



California Native Plant Society
Santa Clara Valley Chapter

THE BLAZING STAR

July-August 2014

SUMMER BREAK - NO GENERAL MEETING

We won't be having a **General Meeting in July**. Check our next newsletter for details on our September General Meeting & Program. Meanwhile, we invite you to enjoy nature outdoors at one of the **habitat restoration projects listed on page 7**, or attend one of our **upcoming GWN talks**.

Gardening with Natives

Gardening with Natives (GWN), a special interest group within the Chapter, includes a mix of landscape architects, designers, seasoned native plant gardeners and beginners. GWN offers talks throughout the year, which are free and open to all.

This year's themes are *Maintaining Your Native Garden* and *Native All-Stars*. The monthly speakers will share tips on specific garden tasks or on native plant families and how to care for them. For more information, visit www.cnps-sc.org/index.php/gardening/gardening-with-natives.

These programs are made possible by co-sponsoring libraries and volunteers who help with program logistics. If you would like to help organize similar programming at a library near you, contact arvind.kumar@cnps.org.

Your Lawn Is Dead, Now What? A talk by Deva Luna

**Wednesday, July 9, 7:00-8:30 PM, Los Altos Library,
13 S. San Antonio Road, Los Altos (650) 948-7683**

You stopped watering your lawn because of the drought and because you want something new, but now the grass is brown and crispy. What do you do? Come to this talk and be inspired to create a beautiful, water-wise garden! See a variety of no-lawn landscaping styles and ideas. Get professional tips on removing that brown, weed-filled patch called a lawn, learn to choose climate-adapted native plants,

and find out how you might still qualify for landscape rebates. You'll learn how to have a lush landscape without water-hogging grass.

Deva Luna is a sustainable and Bay Friendly-certified landscape designer who has been teaching and speaking about horticulture for 15 years. She has a degree in "Plants and Art" and works for EarthCare Landscaping (www.earthcareland.com) in Cupertino.

Replacing Your Lawn with Drought-Tolerant California Natives, a talk by Julie Montanari

**Saturday, July 12, 2:00-3:30 PM, Brisbane Library,
250 Visitacion Ave., Brisbane (415) 467-2060**

Lawns are ubiquitous in California, yet they require more water, chemicals, and energy than virtually any other type of landscape. Since we have a state-wide goal to reduce our water usage by 20% and there are generous rebates for removing our lawns, now is a great time to make the switch! Come hear about the many alternatives to lawns, including patios, ground covers, meadows, perennial gardens, low-maintenance shrubs, and more. All can be designed using beautiful, water-wise California native plants. Our speaker will also talk about an easy way to get rid of your current lawn.

Julie Montanari (www.montanari-designs.com) is a landscape designer with a passion for naturalistic designs that incorporate California natives and other low-water plants to create beautiful,



Stephen Rosenthal

Buckeye butterfly on buckwheat in fall at Lake Cunningham native plant garden, San Jose

healthy, water-wise gardens. As a Master Gardener, she educates home gardeners about the beauty of low-water plants and the use of sustainable gardening practices. Her home garden has been featured on several garden tours and she has a certificate in Environmental Horticulture from Foothill College.

**Native Buckwheats, Bonbons for Bees,
a talk by Pete Veilleux**

Thu., Jul. 17, 7:00-8:30 PM, Cupertino Community Hall, 10350 Torre Avenue, Cupertino (408) 446-1677

The buckwheat family is a beautiful group of California Native All-Star plants. It is one of the largest genera in California with over 125 species, including annual forms. In the garden, few plants can equal buckwheats for sheer habitat value. Buckwheats are host plants and nectar plants for butterflies and moths, and are a bonanza for bees and other pollinators looking for summer food. As if the wildlife value isn't enough, buckwheats are highly ornamental plants that are very useful and versatile in the garden.

Pete Veilleux is a master designer, nurseryman and photographer. Pete builds gardens using native plants for long-lasting, self-sustaining landscapes which help people get the maximum use and pleasure from their patch of earth. He is the owner and propagator of East Bay Wilds Native Plant Nursery (www.eastbaywilds.com) in Oakland.

**Starting a Native Plant Garden during a
Drought, a talk by Kevin Bryant**

Wednesday, July 23, 6:00-7:30 PM, SJPL Santa Teresa Library Branch, 290 International Cir, San Jose (408) 808-3068 *Please note the earlier start time*

Monday, August 4, 7:00-8:30 PM, Milpitas Library, 160 N Main Street, Milpitas (408) 262-1171

Have you ever lost a native plant for no apparent reason soon after planting? Was it too much water or too little? Too much sun or too little, poor drainage, what?! Starting a native garden during a drought can be even trickier than when there has been good rainfall. Come to this workshop to learn the right way to plant and care for native plants, even during a drought.

