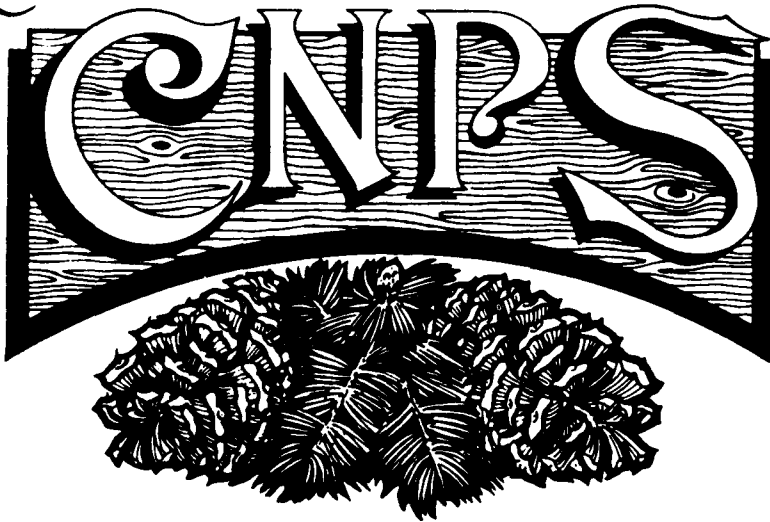


DEDICATED TO THE PRESERVATION OF THE CALIFORNIA NATIVE FLORA

BRISTLEcone • CHAPTER



NEWSLETTER

Vol. 11, No. 6

November 1992

NEXT MEETING

January 27, 1993. Put it on your calendar and start the new year right by being present.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE:

It has been a pleasure to serve as President these last two years. I thank all of you for all the support that you have given me. I hope that you will continue backing the new President, as I know you will.

It is time once again to voice our support for the Desert Protection Act to our new Senators, one of whom has already taken office. We should keep them informed as to our concern for native plants.

May I extend to you my best wishes for a HAPPY HOLIDAY SEASON, and may all your years be good flower years!

. Evelyn Mae Nikolaus

"The California Desert is a vast land of breathtaking beauty and diverse habitats--looming sand dunes, extinct volcanoes, 90 mountain ranges, 100,000 archaeological sites, the world's largest joshua tree forest, 760 wildlife species, and the planet's oldest living organism, an 11,700 year-old creosote bush."

* * * * *

This is to belatedly report that Doris Fredendall has scored again. Last July she found Spergularia rubra on Rock Creek on Mono County. It is our first report of that species in this region. It is a pink-flowered species, naturalized from Eurasia. The Munz flora shows it as below 7000 feet, but this site was at about 9000 feet. Another species, Spergularia marina is common here, mostly at low elevations on the valley floors. It tolerates alkali and often occurs on the moist clay of drying playas. Its flowers are white to pale pink.

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(909) 798-8570

combining the 7th Annual Mojave Desert Quaternary Research Symposium
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CONSERVATION CORNER

People for the West! Fighting to keep public land open", the slogan of a sub-group of a growing movement espousing "Wise Use", is a loose collection of perhaps 400 organizations that are opposed to the environmentalists whose actions it believes are adversely affecting the Nation's economy, principally in the west.

These are pro-development activists, consumers, and other users which include loggers, ranchers, miners, recreational users such as bikers, 4-wheelers, and their promotional industries and outlets. One of their main objectives is to increase access to public lands, even in wilderness areas and National Parks. Their agenda includes: cutting all decaying and oxygen-using forest growth on National Forest lands and planting to reduce global warming; rewriting the Endangered Species Act to better benefit users; eliminating restrictions on wetlands development; opening all public lands to mineral and energy development; expanding private concessions in National Parks in a massive way; authorizing civil penalties against anyone who legally challenges economic action or development of federal lands; and any other disturbing moves to thwart environmental action and to "utilize" the land for economic purposes.

This seems to be a conflict principally between urban preservationists and rural traditional users. Conservationists should recognize this as a serious threat to the future of conservationist goals. There is big money behind the "Wise Use" movement, mostly from mining interests (many out-of-country), and even from Chevron! Its propaganda is appealing to the immature, or those who feel no responsibility for perpetuation of the species.

We should attend their public meetings and become familiar with their program and their agenda in our area. Our own County Board of Supervisors is seen as strongly pro-commercialization and use oriented, which may be short-sighted. For further information refer to the September-October issue of "Audubon" and local newspaper guest editorials and letters to the editor. Be aware and forewarned! This is an effort to swing the pendulum back.

