



Bristlecone Chapter

Dedicated to the Preservation of California Native Flora

The California Native Plant Society

Bristlecone Chapter Newsletter

Volume 37, No. 2
March-April 2016

President's Message March 2016

Human nature is a funny thing. If you take something good away, when it is given back it is precious. Consider the recent events at the Malheur Wildlife Refuge in Oregon. When we are denied access to a beautiful place, we want to go there even more.

No one has denied us in Inyo County access to public lands. Many volunteers put together field trips for you to enjoy public lands. Since the trips are native-plant focused, a hand lens, hat, lunch and bottle of water are all the tools required.

The drought has limited beautiful spring blooms over the last few years. With good fall and winter rain there is promise of great flowers this year. Even if it is just an average year, I think we will all be more than happy with whatever comes up. Check out the field trip list in the newsletter. Set aside time to explore these extraordinary places. Enjoy them while you can.

--Katie Quinlan



Phacelia nashiana (Tunawee field trip)

Wednesday, March 23, 7 PM, General Meeting, White Mountain Research Center, 3000 E. Line Street, Bishop "Vegetation Changes and Willow and Cottonwood Recruitment in the Lower Owens River Project"-- Speaker Jerry Zatorski

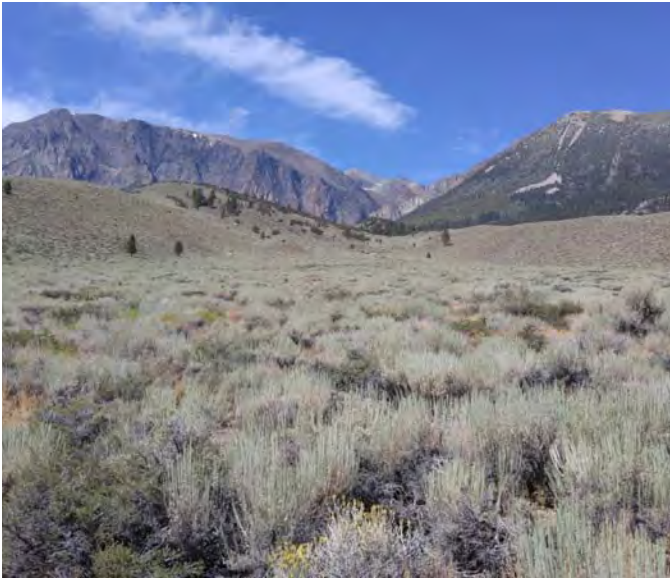
In late 2006, the first sustained water release began in the Lower Owens River Project (LORP). Nine years later, the LORP is still in place, and as one might expect there have been changes in vegetation. Much of the native vegetation has returned along with a few undesirable plants, and many habitats have been altered from the pre-project state while new habitat has also been created. We will explore some of these vegetation changes through a virtual tour of the LORP.

The recruitment of woody riparian trees such as willow and cottonwood is one of the goals of the LORP and an important indicator of how well the project is doing. Each summer, field crews walked the length of the river and look for willow and cottonwood recruitment among other things. From the first survey in 2007 through the latest survey in 2015, over 700 recruitment sites were found, and 476 of these sites were found to be persisting the following year. In the fall of 2015, all 476 persisting woody recruitment sites were revisited. Crews found that more than half of these sites still have willow and cottonwood plants. The recruitment – where and what species–will be discussed.

--Michèle Slaton

January General Meeting Presentation Summary—The Sagebrush Ecosystem in the Eastern Sierra: Threats and Restoration Strategies

Heather Stone, Interagency Vegetation Management Planner for the Inyo National Forest and Bishop BLM Field Office was the speaker to a larger than usual crowd on this topic.



Sagebrush ecosystems are a critical component of the eastern Sierra

Some of the threats to sagebrush ecosystems include annual grasses, excessive grazing (mostly historic with legacy effects), conifer expansion into shrublands, climate change, and altered fire regimes. Annual grasses are of particular concern due to competition with native plants, and also changing fire regimes in favor of more frequent fire.

