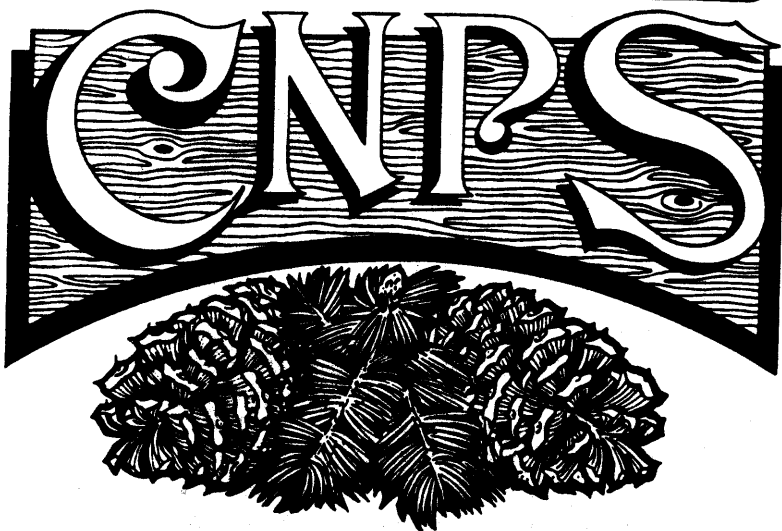


BRISTLECONE • CHAPTER



Volume 14 No. 5 September 1995

NEXT CHAPTER MEETING

Wednesday, September 27, 7:30 p.m. at the Lone Pine High School Public Library. A timely and interesting **DOUBLE FEATURE**: First, Christine Hancock, currently a Lone Pine High School student, will talk to us about her prize-winning science fair project: "How Can We Stop the Dust? - A Study of Plant Survivorship in Owens Lake Soil".

Christine's talk will be followed by a presentation by Death Valley's Natural Resources Specialist, Douglas Threloff, who will discuss biological resource activities taking place in the Park. He will also update us on changes in the Park that have resulted from the passage of the Desert Protection Act.

Attention Native Plant Growers: There will be a short meeting prior to the regular chapter meeting on September 27th. Meet at **7:00 p.m.** at the Lone Pine High School Library. We'll share written information about growing natives, any experiences we've had concerning propagation and we'll trade collected seed. Please call Karen Ferrell at 387-2913 for more information.

NEXT CHAPTER BOARD MEETING:

Tuesday, September 19 at 7:00 p.m. at Doris Fredendall's residence in Big Pine. All chairpersons are welcome and encouraged to attend.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

I would like to take a minute to thank all of you who were able to attend our annual banquet this past July and make it such a success. A very big thank you to Diane Payne for arranging the banquet at Whiskey Creek, printing the tickets and getting all the flyers out to advertise the event. Another thank you to Delbert Wiens for being our guest speaker.

His talk on plant extinction was most interesting and I hope we can have him back in the future to talk about some of his other diverse studies.

Another one of the big highlights of the banquet was bestowing the honor of CNPS Fellow on Vince Yoder. Congratulations Vince, you are most deserving.

I am also pleased to announce that our chapter now has an "Invasive Exotics" Chair: Brian Cashore. As you are aware, one of the most serious threats to California's native plants is the rapid encroachment of "alien" plants. Brian has long been interested in the control of saltcedar, one very serious weed pest in our area. Brian will share news on invasives and let us know what we can do to deal with these problem plants.

Our chapter will be hosting a "Wildflower Weekend" next spring, an event where people from all over the state would come over to the Owens Valley for a series of field trips and other events show-casing the local flora. We need many volunteers to help make this event a success! Please contact Evelyn-Mae Nikolaus if want to help - (619) 878-2149.

.....Scott Hetzler

CNPS Chapter Second Annual Banquet

On Thursday, July 13, 55 of us convened in Bishop's Whiskey Creek banquet room for our chance to dress up, socialize, eat well, and listen to an exceptional program. Two major events highlighted this year's banquet.

