

## DEDICATED TO THE PRESERVATION OF THE CALIFORNIA NATIVE FLORA

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Volume 20 No. 5 September 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).

The November meeting will be our Annual Potluck and slide show, on Wednesday, Nov. 15th at the Methodist Church on School Street in Big Pine. The potluck set-up will start at 6:00 with dinner at 6:30pm. Please bring a dish to share and some slides of plants or adventures during the past year.

### NEXT CHAPTER BOARD MEETING

Tuesday, September 19th 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

This summer on one of my hikes in the Sierra Mts. I came across a nice grove of red fir trees. These trees were growing on the east side of the Sierra range south of Mammoth Lakes. I have hiked up most the canyons on this side of the Sierra mountains from Lone Pine to Mammoth Lakes and had only seen White firs. These red firs were growing between two canyons and were not really in a canyon. I found them growing at Stecker Flat (9000') just south of Red Mountain Creek and north of Taboose Creek.

I saw these firs in early August and most the trees already had this years cones on them. The cones were covered with resin and they looked really beautiful with the sun shining on them. It turns out that this grove was var. *shastensis*. I found this out by finding a cone on the ground and saw that its bracts were exceeding its scales. The cones are not easy to find on the ground because they usually fall apart while still up in the tree. I wonder if a squirrel chewed it off and let it fall to the ground.

It sure was fun finding these trees. They were growing with Jeffery Pines and I was not expecting to see Red firs! Does anyone know of other groves of Red fir growing on the east side of the Sierra Mts. south of Mammoth Lakes? If so I would like to hear from you.

.....Yours truly, El Pres.

## UPCOMING EVENTS

### BRING NATIVES INTO YOUR GARDEN

The Bristlecone Chapter's Fall Plant Sale is just around the corner! While several dry years in succession have taken a toll on the variety of seed-grown plants offered this year, there will still be about 30 different species available. Some new releases include *Clematis ligusticifolia* (Virgin's Bower vine), *Penstemon incertus*, *Artemisia tridentata* (Big sagebrush), *Apocynum cannabinum* (Indian hemp), *Phoenicaulis cheiranthoides*, *Pericome caudata*, and *Asclepias fascicularis* (Narrow-leaf milkweed). Old favorites and garden standouts such as *Salvia dorrii* (Purple sage), *Purshia tridentata* (Bitterbrush), *Mimulus guttatus* (Yellow monkeyflower), *Penstemon eatonii* (Firecracker penstemon), and *Eriogonum wrightii* (Wright's buckwheat) will be plentiful.

To help with garden planning, a Plant Sale Preview will be held on September 5 at 7:00 PM at the White Mountain Research Station in Bishop. This is a good time to share your gardening successes and see what will be available at the sale. Refreshments and raffle prizes will round out a fun evening.

The Plant Sale is on **September 9 at 9:00 AM at the Tri-County Fairgrounds in Bishop**. Call Karen at 387-2913 for more information.

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The Vegetation Committee of CNPS is having a training session in the vegetation Characterization releve methodology on September 22-24 at lovely Big Bear in the San Bernardino Mountains. All interested folks are invited. Please support our Vegetation Committee and have a great time with other CNPSers - plan to attend!! Please make your reservation for the training now, by calling the CNPS state office at (916) 447-2677. or Ilene Anderson at (323) 654-5943.

## 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.

**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

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### Who's In A Name?

Anderson's Buttercup, *Ranunculus andersonii* Gray (Ranunculaceae) and  
Desert Peach, *Prunus andersonii* Gray (Rosaceae)

Spring is brightened considerably in our regions by the bright pink flowers of the desert peach. And although individuals do not bloom for very long, we may enjoy them over an extended period by following them up to higher elevations as the season progresses. As for Anderson's large-flowered white to pink buttercup, you have to nose about a bit in very early spring to find colonies in full bloom; Anderson thought it "would be a fine acquisition

to the garden", and in 1880 Brewer and Watson, in their usually staid "Botany of California", called it "A truly remarkable species." Indeed, both of these spring beauties, whose names honor Charles Lewis Anderson, MD (1827-1910), are remarkable and cherished members of the Eastern Sierra Spring flora.

Anderson practiced medicine in Carson City during the years 1862-1867. His considerable abilities were soon recognized in the young city and Territory (soon to become a State), so much so that in the short time he was there he rose to the post of State Surgeon General, became Superintendent of Schools of Ormsby County, helped organize a library and establish a church, served as an officer in the Nevada Historical and Scientific Society when it was formed, and was involved in several other civic activities. He seemed to take only passing interest in the race for riches going on all around him - but the rough and tumble atmosphere did help augment his roster of patients, the numbers otherwise kept low by a generally salubrious climate. His practice was a marvel of simplicity compared to the practice of modern medicine. He kept an office in a drugstore (with apparently no receptionist or nurse) for which he paid \$10 per month; he charged \$5 per patient visit, plus \$5 per mile when he had to travel out of town.

