

DEDICATED TO THE PRESERVATION OF THE CALIFORNIA NATIVE FLORA

The California Native Plant Society

Volume 22 No. 6
November/December 2002

NEXT CHAPTER MEETING

The November meeting will be our annual Potluck and Slide Show, on Wednesday, November 20th at the Methodist Church on School Street in Big Pine. The potluck set-up will start at 6:00 with dinner at 6:30 p.m.. Please bring a dish to share and some slides of plants and/or adventures during the past year.

NEXT CHAPTER BOARD MEETING

The next Chapter Board meeting will be at Kathy Duvall's residence on Tuesday, November 12th at 7 p.m. All are welcome to attend.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE:

Our congratulations go to Mary Ann Henry, an esteemed CNPS Fellow and Bristlecone Chapter member, who is receiving special recognition for her botanical and conservation work in Short Canyon. On November 3 she was honored with the dedication of a bronze plaque near the mouth of Short Canyon commemorating her many years of floristic work there. Her survey of the Flora of Short Canyon, where the southern Sierra meets the Mojave Desert, "provided the basis for its designation by the BLM as an Area of Critical Environmental Concern," according to Ridgecrest member Charlotte Goodson.

Since being named a CNPS Fellow in 1996, Mary Ann has kept busy "educating the young about plants and healthy habitats through the Sand Canyon Environmental Education Program (SEEP), supporting protection of the desert tortoise, participating in wildflower walks, and being the lead botanist and guiding spirit of the Maturango Museum's annual Spring Wildflower Show," says Charlotte. Thank you, Mary Ann, for your many years of important work.

Using the inspiration of Mary Ann Henry, Mary DeDecker and other local desert conservationists, Bristlecone Chapter members should strengthen their efforts to preserve California's desert areas. Thanks to pressure from George Bush (who never met a bad environmental policy he didn't embrace) and from rabid off-road enthusiasts, many environmental laws protecting the desert are on the chopping block, and BLM policies protecting certain areas may soon be reversed, according to an LA Times article from Oct. 28. The BLM is preparing six plans that will dictate how it manages the 11 million desert acres under its control, and according to the Sierra Club's Eldon Hughes, "This is the template for the future of the desert, and it's a bad template... If it's a model for the West, then we are in serious trouble." The best way we can honor important people like Mary Ann Henry and Mary DeDecker is to be diligent and stay involved in the environmental battles being fought all around us. If we really care then we should stay informed, write letters, attend meetings, and speak out for the plants and animals of the places we love.

.....Stephen Ingram

UPCOMING EVENTS

MARY DEDECKER BOTANICAL GRANT PROGRAM

The Bristlecone Chapter is requesting applications for its small grants program in memory of renowned local botanist, Mary DeDecker. This program is a fitting way to remember Mary's many contributions to the people and plants of the Eastern Sierra. The program will award up to two grants of not more than \$500 each.

The purpose of these grants is to facilitate research and projects that increase the understanding and appreciation of our region's native flora and ecosystems. There are a wide range of appropriate possible subjects for funding, from basic taxonomic or ecological research to a school garden featuring native plants and their pollinators. The only requirement is that the project be relevant to the native plants of the northern Mojave Desert, Sierra Nevada, and Great Basin portions of eastern California.

The deadline for submission of grant proposals is **December 13, 2002**. To receive guidelines for the grant application or for more information, contact Karen Ferrell-Ingram at (760) 387-2913 or at ingram@telis.org.

MARY DEDECKER NATIVE PLANT GARDEN NEWS

If you have not yet seen the new Mary DeDecker Native Plant Garden, located north of the Eastern California Museum in Independence, or if you have not been there lately, it is worth the visit.

New Plants: The Mary DeDecker Native Plant Garden now boasts yearling plants! During the spring and summer, several of these natives bloomed. Thanks to volunteer efforts, more plants were put in the ground recently, so the garden continues to grow in more ways than one. Plants on site include many of the species produced and sold by the chapter during the fall plant sale. Key players in this effort are Karen Ferrell-Ingram and Jerry Zatorski. Many thanks to all the volunteers who have helped with the planting and maintenance.

