



## Bristlecone Chapter

*Dedicated to the Preservation of California Native Flora*

# The California Native Plant Society Bristlecone Chapter Newsletter

**Volume 34, No. 4  
July-August 2013**

## Sojourn Success!

Our Bristlecone Chapter's 2013 Eastern Sierra Spring Sojourn, held May 31 through June 2, was a wonderful success. Many thanks to Edie Trimmer, Julie Anne Hopkins, Katie Quinlan, Sue Weis, Yvonne Wood, Paul Satterthwaite and Kathy Duvall for hours of dedicated work beginning in January. Appreciation goes to previous coordinator Sherryl Taylor for her detailed notes and to Evelyn Mae Nicholas for her original and continued inspiration.

Warm thank yous go to Steve McLaughlin who arrived on Friday with a cooler full of plants and to Steve Ingram for also bringing in many plants for the plant table. Jerry Zatorski, Paul Satterthwaite, Anne Howald, Michèle Slaton and Michael Honer assisted them in labeling. Steve Matson led an enchanting twilight hike Friday around the facility, provided flower slides on Friday and gave a fun, informative program on Saturday night. Much appreciation to Scott Hetzler for selling t-shirts and books, to Karin Coy for "happy hour," and to Laura Smith and family for catering the delicious meals. A huge thank you goes to the faithful clean-up crew: Julie Anne, Edie, Paul, Michael and others including Sojourn participants.

Field trip leaders went beyond all expectations and found numerous plants in a drought year at elevations from 4000 ft. on the Owens Valley floor up to 10,000 ft. at Schulman Grove in the Ancient Bristlecone Pine Forest. Thank you Mark Bagley, Scott Hetzler, Julie Anne Hopkins, Steve McLaughlin, Paul Satterthwaite, Michèle Slaton and Jerry Zatorski. Sue Weis also led trips and organized the entire outing events and plant lists. A final thanks to all who assisted but were not mentioned above.

Please check our calendar for upcoming Sojourns. There's always more to see, as Mary DeDecker would have said, "just around the corner."

— Kathy Duvall

## July General Membership Meeting

Dave and Janet Carle, authors of [Traveling the 38<sup>th</sup> Parallel, A Water Line Around the World](#), will be guest speakers at our July General Membership meeting on July 24. A blurb for the book reads "Between extremes of climate further north and south, the 38<sup>th</sup> North parallel line marks a temperate, middle latitude where human societies have thrived since the beginning of civilization. It divides North and South Korea, passes through Athens and San Francisco, and bisects Mono Lake in the eastern Sierra, where authors David and Janet Carle make their home." This book chronicles their adventures along the 38<sup>th</sup> North parallel.

Join us on Wednesday, July 24 at 7 PM, at the USFS/BLM Conference Room, 351 Pacu Lane, Bishop. Come in the front door of the building and the conference room is right up front on the left. for their talk on the book and their adventures and insights.

## Volunteer Opportunities

Joy England, recipient of a Mary DeDecker grant sponsored by the Bristlecone Chapter, is looking for volunteers in their field work this summer. On July 20, she will be in Rock Creek searching for *Botrychium crenulatum* (scalloped moonwort) and *Calyptidium pygmaeum* (pygmy pussypaws) as well as other interesting "cool plants". For details on this project, see calendar section below.

## Spring Sojourn Field Trip Reports

The Sojourn offered 11 field trips beginning May 31 through June 2. Below are field trip reports from three of those trips. Future issues of the Bristlecone newsletter will add other Sojourn field trip reports. Here is unsolicited testimony from Jeffrey Greenhouse: "I thoroughly enjoyed the Sojourn and the 11 new plants that I got to see." Praise doesn't get better than that.

## Oak and Division Creeks – Sue Weis, leader

The Sojourn field trip to Oak and Division Creeks started with a stop near the South Fork of Oak Creek where the debris flow of 2008 had moved large boulders through the black oak stand. This stand is re-sprouting well after the fire and flood. We also found canyon live oak, probably the northernmost population on the east side. Lots of weed species came in after the disturbance, but there were still some natives blooming such as *Lupinus excubitus*, lots of *Calystegia longipes*, and a few *Mimulus guttatus* providing color.