Vince Yoder
Conservation Chairman



THE PLANNING AND CONSERVATION LEAGUE (PCL) INVITES YOU TO THE 1993 ENVIRONMENTAL LEGISLATIVE SYMPOSIUM, "ENVIRONMENTAL INITIATIVES"

**SATURDAY AND SUNDAY
JANUARY 9 AND 10, 1993**

**Sacramento City College
3835 Freeport Boulevard
Sacramento, CA 95822**

For more information and or registration packet, call Lindy Rodgers (916) 444-8726, Ext. 7, or write PCL Symposium, 926 J Street, 3612; Sacramento, CA 95814., or contact your newsletter editor. This is an opportunity for a productive experience, one which you may share with the rest of us. Our chapter supports PCL.

DEDECKERA CANYON RESTORED

When John Nicoll decided to build a mining road through Dedeckera Canyon, in October 1991, little did he realize the shock waves he was creating. He was violating an Area of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC) which was within a Wilderness Study Area. The object of the ACEC designation was to protect the concentration of rare plant species and archaeological sites in Dedeckera canyon. (The canyon was named "Dedeckera" after a newly discovered plant genus, which was discovered there in 1974. This is a rare shrub in the buckwheat family.) When Mr. Nicoll had applied to BLM's Area Office in Ridgecrest for permission to build a road to his mine in upper Saline Valley, he was instructed to submit a plan for consideration. Rather than do that he took matters into his own hands and decided to build a road over the divide from Eureka Valley by way of Dedeckera Canyon. No application was filed. He labored under the illusion that a miner had a right to provide access to his mine, regardless of any restrictions.

He began by unloading a bulldozer at the Eureka Dunes and driving it several miles to the mouth of Dedeckera Canyon, taking a few shortcuts along the way. He was making good progress in constructing a straight, well graveled road over the winding route on bedrock in the narrows when Stan Zuber, a desert ranger, arrived on the scene. The road project ended abruptly before Mr. Nicolls had completed the entire portion through the narrows but, even so, the damage was appalling. The problem area of roadway had been covered with great amounts of gravel taken from the bed of the canyon below. This allowed easy access for any type of vehicle up into the sensitive area which could mean an alarming amount of traffic and possibly destructive uses. The scenic value of that rugged narrows had been largely obscured by the ugly fill; the straight gravel road over the curving wash channel was an insult to the integrity of the natural scene.

Mr. Nicolls and his wife, Margaretha, had been cited before for illegal acts in the Panamints. This new act of defiance was a serious infraction which could not be tolerated, so BLM took the case before the federal magistrate. Stan Zuber did an excellent job of presenting it, while Mr. Nicolls and his attorney claimed that they had merely removed gravel deposited by runoff. The magistrate penalized Mr. Nicolls with a fine of \$2,000, a period of probation, and an order to restore the canyon to the satisfaction of BLM. The outcome was that BLM allowed a deadline of late October for performing the rehabilitation in order to avoid working in the heat of the summer.

Initial objections and inadequate rehabilitation proposals by Mr. Nicolls changed to a positive attitude by both Mr. and Mrs. Nicolls when they finally faced the fact that they must do the job. Then they became most cooperative. They rented a large, rubber-tired Case front-end loader and hired an outstanding operator, Bud Mallory, to operate it. Much credit goes to Mr. Mallory who seemed to accomplish the impossible, all within very tight quarters. BLM's objectives were (1) to restore the original drainage pattern and so avoid the straight shoot down the canyon; (2) to restore the road to the original winding route over bedrock, including its obstructions and limitations, (3) to restore the rugged aesthetic value of the narrows, (4) minimize the occurrence of any additional damage; and (5) meet the court order date for reclamation.

The restoration project was completed in two days, October 27 and 28, 1992. Besides Mr. and Mrs. Nicolls, Mr. and Mrs. Mallory, (the operator and his wife,) four BLM staff members were present throughout, headed by Glenn Harris who did a sensitive job in directing the operation. I appreciated the fact that I was invited to be present throughout the planning sessions and the actual reclamation. The restoration was a marvelous achievement in an atmosphere of outstanding cooperation. Mr. and Mrs. Nicolls did a lot of shoveling and raking along the edges where the large bucket could not reach. The BLM staff joined in the work at times. I was particularly impressed when the equipment operator jumped from his seat to help shovel in a tight place.

It was estimated that 1100 cubic yards of fill were removed from the narrows and put back down in the canyon bottom . The end result was a surprise to us all, far better than we had hoped could be achieved. It would take a good runoff down the canyon to accomplish the finishing touches. It rained one night while we were camped at the Eureka Dunes, so perhaps the canyon has been washed by now. This was a happy ending to a very traumatic occurrence. Final approval by the Ridgecrest Area Manager will terminate the court's requirement for reclamation. All the participants are to be commended for the successful outcome.

