



California Native Plant Society
Santa Clara Valley Chapter

THE BLAZING STAR

July-August 2008

GENERAL MEETING AND PROGRAM

Friday, July 18th at 7:00pm
Los Altos Library Program Room
13 South San Antonio Road, Los Altos

**The Natural World of the Sierra Nevada:
Art and Science**

SPEAKER: John (Jack) Muir Laws

Please note the earlier than usual starting time

6:30pm Keying with Natives
7:00pm Illustration Techniques Demonstration
7:30pm Announcements and Program

Naturalist and artist John (Jack) Muir Laws has recently published a beautifully illustrated field guide to the natural history of the Sierra Nevada. The book is filled with Mr. Laws' original artwork. Join us for an entertaining evening as he talks about both the natural history of the Sierra Nevada and the creation of the field guide. Mr. Laws is enthusiastic, informative, and one of the most engaging speakers around. Copies of his book will be available for purchase at the meeting.

Our speaker has generously offered to demonstrate his illustration techniques prior to his formal presentation. Watching him draw is an amazing experience that one should not miss.

For six years, John Muir Laws backpacked the Sierra Nevada to research and illustrate *The Laws Guide to the Sierra Nevada*, a pocket-size field guide to over 1,700 species found in the Sierra. The guide was reviewed by educators, naturalists, and scientists throughout the country, and was intensively field tested by adults and youth.

Mr. Laws is deeply committed to stewardship of nature and collaborates with organizations throughout the state to this end. He is currently coordinating efforts to create a

standards-based, sixth- through eighth-grade curriculum to help teachers convey a love of nature and an understanding of biodiversity to their students through field studies and nature sketching.

Mr. Laws is trained as a wildlife biologist and he teaches classes on natural history, conservation biology, scientific illustration, and field sketching. He is a regular contributor to *Bay Nature* magazine, and will be a keynote speaker at next January's CNPS 2009 Conservation Conference: Strategies and Solutions, in Sacramento. For more about Mr. Laws visit **www.JohnMuirLaws.com**.

Directions: From Foothill Expy., travel ½ mile on San Antonio Road towards the Bay, cross Hillview and turn right into the driveway; library is on the left. From El Camino, travel towards the hills on San Antonio Road, cross Edith and turn left into the unmarked driveway just before Hillview. The sign on San Antonio Road reads "Civic Center, Library and History Museum." Enter through the lobby of the main entrance.

CNPS general meetings are free and open to the public. For more information, contact Chapter President Kevin Bryant at mtngreen17@verizon.net or (408)353-8824.

CHAPTER ACTIVITIES

Native Plant Nursery

Volunteers are invited to continue to care for and propagate native plants throughout the summer at our Nursery at Hidden Villa. Our weekly work sessions take place every **Wednesday, from 10am to 2pm**. Bring garden gloves, sunhat, clippers, and your lunch. Other tools will be provided at the nursery. Knowledge of plants is not necessary: your willingness to help is all that's required.

For more information, contact Jean Struthers at (650)941-2586 or JeanStruthers@att.net; or Ray Deutsch at (650)365-6136 or henrymarsh@yahoo.com.

Directions: Hidden Villa is located on Moody Road west of Foothill College. From Hwy 280 in Los Altos Hills, take the Moody Road exit and head west. Two miles west of Foothill College, look for the Hidden Villa sign and driveway on the left. Proceed over the bridge and park in the visitor (Dana) center parking lot to your right. The Native Plant Nursery greenhouse is just beyond the visitor center.

Gardening with Natives

Gardening with Natives (GWN) is a special interest group within the Chapter which usually meets on the first Thursday of each month, at the Peninsula Conservation Center (PCC) in Palo Alto (directions below). The group is open to all, and includes a mix of seasoned native plant gardeners as well as beginners. Newcomers are always welcome.

Ceanothus for Gardens, Krzysztof Kozminski

Thursday, July 10, 7-9pm. at the PCC

Host: Chris Todd

Have you admired the jewel-like intense blues of our native California Lilac/Ceanothus in the hills and along 280 in the spring? Are you wondering what variety of our beautiful California lilac will work for your garden? And what about those comments about "a short-lived species"?

Krzysztof Kozminski shares his experience and photos of his many *Ceanothus* species in his garden in the foothills of San Jose. Krzys has a very effective planting method for his California natives, which also makes sense for establishment of other species in our clay-type soils. His garden has been on the Going Native Garden Tour for several years.