The first: Mary Dedecker addressed the audience, explaining the CNPS tradition of bestowing the honor of "Fellow" upon members who have made significant contributions not only to their chapter, but also towards protecting California's native flora and in furthering the mission of CNPS. She reminded us that this honor was last year extended to Doris Fredendall. Then, in a surprise announcement (a surprise only because she had kept it a secret and not because he was not worthy of it), Mary presented the honor of CNPS Fellow to Vincent Yoder. Amidst the cheers and applause, Vince humbly accepted the plaque. A well-deserved and visibly earned recognition for all his hard work for the society.

The second: Mary turned the podium over to chapter President Scott Hetzler, who introduced our speaker for the evening: Dr. Delbert Wiens, botany professor at the University of Utah. Dr. Wiens brought us up to date on his theories concerning the mechanisms of plant extinction. Not one to espouse dogma, Dr. Wiens provided evidence for his theory that many species that are possibly on the verge of extinction are there for inherent and natural reasons; particularly, they possess very low seed-to-ovule ratios. While variations in the abiotic environment may cause variations in such expressed characteristics as plant growth, flower production, and even, perhaps, seedling survival, he has found that in plants as close to home as *Dedeckera eurekaensis* and a desert *Gallium* to plants as far away as those of the Jaun Fernandez Islands and the African cape, annual seed:ovule ratios are extremely low and do not vary significantly. He thus has evidence that this characteristic may be present in many long-lived and taxonomically distinct species.

Dr. Wiens did not miss the opportunity to point out that this branch of research allowed him to focus on one of his favorite plants: the one named for his mother-in-law, who discovered it. Of *Dedeckera* he quipped, "it's tough as nails and it lives forever!"

Many thanks to all those who attended and especially to those who worked hard to arrange this successful event, particularly Diane Payne, Mary DeDecker, Betty Gilchrist and Scott Hetzler.

.....Sally Manning

Upcoming Bristlecone Chapter Field Trips

On all field trips please 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.

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

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 7. Seed Collecting Trip-Bishop Creek. Leader: Richard Potashin. Meet at 9:00 a.m. at the Smart and Final Parking lot in Bishop. Please bring paper bags and gloves.

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 7. Autumn Colors in Lundy Canyon. Leader: Anne Halford. In anticipation of a vibrant display, join this moderate 2-3 mile round trip hike. Meet at 9:30 at the U.S. Forest Service Mono Lake Visitor's Center.

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 9. Bishop Creek Sketch Trip. Leader: Richard Potashin. Meet at 9:00 a.m. at the Smart and Final Parking Lot. Bring sketch paper, pens, pencils or markers, clipboards and erasers.

Upcoming Events

University of California White Mountain Research Station Adult Education Workshops

UC-White Mountain Research Station is offering a Geology workshop, open to the general public and sponsored by the Inyo County Office of Education.

The workshop is entitled "Field Geology of the Eastern Sierra, Owens Valley, and White-Inyos-Volcanic, Glacial Geology and Earthquake History". The workshop will be led by Clem Nelson and Ray Gray. Both instructors are well-known geologists who have extensive experience in this area. The workshop will span two weekends, **September 23-24, and September 30-October 1, 1995.** Registration fees: \$25.00 per person for both weekends. Fees include a guidebook with road logs. Please register early: number of participants is limited to 30.

For more information, please call Elizabeth Phillips at (619) 873-4433.

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

Prince's Plume

Prince's Plume (*Stanleya elata*) wins the honors in attracting attention along our desert roadways. It is a popular member of the mustard Family. Its stems, 2 to 6 feet tall, rise from a clump of large basal leaves. Each stem is topped by a "plume" of yellow flowers.

The plant is widespread, often abundant, its tall, flowering stems outlasting most other floral displays. Then in the fall one will enjoy its mature siliques. It is a beautiful sight, when traveling, westward down a desert canyon in late afternoon, to see them backlit along the way. It usually occurs between 4000 and 6000 feet in Desert Scrub communities on limestone soils.

In the same genus, Desert Plume (*Stanleya pinnata*) also grows in the region, usually at lower elevations and often on slopes. The two species may occur together, however, Desert Plume, with several spreading stems, is not as tall as Prince's Plume, and its stems are leafy throughout.

