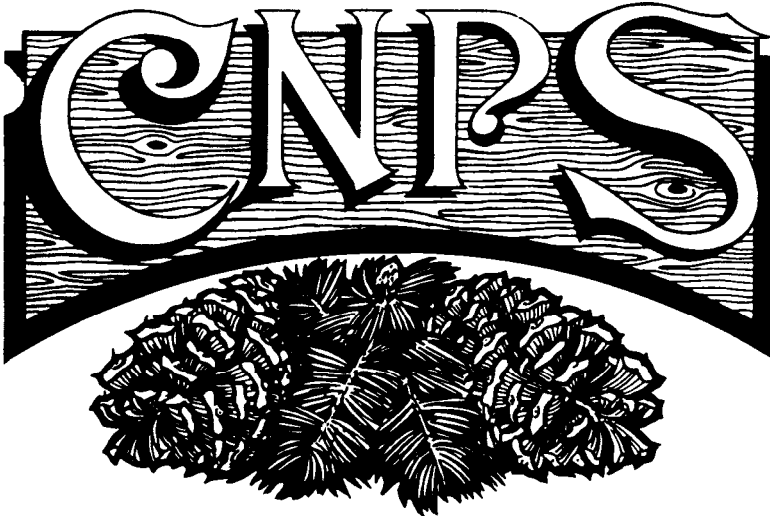


BRISTLECONE · CHAPTER

NEWSLETTER



Vol. 3, No. 3

June 1984

NEXT MEETING

Evening meetings are discontinued during the summer. The next one is to be September 26.

President's message:

The everlasting topic in Inyo-Mono is water. Native plants require water. The question seems to be whether environmental values for the future are to be sold out for some dollars now.

On page 6 of our April Newsletter we expressed concern over the "water pact" or "groundwater agreement" between Los Angeles and Inyo County. Both parties had signed the document, by then entitled "Stipulations" in reference to the court cases addressed therein. But it still had to be approved by each of the three courts involved. It sailed through the Superior Court presided over by San Bernardino Judge Turner, who said, "An EIR doesn't do a thing." Next was a San Diego Superior Court where there was no problem over the settlement of a tax case. But when it went before the Third District Court of Appeals in Sacramento recently, the court was more perceptive. Besides, that court's order for an EIR by Los Angeles on its pumping program had not been satisfied in 11 years.

The three justices there gave conditional approval of the agreement, along with the requirement that the parties appear again at the end of five years for review. The conditions were that an EIR on both surface and groundwater, as previously called for by that court, and a joint water management plan be prepared by the end of the five year period. Final approval depends on both parties agreeing to these requirements. The still standing court imposed pumping limit was removed, but both parties will have to answer for the results.

In my opinion those justices showed the-wisdom of Solomon in the conditions imposed. If the Los Angeles officials are as honorable as they profess to be, they have nothing to fear from being held accountable. If they object, their motives are self-evident. It will be interesting to analyze any change of wording they propose.

As stated in our last newsletter, a responsible watchdog is essential. Now the Appellate Court has assumed that role. Whether the court's requirements will be approached with a degree of humble cooperation or a stubborn effort to justify past procedures remains to be seen. A strong segment of the public is yet to be recognized.

But a reasonable water management plan could yet be achieved for Owens Valley. At least there is another chance.

Mary DeDecker

PLANT SCOUTS AT WORK

Doris Fredendall, our plant scout in Big Pine, reports a *Hecastocleis shockleyi* site east of Big Pine along the well traveled Waucoba or Death Valley Road in the Inyo Mountains. It is on the north facing side of the canyon one mile up from the wash crossing, on or near rock slides. Also around the bluff from there. That brings it to the very border of Owens Valley.

Pat and Jack Crowther have found *Dicentra uniflora*, steer's heads, in Inyo County! The site is on the Piute Pass trail above Piute Lake at 11,000 feet in the Sierra Nevada. The plants were starting to bloom on June 16. A nice addition to our local flora.

Even in this exceedingly dry year we found two new sites for *cilia ripleyi*. One was in San Lucas Canyon, Eureka Valley drainage, in the Inyo Mountains at about 4400 feet. The other was in the Cucomungo Narrows between Fish Lake Valley and Eureka Valley. Both were at the base of whitewashed watercourses from limestone cliffs above.

A call from Jim Morefield of Northern Arizona University tells us that he has just discovered an extensive population of *Dedeckera eurekaensis* in the White Mountains. More information will come later.