Fall Planting Inspiration: Native Plant Garden Photos

Thursday, August 7, 7-9pm at the PCC

Host: Stephanie Morris

This meeting is for all of us preparing for fall planting! Did you miss April's Going Native Garden Tour or do you wish you had been able to see more gardens? Are you looking for ideas of plants to add to your garden this fall?

This meeting is a result of several requests received last summer. We'll share photos from several gardens visited on the tour. We will also show summer photos from several of the gardens on the tour so that we can get an idea of how a native plant garden changes with the seasons. Summer is a great time for native garden design and

planning, so join us as we look at photos of gardens for inspiration.

Stephanie welcomes photos from tour gardens to share with the group. Please contact her at StephLMorris@hotmail.com if you have photos that you would like to share at this meeting.

Directions to the PCC: PCC (Peninsula Conservation Center), 3921 E. Bayshore Road, Palo Alto. From Highway 101, take the "San Antonio North" exit, get immediately into the left-hand turn lane, and turn LEFT onto East Bayshore. This will curve around to the left, then right. Turn right on Corporation Way. Then turn into the first driveway on your left, which leads to the PCC parking lot. The meeting is in the Raptor Suite on the first floor, accessible from the parking lot.

For more information on the Gardening with Natives group, visit its website at www.GardeningWithNatives.com. GWN maintains a Yahoo group with over 500 members, a true resource for native plant gardeners in this area. To join the Yahoo group, visit groups.yahoo.com/group/GardeningWithNatives. To contact the GWN Steering Committee, email info@gardeningwithnatives.com or call Arvind Kumar at (408) 715-7020.



Native Hill - Wins and Losses

We have had some wins and losses with our plantings at the Native Hill garden at Foothill College this year. We lost several sages and ceanothus that were planted last fall and this spring. We provided some additional irrigation but it was obviously not enough.

However, the grindelia (gumplant) that we were using as a fill-in has done splendidly. It's an easily propagated plant (from seed and cuttings as we have found), it provides a profusion of blooms from early spring into fall, and it is great at attracting bees and butterflies. We also have a family of quail with twelve chicks that seem to have taken up residence in the garden, especially around the *Eriogonum giganteum* (Saint Catherine's lace).

As always, if you would like to volunteer at the garden or be added to the email list to be notified of upcoming

workdays, contact Phil Higgins at phidor@juno.com or (650)941-4752.

Photo Group

Our Chapter Photo Group is a special interest group which meets on the **third Monday** of even-numbered months at the Peninsula Conservation Center (PCC) in Palo Alto. The Group is open to all, and includes both beginning and experienced photographers.

Our next meeting date will be **Monday, August 18**. In addition to the featured program of each meeting, attendees are encouraged to bring recent favorite photos. Up to 20 slides, digital images, or prints per photographer are welcome. Also, interesting off-topic images can be shared. For more information, please contact Patrick Gallagher, at (408)483-9366 or drrust@greenisles.com.

Photo Contests

Chapter members are invited to participate in two upcoming photo contests:

The **CNPS 2009 Conservation Conference: Strategies & Solutions** is sponsoring a photo contest. They are looking for photos of California native plants, including rare or common plants, flowers, trees, shrubs, vines, grasses, bryophytes - surprise them!

The entry deadline is **November 15**. For more information visit www.cnps.org/cnps/conservation/conference/2009/photos.php or contact Stacey Flowerdew at sflowerdew@cnps.org.

The **California Invasive Plant Council** is sponsoring a photo contest too. When you enter your photos, you provide Cal-IPC with great photos that can be used in outreach, educational, and other Cal-IPC materials.

The deadline for entries is **September 1**. For more information visit www.cal-ipc.org/symposia/pdf/PhotoFlyer2008.pdf.

Keying with Natives

Join other native plant enthusiasts in a fun and educational atmosphere, as we hone our skills at plant identification (aka "keying"). We meet **6:30pm-8:30pm** on the **last Friday** of each month, and **1 hour before** Chapter general meetings. If you have a mystery plant growing in your yard, bring in a sample and we can try to figure it out!

We have microscopes and books to help us. We can show a way to identify most plants down to their families, and then discuss further ways to distinguish them. But most of

all, we bring enthusiasm and a sense of curiosity in attempting to understand the mysterious world of plants.

Now is a good time of the year to bring back plant samples from summer trips (collected by lawful and responsible means of course). Last month members brought back specimens from the Trinity camping trip, giving all an opportunity to examine species related to our local flora, but slightly different! We learned how to find the identifying nodes on the buckwheats, and grappled with a couple of manzanitas (and they were not even in bloom!), to name a few.