BLM Donation: Last spring, the garden received a generous donation from the California state office of the Bureau of Land Management (BLM). The Bristlecone Chapter gratefully acknowledges the donation, and the garden committee has discussed ways to put the money to work. Currently: we are in the process of obtaining identification tags (with both Latin and common names) to place near each plant; a brochure is being assembled; tools are being purchased; a kiosk has been designed and should soon be constructed; a commemorative plaque has been discussed; and ideas about benches have been explored.

Dedication of the Garden: Mark your calendars for Saturday May 10, 2003, 1 p.m. On this date, the garden will be dedicated to Mary DeDecker, a pre-eminent local botanist and our chapter's founder (among other distinctions). Plans are being developed for

the celebration, which will include presentations, music, light refreshments, garden tours, and more. A late afternoon barbecue hosted by the Friends of the Eastern California Museum is set to continue the festivities. Additional details will be available in future issues of the chapter newsletter.

Help is always welcome! If you would like to volunteer with any of the activities, please contact Heidi Hopkins (heidimono@aol.com), Jerry Zatorski (jerryzat@yahoo.com), or Sally Manning (smanning@telis.org). Also, please consider a donation to assist with garden improvements.

.....Sally Manning

CANDIDATES FOR CHAPTER OFFICERS

The following have been nominated for positions as Bristlecone Chapter officers for 2003. Please come to the November meeting and participate in supporting our volunteers.

President - Stephen Ingram
 Vice President - Sherryl Taylor
 Treasurer - Rosanne Higley
 Secretary - Sally Manning

FIELD TRIP REPORTS

Emerald Lake, September 7

On a fresh morning after a day of rainfall, a group of people who wanted a glimpse into the end of summer met for a quiet morning of botanizing with Diane Payne. We drove up to the Emerald Lake trail head at 8,960 feet just west of Mammoth Lakes. The air was crisp as we sampled tasty red currants and hiked up Cold Water Creek finding blooms still hanging onto brook saxifrage (*Saxifraga odontoloma*) and the larger mountain monkey-flower (*Mimulus tilingii*). We followed an American dipper up the creek and found four specimens of the APIACEAE family: Brewer angelica (*Angelica breweri*), Parish yampah (*Perideridia parishii*), cow parsnip (*Heracleum lanatum*) and ranger buttons (*Sphenosciadium capitellatum*). Along the trail we enjoyed the acrobatics of the White-breasted Nuthatch and the Brown Creeper as they poked into tree bark looking for insects. Emerald Lake was sitting quietly among whitebark pine (*Pinus Albicaulis*), mountain hemlock (*Tsuga mertensiana*), white heather (*Cassiope mertensiana*) and mountain heather (*Phyllodoce breweri*).

I continued hiking up to beautiful Sky Meadows just below the pale gray granite of Mammoth Crest, another 900 feet altitude gain. At this elevation the little Sierra gentian (*Gentianopsis holopetala*) was blooming amid the dried grasses in the meadow. Clarks Nutcrackers noisily pecked the whitebark pine cones looking for seeds to tide them over for their winter stay in the mountains. Nearby, huge white clouds were forming and dissipating. Late summer and early autumn are beautiful transition times in the Sierra. Thank you Diane.

.....Kathy Duvall

CONSERVATION

Who remembers?

Did you ever see Hines Spring flow? Do you remember Black Rock Springs when it was still a spring? Did you ever see all the alkali sycamore in the Bairs-George wellfield before it died?

The destruction of these and similar areas began about 30 years ago with groundwater pumping to fill the second barrel of the LA Aqueduct.

The Inyo-LA Long Term Water Agreement/EIR/MOU (LTWA) arose from the indignation of those who witnessed this devastation.

A generation has passed and many of the witnesses are no longer with us. Many people today have no idea of how much has been lost. Inevitably, public indignation has diminished. The extent of the diminishment was demonstrated in recent meetings in which both Inyo County and LADWP officials discussed exempting wells at Big Pine (for the ditch system) and Laws (for irrigation water) as though this were a perfectly reasonable course of action, despite the fact that the county did initially state their opposition to well exemptions.

