

NEXT CHAPTER MEETING

Wednesday, May 27, 7:00 p.m. at the Methodist Church in Independence which is on the corner of Washington and Center streets, one block west of the courthouse. John Karlick, from the Kern County Agricultural Extension Service will talk about "Principles of Xeriscape landscaping". John has done a case study on typical mesic landscape plantings and "xeriscapes" for arid climates, and will discuss the principles and advantages of xeriscaping in our eastern Sierra climate.

NEXT CHAPTER BOARD MEETING

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

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

As our president is busy surveying desert tortoise habitat, he has requested that everyone continue to enjoy the floristic wonders of this year and make sure to attend our annual Spring Sojourn event (May 15-17th). Other upcoming chapter events to keep in mind are the July Banquet on July 29th, and our annual native plant sale on September 12th. Also, if anyone is interested in leading a July field trip please contact field trip chairperson Mark Bagley with your ideas - we could use an extra trip that month. Thanks!

.....Anne Halford for El Presidente

UPCOMING CHAPTER EVENTS

Sierra Spring Sojourn: May 15-17th. A weekend of field trips, camaraderie and eastern Sierra wonder. Evening programs include the following highlights: **Friday.** Carla Scheidlinger, botanist and twelve year resident of the Owens Valley will give a presentation on Owens Valley water issues with reference to the Owens Dry Lake dust abatement controversy and the recently approved Inyo County-Los Angeles Department of Water and Power water agreement. **Saturday.** "California Public Lands: Wild and Beautiful", presented by Dr. Allen Schoenherr, Professor of Ecology at Fullerton College and author of "A Natural History of California (UC Press, 1982).

Our Summer Banquet will be on Wednesday, July 29th at Whiskey Creek in Bishop. There will be a social gathering with no-host bar at 5:30 p.m., and dinner at 6:30. This year's speaker is Dr. Dean Taylor, who is on the research staff at the Jepson Herbarium. Dr. Taylor will give a presentation entitled:

Plant Exploration in California: The Frontier is Still Here

Dr. Taylor will inspire us all to continue our botanical endeavors that may lead to new discoveries! According to Dr. Taylor, California botanists continue to discover new species at the same pace as in the Gold Rush and he will emphasize that contrary to expectations, the flora of California is as poorly documented as some tropical regions. Dean feels the most exciting time in California botany is not the horse and buggy days... IT IS NOW!

Bristlecone Chapter Plant Sale - Saturday, September 12th

The natives are restless - surging forth with all their vigorous growth. It should be a banner sale with many native plant species to choose from - so mark your calendars NOW! But we need your help to make this sale another success. Things people can help with include; cashier, book/t-shirt sales, setting up, making plant labels, potting-up the plants, etc. No greenthumb required - just your smile and enthusiasm. Please call Karen Ferrell at 387-2913 to find out how you can help make this another great chapter event!

CNPS Bristlecone Spring and Summer Chapter Field Trips

May 30, Saturday. Owens Valley Alkali Meadows. Leader: Sally Manning. Meet at 9:00 am at the Glacier View Campground, at the junction of Hwy. 395 and 168, just north of Big Pine. Alkali meadows are fairly diverse plant communities and relatively uncommon habitats in the desert. The Owens Valley has a high proportion of alkali meadows compared to many other desert areas. Some of the unique plant species inhabiting these meadows should be in full bloom. We will visit several different meadows in the northern Owens Valley. A high clearance vehicle is recommended. Easy walking.

June 13, Saturday. Lower Rock Creek Gorge Area. Leaders: Steve Ingram and Karen Ferrell. Meet at 9:00 am at the Paradise Restaurant. We will drive from Paradise up Lower Rock Creek road and walk around between the road and Lower Rock Creek Gorge. The area we'll explore is a diverse community of shrubs on Bishop Tuff with fantastic views all around. We

should see 8 or 9 species of buckwheats (*Eriogonum* spp.), purple sage (*Salvia dorrii*), desert paintbrush (*Castilleja angustifolia*), and golden forget-me-not (*Cryptantha confertiflora*), among others. Easy walking. This half-day trip will disperse after lunch.

