



Bristlecone Chapter

Dedicated to the Preservation of California Native Flora

The California Native Plant Society

Bristlecone Chapter Newsletter

Volume 44, No. 5
September–October 2023

General Meeting, 7:00 p.m. HYBRID **Wednesday, September 27th**

**White Mountain Research Center,
3000 E. Line St., Bishop or Zoom link:**

<https://cnps-org.zoom.us/j/88223300030?pwd=Q2xxc3hpRlJOT1c0T0hMVzIObWlpdz09>

A Vascular Flora of the Sacatar Trail Wilderness
Speaker: Kimberly Schaefer, California Botanic Garden Master's student



DeDecker Grant recipient Kimberly Schaefer is excited to share her findings to date from the Sacatar Trail Wilderness in the Southeast Sierra Nevada Mountains. She refers to this area as a “botany blackhole” because of the dearth of floristic data and the fact that most of the plant collections from the region were sampled in the 1960s.

Her passion for botany began at an early age growing up in the Pacific Northwest, but her interest in rugged desert plants led her to earning her B.S. degree in Biology at Cal Poly Pomona. She spent the following three years working as a conservation technician at California Botanic Garden in both the invasive plant and seed bank programs before joining the graduate program in 2021.

Kimberly hopes that her current and future research will shed light on the effects of climate change on plant distribution and help to inform habitat conservation efforts.

Tri-Valley Groundwater Management District SGMA Workshop Report

At its monthly meeting on August 23, Tri-Valley Groundwater Management District (TVGMD) held a workshop for Tri-Valley residents and interested citizens on the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA). Representatives from the California State Water Department and Mono County Counsel helped facilitate the workshop. The meeting was well attended with approximately 40 people present, representing domestic and agricultural well-owners, California Department of Fish and Wildlife, and those concerned about Fish Slough. There is considerable overlap between those concerned about the sustainability of domestic wells and Fish Slough. The following is extracted from opening remarks by Carol Ann Mitchell, Chair of the TVGMD board.

The Mono County TVGMD was created January 1, 1990 by an act of the California Legislature in response to local concerns and a grassroots push to protect Tri-Valley from groundwater export. The District was the second groundwater management

district formed in the State. The legislative findings stated it was to protect our groundwater resources for the benefit of domestic, agricultural, and commercial needs for this part of Mono County and to prevent overdraft of the basin.

In TVGMD's early years, a groundwater export project was made by the U.S. Filter Corporation and Mono Farms. The application went through the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) process at the time. U.S. Filter eventually withdrew the project because initial studies suggested that there was not excess groundwater available for export from Tri-Valley.

The historic passage of the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act, or SGMA, in 2014, set forth a statewide framework to help protect groundwater resources over the long-term. SGMA requires local agencies to form groundwater sustainability plans for high and medium priority basins. Groundwater Sustainability Agencies are to implement groundwater sustainability plans (GSPs) to avoid undesirable results and to mitigate overdraft within 20 years. Tri-Valley is currently rated a low priority basin but joined the Owens Valley Groundwater Authority with Mono County to work on Owens Valley Basin Groundwater Management Plan. The district and residents submitted comments on the Tri-Valley portion of the plan.

It became clear to the TVGMD Board of Directors throughout this process that local control was needed for TVGMD. The Tri-Valley Board voted to withdraw from the Owens Valley Groundwater Authority and asked the Department of Water Resources for its status as a Groundwater Sustainability Agency. We became a Groundwater Sustainability Agency in November of 2022. The Owens Valley Groundwater Sustainability Plan, which still includes Tri-Valley, was submitted in 2022 but has yet to be approved by the Department of Water Resources. This plan, if approved, will require coordination with the Owens Valley Groundwater Authority on groundwater management issues for our portion of the Owens Valley Basin.

Due to a lack of money and data in the Tri-Valley area, Mono County has applied on the District's behalf for a grant to do a groundwater model in 2024. In addition, TVGMD is investigating other ways to gather data for the area.

Fish Slough is definitely a concern for Tri-Valley residents and should be a concern for Owens Valley residents and our own Bristlecone Chapter of California Native Plant Society. TVGMD holds meetings on the fourth Wednesday of each month in either Chalfant or Benton. The TVGMD Advisory Board meets on a less regular basis but is addressing many of the issues faced by the TVGMD. Please consider attending these meetings and being an advocate for Fish Slough.

