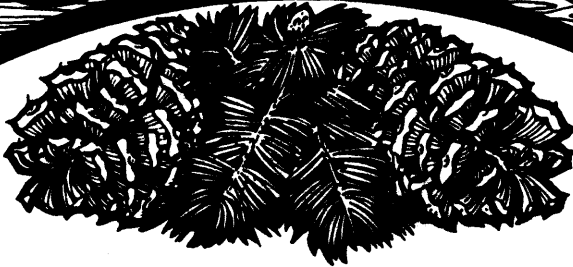


BRISTLECONE • CHAPTER

CNPS



Volume 14 No. 2

February 1995

NEXT CHAPTER MEETING:

Wednesday March 29, at 7:30 pm at the Big Pine Methodist Church on School Street. Our speaker will be retired Forest Service Geneticist LeRoy Johnson. His interests range from genetics of bristlecone pines to Death Valley history.

NEXT CHAPTER BOARD MEETING:

Tuesday March 21, at 7:00 pm at Doris Fredendall's residence in Big Pine. All chairpersons are welcome and encouraged to attend.

PRESIDENTS MESSAGE

The rain and snow gods have been good to us so far this year. It should be a very good year for flowers and I hope you can make as many field trips as possible. I would like to recruit someone to perhaps put together a slide show on our local plants to share with the public. It would be a great way to let people know a little more about the importance of our native flora and how the California Native Plant Society is working to protect it. A slide show would be really good to share with our local schools too!

I recently received a notice from our friends at the Jepson Herbarium that the editors of the Jepson Manual are working on making corrections to the manual. They would like to hear from you if you have noticed any errors in the manual. For more details call me at 873-8392 and I will send you a copy of the notice.

It's tax time again and you can help California native plants by writing in an amount on line 50 of your state tax form. This money is used only on projects that benefit our rare, threatened and endangered species. Hey, you are probably getting a big return anyway so don't forget line 50!!



BRISTLECONE CHAPTER - CALIFORNIA NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY

OFFICERS AND CHAIRPERSONS

OFFICE	NAME	ADDRESS	PHONE (619)
President	Scott Hetzler	3000 E. Line St. Bishop 93514	873-8392
Past President	Betty Gilchrist	Rt. 2, Box 89, Lone Pine 93545	876-4517
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Secretary	Karen Ferrell	Rt. 2, Box 352, Bishop 93514	877-2619
Treasurer	Mary Allen	P.O. Box 1585, Bishop 93514	873-2788
Membership	Kay C. Wylie	P.O. Box 775, Lone Pine 93545	876-5788
Newsletter Editor	Anne Halford	312 Shepard Lane, Bishop 93514	873-6714
Conservation	Vince Yoder	P.O. Box 330, Lone Pine 93545	876-4275
Conservation (south)	Mary Ann Henry	329 Perdue Ave. Ridgecrest 93555	446-6264
Rare Plant Coordinator	Mary DeDecker	HCR, 67, Box 35, Independence 93526	878-2389
Plant Communities	Sally Manning	See above	
Legislation	Myron Alexander	P.O. Box 912, Lone Pine 93545	876-5972
Education	Ann Yoder	P.O. Box 330, Lone Pine 93545	876-4275
Programs	Sally Manning	see above	
Publicity	Bette Sisson	Rt. 2, Box 161, Lone Pine 93545	876-5841
Field Trips	Mary DeDecker	See above	
Poster Sales	Vince Yoder	See above	
Sales	Diane Payne	215 S. Third St. Bishop 93514	872-3460
Hospitality	Doris Fredendall	P.O. Box 146, Big Pine 93513	938-2787
Historian	Doris Chretien	Rt. 2, Box 178, Lone Pine 93545	876-5873
Librarian	Evelyn-Mae Nikolaus	P.O. Box 396, Independence 93526	878-2149

Upcoming Bristlecone Chapter Spring and Summer Field Trips

We have a full field trip schedule this year in anticipation of an exceptional flower display. We hope that you will appreciate, as we do, the trip leaders who do so much to make the trips enjoyable.

The procedures remain the same. Always take whatever personal needs are necessary; lunch and/or snacks, plenty of water, hat, sunscreen, glasses, notebook, pencils, camera, hand lens and field guides/lists. For overnight trips bring all necessary food and camping gear. Please do not bring pets. The trips will LEAVE at the time announced, so please arrive a few minutes early. Car pooling is also encouraged.

All are welcome including friends and family. For more information call the Field Trip Chairperson, Mary DeDecker at (619) 878-2389. Happy botanizing!!!!

March 11-12. China Ranch. Leader: Mary DeDecker. An overnight trip to an oasis near Tecopa. Brian Brown is graciously providing a place for us to camp which will allow us time to explore nearby points of interest. Meet at Tecopa, in the shade across from the cafe, during the noon hour, 12:00 to 1:00.