..... Mary DeDecker

LEARNING THE FLOWERS

Can I tell the pleasure can I say anything
That will tell you something of it
The hard work the forgotten time
The fulfillment the plain pleasure of knowing?

On any and many a spring day going out
Into the forest the field spending much sun
Much wind finding so many all blooming colors
Of things bringing them back

Then sitting in the darkening room with the light
the lens the book and looking so back and forth
And touching and seeing the shapes and feels
The colors the numbers of things on the table

The keys that unlock the descriptions that tell
The names that are ringing the music my tongue
Says them softly I write all down and now
Every color of flower has its name

The next time then walking abroad in the sun
I am not alone though no person is near
For friends I can speak to and call them by name
Are growing and touching my feet and my eyes.

Norman H. Russell



The above poem from a publication by the Badlands Natural History Association of South Dakota was sent to our Bristlecone Chapter by former member Elizabeth Anderson.

.....

If a man walks in the woods for the love of them half of each day, he is in danger of being regarded as a loafer. But if he spends his day as a speculator, shearing off those woods and making the earth bald before her time, he is esteemed as an industrious and enterprising citizen.

Henry David Thoreau

The Tree-Ring Record

Information compiled by university professors and published in the report *Severe, Sustained Drought in the Southwestern United States*, paints a disturbing picture of the potential for even longer and harsher water shortages.

"Tree rings and other data used to reconstruct drought events from the last 450 years indicate that the southwest will likely face future drought of a duration and magnitude not experienced in modern time," researchers said in the 1991 report. "A worst case scenario would be simultaneous severe, sustained droughts affecting the Colorado, Owens and Central Valley (water) sources serving southern California."

Through the science of dendrochronology, researchers examine the pattern of a tree trunk's individual growth rings to determine climatic changes. Growth rings are wide when a tree grew rapidly in a wet year and narrow when a year was dry. Studies of tree rings in Californian Oregon, Arizona and other western states illustrate that there were longer periods of drought than those recorded since the 19th century, when the United States Geological Survey (USGS) began to systematically record streamflow, runoff and precipitation.

Tree-ring studies and the current drought are forcing federal, state and local water managers to reevaluate the real yields of various water systems, and their ability to meet future demand. "The role of the climate is the force that drives change," said Joel Michaelsen, a geography professor at the University of California, Santa Barbara, who has participated in tree ring studies. "Climatic extremes force people to look at these systems and require some sort of change."

Some strategies for coping with a future drought as severe as those indicated by tree-ring data--such as the reliance of urban southern California on surplus Colorado River flows--may not be available in the future. In the 1976 to 1977 drought and the current crisis, for example, the Colorado has been southern California's safeguard when severe drought in the Sacramento River Basin required cutbacks in State Water Project supplies. Although flow in the Colorado River at Lee's Ferry has been below average since 1988, Southern California has relied on surplus water not used by Nevada and Arizona. Researchers caution that once these states begin using their full entitlement, a repeat of past droughts would bring immediate shortages to residents of urban southern California.

Researchers soon will reenact the drought of 1580 to 1620 in the Colorado River Basin to determine how the water delivery system will operate under the Law of the River. The Law of the River is a collection of compacts, court decisions, treaties and agreements that regulate the allocation and delivery of available Colorado River water.

From the September-October, 1992, issue of WESTERN WATER published by the Water Education Foundation in Sacramento.

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Heaven is under our feet as well as over our heads.

-- Henry David Thoreau

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THE 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 _____

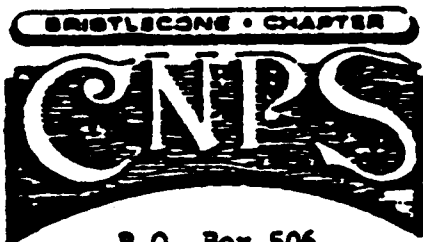
City _____ State _____ Zip _____ Phone _____

Membership Category:		I wish to be affiliated with the
_____ Student/Retired/Limited Income	\$18	Bristlecone Chapter _____
_____ Individual or Library	\$25	Other _____
_____ International	\$35	
_____ Family or group	\$35	Please make check payable to:
_____ Supporting	\$50	California Native Plant Society
_____ Plant Lover	\$100	Mail to: Bristlecone Chapter, CNPS
_____ Patron	\$250	P.O. Box 506
_____ Life	\$500	Independence, CA 93526
_____ Benefactor	\$500	
_____ Corporate	\$1,000	

GIFT contribution: Where most needed _____. Conservation _____.

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



P.O. Box 506
140 West Pavilion Street
Independence, CA 93526