Special attention was given in the presentation to explaining the difference between persistent woodlands (where pinyon-juniper has been relatively stable in recent history), from expansion of pinyon-juniper into shrublands which has occurred at an accelerated rate over the last 150 years or so and where pinyon-juniper extent appears to be controlled by the fire regime.



An example of pinyon-juniper woodland expanding into sagebrush shrublands.

Successes and opportunities for continued learning in strategic restoration that will benefit these systems was discussed. After wildfires, natural recruitment of native species has been very successful in some areas, where other areas have benefited from planting native species or weed removal. Seeding is very vulnerable to variations in the weather so strategies to carefully select locations and trials with different methods were recommended.

Conifer removal in some areas has also shown benefits to sagebrush ecosystems including the return of sage steppe dependent wildlife species such as sage grouse that had previously abandoned sites – sage-grouse like many other species typical of sagebrush steppe don't like the trees, because they give predators a place to perch and hide. Strategic fuel-breaks to limit fires in low elevations with cheatgrass which favors fires which are too frequent and too large were also discussed as well as small patchy prescribed burns or treatments in higher elevation areas where suppression has reduced the frequency of fire. All the threats and pressures mentioned may become exacerbated with future warming trends, making appropriate and successful restoration efforts all the more important.

--Heather Stone

Greenhouse Update

Spring is here, at least under the row covers at the propagation center. The dormant plants (such as *Aquilegia formosa* and *Zauschneria californica*) are starting to send up fresh green leaves. I breathe a sigh of relief when I see the new growth, knowing that the plants have made it through the winter.

A less pleasant surprise also awaited me under the row covers this year: those pesky mice have been

active. Little holes are randomly dug in the plants. I can't figure what they are digging, because they haven't eaten the plants. Unfortunately they expose the roots and the plant dies. I haven't seen any mouse activity on the shade tables for the last two years, but it looks like this year I will need to put out the mousetraps early.

I have been stratifying the seeds since January and this month we start putting those seeds in dirt. If some of your plants didn't make it through the winter and you would like to replace them before the fall sale, I will be selling plants at the Eastern Sierra Land Trust's "Garden Fest" on April 30 from 11-2 pm.

--Katie Quinlan

Conservation Update Inyo National Forest Plan Revision

The coalition of environmental groups focused on the plan revision for the three early adopter Sierra Nevada forests, including CNPS, has submitted comment letters on the forest documents concerning potential wilderness area, species of conservation concern, and potential new Wild and Scenic River Segments. CNPS continues to work with the Forests and the coalition on the Species of Conservation Concern (SCC) list, since many species formerly listed as Forest Sensitive Species (FSS) have not been included in the Plan Revision SCC list. CNPS recommends all species included in the SCC list, and if excluded, an explanation and the criteria for exclusion needs to be provided.

In July 2015, the Forest Service shared the proposed draft for public review. In response to the feedback received then, the Forests are now sharing the screening criteria used to develop these lists. If you have questions, concerns or feedback about our draft proposed SCC lists or process, please contact Joan Friedlander at 858-674-2962 or submit your input via Web-form at <http://tinyurl.com/earlyadoptersfpr>.

Renewable Energy

DRECP and BLM Land Use Plan Amendment (LUPA)

The Record of Decision (ROD) on the Desert Renewable Energy Conservation Plan (DRECP) is due to be released in March 2016. CNPS has demonstrated our commitment to the goal of balancing renewable energy generation with conservation of large intact landscapes and species'

habitats, our organization continues to devote resources to the DRECP process, as we have since the initial science advisory and stakeholder meeting in 2010. We, CNPS together with Audubon California, submitted a letter of protest on the Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) protection of microphyll woodlands.

