



## Bristlecone Chapter

*Dedicated to the Preservation of California Native Flora*

# The California Native Plant Society

Bristlecone Chapter Newsletter

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**Volume 36, No. 6**  
**November-December 2015**

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### President's Message, November 2015

I enjoyed reading Ted Williams's story in the October 3 Inyo Register about how the Mount Whitney trail was built. What impressed me as that the trail was built entirely with local funding and labor. The valley communities quickly got on board with the vision of a first-class trail to the top of the mountain and started raising money to build it. Ted states "you might say the trail was built on bake sales." This story brings home the fact that small groups of people can do great things if they all contribute toward a common goal.

In Malcolm Gladwell's book, Tipping Point, he says, "Economists often talk about the 80/20 Principle, which is the idea that in any situation roughly 80 percent of the "work" will be done by 20 percent of the participants. In most societies, 20 percent of criminals commit 80 percent of crimes. Twenty percent of motorists cause 80 percent of all accidents. Twenty percent of beer drinkers drink 80 percent of all beer. When it comes to epidemics, though, this imbalance becomes even more extreme: a tiny percentage of people do the majority of the work."

At the CNPS Bristlecone Chapter we do better than the 80/20 principle. We have four board positions that the Chapter votes on: President, Vice President, Secretary and Treasurer. There are also 22 committee chairs that can be held by people that help this Chapter run; currently 14 people fill these 26 positions. My goal is to fill all those chairs! We will vote on a new slate of officers at our November meeting, however, you can volunteer to be a committee chair at anytime. When you volunteer you get to know people in a different light. Making a small commitment to help the group in one way makes the experience of belonging to this group more rewarding for everyone. This allows you to develop deeper relationships with people who have a common interest with you.

If everyone does a little bit then no position is too daunting. Just like the locals who raised the money for the Mount Whitney trail, we can have a strong and fun Chapter if everyone contributes. Currently we really need a publicity chair and a webmaster. If you can contribute to our organization, please contact Katie Quinlan.

*--Katie Quinlan*

**Wednesday, November 5, 7 PM, General Meeting, White Mountain Research Center, 3000 E. Line Street, Bishop**  
**"The Ebb and Flow of Sagebrush and Why You (and Bugs) Should Care"**  
**--Hudson Intern, Sophie Winitsky.**

The annual Bristlecone Chapter potluck begins at 5:30 PM this year. Bring food, drink and conversation to share, bring utensils and plates for yourself. Members and non-members are welcome. We'll follow the potluck with Chapter Elections at 6:45 PM, followed immediately by the Chapter Program at 7:00 PM. Sophie Winitsky, the current CNPS and USFS botany intern honoring local naturalist Robert Hudson's bequest, will present her study of sagebrush regeneration throughout the Inyo National Forest. Sophie is from Southern California and has a bachelors in Environmental Studies. She spent the last five months helping the Inyo National Forest with rare plant monitoring, assisting Jeff Holmquist and Jutta Schmidt-Gengenbach with aquatic insect studies, and conducting her own research project on factors leading to sagebrush success on the Inyo. Sophie has made an important ecological contribution to the Bristlecone Chapter and Inyo National Forest, and her enthusiasm and curiosity are contagious!

*--Michèle Slaton*

## Greenhouse Update

The plant sales were a great success this year. We raised more money than ever! We netted \$6,456 which goes to our Mary DeDecker grant program. This year we held five plant sales in Mammoth and Bishop.

Sherry held two sales in Mammoth. Because of the increasing water restrictions up in Mammoth, Sherry didn't want to hold over any more plants than she had to so she brought her extras down to the Bishop sale.

Katie's first sale was in April at the Eastern Sierra Land Trust's "Garden Fest". Her second sale was held for the recipients of the Land Trust's Pollinator Garden grant. The final sale was the annual fall sale held at White Mountain Research Center.