June 20-21, Sat.-Sun. Argus and Coso Mountains, Naval Air Warfare Station, China Lake. Leader: Dave Silverman. Meet at 9:30 am at China Lake. Take advantage of this rare opportunity to visit portions of the Argus and Coso ranges normally off-limits to the general public. We'll visit blackbush scrub, sagebrush scrub, Joshua tree woodland, and pinyon-juniper woodland habitats. The bloom should be great this year and we hope to find several rare plants, including *Astragalus atratus* var. *mensanus*, *Cordylanthus eremicus* ssp. *eremicus*, *Lupinus magnificus* var. *glarecola*, and *Sclerocactus polyancistrus*. All participants must camp together at Birchum Springs on Saturday night, bring all your water to this dry camp. For those returning northward on Sunday, you will be able to exit the base near Darwin instead of driving back to China Lake. High clearance vehicles only. Advance reservations are required by June 5th, limited to about 15 people. Get more information or sign-up with Dave Silverman by calling 760-375-4043 or e-mail: locoweed@iwvisp.com. Trip is subject to NAWs testing interruption.

July 15, Wednesday. Birch Creek, west of the Buttermilks. Leader: Scott Hetzler. Meet at 9:00 am in the old Smart and Final parking lot in Bishop (just behind, ie. west of, Joseph's Market). Birch Creek has a Jeffery pine-willow-birch riparian community surrounded by sagebrush scrub on the higher ground. In the past, the creek was impacted by water diversions for

hydroelectric power, but over the last few years regular flows have returned. In addition to looking at the diversity of plants in these two habitats, we'll be looking at how the riparian area is recovering. High clearance vehicles only. Moderate walking, crosscountry (no trails).

August 15-16, Sat.-Sun. Baboon Lakes, Sierra Nevada. Leader: Anne Halford. This will be an overnight trip to these alpine lakes above South Lake. The hiking will be moderate to strenuous and will traverse through wonderful flower-laden granite benches. The overnight group size is limited so please contact Anne as soon as possible if you are interested in participating (873-6714). More details will appear in the July newsletter.

September 12, Saturday. Indigenous Utility Plants of the Owens Valley. Leader: Richard Stewart. Meet at 9:00 am at Mendenhall Park, Big Pine. A look at the plants that have provided food, medicine, fiber and other uses for the indigenous peoples of the Owens Valley. Trip will focus on the Big Pine area, mostly near the river. Easy walking. For more information call Richard at 760-938-2684 or e-mail: Richard_Stewart@eee.org.

October 10, Saturday. Aspen Color and Carvings. Leader: Richard Potashin. Look for details in the July newsletter.

For all field trips, be sure to bring plenty of water, lunch, good walking shoes or boots, and appropriate clothing for hot sun or inclement weather. Also useful would be a hand lens, binoculars, camera, floras, and plant lists. Trips will leave at the time announced, so please arrive at the meeting sites a few minutes early. Unless indicated, the average car should do fine. Car pooling is encouraged. Everyone is welcome, but

please no pets. If you need more information contact Field Trip Chairperson Mark Bagley at 760-873-5326 or e-mail: Markbagley@qnet.com.

FIELD TRIP REPORTS

Short Canyon Wildflower Show

The sometimes forgotten Southern Sierra canyons west of Ridgecrest are alive and well this spring with a plethora of blooms. On March 21st, plant enthusiasts from Bishop and Ridgecrest, led by Mark Bagley, could not stop marveling at the diversity, colors and numbers of flowers flowing down the dry decomposed granite slopes of Short Canyon.

Before arriving in the canyon, we stopped for prolific hillside blooms of fern phacelia (*Phacelia distans*) peppered with splashes of California poppy (*Eschscholzia californica*) and chia (*Salvia columbariae*). Hiking up the canyon, photo after photo captured natural gardens of Bigelow's coreopsis (*Coreopsis bigelovii*), California poppy, popcorn flower (*Plagiobothrys arizonicus*), bajada lupine (*Lupinus concinnus*), brown-eyed evening primrose (*Camissonia claviformis*) and desert paintbrush (*Castilleja angustifolia*).

Other treats along the trail included blue dicks (*Dichelostemma capitatum*), pygmy stonecrop (*Crassula erecta*), evening snow (*Linanthus dichotomus*), paperbag bush (*Salazaria mexicana*), and sandpaper plant (*Petalonyx thurberi*). The species that stole our hearts, though, was the incredibly beautiful deep blue Charlotte's phacelia (*Phacelia nashiana*) as it cascaded down shallow drainages amid brilliant yellow coreopsis and golden California poppies. A last stop was made at a dune area with late

afternoon shadows giving us another distinct habitat rich in California primrose (*Oenothera californica* ssp. *avita*) and lush bunches of Indian rice grass (*Achnatherum hymenoides*). Check out those unpretentious canyons wherever you go. There are surprises awaiting the seeker!