Microphyll woodlands are desert woodlands comprised of specific vegetation alliances typically associated with desert wash systems that provide high quality habitat values for desert birds, mammals, and reptiles. The general term microphyll woodlands includes four vegetation alliances that occur across the Plan Area; *Chilopsis linearis* alliance (Desert willow), *Prosopis glandulosa* alliance (Mesquite), *Psoralea argemone* alliance (Smoke tree), and *Parkinsonia florida* - *Olneya tesota* alliance (Blue palo verde - Ironwood). Desert willow, Mesquite, and Smoke tree are rare vegetation alliances.

Owens Valley Solar Energy Study (OVSES)

The final public meeting for OVSES will be March 1 at 10 am at the Inyo County Board of Supervisors Hearing Room, 224 N. Edwards St., Independence. County staff will present information and make recommendations.

The OVSES will develop strategies as Inyo County analyzes the environmental analysis for photovoltaic solar projects in the Owens Valley. The Bristlecone Chapter will review this document and provide more detail throughout the planning process.

To review updated mapping for the project: Under <http://databasin.org/> search for the "Owens Valley Solar Energy Study (OVSES)" Gallery. <http://databasin.org/galleries/0d0b40d9eea543e48166ca9f6b5a56c0>.

Ground Water Pumping

Owens Valley Checkerbloom and renaming capped wells 385 and 386.

Proposed drilling of new wells in Inyo County by LADWP remains a matter of contention due to concern about further drawdown of the groundwater level and the potential negative effect on a population of state endangered Owens Valley checkerbloom (*Sidalcea covillei*), alkali meadows, and failed required mitigation (revegetation) efforts. The LADWP proposal involves re-drilling of the closed

shallow wells W385 and W386 in the Five Bridges area (northern Owens Valley) as deep water wells, by renaming the wells to 385R and 386R, and initiating an environmental analysis (CEQA). The Bristlecone Chapter will provide further information to members and will prepare comments on this highly controversial proposal.

Sidalcea covillei:

CNPS List 1B.1

Federal Species of Concern

State-listed Endangered

Endangered throughout its range

Endemic to Owens Valley

Learn more about the Owens Valley checkerbloom at: http://bristleconecnps.org/native_plants/of_interest/Sidalcea_covillei.php.

For more information on these important conservation issues contact Julie Anne Hopkins: conservation@bristleconecnps.org.

--Julie Anne Hopkins

**A Message from Greg Suba, CNPS
Conservation Program Director**

I hope you've heard by now that [President Obama has designated three new national monuments - protecting 1.8 million acres - across California's desert habitats](#). Thank you for the messages many of you sent to your elected officials in support of the new desert monuments!

In other news, two weeks ago the [California Public Utilities Commission voted to keep rooftop solar an affordable option for Californians](#).

These recent developments will protect desert landscapes and reduce the pressure to build large-scale solar facilities in the wrong places.

Over the next several weeks, the US Bureau of Land Management (BLM) will make a final decision on their portion of the Desert Renewable Energy Conservation Plan (DRECP). Many thanks to the CNPS activists who contacted BLM asking for the protection of dense microphyll woodlands in areas still proposed for development.

--Greg Suba

**Second Annual Owens Lake Bird Festival,
Friday-Sunday, April 22-24, 2016**

Join Friends of the Inyo and our partners for the second annual Owens Lake Bird Festival in Lone Pine, California. The festival will celebrate migrating shorebirds as they move between hemispheres at Owens Lake Important Bird Area and will highlight the significance of the Owens Lake story and the return of threatened habitats.

Open registration for the public begins February 15. Tickets are adults \$60, students \$30, and children 12 and under free. Registration includes Friday evening reception, Owens Lake field trips on Saturday and Sunday and continental breakfast on Saturday and Sunday. For more information contact friendsoftheinyo.org/foiD7/owenslakefestival

Eastern Sierra Audubon Yard Sale

Eastern Sierra Audubon Society is planning a spring 2016 yard sale. All proceeds will fund two \$500 scholarships to graduating seniors in Mono and Inyo Counties.

We need your help. Think of putting together some items from your basement, garage or attic for the yard sale. The yard sale will be Saturday, May 14.

Thank you for helping to fund the 2016 Senior Scholarships. Past student award winners are wearing big smiles of accomplishment.