The Bishop fall sale had 86 customers who bought 840 plants. There were 18 volunteers, the most volunteers we have ever had, which allowed us to have a greeter telling people where things were and someone just selling books and t-shirts. What I noticed about this year's sale is that more people were buying lots of plants instead of just one or two. I think converting lawns to more drought tolerant landscape is having a very positive effect on our sales.



*Trish Schilting is happy with new new plants  
--Photo by Katie Quinlan*

A lot of work goes into the growing of the plants for the plant sale. It couldn't happen without dedicated volunteers who help to seed and transplant the plants throughout the year. So a big thanks goes out to: Stacey Brown, Alison Collin, Steve Dickinson, Kathy

Duvall, Karen Ferris-Ingram, Nancy Padlock, Scott Hetzler, Marti Holton, Julie Anne Hopkins, Fran Hunt, Stephen Ingram, Rosemary Jarrett, Ceal Klinger, Margaret Lamb, Charlie Massieon, Steve McLaughlin, Laura Mogg, Jill Paydon, Margaret Phelps, Trish Schilting, Michele Slaton, Tim Tiernan, Bryce Tiernan, Marty Tiernan, Edie Trimmer, Jim Varnam, Jerry Zatorski, Sue Weiss, Kay and James Wilson.

There are still plants left. If you missed the sale or find you need just a few more to fill in that new landscape, contact Katie at [plant\\_sales@bristleconecnps.org](mailto:plant_sales@bristleconecnps.org).

*--Katie Quinlan*

## Conservation Update, October, 2015

As the season progresses with amazing autumn color we await two important planning documents to be released – the Inyo National Forest Plan Revision DEIS (Sequoia and Sierra as well) and the Owens Lake Master Plan DEIR. The Bristlecone Chapter will continue to work with our local conservation groups and the CNPS state office in preparation for comment letters when the documents are released. We will provide more detailed information on our website ([www.bristleconecnps.org/](http://www.bristleconecnps.org/)) and work with members to develop comment letters.

### Inyo National Forest Plan Revision

INF has formally announced the delay of the DEIS for the Forest Plan revision to the fall – maybe November 2015. The DEIS covers the INF as well as the Sequoia and Sierra. The Bristlecone Chapter has worked with CNPS state and the Sierra Nevada Forest Planning Coalition in providing comments to the Forest Supervisors to help guide the DEIS process.

Additional websites:

[www.friendsoftheinyo.org](http://www.friendsoftheinyo.org)

[www.sierraclub.org/toiyabe/range-light](http://www.sierraclub.org/toiyabe/range-light)

### Owens Lake Master Project

The Bristlecone Chapter submitted scoping comments (Notice of Preparation—NOP) in August 2015, providing LADWP our environmental concerns regarding the development of the DEIR for the implementation of the Owens Lake Master Project (OLMP). The proposed OLMP modifies dust control methods to reduce emissions, while also reducing the amount of water used for dust suppression on the lakebed, in compliance with agreements with the Great Basin Unified Air Pollution Control District

(GBUAPCD). LADWP is evaluating the use of groundwater from beneath Owens Lake for dust suppression, which CNPS does not support. Expect the OLMP DEIR to be released soon in fall 2015. The Bristlecone Chapter will try to host a comment letter writing workshop during the comment period once the DEIR is released. Check our website for background information—<http://bristleconecnps.org>

Additional websites:

<http://ovcweb.org/>

<http://ovcweb.org/docs/no-new-wells-for-website.pdf>

<https://www.ladwp.com/ladwp>

--Julie Anne Hopkins

## **Bitterbrush Planting—A Volunteer Project with BLM Fire-Fighting Crews**

On October 3 the Bristlecone Chapter teamed up with Bishop BLM botanist, Martin Oliver, wildlife biologist, Sherri Lisius, and BLM fire fighting crews to plant three hundred bitterbrush (*Purshia tridentata*). Like last year, the purpose of the planting is to re-establish vegetation in the Indian Fire location that burned approximately 12,600 acres in 2012. Our effort assisted with post-fire restoration of native shrubs that will provide habitat for the Bi-State Greater Sage Grouse. The healthy seedlings were grown by Katie Quinlan with the help of other volunteers – a big thank you to all!



