



Bristlecone Chapter

Dedicated to the Preservation of California Native Flora

The California Native Plant Society Bristlecone Chapter Newsletter

**Volume 34, No. 6
November-December 2013**

November General Membership Meeting and Potluck, November 20, 6 PM at White Mountain Research Station

Chapter Potluck, 6 PM,

The annual Bristlecone Chapter potluck begins at 6 PM. Bring food, drink and conversation to share. Member and non-members welcome.

Chapter Elections, 7 PM

The Bristlecone Chapter's Nominating Committee is pleased to present the following candidates for its 2014 Executive Board:

President: Katie Quinlan

Vice President: Michèle Slaton

Treasurer: Paul Satterthwaite

Secretary: Rosemary Jarrett

After opening the floor to any other nominations, the election will take place at the November 20 general meeting. Positions will begin in January for a 1 year term. Please thank these candidates for their commitment.

— *Kathy Duvall, Sue Weis, Steve McLaughlin*
Bristlecone Chapter Nominating Committee

Chapter Program, 7:15 PM

"What Clouds Tell Us About Climate Change"

Our program for November will be Hal Klieforth, faculty emeritus of the Desert Research Institute and local climatologist, explorer, natural history expert, and all-around wonderful man!

During the past three decades, cloud forms in the Eastern Sierra have indicated major shifts in global circulation patterns. The appearance and behavior of individual clouds has demonstrated how local precipitation, distribution and amounts are affected by global air pollution.

September General Meeting with Greg Suba, CNPS State Conservation Program Director

Our chapter was honored to host Greg Suba and learn about the CNPS Conservation Programs. Greg talked about five ongoing programs at the CNPS state level: Rare Plant, Vegetation, Education, Horticulture and Conservation. These programs benefit all our chapters as well as California flora.

Greg talked about land use practices that are threatening California plant communities on a large scale. Renewable energy development on public lands is one of these and certainly of interest to residents in the Owens Valley. He tracks these projects as Conservation Program Director.

Solar projects are popular as a forward-looking energy policy but have impacts that must be assessed and planned for. Large-scale projects need scrutiny since not all desert lands are appropriate for projects that require significant resources of land and water. Often, the projects are proposed for areas that are intact desert communities. The Conservation Program at CNPS seeks to provide the long-range planning, science, and public advocacy to protect our floristic heritage as these projects are proposed. As conservation director, Greg provides planning and alternatives rather than to oppose large-scale projects.

Bristlecone members asked why small roof-top solar projects were not being more actively pursued. Greg acknowledged that this is a concern he often hears and he shares the frustration at how slowly this approach to renewable energy generation is proceeding. Most roof-top solar projects occur on schools and other public buildings with subsidies from utility companies or federal grants.

The night of our Chapter meeting coincided with the second LADWP SOVSR presentation – a proposed solar energy project nearly the size of Bishop City limits –

and it is in our own backyard. Greg showed maps of at least 14 more renewable energy (wind and solar) that are proposed in our Chapter's area! Thanks to Greg Suba for making the long drive from Sacramento and for giving us a wake-up call.

--Julie Anne Hopkins

Site Visit to LADWP's Proposed Southern Owens Valley Solar Ranch --Let's Consider the Alternatives

On October 11, 2013 several Bristlecone chapter members visited the LADWP's proposed *Southern Owens Valley Solar Ranch* site. It was my first visit to the location and I was completely surprised. I expected to find highly disturbed, fallow land – a location perhaps suitable for a 1,200 acre industrial solar development. Instead I found an intact Northern Mojave Desert scrubland with panoramic views of the Owens Valley, Sierra Nevada and White-Inyo Mountain peaks, and the historic remains of days gone-by, approximately 15 miles north of Owens Lake. With the exception of LADWP's Inyo-Rinaldi transmission line the entire viewshed was spectacular!



Sierra Nevada and Inyo-Rinaldi Transmission.

Photo by Mike Prather

The existing *Sarcobatus vermiculatus* (greasewood) scrub plant community is well adapted to the harsh environments. Though not considered as globally or State threatened, the organisms that occur here must endure powerful winds, shifting sand, high salinity and minimal annual precipitation (~6 in/yr average). The dominant shrub species encountered include: *Sarcobatus vermiculatus* (greasewood), *Atriplex confertifolia* (shadscale), *A. canescens* (fourwing saltbush) and *Psoralea polydenia* (dotted dalea).

We even happened upon a perky, yellow plant in full bloom – *Pectis papposa* (Cinch weed), an infrequent, wide-spread N. Mojave annual species that responds to late summer rains – the only known occurrence in the Owens Valley.



