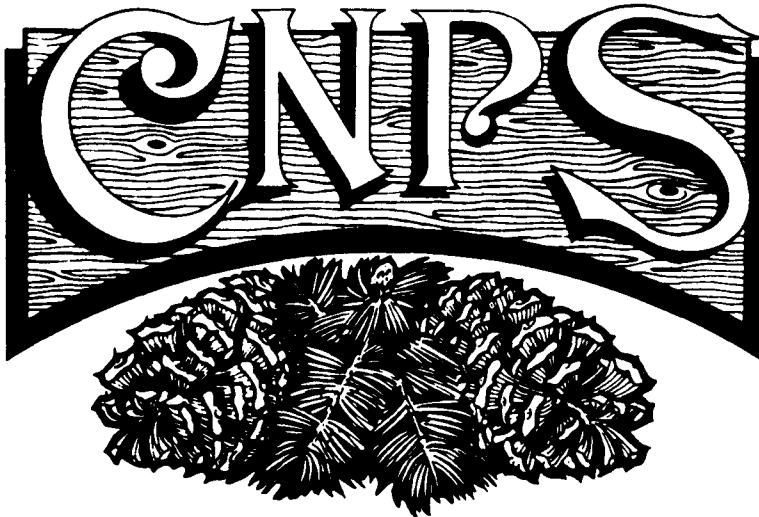


DEDICATED TO THE PRESERVATION OF THE CALIFORNIA NATIVE FLORA

**BRISTLECONE • CHAPTER**

NEWSLETTER



Vol. 12, No. 3

May 1993

#### NEXT CHAPTER MEETING

Wednesday, May 26, 7:30 at the Methodist Church in Big Pine. The next CNPS board meeting will be on Tuesday May 18th at 7:30 at Doris Fredendall's residence in Big Pine. We encourage all officers to attend.

The Chapter meeting presentation will be hosted by Carol Owen, a Lone Pine resident who recently returned from a trip to the Galapagos Islands. She will treat us to slides and stories of this biological wonder.

#### PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

The "greening of the desert" seems to be a very sudden and breathtaking phenomenon each year. Its renewal, especially this year has given us an opportunity to rejuvenate along with the plants and desert creatures after so many years of drought.

While participating in the varied Chapter field trips it has been a delight to follow the progress of our desert spring unfolding as we make visits to Death Valley, Sand and Red Rock Canyons, and Fossil Falls. Within each of these special places the gradients of elevation and moisture bring us an artist's palette of color and form.

The vibrancy we experience around us restores our determination to urge passage of the Desert Protection Act at the earliest possible moment. To quote A. Starker Leopold from Wild California: "California's rich desert heritage is one of unequalled beauty. The wildlife and wild lands of the desert are treasures and resources to be cherished and protected for all time".

Add your voice to the multitude by writing to your senators and congressmen today if you have not already done so.

.....Betty Gilchrist

## Bristlecone Chapter T-shirts Now Available

The Bristlecone Chapter is proud to announce its new T-shirts which show off three most beautiful flowers that include; *Mimulus rupicola*, the rare rock midget of the Death Valley region, *Astragalus coccineus*, the showy scarlet milk-vetch of the desert hills of the Owens Valley, and *Cassiope mertensiana*, the dainty heather bells of the high Sierra. The appealing design is by botanical artists Mary and Flora Pomeroy.

Those who wish to order the T-shirts may do so by contacting Scott Hetzler, 3000 East Line Street, Bishop, CA 93514, or Mary DeDecker, P.O. Box 506, Independence, CA 93526 (Phone: (619) 878-2389). The Shirts are white, 100% cotton; in sizes, small, medium, large and extra large and a child's size (about 7 to 10 years). Adult size shirts are \$15.00 (including tax) and the child's size is \$12.00. Mail orders require an additional \$2.50 each for shipping. Please make checks payable to the Bristlecone Chapter, CNPS.