Exempting a well means the well will not be subject to the ON/OFF provisions of the LTWA; in effect, the well will be pumped regardless of environmental impacts it may cause. Exemption of a well represents an abandonment of the environmental protection goals of the LTWA for the area affected by the well (a good example is in the Thibault-Sawmill wellfield, where alkali meadow is now turning into shrubland due to pumping of the exempt wells for the Black Rock fish hatchery).

Although the issues at Big Pine and Laws are complex, in both cases LADWP has failed to

carry out its commitments for mitigation and irrigation under the LTWA. And in both cases Inyo County is seriously considering abandoning the environmental protection goals of the LTWA by exempting wells as part of plans to induce LADWP to carry out its mitigation/irrigation obligations. How sad that our Supervisors do not seem to see the absurdity of using mitigation/irrigation projects required by the LTWA to allow further environmental degradation due to groundwater pumping!

The LTWA mandates both protection of native vegetation and implementation of mitigation/irrigation projects. It does not require one at the expense of the other. The LTWA was intended to avoid pumping impacts, not to cause new ones!

Please let your supervisor know that any "solution" to the problems at Big Pine and Laws which requires exempting wells is no solution at all.

.....Daniel Pritchett

CARMA Update

According Inyo National Forest spokesperson Chaz O'Brien, the release of the Draft Environmental Impact Statement for the ill-conceived proposal to build a large observatory at an undisturbed site in the Inyo Mountains (a.k.a. the CARMA project, discussed in this newsletter since 1998) is now tentatively scheduled for mid-December. For those of you who care about the Inyo Mountains, it will be important to get a copy of this document and let Inyo National Forest know your comments. Comments will be taken verbally at a public hearing and may also be submitted in writing. If we fail to let our views be known it this will be a black Christmas for the Inyo Mountains. Please monitor the chapter website (www.bristleconecnps.org/conservation) for the latest information

.....Daniel Pritchett

LORP Draft EIR Released November First

On September 12th Judge Ed Denton ordered LADWP and Inyo County to release by November 1st the Draft EIR for the Lower Owens River Project (LORP). Judge Denton's order, in the case brought by the Owens Valley Committee (OVC) and Sierra Club, stated that if it was not released by that date the court will issue an Order to Show Cause why it was not released and why the Court should not impose a penalty. This has finally resulted in the release of the document on November 1st, more than two years after the original due date.

The LORP calls for re-watering of the river between the LA Aqueduct intake located north of Independence and the river delta Approximately 60 miles to the south. A stretch of river that the City dried up early in the last century. Release of the LORP Draft EIR has been delayed due to LADWP's insistence on tripling the size of the project's pumpback station that will return most of the river water to the aqueduct just before it flows to Owens Lake. The larger pumpback is a unilateral change to the Water Agreement by LADWP that would prevent high springtime flows from reaching the 1,200 acre delta wetlands that the City has committed to improving. Additional causes of delay appear to be the City's lack of management commitment and inability to provide a detailed project description. Of course, implementing the LORP will use a lot of water that LADWP could otherwise export, so they have a financial incentive to delay the project.

Although the Inyo County Water Department has pressed hard to get an adequate project description and environmental analysis, the OVC and Sierra Club are very concerned there will be some issues not properly addressed by the Draft EIR. Interested parties will have until **January 14, 2003** to comment on the draft document. The OVC and Sierra Club will be organizing an effort to do an in depth analysis of the Draft EIR and provide information to

interested people to help them in their personal comments. This is an important project, if you're interested in helping out with the analysis or want to comment please contact Mark Bagley (760-873-5326 or <m.bagley2@verizon.net>) or check the OVC web site (www.ovcweb.com).

Information on obtaining a copy of the Draft EIR (either a hard copy or CD Rom) is posted on the OVC web site and Inyo County Water Department website (www.inyowater.org), including a link to the document on the web. It can be reviewed at Inyo County public libraries, the Inyo County Water (163 May St., Bishop) and Planning departments (168 North Edwards, Independence), the Owens Valley Indian Water Commission (46 Tu Su Lane, Bishop), LADWP offices (300 Mandich, Bishop or 111 N. Hope St., Room 518, Los Angeles), and EPA Library (75 Hawthorne St., 13th Floor, San Francisco).

