

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

The California Native Plant Society



Bristlecone Chapter

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FROM THE EDITOR

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

If you still receive this newsletter via US Mail, please send your email address to the editor (email address above) so you can receive the electronic version. Please help the Bristlecone chapter save money, energy, and trees.

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

EVENTS

September 15, Saturday -- Plant-Animal Interactions at Fish Slough Area of Critical Environmental Concern, north of Bishop. Leader:

September Meeting

Wednesday September 26, 7:00 pm at White Mountain Research Station, 3000 East Line St., Bishop. Dr. Gilbert G. Thibault will discuss his book "I am the world's oldest-known living tree." The book is described as being for children of all ages. The narrator is Methuselah, the world's oldest-known living tree. Readers will learn through stunning color photographs about the life lessons of Methuselah and the artistry of his friends.

September Board Meeting

Wednesday, September 19, 2012, 7:00 pm at the ESICE office, 512 N. 2nd St., Bishop. Members are welcome.

Ceal Klingler. In late August, September, and early October, as white-flowered rabbitbrush (*Ericameria albidia*), Mojave rabbitbrush (*Ericameria nauseosa* var. *mohavensis*), and Cleomella species bloom, squadrons of insects congregate on their favorite plants at Fish Slough to eat and mate, attracting other insects and spiders to join them for dinner. If the timing's right, we'll see jumping spiders (mostly *Phidippus* species) and crab spiders (*Misumena* species) lurking in the shade of Mojave rabbitbrush and greasewood (*Sarcobatus vermiculatus*) while desert blister beetles (*Lytta vulnerata*), Zonitis blister beetles, and long-horned flower beetles (*Crossidius* species) bury their faces in pollen. We probably will also 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, all of whom have their own hunting and/or plant preferences. At least a few of the seven lizard species that roam

Fish Slough in daylight will be watching us as well. Because insects keep sunny schedules, 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. We'll meet at the intersection of Five Bridges and Fish Slough roads (by the kiosk) at 10 a.m. and carpool from there. Contact Ceal Klingler at 760-872-3196 or cksb@qnet.com for more information.

REPORTS

Tioga Pass Lichens Field Trip, July 14, 2012

Sue Weis took advantage of a rare opportunity to bring in lichenologist Kerry Knudson to lead a field trip to Tioga Pass. Region 5 of the US Forest Service is working to build up its expertise on lichens and is training FS botanists. As an Inyo NF botanist and our field trip coordinator, she was in a unique position to arrange the July trip.

Kerry and his co-leaders (Sue and San Bernardino NF botanist Kate Kramer) took a group of 12 participants to two locations near the summit on Tioga Pass to examine the subalpine lichen flora. Kerry didn't just identify the common and rare lichens of this area, but expounded on lichen taxonomy, biology, ecology, and biogeography. Nearly all the lichens we saw were crustose lichens growing on rock outcrops and boulders; foliose and fruticose lichens, also known as "macrolichens," require moister conditions of wet canyons and are not found in the drier subalpine and alpine habitats.

There are 1500 species of lichens known from California, and Kerry and his colleagues have been able to document the presence of 600 species from Yosemite National Park. Common species pointed out to the group include the brown member of the *Lecidea atroburnnea* group (brown tile lichen), the greenish-yellow *Rhizocarpon* cf. *geographicum* (map lichen), the green *Lecanora muralis* (stonewall rim lichen), the orange *Xanthoria elegans* (elegant sunburst lichen), and the bright yellow *Pleopsidium flavum* (gold cobblestone lichen).

We all learned in school that lichens constitute a harmonious symbiosis between algae and fungi. Kerry provided the group a more accurate but more nuanced explanation of lichen

ecology. It turns out that several lichens are in fact parasites of other lichens; Kerry showed us *Pleopsidium flavum* colonies on which parasitic species of *Rhizocarpon* were growing. And some fungi lose their algal symbionts, perhaps in response to drought, becoming "delichenized" saprophytes. Kerry showed us an example of small, dark colonies of *Lichenothelia* on a boulder below the canopy of a lodgepole pine and living on the decaying needles.

Lichens are very old organisms. The larger colonies we see on boulders are often composed of several individual colonies, each several hundred years old, that have coalesced. The crustose species we observed are susceptible to the direct and indirect effects of climate change, particularly increasing frequency and severity of fire. Climate-driven fires that recur more frequently than lichens can reestablish have the potential to greatly reduce our lichen flora.