A more robust but less common form is the Inyo Desert Plume (*Stanleya pinnata* var. *inyoensis*). Its basal stem is thick and woody, and the plant is large throughout. It grows where there is more moisture available such as near springs, seeps or desert sinks, often with Greasewood (*Sarcobatus vermiculatus*). It can tolerate some alkali. The first discovery was at the Eureka Dunes.

All *Stanleya* species are said to indicate selenium in the soil.

It is not surprising that the Native Americans found a use for such a widespread genus. They boiled the leaves in several waters to remove the astringency before eating it as cabbage-like tasting greens. They also used the seeds, parched and ground for mush.

.....Mary DeDecker

Field Trip Reports

Redding Canyon

June 14 - Leader Scott Hetzler

Redding Canyon - where in world is that? Well, it could be called "the South Fork of Poleta Canyon". You know the ORV play area east of Bishop. Well, anyway, it's a neat canyon with a primitive road (good for walking) leading way up to above the Pinyon zone.

The flowers were profuse! Hillsides of *Phacelia crenulata* var. *crenulata* (Purple Phacelia); a whole side canyon full of *Hecastocleis shockleyi* (Prickle Leaf); gigantic *Epicactis gigantea* (Giant Stream Orchid); *Platanthera sparsiflora* (Green Canyon Orchid, Sparse-flowered Bog Orchid) 2 1/2 feet

high; gobs of *Emmenanthe penduliflora* var. *penduliflora* (Whispering Bells) and *Tricardia watsonii* (Three Hearts); the strange but attractive *Astragalus serenoii* var. *shockleyi* var. *shockleyi* (Purple Broom, Naked Milkvetch); lots of *Erigeron divergens* (Pastel Daisy) in the road, likewise under foot; both *Stanley pinnata* var. *pinnata* (Desert Plume) and *S. elata* (Prince's Plume) in profusion; a whole slope of *Langloisia setosissima* var. *punctata* (Dotted Langloisia, Lilac Sunbonnet); and *Penstemon monoensis* (Mono Penstemon) and *P. floridus* ssp. *austinii* (Austin Penstemon); and many other species (plant list will be available in a future newsletter, when the temperatures are colder and we are reminiscing about the beautiful blooms of this spring and summer). The day was just right - warm, breezy, and mostly cloudy. A good mid-June trip - thanks for this one Scott!

.....Vince Yoder

Molly Gibson Mine Road

June 24 - Leader: Mary DeDecker

Perfect weather greeted our group as we gathered at the Triangle Campground in Big Pine where participants from such communities as Santa Barbara and Modesto also joined us.

Unfortunately, Professor Clem Nelson was unable to attend but co-leader Mary DeDecker took the lead, east on Hwy. 168, in her beautiful, new, red truck. As we climbed out of the warm valley floor into the welcome, cooler heights, our group noticed the profusion of lingering, spring flowers, even at this late date. Especially evident were the countless Prince's Plumes (*Stanleya elata*) on the slopes, interspersed with blooming buckwheats *Eriogonum inflatum* and *Eriogonum fasciculatum*.

Our first stop was midway up the grade where we observed a small member of the poppy family, *Escholzia minutiflora* as well as the 1) large Prickly Poppy, (*Argemone munita* ssp. *rotundata*). Continuing up the road, we were welcomed by displays of *Psoralea arborescens* var. *minutifolia*, *Phacelia crenulata*, *Mimulus bigelovii*, and *Eriastrum sparsiflorum* var. *wilcoxii* in varying shades of blue to purple.

Shortly after crossing Westgard pass, we turned off the pavement onto a little-used road, winding north up a canyon. We stopped under an overhanging cliff where we enjoyed the sight of Alum Root (*Heuchra rubescens* var. *alpicola*) growing in the

shaded crevices. Also at this location was a community of Nevada Broom-Shrub (*Lepidospartum latissquumum*) which apparently is seen locally only in this area of the White-Inyo Range. In addition, Little Blazing Star (*Mentzelia albicaulis*) and Inyo Evening Primrose (*Camissonia boothii* ssp. *inyoensis*) were present with Needle and Thread grass (*Stipa comata*) in between.

