Bristlecone Chapter

Next Chapter Meeting
The next chapter meeting will be on Wednesday, September 24, at 7:00 P.M. at the “Green Church” which is at the corner of Benton Crossing Rd. and Hwy #395 near Mammoth. Mary DeDecker Botanical Grant recipient Daisie Huang will present a talk on her research titled “Untangling relationships in the perennial lupines of California.”

All are welcome to attend.
If you are planning to attend our September 24th meeting at the Green Church and can help our chapter out by bringing cookies, please contact Sherryl Taylor at staylor@npgcable.com or 924-8742. Thanks a lot!

Next Board Meeting

The Bristlecone Chapter Board will meet on Wednesday, September 17th at 7:00 p.m. at the USFS/BLM Conference Room, 351 Pacu Lane in Bishop. Everyone is welcome.

PRESIDENT’S MESSAGE

This past August, when I should have hiking or fishing somewhere up in the high country, I often found myself instead someplace in the hot valley bottom, as when doing our volunteer Fish Slough Patrol, or birding at Klondike Lake or Tinemaha Reservoir. But the Eastern Sierra never ceases to surprise and enchant me, and my reward for visiting such places in the hot summer sun was getting to know some of the special flora of our lowland alkaline marshes and meadows.

In recent weeks I’ve had the pleasure of seeing delicate pink-flowered centaury (Centaurium exaltatum), two species of bird’s-beak (Cordylanthus maritimus and C. ramosus), several species of stinkweeds (Cleomella), the white-flowered rabbitbrush (Chrysothamnus albidus), a rare hawkweed (Crepis runcinata ssp. hallii), Nuttall’s sunflower (Helianthus nuttallii), the delicate alkali cordgrass (Spartina gracilis), and an unusual sedge (Fimbristylis thermalis), in addition to the more widespread and abundant halophytes characteristic of saline soils. The most curious and noteworthy surprise for me was seeing a member of the Rose Family (Ivesia kingii) in this exceptionally arid, alkaline habitat.

Why do so many of these plants flower at the hottest time of the year? How do their seeds germinate and establish in such highly saline soils? There are many interesting questions about the ecology and physiology of this flora that have yet to be fully answered. Let’s hope we have...
the opportunity to learn more about them.

I suspect that these alkaline marshes and meadows were once much more widespread throughout the Owens Valley, but early records are sketchy. What’s clear now is that water diversions, ground-water pumping, and agriculture have greatly reduced the extent of these communities.

They are botanically interesting and worth preserving. More than ever I appreciate the sustained, concerted efforts of the many members of the Bristlecone Chapter who have worked hard for their conservation.

........Steve McLaughlin

UPCOMING EVENTS

Annual Native Plant Sale Saturday
September 20th: 9:00-11:00 am at the
White Mtn. Research Station
A wonderful array of native plants are
growing and awaiting their garden homes.
Please find the attached insert for the species
we should have available.

October 26, Saturday. Highway Clean-
up. Leader: Scott Hetzler. Meet at the
intersection of Highway 395 and Pine Creek
Rd., west of 395, at 9.00 AM. We will try to
be done by 1:00 PM. For more information
contact Scott at 873-8392.

FIELD TRIP POLICIES: For all field trips,
be sure to bring plenty of water, lunch, good
walking shoes or boots, and appropriate clothing
for hot sun and/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 no pets.
For general questions on field trips please call
Sue Weis at (760) 873-3485 or
sueweis@aol.com

FIELD TRIP REPORTS

Field Trip Report: Glass Mountain Ridge,
July 19, 2008. Michael Honer led a group
14 participants to the eastern section of the
Glass Mountains. Michael conducted a
thorough floristic inventory of the Glass
Mountain region for his master’s thesis at
Rancho Santa Ana Botanic Garden. He has
documented over 500 plant taxa from this
range, and continues to find new taxa not
previously recorded for the area, including
Penstemon floridus and a species of bird’s-
beak (Cordylanthus kingii?). The trip was
made a little more exciting by rainstorms the
previous week that had eroded deep gullies
into the 4WD roads. From the top of the
ridge, on an unnamed volcanic cone, we
enjoyed incredible views of the Long Valley
Caldera, Mammoth Mountain, the Minarets,
and the Sweetwater Mountains. While the
flora was somewhat past its spring/early
summer peak, we still found many species in
flower, including among others Castilleja
linariifolia, Ericameria suffruticosa,
Eriogonum umbellatum Eriophyllum
lanatum, Senecio multilobatus, Lupinus
lepidus, Monardella odoratissima,
Penstemon speciosus, and Silene
bernardina.

........Steve McLaughlin

NEW MEMBERS

The Bristlecone Chapter warmly welcomes
the following new members!

Frank Lafon
Big Pine, CA

Lynne Thompson
Ridgecrest, CA

Yvonne Wood, Bishop, CA
CONSERVATION

The Technical Group surpasses itself

A botanist friend (from Sacramento) recently passed through Owens Valley from Eastern Nevada, where she had learned for the first time about the ongoing Las Vegas water grab. My colleague was surprised and appalled that Las Vegas is now being allowed to dry up several valleys in eastern Nevada, just as Los Angeles was allowed to dry up Owens Valley a century ago. Her surprise surprised me, and reminded me that water politics is a profoundly radicalizing subject. Readers beware: if any of you still believe claims by Inyo County Supervisors and DWP that they take seriously their 'obligations to avoid groundwater pumping impacts under the California Environmental Quality act, read no further lest your naiveté be undermined!

I’ve complained in this newsletter (and elsewhere) for years regarding the pumping-induced drawdown in the Blackrock area which is destroying what used to be a large and beautiful alkali meadow. In July, 2007, our chapter sent a letter to the Inyo-LA Technical Group calling its attention to this problem and suggesting a simple, fair solution. The Technical Group finally put a discussion of this problem on its agenda in May, 2008, ten months after it received our letter.