The second stop was along the mud flow of the North Fork of Oak Creek, where we had a view of the new channel of the South Fork caused by the flood. We saw two species of *Ambrosia*, one with a new genus name. We stopped a couple more times on our way to lunch at the Baxter Pass trailhead, where *Lupinus excubitus* and *Malacothamnus fremontii* were blooming vigorously and the re-sprouting oaks provided a bit of shade. Phacelia, chia, a bright pink gilia, and *Camissonia* were blooming on a sandy road-cut near the trailhead and everyone was eager to get a look and maybe a photo.



Oak Creek/Division Creek Field Trip  
Photo by Sue Weis

We hiked about a mile up the Baxter Pass trail among the boulders where rose penstemon, *Keckiella*, and apricot mallow were blooming. The two stream crossings provided some welcome shade and interesting plants like chocolate drops, *Tauschia*, and *Lomatium rigidum*. These last two have similar leaves, so it was nice to have them close together for comparison.

After a short stop at the casino for some cool drinks, we drove up to the stand of narrow-leaved cottonwoods at Division Creek. This is believed to be the only verified stand in California, although the species is common in the Rocky Mountains. The twelve participants were also interested in a *Ribes* growing along the creek, later identified (tentatively) as *R. nevadense*, which is not listed in the Jepson Manual for Eastern Sierra Nevada (SNE). A collection to the herbarium is in order to record a range extension.

– Sue Weis

## Owens Valley Habitats – Jerry Zatorski, leader

We began our Saturday field trip of Owens Valley habitats with a brief description of our route. The group wanted to stop by the Mary DeDecker Native Plant Garden. There we saw a number of the well-tended native species in bloom including *Hecastocleis shockleyi*, *Dedeckera eurekaensis*, and *Pensetmon floridus* var. *austini*.

After Independence we went south to Lone Pine. On Lone Pine Narrow Gage Road, we stopped along the Owens River where I covered some details of the Lower Owens River Project and the group explored some of the river flood plain. In the floodplain, we had *Helitopium curvassavicum* and *Anemopsis californica* in bloom and *Ericameria nauseosa* var. *orioplila*, *Atriplex torreyi*, and willow species – *S. goodingii*, *laevigata* and *exigua*—in the salt grass *Distichlis spicata* meadow.



At the Owens River  
Photo by Edie Trimmer

The group continued up the east side of the valley to look at Shadscale Scrub and Greasewood Scrub. Along

this route, we found an area that got some of the rare and spotty rain we had in early May. *Lepidium fremontii*, *Stanleya pinnata* var. *pinnata*, *Psoralea polydenia* responded with some nice floral displays along with numerous insects buzzing the flowers for pollen or other insects as prey.

By lunch, the group found some rare valley floor shade under some non-native Locust, *Robinia pseudoacacia*, at the Manzanar Airport. At the air strip we discussed some history of the Manzanar area and vegetation conditions. A few lucky folks had excellent looks at LeConte's Thrasher and Sage Sparrow, two bird species that specialize in the Chenopod scrub which surrounds the airstrip.

At a quick stop just east of Independence, the group saw more open alkali meadow with Screwbean Mesquite, *Prosopis pubescens* (rare in the Owens Valley), growing there. A last stop in the southern portion of the valley was at the Blackrock Waterfowl Management Area, where we discussed the marsh systems maintained at this location. Numerous species of birds present gave this stop only more magic and demonstrates the benefits of mitigation efforts.

The last stop was in an alkali meadow system south of Bishop, full of many sought-after valley species in full bloom such as *Crepis runcinata* ssp. *hallii*, *Sidalcea covillei*, *Potentilla gracilis* var. *elmeri*, and *Sisyrinchium halophilum*.

The weather treated us well with a high of only 90 degrees and a nice southerly breeze by afternoon. Many thanks to the group of nine people who carpoled together which helped to keep some of the dust down.

— Jerry Zatorski

### **McGee Creek — Sue Weis, leader**

McGee Creek was the place for floral displays this Sunday Spring Sojourn with a group of fifteen participants. We began to see the wildflowers as we approached the trail head in our caravan. The *Astragalus whitneyi* was putting on an amazing display of big clusters of beautiful pink/purple flowers, some big enough to poke out the tops of the sagebrush plants. The *Astragalus purshii* was blooming at the higher elevations, but already had produced its fuzzy pods near the trailhead.

The mule ears and arrow-leaf balsamroot filled the canyon bottom in some places, and the salmon-colored scarlet gilia, phlox, phacelia and linanthus were there with them, adding color variety. Stick-seed, false Solomon's seal, meadow rue, and a few iris were blooming in the riparian zone under willows, aspen, and water birch. We found four species of *Castilleja* on the trip, as well as an *Orobancha* (opinions differ on the species).