A bumpy mile further along, we reached a fork in the road. Here, we stopped for a thorough examination of the area. Our search was rewarded with many species close at hand. Outstanding examples of the Figwort Family were represented by Bigelow Mimulus (*Mimulus bigelovii*), Elfin Mimulus (*Mimulus densus*) and Red-Stemmed Mimulus (*Mimulus rubellus*). Also species from the Waterleaf Family were present such as *Phacelia vallis-mortae* and *Phacelia crenulata*. Dainty Summer Snowflakes (*Gayophytum diffusum* var. *parviflora*) growing next to bright Gold Buttons (*Erigeron aphanactis*), offset by elegant *Calochortus bruneunis* and the lowly *Orobancha fasciculata*, provided an outstanding flower garden.

After a pleasant lunch in the shade of a spreading pinyon, we split up, one group returning down the canyon, the other continuing up the worsening road which, at time, resembled a stream course. Finally, the road became a low-angle waterfall where we decided to turn around. Here, we identified an Owens Valley Penstemon (*Penstemon patens*) and a Pinyon Streptanthus (*Streptanthus cordatus*). We left the winding canyon and its amazing collection of plants, knowing that we were fortunate to have enjoyed such an abundance of life during this exceptional year.

.....John Gorham

Glass Creek Meadow

July 1 - Leader: Derham Giuliani

Thirty-five people turned out for a butterfly walk with Derham to Glass Creek Meadow. The trail, which takes off from a dirt road near Obsidian Dome, rose steeply through pumice and obsidian on a slope worth of Dr. Doolittle's Sidehill Wampas. The sparse forest was composed of Jeffrey, Lodgepole, Western White and Whitebark pines.

The meadow itself, a broad expanse lying at 8800' south of June Mountain and beneath a ridge called White Wing, was still slushy with snow melt. Its borders were dotted with early-blooming buttercup

(*Ranunculus alismifolius*), but the flowers and butterflies of a typical Sierran July were only a thought. The most arresting sound was neither the call of the Clark's Nutcrakers from the Lodgepole Pines nor the song of the White-Crowned Sparrows from the leafless willows but the distinctive tremolo of the Yosemite Toad (*Bufo canorus*) which was heard again and again.

Derham explained that Glass Creek Meadow is a rich place for butterflies. He has identified fifty-two species here, with some two dozen more as possibilities. In no other place in the area can one see even half that number. Derham mentioned ones to look for: Painted Lady and Fritillary (*Nymphalidae*), a dozen species of Blues (*Lycaenidae*), Sulfurs (*Pieridae*), Swallowtails (*Papilionidae*), and Skippers (*Hesperiidae*). Although most species of butterfly are plant-specific, the Painted Lady, the most widespread butterfly in the world can use a variety of plants.

Glass Creek Meadow is used for sheep-grazing, a practice which Derham says is damaging to the meadow since it is too small space for such an intense activity. An even greater threat is the potential proposal to develop the meadow as part of the Mammoth to June ski area, a project that is currently being actively debated.

The study of natural history is full of surprises, as those who sought butterflies and were blessed with Toad-song know. All of Derham's group who visited Glass Creek Meadow in just-spring said "we'll have to come back".

.....Cathy Rose

Conservation Corner

National Forests and Public Lands Alert

This may be your last chance to contact Congress to protect National Forests, rangelands and grasslands! Congress may soon pass legislation that will give control of our federal lands to the grazing industry.

