

**DEDICATED TO THE PRESERVATION OF THE CALIFORNIA NATIVE FLORA**

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**Volume 20 No. 4 July 2000**

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Our September meeting will be on Wednesday, the 27th at 7:00 p.m. in Lone Pine at the Lone Pine High School Library, one block east of Hwy. 395 on Muir St. Mike Prather will give a program entitled: "From the Intake to the Lake - A Canoer's Mantra: Will the Birds as well as the Dust Settle on Owens Lake?" Mike Prather, a resident of Lone Pine and long-time student of Owens Lake, will discuss bird and plant habitats on the playa and lower Owens River, and give us an update on the Lower Owens River Project (LORP).

**NEXT CHAPTER BOARD MEETING**

Tuesday, July 25th at 7:00 p.m. at the White Mountain Research Station. All chapter members and other interested individuals are welcome and encouraged to attend.

**PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE**

It sure was fun to see everyone at our chapter banquet this year. Glenn Keator gave a very interesting talk on plants of the Eastern Sierra and Owens Valley that could be used for landscaping around our homes here. For the first time we also had two door prizes that were given away in a drawing. Karen came up with the idea and she decided that one prize would be a book written by Glenn and the other prize, a gift certificate for our plant sale. If you did not get to the banquet this year now you know what you missed!

Our chapter has a nice collection of plant books that can be used by the members of our chapter. EvelynMae is our librarian and we hope soon to have a list of all our books on our web site. Be sure and check out what we have available, you might be surprised.

Looks like we have some interesting field trips lined up for this summer and I hope you can make it to some of them. Don't forget that I'll be leading one to the Glass Mts. later in July.

.....Yours truly, El Pres.

## CHAPTER HIGHLIGHTS

### Mary DeDecker's Plant Specimen Database Complete

Three years ago Larry Blakely took the initiative to complete the digital scanning of Mary DeDecker's 3,000 plus plant specimen database cards in their original form. It has always been Mary's wish that this comprehensive information be available to assist with continuing floristic research and education. Now thanks to Larry this invaluable resource will be available in perpetuity. Thank you again Larry for your commitment of time and heart to this very important endeavor.

.....Anne Halford

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### Bristlecone Members Team with Partner's For Plants in Search of the Fish Slough Milk-Vetch

Several intrepid plantswomen braved summer heat to assist BLM botanist Anne Halford with a census of the Fish Slough milk-vetch (*Astragalus lentiginosus* var. *piscinensis*). Approximately 2,000 acres were systematically surveyed on Los Angeles Department of Water and Power and BLM administered lands to better gauge the population declines this species has been experiencing since 1992. With cold watermelon, Sherryl's cookies and lots of shared stories we were able to complete the work in record time. A special thank you to Sherryl Taylor, Kathy Duvall, Katherine Malengo and Amy Kraus for your time and support.

.....Anne Halford

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## UPCOMING EVENTS

The Native Plant Sale is planned for September 9. It will begin at 9 AM and will be held again at the Tri-County Fairgrounds in Bishop. For more information and/or a species list of available plants, please contact Karen Ferrell-Ingram at 387-2913 or at [ingram@telis.org](mailto:ingram@telis.org).

## SUMMER 2000 BRISTLECONE CHAPTER FIELD TRIPS

### FIELD TRIP POLICIES

Generally, day trips last most of the day while the overnight trips conclude early Sunday afternoon. 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 are a hand lens, floras, and insect repellent on the Sierra trips. Often we are near the vehicles at lunch, but be prepared to carry your lunch on a hike. Trips 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. For more information contact Field Trip Chairperson Mark Bagley at 760-873-5326 or e-mail: [markbagley@qnet.com](mailto:markbagley@qnet.com).

### **July 16, Sunday. SNARL and Valentine Camp.**

Leaders: Ann Howald and Mark Bagley. Located near Mammoth Lakes, the Sierra Nevada Aquatic Research Laboratory (SNARL) and Valentine Camp form the Valentine Eastern Sierra Reserve, a part of the University of California's Natural Reserve System. We will begin the trip at 9:30 am at SNARL, with the rare and disjunct California population of *Pedicularis crenulata*, the scalloped-leaved lousewort (CNPS List 2). We'll then move on to Valentine Camp which contains an unusually diverse sample of eastern Sierran habitats at the ecotone between Great Basin sagebrush desert and coniferous forests of the higher Sierra Nevada. This will be an easy walking trip at elevations of about 8000'. Because this is a reserve, our numbers will be limited so you must sign up with Mark by e-mail at [<markbagley@qnet.com>](mailto:markbagley@qnet.com) or by calling 760-873-5326.