Kevin Bryant is a past president of our Chapter of CNPS. He moved to the Santa Cruz Mountains 21 years ago from the Chicago area, and it took just one hike at Castle Rock State Park to spark an extreme appreciation and thirst for knowledge about our local flora. He works as a native plant landscape consultant.

**Replace Your Lawn with Drought-Tolerant
California Natives, a talk by Alex Von Feldt**

Thursday, August 21, 7:00-8:30 PM, City of Mountain View Library, 585 Franklin St., Mountain View (650) 903-6337

Ready to lose the lawn, but don't know where to begin? Come to this talk and be inspired to create a beautiful, water-wise garden! See a variety of no-lawn landscaping styles and ideas, and get professional landscaping tips on removing a lawn, choosing the appropriate plants, and watering more efficiently. You can achieve all this without sacrificing the look of a lush landscape.

Alex Von Feldt is the Stewardship Program Director at Acterra. She is a resident of Portola Valley where she has served on conservation committees and planning commissions. She has been an avid native gardener for seven years and her garden has been featured on the Going Native Garden Tour.

CHAPTER ACTIVITIES

Native Plant Nursery at Hidden Villa

Come help propagate plants for our next plant sale by volunteering at one of our nursery work sessions, every **Wednesday and Thursday, from 10am to 1pm** (note summer hours). Bring garden gloves, sunhat, clippers, liquids and your lunch if you like. 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 Melanie Cross at (650) 947-1325 or melanie@pcross.com; or Ray Deutsch at (650) 365-6136 or ray.deutsch@yahoo.ca.

Directions: Hidden Villa is located on Moody Road west of Foothill College. From I-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 drive

about ¼ mile to the large parking lot on the right. The Native Plant Nursery is at the greenhouse just beyond the visitor center.

Keying with Natives

Join us as we learn and practice methods of identifying the native plants of our region (aka keying). From beginners to more advanced, there are challenges for all. Bring in plant samples if you have some or just come and work with the materials provided. We discuss the various plant books and practice keying with them. Microscopes are also available.

The upcoming dates are **Fridays, July 25 and August 29 from 6:30pm - 8:30pm**. We meet at the Peninsula Conservation Center (PCC), 3921 E. Bayshore Road in Palo Alto. For more information, please contact Dave “Tex” Houston at 350co2now@gmail.com or (650) 303-2777; or Sally Casey at (408) 377-0989.

Directions to PCC:

From Hwy. 101 take the San Antonio Rd. exit and head north. Take your next left onto East Bayshore, which will curve left then right. Take your next right onto Corporation Way. Your next left is the entrance to the PCC parking lot. The meeting rooms are on the first floor.



Volunteers at Ulistac Natural Area planting seedlings on a workday in October 2012

LIVECoRPs Conservation News

Win for Bees and Other Pollinators

There has been a lot of recent discussion on the GWN Yahoo! Group regarding the use of Neonicotinoid pesticides in the nursery trade. These commonly used systemic insecticides persist in plants and soil and are implicated but not proven to have a part in Colony Collapse Disorder of honey bees. People wanted to know if the native plants they were planting to improve habitat were potentially harming native bees and other pollinators.

First, be assured that our Chapter nursery at Hidden Villa does not use Neonicotinoids on any of the plants that we propagate and sell. We care about the health of our pollinators, our volunteers and the environment. But it was discovered that one of the major local suppliers of native

plants to both commercial and independent nurseries made “limited use” of Neonicotinoids.

Pete Veilleux, native plant landscape designer, installer and owner and chief propagator of East Bay Wilds Native Plant Nursery contacted M. Nevin Smith of Suncrest Nurseries expressing the concerns of our native habitat enthusiasts. Long story short—Suncrest Nurseries will stop using Neonicotinoids as of July 1st. Let’s hope that this makes our little corner of the planet a little safer for our pollinators.

Ulistac: It’s Not Over Yet

The City of Santa Clara has several goals regarding youth soccer fields:

1. Find a way to mitigate traffic problems caused by their current youth soccer park’s location right across the street from the new 49ers stadium so that they can use the facility for the current soccer season.

2. Locate space on City-owned property to build three permanent additional soccer fields. Currently they do not seem to be considering Ulistac for this use.

3. Build a new larger youth sports facility to replace the current youth soccer park and expand the number of sports served to include cricket, BMX, baseball and other sports.

