



Insignis

Newsletter of the Alta Peak Chapter, celebrating and supporting the native plant communities in Tulare County, serving the Central Valley and Sierra Nevada Mountains and Foothills.

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Chapter Council Meeting

June 3-5, 2011

hosted by Kern Chapter

University Square, 2000 K Street, Bakersfield 93301

The main Chapter Council Meeting starts at 8 am on Saturday, June 4, and chapter members are invited to just go for the day. See how CNPS works together. The agenda is not yet finalized, but if you are interested in attending all or part of the sessions, call Joan at 539-2717 to arrange for some car-pooling.

Our President, Joan, has been asked to be Master of Ceremonies on Saturday evening, announcing Alison Sheehey, the evening's speaker, and making other introductions. This is an acknowledgement of the ties we, here in Tulare County, share with CNPS conservation issues to the south in Kern County.

Directions to meeting location from going South on 99: Take the CA-204 South Golden State Ave exit (exit 27). Stay straight to go onto Golden State Ave. Enter next roundabout and take the 2nd exit onto Chester Street. Turn left onto 21st Street. Take the 1st right onto K Street. Building is on the left.

For more information about all the activities, see www.sites.google.com/site/cnpschaptercounciljune2011.



Nature Journaling Field Trip in March, photo by Elsayh Cort

Chapter President's Report

by Joan Stewart

Spring....so much of what we see, read, experience, is contradictory? Green hillsides give way to dry brown slopes too quickly. We think "not ready for summer." We read about sounds, sights that only very briefly are with us here in this part of the world, warmth and sun, recently bare trees shifting quickly from flowering color to green shade. Flowers, in the grass a few days ago, are already drooping, fading. We see today, under the oaks, very different species than what was there so recently. Friends from other places call and write to ask "when can we visit to see springtime wildflowers", and we sigh and say, well....But, despite this sense of landscapes changing too fast, CNPS has had some lovely shared times in the past month or two.

Our Spring Program at Cathy Capone's Native plant Nursery and Demonstration Garden brought out a number of eager potential gardeners, and others who simply enjoyed all the variety there. Most of the species she shows and grows are propagated from material (seeds, cuttings, roots) collected from around here, so they are truly "native" and adapted to local conditions. Her watering system supports the particular needs of plants, and she is able to offer a range of sun-shade. The Program turned into a rather informal morning, a chance to wander individually or in small "guided" groups, and a lot of sharing of ideas, questions, experiences with our native species in garden settings. Thank you, Cathy, for the opportunity.

Our Field Trip and hike on the Jenkins Ranch proved a "we must go again" sort of morning. Although Sandy and Ron apologetically mentioned flowers that had already come and gone (shooting stars, for example) many more were blossoming out in full loveliness. Some were most unusual to see together, others were present in such masses as to seem unreal. Trails up and across the hill are designed to lead seekers of plants to where they are. When they clear trail edges they mark and carefully go around the isolated stalks or clusters of special species. For me, the wind poppies and clarkias were exciting. Others exclaimed over collinsia (Chinese houses), Ithuriel spears, baby blue eyes (two species, large and small), fairy lanterns, and fiesta flowers. This year has been a good year for plants to produce flowers, and for us to get out and enjoy.

Our Chapter has received a printed copy of *The Conifer Connection, a Resource for Learning and Teaching About Coniferous Forests and Watersheds*. This has been written by Michael Roa, who has been involved in public education for over 40 years, teaching at elementary, middle school, high school, and college levels. Environmental issues have been a central concern throughout this career, and he has authored several other guides. Many people from related fields have reviewed this

document, and I find it a wonderful supplement to many of the materials we use here in our area. In addition to examining our Chapter copy, you can order print or dvd copies of *The Conifer Connection*, go to the California Community Forests Foundation website at caltrees.org. Be aware this is a large document with 365 pages.

Conservation Report

by Joan Stewart

Still on hold, waiting, for final Tulare County General Plan Update. We are working with other organizations, groups, individuals to try to sort out, understand, anticipate issues that could involve native vegetation and thus be appropriate for CNPS attention. Development in Yokohl Valley is high on the list of concerns, but other land use considerations could also become important for us. That's about all any of us can say at this point.

