

Vol. 9, No. 6

November 1990

NEXT CHAPTER MEETING  
January 30, 1991, to be announced.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE:

This has been another active, fruitful year--all the way from our mining meeting and subsequent field trip with the BLM in Ridgecrest to our Forest Service meeting and following field trip to timber sales and regeneration areas in the north--quite a spread. Our field trips have been from Darwin Falls in the Coso Range to the Tioga Pass area in the Sierra. What we do have in the Eastern Sierra and nearby desert ranges is contrast. From below sea level to the towering Sierra and White Mountains. Good place to live, work and play.

Well, it's been a pleasure to be your Chapter President again this past year. And my thanks to all the fine people who help make our successes possible. The slate for new officers for next year looks exciting and I predict another lively year for our chapter. There is plenty to work on--Water Agreement DEIR to comment upon; BLM Bishop Resource Management Plan to comment upon; oak inventory; riparian survey; plant community inventory; investigate and follow-up on DWP in-valley grazing practices; plus an array of field trips and chapter meetings.

So let us support our new officers and help make this our best, most active year yet.

An thanks again for all your help.

. . . . . Vince Yoder

**ANNOUNCEMENT:** The Bristlecone Chapter is sponsoring a field trip to be followed by a workshop to better inform the public on critical environmental sites in Owens Valley. This is to encourage informed responses to the DEIR Long Term Groundwater Management Plan. Carla Scheidlinger will conduct both events. The field trip, and possibly the workshop, will occur before you receive the newsletter, but they will be announced by the news media. The field trip will be Saturday, December 8, starting at 8:30 a.m. in Lone Pine and ending in the Bishop-Laws area. The workshop, to discuss observations made on the field trip, will be on Monday, December 10 at 7:00 p.m. in the Big Pine town hall.

From the editor:

This is to express apologies for being late with the November newsletter. Actually I evaded my responsibility by going on a trip to northeast Kansas on an extended Thanksgiving holiday. The local elections were over, leaving Inyo County government intact. The long nightmare was over--the recall efforts had failed so we had the assurance that progress would continue toward a long term water agreement between Inyo County and Los Angeles. Paul and I thought we were headed for a relaxing holiday. Little did we know that we were to share in another environmental crisis. There is no escaping environmental concerns! This horror story is well described in the November 23 issue of the New York Times. (Watch for a similar one expected to appear in Newsweek.) We shared horrified helplessness with our biologist grandson who is associated with the Kansas Heritage Program. He had already given us a good feeling for prized remnants of the tall grass prairies. Can you imagine walking through grasses up to eight feet tall? That fine prairie remnant is lost forever. Let us hope that the shock waves will effectively further support for such national values. I give you the introductory portion of the article in the New York Times.

## Virgin Prairie Lost to Plow in Kansas

LAWRENCE Kan. Nov. 23-- The largest remaining stretch of virgin prairie in northeast Kansas disappeared under the plow this week after futile attempts by the Nature Conservancy and local environmentalists to buy it.

The plowing of the 80-Acre Elkins Prairie was first noticed soon after sunrise on Sunday and the news quickly spread to a community group that had worked for two years to preserve the land, one of the few remaining unspoiled pieces of the 200 million acres of tall grass prairie that once covered North America.

Environmentalists hurried to the site and pleaded with the landowner to stop his action. The Douglas County Commission called an emergency meeting and after negotiating half the night offered to pay the landowner \$6,000 an acre within six months, the equivalent of what developers had recently paid for nearby land.

But the owner, Jack Graham, rejected the offer and resumed plowing. By late Monday only a small strip of virgin prairie remained.

### Home to 150 Plant Species

"It's heart-wrenching," said Joyce Wolf, leader of the group that had hoped to buy the land for an environmental education area. "He has stolen a resource from a community."

Mr. Graham, a 39-year-old businessman who bought the land five years ago, declined to comment on his action. His lawyer, Thomas Murray, said Mr. Graham and his family "simply wanted to make their property more productive," but he would not elaborate.

Only about 2 percent of the original tall-grass prairie in North America remains, and Craig Freeman, coordinator of the state's Natural Heritage Program said the Elkins

Prairie stretch, about a mile outside this booming college town, was a particularly fine example of the complex prairie ecosystem. It was home to 150 species of plants, including two threatened species, Mead's milkweed and the western prairie fringed orchid.