If you have questions, contact Ann Hoffmann at hoffmann@qnet.com or at 760-937-1862.

Up-Coming Events

March Board Meeting

Wednesday, March 16, 6 PM Conference Room,
351 Pacu Lane, Bishop.

All members are welcome.

March Bristlecone Chapter Meeting and Program

Wednesday, March 23, 7 PM White Mountain
Research Center, 3000 East Line St., Bishop.
"Vegetation Changes and Willow and Cottonwood
Recruitment in the Lower Owens River Project"
Speaker--Jerry Zatorski

Bristlecone CNPS Field Trips (for updated information, visit Bristleconecnps.org)

March 12-13: Panamint Valley and/or Death Valley.
Leader: Mark Bagley. Meet at 9 AM at Panamint
Springs on Hwy. 190 in Panamint Valley, about one
hour east of Lone Pine. Camping Saturday night will
probably be primitive (no water, no toilets, no
tables), but the location will be determined just
before the trip as will the locations we'll botanize.
We'll go to areas in either Panamint Valley and/or
Death Valley depending on the bloom. Easy to
moderate walking. Standard car OK, but we will be
on some dirt roads; don't forget to gas up ahead of
time (there is very expensive gas at Panamint
Springs and in Death Valley). Bring good walking
shoes, plenty of water for the whole weekend and
everything else you need for camping. Trip will end
on Sunday about 3 or 4 pm. Contact Mark Bagley at
760-920-2211 for more information.

March 19, Saturday: Aberdeen Station bike trip.
Leaders: Katie Quinlan and Michèle Slaton. Meet on
the Aberdeen Crossing road near the bridge at 9 am.
The road is 11 miles south of Big Pine, east of
Highway 395. We will park the cars and ride the
bikes from there. This trip will ride sections of the
old Slim Princess railroad grade stopping to look at
what little remains of the Cities of San Carlos, Bend
City and Chrysopolis, for about a 20-mile ride. We
will compare the plant habitat of the river wetland,
alkali meadows and alluvial fans of the Inyo
mountains. We will also stop to look at any
interesting plants that come our way – including a
variety of annuals, perennials, and shrubs. This ride
is on dirt roads, so a mountain bike or cross bike are
needed. Riding will be an easy pace. Bring a lunch,
water and clothing for any kind of weather. Contact
info: Katie Quinlan kquinlan16@gmail.com.

Up-Coming Events

March 26: Big Pine/Baker Creek. Leader: Steve
Matson. Join us for an early season foray along and
near Baker Creek and Warren Bench. This is a great
spot to see early season annuals. We will be on the
lookout for, among other things, *Muilla coronata*.
Meet next to the campground at the junction of
Hwys 168 and 395 in Big Pine at 9 AM. We will
drive on paved and well-graded dirt roads to a
parking area for our point of departure. Easy
walking off trail, 3 to 4 hours total. Bring water and
snacks, sun protection, etc. Contact info: Steve
Matson, ssmat@sbcglobal.net, 775-843-0389 or 760-
938-2862.

April 16, Saturday: Tunawee Canyon. Leader:
Michèle Slaton. We will explore the bloom at the
mouth of Tunawee Canyon near Coso Junction. At
the southern tip of the Inyo National Forest, the
lower canyon is the transition zone from a Mojave
Desert Joshua tree woodland up into Sierra Nevada
pinyon-juniper, and in the potential recommended
addition to the South Sierra Wilderness under
consideration for the revised Forest Plan. Diversity
of showy wildflowers will abound (evening
primrose, phacelia, woolly sunflowers, lupines etc.),
but the real prize is Charlotte's phacelia (*Phacelia
nashiana*), a Forest Service Sensitive species, and
such a brilliant blue that it will be forever painted on
your mind. We may also be able to find Kern Canyon
clarkia (*Clarkia xantiana* ssp. *parviflora*). We will
drive a good dirt road to about 5000 ft., and stroll at
the canyon mouth on gentle slopes, likely walking 1-
2 miles total in the day. We will meet at 8 am at the
Forest Service building behind the DMV on W. Line
St. in Bishop, and carpool as much as possible.
Alternatively, meet one hour later at the Interagency
Visitor Center in Lone Pine. Bring lunch, water, and
other field gear for the day. Car camping at the
road's end following the field trip is an option,
please RSVP if interested. Any questions, contact
Michèle Slaton at msslaton02@gmail.com or 760-920-
8693.