## Upcoming Seminars and Workshops

### Farming and Ranching in the Eastern Sierra *Agriculture, Water Use and Erosion*

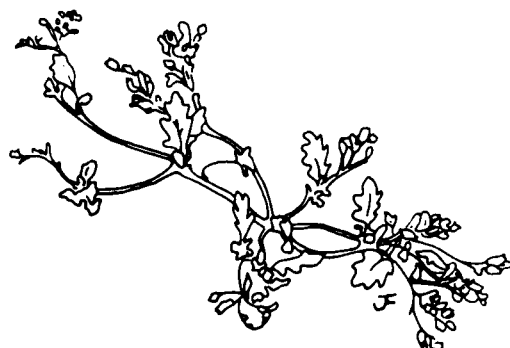
October 2-3, 1993

UC White Mountain Research Station and the Inyo-Mono Offices of UC Cooperative Extension are pleased to announce their first Joint Workshop. It will take place at WMRS, 3000 E. Line Street, in Bishop.

The workshop will focus on the economic and environmental aspects of agricultural activities. The topic offers an opportunity to generate a dialogue between the members of the Eastern Sierra communities. Our goal is to create a forum where speakers and participants can share their experience, knowledge and concerns in a positive atmosphere. The workshop will include classroom sessions and a field trip where specialists from UC Berkeley, UC Davis, UC Cooperative Extension, USDA Soil Conservation Service, and the Great Basin Air Pollution Control District will meet and talk with local ranchers and farmers about their operations.

### For more information, please call or write:

Elizabeth Phillips  
UC - White Mountain Research Station  
3000 E. Line Street  
Bishop, CA 93514  
Phone: (619) 873-4344



Phacelia monoensis (Mono Phacelia)

## Natural History Field Seminars for the Curious and Adventurous

The Sequoia Natural History Association is announcing their annual spring/summer natural history seminar program in Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Parks and Devils Postpile National Monument. This outdoor program is designed for the student, teacher, artist and the curious and adventurous! These excursions, field trips and workshops explore in depth various topics that help the visitors to the parks better appreciate and understand the wonderland of the Sierra Nevada. An enjoyable and memorable experience is a top priority for each seminar. **For additional information or a free seminar brochure, contact:** Sequoia Natural History Association, Ash Mountain, Box 10, Three Rivers, CA 93271; (209) 565-3758.



## SPRING FIELD TRIP REPORTS

### Death Valley, March 6th. Leader's: Sally Manning and Douglas Threlhoff

The March 6th field trip to Death Valley attracted a group of people interested in learning the CNPS plant inventory method. Although most of the group came from the Eastern Sierra, two folks working with the L.A. County outdoor education center arrived from Wrightwood, CA.

The meeting place was at the Death Valley visitor center. Douglas Threlhoff, Death Valley's new Resource Specialist met with us and introductions were exchanged. Doug originally came from Michigan and before taking his current position in Death Valley was a biologist and manager of the Ash Meadows National Wildlife Refuge.

Our small group rode in a Park Service vehicle to an area of Cambrian marine sediments located in Echo Canyon. Stopping in a section where the canyon widened, we discussed site and transect data collection. The setting up and running of the transect followed (for more information on objectives and methodology, contact Sally

Manning). The establishment of the transect was not difficult, however at the time of sampling in Echo Canyon, much of the vegetation was just beginning to emerge which made species identification somewhat more difficult. Each person in the group participated in running the transect.

During our lunch break, Doug gave a global positioning system (GPS) demonstration. This navigational instrument can be used to give ones location (within 100 meters), find elevation and UTM coordinates. GPS can give computerized "digital" data that can be directly interpreted by a computer.

Driving back down Echo Canyon, Mary DeDecker spotted a shrub of Death Valley sage (*Salvia funerea*) blooming. Other plants seen during the ride down included ghost flower (*Mohavea breviflora*) and the elusive gravel ghost (*Atrichoseris platyphylla*).

Doug also gave us a Geographical Information System (GIS) demonstration which showed a satellite-produced map of the entire Death Valley National Monument. Although it was fairly general in terms of plant communities, it was still an excellent way to sort, visualize and analyze data.

The evening was spent chatting and exchanging stories, cookies and friendship while camping in the Furnace Creek Campground. Sunday was spent botanizing at our own pace. It was still a bit early for flowers but we managed to see a few different species including the beautiful *Phacelia rotundifolia* and the Death Valley endemic, golden carpet (*Gilmania luteola*).