TOXIC PLANTS

The regular meeting of May 30 in Big Pine was most informative. Peter Rowlands gave us plenty of food for thought which will cause some hesitation in choosing foods for the stomach. He discussed horticultural species as well as common wild ones. It was somewhat disconcerting to find that many species suggested in books on wild food plants have toxic qualities. Some only interfere with the utilization of vitamins or minerals taken in other foods. So it is best not to get carried away in consuming wild things.

COMING FIELD TRIPS

June 30- MAMMOTH AREA. Meet at 10:00 a.m. at the Mammoth
July 1 Lakes Visitor Center Saturday, June 30. Camping
will be at the Pine Glen group site (behind the
Visitor Center) Saturday night. Space #11.
LEADERS: Mike Prather and Joe Madeiros.

July 14-15 SAWMILL MEADOWS, near Glass Mountain, Mono County.
Meet on Highway 120 in Benton, just west of
Highway 6, at 10:00 a.m. Saturday.

For those who miss the group: 1S01 will turn
left from Highway 120 in approximately 15 miles (
watch for road sign). Keep to right at the fork
where you will leave the canyon bottom. Keep to
the left at the intersection with 1S16.

There is wood, but no water (except in the meadow) at
the 10,000 ft. site, which indicates warm jackets
for evening, and bug repellent, plus the usual
camping equipment, reference books, hand lens,
notebook, etc.

On the Sunday return home you could backtrack to
Black Lake for birding, or drive northwest on 1S16
and various other forestry roads to Crooked Creek
Meadows and, eventually, to Highway 120 at Big Sand
Flat up Mono way. Or you could go back toward
Benton, take 2S84 (at the curve before the big
rocks) through Wildrose Canyon, Watterson Canyon,
over Benton Crossing to join Highway 395 at the
church near Convict Creek; or you could cut from
2S84, drive through the pinyons, cross Crowley Dam,
and join Highway 395 near Tom's Place.

LEADERS: Doris Fredendall and Ray Mosher.

August 18-19 RAMSHAW MEADOW on the Kern Plateau. We will be
cooperating with the Inyo National Forest in
making a field inventory of the rare alpine sand
verbena, *Abronia alpina*. The meadow is an 8 to 9
mile hike via Mulkey Pass from Horseshoe Meadows.
Flights to nearby Tunnel Meadow can be arranged
through Eastern Sierra Flying Service in Lone
Pine. The Cottonwood Pack Station (Phone 619 764-
2225) can pack in your gear if you want to go light
on the trail.

LEADERS: Carroll Albert, U.S.F.S, and Mary
DeDecker.

Sept. 8-9 SADDLEBAG LAKE from Tioga Pass. Details

later.

SOMETHING TO SHARE

A note from Heidi Hopkins of Markleeville after the Eureka
Valley field trip:

*The whole trip definitely enriched my life. Now when I walk
through our local fields or woods I see things I never saw
before. I see families of plants; I see **connections** between
plants. Things begin to make sense. But besides that,
visiting with you was enriching too ...*

EUREKA VALLEY by Mike Prather

The Chapter's May 12-13 trip was to visit Eureka Valley and its unique dunes and flora. Twenty members began by crossing Westgard Pass in the Inyo Mountains, where we stopped to look at *Eriogonum panamintense*, *Eriogonum caespitosum* and *Astragalus inyoensis* in the Pinyon-Juniper Woodland. Even though the area has had no appreciable amount of rain since Christmas, this higher elevation stop was one of our best. Later, at a lower elevation between Fish Lake Valley and Eureka Valley, we entered a narrows where there were limestone outcrops. There we found *Hecastocleis shockleyi*, known as pricklebush, *Mentzelia oreophila*, Inyo blazing star, and *Gilia ripleyi*.

All of this was just a prelude to Eureka Valley and our campsite at the foot of the dunes. A bright moon lit the 700 foot tall dunes all Saturday night. People hiking to the top of the dunes found that they "sang". Deep organ-like tones were emitted when the sand flowed down from the ridges. Three endemic plants in the dune area highlighted our stay. *Swallenia alexandrae*, Eureka dunegrass, grew on the slopes, while some rosettes of *Oenothera avita* ssp. *eurekensis*, the Eureka Evening primrose, and mature clumps of *Astragalus lentiginosus* var. *micans*, Eureka milk-vetch, grew on the sandy borders.