Similarly, the revised plan for the Giant Sequoia Monument will be completed and distributed in coming months, offering us an opportunity to comment on elements, sections, that affect plants.

Board members agreed to continue our membership with Sierra Nevada Alliance, a group of organizations concerned with natural systems throughout the Sierra. Many of the events are centered on the areas to the north of us, but we Tulare County includes part of the Sierra, and this provides opportunity to have our voice heard, and to hear about what is going on elsewhere.

Similarly, CNPS is active with Tulare County Citizens for Responsible Growth (TCCRG). We do not contribute to discussions about issues that do not in some way affect natural vegetation...air quality, water, roads, but do speak strongly whenever there is information or opinion that could either support or damage natural resources, directly or indirectly. If you know of specific concerns that we might need to become involved with, please let us know.

Although it didn't make much of a splash in our area, California Native Plant Week Statewide attracted wonderful support--third week in April was thus designated by Assembly / Senate action, along with CNPS sponsorship.

Sierra Nevada Geotourism Project

Look for the Alta Peak Plant Sale listing on this site.

sierranevadageotourism.org

Geotourism is defined as tourism that sustains or enhances the geographical character of a place—its environment, culture, aesthetics, heritage, and the well-being of its residents. Geotourism incorporates the concept of sustainable tourism—that destinations should remain unspoiled for future generations--while allowing for ways to protect a place's character.

Chapter Summer Field Trips

For more information call Joan Stewart at 539-2717.

June 11: Jordan Peak

If, and this is big question, the North Road is open, and snow is mostly off ground, this would be time to see the Erythronium in bloom, in addition to 40-50 other plants along the trail. People come from far and wide to see this lily, one of several in genus, each found only on its own mountain top, along the Sierra crest. The climb from trailhead is just over 2 miles. The peak is about 9100 feet elevation. As in former years, we meet at 10 am at the junction of North Road and the end of Highway 190, just beyond Quaking Meadow turnout.

July 9: Meadows along North Road

Some of Joan's favorite plant/flower wanderings are in and around meadows that lie along North Road. Each different, each special for one or another reason. We'll again meet at 10 am and carpool from the junction mentioned for Jordan Peak, about 24 miles from Springville.

August 6: Nobe Young Meadow

Nobe Young Meadow is historically significant as a site used by early horseback Forest Service high country rangers. It is found off Western Divide Highway about eight miles beyond the North Road junction, about 1.4 miles up Crawford Road, west of the Western Divide Highway. Joan has spectacular color photos of this meadow from previous visits.



photo by Cathy Capone

For all Alta Peak Chapter field trips, hikes, and walks, bring your own water, whatever food you want, sun hat, and sun screen. The elevation for these summer field trip sites is around 7-9000 feet.



photo by Cathy Capone

Wishon Trail Field Trip Report

by Joy Semple

A group of enthusiastic Alta Peak Chapter members, joined by the Sierra Club, hiked the Wishon Trail on May 21. The trail was a moderately difficult trail starting at 4000' elevation and climbing to about 5000'. Everyone was enchanted by an abundance of spring wild flowers such as madia, tom cat clover, fairy lantern and wild hyacinth. Alta Peak Chapter President, Joan Stewart was always nearby for finding and identifying special flowers such as wild ginger, bleeding heart and selene.

Hikers also experienced being surrounded by groves of blossoming dogwood, white ceanothus, and gigantic manzanita while on their way to eat lunch at one of the water falls on the rushing Wishon Fork of the Tule River. For giant tree lovers, there were two special oak trees as well as spectacular yellow and sugar pines. The on-going plant list for this trail contains over 60 plants at this point in time.

To find Wishon Trail, drive east from Springville up Highway 190; turn left on the Camp Wishon road just below the PG & E Power House. Pass the Wishon Campground and proceed to the gate for Doyle Springs Colony. The trail begins on the north side of road.