Federal plant protection laws do not apply to private property that receives no Federal money.



## Additions to our flora

As Vince says, this is a good place to live, work and play. Our people are still finding new or unexpected species for the region. Perhaps the honors for the showiest go to Derham Guilliani, our entomologist, who is always alert for any new plant that his insects might feed upon.

It was Derham who discovered silk-tassel bush, *Garrya flavescens* ssp. *pallida* thriving at about 5000 feet on Haiwee Creek of the Sierra Nevada. We had no previous record of it on the east side. He also found a fine population of giant chain fern, *Woodwardia fimbriata*, which extended 300 to 400 feet up a spring fed slope along Cartago Creek at about 5600 feet. Here in Owens Valley it is hard to believe that ferns can become so large. Temperatures that far south may be moderate enough to allow species not normally found on the Sierra's east side.

On the valley floor I was surprised to find that a modest little pincushion at the Cabin Bar Ranch in Cartago was *Chaenactis glabriuscula* var. *tenuifolia*, a species unknown to us here.

Another surprise was to find that a strange little *Plagiobothrys* collected in 1974 in the Sweetwater Mountains is *P. glomeratus*. This may be a first record for it in California. A collection this year in the Mammoth Sierra by Mark Bagley appears to be the same species. It must be one which grows at a higher elevation than the similar *Plagiobothrys hispidus*. Many Nevada species come over the line and enrich the flora of eastern California.

Yet to be confirmed is the occurrence of the Bullfrog wild pea, *Lathyrus hitchcockianus*, on the California side of the state line in the Grapevine Mountains. Mike Ward, an employee of Death Valley National Monument, thinks that he has found it here. At present its known populations are mostly confined to the Bullfrog Hills in nearby Nevada, all on Timber Mountain or Paintbrush tuffs of Pliocene volcanics.

## Final field trip for 1990

October 6, 1990, Trip to Deep Springs Lake, led by Carla Scheidlinger.

About a dozen CNPS members and friends wound their way over Westgard Pass this bright Saturday morning and converged at the gate of Deep Springs College in the Deep Springs Valley. We drove past the row of stately elms near the dairy barn, and followed a dirt road south out of the campus and out into the rangeland of the valley. The first stop was at a large, flat boulder about 100 meters from the road, the surface of which contained a number of grinding slicks which indicated that Native Americans had found this to be a prime site for Indian ricegrass, *Oryzopsis hymenoides*. The site was now dominated by Russian thistle, however. Since the cows also seek out ricegrass and had trampled the site.

A little further down the valley we stopped in an area with very little grazing impact, dominated by greasewood, sagebrush, and shadscale. Here the ground was crisp and somewhat brittle to the touch--the characteristics of undisturbed cryptogamic soil.

At the lake, we teetered across a series of boards laid across the meandering streams that originate a little upslope from the Corral Springs, and crossed a saltgrass meadow to a ridge of granite boulders that overlooks a slough and freshwater marsh that back on the hillside. A couple of Indian homesites were found: circles of stones built into a low wall, about eight feet in diameter. Here also were several Indian hunting blinds, from which bighorn sheep must have been taken as they descended to water. There were a variety of cactus growing on this ridge, along with shrubs and perennial herbs characteristic of desert alluvial fans.

Few plants were in bloom at this time of year, but the vegetation in and around the numerous ponds and streams was lush and green. Watercress (*Nasturtium officinale*) was abundant, and monkeyflowers (*Mimulus guttatus*), nodding bur-marigold (*Bidens cernua*), and valley epilobium (*Epilobium ciliatum*) were found in flower. Shadscale bushes were common, and the pink-tinged fruits were lovely. Transitions were rapid from one community to another--alluvial fans, shadscale scrub, alkali meadow, freshwater marsh, and freshwater seep--which made for a varied exposure to many habitats. While crossing the stream originating from one of the Buckhorn Springs, near a small grove of *Tamarix*, we spotted one of the rare Deep Springs black toads. This species is confined to the Deep Springs Valley, and has its nearest relatives in the Yosemite region. Also found was *Spartina gracilis*, the alkali cordgrass, rare in this region.