The "Livestock Grazing Act" (S852 and H.R. 1713) is an ill-conceived and lopsided proposal which will encourage continued overgrazing and prevent public participation in the sound management of our public lands. This bill is supported by the powerful Senate Budget Committee Chair, Pete Domenici, and is opposed by fish and wildlife, recreation,

conservation and environmental groups nationwide. Here's why:

1. The Livestock grazing Act(LGA) undermines the public's ability to use and enjoy public lands. The Bill makes livestock grazing the dominant use of all public lands, including National Forests (not Parks), overriding multiple use policies. It recognizes grazing as a right, not a privilege.
2. The Bill creates new roadblocks which severely limit public involvement in the public land decision-making process. It exempts grazing decisions from the NEPA process and other environmental laws. It bypasses extensive public land management problems and is an attempt to silence public criticism of poor grazing management on public lands.
3. The LGA accepts environmental damage from grazing unless it is "permanent". It sets livestock numbers at the 1993 level, requires extensive "studies" approved by the livestock permittees before the BLM and Forest Service could make changes in numbers or in poor grazing practices, and prohibits the agencies from requiring good stewardship practices in grazing permit terms and conditions. It prohibits conservation use by permittees (holding a grazing permit or deferring grazing for a season or so to allow improvement in range conditions).
4. The Bill will continue public financial and environmental subsidies to the livestock industry by a) keeping grazing fees a fraction of private forage fees, b) creating a multitude of unnecessary, unrepresentative, and expensive "advisory councils, and c) continuing resource damage.
5. The LGA removes the twenty National Grasslands from the National Forest system and gives them to the Secretary of the Interior instead of Agriculture where they belong and are now.

YOUR HELP IS URGENTLY NEEDED

The livestock industry sees this Bill as an opportunity to fulfill their fondest dreams and is finding powerful champions in the Congress. They are trying to dominate management of federal rangelands at the expense of other public uses and values, including wildlife, recreation, wilderness and water resources. Currently, the Bill only applies to rangelands, but is being amended to extend it to our National Forests. Unless this legislation is stopped, we will lose the ability to wisely manage, protect

and enjoy our public rangelands and National Forests.

WHAT YOU CAN DO

Your help is needed to protect the public's ability to participate in the sound, balanced and multiple-use management of our public lands, National Grasslands, and National Forests. Our public lands belong to ALL Americans - they should not be sacrificed to the livestock industry.

The goal of public land management should be the restoration and maintenance of the ecological health of the land, for the public's benefit today, and for generations in the future. Abusive livestock grazing practices are currently damaging public lands and resources. The livestock Bill would undercut agency efforts to stop grazing damage.

Please write as soon as you possibly can to Senators Barbara Boxer and Dianne Feinstein and to our Representative Jerry Lewis urging them to oppose the Livestock Grazing Act (S852 and H.R. 1713). Remind them that our public lands and National Forests and Rangelands belong to each and every one of us - not just to a select few in the livestock industry.

Address your letters to:
Representative Lewis
US House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20510

Senators Boxer and Feinstein
US Senate
Washington, DC 20515

.....Vince Yoder



Public Outreach Committee Seeks Members

At the last Board meeting, a CNPS Public Outreach Committee was formed. The mission of the Public Outreach Committee is to vigorously disseminate accurate information on CNPS and on native plant and conservation issues, primarily through the media.

There are many ways we can have an enormous impact on public opinion in a relatively short time and with relatively little effort. A few that we can begin immediately:

1. Chapters can monitor local press for inaccuracies on environmental issues. We can respond with letters to the editor or by writing guest editorials.
2. We can develop white papers or fact sheets on key issues such as species protection or unique plant communities in our area for distribution to Chapters, politicians, and the press.
3. The state office can act as a clearing house to circulate fact sheets, letters to the editor, and other materials among the Chapters. In this way, Chapters can rapidly respond to inaccurate information in the press without having to develop letters or gather facts from scratch.

We are asking each chapter to appoint a representative to the Public Outreach Committee. The representative should be someone who is interested in working with the media and who is willing to monitor the media.

It is painfully obvious that this is a critical time for CNPS and for all who support conservative management of natural resources. Many of our problems are based on deep and widespread misunderstanding in the public and the media about scientific and environmental issues. The only way to address those misunderstandings is to get the facts out to the public.

.....Ray Butler, State Conservation Chair

Please let our Bristlecone Chapter President, Scott Hetzler know if you are interested in representing this position: 873-8392.