### **July 19, Wednesday. O'Harrel Canyon, Glass**

**Mountain.** Leader: Scott Hetzler. Meet at 9:00 am at the Little Green Church at the intersection of Hwy. 395 and Benton Crossing Road. We'll drive from there up to O'Harrel Canyon, which has a perennial stream, and hike up the canyon towards Glass Mountain Ridge. A moderately strenuous cross-country hike. High clearance vehicles recommended, 4WD not necessary.

**July 29, Saturday. The Lying Head on Mt. Dana, Tioga Pass area.** Leaders: Cathy Rose and Kathy Duvall. Meet at Tom's Place for carpooling at 8:00 am or just outside the Tioga Pass entrance to Yosemite National Park at 9:00. We will hike from Tioga Pass up the slope of Mt. Dana to the Lying Head. This is a steep, very stiff climb, above 9000 feet, with great botanical rewards. Bring Weeden Sierra Nevada Flora. Call Cathy at 935-4329 for more information.

**August 12, Saturday. Glass Creek Meadow.** Leaders: Kathleen Nelson and Sue Weis. Meet at 9:30 am at Glass Creek Campground, across Highway 395 from the Crestview CalTrans Maintenance Station, approximately one mile north of Crestview Rest Area. From there, we will drive on the dirt road to a parking area near the trail access. Though relatively short, at 1-2 miles each way, the beginning of the hike is moderate to strenuous, climbing a steep loose hillside. The reward, Glass Creek Meadow, will be worth the walk. Not only will we have the opportunity to enjoy a wide diversity of plant species, but there have been over 50 species of butterflies recorded from here as well! Be prepared to carry lunch and water, as we'll have lunch up at the meadow.

**September 13, Wednesday.** Buckwheats, Red Rock Canyon, Mono County. Leader: Scott Hetzler. Meet at 9:00 in Bishop at Wye Rd., behind Symons Tire and the Shell Station at the junction of Highways 6 and 395. This will be a half-day trip, bring lunch if you desire. We'll make several stops along the road above Red Rock Canyon. This will be an easy walking trip near the road to see the many species of buckwheats (*Eriogonum*) that occur here. Maintained dirt roads, any car should be fine. For more information contact Scott at 873-8392

Look for our later trips in the next newsletter.

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### Who's In A Name?

Bigelow's Monkey Flower, *Mimulus bigelovii* (A. Gray) A. Gray var. *cuspidatus* A.L. Grant (Scrophulariaceae)

The devastating Division Creek fire of last year was followed this spring by a remarkable display of annual wildflowers and the exuberant rebirth of perennials. Blue phacelias and gillias covered broad

swaths of land on the upper alluvial fan, the bright blue carpets speckled with black twisted stems of bitterbrush - their tops destroyed by the fire, but their crowns resprouting with vigor. Along the edge of an adjacent lava flow to the north, different species appeared including a fine display put on by robust colonies of Bigelow's monkey flower. While contemplating their striking beauty one was prompted to inquire, "Who, by the way, was Bigelow?"

John Milton Bigelow, MD (1804-1878) was born in Vermont, but later made Ohio his home; he obtained his medical degree from a Cincinnati College. In his late forties he left the comforts of his home in Lancaster, Ohio to become surgeon-botanist on two major government-sponsored western surveys: the Mexican Boundary Survey, and the Pacific Railroad Expedition along the 35th parallel under the command of Lt. A. W. Whipple. Several collectors accompanied the former (though Bigelow and C. C. Parry did the bulk of the collecting), while Bigelow was the sole botanist on the latter. Most of his survey collections were made east of California, but he collected extensively in California during the late winter and spring of 1854, at the conclusion of the Whipple Expedition. He found many new genera and species in his four years in the southwest and California. His collections were worked up by John Torrey and Asa Gray mainly, but he collaborated with George Engelmann of St. Louis on his extensive collection of cacti. In his late fifties he became professor of botany and pharmacy at Detroit Medical College.

The artist on the Whipple Expedition, H. B. Möllhausen, described him as a congenial colleague in the field, "a general favorite and by far the oldest of the party. ... [with] a pattern of gentleness and patience ... not only a zealous botanist, but also an enthusiastic sportsman. ...