Up-Coming Events

April 30, Saturday: Vaughn Gulch, Inyo Mountains. Leader: Steve Matson. Last year I found *Penstemon fructiformis* and *Peucephyllum schottii* in this canyon and we should find them again. These are possible range extensions for these taxa. Also reputed to be a good location for fossils (other than the trip leader). Meet 8:30 am next to the campground at the junction of Hwys 168 and 395 in Big Pine. Second meeting at 9 am at the park at the south end of Independence on the west side of 395. We will drive the Mazourka Canyon road east. Final access is tricky as last mile will be over a rough 4WD high-clearance track. We will hike off trail up canyon, not too rough or steep. Bring lunch and water. Return to vehicles by 2 pm. Contact info: Steve Matson, ssmat@sbcglobal.net, 775-843-0389 or 760-938-2862.

May 7, Saturday: Union Wash. Leader: Jerry Zatorski. This will be part driving tour and part hiking tour of this rarely botanized southern Owens Valley alluvial fan. The bottom of the fan is down in the Owens Valley's Great Basin flora, and as we ascend up the alluvial fan, we will enter into Mojave flora. There are also a few spring ecosystems with perennial water. With the long-awaited El Nino moisture finally here, we can expect annuals alongside the persistent drought adapted perennial shrub flora. This will be a full day of exploring, so you will need to bring lunch, snacks, fluids and dress to be outside all day. Also have hand lens, field guides, and binoculars. We will meet at Independence Park, on the south end of Independence, on US 395 (Edwards St) at 8 am, and we should be done by late afternoon. Contact info: Jerry Zatorski, jerryzat@gmail.com.

May 28, Saturday: Black and Marble Canyons, White Mountains. Leader: Steve Matson. Right in the Bishop backyard, Marble Canyon has some rare finds like *Glossopetalon spinescens* and *Philadelphus microphyllus*. Meet at 9 am at the White Mountain Research Center at 3000 East Line St. in Bishop. We will car pool from there on both paved and not too rough dirt roads. Bring lunch and water. We will hike up Marble canyon on a use trail, somewhat rough, some slick rock. Contact info: Steve Matson, ssmat@sbcglobal.net, 775-843-0389 or 760-938-2862.

Up-Coming Events

July 16, Saturday, 9:45 – approx. 2:30: Valentine Reserve, Old Mammoth, Mono County. Leader: Ann Howald. Valentine Camp, a University of California Natural Reserve, covers about 150 acres, is amazingly rich in habitats, and supports over 250 plant species. On this leisurely hike we'll see montane forest, wet meadows, seeps and springs, montane riparian woodland along Mammoth Creek, sagebrush scrub on a small moraine, and a slope of montane chaparral with red firs attempting to reclaim it. Wildflowers will be abundant, especially in the sagebrush-meadow transition zone. Historically, the legendary skier Hans George operated his ropetow on the slopes above Valentine Camp, and the property was a summer fishing camp for the original owners. The Valentine family donated this property to the University of California. Since 1972 it has been included in U.C.'s Natural Reserve System, dedicated to research and public education. Easy hike. Bring water, lunch, sun protection. All attendees will need to sign a waiver before entering the reserve. Space is limited, so please contact Sue Weis (sueweis@aol.com or 760-873-3485) to sign up. Sorry, but no dogs or folks under 18.

