

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

The California Native Plant Society



Bristlecone Chapter

**Volume 30 No. 5
September-October 2009**

Bristlecone Chapter meeting

7:00 p.m. Wednesday September 30, 2009, at the Green Church, on Benton Crossing Rd. and US 395, south of Mammoth. Botanist Ann Howald will present: "Have you seen this plant? Conservation of the rare *Pedicularis crenulata* at Convict Creek." The public is welcome.

Bristlecone Chapter Board Meeting

7:00 p.m. September 19th at the BLM/USFS building 351 Pacu Lane, Bishop. CNPS members welcome.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

A GLORIA-ous Week in the White Mountains

Our summer sojourn in the White Mountains, held from July 17 to July 19, was an unqualified success. Registration filled fast with a waiting list by early June; the event attracted CNPS members from throughout the state, and even a few folks from out-of-state. Everyone seemed to enjoy staying at the Crooked Creek Station—meals were particularly good. Jim Bishop of the Mount Lassen Chapter gave the Friday evening program on alpine ecology, and Adelia Barber of the University of California, Santa Cruz, described her demographic research on bristlecone pines on Saturday evening; both programs were very well-received. Special thanks to Sherryl Taylor for all her work on organizing the sojourn, with help from Kathy Duvall and Sue Weis. Thanks also to our field-trip leaders: Mark Bagley, Jim and Catie Bishop, Stephen Ingram, Daniel Pritchett, John Smiley, Sue Weis, and Jerry Zatorski.

I had the opportunity to stay up at Crooked Creek for most of the week immediately following the sojourn to participate in the 2009 field work for the GLORIA project (Global Observation Research Initiative in Alpine Environments). This global-change project is being conducted on mountain summits throughout the world. The basic thesis is that effects of climate change on vegetation should be most easily detected on alpine summits. Some alpine plants could be "pushed off the top" of mountains if warming temperatures exceed their tolerances; other species may be able to colonize summits from lower elevations. Summits are complex environments and many unexpected results will doubtless be observed.

Working above 12,000 feet elevation was a challenge, at least for me, but it was well worth it. I had the opportunity to better learn the fascinating alpine flora of the White Mountains, and I got to work with a great

group of people. GLORIA is long-term project. In 2009 we re-sampled plots first established in 2004. It will likely take several 5-year sampling intervals before the most important results are observed. Many of those who worked hard to initiate these studies will likely not be around when significant trends begin to emerge. Such long-term ecological research is as valuable as it is rare. It is difficult to fund, and hard to keep going. Perhaps the Bristlecone Chapter can have a role in helping to maintain this initiative in coming decades.

...Steve McLaughlin

UPCOMING EVENTS

Late Summer Bristlecone Chapter Field Trip

Sept 19, Saturday - Kennedy Meadows

Across the bridge and opposite the PCT is an area burned by the Manter fire. Last year, on September 25, we found more than twenty species blooming in this open area between the river and the ridge, some abundantly. There was a lot of small wildlife activity indicative of good feed. (A Mountain Bluebird played peek with us.) It should be interesting to find what plants we missed.

Easy walking. Altitude is about 6400 ft. Weather could be nice or not. The store will probably be open, but don't count on it. Bring the usual gear, water and food.

We will meet at the 395 / Kennedy Meadows road intersection at 10am. It's about 27 miles to the bridge. For more information contact Judy Breitenstein (760) 375-2158

October 18, Sunday. 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

NATIVE PLANT SALES

**Mammoth Regional Plant Sale - September 12th, 9-11 am—
107 Sugar Pine Drive, Mammoth**

**Bishop Annual Native Plant Sale - September 12th, 9-11 am—
White Mtn. Research Station, 3000 E. Line Street, Bishop**

**October 17, Saturday
Desert Botany: Boom or Bust**

The Southern California Botanists are hosting their 36th annual symposium Saturday October 17, 2009, at California State University, Fullerton. Registration information is available from Southern California Botanists, Dept. of Biology, California State University Fullerton, Fullerton, CA 92834-6850. Many talks concern energy development in our desert areas. Speakers and topics are as follows:

- Jim Andre** - Recent plant discoveries in the California deserts: Scratching the surface about to be bulldozed
- Greg Suba** - Renewable energy: Meeting the threat to California's desert rare plant habitat
- Matt Brooks** - Invasive plant species and their effects on desert plant communities
- Robert Webb** - Disturbance, vulnerability, and recoverability of soils and vegetation in the Mojave Desert
- Edward Bobich** - Responses of desert perennials to extreme drought: Are populations recovering from 2002?
- Kristeen Penrod** - Connectivity conservation in the California desert
- Christina Lund** - Management of threatened and endangered plants on BLM lands
- Bruce Pavlik** - Securing a future for California deserts

REPORTS

The Bristlecone Chapter sponsored several field trips in July but no field trip reports were received.