Altogether, this was an extremely informative and enjoyable field trip. Participants are unlikely to look at lichen-covered boulders without recalling what they learned on this outing.

Steve McLaughlin and Sue Weis

Schulman Grove Visitor Center dedicated

On September 1, 2012, the new Schulman Grove Visitor Center in the Ancient Bristlecone Forest (in the White Mountains) was dedicated. The previous building had been destroyed by an arson fire four years before. Several members of the Bristlecone Chapter Board attended the festivities. Highlights of the dedication ceremony included an invocation in Paiute (with English translation) by two Owens Valley Paiutes, remarks by Connie Millar (of the USFS Pacific Southwest Research Station) regarding threats to bristlecones as the climate warms, and remarks by Malcolm Hughes (University of Arizona Laboratory for Tree Ring Research) regarding the value of bristlecones for scientific research. It was a spectacular day for a celebration in a spectacular place.

Daniel Pritchett

CONSERVATION

The Aqueduct centennial: colonial arrogance

Next year, 2013, will be the centennial of the completion of the Los Angeles Aqueduct. A few weeks ago I learned of an "Aqueduct

Centennial Project” which calls, among other things, for an “Aqueduct Futures Exhibition” to be constructed. The Exhibition will consist of:

- “Information Panels with Drawings/Maps/Photographs
- Kiosk w/ interactive graphics and real-time/historic data of flow through the Aqueduct
- Model of aqueduct
- Artifacts or full scale mock-up of Aqueduct – conduit, siphon, head-works
- Brochure/gallery guide”

Glorification of the Aqueduct is to be expected from DWP. However, this proposal is not from DWP, but from an Assistant Professor of Landscape Architecture at Cal Poly Pomona and his colleagues. Even this isn’t really surprising – academics are skilled at sniffing out funding, and I’ll bet there’s a lot of funding available in LA for the Aqueduct centennial.

This is noteworthy because one of three potential sites for the “Aqueduct Futures Exhibition” is the Lone Pine Interagency Visitor Center. I understand commemorating and glorifying the Aqueduct in Los Angeles. However, proposing to commemorate and glorify the Aqueduct in Owens Valley (OV) displays a level of arrogance I had hitherto thought existed only in DWP. Whenever the wind blows OV residents already commemorate the aqueduct in the form of dust which lodges in our lungs – surely no further commemoration is needed here!

But don’t blame the professors -- they undoubtedly mean well. Teaching in greater Los Angeles, a colonial power, their attitudes reflect the colonial arrogance of the people around them regarding OV. This same arrogance has been responsible for so much environmental devastation in OV. The fact it is manifested in well-intentioned academics suggests the difficulty of avoiding it when living in the Los Angeles area.

Another component of the Aqueduct Centennial Project is,

“a public forum for the [Cal Poly] students and residents of Owens Valley. The planned agenda calls for a visioning exercise, breakout sessions on future scenarios of cultural, ecological, and economics issues and a resource fair.”

So, it didn’t occur to the professors to wonder whether OV residents wanted an Aqueduct commemoration in Lone Pine, but the professors do expect OV residents to participate in a public forum for and with their students. And the professors will be paid to conduct this forum, but nothing suggests OV residents will be paid to participate -- another wonderful expression of colonial arrogance! OV residents should be grateful for the opportunity to donate our free time for the edification of students from the colonial power – the next generation of our masters!

Most remarkable is that the commemoration calls for students to develop alternative visions for the future of the Aqueduct, yet the commemoration overview fails to mention DWP at all. If students are to make meaningful visualizations of the future it is critical they have an understanding of the enormous problems of the present: the magnitude of the dysfunction at DWP, and DWP’s repeated bad faith in relations with OV and its own governing body, to say the least. Without such an understanding, “alternative visions” may be indistinguishable from “pure fantasy.”

I don’t expect to participate in the public forum, so I here offer my alternative Aqueduct vision: a railroad corridor! More information is at www.aqueductfutures.wordpress.com.

Daniel Pritchett

MEMBERSHIP

The Bristlecone Chapter heartily welcomes the following new members:

Regina Fink, Santa Monica, CA

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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Membership Category

___ Student, Limited Income	\$25.00
___ Individual	\$45.00
___ International	\$45.00
___ Family or Library	\$75.00
___ Plant Lover	\$100.00
___ Patron	\$300.00
___ Benefactor	\$600.00
___ 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

Gift Contribution: Where most needed _____
 Conservation _____

Bristlecone Chapter Directory

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