Anderson was born in Virginia, but his family moved to Indiana when he was 10. He worked his way through medical school in Indiana, then moved to Minneapolis, Minnesota to set up his first practice (where he also served as Superintendent of Schools of Hennepin County). An enterprising Minnesota friend preceded him to Nevada, and at the friend's urging, Anderson decided to head out west. He settled his wife and 2 young daughters in Beloit, Wisconsin, then traveled across the plains and mountains by wagon train and stage coach. He wrote voluminously to his wife while traveling, and after settling in Carson City. His letters, which were fortunately preserved, give a vivid accounting of those times. A year later he was joined by his wife and daughters, who bravely followed his path across the country.

Amazingly, in spite of all of his other endeavors, he found the time to pursue his lifelong interest in botany. He was one of the very first botanists to collect extensively in Nevada (the redoubtable Pathfinder - and botanist - John C. Fremont was first, in 1844). Anderson made most of his plant collections in the vicinity of Carson City, but he also explored elsewhere in Nevada, and may have collected his buttercup at Blind Spring Hill near Benton. Many of the plants he collected turned out to be new to science when examined by Asa Gray of Harvard, to whom Anderson sent all his Nevada specimens. Anderson wrote the first flora of Nevada, and in its introduction observed: "the country is as rich in vegetable novelties as it is at all times in mineral wealth."

Other Nevada and California plant species, subspecies and varieties named for Anderson are found in these genera: *Arctostaphylos*, *Aster*, *Astragalus*, *Cirsium*, *Crepis*, *Delphinium*, *Lupinus*, *Lycium*, *Silene*, and *Trifolium*. He is credited with the discovery of 34 new plant species during his years in Nevada, including spiny menodora, so familiar in our area.

Among the notes of Anderson's principal biographer, Olga Reifschneider, is this list which she made under the heading "Anderson's personality": "gentle sympathetic cultured scientific practical ambitious for health, comfort and happiness yet not aggressive to accumulate wealth".

Seeking a gentler climate and society, Anderson moved his family to Santa Cruz, CA, in 1867, where he lived for the rest of his life. There, in addition to his medical practice, he continued his lifelong predilection for civic service, and the study of botany. He developed an interest in marine algae, and collected some new species which were named for him; he also wrote botanical papers on the plants about Santa Cruz. Ever one for a challenge, his favorite groups were the willows and the grasses.

.....Larry Blakely

## CONSERVATION

The Inyo - LA Water Agreement:  
The issue that won't go away

I don't remember if this is the second or third consecutive year in which I've written about Water Agreement issues and I can't blame readers if they are tired of reading about them. The sad truth is that these articles are part of a struggle which has been going on for almost a century, and shows no sign of ending. An equally sad truth is that, unlike most other environmental issues in the Eastern Sierra (for example, those affecting the Inyo National Forest or Death Valley National Park) there is almost no interest in this issue from people who don't live in the Owens Valley.

If you are fortunate enough to live here and/or care about the native vegetation (and all the life which depends upon it), the Inyo-LA Water agreement is your issue whether you like it or not. The sooner you start making yourself learn about it the sooner you will be empowered to help protect the Owens Valley. I have written below about three Water Agreement issues of immediate concern to the Bristlecone Chapter. There are many others, however, and the Chapter encourages readers to choose their own to learn about.

### LADWP's proposed 2000-2001 pumping program

Although the runoff year is already 5 months old, Inyo County and LADWP have yet to agree on a pumping program. LADWP has reduced its proposal from 93,000 acre feet to approximately 70,000 acre feet, which is a step in the right direction. There is still a major disagreement, however, concerning operation of the McNally canals near Laws. Water must be run in the canals to recharge the area's aquifer. LADWP, however, doesn't plan to run water this year. Inyo County Supervisors have stated that they will take this matter to dispute resolution if not resolved by the Standing Committee meeting of Sept. 14. The Supervisors deserve

commendation for taking this position and we hope you will communicate your support to them.