To his patients he was most kind and attentive, and of his mule, Billy, he made an absolute spoiled child." Bigelow stood up for his rights, though; he admonished Torrey to give full credit to his collectors: " ... the humble collector who undergoes much fatigue & privation as well as danger should not be forgotten or neglected in the roll: for if we cannot make the music we are necessary in raising the wind so essential in successfully playing the organ of fame."

Torrey did right by him. Among the native plants of

California, 17 species and one variety bear Bigelow's name. In addition, 11 species, mostly cacti, were named by Bigelow. If you thumb through the Cactaceae in the Jepson Manual you'll notice that many of the species names were authored by "Engelm. & J. Bigelow". Among these are our common Mojave prickly-pear, *Opuntia erinacea*, and the great beauty, the Mojave fish-hook cactus, *Sclerocactus polyancistrus*, which Bigelow collected near "the headwaters of the Mojave ... one day's journey ... [east of] the Cajon Pass". Seven of our Eastern Sierra native plants are named for Bigelow; in addition to the monkey flower beauty, our charming Bigelow's four o'clock (or wishbone plant) is another common spring sight.

Bigelow wrote two introductory chapters for the report volume on the botany of the Whipple Expedition. In the first he described conditions encountered along the route from the Mississippi to Los Angeles. After so many wearying miles of desert from Texas to eastern California, the party must have given a sigh of relief as they crossed over to the LA basin. Bigelow wrote: "Immediately on passing the crest of the Cajon, the vegetation changes like magic. ... [we passed] through a beautiful valley ... well wooded and watered. ... Nature has peculiarly favored this region, and adapted it to grazing ..." He praised the oranges and grapes at San Gabriel, concluding, "We could say nothing more favorable of the climate of this delightful region."

He was one of the first botanists to see the Big Tree in nature (then known only at the North Grove in today's Calaveras Big Trees SP). He arrived in the year after the strong men with their augers and wedges had labored 26 days to topple the "Discovery Tree", near the location of the current State Park headquarters. He gives his interesting observations in the second introductory chapter, about trees seen on the Expedition. Since there were so few Big Trees, it appeared to him that they were a relic of the past, "soon to become extinct". "Indeed these giants of the forest are so marked in their rusty habit from their present associates, ... that they seem but reminiscences of an eternal bygone." The convoluted process of the Big Tree's naming was well underway at the time of his writing. Bigelow feared the generic name would be Wellingtonia, not Washingtonia as he preferred; he lamented, "we must now be contented with the possession of the tree, as England must be with the empty name." Proponents of George Washington and those of the Duke of Wellington fought it out well into the 20th Century.

Today, the British graciously accept the current scientific name of *Sequoiadendron giganteum*, though they continue to use the common name Wellingtonia. Bigelow would perhaps not find fault with that.

.....Larry Blakely

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## CONSERVATION

### Upper Harkless Update

On May 16, 2000, Tom Bohigian, Senator Barbara Boxer's Northern California Director, hosted a meeting in Bishop of representatives of several parties interested in CalTech's proposed observatory at Upper Harkless Flat in the Inyo Mountains (see previous issues of this newsletter for more information about this proposal). James Wilson (Friends of Inyo), Sally Miller (the Wilderness Society), Jim Parker (Eastern Sierra Audubon Society) and I (Bristlecone CNPS) were joined by Anneila Sargent (CalTech), Steve Scott (Cal Tech), and Stuart Vogel (University of Maryland).

The meeting was cordial, but the message we delivered was clear: Upper Harkless Flat is not an acceptable site for an observatory, and continued attempts to build there will lead to a political "train-wreck". It appears that the message finally got through and the astronomers are currently looking at other potential sites. It is premature to claim victory, but this certainly is a big step in the right direction.

Readers of this newsletter deserve much credit for this development. Your letters to Senator Boxer prompted her to publicly question the project (in a letter to the US Forest Service), and make it clear that project proponents would receive no support in Washington.

Another nail in the proposal's coffin lid came in the form of President Clinton's roadless area conservation initiative. This provides the Inyo National Forest with a strong bureaucratic justification to reject any application for a Special Use Permit to build at the site, because the proposed site is in an inventoried roadless area.

If Upper Harkless remains undisturbed it will be because our members voted and communicated their views to their elected representatives. This is, for once, an example of the democratic process working as it should.