Pectis papposa, Cinch weed.

Photo by Mike Prather.

Beneath the shrubs where sands collect there are numerous desert kangaroo rat precincts, antelope ground squirrel and rabbit holes, and at least one American Badger (CDFW Species of Special Concern) retired den. Badgers move frequently and the dens that remain are critical refugia for many local desert denizens, such as desert kit fox and coyote. Several sparrow species were observed higher up in the shrubs. Yellow-rumped warblers were busy foraging flying insects from the canopy and a Northern Harrier (CDFW Species of Special Concern) cut across the horizon above the wet claypans that dot the landscape.



Claypans filled with water dot the landscape.

Photo by Mike Prather

The proposed project site has clues to past cultural occupation. Large stumps from a former windbreak, timber from old structures and a view of the Reward Mine are examples of recent history. Obsidian flakes and chert suggest that this area was an important place long before mineral prospecting and extraction occurred.

November 4, 2013 is the last date to provide comments on the LADWP Draft Environmental Impact Report for the proposed SOVSR. There is time to provide your comments and consider the alternatives. I know which one I prefer. www.ladwp.com/envnotices

“...may this part of the [Northern Mojave] California Desert always receive the sensitive management, by individuals and government alike, that it deserves.”
(Mary DeDecker, 1984)

--Julie Anne Hopkins

Bristlecone Native Plant Sales 2013

The leaves changing color on the valley floor mark the end of the growing season at the propagation center. The last minute sales are done and plants that needed to be potted into larger pots have been. Now is the time to take stock of how this year's plant sales went and take inventory of what we need to buy for next year. This year's sale revenues came in very close to last year's revenues. Our fall sales with 600 plants sold, were \$265 dollars less this year, but with the income from the spring sales we made \$700 more. The proceeds from all the plant sales are donated back to the community as Mary DeDecker Grants.



Photo by Julie Anne Hopkins

The many hours I put in to grow the plants for the sale would be much greater but for a cadre of volunteers who work for cookies. I owe much gratitude to Kathy Duvall, Sue Weis, Paul Satterthwaite, Jim Varnam, Julie Anne Hopkins, Kay Wilson, Margaret Phelps, Steve McLaughlin, and Kirsten Dutcher. These fantastic volunteers show up when I need to re-pot plants and really do donate their mornings for cookies. They also help at the annual plant sale.



Photo by Julie Anne Hopkins

Almost 2,000 plants at the propagation center are destined for restoration sites. These include 90 bitterbrush that have been planted on Eastern Sierra Land Trust land in Swall Meadows and 90 grasses planted by Friends of the Inyo in roads closed by the Forest Service. The Great Basin Air Pollution control planted 500 plants at Keeler dunes at the end of October. Forest Service and BLM employees will get work crews together at the end of the government shut down to plant 800 grasses and Atriplex in their new homes. Another 500 bitterbrush will go to restoration sites next year.

-Katie Quinlan

CNPS Has a New Horticulture Program Director

Exciting news: for the first time in our history, the California Native Plant Society now has a full-time staff Horticulture Program Director! This is a new staff position, and CNPS sought out a Horticulture Program Director who could help chart the course of California's oldest and most recognized native plant gardening program.



Photo Credit: Bob Hoffman Photography

Susan Krzywicki comes from our San Diego chapter, where she helped to lead that chapter's horticulture program. The chapter has a successful garden tour, delivers training symposia, and otherwise engages thousands of San Diegans in growing native plants. While doing all this, Susan has also helped other groups (such as Surfrider Foundation, San Diego County Water Authority, and Port of San Diego) in their work adopting and promoting California native plant horticulture.

Susan's communication skills, public presence, leadership, and organizational ability will enable her to make an outstanding contribution to the CNPS mission: to protect California's native plant heritage and preserve it for future generations.

Native plant horticulture is increasingly popular and is catching on with gardeners, homeowners associations, and public entities across the state. It is a fun and effective approach that saves water, and helps pollinators.

The Horticulture Program is ramping up, and we are looking forward to input from members throughout the state. As we set plans in motion, it is crucial to focus on what works at a local level and how we can base our programs on a sound scientific footing that can help gardeners throughout the state to succeed. Please welcome Susan and send any suggestions or ideas to skrzywicki@cnps.org.

What's Your Experience Gardening with Natives?

I've been gardening with natives for a long time but still consider myself a beginner. I confess many more native seedlings languished than survived under my care and languished in many ways—too much or too little water; wrong place; planted badly; stepped on and mowed over; pulled up by yard help; out-competed by grass and weeds; badly pruned trees and more.