The going was slow because there were so many things to find and photograph, so after lunch under a big juniper, we headed back down the trail. A great early summer trip to McGee!

— Sue Weis

## **How to Plant Natives from a Community Garden Guru**

I sometimes think that successful gardening with natives is a combination of a little neglect and a bit of patience. In December of 2011 a few volunteers from CNPS and the Master Gardeners put in a demonstration garden at the Bishop Community Garden. We had solarized the site all summer under plastic to kill the weeds. After we pulled up the plastic we put down a load of decomposed granite and a few large rocks for interest. We then dug holes and planted plants that were left over from the September Native Plant sale, watered them in and pretty much ignored it for the next few months.

In March when the water was turned on, we put in a drip system (the garden is watered for 6 minutes every 3 days), pulled the few weeds that were coming up and ignored it again. In the fall, we weeded again and turned off the water. The garden was hand watered a few times over the winter. In the spring the garden looked great! It was unbelievable how much the plants had grown from those tiny plants that we had put in from the plant sale.

We all want big plants that fill in our garden spaces right from the beginning. But with natives, smaller plants and having a little patience is better. Because natives have such deep roots, a large potted plant is likely to be root-bound or its roots have rotted in the bottom of the pot. Smaller plants, once they are in the ground, send their roots down deep and even think it was their idea to grow where you put them. If it is a location they like, they just take off.



Bishop Community Garden  
Photo by Katie Quinlan

After the muted colors of winter, the gardening urge hits each spring. We want color and green plants again. However, for natives fall is the best time to plant. The days are cooler so their roots can get established without having to deal with the high temperatures.

So these dog days of summer are the time to plan that native garden. Where are you going to put the garden? How much of the lawn will you take out. Go and do that now so the grass will be really dead by the time you put your natives in. Get your drip system set up so the new plants can get watered. Then when you buy your plants in September you can just drop them into the ground and treat them with benign neglect.

There are about 1500 plants of 44 species growing in the greenhouse for the fall Bishop plant sale. Go to the plant sale link on the website to see the updated inventory list. The first Mammoth plant sale of the summer has been scheduled for **Saturday, June 29 from 9-11 a.m.** The Bishop plant sale will be on **Saturday, September 14<sup>th</sup> from 9 to 11** at the White Mountain Research Station, 3000 E. Line St.

— Katie Quinlan

## Birch Creek Journal

June 12, 2013 — Here along Birch Creek it's hot and windy, but the western tiger swallowtails are unfazed. They cruise downstream beside the water birches (*Betula occidentalis*) and arroyo willows (*Salix lasiolepis*), stopping occasionally to nectar at the flowers of wild licorice (*Glycyrrhiza lepidota*). Carpenter bees seem to revel in the heat, too. At almost any time of day I can see them scrambling across the

stamens of prickly poppy (*Argemone munita*) or stealing nectar from the flowers of Bridges penstemon (*Penstemon rostriflorus*). The seed capsules of coyote willow (*Salix exigua*) have split open, and the masses of seeds entangled in dense white hairs look like little white powder puffs. From a distance they are much more showy than the inconspicuous flowers of early spring.

Unfortunately, I'm much too busy eradicating weeds to pay adequate attention to nature this month. A year ago at this time Steve told me I would be sorry, and you know what? he was right. I *am* sorry, sorry that last summer I let the common purslane (*Portulaca oleracea*) in the vegetable garden go to seed. I let it fill all the paths between the raised beds until the plants made a solid ground cover. It was edible, that was one of my excuses—I thought I might pick it for a salad once in a while. I told myself that it couldn't spread upward to the raised beds because the seed capsules are teeny, lidded cups, and when the lid falls off, the seeds spill out of the cup onto the ground. Besides, even though purslane isn't native to California, it was a cheery weed, and I liked its sprawling stems, fleshy leaves, and yellow flowers. Might as well just let it be.

Oh, I was prolific with excuses while the purslane was being prolific with seeds, and this summer it is everywhere—in the paths and in the beds and in places where we've never seen it before. Whenever we walked through the garden, we apparently picked up purslane seeds on the bottoms of our shoes, and now, like garlic and onions springing up in the footsteps of the Islamic Satan, a trail of purslane leads from the porch to the garden and from the garden to the well house. Worse than that, when I dug the beds this spring, I imported a shoe-sole's worth of seeds every time I stepped into a bed from the path. Dumb! Dumb! Dumb! You'd think a botanist would know better.