.....Daniel Pritchett

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### INYO-LA Water Agreement: More Bad News or Deja vu All Over Again

In the July, 1999 newsletter I wrote about problems in implementing the Inyo-LA Water agreement and mentioned four in particular:

- 1) the failure of the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power (LADWP) to install new test wells (i.e. wells to monitor the height of the water table) in spite of its clear responsibility to do so.
- 2) the failure of the Inyo County Water Department (ICWD) to call a Technical Group meeting (to press the test wells issue) for a full year after submitting the lengthy list of needed test wells,
- 3) the circumvention by LADWP and ICWD of the Brown Act's requirement for open Technical Group meetings by holding technical discussions at a closed "staff" meeting and turning the Technical Group meeting into a press conference to announce results to the public,
- 4) Inyo County's acceptance of LADWP's proposed 18-fold increase in pumping at well 349 in spite of the fact that the absence of test wells left ICWD unable to determine if the pumping met its own definition of "conservative" management or not.

It would be nice to be able to write that these problems have been resolved. Unfortunately, the same problems remain, and in some cases are considerably worse:

- 1) Of the approximately 90 needed test wells ICWD identified over two years ago, LADWP has so far agreed in principle to drill only 25, and (as of 6/27/00) has yet to actually drill a single one.
- 2) At least three technical group meetings were held since July 1999. This is a step in the right direction, though contentious issues (such as the definition of conservative management) were carefully omitted from discussion at the meetings.

3) LADWP's annual operations (pumping) plan was again discussed in a secret "staff" meeting, circumventing the Brown Act and preventing the public from hearing substantive technical debate between ICWD and LADWP.

4) LADWP is again proposing to pump Well 349 even though the test wells Inyo stated last year were necessary have yet to be installed. Unlike last year, however, Inyo is objecting.

LADWP's proposed pumping plan for 2000-2001 calls for a 40% increase over last year's levels. This would be the largest proposed pumping increase in the history of the Agreement. What is remarkable is that this has received almost no public attention. ICWD published its objections to the proposed pumping in its Water Reporter and presented them at the Water Commission meeting of June 12. Without a Technical Group meeting, however, there is no public forum in which LADWP must defend its proposal and attempt to answer ICWD's objections.

ICWD's complicity with LADWP in circumventing the Brown Act (item #3 above) and preventing the public from hearing any of the technical debate concerning LADWP's proposed pumping plan is almost as disturbing as the magnitude of the proposed pumping increase itself. According to the Water Agreement, LADWP was obligated to meet with ICWD's technical representatives to try to resolve disagreements within 10 days of LADWP's receipt of ICWD's comments on its proposed pumping program. This means a Technical Group meeting should have been held by May 10, 2000. LADWP ignored this requirement thus clearly violating the Agreement and ICWD neither made any objection nor notified the public.

The Bristlecone Chapter of CNPS has supported the Water Agreement because we believed it would require pumping decisions to be made in public and be based on the best available science. Behavior of both LADWP and ICWD suggest we were very mistaken.

For more information please contact Daniel Pritchett at [skypilots@telis.org](mailto:skypilots@telis.org) (PO Box 1411, Bishop, CA 93515). To have an immediate impact, please consider communicating your views to your Inyo County Supervisor.

.....Daniel Pritchett

## LEGISLATION

### Weed Bill Needs Support

The spread of invasive non-native plants is the second largest threat to biodiversity, second only to sprawl! According to High Country News, 4,200 acres a day are lost in the west to weeds. Well over 100 species in California are listed as "Exotic Pest Plants of Greatest Ecological Concern" by the California Exotic Pest Plant Council and pose serious problems for our wildlands in California.

California State Senator Tim Leslie has introduced The Noxious Weed Management bill (SB1740) which directs funding for weed eradication projects and for research on weed control. CNPS is working to have the bill:

- Fund only eradication projects that follow the principles of integrated weed management
- Disperse funds only to Weed Management Groups
- Apply to the control of weeds affecting wildlands and not just agricultural lands

We can help fight invasive non-native plants by writing letters of support for the passage of a strong Noxious Weed Bill. Letters should be written at the end of July/first of August as the Legislature reconvenes. Please write, e-mail or call your representatives. If you would like to receive an update on the status of this bill, suggestions of points to make in your letter/call, and appropriate addresses, please call me at;

(760) 924-8742 or e-mail me at sherrylt76@aol.com

.....Sherryl Taylor, Legislative Chair.