Bristlecone Chapter represented at Ecological Society of America meeting

In August, Daniel Pritchett and Sally Manning traveled to Albuquerque NM to speak at the annual

conference of the Ecological Society of America. The conference theme was "Ecological knowledge and a global sustainable society." A keynote speaker for the conference was Sandra Postel, a world-renown expert on the earth's threatened supply of fresh water.

Our talk was placed in a session titled, "Pulse of the Planet: Ecologists' diagnosis and treatment recommendations for global sustainability – public policy implications." The session was organized by Warren Hern, M.D., who argued that the growth and sprawl of urban areas mimicked the appearance and characteristics of cancerous tumors. Dr. Thomas Lovejoy, director of the Heinz Center, spoke about the numerous threats to human wellbeing and the ecology of the planet, and suggested that ecologists might be able to reverse some of the problems if more people recognize the current dire situation and are willing to put a large amount of effort into cleaning things up. Dr. Earl Ellis of U. of Maryland diagnosed earth as ill, but not dead yet. He compared the state of our planet to a human having a mid-life crisis, saying that rapid growth rates and unrestrained consumption habits are no longer appropriate, and we need to learn to live on, and take care of, a used planet that's slowing down in many ways. Ecological economist Dr. Marjan van den Belt presented a somewhat more upbeat diagnosis for humans and earth, suggesting people need to seek happiness as opposed to material wealth, and once better lives and lifestyles become the goal, models suggest the alternative approaches may lead to gains for both humans and the planet. The next speaker, Dr. William Rees, was pessimistic as he showed quantitative data on the magnitude of the reduction in human consumption necessary to avert ecological collapse. He concluded his talk with a quote: "The scientifically necessary is politically infeasible, but the politically feasible is scientifically irrelevant." The next speaker was a neuroscientist, Dr. Marc Pratarelli and the title of his talk was *Myopic Man: Human self-deception of risk as a factor in global climate change.* He argued that our culture has spent time and effort on publicizing the *effects* of global climate change, but has done a poor job of pointing to and dealing with the *cause*, namely ourselves. He argued that the human propensity for self-deception and denial is what need to be addressed.

The remaining four talks of the session were case studies. Daniel, giving his affiliation as Bristlecone Chapter, CNPS, presented the final talk of the session, "Groundwater extraction, fire, and desertification: A case study in Owens Valley, CA." He briefly reviewed the history of Los Angeles in Owens Valley and the goal of the Inyo/LA Water Agreement. He then used data from vegetation parcels in the Blackrock area to demonstrate failures by the parties to the Water Agreement (Inyo and LA) to implement management capable of achieving the goal. Although brute political force and self-deception were raised as plausible reasons for the agencies' failure, he suggested that the problem of difference of purpose may be the real root of the problem. Los Angeles, he said, has an unchanging long term goal in Inyo County: to take water. Inyo County is party to the Agreement, but Inyo County Supervisors have broad responsibilities, changing priorities and little formal education. They may not be inclined to put the necessary time and energy into obtaining the detailed legal, ecological, and political knowledge required to protect Inyo County's interests against Los Angeles' relentless quest for water. During the question period following his talk, audience members suggested that, if the politicians lacked the will to manage appropriately, perhaps it was time for CNPS to consider litigation.