Belatedly, I took action. I weeded the beds by hand, a slow and tedious task. Steve then introduced me to the Hula-Hoe, soon to become my new best friend, and I scraped out every purslane in the paths. Satisfied, I returned the Hula-Hoe to the garage and continued to harvest beets, broccoli, and peas. And then it rained. Our neighborhood got about an inch and a tenth, quite a deluge after two dry winters in a row. Seeds of native wildflowers hardly responded at all—a few whispering bells (*Emmenanthe peduliflora*) emerged and bloomed, as did *Eriogonum brachyanthum*, an annual buckwheat—but for most natives the soil was too warm for germination despite the soaking rain. Purslane, on

the other hand, loved the warmth as well as the moisture, and in a matter of days all my work with the Hula-Hoe was for naught.

So, back to work I went and scraped out the second cohort. But it turns out that no matter how much you scrape you never really get rid of purslane—perhaps that’s why it’s considered number nine in a list of the world’s worst weeds. Every time the irrigation system runs in the garden, more purslane germinates. Every time I let the hose spray across bare ground, more purslane germinates. It’s the sorcerer’s apprentice of weeds, and no wonder. Under ideal circumstances, a vigorous individual can produce as many as 35,000 seeds. If you sampled the soil under a mat of purslane plants, you could find up to 78,600 seeds per square meter. Worse yet—there’s always a worse yet when it comes to weeds—purslane seeds can persist in the soil for forty years. And I let them go for an entire summer, blooming and fruiting and dispersing seeds at will. I’ll be an old woman and still battling purslane along Birch Creek.

Well, you live and you learn, and usually in that order, as burglar-detective Bernie Rhodenbarr says in one of my favorite murder mysteries. I’m not happy about the prospect of dealing with purslane in perpetuity but I’m not all that disgruntled, either. Soon there will be tomatoes, cucumbers, zucchini, and eggplant, and it’s hard to maintain a bad attitude in the midst of summer’s abundance.

— *Jan Bowers*



*Pollinating Insects on Inyo Valley Star Tulip  
Photo by Kristen Luetkemeier*

## **We Come Elemental**

We step into humid light.  
It sticks to our skin  
and microbes gorge  
in greywater runoff pools.

The chlorophyll chorus sings  
our collected chemical stew—  
nitrogen! nitrogen! nitrogen!

Each molecule polished  
each o each pair of h a banquet of lust—

wet sludge::  
stream suds::  
oil slick rain::

::eat the bread of our body's slough  
::eat our bread the crumbed down drain  
::eat of our bread our rainbowed fuel

until clear pools  
flow back to the rivers  
—those quick veins of industry—

wash over ancient mollusk shells

and we learn again  
green's good  
was light veined  
through leaves.

TAMIKO BEYER

## Up-Coming Events

### **June 29, Saturday, 9-11 AM. Mammoth Native Plant sale, 107 Sugar Pine Drive, Mammoth.**

All proceeds go to the Native Plant Society Bristlecone Chapter. List of plants for sale available on Bristlecone CNPS website. For more information call Sherry at 760-934-2338.

### **July 6, Saturday. South Fork, Big Pine Creek. Leader Steve Matson.**

Meet in Big Pine at 9am in the parking area next to campground at Junction of 395 and 168. We will drive 10 miles up Big Pine Canyon to the trail head by Glacier Lodge. I propose to hike 6 to 7 miles RT. I hope to find *Lupinus padre-crowleyi*, *Nama rothrockii*, and *Penstemon papillatus*. Contact: Steve Matson 760-938-2862 or [ssmat@sbcglobal.net](mailto:ssmat@sbcglobal.net).

### **July 13, Saturday – Mammoth Lakes Basin, Heart Lake and Arrowhead Lake. Leader Ann Howald.**

Meet at the far end of the parking lot that is beyond the Coldwater Campground, at 9:00 AM. We will hike up the Heart Lake trail, through the montane form of sagebrush scrub that is “enriched” with many wildflowers, then cross a talus slope with an array of multi-colored hybrid columbines, then return from Arrowhead Lake through subalpine forest. This is a moderately strenuous, although short (about 2.5 mi) hike. We should return to the parking lot by mid-afternoon. Bring lunch, water, sunscreen and a hat; and hiking poles if steep downhill bothers your knees. For more information contact Ann at 707-721-6120 or [annhowald@vom.com](mailto:annhowald@vom.com).