.....Denise Waterbury

### **Black Canyon, May 25th. Leaders: Doris Fredendall and Ray Mosher**

The clear, warm spring weather beckoned 31 people to come out and see the color and diversity of plants in an area so close to our homes. Participants came from Ridgecrest, Los Angeles and Alaska!

Doris and Ray orchestrated eight stops for the field trip which encompassed a variety of plant communities and brilliant colors. A detailed plant list compiled by Doris was also provided.

Stop One: Mid alluvial fan. Here we were treated to the beautiful rose four o'clock (*Mirabilis alipes*), and mats of yellow peppergrass (*Lepidium flavum* var. *flavum*) as well as splashes of butter yellow from the desert dandelion (*Malachothrix glabrata*).

Stop two: Higher up the alluvial fan. Along the alluvial channels were the brilliant fuchsia mono penstemon (*Penstemon monoensis*) and extremely robust cotton-thorn (*Tetradymia axillaris*), spiny hopsage (*Grayia spinosa*) and our familiar, but now very long-winded named winter fat (*Krascheninnekovia lanata*)!! Soon the flowers on the cotton-thorn will be in full bloom and Doris said it would be a very worthwhile site.

Stop three: A short stop to see more *Mirabilis alipes* and marvel at the vibrancy of the rejuvenated shrub community.

Stop four: Mouth of Black Canyon. Here we ambled around to find some very interesting plants that included threadstem (*Nemacladus* sp.) which Mary DeDecker found. It has a dainty almost orchid-like flower and is in the bellflower (Campanulaceae) family. There were also bursts of crimson from the desert paintbrush (*Castilleja californica*), and an old friend to many Ridgecrest folks; silver stars (*Microseris lindleyi*) was also found.

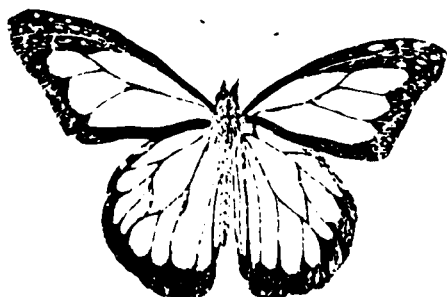
Stop five: 0.5 miles up the canyon from the mouth. Here we scrambled up the slopes to find the little gold poppy (*Eschscholzia minutiflora*), the delicate, yellow whispering bells (*Emmenanthe penduliflora*), and the purple and pungent smelling phacelia (*Phacelia crenulata* var. *crenulata*).

Stop six: Further up the canyon almost at the narrows. Hidden between some of the shrubs we found three-hearts (*Tricardia watsonii*) and were surprised and very pleased to see the splendid scarlet locoweed (*Astragalus coccineus*). The drawing on the new Bristlecone T-shirts of this plant matched very nicely with the live specimen! We also found a few lavender *Arabis pulchra* along the washes.

Stop seven: Lunch spot in the "narrows". After a bit of chatting and purchasing of the new T-shirts Scott had brought, we explored some of the rock crevices to find the small cliff phacelia (*Phacelia perityloides*) and the desert goldenback fern (*Pityrogramma triangulris*). Along the hillsides were also the golden forget-me-not (*Cryptantha confertiflora*) and the fragrant forget-me-not (*Cryptantha utahensis*).

Final stop. Intersection of Marble and Black Canyons. The crimson/orange of the mound cactus (*Echinocereus triglochidiatus* var. *mojavensis*) appeared on the tops of a few rock outcrops. At the bottom of the canyon was a shady and cool riparian area which we sought out. From here several of us explored further up the canyon and found moisture loving plants like the snowberry (*Symphoricarpos longiflorus*) and miner's lettuce (*Claytonia perfoliata* var. *utahensis*). Within the rock crevices were three different kinds of ferns; the Parry cloak fern (*Notholaena parryi*) with a very fuzzy, white texture, the desert goldenback fern (*Pityrogramma triangulris*) and the slender lip fern (*Chielanthes feei*) which Mary DeDecker keyed out. As we ventured back out to the mouth of the canyon we also found many globe mallow (*Sphaeralcea ambigua*), but in amongst them was the rose desert mallow (*Sphaeralcea ambigua* var. *roseae*) as well, which is a species most often found in Saline Valley. It had been a wonderful day with a great group of people and two very special leaders.