April 5. Darwin Falls, Argus Range. Leaders: Vince Yoder and Betty Gilchrist. Meet at Panamint Springs Resort at 9:00 am (Highway 190, 47.5 miles from Highway 395, Lone Pine). It is an easy walk to the falls from the parking area. The walk near the falls will be wet so bring appropriate foot gear.

April 15. Little Lake. Leader: TBA. Meet at the Lone Pine Visitor's Center at 9:00 am.

April 29. Lower Rock Creek Canyon. Leader: Anne Halford. Meet at Paradise Lodge on old Hwy. 395 at 9:00 am. This moderate hike will take us through lush water birch and creek dogwood reaches, penstemmon laden hillsides and ponderosa and jeffrey pine woodlands. Round trip hike will be approximately 3-4 miles.

May 6. San Lucas Canyon to "The Pearly Gates", Inyo Mountains. Leader: Vince Yoder. Meet at the Visitor's Center south of Lone Pine at 8:30 am. A combination of a flowering desert canyon and a dramatic historical site. A 4WD vehicle is required and the trip will consist of a 4 mile hike to the site.

May 13. Eureka Valley. Leader: Doris Fredendall. Meet at 9:00 am at the Triangle Campground north of Big Pine. Exceptional blooms are expected!

May 27-28. Mesquite Spring, Lost Burro Gap, etc. Leader: Vince Yoder. Meet at the Triangle Campground north of Big Pine at 9:00 am. An overnight trip requiring a 4WD vehicle over a long but extremely interesting route. Go in from Big Pine on the northerly route to Death Valley; camp at Mesquite Spring south of Scotty's Castle, go from Ubehebe Crater, up the wash to Teakettle Junction, Lost Burro Gap, and on to Hunter Mountain and home by way of Highway 190.

★ **June or early July. A butterfly trip in the White Mountains. Leader: Derham Guillani.** This trip will depend on when the butterflies arrive. Watch for an announcement in the local newspapers.

July 8. McGee Canyon. West of Crowley Lake. Leader: Charlotte Haberson. Meet at 9:00 at the McGee Canyon Trailhead. From 395 take the McGee Canyon road to the end (past the pack station). This will be an easy 3-4 mile round trip hike.

June 24. Mollie Gibson Mine Road, White Mountains. Leaders: Clem Nelson and Mary DeDecker. Meet at Triangle Campground north of Big Pine at 9:00 am. Geology and botany. 4WD vehicle required for road from Highway 168. Some car pooling may be possible from there.

July 15. Whippoorwill Flat, Inyo Mountains. Leader: Mary DeDecker. Meet at the Triangle Campground north of Big Pine at 9:00 am. This trip will focus on mistletoes but there will be many other plants of interest. If time permits we will also take a short hike to an historical site.

July 29. A plant sketch trip up Big Pine Canyon, Sierra Nevada. Leader: Richard Potashin. Meet at the Glacier Lodge parking lot at 9:00 am. Bring white paper, pencils, colored pencils or markers, clipboards, erasers and other field trip items.

August 9. Francis Lake. Leader: Charlotte Haberson. Meet at 9:00 am at sand ridge behind the Rock Creek Trailhead. Take Hwy. 395 to Rock Creek Canyon. Turn left at Rock Creek Lake and park on the east side of the road. The hike will be a moderate to strenuous 8-9 mile round trip.

August 12. McAfee Meadow, White Mountains. Leaders: Carla Scheidlinger and Terry Hicks. Meet at Barcroft Lab, about 2 1/2 hours from Cedar Flat (we have permission to go beyond the Barcroft gate). 4WD vehicle is advisable but probably will not be necessary. We will study the alpine tundra and meadow flora.

August 26. Saddlebag Lake, Sierra Nevada. Leader: Ann Howald. See July newsletter for trip details.

September. Seed Collecting. Leader: Richard Potashin. These trips will focus on collecting seed for propagation of native plants to sell at our plant sales. See upcoming newsletters for trip details.

Upcoming Workshops

*Drawing in the Desert
Sketching Plants in Nature*

Linda Ann Vorobik

A six-day course in Anza-Borrego Desert State Park. **March 25-31.** Sponsored by The Friends of the Jepson Herbarium. The class is limited to 12 participants and enrollment is first-come, first-served. Class (including all meals) is: \$495.00. Contact The Friends of the Jepson Herbarium at (510) 643-7008 for more information.

The following article by Mary DeDecker is the second in a series on native plants that will focus on ecology, taxonomy and other natural history information.

Mountain Mahogany

Mountain mahogany, *Cercocarpus ledifolius* var. *intermontanus*, is a large evergreen shrub or small tree in the Rosaceae family. It thrives in the mountain ranges of this region, usually above 7,000 feet in elevation and up to 10,000 feet in the higher desert ranges. Roughly, it is between the Sagebrush Scrub and Pinyon-Juniper Woodland and penetrates both communities.

