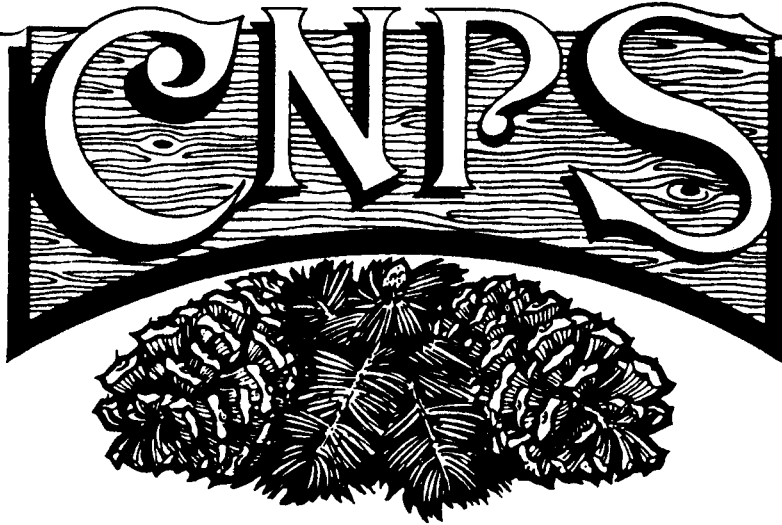


BRISTLECONE • CHAPTER

NEWSLETTER

Vol. 7, No. 2

March 1988



NEXT MEETING

Wednesday, March 30, 7:30 p.m. at the Sierra Baptist Church on Wall St. just east off Hwy 395. Mary DeDecker will show slides of Australia's Outback.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE:

My thanks go to the eleven hardy workers who cleared (at least for the present) the Tamarix from the west playa of the Eureka Dunes. We are not so foolish as to believe that the job is finished; seeds will no doubt sprout for years. After receiving the Tamarix-removal report, Area Manager Patricia E. McClean of the Ridgecrest Resource Area, BLM, wrote, "Please go ahead with your plans for another removal effort after spring growth and keep us informed. Convey our thanks to your members for their public service efforts to control this noxious invader" .

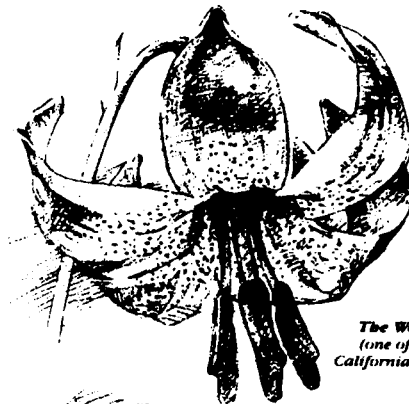
As we started home along the base of the Last Chance Range (after "the dig") we met many vehicles heading for the dunes. No dune buggies were evident in the bed of these pickups. However, each time I have walked the dunes, there have been many tracks of vehicles swerving up and around the dune slopes. BLM rangers are encouraged to check this special area more often.

..... Doris Fredendall

THE ENDANGERED SPECIES OF CALIFORNIA

**You can help them survive
by filling in LINE 45
on your State Tax Return.**

California has more than 250 animal and plant species that face the threat of extinction. We urge you to help them survive with a tax-deductible contribution on LINE 45 of your State Tax Return. Please help if you can. The loss of just one living species hurts us all....



*The Western Lily
(one of 252 native
California species at risk)*

The CNPS rare and endangered plant list shows the following plants of Inyo and Mono counties as having the highest priority. Those marked * are on the California Fish and Game list and those marked * are federally listed as endangered.