.....Fletcher Linton and Anne Halford



*Microseris platyphylia*

## **Red Rock Canyon State Park, April 3rd. Leader: Mark Faul**

Saturday, April 3rd was a beautiful clear and warm spring day! The flower show was outstanding - just about peak. Some of the show included: yellow

lasthenias (fields of them), lavender and white Linanthus, magenta Mimulus... all of which made beautiful swathes of BIG color.

Until noon Mark Faul led us to a choice area with a concentration of species and displays. His knowledge of the local flora was welcome indeed for us northerly-oriented folks. Thanks Mark!

But we were on our own after lunch and went up the hillside from the "Athel parking area" just south of "the narrows" to find Charlotte's Phacelia - about a dozen or so brilliant specimens. Even we botanical types were excited to discover two desert tortises; an adult about 10" in size and a juvenile, about 4" in size - no touching, just a lot of photographs.

All in all it was a great day for the ten of us - sorry you weren't there too!

.....Vince Yoder

Note: Vince has compiled a very comprehensive list for Red Rock Canyon. Check with him if you would like a copy.

## **CONSERVATION CORNER**

The Desert Bill during the week of May 1st received a "thumbs up" from Interior Secretary Bruce Babbitt. Such a move bodes well for the bill's future passage. Continued citizen support is still needed however so please take the time and write or CALL your Senators. Once again here are the addresses: Senator Feinstein, U.S. Senate, 367 Dirksen Bldg., Washington, D.C. 20510 (202) 224-3841, Senator Boxer, U.S. Senate 112 Hart Bldg., Washington, D.C. 20510 (202) 224-3553.

### **A Farewell to Wallace Stegner 1909-1993**

On April 13, 1993 Wallace Stegner, western writer and conservationist died of injuries from a traffic accident in Albuquerque, New Mexico. Stegner was a foremost influence on the American West in the 20th century. "With unerring words from that rickety old typewriter, he explained the whole West, the people, the societies, the history, the land, the obstacles, the hope, the spirit, the spirituality. His writing was universal but, like all great writing, grounded in a place and a culture" (Wilkinson 1993).

From his 1972 essay "Thoughts in a Dry Land": "Aridity, more than anything else gives the Western landscape its character. It is aridity that gives the air its special dry clarity; aridity that puts brilliance in the light and polishes and enlarges the stars; aridity that leads the grasses to evolve as bunches rather than turf; aridity that exposes the pigmentation of the raw earth and limits, almost eliminates, the color of chlorophyll; aridity that erodes the earth in cliffs and badlands rather than in softened and vegetated slopes, that has shaped the characteristically swift and mobile animals of the dry grasslands and the characteristically nocturnal life of the deserts".

Quotes taken from: High Country News, May 3, Vol. 25 no. 9.

## CNPS BULLETIN NEWS

**Correction:** In the last issue of the CNPS Bulletin (April, May, June 1993) the telephone number for the new Sacramento office is incorrect. The correct number is (916) 447-2677. The Bulletin editor is extremely sorry for any inconvenience this may have caused you.

## NEW MEMBERS

**A warm welcome to the following new members in our chapter**

Mary Alice Hamilton  
Bishop, CA

Suzanne A. Stokes-Mennine  
Hollywood, CA



Sidalcea covillei (Owens Valley Checkerbloom)

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:

- \_\_\_\_\_ Student/Retired/Limited Income
- \_\_\_\_\_ Individual or Library \$25
- \_\_\_\_\_ International \$35
- \_\_\_\_\_ Family or group \$35
- \_\_\_\_\_ Supporting \$50
- \_\_\_\_\_ Plant Lover \$100
- \_\_\_\_\_ Patron \$250
- \_\_\_\_\_ Life \$500
- \_\_\_\_\_ Benefactor \$500
- \_\_\_\_\_ Corporate \$1,000

I wish to be affiliated with the

\$18. Bristlecone Chapter \_\_\_\_\_  
Other \_\_\_\_\_

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California Native Plant Society

Mail to: Bristlecone Chapter, CNPS  
P.O. Box 506  
Independence, CA 93526

GIFT contribution: Where most needed \_\_\_\_\_. Conservation \_\_\_\_\_.

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California Native Plant Society



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