The conference lasted all week, and there were other interesting sessions and discussions, including the importance of Traditional Ecological Knowledge, management of pinyon and sagebrush vegetation, the Public Trust Doctrine and how it might be utilized to better manage natural ecosystems, and the importance of the study of natural history in contrast to reductionist science. There was a midweek scientific plenary talk, given by Dr. Diane Pataki of UC Irvine. She presented preliminary data on the greenhouse gases (GHG) being emitted by the City of Los Angeles and stated that, even if the entire City were replaced by tropical rainforest, the change would only absorb about 3% of the GHG LA emits. By comparison, she noted that Albuquerque had many more characteristics of a sustainable city. Her talk concluded with a recommendation that LA could be replanted with either more water-efficient street trees, or people could be encouraged to landscape with food-producing plants. Those of us in the audience from Owens Valley saw the unintentional

irony in Dr. Pataki's suggestion. Food-producing plants in Owens Valley were dried up to provide water to LA almost a century ago. Part of that water, in turn, was used for food-producing orchards in San Fernando Valley until they, too, were sacrificed for Los Angeles' urban development.

... Sally Manning

CONSERVATION

Inyo County undermines the Water Agreement

The Inyo-LA Long Term Water Agreement (LTWA) and EIR are proactive documents and were presented to the Inyo County public as such. The LTWA and EIR repeatedly state the primacy of *avoiding* new pumping impacts, while mitigation after-the-fact is "secondary", a step to be taken only if the primary goal of avoidance has not been attained. This understanding of the primacy of avoidance was the basis of both the 2000 and 2001 challenges Inyo County made to DWP's proposed annual management plans. While the details of each challenge differed, they were both attempts to enforce the proactive nature of the LTWA by altering management before the need for mitigation arose.

In neither of its responses to these challenges did DWP acknowledge any proactive obligation to modify management to avoid a significant impact. In the 2000 case, DWP called the county's complaint an "unfulfilled mitigation measure", notwithstanding the fact that Inyo clearly did not call for mitigation at all. In the 2001 case DWP paraphrased the LTWA's goal by replacing the word "avoid" with the word "consider," and asserted the LTWA is useful only to determine after-the-fact if mitigation is necessary. DWP wrote,

"In short the Agreement requires the City to *consider* impacts of its groundwater pumping before implementing the annual plan, but does not authorize Inyo to restrict or limit the City's pumping before the fact. The Agreement instead sets forth the method for determining *after the fact* whether an impact to vegetation has occurred which is measurable, significant, and attributable to groundwater pumping." [Italics added for emphasis]

DWP's reading of the LTWA and associated documents as strictly "reactive," cuts the heart out of the LTWA. This reading originated under Mayor Hahn, whose appointees to the LA Board of Water and Power Commissioners were hostile to the idea of environmental protection. Mayor Hahn's successor (Antonio Villaraigosa) appointed self-proclaimed "environmentalists" to the LA Board of Water and Power Commissioners, and I hoped they might reconsider DWP's position. I wrote Standing Committee members on behalf of the Bristlecone Chapter, reminded them of this fundamental disagreement, cited the management problems at the Blackrock area as a case in point, and asked them to discuss the issue and see if they might reaffirm the proactive nature of the LTWA. Over two years have passed and the Standing Committee has yet to hold this discussion.

It now appears the discussion will never be held because there is no longer any disagreement: The "environmentalists" on the LA Board of Water and Power Commissioners have not rescinded their predecessors' reactive reading of the LTWA, while the Inyo County Water Department (ICWD) has adopted it. ICWD's position was revealed in a June 19, 2009, letter from ICWD Director Bob Harrington to DWP's Gene Coufal. Harrington's letter was an attempt to "address the issues" the Bristlecone Chapter had raised over two years earlier in a letter to the Technical Group. We had asked that management be modified in the Blackrock area because existing management (permanent water table drawdown) is inconsistent with the LTWA's requirement to *avoid* impacts. We did not assert a significant impact had occurred nor did we seek mitigation. Our request was analogous to arguments Inyo County itself made in its 2000 and 2001 challenges to DWP's annual management plan.

In his letter to Gene Coufal, ICWD Director Harrington ignored our central argument, that permanent drawdowns cannot be consistent with the LTWA's requirement to *avoid* pumping impacts. In fact, Harrington made no reference to *avoiding* impacts at all. He wrote, instead, that an investigation under Section IV.B. of the LTWA regarding measurability, attributability, and significance was appropriate. This procedure is used to determine if mitigation after-the-fact is needed.

Director Harrington has adopted DWP's reactive reading of the LTWA. In so doing, he and Inyo County Supervisors (without whose approval he doesn't act) have abandoned the most important legal victory Inyo County won in the 19 years of litigation which led to the LTWA. The truth of the cliché that environmental victories are temporary and defeats are permanent has never been clearer. Native plants and animals, as always, will suffer the consequences.

