DEDICATED TO THE PRESERVATION OF THE CALIFORNIA NATIVE FLORA

The California Native Plant Society



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FROM THE EDITOR

Next Newsletter Deadline: April 25, 2012 Send articles to: newsletter@bristleconecnps.org

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Newsletter editor sought – if interested, please contact the email address above.

March General Meeting

Wednesday, March 28, 2012, 7:00 pm at White Mountain Research Station, 3000 East Line St. in Bishop.

Mike Davis of the Eastern Sierra Land Trust will speak about restoration work at Benton Hot Springs, including clearing non-native plants and reintroducing native species. This will be a preliminary report as the work is still underway, but this represents an important partnership with a private landowner. If time permits, other habitat improvement and land acquisition projects of the Eastern Sierra Land Trust will be discussed.

March Board Meeting

Wednesday, March 21, 2012, 7:00 pm at the ESICE office, 512 N. 2nd St., Bishop. Members are welcome.

REPORTS

News from the greenhouse

I know spring is coming when the bottom shelf of my refrigerator has been given up to seeds stratifying for the plant sale. I put the first seeds into their damp cold bags at the end of December and the number of bags keeps growing daily until the middle of March when I open the greenhouse and they all get planted in soil.

This year I tried something new and put some seeds into pots in cold frames in my garden, now I have some little lupine and *Balsamorhiza sagittata* starts showing their leaves. This is exciting because I didn't scarify the lupine seeds first, and if I can get lupine seeds to sprout this

way, I don't have to sit and scratch each seed before I plant it. Lupine is a tricky plant because it has a tendency to damp off.

At the greenhouse, the maintenance has been taken care of and the tables are ready for plants. The garbage cans are full of soil ready for planting day. I re-plumbed the drip system and moved the tables around so I can get the wagon and ladder between the tables. This should help my aching back. With this dry winter I have been going out every other week to water the overwintering plants. Besides watering, I check the goings on of the critters around the growing area. A mole has decided to push up a burrow in one of my planted beds; fortunately he came up between my plants and hasn't taken out any of the plants. I will have to see how extensive his excavation plans are.

It looks like the cottontails were having a hootenanny out in the grass because there is a lot of scat scattered about. Two years ago when I set out seedlings in the flower beds I discovered another great use for pots with the bottom cut out, they make great shade structures and rabbit fences. I had a great basin wild rye in one that was 2 years old, I figured that it was established well enough that it didn't need a shade protector any more, the day after I took it off the rabbits cropped the grass down to half its size!

Great basin wild rye is an important wildlife plant and I now know why my plant at home doesn't self-seed, between the birds, rabbits and mice, it is a wonder that grass grows at all. On the shade house tables the mice have cropped the little grass seedlings down. With the warmer weather and longer days I am seeing new sprouts come up so in the end I think their grazing won't matter much. But seeing the mice activity has reminded me to get the mousetraps out and super glue the nuts to them so they don't dig up all my seeds in the greenhouse. I have a love hate relationship with the mice as they dig up the seeds like the lupine, but they plant *Datura wrightii* for me. I haven't been able to get *Datura wrightii* seeds to grow myself, but the mice plant it in the overwintered plants, which allows me to transplant it, saving me the trouble of starting it. This week I noticed that the mice have been very busy planting seeds as there were lots of little holes dug in the various pots.

On May 3^{rd,} from 3:30 to 5:30, the Eastern Sierra Land Trust will be holding their 2nd annual "Garden Fest" and I will have plants that have overwintered for sale. So if you missed the sale last fall, or realized that you have a spot for one more native, there will be plants available at the Garden Fest. To see what plants there might be go to the plant sale page for a current list of plants available. I won't be bringing all the plants to the sale but you can contact me if there are certain ones you would like.

Katie Ouinlan

Native Americans and Native Plants

The January 2012 CNPS conservation conference in San Diego offered some excellent speaker sessions, poster and presentations by our own members and others working in the Eastern Sierra (unlike me, some attendees put in some effort!), and fun gatherings where we could catch up with the state's other botanists.