—*Edie Trimmer*

November Election for Vacant TVGMD Board Position

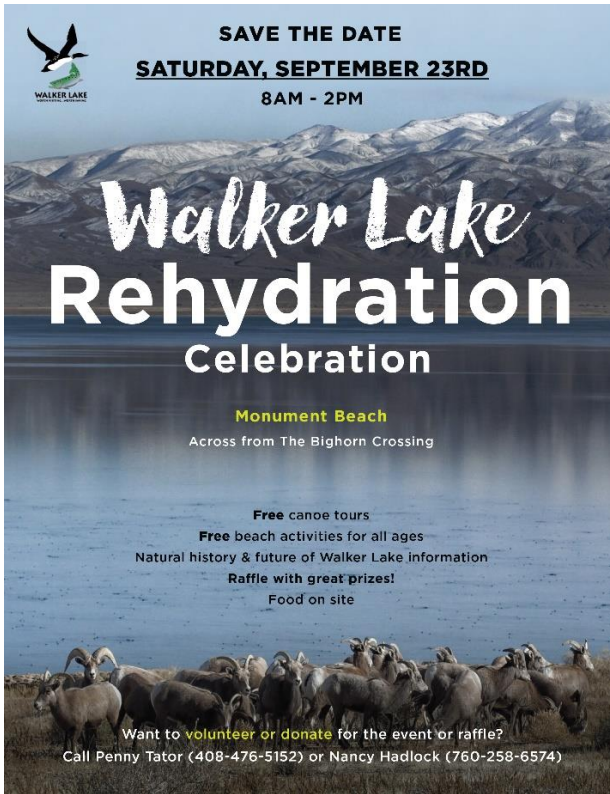
In November 2023, Tri-Valley registered voters will vote between two candidates for the vacant position on the seven-member TVGMD Board. This position has been vacant since November 2022. The six board members were unable to come to consensus on whether the vacant position should be filled by a domestic or agricultural well user. Therefore, the position must be chosen by Tri-Valley Voters. The policies pursued by the Board are likely to be significantly different depending on who fills the vacant position. Domestic users represent the greater number of households, while agricultural users are the biggest consumers of groundwater.

The two candidates are Curtis Milliron and Don Moss. Milliron is a domestic user and environmental scientist retired from the California Department of Fish and Wildlife with groundwater management experience. He worked with Phil Pister at the beginning of his career. Moss is an agricultural user, a hydrologist for hydroelectric plants, and an agricultural operator in Hammil Valley.

If you live in the Tri-Valley area or know people who do, please promote this off-season election which will impact the future of Fish Slough.

—*Edie Trimmer*

Walker Lake, Nevada, Mono Lake's Sister, Needs your Help



The Walker Lake Working Group wanted to update CNPS members on an environmental battle that has been raging for thirty years in Western Nevada. We have a terminus desert lake that's literally in terminal condition and in desperate need of your organization's help. Walker Lake, located 50 miles east of the rugged, snow-covered Sierra Nevada range, was fed by Sierra runoff that once flowed unimpeded to the lake. However, upstream diversions by farmers in Nevada and California over the last 140 years, have dropped the lake 180 vertical feet. Deprived of a sustainable inflow, salts in the lake reached toxic levels rendering the lake useless for fish and of limited use to birds. The Lahontan cutthroat trout and tui chub, which once sustained the Walker River Paiutes, are long gone. The lake was once home to a yearly loon festival and fishing derbies supporting the local economy. The loons and the anglers are gone. Walker Lake, once a vibrant, sustainable remnant of ancient Lake Lahontan and sister to Mono Lake, has experienced a complete ecosystem collapse.

Walker Lake's plight bears a striking resemblance to Mono Lake. Many of you are familiar with that story. The Mono Lake Committee relied upon the Public Trust Doctrine to achieve a court victory. That ensured a sustainable amount of water reached the lake to support brine shrimp, flies and millions of birds.

Walker Lake Working Group, a grassroots organization based in Hawthorne, Nevada, has devoted the last three decades to a similar court battle, also using the Public Trust Doctrine. Our opponents are the upstream irrigators, primarily the Walker River Irrigation District. We expect to go to trial in 2025. Our opponents have deep pockets. We do not and the legal bills are daunting.