- Astragalus funereus* Rhyolite milk-vetch
- * *Astragalus johannis-howellii* Long Valley milk-vetch
- Astragalus lentiginosus* var. *micans* Eureka milk-vetch
- Astragalus lentiginosus* var. *piscinensis* Fish Slough milk-vetch
- Astragalus lentiginosus* var. *sesquimetralis* Sodaville milk-vetch
- * *Astragalus monoensis* Mono milk-vetch
- Astragalus ravenii* Raven milk-vetch
- Calochortus excavatus* Alkali mariposa
- Caulastramina jaegeri* Cliff dweller
- * *Cryptantha roosiorum* Bristlecone cryptantha
- Dedeckera eurekaensis* July gold
- Draba cruciata* var. *integrifolia* Mt. Whitney draba
- Draba quadricostata* Bodie Hills draba
- Enceliopsis covillei* Panamint daisy
- Eriogonum ampullaceum* Flask buckwheat
- Eriogonum eremicola* Telescope Peak Buckwheat
- Eriogonum microthecum* var. *panamintense* Panamint Buckwheat
- Eriogonum wrightii* var. *olanchense* Olancha Peak buckwheat
- Galium hilendiae* var. *kingstonense* Kingston bedstraw
- Galium hypotrachium* var. *tomentellum* Telescope Peak bedstraw
- Gilmanii luteola* Golden carpet
- Grindelia fraxo-pratensis* Ash Meadows gumplant
- Hackelia brevicula* White Mountain forget-me-not
- Hackelia sharsmithii* Sharsmith stick-seed
- Lupinus magnificus* var. *magnificus* Magnificent lupine
- * *Lupinus padre-crowleyi* Father Crowley lupine
- * *Maurandya petrophylla* Rock lady
- * *Nitrophyla mohavensis* Amargosa nitrophyla
- ** *Oenothera avita* Ssp. *eurekaensis* Eureka evening primrose
- Perityle inyoensis* Inyo perityle
- Perityle villosa* Hanaupah perityle
- Petalonyx thurberi* Death Valley sandpaper plant
- Phacelia monoensis* Mono phacelia
- Phacelia novemillensis* Nine Mile Canyon phacelia
- Sidalcea covillei* Owens Valley mallow
- Sphaeralcea rusbyi* ssp. *eremicola* Rusby desert mallow
- ** *Swallenia alexandrae* Eureka Dune Grass

Tetracoccus ilicifolius Holly-leaved tetracoccus

Trifolium dedeckeræ DeDecker clover

The above are on CNPS List 1B, meaning that they are considered rare and/or endangered in California and elsewhere.

Vanishing plant-animal chains – a major concern

from an article by David Diaz in the San Diego Union

"You've got to fight" sighed Hugh Iltes. What are you living for except to fight?" Iltes and fellow members of the newly formed **Society for Conservation Biology** are waging a war against the most massive obliteration of life forms since the disappearance of the dinosaurs 65 million years ago.

Their opponent? Ignorance, apathy, and economic forces that encourage people each year to destroy another 50 million acres of tropical forest (an area the size of Great Britain), according to estimates from the Academy of Science. Even in the most intensely developed nations, millions of acres of wetlands and woodlands continue to be lost annually. Natural scientists fear that in the next 30 years an average of 100 plant and animal species could become extinct every day. Thought of such losses can leave naturalists feeling queasy in the stomach and wobbly in the knees.

Each species belongs to a circle of independent life. The loss of one insect, plant, or animal can ignite a chain reaction of extinction. Even Homo sapiens relies on a vast array of creatures with different Latin names.

Scientists may never be able to fathom the sum worth of a particular species. A tropical animal that dies out this year might take with it a resistance to AIDS virus. Or the animal be essential to an insect that pollinates a flower that produces a chemical that kills human cancer. Or there may be benefits that are less direct but equally precious. "What value is an orchid?" Iltes asked. Or a tiger? Or a panda? Or a spotted owl? Iltes knows firsthand how important just one rare and obscure species can be. An Indiana Jones of the botany world, Iltes, 62, frequently can be found tramping through the rain forests of Central and South America when not teaching at the University of Wisconsin. Nine years ago he and a student discovered a primitive relative to corn that is proving to be worth billions of dollars to corn farmers around the world, according to Congress's Office of Technology Assessment. The plant is resistant to

seven major diseases plaguing corn crops. "For four of the viruses, this lousy-looking, weedy, little grass is the only known resistant in the world" said Iltes. By infusing the ancient plant's genetic material into modern, domesticated varieties, breeders have developed hardier corn hybrids in the United States, the Soviet Union and South Africa. Its genetic information could even yield a perennial strain of popcorn that pops up year after year without plowing or planting. Iltes stumbled across the plant by accident. It grew only in three small strips - a total of 10 acres of land - on a single mountainside in Mexico.

The tropics is full of wonderful things like this that we're barely beginning to understand," Iltes said. "Most plants have never been studied in terms of human uses." Fewer than 1 percent of the plants in the tropical rain forests have been chemically analyzed. Yet 70 percent of the plants that the National Cancer Society considers useful in fighting cancer grow only in tropical forests. Treatments for leukemia and Hodgkin's disease have been developed from tropical plants. Wild tropical yams have yielded cortisone and the active ingredients in birth control pills. A quarter of all prescription drugs sold in America come from plants.