It was great to see a session on <u>Tribal</u> <u>Conservation and Traditional Use of Native Plants</u> at a CNPS event. CNPS was founded in 1965, but has generally done little to reach out to California's Native Americans. The session was chaired by Dean Tonenna, a BLM botanist with training in ethnobotany, who is also affiliated with the Mono Lake Kootzatukadu. Speakers included:

- --Rick Flores, who works at the UC Santa Cruz arboretum and has become involved in a project to restore an area with deer grass and white sedge used for basket-making, located in Pinnacles National Monument, territory of the Amah Mutsun; --Richard Bugbee who teaches at Kumeyaay Community College about the interdependence between land and people;
- --Stan Rodriguez of the Santa Ysabel/San Diego Kumeyaay who spoke about how important the regional flora was and still is to traditional lifeways and said, "when we get along with each other, we get along with the earth";
- --Abe Sanchez, an artist who makes traditional style baskets thus has an eye for quality natural material;
- --Shana Gross, a USFS ecologist who is leading a planting/restoration project near Lake Tahoe (Tallac) to grow traditional plants for the Washoe, which they will be able to harvest and use as needed;

2012 Bristlecone Chapter Spring and Summer Field Trips Please check the website for more details, updates and changes. http://bristleconecnps.org/events/index.php

March 17, Saturday – Wildflowers, Cyptobiotic Soil Crust, Microbial Mats, and Tufa Encrustations in Poison Canyon. Leaders: Jane McEwen & Judy Breitenstein. This tour of Poison Canyon, which connects Indian Wells Valley and Searles Valley, will focus on the chain of Pleistocene Owens, China, and Searles Lakes. Besides looking for wildflowers, common and rare, we'll drive up into the hills to look at tufa limb casts of shrubs or trees submerged during the Pleistocene and coated with calcium carbonate. Meet at the Maturango Museum (100 E. Las Flores, Ridgecrest) at 8:00 am to carpool. Four-wheel-drive vehicles are necessary for those who want to cross the wash to visit the tufa limb casts. Poison Canyon is 11 miles east along Highway 178. Bring lunch or snacks, water, jacket, good walking shoes, hat, sunscreen, camera. Contact persons: Judy Breitenstein; 760-375-2158 ebreit@ridgenet.net and Jane McEwan, 760-264-6206 mcewanmj@gmail.com.

March 25, 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. Contact person: Scott at (760) 873-8392.

March 31, Saturday - Mary Dedecker Native Plant Garden Spring Cleaning. Leaders: Sue Weis, Jerry Zatorski, Katie Quinlan. March is a great time to remove exotic weeds before they drop their seeds, as well as trim anything needing it. We'll meet at the garden at the Eastern California Museum in Independence at 9:00 AM. To carpool from Bishop, meet at the end of S. Fowler (next to DWP). Bring garden gloves, trowels, hand pruners, and wear sturdy work clothes. Contact person: Sue Weis at 760 873-3485 or email at sueweis@aol.com.

April 13-15, Fri & Sat, 10 am – 7 pm & Sun 10 am – 5 pm - Wildflower Show at the Maturango Museum, 100 E. Las Flores, Ridgecrest, 760-375-6900. Of special interest will be a presentation of photographs of local wildflowers on Sunday, April 15 at 2:30 pm. Wildflowers will continue to be displayed on Monday morning, April 16, 2012, 10:00 to 12:00 noon.

April 21, Saturday – Surprise Canyon, Panamint Mountains. Leader: Shelley Ellis, Ridgecrest BLM Biologist. We will join the local Kerncrest Chapter of the Audubon Society for a trip to Surprise Canyon, about 2 miles north of Ballarat in the Panamint Mountains. A perennial stream runs through Surprise Canyon with riparian vegetation contrasting sharply with the surrounding badlands. Panamint daisies, Panamint dudleya, as well as *Ferocactus cylindraceus* grow here and bighorn sheep are often seen. The hike follows the stream which has a series of waterfalls. Wear shoes with good traction that can also go in the water. In places, the stream (the hike) goes through dense willows. Bring the usual: water, food, sunhat, long sleeve shirt, sun lotion. We will meet at the Park and Ride on the corner of Ridgecrest Blvd and Richmond Rd near the south end of China Lake NAWS. Those who would like to arrive early in the canyon to see more birds will meet at 7:00 am, while others will meet at 8:00 am. The hike can be any distance. Contact person: Shelley Ellis jfellis@mchsi.com.