*Bristlecone CNPS volunteer planting bitterbrush*  
--Photo by Julie Anne Hopkins

Like last year it was a gorgeous day with panoramic views encompassing Mono Lake and Sierra Nevada mountains to the West and Montgomery Peak and the White Mountains to the east. We were fortunate to have fire fighters to dig, plant and water the

seedlings. They were called away on a potential fire but came back soon. Fire fighters are important for many reasons.

Ten volunteers and the fire crew worked until the seedlings were in the ground and well watered. We had a great time working in a beautiful place on an important restoration project. Watch our newsletter (website and Facebook) for upcoming planting/restoration projects, field trips and other events in the future. It was good work with great company, so thanks to all who participated!

--Julie Anne Hopkins

## **Rabbitbrush or Ragweed?**

Fall in the Owens Valley finds beehives throughout golden fields of rubber rabbitbrush (*Ericameria nauseosa*). Fall is also when people complain of sneezing and wheezing caused by the "darned Rabbitbrush."

However, while a person may be allergic to Rabbitbrush pollen, the question is, can it get up your nose? The proteins in a piece of beefsteak might make you sneeze, but there isn't much beefsteak blowing in the wind. The same can be said for Rabbitbrush, which is insect pollinated, and has sticky, heavy pollen grains.

In fact Rabbitbrush takes the rap for a bevy of wind-pollinated plants that bloom at the same time, with Ragweed (*Ambrosia* spp.) being possibly the worst offender, growing in abundance on roadsides. Ragweed flowers are inconspicuous, but if you get close, you will see that they look like little caps. Sometimes you can tap it, and the pollen drifts away. Sagebrush also blooms in fall and sends its pollen flying.

Wind-blown pollen is quite small, and light enough to be blown around. It is the wind-blown stuff that gets in your nasal passages. The flowers are green. Insect- or bat-borne pollen is large and sticky, so it will cling to the bug or bat. The co-evolution of plants and insects has produced many fascinating mechanisms for attracting pollinators, including shelves for the bugs to sit on, and nectar to feed them. One of the most common signals to pollinators is the color of the flower. The color of flowers seen by us may be different from what bees, for instance, see, because they can see ultra-violet light. Plants that do not attract insects have no need for signals such as colors,

nor lures like nectar. The golden flowers of Rabbitbrush tell you right away that they are insect pollinated. The beehives also give you a hint.

--Constance Spenger



*Rubber rabbitbrush*  
--Photo by Steve Matson

**Book Review. *Rock Creek Wildflowers.*  
Text by Cathy Rose, photographs by  
Stephen Ingram. California Native Plant  
Society Press, Sacramento California.  
2015.**

It has been my experience on my own plant walks that most participants want to know much more than just the names of the plants. Such plant lovers will be pleased with this book. The 125 species covered in this field guide include not just plants with colorful flowers, but also ferns, pines, willows, and even the most common species of grasses, sedges, and rushes. Few field guides are willing to tackle the last three groups of grass-like plants.

The area covered by *Rock Creek Wildflowers* includes all of the Little Lakes Valley from the Mosquito Flat trailhead at the end of the Rock Creek road, including the trails to Eastern Brook Lakes, Gem Lakes, Mono Pass, and Morgan Pass. Elevations range from just over 10,000 feet at the trailhead to 12,000 feet at Mono Pass, so the focus is entirely on the subalpine and alpine vegetation zones. A good map to the area can be found in the back of the book.

The arrangement of species is alphabetical by plant family. Some users may be more comfortable with field guides arranged by flower color, but the authors thought it was important that users “take an interest

in evolutionary relationships.” I agree. There are in fact both logical and practical reasons to arrange a field guide this way. The book includes several species fleabanes (*Erigeron*), paintbrushes (*Castilleja*), and buckwheats (*Eriogonum*) which vary in their flower color. Having all of the species in these genera together in one place makes it much easier to tell them apart.