... Daniel Pritchett

Editor's Message

In the July-August issue, readers were asked to let me know whether they would prefer to continue receiving hard copy newsletters in the mail, or if they would prefer to receive an on-line version. To date, I have heard from 23 people. If you haven't already contacted me, please do. Please leave a message stating your preference at 760-873-8943 or email me at skypilots@telis.org.

Next Newsletter Deadline: October 28th

... Daniel Pritchett

Partial list of plants available at the Bishop Native plant sale, Spetember 12, 2009, 9:00AM at White Mountain Research Station

<i>Astragalus coccineus</i>	Scarlet milkvetch
<i>Asclepias speciosa</i>	Showy milkweed
<i>Calystegia longipes</i>	Morning glory
<i>Ceanothus gregii v. vestita</i>	Desert Ceanothus/Buckbrush
<i>Cercocarpus ledifolius</i>	Mountain mahogany
<i>Chilopsis linearis</i>	Desert willow
<i>Cryptantha confertifolia</i>	Yellow cryptantha
<i>Datura wrightii</i>	Jimson weed
<i>Encelia actoni</i>	Bush sunflower
<i>Eriastrum densifolium</i>	Heavenly blue
<i>Eriogonum inflatum</i>	Desert trumpet
<i>Eriogonum nudum</i>	Nude buckwheat
<i>Forestiera pubescens</i>	Desert olive
<i>Hespirostipa comata</i>	Needle & thread grass
<i>Leymus cinereus</i>	Great Basin wild rye
<i>Lepidium fremontii</i>	Desert allysum
<i>Lupinus argenteus</i>	Bush lupine

<i>Lupinus excubitus</i>	Inyo bush lupine
<i>Oenothera californica v. avita</i>	Evening primrose
<i>Oenothera xylocarpa</i>	Creeping white primrose
<i>Penstemon eatonii</i>	Firecracker penstemon
<i>Penstemon floridus v. austinii</i>	Austin's penstemon
<i>Penstemon floridus v. floridus</i>	Rose penstemon
<i>Penstemon fruticiformis</i>	Desert mountain penstemon
<i>Penstemon incertus</i>	Mojave penstemon
<i>Penstemon monoensis</i>	Mono penstemon
<i>Penstemon patens</i>	Owens Valley penstemon
<i>Penstemon rostriflorus</i>	Scarlet penstemon
<i>Phoenicaulis cheiranthoides</i>	Dagger-pod
<i>Psoralea argophylla</i>	Indigo bush
<i>Rhamnus californica</i>	Coffee berry
<i>Salvia dorrii</i>	Purple sage
<i>Sporobolus airoides</i>	Alkali sacaton
<i>Sphaeralcea ambigua</i>	Apricot mallow
<i>Stanleya elata</i>	Princes plume
<i>Stanleya pinnata</i>	Princes plume
<i>Xylorhiza tortifolia</i>	Mojave aster

MEMBERSHIP

The Bristlecone Chapter heartily welcomes the following new members:

- Liga Auzins - Monrovia CA
- Elaine Chow - Davis, CA
- Drew Foster - San Francisco, CA
- Michelle Raust - Turlock, CA
- Rosemarie Willimann - Bridgeport, CA

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 _____

The California Native Plant Society
Bristlecone Chapter
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Membership Category

<input type="checkbox"/> Student, Limited Income	\$25.00
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<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

Please make membership checks payable to and send to:

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

Bristlecone Chapter Directory

President – Steve McLaughlin (760) 938-3140
Vice President – Sally Manning (760) 873-3790
Secretary – Connie Spenger (760)-938-2159
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Membership – Sally Manning (760) 873-3790
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Education - VACANT
Programs – Sally Manning (760) 873-3790
Field Trips – Sue Weis (760) 873-3485
Decker Native Plant Garden – Jerry Zatorski (760) 872-3818
Publicity – Denise Waterbury (760) 873-7639
Historian – Ann Fulton (760) 873-9261
Librarian - EvelynMae Nikolaus - (760) 878-2149
Rare Plant Committee - 2008 Chair. – Anne Halford
(760) 872-5022
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 Daniel Pritchett, Newsletter Editor; 401 E. Yaney St., Bishop, CA 93514 - or email to skypilots@telis.org