## FIELD TRIP REPORTS

### *Rose Valley/Coso Mountains*

At our arrival in the morning, the winds were blowing, and it was going to look as if we were in for a blustery day out in the open. By the time we began on our way the weather was more cooperative and

spirits were heightened. Ah yes and there were flowers, and lots of them! Mark Bagley, our trip leader, started us at the lowest elevation of the field trip having us explore the playa habitat and its associated species complex.

We then went up in elevation to were the Creosote scrub grew and began to notice the change in annual species composition. At these first two locations, we examined numerous Asteraceae, Phacelias, Cryptanthas, and Cammisonias just to name a few. Once through with the open valley, we headed up into the canyon zone. Up in the Cosos, the composition of species once again changed, although some lower elevation shrubs and annuals were still present. At our first stop in the Cosos, we explored a small wash noting new species. It was then lunch time, so we went to the pictographs parking lot. While enjoying our lunches, it was easy to see the definite change in floristic composition as we were now in a mountain Mohave habitat. Here Ericamerias, Paintbrush, Solanum and many annual species were in bloom. The pictograph area provided us with an abundance of shrubs, perennials and annuals due to the rock outcrops rising above the surrounding terrain. Mark, an excellent field botanist, stirred many a mind with his vast knowledge of the flora and key identification characteristics for particular species. Although many of the annual plants were smaller in size due to the drier winter, the flower display was anything but compromised and certainly worth the trip.

.....Jerry Zartoski

Lower Rock Creek Gorge  
May 21, 2000

What do you see in a year when it's a little too dry for a great display of annual wildflowers? Perennials, of course, with a sprinkling of a few brave annuals. Visiting many of the plants that she grows for the Native Plant Sale, Karen Ferrell-Ingram led a large group that included several people from the Dorothy King Young Chapter, in a hike through the sage scrub overlooking the Lower Rock Creek Gorge and then down the gorge itself.

At our first stop, Sage Flat, some of the fragrant purple sage (*Salvia dorrii*) were still blooming, and although the desert peach (*Prunus andersonii*) were past their prime, several perennial buckwheats

(*Eriogonum* spp.) were just beginning their flower show. A few Mariposa lilies (*Calochortus bruneaunis*) teeming with insect pollinators and desert larkspur (*Delphinium parishii*) greeted us as we made our way through the sage and bitterbrush. We learned from Pat Crowther about the Native American use of the cottony material at the base of wire lettuce (*Stephanomeria pauciflora*) as wound packing material. There were patches of mat-forming plants highlighted by Kennedy buckwheat (*Eriogonum kennedyi*) and *Arenaria macradenia*..

The refreshing sound of Rock Creek and patches of shade along the trail through the gorge were very welcome on a warm day. The wild roses (*Rosa woodsii*) and Virgin's bower (*Clematis ligusticifolia*) were putting on a show among the willows, cottonwoods, and pines along the stream. We stopped in a grove of pines for lunch, noting that both Jeffrey and Ponderosa pine are present in the gorge, and can be difficult to tell apart. Hybridization? More flowers were in bloom along the lower part of the trail, including two species of penstemon (*Penstemon rostriflorus* and *P. floridus*), the rare Inyo hulsea (*H. vestita* ssp. *inyoensis*), scarlet gilia (*Ipomopsis aggregata*), *Ivesia saxosa*, and tiger lilies (*Lilium kelleyanum*).

Thanks to Karen for an interesting and informative trip, and of course the great plant list.

.....Sue Weis

## NEW MEMBERS

The Bristlecone Chapter would like to welcome the following new members:

Mary Siceloff,  
April Miller,  
Rosanne and Tom Higley and  
Ken and Edyth Irvine

Also, thank you everyone for the many renewals and newsletter subscriptions.

.....Kathy Duvall

## 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	\$1,000.00
<input type="checkbox"/> Benefactor	\$1,000.00
<input type="checkbox"/> Corporate	\$1,000.00

Please make membership checks payable to: The California Native Plant Society. **Mail to:** Bristlecone Chapter, CNPS. P.O. Box 364, Bishop, CA 93515-0364.

**Gift Contribution:** Where most needed \_\_\_\_\_ Conservation \_\_\_\_\_

**THE CALIFORNIA NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY** 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 non-members and can be obtained by sending newsletter subscriptions to CNPS. P.O. Box 364, Bishop, CA 93515-0364. Send newsletter articles not memberships to Newsletter Editor Anne Halford at 312 Shepard Lane, Bishop, CA 93514 - or email to: [ahalford@ca.blm.gov](mailto:ahalford@ca.blm.gov)

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