. Kathy Duvall

Panamint Mountains

April 4-5, 1998 Joint trip with the Eastern Sierra Audubon (see their newsletter for birds). Led by Mark Bagley and Kathy Duvall.

A vision of riches-beyond-belief has lured treasure seekers to the Panamint Range for over a century. The 20 or so of us who gathered the morning of April 4th were no exception. The treasures we sought, however, were not mineral, but biological (and spiritual!). Surrounded by western history and an evocative landscape that beckoned the explorer in us all, we ventured into the westside canyons.

Our first stop was at Warm Sulfur Spring. This large BLM wetland, located, predictably, at the toe of the alluvial fan, featured thick cushions of saltgrass (*Distichlis spicata*), *Allenrolfea occidentalis*, aromatic *Anemopsis californica*, and honey and screw bean mesquite (*Prosopis glandulosa* var. *torreyana* and *P. pubescens*, respectively). Some had mistletoe (*Phoradendron californicum*). Red-eyed Phainopeplas watched us from a safe distance.

From there we 4-wheeled up a canyon, then hiked up the wash to Jackpot Springs. The canyon was ablaze with annuals. Aside from the boisterous *Geraea canescens*

(desert gold), *Eremalche rotundifolia* (desert fivespot), and *Phacelia calthafolia*, Mark pointed out some of the more reticent plants: *Chaenactis carphoclinia*, *Eriogonum trichopes*, *E. thomasi*, *Camissonia refracta*, *Phacelia pachyphylla*, and *P. pedicellata*. Exotics at the mine claim included fig (*Ficus carica*) and pomegranate (*Punica granatum*).

We next ventured into the area south of Happy Canyon. There, we saw Panamint daisy (*Enceliopsis covillei*) scattered widely but consistently on the same soil type. This population had been located when the area was being scouted for possible gold mine development. The group camped at Ballarat, where \$1 buys you acres of flat open tent sites near a wild-west cemetery. On Sunday morning, we drove to the wilderness boundary then hiked up Happy Canyon. Bird sightings included a B-2 (stealth) bomber (a life-lister for many of us, but not infrequent in the vicinity). The canyon seemed luxuriously wet and green for a low-elevation desert canyon (blame El Nino). We saw repeats from the previous day as well as numerous barrel cactus (*Ferocactus cylidraceus*), occasional *Pleurocoronis pluriseta* (used to be *Hofmeisteria*), bright *Camissonia cardiophylla* (we think!), cryptic *Eucrypta chrysanthemifolia* var. *bipinnatifida*, and one *Salix laevigata* (red willow) occupied by a Ruby Crowned Kinglet under which we ate lunch.

Indeed, our rugged neighbors, the Panamint Mountains, contain riches. Perhaps the Desert Protection Act now insures that the treasures will remain in place for future generations to experience.

.....Sally Manning

CONSERVATION

For those who care about the Eureka Valley dunes you now have an opportunity to help protect them and the three endemic plant species which occur there. You may recall CNPS's efforts led by Mary DeDecker to protect these plants and the dunes from ORV activity several years ago and wonder why more work is needed. The reason is that the dunes have changed jurisdiction. Under the California Desert Protection Act the dunes were transferred from BLM to Death Valley National Park. The Park Service is currently attempting to develop a management plan, in consultation with the US Fish and Wildlife Service.

One point of contention concerns activities to be allowed at the dunes. The Park Service proposes to allow horseback riding and the (nascent) sport of sand-boarding. While sand-boarding may seem like an idea whose time will never come, the same thing was said about snow-boarding until very recently, and the Eureka dunes are currently listed at a sand-boarding web site as one of the best places to practice the sport. Letters to the Park Superintendent urging him to be pro-active and prevent these activities BEFORE plants are lost could have a big impact.

The fact that the Superintendent recently allowed known habitat in the park for a federally listed bird species (Bell's vireo) to be destroyed further suggests that he needs to be reminded of his obligation to "preserve and protect" the park's priceless resources. For more information about the Bell's vireo incident see the March-April 1998 issue of the Eastern Sierra Audubon Society Newsletter and/or visit their ESA website at

http://users.aol.com/ESASociety/2newsltr/wv16_4.htm

Please send letters to: Mr. Richard Martin
Superintendent, Death Valley National Park
Death Valley, CA 92328

.....Daniel Pritchett

Letters Needed for Development Issues in Inyo and Mono Counties

Pine Creek - Pacifica Development Corp. (Inyo County). Pacifica Development from Costa Mesa is planning to build **362 houses** on 260 acres from Rovanna almost down to the Round Valley School. This project will significantly impact critical mule deer winter range on a bitterbrush/sagebrush dominated site that is a remnant fraction of their former habitat. A large portion of the Round Valley mule deer herds' habitat was destroyed by an extensive burn in 1995 on the alluvial fans of Mt. Tom. Where Pacifica plans to develop is right along the lateral moraine where the vegetation is still intact and deer are seen weekly here in the winter and early spring.