However, there is hope on the horizon. As we fight in court to restore Walker Lake, our partner organization, the Walker Basin Conservancy, is buying up water rights and land from willing upstream ranchers. To date they've acquired 53% of the water rights needed to bring the lake back. The Nevada Supreme Court, in 2021, acknowledged that the Public Trust Doctrine is applicable to Nevada water law, allowing our case to go forward. Finally, and the best news yet, as a result of this year's record Sierra snowpack, Walker Lake has risen 15 feet.

This is cause for celebration and we plan to do just that. We are having a Rehydration Celebration at Walker Lake on September 23 and you are invited to come and experience the lake and learn of its plight firsthand. There will be canoe tours, presentations, speakers, a raffle, food and kids' activities.

You can also help by donating to Walker Lake Working Group or becoming a member of our growing organization. Consider volunteering your time. Join the fight to save Walker Lake. The battle is far from over.

If you would like more information you can check out our website at <https://walkerlake.org> and our Walker Lake Facebook page. Or contact Richard Potashin and Nancy Hadlock at aspenluv1@gmail.com.

—Nancy Hadlock

DeDecker Grant Recipient's *Malacothamnus* Research is Published



Keir Morse with the new species *Malacothamnus astrotentaculatus*. Photo courtesy of Keir Morse.

Keir Morse, a 2022 graduate of Claremont Graduate University, has published his dissertation research on the genus *Malacothamnus* as a three-volume, open-access monograph. Keir's research was partially funded by a 2018 CNPS Bristlecone Mary DeDecker Grant.

The third volume is written for more of a general audience and includes an introduction to *Malacothamnus*, a new treatment, conservation assessments, maps, and photos. The abbreviated Jepson eFlora version of this treatment should be out around the end of this year. For those who want to dig deeper, the first two volumes go into the detailed evidence used in making the taxonomic decisions for the treatment. Volume 2 also describes three new species. Links to all three volumes, two earlier *Malacothamnus* papers, and a couple video presentations on *Malacothamnus* can be found on Keir's website (<https://keiriosity.com/malacothamnus/>).

Most relevant to the Bristlecone Chapter regarding *Malacothamnus* is that *Malacothamnus orbiculatus* is the only species of *Malacothamnus* known to occur on the east side of the Sierras. *Malacothamnus fremontii*, which *M. orbiculatus* was lumped into in the 1993

Jepson Manual, is only known from the west side of the Sierras. So, any observations of *Malacothamnus fremontii* from the east side of the Sierras are almost certainly misidentified. See the new treatment for how to distinguish them.

—Keir Morse



Malacothamnus orbiculatus. Photo by Keir Morse.

2023 Plant Sale Recap

The plant sale followed this year's weather pattern of being extreme and unusual. Due to the high demand for plants at the spring sale, I grew an extra 500 plants for the fall sale. The plants looked great, the bugs had pretty much missed them, and they were ready for new homes. I went over the inventory three times to make sure I had the correct numbers in the Square ecommerce platform hosting our online store.

Sunday, opening day of the sale for members, is always the day with the highest number of orders. Usually, we get about 50 orders on that day. But as I was printing out the orders, the list acted glitchy and the orders got scrambled. A volunteer and I spent four hours Sunday evening straightening out the mess and making sure we had printed all the orders without double printing any. We had 150 orders in one day! I was worried we would sell out by Monday but also excited that native gardening had taken off to such a degree.

Unfortunately, we found a lot of mistakes among those orders, including orders for plants that were not in the inventory this year. I began to dread all the returns I was going to have to do. About half way through filling the orders, Stephen Ingram came

across his name on an order—he checked with his wife to make sure, they had not ordered any plants this year. Upon further investigation we realized his order was from last year. We started looking at the other orders and sure enough we had more orders than expected because Square had combined this and last year's orders. So, all the volunteers spent an hour going through every order we had already filled and all the other order sheets still to be filled, pulling out last year's orders. Most of the items in already-filled orders had to be restocked. At the end of the day, we filled 49 actual orders for 2023. The good news was there weren't any refunds I needed to make.



Stephen Ingram and Katie Quinlan checking orders. Photo by Gaylene Kinzy.

When I went home to figure out what happened, I found out Square had locked me out of the part of the program where I can update the stock, issue refunds and print orders. I emailed the person at the State office who helps us deal with such problems and is the official "owner" of our Square site, but she never responded. At least, the sale seemed to be going along fine after Sunday. I figured out how to print orders in a different way and issued the few refunds I needed to. I breathed a sigh of relief. The new orders were all for this year's sale so things seemed to be going well.