Each species is profiled with its family, scientific, and --common names, a brief description the plant, including its geographic distribution, a text narrative highlighting particular interesting features, and a photo. The derivation of each Latin name is given, telling the reader what the Latin means or who were the botanists that some genera and species were named after.

The photographs are excellent, reflecting the skill of an experienced photographer and botanist in capturing the diagnostic features of the flowers and vegetative parts of the plants. I have never seen better pictures of small-flowered species such as carpet clover (*Trifolium monandrum*) and sibbaldia (*Sibbaldia procumbens*).

The narrative portion of the species profiles contains information on specific localities and habitats where the plant can be found. Additional notes may include flowering season, pollinators, seed dispersers, birds, mammals, and (especially) butterflies commonly associated with the plant, ethnobotanical uses, and even a line or two of poetry.

The introduction includes a brief description of the geology and history of the Little Lakes Valley, and the index at the back includes both Latin and common names, making it easy to locate the profile for each species.

I have just one minor complaint, having to do with production values. For a few of the blue-flowered species (e.g., *Gentianopsis holopetala* or *Penstemon heterodoxus*) the flowers appear much more magenta in the photos than they appear in the field.

This field guide is compact and light weight, meant to be easily carried and used in the field. Although the focus is obviously on Rock Creek, most of the species can be found from Mt. Whitney to Tioga Pass, so hikers will find it useful throughout the subalpine and alpine areas of the Eastern Sierra Nevada.

--Steve McLaughlin

## Bristlecone T-shirt Sale

The Bristlecone Chapter t-shirts are almost sold out. The last ones are for sale at Spellbinder Books for a reduced price of \$10. Get yours now!

The design was created in the early 80's by an artist friend of founding member Francis Cholewa. The flowers selected for the shirts were Death Valley Monkey Flower (*Mimulus rupicola*), a flower Mary DeDecker discovered growing in Eureka Valley; Scarlet Milkvetch (*Astragalus coccineus*); and White Heather (*Cassiope merpensiana*), a favorite flower of John Muir.

The original shirts sold for \$8, which included tax, with another \$1 for shipping. Thank you to Jerry Zatorski for making sure the last printing of the shirts was true to the color of the plants. This shirt has been a favorite for a long time. To quote dedicated chapter member Doris Fredendall, "I find pleasure in looking back, but more pleasure in looking forward".

--Kathy Duvall

## Deadline for next issue.

Please have your articles or information to us by December 15, 2015.

### Bristlecone Chapter Directory

President: Katie Quinlan 760-873-8023  
Vice President: Michèle Slaton 760-938-3258  
Secretary: Rosemary Jarrett 760-387-2782  
Treasurer: Nancy Hadlock 760-263-5022  
Creosote Ring Sub-chapter: Kathy LaShure 760-377-4541  
Chapter Council Rep: Stephen Ingram 760-937-9918  
Conservation/Partnerships: Julie Anne Hopkins  
831-566-6012  
Programs: Michèle Slaton 760-938-3258  
DeDecker Grants: Michèle Slaton 760-938-3258  
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](mailto:webmaster@bristleconecnps.org)>  
Posters: Nancy Padlock 760-263-5022  
Book Sales: Sue Weis 760-873-3485  
T-shirt Sales: Scott Hetzler 760-873-8392  
DeDecker Garden: Richard Potashin 760-263-5022

## Up-Coming Events

### October/November Board Meeting

**Wednesday, October 28, 6 pm. Conference Room,  
351 Pacu Lane, Bishop.**

All members are welcome.