### Secrecy in the Technical Group

The Technical Group is composed of technical experts from both Inyo County and LADWP and acts as the primary entity responsible for implementing the Water Agreement, EIR, and MOU. When the Water Agreement was finally accepted by the Court in 1997, meetings of the Technical Group became subject to the Brown Act. This California law requires legislative bodies and their subcommittees to open their meetings to the public. To avoid public scrutiny, however, the Technical Group has resorted to discussing contentious issues (such as LADWP's proposed pumping program) at "staff meetings" which are not open to the public. We believe in at least one case the entire membership of the Technical Group attended the "staff meeting". The Bristlecone Chapter has raised objections to this practice to the Inyo County Supervisors verbally and in writing. We expect a written response from the Supervisors in September.

The legacy of public mistrust of both LADWP and the Inyo County Water Department (ICWD) is great, and, in my view justified. Only when the Technical Group conducts all its business in public will there be any way for the credibility of the two agencies and by implication the entire Water Agreement to be restored.

### Proposed pumping of "Off" status wells

LADWP proposes, as part of its 2000-2001 pumping plan to operate 5 wells that are actually in "OFF" status according to the Green Book. Pumping wells in "OFF" status is prohibited in the Water Agreement. ICWD revealed at the Water Commission meeting of June 12, 2000, however, that it had, in effect, invited LADWP to propose a cooperative study in which the pumps in question would have to be turned on. This invitation was offered at a closed "staff meeting" (see above) and is an example of why

ICWD has so little credibility and why it is so important that such "staff meetings" be open to the public.

LADWP has now submitted a proposed protocol for this "study" but space doesn't permit elaboration of our numerous objections to it. The Chapter's view is that the study would result in violation of the Drought Recovery Policy, pose risks to springs and seeps, violate any meaningful definition of "conservative management", and establish the dangerous precedent that "OFF" status wells can be pumped for export by the simple expedient of treating the pumping as a cooperative study. Neither ICWD nor LADWP have shown that the information to be gained from this "study" is important enough to justify the policy violations, risks to native vegetation and establishment of the bad precedent that the "study" would cause. Should the Technical Group approve this "study", the Chapter will communicate our many concerns to the Inyo County Supervisors, who have veto power through their vote in the Standing Committee.

.....Daniel Pritchett

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## LEGISLATION

### Support Private Forest Reform

Clearcutting replaces complex, diverse forests where hundreds of different plant and animal species live with even-aged lumber farms. It causes erosion and landslides that pollute our water and 85% of California's annual water runoff originates in its forested watersheds! Thirty six million acres (of our state's 101 million acres) are privately owned forest and rangeland, regulated by the California Board of Forestry. 3.7 million acres are owned by the timber industry. Sierra Pacific Industries, owning 40.5 % of these acres, has increased clearcutting by approximately 2500% since 1992.

The California Forest Practice Act and Forest Practices Rules govern logging on both

industrial and non-industrial forest lands. While landowners have a right to use their private property, they must do so without harming public values such as water, fish and wildlife. Excessive clearcutting threatens these precious public resources.

CNPS supports AB 717, a bill authored by California Assembly Speaker Pro Tem Fred Keeley of Santa Cruz, which institutes a temporary ban on the practice of clearcutting and appoints an independent panel to examine complex issues related to the economy and ecology of logging in the state's forests.

If you would like to learn more about this bill and perhaps be willing to write, FAX, or email our legislators and the governor in support of this bill, please call or email me for more information, sample letters and appropriate addresses. Remember, you'll never know if what you did mattered, but you will know what you didn't, didn't.

Sherryl Taylor  
Legislative Chair  
Sherrylt76@aol.com  
760-924-8742

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## FIELD TRIP REPORTS

### *Dry Lakes Plateau, Bodie Hills - June 10-11*

Far off on the northeastern edge of California lies a broad volcanic plateau nestled between the Bodie Hills and the Nevada border. The Sweetwater Mountains dominate the northwest horizon while Beauty Peak gazes down from the east. Signs of prehistoric people are numerous and a mild breeze drifts over the hills as Pronghorn Antelope graze across the Dry Lakes and adjoining uplands.

Into this serene landscape rumbles a convoy of eight 4WD vehicles, led by botanist Anne Halford and archeologist Kirk Halford. CNPS members from as far as Sand Diego and Sacramento, and as near as Bishop and Bodie

have traveled to this remote location to observe a relatively undisturbed piece of the Great Basin flora, and witness evidence of 10,000 years of human habitation.

Our first stop led us to examine discreet populations of Mono Phacelia (*Phacelia monoensis*) and Bodie Hills draba (*Cusickiella quadricostata*) growing on soft friable Rhyolitic clays along the rugged road up to the plateau. These two diminutive plants, both with tiny yellow flowers, were the first rare species encountered. We take a quick lunch surrounded by Long Valley milk-vetch (*Astragalus johannis-howellii*), followed by a short hike down to the dry lakebed. Here Anne located a few rare individuals of the Great Basin vernal pool species; combleaf (*Polycytenium williamsii*). This is the first time in 9 years that these lakes have been dry so we feel lucky to have spotted a few of these small white-flowered endemics.