On Wednesday I realized I needed to be able to get to that part of the site that Square wouldn't let me into

because I needed to turn the sale off on Thursday. Since the state office staff weren't responding to my email, I tried calling but I couldn't leave a message because their mailbox was full. I called the Square helpline, but they couldn't help me because I wasn't the owner of our plant sale webpage. I called someone else at the state office and left a message but they never returned my call.

On Thursday I texted the state office again asking them to turn off the sale but when I checked Thursday night at 7:00 pm the sale was still on. Fortunately, you the wonderful customers have been well-trained; no one ordered after 6:00 pm. But I still mentally prepared myself for a potentially crazy Saturday with people walking in and telling me that they had just put in their orders online and expected to have their pre-paid orders all packed up on the same day.

On Friday morning when I checked the online sale, it had been turned off so I thanked the plant gods for the small blessings. But I noticed something unusual: no one ordered plants of some of the more popular species that normally sell out. For example, I had 138 showy milkweed and didn't sell a single one. What should have tipped me off that something else was amiss in Square were the messages people put with their orders asking me if I had any desert willows. I had 79, so I wondered why people were asking for them instead of just ordering them. As it turned out, Square miscategorized as "sold out" or "not available" many of the plants that people usually want to buy. At this point I just wanted to scream. How many ways could Square mess things up?



Volunteer Laura Mogg helped fulfill and correct orders. Photo courtesy of Katie Quinlan.

At least pick-up day went smoothly. People came in at a steady pace, and there was no rush and no mistakes or missing orders.

Next year, we will not be doing an online sale. WE WILL ONLY BE DOING AN IN-PERSON SALE ON THE THIRD SATURDAY OF AUGUST, which is August 17th, 2024. I know lots of people liked the online sale, but it is more work for me. With this year's online sale having been such a mess and causing many extra hours of work, I am not doing it again.

Overall, the plant sale numbers are down this year. There were fewer pollinator grantees—6 compared to 17 last year. There were fewer customers, 72 compared to 107, and we made about \$2000 less in sales.

—Katie Quinlan

Warm Welcome to all

We have a few new members to welcome and thank for joining our chapter. Big thanks for supporting the work we do on the Eastside to:

Amy in Conifer,
Betsy in Auburn,
and
Melinda in Sacramento

Desert Marigold and Bees

The flowers of desert marigold, *Baileya multiradiata*, (family Asteraceae) provide a night resting site for solitary ground-nesting long-horned bees in the genus *Melissodes* (family Apidae). The females sleep in their nests at night, but the males huddle together on flower heads and stems. There can be from 10–20 males resting at night in one flower head. They can hold on to the flower with their mandible and groom themselves (Wilson and Carril, 2016). Pictures were taken from our native garden.

—Bob Zimmerman

*Wilson, J. S. & Messinger Carril, O. J. (2016). The bees in your backyard: a guide to North America's bees. Princeton University Press.



Bees in flower heads of *Baileya multiradiata*. Photos by Bob Zimmerman.

Up-Coming Events

Chapter Events

Wednesday, September 20, 6:00 pm
Board Meeting (online)

All members are welcome to join. Contact our Secretary, Kathleen Nelson, at secretary@bristleconecnps.org for the Zoom link.

Saturday, September 23, 9:00 am
CNPS Bristlecone Chapter Plot,
Bishop Community Demonstration Garden in
Bishop City Park, 688 N. Main St.

Join Sue Weis on the third Saturday of each month, starting at 9:00 am, to work in our plot of native plants. Workdays will be canceled if raining. If you plan to help out, do contact Sue beforehand. sue.weis98@gmail.com

Wednesday, September 27, 7:00 pm
General Meeting, Hybrid
White Mountain Research Center, 3000 E. Line
St., Bishop or by Zoom <https://cnps-org.zoom.us/j/88223300030?pwd=Q2xxc3hpRIJOT1c0T0hMVzIObWlpdz09>

See pg. 1 for more details.