Upcoming meetings are **June 27, July 25** and **August 29** at the PCC building in Palo Alto, and before the **July 18** Chapter General Meeting in Los Altos (see page. 1). For details, contact David "Tex" Houston at tex009@sbcglobal.net or Sally Casey at (408)377-0989.



Western Azalea
Rhododendron
occidentalis

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Accounting for Volunteer Hours Helps CNPS!

Every January the 32 chapters of CNPS submit Activity Reports to the state office. These mandatory reports are extremely critical and beneficial in highlighting the tremendous variety of volunteer work that is done including everything from plant sales to presentations.

Your volunteer hours also help CNPS attract grant money. Agencies and foundations use the volunteer hours of an organization to calculate the level of funding for which it is eligible. (A typical conversion rate may be \$15/hour.) An organization with a high number of volunteer hours reduces the risk and leverages their funding better. So by recording and reporting your volunteer hours, you are making a difference to CNPS's bottom line.

Whether you spend a little time or a lot of time volunteering for CNPS, it all matters and we want to hear from you! We ask that you submit your information throughout the year to Georgia Stigall via email (GeorgiaStigall@yahoo.com) or postal mail (17287 Skyline Blvd #102, Woodside, CA 94062).

If you are in doubt about whether or not your effort should count, if you are representing CNPS it counts! All that is needed is type of activity, date and location if you have it, number of hours and your name and contact information in case Georgia needs to get back to you.

You are welcome to elaborate if you wish and any input we receive will be kept as part of our Chapter archive.

Please use a subject line of "CNPS activity input" when you send email on this topic.

The exceptions to our request are the Wildflower Show, Plant Sale and Board meetings; for which the number of volunteer hours are accounted for by either the coordinators or Chapter president.

Thank you for your help with this important chapter administration project!



Online Membership Renewals

Did you know that you can renew your CNPS membership online using a credit card? You can even set it up to **renew automatically** year after year. It is quick, easy, convenient, and reduces the cost of mailing renewal notices.

Visit www.cnps.org and click on the JOIN button.

Wildflower Show Well Attended - Thanks!

Thanks to all of you who helped with the Wildflower Show on April 25-27. The official attendance for the two days of the show was 712, more than triple last year's attendance, in part due to a timely article in the San José Mercury News, better signage, lack of rain, and not having the show on the weekend of April 15.

It was a busy show and all of the volunteers were run ragged, which is a good thing. The classes were well-attended, the Children's Table was well-received even by adults, and the flower bouquets at the ends of the table were a hit. Thanks for all of your ideas. We have also been fortunate for the past six years to hold the show at Mission College, which has been a very accommodating venue and has shown us much hospitality and support.

Special thanks go to our show coordinator David Chapman and to Judy Mason, Kevin Bryant and Arvind Kumar, who presented very popular classes on wildflower identification and gardening. Thanks also to everyone else who helped with hospitality, set-up, take-down, keying, book and poster sales, surveys, the greeter table, flower collecting, publicity, displays, garden clean-up, and specimen presentation.

The Wildflower Show continues to be an important education and outreach event for our Chapter, and we hope you can all join us again as volunteers or visitors at next year's 37th edition!

Editor's note: Volunteers from the 2007 Wildflower Show may recall a photographer, Jim Schrempp, taking photos. For a look at his photos of the show including volunteers in action at the take-down Sunday afternoon, visit www.jimschrempp.com/friends/2007CNPSShow.htm.

Save the Dates!

Our Chapter's **Fall Native Plant Sale** will be held at Hidden Villa on **Saturday, October 18**.

Our November Chapter General Meeting will include our **annual potluck dinner and Chapter elections**. It will be held on **Saturday, November 8** at the Shoup Garden House in Los Altos.



Black Oak
Quercus kelloggii

CHAPTER SERVICE OUTINGS

Habitat Restoration at Edgewood Park

Come enjoy the summer wildflowers while protecting sensitive habitats at Edgewood Park. **Friday morning** habitat restoration sessions occur year-round and start at **9am**. Our **Wednesday evening** sessions start at **5:30pm** and continue throughout the summer, until the end of Daylight Savings Time.

Our last summer **Saturday** session will be on **July 19**, meeting at the Day Camp at **9am**.

For details, including schedules and meeting places, see our Weed Warriors website at edgewood.thinkersrus.net, contact Paul Heiple at (650)854-7125 or pheiple@gmail.com, or email John Allen at jcakwa@earthlink.net.

more information and to **reserve a spot**, contact Carolyn at cdorsch1@aol.com or (650)804-6162, Stella at (408)255-6233, or Michael at [yantossarchitect@att.net](mailto:yantosarchitect@att.net) or (650)743-2807.