### November Bristlecone Chapter Meeting and Program

**Thursday, November 5, White Mountain  
Research Center, 3000 East Line St., Bishop.**

**NOTE DATE.**

**5:30 Potluck**

**6:45 Elections for Board Positions.**

**7 pm.** "The Ebb and Flow of Sagebrush and Why You  
(and Bugs) Should Care" --Hudson Intern, Sophie  
Winitsky

## Sturgeon Moon—The Death of Meriwether Lewis

Take, for example, Meriwether  
Lewis, Striding across  
America, a wilderness then,  
a green dazzling paradise livened  
by Indians, and animals,  
and the drawing in of details  
on the enormous maps, he must have  
let it happen. During the years  
Jefferson thought the whole expedition  
had vanished, he must have been feeling  
the sharp, the fatal exchange  
of his life as it flowed forth into  
the world around him—as he became  
the rivers, the plains full of dark  
beasts browsing peacefully  
by the thousands. The trees  
felt his hand upon them, and tried to let  
their secret of longevity sift forth,  
sprinkling it into his eyes. He returned  
from that wild green America,  
but hardly what he'd been—more river water  
in his veins than blood, more leaves  
than flesh, more earth  
than ego. And what life  
was possible then? Government?  
Commerce? He sought  
the small flame of cheap comforts,  
as he limped ahead in the aching bones  
that come even to a young man  
who has slept so long in the leaves.  
Then: Tennessee. Warmed  
by brandy, he could entertain  
with stories of a world too rich  
to be left unmolested. He knew it--  
saw the small towns fattening on the borders,  
thought of the green man he had left  
deep inside Yellowstone, waiting  
along the one blazed road,  
drinking water from his cupped hands,  
not guessing in his wildest nightmares  
what mutilations lay ahead. Lewis  
became morose, stared out of windows; ended  
victim of some small  
brawl, or a suicide--  
who knows which, and what's  
the difference anyway.

--Mary Oliver from *Twelve Moons*

## ***Rock Creek Wildflowers*, available in local bookstores and visitor centers**

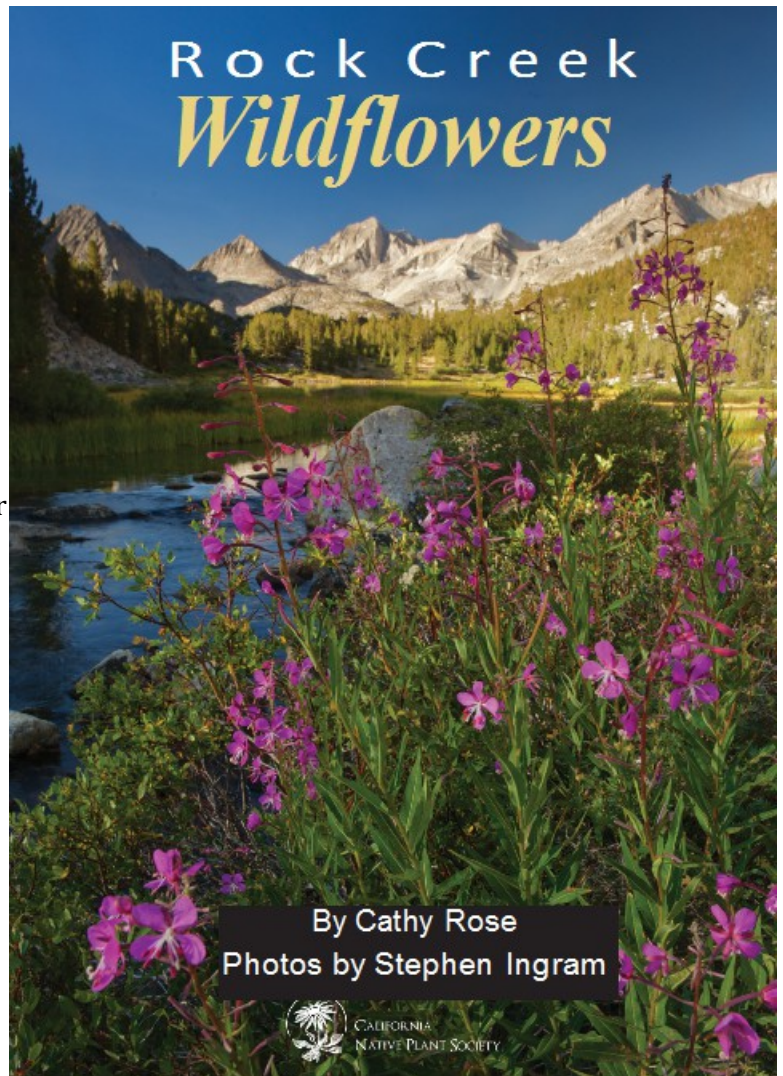
A spectacular high Sierra Nevada valley is the subject of a new wildflower guide called ***Rock Creek Wildflowers***, published by the California Native Plant Society. Little Lakes Valley, at the head of Rock Creek Canyon, has been a favorite of flower-lovers, hikers, anglers, climbers, and sight-seers for generations. Local botanist, Cathy Rose, and photographer, Stephen Ingram, have teamed up to produce a highly portable and user-friendly guide to the most common plants of the valley, starting at the trailhead at Mosquito Flat and covering the trails from Mono Pass to Morgan Pass.