### **July 20, Saturday – Little Lakes Valley. Leader Joy England.**

Assist Joy with her fieldwork for her thesis research. Translation: look for cool plants. Two rare species I did not encounter, but known previously from the study area, are *Botrychium crenulatum* (scalloped moonwort) and *Calyptidium pygmaeum* (pygmy pussypaws). I will be searching for these and other species I have not yet encountered. Meet at the Mosquito Flat trail head at 9:00 AM.

## Up-Coming Events

### **July 24, Wednesday, 7 PM, *Traveling the 38<sup>th</sup> Parallel, A Water Line Around the World***

At the July Bristlecone CNPS General Membership Meeting, Dave and Janet Carle will talk about their new book, *Traveling the 38<sup>th</sup> Parallel, A Water Line Around the World.* Hear about their adventures and insights. New venue! USFS/BLM Conference Room, 351 Pacu Lane, Bishop - see you there!

**July 27, Saturday. White Mountains.** Leader: Jerry Zatorski. It always a treat to see what can be found in this high desert mountain range in mid-summer. This trip will focus on the sub-alpine and alpine habitats in the White Mts. Expect to see many herbaceous and shrubby alpine species along with the famous Bristlecone Pines. We will meet at the Triangle campground entrance just north of Big Pine, at the intersection of US 395 and SR 168 at 8:00 AM and go from there. This will be an all day trip, so have plenty of food, fluids, along with field guides hand lens, sun protection, dress for weather and so forth, plant to return to Big Pine by ~ 5:00 PM. For more information contact Jerry Zatorski at 760-387-2920 or [jerryzat@gmail.com](mailto:jerryzat@gmail.com).

### **September 14, Saturday, 9-11:30 AM. Bristlecone Chapter Native Plant Sale.**

A wonderful array of native plants are offered every year. We've been busy coaxing from seed dozens of brittlebush, various buckwheats, penstemons, Mojave aster, lupine and many more favorites!! Plant prices are currently \$5.00 for a small tree pot and \$8.00 for gallon pots. Contact Katie at [mailto:plant\\_sale@bristleconecnps.org](mailto:mailto:plant_sale@bristleconecnps.org) if you have any questions.

**September 18, Wednesday, 7 PM. Board Meeting** at the Friends of the Inyo office on 819 North Barlow Lane, Bishop. Members welcome.

### **October 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. For more information contact Scott at 760-873-8392.

## Up-Coming Events

### **October (date & time TBA): Bitterbrush Planting/Indian Fire Rehab.**

Martin Oliver (BLM), Julie-Anne Hopkins. Last summer the Indian Fire burned over 10,000 acres of sagebrush/bitterbrush habitat east of Mono Lake. This area is important for sage-grouse and other wildlife. Adjacent areas that have burned in the past 20 years have remained largely free of non-native annual grasses and other weeds but shrub species have been slow to return. Come out and help plant bitterbrush and other native plants that were grown at the Deepest Valley Native Plant Propagation Center. For more information contact Martin Oliver at [mpoliver@blm.gov](mailto:mpoliver@blm.gov), 760-872-5035.

### **October/November (date & time TBA) – DeDecker Garden fall clean-up. Katie Quinlan, Sue Weis.**

Bring your gloves and gardening tools and help get the garden ready for winter. For more information, contact Sue Weis at [sueweis@aol.com](mailto:sueweis@aol.com), 760-873-3485.

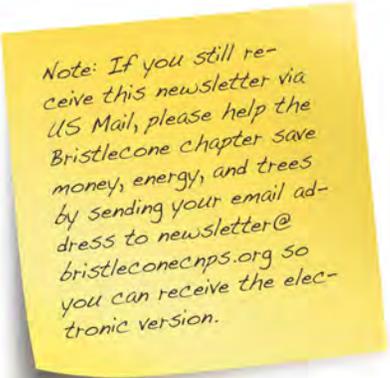
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Conservation: Julie Anne Hopkins 831-566-6012  
Partnerships: Steve McLaughlin 760-938-3140  
Highway Clean-up: Scott Hetzler 760-873-8392  
DeDecker Garden: **OPEN**

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**The California Native Plant Society**

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## Membership

*The California Native Plant Society is an organization of laypersons 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.*

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**Membership Category**

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