Proceeding farther north, we park our vehicles on the Nevada Border next to some conveniently located tall stands of mountain mahogany. Soon we're striking out west across the rugged basalt plateau. We step over *Penstemon humilis* as we're treated to absorbing lectures on packrat middens which record the arrival of pinyon pine here almost 5,000 years ago. We stumble over *Senecio multilobatis* and find mounds of *Polygala intermontana* which are relatively infrequent in the Bodie Hills. Sitting on a ridge overlooking an unusual sedge bog, we're prompted to think of the detailed long-term climatic information that is buried there and revealed by recent core samples.

After the day's explorations, we settle in to camp on a broad plane at 8,000; leading down to the lakebed. Kirk shows us secret grinding slicks and other tools used by ancient campers. Some of the group prefer to explore nearby water tanks effaced by the graffiti of more contemporary campers, the Basque, Peruvian, and French shepherds stationed here since the turn of the last century.

The chilly evening is spent recounting various earthquake anecdotes around the fire while sharing some splendid lemon pound birthday cake.

Up bright and early, our objective is to casually hike up to Beauty Peak. On top at 9,018' we're dazzled by about a 378 degree view, as a few young Bodie Hills Arabis (*Arabis bodiensis*) look on. Eventually we make our way back down to the vehicles, satisfied and thankful for the opportunity to explore such a culturally rich and botanically diverse region. Clouds of road dust drift across the Dry Lakes Plateau as we wind our way back downhill.

.....Michael Honer

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#### SNARL/Valentine Camp - July 16

Nine of us met at Sierra Nevada Aquatic Research Lab (SNARL) on Sunday morning, July 16th, for a double feature tour of Valentine Eastern Sierra Reserve (VESR) led by Ann Howald and Mark Bagley. In the meadows along Convict Creek at SNARL, Ann showed us the only California population of the scalloped leaved lousewort (*Pedicularis crenulata*), one she has monitored since 1978. This is the only known extant population of this species west of the Rockies. The number of individual plants has remained about the same within the fenced boundaries of SNARL where they are protected from grazing.

Our second feature began with lunch at the beautiful new Education Center at Valentine Camp, which houses the children's outdoor education programs held here in summer and fall. Ann Howald published A Flora of Valentine Eastern Sierra Reserve in 1980. Her updated version, published this year, is available from SNARL\*. Ann and Mark's tour of the five habitats of Valentine Camp was enlivened by Ann's stories from her botanizing there since the early seventies.

After stopping to view the pretty bog wintergreen (*Pyrola asarifolia*) near Mammoth Creek, we emerged into perhaps the only ungrazed montane meadow in the Eastern Sierra. Among the mid-season blooms the most memorable were the abundant Kelley's lilies (*Lilium kelleyanum*). As we climbed up a sagebrush scrub knoll, crowned by a dramatic Jeffrey pine, the "grandmother tree," we walked through meadow lupine (*Lupinus polyphyllus*.) up to our chins. Crossing the north slope, below Lake Mary Road, we encountered the Juniper springs which provide moisture to this slope and to the meadow below. The scent of tobacco brush (*Ceanothus velutinus*) and berry-laden greenleaf manzanita (*Arctostaphylos patula*) indicated we had entered the reserve's montane chapparel. As we descended into the riparian habitat and the coniferous forest beyond, we caught sight of a lovely cascade on Mammoth Creek.

Visiting Valentine camp is a special opportunity. Thanks to Ann and Mark for a terrific tour, to Ann for her longterm work at both VESR sites, and to Mrs. Valentine for her foresight and generosity in giving Valentine Camp to the UC Natural Reserve System.

\*It can be downloaded for free at <http://nrs.ucop.edu/reserves/snarl/html>.

.....Sherryl Taylor

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### BOOK REVIEW

"Drowning the Dream, California's Water Choices at the Millennium" was published on February 28 by Praeger. Reviews of this environmental history of the state (that focuses on water choices shaping population growth patterns and environmental change) are being posted on a webpage at <http://users.qnet.com/~carle>.  
David Carle  
[carle@qnet.com](mailto:carle@qnet.com)

### NEW MEMBERS

The Bristlecone Chapter would like to welcome the following new members

Paul McFarland  
Jenny Klingler  
Shalle Wells  
Patricia Smoogen  
Heather Swartz  
Frederic Heim

Thank you for your many renewals and newsletter subscriptions.

.....Kathy Duvall

**Newsletter Deadline: October 25th**

## 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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