CHAPTER FIELD TRIPS

Chapter field trips are free and open to the public. They are oriented to conservation, protection and enjoyment of California native plants and wildlife, and we adhere to all rules and guidelines for the lands on which we are visiting.

In our region it is very important to be prepared for hiking on rugged & steep terrain, wide temperature ranges and rapidly changing conditions at any time of year. All participants should wear sturdy footwear and carry sufficient water, sun protection, food, clothing layers, personal first aid and other supplies you may need. If you have any questions about your ability to participate in a particular field trip, please contact the trip leader in advance.

Wed-Sun July 16-20 Big Duck Lake Backpack

Join trip co-leaders Joe Cernac and Ken Himes for a backpack field trip to Big Duck Lake in the Russian Wilderness Area of Northern California.

Nestled in the many cirques of the Salmon Mountains, Big Duck Lake is one of the larger lakes in this botanically rich area. There will be many unusual trees and shrubs along with a good showing of flowers at higher elevations. At a lower elevation, *Cornus canadensis* grows, certainly one of the southern most occurrences of this northern dogwood perennial. The trail is an easy 5 mile hike with about 1600 feet of elevation gain.

Depending on group size and experience, we will continue our journey to Payne Lake or another lake in the region. For more information and to reserve your spot, contact Joe at (408)292-5465 or JoeCernac@sbcglobal.net, or Ken at (650)591-8560.

Fri-Sun August 1-3 Sonora Pass Camping

Join Carolyn Dorsch, Stella Yang and Michael Yantos on a botanical expedition around the Sonora Pass (Hwy 108) area. This will be an exploratory trip with short day hikes. See the high Sierra "spring" wildflowers during our summer, all just below timberline. We are hoping to see lots of flowers in bloom.

We will be car-camping at spots along Hwy 108, with nearby lodging for people who do not wish to camp. For

CHAPTER OFFICERS FOR 2008

To learn more about volunteering with the Chapter, or to ask any other questions or give suggestions, please contact one of our officers listed below.

Title	Name	Phone	Email
President	Kevin Bryant	(408) 353-8824	mtngreen17@ verizon.net
Vice President	Drew Shell		Dshell@ microsoft.com
Recording Secretary	OPEN		
Treasurer	Paul Heiple	(650) 854-7125	pheiple@ gmail.com
Past President	Judy Fenerty	(408) 655-3493	judy@ fenerty.com
Officer at Large	Georgia Stigall	(650) 941-1068	georgiastigall @yahoo.com

To join our Chapter email list please send your request to judy@fenerty.com.



Fremont Cottonwood
Populus fremontii

Illustration Acknowledgement: Many thanks to Chapter member Mary Ann Griese for providing her pen and ink hand-drawn illustrations to decorate this issue of the Blazing Star. Ann can be reached at MaryGriese@aol.com.

DEADLINE FOR THE NEXT *BLAZING STAR*
Saturday, August 9, 2008

Email: mattsson@surfpix.net
Phone: (408)255-3767

CALENDAR OF EVENTS**(page # in parentheses)****Jul 10 Thu** Gardening with Natives (2)**Jul 16-20 Wed-Sun** Russian Wilderness Trip (5)**Jul 18 Fri** Keying with Natives (1)**Jul 18 Fri** **General Meeting** (1)**Jul 19 Sat** Edgewood Saturday Weeding (4)**Jul 25 Fri** Keying with Natives (3)**Aug 1-3 Fri-Sun** Sonora Pass Trip (5)**Aug 7 Thu** Gardening with Natives (2)**Aug 9 Sat** Newsletter Submittal Deadline (5)**Aug 14 Thu** **Chapter Board meeting****Aug 18 Mon** Photo Group (3)**Aug 29 Fri** Keying with Natives (3)**Wed Afts.** Nursery work sessions (1)**Wed pm, Fri am** Edgewood weeding (4)**Via Email List** Native Hill work sessions (2)

The next Chapter Board meeting will be **Thursday, August 14 at 7pm**
 at the PCC, 3921 E. Bayshore Road in Palo Alto
 Chapter Board meetings are open to all Chapter members and their guests.

The California Native Plant Society is a statewide non-profit organization of amateurs and professionals with a common interest in California's native plants. The Society, working with its local chapters, seeks to increase understanding and to preserve the rich heritage of the native flora for future generations. Membership is open to all. Individual memberships are \$45.00 per year. If you have questions concerning a new membership, renewal of a current membership, or if you wish to report a change of address, please contact the Membership Chairperson, CNPS, 3921 East Bayshore Road, Palo Alto, CA 94303.

The *Blazing Star* web address: www.cnps-scv.org

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