The lake area was a wonderful place to explore and botanize, even this late in the fall. We agreed it would be very worthwhile to return again in the spring for another trip.

..... Carla Scheidlinger

## CONSERVATION NOTES

Reinheckle Spring is probably the only major one left on the valley which has not been permanently affected in a major way by pumping. Even after four years of

severe drought it has a flow which must be about 1.5 cubic feet per second or more (1000 acre feet per year) --a major spring indeed.

But we read on page 16-34 and 35 of the Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) for the proposed Long-term Water Management Plan that: "New wells in The Independence-Symmes-Bairs area may reduce or eliminate the flow from Reinhackle Spring and impact vegetation dependent upon the flow from that spring. In addition to lowering of the water table, flow from Reinhackle Spring could be reduced because of groundwater production from the lower aquifer zone. Results from the OLB model and an independent hydrograph analysis by Hutchison..... indicate that flow from Reinhackle Spring may be reduced or dry up during dry periods with low runoff and high pumping." A suggested mitigation measure follows which is iffy at best.

This is clearly unsatisfactory. Reinhackle Spring is the last major spring in the valley. It must be preserved as a remnant and example of the former abundant springs which made the valley more than a desert. Waters from the spring feed a large wet meadow which is not only valuable to local plants and wildlife but it is very necessary to keep the meadows in good condition for the rancher who leases the area. Any major decreases, let alone cessation of water flow here would be a disaster ecologically and must not be allowed to happen.

The City must be required to relocate the three proposed well sites shown on page 16-25 in the DEIS to locations which will help to give continued flow from this important asset in our valley. Please help to make this clear at the public meetings. Thank you.

.....Vince Yoder

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We are happy to announce the following new members in this issue:

- A.D. and Susan Des Baillets, Lee Vining
- Kitty Page, Mammoth Lakes
- T. A. Sawinski, Mammoth Lakes
- Emilie Strauss, Oakland
- Bob Williams Nursery, Indio

It appears that we neglected to list the following members who joined early this year, so we hereby name them with our apologies:

- Marty Berbach, Independence
- David Jim Bradney, Las Vegas, NV
- Larry Nahm, Bishop
- Imelda Nee, Ridgecrest

WE extend all of the above a warm welcome and urge our active members to do the same in all chapter gatherings. Cheers!

## FLOWERS NOTED ON HUNTER MOUNTAIN, SPRING 1990

### APIACEAE (Parsley Family)

*Angelica lineariloba*

Tall angelica

*Lomatium nevadense* var. *parishii*

Parish parsley

### ASTERACEAE (Sunflower Family)

*Artemisia tridentata*

Big Sagebrush

*Chaenactis macrantha*

Large-flowered pincushion

*Crepis acuminata*

Mountain hawksbeard

*Crepis occidentalis*

Western hawksbeard

*Eriophyllum ambiguum* var. *ambiguum*

Woolly daisy (Yellow)

*Haplopappus lineariloba* var. *nevadensis*

Showy goldenbush

*Yiguiera multiflora* var. *nevadensis*

Nevada Golden-eye (immature)