Still, vast stands of forests are burned and bulldozed to make room for farms and cattle ranches. Along with the trees fall unknown scores of insects, birds, reptiles, mammals. Half of earth's species may lie in the canopies formed by tropical trees, according to a recent article in *Omni*. At the present rate of destruction, only remnant patches of rain forest will exist by 2050.

Those refuges won't be enough to save a staggering number of species from extinction, according to Iltes and other natural scientists who subscribe to the "theory of island biogeography."

NOTE: We do not have space to give this thought provoking article in its entirety, but this is enough to alert us to the danger of complacency.

FIELD TRIPS, SPRING SCHEDULE.

APRIL 16-17. Short Canyon and Walker Pass, west of Ridgecrest.

Leaders: Mary Ann and Ron Henry. Meet at 9:30 Saturday morning at Brady's Cafe and Mobil Station, just north of the junction of Highways 395 and 14.

May 21 -22. Tetracoccus Peak and Wildrose Canyon, Panamints.

Leaders: Mike and Nancy Prather. Hike Saturday from Aguerberry Point to Tetracoccus Peak, about 2 miles round trip, cross-country. Rocky and somewhat steep in places, but we'll be going slowly to see all the rare plants found here--*Tetracoccus ilicifolius*, *Mimulus rupicola*, *Gilia ripleyi*, and other limestone plants endemic to the area. Meet at the Aguerberry Point parking lot at 10:30 a.m. on Saturday. It's about 2 hours from Lone Pine. Take a good dirt road which turns east from the Emigrant Canyon road for about 6.5 miles. Elevation about 6200 ft. Dry camp at Thornkdike Camp in upper Wildrose Canyon Saturday night. Botanize in the Wildrose Basin on Sunday.

June 4. Mazourka Canyon, Inyo Mountains, east of Independence.

Leaders: Evelyn Mae and Al Nikolaus. Meet at 9:00 a.m. at the rock service station just south of Independence, on the corner of Mazourka Road and Highway 395

June 18-19. 4-WD trip in the Inyo Mountains.

Leaders: Mary and Paul DeDecker. Meet at 9:00 at the Triangle Campground, junction of Highways 395 and 168. High clearance 4-WD vehicles **absolutely necessary**. Those planning to participate **must** contact the leaders in advance. Numbers limited. Phone 878-2389.

NOTE: For more details and trip policies see the January Newsletter or call Mark Bagley, Field Trip Chairman, (619) 973-5326.

David Gaines - 1988

I can think of few people in this world who are irreplaceable. David was one of them. For twelve years he was Mono Lake's most eloquent and passionate champion, devoting his life to the lake and, at times, driving himself to exhaustion. There was always too much to do.

I am convinced that had David not decided to fight for Mono Lake, no one else would have. Who else was dedicated enough or young and foolish enough to believe that one could win against the giant DWP? It was David, in his quiet way and by example, who inspired quite a few thousand of us to believe as he did, that Mono Lake was worth saving, that it was not a hopeless fight and that *of course we could win*.

Monday, January 11, David and Don Oberlin, a Mono Lake Committee staff member, were killed in a head-on collision on Highway 395 north of Mammoth Lakes during a whiteout caused by blowing snow. Sally Gaines suffered a broken wrist, and their daughter Vireo, 5, was in serious condition for over a week. Their son, Sage, and the driver of the other car were not hurt. A memorial Fund has been established. Sally has suggested that it be used to accomplish one of David's major goals--the continued existence of the Lee Vining Visitor Center. Donations in

memory of David may be sent to the Mono Lake Committee or the Mono Lake Foundation (tax deductible). P.O. Box 29, Lee Vining, CA 93541.

Born in Los Angeles, David became acquainted with the eastern Sierra during family vacations. He attended UC Santa Cruz and UC Davis, where he received a master's degree in ecology. He was among the group of students who received a NSF grant in 1976 to study the Mono Lake ecosystem. I remember stopping in at their camp that summer. What enthusiasm! Bits and pieces of Mono Lake had been studied before, its geology and limnology, but never the whole lake and all its creatures. What a marvelous idea, to gather a dozen students with many specialties, turn them loose on Mono Lake, and put all their findings together.