July 30, Saturday. Shepherd Pass trail, Symmes Creek. Leader: Sue Weis. We will hike up the Shepherd Pass trail at least as far as the population of DeDecker clover on the ridge between Symmes and Shepherd Creek. We'll try to clarify the subspecies of *Petrophytum caespitosum* present on the walls of Symmes Creek so bring hand lenses to look at small petals. Mary DeDecker reported an Erigeron from a rocky south facing slope on Symmes Creek and we will try to re-locate it. Meet at 8 am at Dehy Park at the north end of Independence for carpooling. The road to the trailhead is a rough dirt road, so 4WD and high clearance will be needed. We will walk 3-4 miles mostly on an easy trail, with several stream crossings, but there are steep switchbacks going to the clover population. Bring lunch, sun protection, and lots of water since it will most likely be hot, as well as normal hiking gear. For questions, contact Sue Weis, sueweis@aol.com, or 760-873-3485.

Up-Coming Events

August 13, Saturday. East of Mono Lake, Anchorite Hills. Leader: Sue Weis. Last year we re-located populations of several CNPS listed species in the Anchorite Hills area, including *Astragalus kentrophyta* var. *ungulatus*, *Mentzelia torreyi*, and *Eriogonum alexandrae*, and also found that the area had an infestation of halogeton, which we pulled. We will be again pulling any halogeton we find while visiting this diverse corner of Mono County. Meet at the intersection of Hwys 395 and 167 at 9 am. Part of the trip is a few miles on a sandy bumpy road that needs 4WD and some clearance, with a short hike on sandy soil. Bring lunch, water, gloves, and sun protection. For questions, contact Sue Weis, sueweis@aol.com, or 760-873-3485.

CNPS Workshops (for more information, visit cnps.org/workshops)

March 14-15. Oxnard and Malibu. "Rare Plant Survey Protocols." Taught by Heath Bartosh, Aaron Sims, Kristi Lazar.

April 3-6. Zzyzx (south of Baker, California). "Measuring & Monitoring Plant Populations." Taught by John Willoughby.

May 3-5. Dye Creek Preserve, Los Molinos. "Introduction to Plant Identification." Taught by Josie Crawford.

May 18-20. Taft Gardens, Ojai. "Wetland & Riparian Plant Identification." Taught by David Magney.

July 19-21. White Mountains. "Vegetation Rapid Assessment." Taught by Julie Evans.

Summer 2016. San Francisco Bay Area. "Vegetation Mapping." Taught by Julie Evans.

Other Events of Interest

April 22-24. Second Annual Owens Lake Bird Festival sponsored by Friends of the Inyo and partners. Open registration begins February 16. For more information, contact friendsoftheinyo.org/foiD7/owenslakefestival

May 14, Saturday. Eastern Sierra Audubon yard sale to benefit 2016 Senior Scholarships. Location to be determined. Contact Ann Hoffmann at hoffmann@qnet.com or at 760-937-1862.

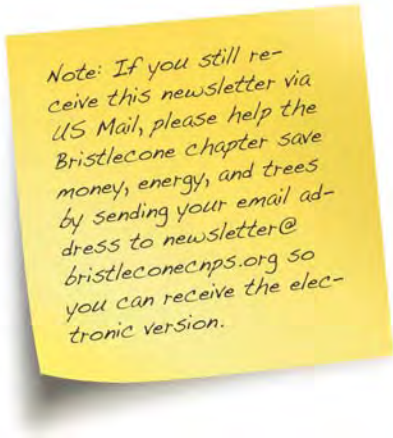
Please have your articles or information to us by April 15, 2016.

Bristlecone Chapter Directory

President: Katie Quinlan 760-873-8023
Vice President: Michèle Slaton 760-258-1464
Secretary: Sue Weis 760-873-3485
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 760-258-1464
DeDecker Grants: Michèle Slaton 760-258-1464
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: Karen Ferrell-Ingram 760-937-9918
Newsletter: Edie Trimmer/Thomas Brill 760-920-3702
Membership: Edie Trimmer/Thomas Brill 760-920-3702
Website: webmaster@bristleconecnps.org
Posters: Nancy Hadlock 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

The California Native Plant Society

Bristlecone Chapter
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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: _____

- __ 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: _____