Botanical Requests

Unusual Plant Observations west of Hwy. 395 and 14

Jim Shevok, CNPS VP for Plant Programs and
Bristlecone chapter member

I have been working for several years toward developing a comprehensive flora of the southern Sierra Nevada. The eastern slope of this area (primarily from Bishop Creek south to Red Rock

Canyon in Kern County) is rugged, beautiful, and floristically diverse.

My request is this: I want to attempt to document every species that occurs within the southern Sierra, but no one person can possibly explore and survey such a large geographical area. Bristlecone chapter members are really active in getting out in the field and studying the flora and I'd like to tap into this wonderful resource. I'm most interested in any plants that you feel are unusual or "out-of-place" along the eastern slope of the southern Sierra (west of highways 395 and 14). For example, you may have come across a plant that is more widespread in the Inyo Mountains, or a common desert species that you have only seen once or a few times within the boundary mentioned above. Essentially, I'm trying to locate those plants that are "disjunct" from their primary distributional range. I'm also interested in northern/southern limits for species in the southern Sierra.

Over the years Mary DeDecker and Mary Ann Henry have kindly provided me with interesting observations and/or plant checklists. Mary Ann's ongoing work in Short Canyon west of Inyokern has added several Mojavean taxa to the Sierran flora. I hope other Bristlecone members are willing to share their botanical observations as well!

Any and all plant information you may send my way will be gratefully received and acknowledged. As a way to document your plant observations, it would be helpful to know where you observed the plant, an idea of how common it was at the site, and if you took any photographs or plant specimens. I appreciate your interest in this quest and you can send information to: **Jim Shevok, 601 Van Ness Ave. #311, San Francisco, CA 94102.**

Request for Native Plant Information

Judith Larner Lowry, proprietor of Larner Seeds, is writing a book on restoration ecology for California backyard gardeners, and she would like to list the names and addresses of landscape architects, designers, and gardeners who use native plants. Please specify whether you use native plants exclusively or occasionally. Send information to: **Larner Seeds, P.O. Box 407, Bolinas, CA 94924.**

Correction:

In the July newsletter I noted in the Death Valley field trip report that Mary DeDecker had discovered that the leaves of some of the *Enceliopsis nudicaulis* we saw had wavy leaf margins and that she suspected it was the variety *corrugata* previously known only from Devil's Hole in Nevada.

I need to emphasize that indeed Mary had confirmed this unusual variety of *Enceliopsis* and that it is a now a new record for California.

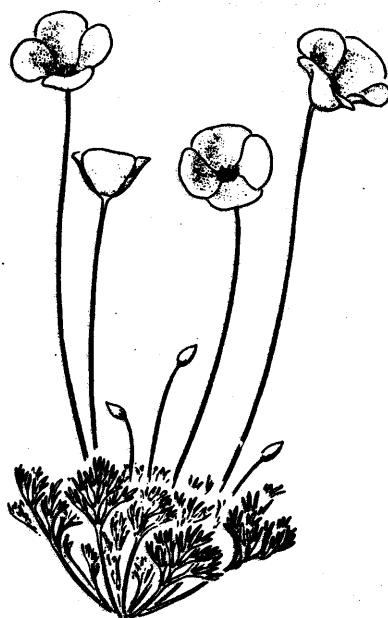
.....Vince Yoder

New Members

The Bristlecone Chapter warmly welcomes the following new member.

Svata Louda
Bishop, CA

NEXT NEWSLETTER DEADLINE: October 27.



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 _____

Membership Category

☐ Student/Retired/Limited Income	\$20.00
☐ Individual or Library	\$35.00
☐ International	\$35.00
☐ Family or Group	\$45.00
☐ Supporting	\$75.00
☐ Plant Lover	\$100.00
☐ Patron	\$250.00
☐ Life	\$500.00
☐ Benefactor	\$1,000.00
☐ 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.

California Native Plant Society
 Bristlecone Chapter
 HCR 67 Box 35
 Independence, CA
 93526

Non-Profit Org.
 U.S. Postage
 INDEPENDENCE
 CALIF. 93526
 PERMIT NO. 7