### BORAGINACEAE (Borage Family)

*Cryptantha circumscissa*

Capped cryptantha

### BRASSICACEAE (Mustard Family)

*Arabis pulchra* var. *gracilis*

Prince's rock-cress

*Erysimum capitatum*

Wallflower

### CACTACEAE (Cactus Family)

*Opuntia erinacea* var. *erinacea*

Mojave prickly pear

### CAPRIFOLIACEAE (Honeysuckle Family)

*Symphoricarpos oreophilus* var. *utahensis*

Mountain snowberry

### CHENOPODIACEAE (Goosefoot Family)

*Chenopodium atrovirens*

Mountain goosefoot

### EPHEDRACEAE (Ephedra or Mormon Tea Family)

*Ephedra viridis*

Green ephedra or Mormon tea

### EUPHORBIACEAE (Spurge Family)

*Euphorbia albomarginata*

Rattlesnake weed

### FABACEAE (Pea Family)

*Case astragalus*

Case milk-vetch

\* *Lotus oblongifolius* var. *oblongifolius*

Narrow-leaved lotus

*Lupinus argenteus* var. *palmeri*

Palmer lupine

*Lupinus excubitus*

Bush lupine

### HYDROPHYLLACEAE (Waterleaf or Phacelia Family)

*Nama aretoides*

Pink nama

*Phacelia fremontii*

Yellow throats

### LAMIACEAE (Mint Family)

*Monardella tinoides* ssp. *tinoides*

Flax-leaved monardella

### LILIACEAE (Lily Family)

*Calochortus panamintensis*

Panamint mariposa

*Dichelostemma pulchella*

Blue dicks

### MALVACEAE (Mallow Family)

*Malcothamnus fremontii*

Tehachapi mallow

*Sphaeralcea ambigua*

Apricot mallow

**ONAGRACEAE (Evening Primrose Family)**

<i>Camissonia pusilla</i>	Little wiry primrose
<i>Camissonia claviformis</i> ssp. <i>funerea</i>	Brown-eyed primrose
<i>Gayophytum difusum</i> ssp. <i>parviflorum</i>	Summer snow
<i>Oenothera avita</i> ssp. <i>avita</i>	White desert primrose

**OROBANCHE (Broomrape Family)**

<i>Orobanche fasciculata</i>	Mountain strangler
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**PAPAYERACEAE (Poppy Family)**

<i>Argemone munita</i>	Prickly poppy
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**POACEAE (Grass Family)**

<i>Leymus cinereus</i>	Creeping wildrye
<i>Oryzopsis hymenoides</i>	Indian ricegrass

**POLEMONIACEAE (Phlox Family)**

<i>Gilia transmontana</i>	Star Gilia
<i>Gilia brecciarum</i>	Nevada small gilia
<i>Leptodactylon pungens</i> var. <i>hallii</i>	Prickly phlox
<i>Linanthus nudatus</i>	Tehachapi linanthus
<i>Phlox longifolia</i> var. <i>stansburyi</i>	Stansbury phlox

**POLYGONACEAE (Buckwheat Family)**

<i>Eriogonum fasciculatum</i> sp. <i>polefolium</i>	Bee buckwheat
<i>Rumex salicifolius</i>	Willow dock

**RHAMNACEAE (Buckthorn Family)**

<i>Ceanothus cordulatus</i>	Snow bush
<i>Cordylanthus greggii</i> var. <i>vestitus</i>	Desert ceanothus

**ROSACEAE (ROSE FAMILY) Cliff rose**

<i>Prunus fasciculata</i>	Desert almond
<i>Purshia glandulosa</i>	Desert bitterbrush
<i>Rosa woodsii</i>	Wild rose

**RUBIACEAE (Madder Family)**

<i>Galium matthewsii</i>	Bushy bedstraw
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**SAXIFRAGACEAE (Saxifrage Family)**

<i>Ribes velutinum</i>	Plateau gooseberry
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**SCROPHULARIACEAE ( Figwort Family)**

<i>Castilleja martinii</i> var. <i>clokeyi</i>	Clokey paintbrush
<i>Keckiella rothrockii</i>	Buckskin keckiella
<i>Penstemon floridus</i>	Palmer penstemon
<i>Scrophularia desertorum</i>	Bee plant, desert figwort

**SOLANACEAE (Nightshade Family)**

<i>Solanum xanti</i>	Desert mountain nightshade
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\*It is possible that this *Lotus* will be at least a new variety when studies on that genus are completed.

NOTE: We expect to schedule a field trip to Hunter Mountain next season, so save this plant list for that occasion. Notice how different the flora there is from those of neighboring desert ranges. This site was burned several years ago. It is a granite area.

**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 \_\_\_\_\_

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**Membership Category:**

- \_\_\_\_\_ Life, Couple \$500
- \_\_\_\_\_ Life, Individual 450
- \_\_\_\_\_ Supporting 50
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- \_\_\_\_\_ Individual or Library 18
- \_\_\_\_\_ Student or Retired 12
- \_\_\_\_\_ Retired Couple 15

I wish to be affiliated with the  
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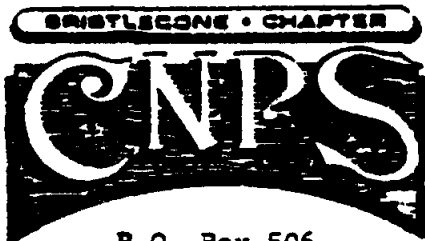
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