I've worked on community native gardens and seen many of the same problems with this added problem: city maintenance crews are difficult to work with! I still mourn two big-toothed maples I nurtured for years before planting them in community gardens in Salt Lake City. They were mowed over within a year.

So one of my topics of conversation when I find a native gardener is to ask about what their experiences have been gardening with natives. It seems they break down into roughly these topics – garden planning and preparation; success rate; proper placement; species availability; getting reliable advice from nurseries and yard installation specialists;; yard services for native gardens, especially for rental property or community gardens; long-term maintenance and replacement.

There are many other topics. As CNPS members, we can take advantage of the CNPS Horticulture Director Susan Krzywicki to work on these issues with those interested in gardening with natives. There are some excellent publications out there and much great advice, including what comes from you, our members.

--Edie Trimmer

Mary DeDecker Botanical Grant

The Bristlecone Chapter of the California Native Plant Society is pleased to request applications for the Mary DeDecker Botanical Grant. This small-grants program is named in memory of a local botanist renowned for her many contributions to the botany and history of the Eastern Sierra Nevada and northern Mojave Desert. The program will award grants of up to \$1,000 each.

Our goal is to promote research and projects that increase understanding and appreciation of native plants and ecosystems of the Eastern Sierra region. Anyone may apply for a grant, but we are especially interested in helping graduate and undergraduate college students as well as elementary, middle, and

high school pupils and their teachers. Subjects appropriate for funding cover a wide range, from basic taxonomic or ecological research to school gardens featuring native plants and their pollinators. The only requirement is that the project be relevant to the native plants of the northern Mojave Desert, Eastern Sierra Nevada, or Great Basin of eastern California.

Criteria and Procedures

Submit written proposals to the Mary DeDecker Grant Committee. Proposals should be no more than two pages in length. Each should contain title, objectives, methods, expected final product, brief statement of applicant's qualifications, and breakdown of proposed costs. Students should include a letter of support from their adviser or teacher. Deadline is **Friday, December 13, 2013**. All applicants will be notified of the committee's decision by **Friday, January 31, 2014**.

A progress report explaining how Bristlecone Chapter funds were used is due at the end of the first year. Applicants are encouraged to give a talk about their project at a Bristlecone Chapter evening meeting or to write a brief explanation of their work for the Bristlecone Chapter newsletter.

Send proposals or requests for information to:

holly.alpert@gmail.com (electronic submissions are preferred but not required) OR

Holly Alpert

Mary DeDecker Grant Committee

P. O. Box 8163

Mammoth Lakes, CA 93546

You can find more information grants about the Bristlecone Chapter Grants Program, including this Request for Proposals, at

<http://bristleconecnps.org/dedecker/grant/index.php>.

This site also has a history of past recipients of grants. These include plant surveys of Rock Creek by Joy England over the last two years, research in mimulus species by Naomi Fraga (with new species identified), funds for youth programs by the Bishop Paiute Tribe's First Bloom program and the Valentine Eastern Sierra Reserve in Mammoth. Sherry Taylor, who grows native species for the Bristlecone Chapter Mammoth plant sales, describes the outcome of the Mary DeDecker grants "I got started growing natives through the Mary DeDecker grant program. I work for Valentine Eastern Sierra Reserve teaching outdoor science to elementary age school children. Leslie Dawson, my boss, friend and mentor, thought we could use the grant money to start

a program to teach fourth graders about native plants. For 10 years we had the kids plant seeds, then they took the plants and used them for a restoration project in the Mammoth area, mostly at Cerro Coso College."

Gathering Cattle

Our grazing permit ends mid September. It's beginning to get cold at 10,000 feet. The older, experienced cows start down.

I call up hired help,
family, and friends
get all the horses to Cow Camp.

I gather the odd few pairs
stashed in the little side meadows,
move them to a lower water point.

With a crew of riders
we clean out Crooked Creek,
take them over Sage Flat.

Water Canyon in late afternoon
sound of cows calling calves
echoes off canyon walls.

Other days, with a change of horses,
Beauregard Mine, Eureka Springs,
Goat Springs and Mill Canyon.

All down Wyman Creek to valley below
closing drift fence gates behind them
before a long ride back to camp.

Move the horses down to Roberts line camp,
trail cattle onto last of salt grass at the Lake.
Peeling the bulls off at the ranch.

Finally. I hope we have them all,
return in an old jeep to gates and narrows
drag brush across the trails.

