

2012 Bristlecone Chapter Spring and Summer Field Trips

Please check our website for more details, updates and changes: www.bristleconecnps.org/events

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 suweis@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/> for updated information.

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 mcewanmj@gmail.com or 760-264-6206 (cell).

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 – Alkali 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 happening 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, spike-mallow, 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: www.bristleconecnps.org

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 Trail, 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.