

DEDICATED TO THE PRESERVATION OF THE CALIFORNIA
NATIVE FLORA

The California Native Plant Society



Bristlecone Chapter

Volume 29 No. 5
September/October 2008

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



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 _____

Bristlecone Chapter Directory

Membership Category

<input type="checkbox"/> Student, Limited Income	\$25.00
<input type="checkbox"/> Individual	\$45.00
<input type="checkbox"/> International	\$45.00
<input type="checkbox"/> Family, Group, or Library	\$75.00
<input type="checkbox"/> Supporting	\$75.00
<input type="checkbox"/> Plant Lover	\$100.00
<input type="checkbox"/> Patron	\$300.00
<input type="checkbox"/> Benefactor	\$600.00
<input type="checkbox"/> Mariposa Lily	\$1,500.00

CNPS - Membership Coordinator
 2707 K. Street, Suite 1
 Sacramento, CA 95816

President - Steve McLaughlin (760) 938-3140
 Vice President - Sherryl Taylor (760) 924-8742
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 Treasurer - Rosanne Higley (760) 387-2803
 → Membership - Diana Pietrasanta - (760) 873-6262
 Newsletter Editor - Anne Halford - (760) 873-6714
 Conservation - Daniel Pritchett - (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

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CNPS Bristlecone Chapter - 2008 Plant Sale Species List

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).

<i>Achnatherum speciosum</i>	Desert needlegrass
<i>Ceanothus leucodermis</i>	Chaparral whitethorn
<i>Cercocarpus ledifolius</i>	Mountain mahogany
<i>Chilopsis linearis</i>	Desert willow
<i>Datura wrightii</i>	Jimson weed
<i>Elymus elymoides</i>	Squirreltail
<i>Encelia actoni</i>	Bush sunflower
<i>Ephedra nevadensis</i>	Desert ephedra
<i>Eriogonum elatum</i>	Tall buckwheat
<i>Eriogonum fasciculatum v. polifolium</i>	California buckwheat
<i>Eriogonum nudum v. westonii</i>	Nude buckwheat
<i>Eriogonum umbellatum v. nevadense</i>	Sulphur buckwheat
<i>Erysimum capitatum</i>	Western wallflower
<i>Forestiera pubescens</i>	Desert olive
<i>Koeleria macrantha</i>	Junegrass
<i>Lepidium fremontii</i>	Desert allysum
<i>Lupinus excubitus</i>	Inyo bush lupine
<i>Monardella odoratissima</i>	Mountain pennyroyal
<i>Oenothera caespitosa ssp. Marginata</i>	Large white evening primrose
<i>Oenothera elata</i>	Hookers evening primrose
<i>Oenothera xylocarpa</i>	Wood fruit evening primrose
<i>Penstemon fruticiformis</i>	Desert mountain penstemon
<i>Penstemon floridus v. austinii</i>	Austin's penstemon
<i>Penstemon floridus v. floridus</i>	Rose penstemon
<i>Penstemon incertus</i>	Mojave beardtongue
<i>Penstemon patens</i>	Owens valley penstemon
<i>Penstemon rostriflorus</i>	Scarlet penstemon
<i>Pinus jeffreyi</i>	Jeffrey pine
<i>Psoralea argophylla</i>	Indigo bush
<i>Purshia tridentata</i>	Bitterbrush
<i>Rhamnus californica</i>	Coffee berry
<i>Salvia dorrii</i>	Purple sage
<i>Sphaeralcea ambigua</i>	Apricot mallow
<i>Sporobolus airoides</i>	Alkali sacaton
<i>Stanleya elata</i>	Panamint prince's plume
<i>Stanleya pinnata</i>	Desert prince's plume
<i>Xylorhiza tortifolia</i>	Mojave aster

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