Just two weeks earlier the Eureka Sand Dunes were dedicated as a National Natural Landmark at a ceremony attended by interested visitors, including Inyo County and Federal officials. Our own Mary DeDecker was a featured speaker. She had been a prime mover in gathering the necessary support for closing the dunes to ORV activity to protect their unique natural features.

Sunday we piled everyone into 4-wheel drive vehicles and drove up to Dedeckera Canyon, a scenic limestone canyon above the dunes. It was here that Mary DeDecker discovered the new buckwheat that was named in her honor, *Dedeckera eurekensis*. This was the first newly discovered genus in California since 1949. Other plants seen in the canyon were *Arenaria macradenia* var. *parishiorum*, *Buddleja utahensis*, *Cryptantha racemosa*, *Hecastocleis shockleyi*, *Notholaena jonesii*, *Penstemon calcareus*, *Penstemon fruticiformis*, *Phacelia perityloides*, *Salvia funerea*, *Scopulophila rixfordii* and *Viguiera reticulata*.

The Eureka Dunes and vicinity offer a one-of-a-kind experience, from the dune world to its limestone canyons. Truly it is a place for all who are interested in the natural world to visit again and again.

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BODIE HILLS GRAZING ALLOTMENT

STUDY by Vince Yoder

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) allows ranchers to graze livestock through a permit process. The BLM land suitable for grazing are divided into grazing allotments and the number of stock allowed on each allotment, as well as time of use, restricted areas, etc., are covered in the permit.

The Bodie Hills in northwesterly Mono County have a long history of use by ranchers. Because environmental degradation has occurred in the past and because wildlife, including fish and sage grouse conflicts are severe, the area was studied recently to evaluate the need for possible adjustments in the number of livestock per allotment. The adjustment in all but one case was to reduce the grazing impact. This, naturally, has met with rancher resistance.

To help resolve the management problems and to put the decision process upon a broader base the BLM decided to try a relatively new evaluation procedure which would involve a wide area of federal, state, and local governmental interests, as well as the public sector including the ranchers and environmentalists.

To get the process started, a meeting was held on April 27 in Bridgeport. It was led by Jim Morrison, Area Manager of the Bishop Resource Area, under whose jurisdiction the Bodie Hills lie. The meeting centered on a discussion of the Coordinated Resources Management Plan (CRMP) concept and the applicability and benefits of this management decision process to the Bodie Hills area.

The morning session explored the ramifications and problems of the process. The group was encouraged enough by the potential for success that it decided in the afternoon session to go ahead with the CRMP. A Steering Committee was nominated to further organize and direct the activities. This committee of 16 members represents many interests: Grazing, mining and geothermal, soils, water, wildlife, environment, etc. I was selected to represent environmental matters.

The Steering Committee met on May 31 to define the role of the Committee, the areas to be studied, and to develop an action plan. The Committee finally felt ready to select one of the grazing allotments to begin the review process. The review of the area selected, Aurora Canyon, will be done on the ground in the field by a specially selected group of experts known as the Technical Review Team. All major areas of interest are represented, mostly by governmental persons. The public is represented by a rancher for grazing interests, by a miner for mining and geothermal interests, by Mary DeDecker for botanical/riparian-wetlands, and by Mike Prather for wilderness-recreational interests. Although not technically on the team, Earl Gann should attend and add expertise in the ornithological field and other areas. Meeting dates to do the fieldwork and prepare the report to recommend action are yet to be determined at this writing.

It is gratifying to know that this management process is being tried in an area with the sensitive environmental issues found in the Bodie Hills and that CNPS, Audubon, and Sierra Club members are to be involved in the grazing allotment management decisions. Although unanimity is required in all decisions by the Technical Review Team and by the Steering Committee, this should be possible within the scope of the groups' determination to thoughtfully resolve the problems in a give and take atmosphere. More news will be forthcoming.

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The first session of the BUCKWHEAT CLASS was a good one. We did find buckwheats, although hardly in abundance. We learned to overcome

the main difficulties in the key, and to make judgment on how tolerant to be on slight variations in the species. The August 24-25 session should find some attractive late bloomers in their prime.

We are pleased to welcome the following new members to our

chapter:

Alan erickson

P.O. Box 1349
Yucca Valley, CA. 92284

Rick Takashi Iwanage

9071 Rincon Avenue
Sun Valley, CA.
91352

Alfonse M. Nikolaus
(Included in a new
Family Membership)

P.O. Box 396
Independence, CA. 93526

Larry Wailes

201-B WMIU
Ridgecrest, CA.
93555