April 28, Saturday – Southern Owens burned areas. Leader: Martin Oliver. Details TBA. See Bristlecone Chapter website http://bristleconecnps.org/events/index.php

May 12, Saturday – Sawmill Road, Greenhorn Mountains. Leader: Jane McEwen The highlights of this trip in the Greenhorn Mountains include driving through several plant communities, from Grey Pines and Oaks up into Pines, Firs and Cedars, exploring a mountain meadow, and driving down Sawmill Road with spectacular views of Lake Isabella. We will leave Inyokern Post Office parking area at 9:00 am, drive along the South side of Lake Isabella on Hwy 178, and meet others from the Kern River Valley at 10:30 a.m. at Tillie Creek Campground on Tuttle Road, off Highway 155, just south of Wofford Heights (57 miles from Inyokern). From there we will drive along Hwy 155 up into the Greenhorn Mountains and travel south on Forest Route 25S15/Rancheria Road. We will pass Shirley Meadows Ski Area, travel south along the ridge, travel through a beautiful forest of cedar trees to Evans Flat Meadows, then double back and head down Sawmill Road back to Highway 155 on the west side of Lake Isabella. The drive down Sawmill Road requires high clearance vehicles. A plant list for the area along Rancheria Road is available at: http://www.kerncnps.org/PlantLists/rancheria.html. Contact person: Jane McEwan at <a href="mountains-mou

May 20, 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. Contact person: Scott at (760) 873-8392.

June 2, Saturday – Alakali Meadow at Black Rock. Leader: Daniel Pritchett.

As recently as the mid 1980's the area south/southwest of Blackrock Springs was alkali meadow, a rare plant community in California. Continuous pumping for the Blackrock hatchery with the assistance of the 2007 Inyo Complex Fire is now converting part of the area into a dustbowl. Come see what an Inyo County Water Department-certified pumping impact looks like, as well as an example of very successful groundwater-dependent meadow management. We will explore an area from the Ft. Independence reservation north to 8-mile Ranch/Blackrock hatchery area. Sense of humor and capacity for outrage required. 4x4 not necessary but high clearance never hurts. Meet at Ft. Independence travel plaza/casino parking lot at 8:45 am. Bring water, snacks, hat, and sunscreen. Trip will end by noon. Contact person: Daniel at 760-873-8943.

June 10, Sunday – Bodie Hills. Co-host with Friends of the Inyo, Drew Foster. Come on out for an all day floral adventure in the Bodie Hills. Viewscapes are guaranteed to impress, sagebrush will be present and plentiful, and good times may be had by all! This will be an all day hike, moderate to strenuous, so please bring plenty of water, lunch, snacks, and the usual gear(sunscreen, hat, hiking shoes, etc.) Meet at the end of the pavement at Highway 270 (the road to Bodie State Park) to carpool, 8:30 am (subject to change). Don't forget hand lenses! Contact person: Drew at (805) 405-7577.

June 17, Sunday – Rodeo Flat & Lower Fish Creek Meadow, Kern Plateau. Leader: Kathy LaShure. Although in this dry year it is unlikely that there will be a repeat of last summer's glorious carpets of wildflowers, we still might see rare plants such as *Fritillaria pinetorum*, *Phacelia orogenes*, or *Viola pinetorum ssp. grisea* that were documented in 2011. Other rare plants we'll be seeking are *Erigeron multiceps*, 2 species of *Astragalus* and *Cordylanthus eremicus ssp. kernensis*. We will meet at the Inyokern Post Office at 8:00 am to carpool. Be prepared for sun, wind, hot and cold. Bring food and drink, and have your fuel tanks full. Those coming from the north can meet the group at 8:30 am at the 9-Mile Canyon Rd turnoff from Hwy 395. Contact person: Kathy LaShure; 760-377-4541 or desert encelia@verizon.net).

June 23, Saturday. Oak Creek. Leader: Jerry Zatorski. We will explore the lower Oak Creek area. The 2007 fire and 2008 flood have greatly changed the landscape, and after a few years of recovery we'll see what's there now, and maybe get an idea of what may be there in the future. From the trailhead we will also hike up the canyon to see what may be happing further up in elevation. Hiking is moderate to slightly difficult and it could be warm at the lower elevations; bring plenty of water, lunch, field guide, hand lens, sunscreen and hat. We should be done by late afternoon. Meet at 8:00 am at the intersection of Fish Hatchery Rd. and US 395, 2.3 miles north of Independence and 0.5 mile south of the Fort Independence gas station. Contact person: Jerry Zatorski at 760- 387-2920 or jerryzat@gmail.com.

June 24, Sunday, 9:00 am: SNARL weed pull and tour, Sierra Nevada Aquatic Research Lab, Convict Creek area, Mono County. SNARL is the only known locality in California for scalloped-leaved lousewort (*Pedicularis crenulata*). Bristlecone Chapter member Ann Howald has monitored this species at SNARL for more than 30 years. Woolly mullein is a weed that invades the lousewort's meadow habitat. To reduce the presence of woolly mullein in the area and limit its potential for invading SNARL, we will spend a couple of hours removing mullein on land adjacent to SNARL. Weed removal will include only physical methods. Following the weed-pull, we will eat our lunches at SNARL's picnic tables, then Ann will lead of tour of SNARL's meadow and sagebrush habitats, including visits to lousewort colonies, and other rare plant populations.