Normally it is 6 to 12 feet tall, but may exceed that in favorable locations. The bark is reddish brown when mature, becoming furrowed and scaly in age. Leaves are 1/2 to 1 inch long, elliptic with margins slightly whitish, somewhat downy and prominently veined beneath. The flowers are inconspicuous but the fruits have slender plumes 2 to 3 inches long. These "silvery tails" are especially attractive when back lighted. The bushes emit a sweet, spicy fragrance when warmed by the sun.

The wood of the mountain mahogany is very dense and heavy (67 lbs. per cubic foot), too heavy to float in water. Due to its density it takes a high polish, making it an attractive souvenir for some. Chips of the wood are also used to give a delicious flavor to grilled meats.

The shrub is becoming favored in the Owens Valley or ornamental use. Once established it requires little water and can tolerate the heat of the valley floor. It is slow growing and makes a handsome dark green accent in the garden landscape.

The Paiutes considered mountain mahogany a most valuable medicinal plant. The bark was dried, sometimes as long as two years. Strips of it were boiled to make a medicinal tea. Another method was to scrape off the soft inner bark, sift and dry it for use as a tea. They drank it as a remedy for the common cold as well as for the more serious ailments, brought by the white men, including tuberculosis and diphtheria. Powder from the dried bark was made into a paste to treat cuts, burns and wounds.

The dense, hard wood was also used for arrow shafts, and digging sticks. A purple dye was made from the inner bark and Spanish Americans hung a branch of mountain mahogany on the bed to discourage bed bugs.

Perhaps its greatest value at the present time is for nourishing and furnishing cover for mule deer. The shrub is highly favored by them. Not only is it a major food source, but they bed down in the mahogany groves as well.

Another species, little-leaf mahogany, *Cercocarpus intricatus* occurs on dolomite formations in the desert ranges. It is a smaller bush, usually 3-6 feet tall. It is the same dark green but the leaves are mostly under 1/2 inch long and tightly rolled under to the midvein. An interesting intergradation occurs between the two species on the Seephole Trail in the Inyo Mountains.

.....Mary DeDecker

Field Trip Report

Rock Creek Cross-Country Ski Trip

It was a warm, spring-flower kind of morning in February that found five intrepid plant lovers clipping on skis and setting off up Rock Creek Canyon. With Scott Hetzler as our fearless, fabulous, field-trip leader, we were out to see the wonderful shapes of winter trees. Our long trek up to the lake was amply rewarded by the sight of old and weathered Western (*Juniperus occidentalis*) or Sierra Junipers (*Juniperus occidentalis* var. *australis*) and tall, stately Jeffrey pines (*Pinus jeffreyi*). The junipers populated sunny south and east-facing slopes in large numbers, their rich red bark especially beautiful against the snowy background. We also admired the smooth white trunks of the aspens (*Populus tremuloides*) growing in the moist sites.

Further on, after leaving the tall Jeffrey pine forest, we spotted several short and shapely Jeffrey Pines. The rocky terrain and rough weather had these pines growing much like the Junipers. As we gained elevation, the next tree we encountered was the lodgepole pine (*Pinus contorta* var. *murreyana*).

Usually a rather slender tree, we saw several big and statuesque individuals growing in moist and somewhat protected sites.

We knew we were reaching the higher sites when we finally had the company of the esteemed whitebark pine (*Pinus albicaulis*). This tree can be straight and single trunked or can be a shrubby, multitruunked specimen, depending on the exposure. We enjoyed it in both forms and decided it was time for lunch. From on top of a craggy rock, we ate and took in the awesome view of Bear Creek Spire and Pyramid Peak, among the other sky high mountains. As the shadows got longer, we turned our skis around and sped downhill while trying to avoid close-up views of the tree trunks we had admired on the way up.

.....Karen Ferrell and Steve Ingram



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 the understanding of California's native flora and to preserve this rich resource for future generations. Varied interests are represented.

Name _____ P.O. Box or Street _____
City _____ State _____ Zip Code _____ Phone _____

I wish to be affiliated with the Bristlecone Chapter _____ Other _____

<input type="checkbox"/> Student/Retired/Limited Income	\$18.00
<input type="checkbox"/> Individual or Library	\$25.00
<input type="checkbox"/> International	\$35.00
<input type="checkbox"/> Family or Group	\$35.00
<input type="checkbox"/> Supporting	\$50.00
<input type="checkbox"/> Plant Lover	\$100.00
<input type="checkbox"/> Patron	\$250.00
<input type="checkbox"/> Life	\$500.00
<input type="checkbox"/> Benefactor	\$500.00
<input type="checkbox"/> Corporate	\$1,000.00

Please make check payable to: The California Native Plant Society. Mail to: Bristlecone Chapter, CNPS. HCR 67 Box 35, Independence, CA 93526.

Gift Contribution: Where most needed _____ Conservation _____

THE BRISTLECONE CHAPTER 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: Anne Halford.

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