Besides wildflowers, ***Rock Creek Wildflowers*** includes trees, shrubs, ferns, grasses, and sedges. 125 different species are profiled with descriptions of each plant, lore and history, and a diagnostic photograph. Special places along the trails are highlighted to help wildflower lovers find their favorite plants. Included in the book is a panoramic photo identifying the peaks surrounding the valley as well as a map with trails, lakes, peaks, and other features.

The author, Cathy Rose, began studying plants in Yosemite under the tutelage of the renowned botanist Carl Sharsmith and has enjoyed leading nature field trips throughout California ever since. For many years, Cathy has spent summers at the base of Rock Creek Canyon and she wrote ***Rock Creek Wildflowers*** to share her love of the place and the plants with others. "I loved the experience of writing the book because it involved close study, both on site and through the literature of botany in the Sierra, and I discovered details and lore that were fascinating," said Cathy.

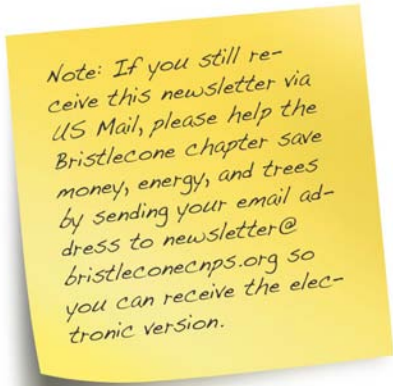
Stephen Ingram is a well-known local photographer specializing in Eastern Sierra flora, fauna, and landscapes. He studied botany at UC Santa Barbara and authored a book called "Cactus, Agaves, and Yuccas of California and Nevada," published by Cachuma Press in 2008. Stephen remarked, "I've been drawn to the incredible abundance and diversity of flowers as well as the beautiful high mountain backdrop in Little Lakes Valley for over 20 years. It's a wonderful area to explore and photograph!"

***Rock Creek Wildflowers*** is available at local bookstores and Visitors Centers in Mammoth and Bishop, as well as at Rock Creek Lakes Resort, which is conveniently located on the way to a trail that leads through an unforgettable valley full of flowers.



**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](http://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: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_ Patron \$300  
\_\_ Benefactor \$600  
\_\_ Mariposa Lily \$1500  
\_\_ Additional Contribution \_\_\_\_\_

**Mail To / Make Payable To:**  
CNPS Membership Coordinator  
2707 K Street, Suite 1  
Sacramento, CA 95816

**Membership Category**  
\_\_ Student / Limited Income \$25  
\_\_ Individual \$45  
\_\_ Family \$75  
\_\_ Plant Lover \$100

**Gift Contribution:** \_\_\_\_\_ Wherever needed   
Specific Area: \_\_\_\_\_