This leaves a "track trap" for a few days--
to look for tracks of leftover cows
as they go for water.

I learned this from Eddy Shaw,
a Paiute Indian, who has been doing it
for years.

*--Richard Strong
from "Great Basin Poems"*

Up-Coming Events

November 2 – DeDecker Garden fall clean-up. Katie Quinlan, Sue Weis.

Meet at the end of S. Fowler in Bishop at 8:30 to carpool or be at the garden at 9:20. Bring your gloves and gardening tools to put the garden to bed for the winter. For more information, contact Sue Weis at sueweis@aol.com, 760-873-3485

November 13, Wednesday, 7 PM. Bristlecone Board Meeting. Friends of Inyo Office, 819 N. Barlow, Bishop.

All members welcome.

November 20, Wednesday, 6 PM Bristlecone Chapter Potluck at White Mountain Research Station. 3000 E Line St. Bishop

Bring dishes and drinks to share and check in with fellow members. Non-members welcome.

November 20, Wednesday 7 PM, Bristlecone General Meeting at White Mountain Research Center, 3000 E Line St Bishop Chapter Program

What Clouds Tell Us About Climate Change
Our program for November will be Hal Klieforth, faculty emeritus of the Desert Research Institute and local climatologist, explorer, natural history expert, and all-around wonderful man!

Election of Officers for 2014

December 13, Wednesday, Deadline for submission of Mary DeDecker grant requests
holly.alpert@gmail.com (electronic submissions are preferred but not required)

OR

Holly Alpert

Mary DeDecker Grant Committee

P. O. Box 8163

Mammoth Lakes, CA 93546

Bristlecone Chapter Directory

President: Yvonne Wood 760-258-7949

Vice President: Holly Alpert 760-709-2212

Secretary: Rosemary Jarrett 760-387-2782

Treasurer: Paul Satterthwaite 773-208-7858

Creosote Ring Sub-chapter: Kathy LaShure 760-377-4541

Chapter Council Rep: Steve McLaughlin 760-938-3140

Partnerships: Steve McLaughlin 760-938-3140

Conservation: Julie Anne Hopkins 831-566-6012

Programs: Holly Alpert 760-709-2212

DeDecker Grants: Holly Alpert 760-709-2212

Field Trips: Sue Weis 760-873-3485

Historian: Kathy Duvall: 760-387-2122

Bishop Plant Sales: Katie Quinlan 760-873-8023

Mammoth Plant Sales: Sherry Taylor 760-934-2338

Publicity: Kristen Luetkemeier 703-862-4395

Newsletter: Edie Trimmer/Thomas Brill 760-920-3702

Membership: Edie Trimmer/Thomas Brill 760-920-3702

Website: Maggie Riley webmaster@bristleconecnps.org

Posters: Stephen Ingram 760-937-9918

Book Sales: Sue Weis 760-873-3485

T-shirt Sales: Scott Hetzler 760-873-8392

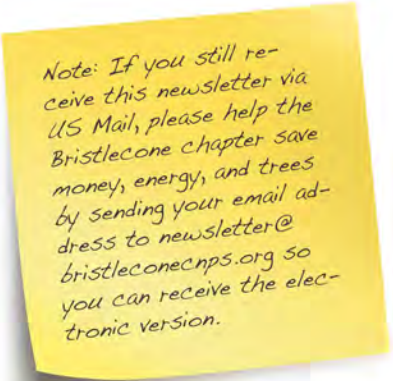
Highway Clean-up: Scott Hetzler 760-873-8392

DeDecker Garden: **OPEN**

Visit our webpage at
<http://bristleconecnps.org>
or follow us on Facebook at
Bristlecone CNPS
for the most current
information.

The California Native Plant Society

Bristlecone Chapter
P.O. Box 364
Bishop, CA 93515-0364
RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED



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.

To Join or Renew Online: Go to cnps.org and click on the JOIN/renew button at the top of the page, or mail in the form below:

Name: _____
Address: _____
City: _____ State: _____
Zip Code: _____ Phone: _____
Email: _____

I wish to be affiliated with the **Bristlecone Chapter:** _____
Other: _____

Membership Category

- Student / Limited Income \$25
- Individual \$45
- Family \$75
- Plant Lover \$100
- Patron \$300
- Benefactor \$600
- Mariposa Lily \$1500
- Additional Contribution _____

Gift Contribution: _____ Wherever needed
Specific Area: _____

Mail to: CNPS Membership Coordinator
2707 K Street, Suite 1
Sacramento, CA 95816