Not only will there be 362 houses but Pacifica also plans on developing ranches, commercial development and highway commercial and tourist services. The Inyo County Planning Department and the County Commissioners **need** to hear our opinions about this proposed development in our rural open space.

Call the Planning Department and request a copy of The Pine Creek Communities Development Project. The phone number is 872-2706. There is also a copy of the plan in the Bishop Library. Comments are due by **May 11th**.

Here is a list of topics to discuss regarding the project:

Impacts:

- The Round Valley Mule Deer Herd - critical mule deer winter range.
- The Big Horn Sheep project up in Pine Creek Canyon and along Wheeler Crest.
- Effects on the Riparian Environmental Resource Area (listed in the General Plan).
- Mountain Lion Habitat.
- Cultural Resources.
- Increased off-road vehicle use on public lands adjacent to the project area that are recovering from the 5,000 acre burn.

Alternatives

- Put limits on the number of houses to be built. Reduce the density and leave islands of native vegetation between houses.
- Provide ample and scientifically developed wildlife migration corridors.
- Put limits on the location of where the houses can be built.
- No project.
- Rezoning.

Bodie RV Park (Mono County). Desert Survivors are urging CNPS members to address a proposed RV Park at the entrance to the Bodie Hills, along Clearwater Ck. An Environmental Impact Report (EIR) has been prepared, but many feel the EIR does not adequately address impacts caused by the project, especially with regard to potential impacts to the stream channel and associated riparian habitat. Desert Survivors are considering an appeal of the Mono County EIR and are urging members to write letters to the county supervisors to

either oppose the project, or ensure that it will not impact Clearwater creek.
Address letters to: Mono County Board of Supervisors, POB 715, Bridgeport, CA 93517

.....Betty Gilchrist, Kathy Duvall and
Anne Halford

In Fond Remembrance

Bristlecone Chapter Member Mary Alice Hamilton died February 26th in San Diego of natural causes. Mrs. Hamilton was an avid member of our chapter as well as the Eastern Sierra Audubon Society and the Range of Light Chapter of the Sierra Club.

New Members

The Bristlecone Chapter Warmly Welcomes
the Following New Members

Charlotte Goodson
Ridgecrest

Kate Kindler
Big Pine

Norma Kryder
Bishop

Desi and Karen Zamudio
Sparks, NV

Mailing Address Change for New Memberships

We offer our apologies to those new members who had not been receiving newsletters, etc. We have been in a bit of a transition here and have decided to change

where our new memberships will be sent. Please note the new address which is **P.O. Box Drawer 989, Lone Pine, CA. 93526.** This is the address of our Membership Chair. K.C. Wiley. Again, sorry if this has inconvenienced you. Thanks for your patience.

Plant Riddle

Arnie Peterson, acting botanist for Death Valley National Park sent me a request to try and identify a plant from a description in a book by John Southworth titled Death Valley in 1948. In this book a plant was found near Indian Pass in the Funeral Mountains near a seep. Southworth noted that the "flower was 18 inches tall with 4 large rough leaves at the base, with a bare stem going straight up, then arching over, with a tiara of tightly closed tulip shaped blossoms chocolate-burgundy in color. Below is an illustration the author made. If anyone knows what this plant is please let Arnie know by calling him at (760-786-3233 or e-mail:arnie_peterson@nps.gov.

**Next Newsletter Deadline: Friday, June
26th**

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	
<input type="checkbox"/> Student/Retired/Limited Income	\$20.00
<input type="checkbox"/> Individual or Library	\$35.00
<input type="checkbox"/> International	\$35.00
<input type="checkbox"/> Family or Group	\$45.00
<input type="checkbox"/> Supporting	\$75.00
<input type="checkbox"/> Plant Lover	\$100.00
<input type="checkbox"/> Patron	\$250.00
<input type="checkbox"/> Life	\$500.00
<input type="checkbox"/> Benefactor	\$1,000.00
<input type="checkbox"/> Corporate	\$1,000.00

Please make check payable to: The California Native Plant Society. **Mail to:** Bristlecone Chapter, CNPS. P.O. Box Drawer 989, Lone Pine, 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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