Not surprisingly, no discussion occurred. The Technical Group, by its own admission, wasn’t prepared. That ten months wouldn’t be sufficient preparation time for the Technical Group to discuss a serious, obvious management problem is bad enough. Far worse is the fact that at the same meeting at which it was not prepared to discuss management problem we identified, the Technical Group had no reservations about agreeing on the 2008-2009 annual pumping program.

Think about this. How could the Technical Group possibly have been prepared to approve a pumping program when, by its own admission it wasn’t prepared to discuss its own data documenting a long-standing pumping management problem? It’s been apparent for a long time that the Technical Group essentially rubber-stamps DWP’s pumping plans each year, but this is the first time the superficiality of its “approval” has been so shamelessly displayed.

At its August meeting, I called the attention of the Inyo-LA Standing Committee to the Technical Group’s behavior and suggested that it reflected poorly on the Standing Committee itself. Members of the Technical Group, after all, work for institutions controlled by members of the Standing Committee. DWP general manager David Nahai responded by very politely asking that the Technical Group give the problem at Blackrock a higher priority.

Don’t hold your breath!

……..Daniel Pritchett, Conservation Chair

G. newberryi

Next Newsletter Deadline: October 28th
CALIFORNIA NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY - Membership Application

The California Native Plant Society is an organization of lay persons and professionals united by an interest in the plants of California. It is open to all. The society, working through its local chapters, seeks to increase the understanding of California's native flora and to preserve this rich resource for future generations. Varied interests are represented.

Name________________________ P.O. Box or Street________________________
City_________________________ State_________ Zip Code_______ Phone____________
I wish to be affiliated with the Bristlecone Chapter ☑. Other________________________

Membership Category

- Student, Limited Income $25.00
- Individual $45.00
- International $45.00
- Family, Group, or Library $75.00
- Supporting $75.00
- Plant Lover $100.00
- Patron $300.00
- Benefactor $600.00
- Mariposa Lily $1,500.00

Bristlecone Chapter Directory

President – Steve McLaughlin (760) 938-3140
Vice President – Sherryl Taylor (760) 924-8742
Secretary – Lizzy Wenk – (760) 873-6263
Treasurer - Rosanne Higley (760) 387-2803
Membership – Diana Pietrasanta - (760) 873-6262
Newsletter Editor - Anne Halford - (760) 873-6714
Conservation - Daniel Fritchett - (760) 873-8943
Plant Communities - Sally Manning - (760) 873-3790
Education - Edyth Irvine (760) 924-5778
Programs – Cheryl Chipman (760) 760-872-7636
Field Trips – Sue Weis (760) 873-3485
Decker Native Plant Garden – Jerry Zatorski (760) 872-3818
Publicity – Sally Gaines (760) 935-4088
Historian – Ann Fulton (760) 873-9261
Librarian - EvelynMae Nikolaus - (760) 878-2149
Rare Plant Committee - 2008 Chair. – Kathleen Nelson (760) 873-1095
Plant Sale Committee – Anne Halford, Diana Pietrasanta, Sherryl Taylor (924-8742), Denise Waterbury (873-4344)
Book Sales - Sue Weis (760) 873-3485
Posters – Stephen Ingram (760) 387-2913
Kathy LaShure, Creosote Ring Sub-chapter Coordinator, (760) 377-4541

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: kasch@cebridge.net

The California Native Plant Society
Bristlecone Chapter
P.O. Box 364
Bishop, CA 93515-0364
PERMIT NO. 47
Plant Sale will be held on Saturday, September 20 from 9:00-11:00 am at the White Mtn. Research Station (3000 East Line St., Bishop).

Achnatherum speciosum
Ceanothus leucodermis
Cercocarpus ledifolius
Chilopsis linearis
Datura wrightii
Elymus elymoides
Encelia actoni
Ephedra nevadensis
Eriogonum elatum
Eriogonum fasciculatum v. polifolium
Eriogonum nudum v. westonii
Eriogonum umbellatum v. nevadense
Erysimum capitatum
Forestiera pubescens
Koeleria macrantha
Lepidium fremontii
Lupinus excubitus
Monardella odoratissima
Oenothera caespitosa ssp. Marginata
Oenothera elata
Oenothera xylocarpa
Penstemon fruticiformis
Penstemon floridus v. austinii
Penstemon floridus v. floridus
Penstemon incertus
Penstemon patens
Penstemon rostriflorus
Pinus jeffreyi
Psorothamnus arborescens
Purshia tridentata
Rhamnus californica
Salvia dorrii
Sphaeralcea ambigua
Sporobolus airoides
Stanleya elata
Stanleya pinnata
Xylorhiza tortifolia

Desert needlegrass
Chaparral whitethorn
Mountain mahogany
Desert willow
Jimson weed
Squirreltail
Bush sunflower
Desert ephedra
Tall buckwheat
California buckwheat
Nude buckwheat
Sulphur buckwheat
Western wallflower
Desert olive
Junegrass
Desert allysum
Inyo bush lupine
Mountain pennyroyal
Large white evening primrose
Hookers evening primrose
Wood fruit evening primrose
Desert mountain penstemon
Austin’s penstemon
Rose penstemon
Mojave beardtongue
Owens valley penstemon
Scarlet penstemon
Jeffrey pine
Indigo bush
Bitterbrush
Coffee berry
Purple sage
Apricot mallow
Alkali sacaton
Panamint prince’s plume
Desert prince’s plume
Mojave aster

For Questions call Diana Pietrasanta at 872-5028 or Anne Halford at 872-5022