Bring lunch, water, hat, sunscreen, work gloves, and a dandelion digger or trowel if you have one. Expect this activity to be completed by about 2 pm. Carpooling from Bishop is recommended; meet at the intersection of Rovana Rd and 395 at 8:30 am. Please let Sue Weis or Ann know if you are planning to attend. Ann can be reached at: annhowald@vom.com or 707-721-6120. Contact Sue at 760-873-3485 or sueweis@aol.com.

July 7, Saturday. Witcher Meadow Wildflowers and Weeding. Leader: Stephen Ingram. Start the holiday weekend right by botanizing and pulling weeds in a beautiful meadow surrounded by Jeffrey pines at 7640'. We may still see shooting star, but will definitely see rein orchid, bog-orchid, spikemallow, Kelley's tiger lily, starwort, and many other wildflowers, grasses, and sedges. The drier areas surrounding the meadow should have blooming porcupine prickly-pear. Easy terrain with moderate walking. After botanizing for an hour or so, we'll work at eradicating goat's beard, *Tragopogon dubius*, an invasive, weedy dandelion. Lunch among the pines and return shortly afterward. Meet at the gravel pit on Sky Meadow Road in Swall Meadows at 9:00 am. High-clearance 4WD needed, but we will carpool. Bring gloves, food, water, hat, sunscreen; bags will be provided. Contact person: Stephen at ingram@bishopwireless.net or 760-387-2913.

July 14, Saturday. Lichen trip, Tioga Pass area. Leaders: Kate Kramer and Kelly Knudsen. Explore the Tioga Pass area with a man who loves crustose lichens. Meet at the Lee Vining Forest Service Visitor Center parking lot at 9:00 AM. Contact person: Sue Weis at 760-873-3485 or sueweis@aol.com or check the Bristlecone Chapter website.

July 21, Saturday. Devil's Postpile Rainbow Falls weed pulling. Leader: Holly Alpert. This will be a work day to remove cheatgrass (*Bromus tectorum*) from Devils Postpile National Monument and surrounding areas. We will hike from the Rainbow Falls trailhead to infested areas. Hiking distance may be 2-4 miles and may be over rough terrain. Bring gloves and some garbage bags. Wear long pants and layers. Meet at Minaret Vista at 9:00 am and we will carpool from there. Contact person: Holly Alpert; 760-709-2212; holly.alpert@gmail.com.

Saturday, July 28, Duck Pass Tail, Mammoth Lakes Basin. Leader Jerry Zatorski. We'll begin at 9100 ft and follow a trail that climbs up through sub-alpine forest. The route will take us through forest, meadows and over rocky outcrops. This is a moderately strenuous hike at high elevation. This trip will take most of the day and participants should bring plenty of fluids and food, field guide, camera, and a hand lens. We will meet at the Duck Pass trail head at 8:00 AM. From Minaret Rd. in Mammoth Lakes take Lake Mary Rd. 3.5 miles up to the lakes basin. About 0.3 mile past the Mammoth Pack Station, take a left onto Around Lake Mary Rd., take this 0.6 miles and take a left at Cold Water Creek Campground Rd., follow this 0.7 mile to the trail head. Be prompt because the parking lot fills up early. Contact person: Jerry at 760-387-2920 or jerryzat@gmail.com

Aug 11, Saturday – Return to Osa Meadow, Kern Plateau. Leader: Kathy LaShure.

Last summer we couldn't access our planned Kern Plateau location and visited Osa Meadow instead. It was fabulosa, so much so that we're returning! The meadow hasn't been grazed for several years and has rebounded floristically. Three rare species were sighted in 2011 and there are at least 6 other possible CNPS Rank 1 or 2 rare plants that we can search for this year. High clearance vehicle required. Be prepared for sun, wind, hot and cold. Bring food and drink, and have your fuel tanks full. The Black Rock Information Station and the Kennedy Meadows Store have no fuel. This will be a full day outing. We will meet at the Inyokern Post Office at 8:00 am to carpool. Those coming from the north can meet the group at 8:30 am at the 9-Mile Canyon Rd turnoff from Hwy 395. Contact person: Kathy LaShure; 760-377-4541 or desert encelia@verizon.net).