Other Events

September 23, 8:00 am–4:30 pm
Mono County- National Public Lands Day
Join Inyo National Forest staff for volunteer projects around the Mono Lake District or stop by the visitor center to learn about the impacts our local, state, federal and nonprofit partners have created for public lands. Events at the Mono Basin Visitor Center include educational programs, junior ranger programs, interpretive hikes, and free goodies from our partners! Fun and learning for all ages, with the magical Mono Lake in the background! Volunteers needed for a native plant garden work, planting native species and removing weeds, or trail maintenance on the scenic Lakes Canyon Trail in Lundy Canyon.

www.neefusa.org/npld/inyo-national-forest/mono-lake-ranger-district-national-public-lands-day

Up-Coming Events

September 24, 10:00 am–1:00 pm
Plant Medicine and Wild Edibles of the Eastern Sierra Nevada Interpretive Hike

Join Mono Lake District Trail Ambassador, Colt, on a hike around Lundy Canyon where you'll learn about, and potentially find some medicinal-edible flora. Meet at 10:00 am at Lundy Lake Resort and carpool to the Lundy Canyon Trailhead (parking is limited at the trailhead). Our hike will begin at just over 8,000ft above sea level. We will walk for 1.5 miles and gain 500 feet in elevation before returning to the trailhead. The hike should take about 3 hours and total 3 miles round-trip. Trekking poles and bug spray are recommended, as well as cameras and plant guides for recording our finds!

<https://friendsoftheinyo.org/event/plant-medicine-and-wild-edibles-of-the-eastern-sierra-nevada-interpretive-hike-7-15-2/>

Please Pre-Register by emailing Lindsay@friendsoftheinyo.org since participation is capped.

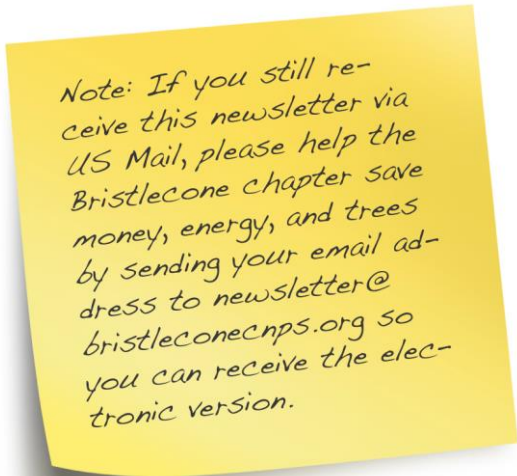
Please send any submissions to us by
October 15, 2023 for the next issue.

Bristlecone Chapter Directory

President: Kelly Bahr kbahr@cnps.org
Vice President: **OPEN**
Secretary: Kathleen Nelson
secretary@bristleconecnps.org
Treasurer: Sue Weis treasurer@bristleconecnps.org
Chapter Council Delegate: Stephen Ingram
stephen@ingramphoto.com
Conservation/Partnerships: **OPEN**
Education: **OPEN**
Programs: **OPEN**
DeDecker Grants: Kathleen Nelson
secretary@bristleconecnps.org
Field Trips: **OPEN**
Bishop Plant Sales: Katie Quinlan
plant_sale@bristleconecnps.org
Publicity: Gaylene Kinzy gkinzyreische@gmail.com
Newsletter: Elaine Chow newsletter@bristleconecnps.org
Membership: Sue Carter membership@bristleconecnps.org
Website: **OPEN**
T-shirt Sales: Katie Quinlan plant_sale@bristleconecnps.org
DeDecker Gardener: Kelly Bahr kbahr@cnps.org

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 www.cnps.org and click JOIN/RENEW (at the top-right or select it after clicking the menu button at the top left of the webpage) or mail the form below:

Name: _____
Address: _____
City: _____ **State:** _____
Zip Code: _____ **Phone:** _____
Email: _____
I wish to be affiliated with the Bristlecone Chapter: _____
Other: _____

Membership Type: ___ New Member
 ___ Renewal

Mail To / Make Payable To:
California Native Plant Society, Attn: Membership
2707 K Street, Suite 1
Sacramento, CA 95816

Gift Contribution: _____ Wherever needed
Specific Area: _____

Membership Category

- __ Student / Fixed Income \$25
- __ Individual \$50
- __ Plant Lover \$120
- __ Supporter \$500
- __ Patron \$1,000
- __ Benefactor \$2,500
- __ Steward \$5,000
- __ Guardian \$10,000
- __ Additional Contribution _____

Go Perennial! To become a monthly sustaining (perennial) member, join or renew online at www.cnps.org/perennial