"Traditional Koyukon people live in a world that watches, in a forest of eyes. A person moving through nature--however wild, remote, even desolate the place may be--is never truly alone. The surroundings are aware, sensate, personified. They feel. They can be offended. And they must, at every moment, be treated with the proper respect."

anthropologist Richard Nelson talking about the ecology of the Koyukon Indians in north central Alaska, from *The Spell of the Sensuous* by David Abram



CNPS 2012 Conservation Conference

January 12-14, 2012 in San Diego

The Conference Program Committee will be accepting abstracts for oral and poster presentations between April 11-August 4, 2011. The program will focus on plant conservation and restoration and will include a keynote address, plenary sessions, concurrent sessions that include a mix of invited and contributed oral presentations, a student paper session, and poster session. A special session dedicated to posters will allow in-depth discussion between authors and conference attendees. Includes guidelines and instruction for submission. New this year will be special sessions devoted exclusively to student presentations.

To find out more about the conference please go to
cnps.org/2012

Submit all abstracts for Contributed Talks and Posters at:
ice.ucdavis.edu/conferences/cnps/2012

Botanical Illustration Contest

A juried show in conjunction with the 2012 Conservation Conference

Call for entries will open June 1, 2011

Deadline for submission November 1, 2011

Details for submission at www.cnps.org/2012

Artists are invited to enter original artwork in any two dimensional medium, reflecting the beauty and uniqueness of California Native Flora and adhering to high standards of botanical accuracy. All entries must depict plants indigenous to California. All the work must be framed, with plexiglass only, and wired for hanging. The show will be juried and hung for the duration of the conference, with security provided. Cash prizes will be awarded.



Golden Iris by Peggy Irvine

Taking the cue from plants to take a deep breath and dive in...

"True insights require you to think something that no one has thought before in quite the same way. Flash judgments are just that--judgments.....A new idea is something larger than that: it's a new perspective on a problem, or a recognition of a new opportunity that has gone unexplored to date. Those kinds of breakthroughs usually take time to develop. When the eighteenth century scientist Joseph Priestley decided to isolate a mint sprig in a sealed glass in an ingenious experiment that ultimately proved that plants were creating oxygen--one of the founding discoveries of modern ecosystem science--he was building on a hunch that he'd been cultivating for twenty years, dating back to his boyhood obsession with trapping spiders in glass jars. He'd had a hunch that there was something interesting in the way that organisms perished when you sealed them in closed vessels, something that pointed to a larger truth. And he kept that hunch alive until he was ready to make sense of it. This was not a matter of doggedly pursuing a single line of inquiry. During those twenty years, Priestley dabbled in a dozen different fields, concocted hundreds of novel experiments in his home lab, engaged in extensive conversations with the leading intellectuals of the day. A minuscule percentage of that time was devoted directly to the problem of plant respiration. He just kept it in the back of his mind. Sustaining a slow hunch is less a matter of perspiration than of cultivation. You give the hunch enough nourishment to keep it growing, and plant it in fertile soil, where its roots can new connections. And then you give it time to bloom."

from *Where Good Ideas Come From--The Natural History of Innovation* by Steven Johnson

Nature Journaling Field Trip Report

By *Elsah Cort*

A small group of curious, enthusiastic and adventurous children came to both the March and the April special field trips, using the new curriculum for CNPS created by Jack Laws and Emily Bruenig. Each child was given a sketch book and a pencil, and shared some magnifying glasses. We tried not to direct them to find certain plants, but let them be the discoverers. They were keen observers and jumped right into drawing!



We hope to plan more of this kind of field trips. If you are interested in helping to set some up, please contact me at 561-4671. We would love to do some in Sequoia Park at the higher elevations but would need some plant experts to join us.

Alta Peak Chapter Board of Directors



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Chapter Website:

altapeakcnps.org

See this newsletter in color
in a pdf file on our website.

Chapter facebook page
facebook.com/altapeak.chapter

Alta Peak Chapter Annual Native Plant Sale

October 1, 2011



Three Rivers Arts Center
North Fork Drive in Three Rivers

(Held in conjunction with
the Three Rivers Green Faire)

CNPS MEMBERSHIP FORM

Name: _____

Address: _____

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I wish to affiliate with: ____ Alta Peak Chapter

Other Chapter _____

Membership Category:

____ Student/Limited income, \$25

____ Individual, \$45

____ Family \$75

____ Plant Lover, \$100

____ Patron, \$300

____ Benefactor, \$600

____ Mariposa Lily, \$1500

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after year via the website www.cnps.org and click on JOIN.

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