.....Mark Bagley

Book Review

Wildflowers of the Eastern Sierra and adjoining Mojave Desert and Great Basin, by Laird R. Blackwell. 2002. Lone Pine Publishing, Canada. 255 pages. \$16.95.

It's exciting to have a new book for our botanically complex area that is informative, has great photos, and is written with an obvious love and knowledge of the plants.

Wildflowers of the Eastern Sierra is organized ecologically into four elevational zones, or habitats, that encompass the Eastern Sierra region - Mojave Desert Scrub, Great Basin Sagebrush Steppe, Mixed Conifer Forest, and Alpine habitats. It covers the region from Horseshoe Meadow Road in the south to the Mt. Rose area in the north, and from 3700' to the Sierra peaks. In other words, the book includes the common shrubs and perennials from scarlet locoweed (*Astragalus coccineus*) to sky pilot (*Polemonium eximium*).

The Introduction includes an excellent map of the area covered, a diagram of the elevational zones, text on how to use the book, regional photos, points of interest with roads and trails (which also appear as a list in the back of the book), and a section on flower anatomy. For each of the four main habitats, there are more detailed descriptions of that environment with representative photos, and place names given.

Within each of the four elevational zones, plants are organized by color and number of petals. For each of the 366 species described, there are one or two color photos, description of the plant and flowers (with important diagnostic characters in bold), origin and meaning of the Latin names, habitats and elevations where the plant occurs with some specific examples of where and when to find the plant in flower. For those species with closely related (and possibly confusing) taxa, there is often a photo and basic description of how the two plants differ.

The author goes beyond just giving basic descriptions of the Eastern Sierra's common and showy wildflowers. The text is colorful and imaginative, and the etymology of the scientific names give the descriptions a thoroughness that adds to the reader's appreciation of the plant. For example, in the Mixed Conifer Forest section, "*Pedicularis* means 'lousewort,' referring to an old superstition that animals that eat some species of *Pedicularis* become susceptible to lice infestation. *Groenlandica* means 'of Greenland,' in reference to the circumboreal distribution of this species, though it does not actually occur in Greenland." (pg. 185).

Because the terms used are not technical, this book will be easy for anyone to use, and because it includes interesting text with name origins, and suggested drives and walks for wildflower viewing, this book should appeal to a broad range of plant enthusiasts. *Wildflowers of the Eastern Sierra* is a very informative and well-designed field guide that should be a great companion no matter where you are in the Eastern Sierra region.

Dr. Laird Blackwell is a Humanities professor at Sierra Tahoe College, and has taught wildflower classes for 25 years. He is also the author of "*Wildflowers of the Tahoe Sierra*" (1997), "*Wildflowers of the Sierra Nevada and the Central Valley*" (1999), and "*Wildflowers of Mount Rainier*" (2000).

.....Stephen Ingram

Next Newsletter Deadline: December 31

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 _____ .

Bristlecone Chapter Directory (Partial List)

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

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 Vice President - Sherryl Taylor (760) 924-8742
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 Treasurer - Rosanne Higley (760) 924-5426
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 Conservation - Daniel Pritchett - (760) 873-8943
 Plant Communities - Sally Manning - (760) 873-3790
 Invasive Exotics - Brian Cashore - (760) 387-2789
 Legislation - Sherryl Taylor - (760) 924-8742
 Education - Lora Rischer (760) 872-4835
 Programs - Stephen Ingram - (760) 387-2913
 Field Trips - Alisa Ellsworth (760) 387-2081
 Native Plant Sales - Karen Ferrell-Ingram - (760) 387-2913
 DeDecker Native Plant Garden - Jerry Zatorski (760) 872-3818
 Publicity - Heidi Hopkins - (760) 647-6271
 Historian - Sacha Stuart - (760) 876-8012
 Librarian - EvelynMae Nikolaus - (760) 878-2149
 Rare Plant Committee - 2002 Chair. - Anne Halford
 Book Sales - Sue Weis (760) 387-2349

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 (www.bristleconecnps.org) 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: fkhalford@earthlink.net

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