Their work was a turning point in history.. They provided solid evidence that the lake's importance to hundreds of thousands of birds--as a nesting site for gulls and plovers and as a critically important food source and resting place for migrating grebes and phalaropes. They also documented the elegantly simple ecosystem that supports these birds: mineral-rich lake water, bacteria, algae, brine flies and shrimp. Without David's passion and eloquence, this evidence might have stayed buried in a scientific report. Instead, appalled at the sure destruction of this living lake if the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power continued to divert its tributaries, dropping the lake a foot or two each year and increasing its salinity, David took it upon himself to do something. Soon joining him were Sally and a handful of friends. They publicized the lake's unique wonders and impending doom, they found allies and organized the Mono Lake Committee. The Committee has led the fight to maintain the lake through legal, legislative, educational and political activities.

David was so closely identified with Mono Lake that you may not know he had other interests and talents. A few years ago he began making time for them, shifting Committee responsibilities to others in order to be with his growing family and other projects long deferred. Such as ornithology--he had just finished a new and greatly expanded edition of his book Birds of Yosemite and the East Slope. Such as publishing; his Artemisia Press already has six titles on birds, local history and geology. Such as his mandolin

David was a rare person, gentle and soft-spoken, but a bulldog on all matters concerning Mono Lake. A man with the courage to live his convictions, David, you were right all along. We are winning. A living,

magnificent lake will be your eternal monument. And we the richer for having known you. Peace on earth.

.....Genny Smith 1/29/88

Tamarix Dig at the Eureka Dunes

Winds that had tortured the valley for several days died quietly during the early hours of February 20 when eleven workers gathered at the Eureka Dunes in mid-morning. There was not a bit of dust to mar the beauty of the dunes in the sparkling air. Carrying mattocks and shovels, the search began for the reddish stalks of *Tamarix* among the gray saltbushes. Sizes varied. There were slender wisps, little-finger size, up to a many branched 10-foot bush with a 5-inch circumference that required the digging of roots in all directions. All of them had to be dug; no chemical poison could be used.

After pleasant lunch break two pickups with side racks were filled with the products of our effort. The workers, Bette and Ray Sisson, Judy Saxton, Ann and Vince Yoder, Mary and Paul DeDecker, Ray Mosher, Lawrence Wylie, Peter Dowty and Doris Fredendall left the dunes with a feeling of satisfaction. It had a been a great day. A watch will be kept for any new plants in the future.

..... Doris Fredendall

We are delighted to greet the following new members:

Joan Benner, 798 N. Main Street, Bishop, CA 93514

John F. Copp, Box 291, Ridgecrest, CCA 93555

Pete Dowty, 816 N. Fairview Street, Ridgecrest, CA 932555

Larry Norris, 7485 W. Colorado Drive, Lakewood, CO? 80226

Phil Pister, 437 E. South Street, Bishop, CA 93514

CALIFORNIA NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY - Membership Application

The California Native Plant Society is an organization of lay persons and professionals united by an interest in the plants of California. It is open to all. The Society, working through its local chapters, seeks to increase understanding of California's native flora and to preserve this rich resource for future generations. Varied interests are represented.

Name _____ P.O. or Street _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____ Phone _____

Membership Category:

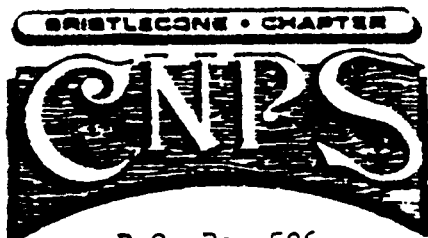
_____ Life, Couple	\$500	I wish to be affiliated with the
_____ Life, Individual	450	Bristlecone Chapter _____
_____ Supporting	50	Other _____
_____ Household	30	
_____ Individual or Library	18	Please make check payable to:
_____ Student or Retired	12	California Native Plant Society
_____ Retired Couple	15	Mail to: Bristlecone Chapter, CNPS

GIFT contribution: Where most needed _____ Conservation _____

P.O. Box 506
Independence, CA 93526

The BRISTLECONE NEWSLETTER comes out bimonthly. It is mailed free to members of the Bristlecone Chapter, CNPS. The subscription is \$5.00 per year for others. Editor: Mary DeDecker.

California Native Plant Society



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