Saturday, September 15. Plant-animal interactions at Fish Slough Area of Critical Environmental Concern. Leader: Ceal Klingler. In late August, September, and early October, as white-flowered rabbitbrush (*Ericameria albida*), Mojave rabbitbrush (*Ericameria nauseosa var. mohavensis*), and *Cleomella* species bloom, squadrons of insects congregate at Fish Slough to eat and mate, attracting other insects and spiders to join them for dinner. We may see jumping and crab spiders in the shade of Mojave rabbitbrush and greasewood (*Sarcobatus vermiculatus*) while desert blister beetles, blister beetles, and long-horned flower beetles bury their faces in pollen. We will probably see other beetles, several species of wasps, ants, bees, and bee- and wasp-imitating flies, an ant imitator or two, and, if we're lucky, late-season Monarchs and Lycaenid butterflies. At least a few of the seven diurnal Fish Slough lizard species will be watching us as well. We'll start at 10 a.m. and finish by about 2 p.m. Walking distance will be three to five miles on easy terrain, but it will be hot. Bring water, food, hat, sunscreen, camera or binoculars, a hand lens, and field guide. Meet at the intersection of Five Bridges and Fish Slough roads (by the kiosk) at 10 am and carpool from there. Contact person: Ceal Klingler at 760-872-3196 or cksb@qnet.com.

October 21, 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. Contact person: Scott at 760-873-8392.

--Dean Tonenna, who gave two presentations, one about restoring the Truckee River to its natural channel and another about the importance of peage, the pandora moth larvae that feed on Jeffrey pines, and the setting aside of "Peage Park" in the Inyo National Forest; and

--Lucy Parker, Yosemite Miwok and Mono Lake Paiute, daughter of renowned basket weaver Julia Parker, who showed a video documentary about her mother and the respect for the land and the attention to detail that goes into basketry. Excellent examples of baskets were displayed, and Dr. Kat Anderson, author of *Tending the Wild* (and co lead on the Big Pine Tribe's nahavita project) was in the audience and her work was acknowledged appreciatively.

The session was a good reminder of human interdependence with native plants. Even as botanists, we might walk right by species that perhaps aren't so showy or rare. It's important to appreciate California's plants that for ages nourished, healed, or otherwise helped humans live their lives.

Sally Manning

CONSERVATION

"Avoid" is equivalent to "mitigate after the fact"

In the Sept-Oct, 2011 issue I discussed the fact that Inyo County's challenge to DWP's 2011 pumping program over pumping at Blackrock had led DWP to initiate its own challenge of Invo's right to challenge a pumping program at all. DWP argued that challenging a pumping program in order to "avoid" creation of impacts was equivalent to seeking mitigation after the fact. The process for seeking mitigation after the fact requires a joint analysis by DWP and Inyo at the Technical Group. Hence, by DWP's logic, Inyo cannot challenge a pumping program with having first gone through the joint process for determining if mitigation afterthe-fact is necessary. Because DWP is a party to this joint process, this reading of the LTWA effectively gives DWP veto power over Inyo's right to challenge a pumping program at all. In summarizing the situation I wrote,

"The good news is that finally, a decade after DWP put forth this self-serving LTWA interpretation, it may actually be challenged. The bad news is that it is entirely possible DWP will

win, not because of the merits of its arguments, but because of its virtually unlimited resources for bombarding the arbitrator/judge with BS, and because of the demonstrated ineffectiveness of Inyo County legal staff regarding the LTWA. It promises to be a thoroughly depressing spectacle."

The issue was sent to arbitration in December, 2011. Inyo County chose one arbitrator, DWP chose another, and the two arbitrators jointly chose a third.

As I feared, it was a thoroughly depressing spectacle. Inyo's legal team failed to persuade even its own appointee to the arbitration panel to support its argument. The three arbitrators were unanimous in their inability to see a distinction between "avoid" and "mitigate" and ruled that Inyo cannot challenge a pumping program in the interests of impact avoidance without first following the procedure for determining if mitigation after-the-fact is required.

Given that challenging individual pumping programs is not the most effective way to realize the LTWA's goals, the decision will not have too much immediate effect. In the big picture, however, it eliminates an important check on DWP's power, and means the important language in the LTWA about avoiding impacts is unenforceable by Inyo County. The decision is a striking example of how attorneys can take straightforward language and give it nonsensical meaning.

Daniel Pritchett

MEMBERSHIP

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. To join, please see back of newsletter.

To RENEW: please contact Sally Manning or **RENEW ONLINE**:

Using a credit card, go to www.cnps.org and click on the JOIN button

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The California Native Plant Society

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