“Save Ulistac” and numerous environmental organizations are working together to preserve Ulistac as a Natural Area. Last month Committee for Green Foothills wrote an excellent Op Ed for the Mercury News and the public sent in numerous follow-up Letters to the Editor in support of saving Ulistac. There was a huge outpouring of public support at the last Parks and Recreation Commission meeting. About 50 people attended and at least half spoke out passionately and eloquently in support of Ulistac from quite varied perspectives. Numerous emails were also sent.

The City conducted a phone survey asking their constituents what their priorities were for the future use of City owned unimproved properties. The number one priority was to have more trails and open space. Building additional soccer fields was at the bottom of the list.

We hope that the City of Santa Clara will heed what their residents want and preserve the native plant habitat jewel that is Ulistac. Until then we will continue to monitor the situation and continue our advocacy efforts. Stay tuned for an Action Alert when we need your help.

LIVECoRPs Meetings

We meet the 3rd **Thursday** of the month at the PCC. Our next meetings will be Thursdays, **July 18th and August 21st**. Please join us in our important work. For questions, comments or concerns, please contact LIVECoRPs Chair Linda Ruthruff at ldruff@hotmail.com. For **directions** to the PCC, please see the previous Keying with Natives article.

EDUCATION NEWS

2014-2015 Chapter Scholarships Awarded

By Nora Monette, Scholarship Chair

The Chapter awarded three \$1,500 graduate student research scholarships and one \$1,000 undergraduate research team scholarship in May 2014. This is the 15th

year our Chapter has supported graduate student California native plant research. Two of the graduate students, Joan Dudney and Adam Schneider, were able to attend our May General Meeting to receive their awards. We look forward to several of the other recipients attending our next General Meeting.

The recipients of the 2014 student scholarships are:

Joan Dudney, University of California, Berkeley [Conservation Scholarship]. Joan is researching the long-held assumption that invasive species are not threatening mountain environments. She is studying forest management impacts of fuel management on understory species in the Sierra Nevada. Fuel management treatments evaluated at the University of California Blodgett Forest Research Station will include 1) prescribed fire, 2) thinning and mastication, and 3) thinning, mastication and

prescribed fire. Her faculty advisor recommended Joan based on her excellent educational qualifications and a strong research plan.

Lizette Guzman-Zaragoza, San Francisco State University [Conservation Scholarship]. Lizette's studies are designed to improve the understanding of the evolutionary history of *Arctostaphylos* using comparative genomics, the branch of molecular biology concerned with the structure, function, evolution, and mapping of the genetic material of an organism. Manzanita is a common name for many species of the genus *Arctostaphylos*, with most species restricted to the California Floristic Province. The primary goal of her study is to identify DNA sequence variation or "genetic markers" in the genome to assist with understanding the ecology and distribution of this genus, which may help establish strategies for its conservation.

Adam Schneider, University of California, Berkeley. Adam is working to understand the role of host-parasite relationships in the evolution of parasitic plants, with an emphasis on the genus *Orobanche*. His work on taxonomy, systematics and host relationships will include study of populations in the northern Sierra as well as the Golden Gate National Recreation Area. A focus will be answering

questions regarding whether there is undescribed diversity among northern California *Orobanche*, how host specific they are, and which species should have high conservation priorities due to rarity or endemism.



Indian warrior (*Pedicularis densiflora*) at Edgewood March 2010

Stephen Rosenthal

Our undergraduate student scholarship

was awarded to an undergraduate team at **San Francisco State University**. The team consists of Joshua Nuzzo, Joy Querida, Jess Amidjojo and faculty advisor Barbara Holzman, Ph.D. Their research will document native vegetation in the recently established Green Hairstreak butterfly corridor in San Francisco; and assess habitat quality and current butterfly populations using native plants.

We look forward to hearing more from the scholarship recipients in the future newsletters. Congratulations to Joan, Lizette, Adam and the San Francisco State University team of Joshua, Joy and Jess!

CHAPTER SERVICE OUTINGS

Edgewood Weed Warriors

Our 25-year volunteer restoration program strives to make Edgewood Park and Natural Preserve an inspirational showcase of all CNPS stands for. Come share the beauty of Edgewood with us, learn a ton, and help keep Edgewood native!

Our **9am Friday** sessions run year round; **5:30pm Wednesday** sessions continue through Daylight Savings Time. Our next special **Saturday workday** will be on **July 19 at 9am**. Meet at the West Kiosk.

For Edgewood Weed Warrior (EWW) schedules, meeting places, and other details visit www.cnps-scw.org; contact Paul Heiple (650) 854-7125, pheiple@gmail.com or John Allen (jcakwa@earthlink.net) for Friday info; or contact EWW program chair Drew Shell (shell@corp.webtv.net) for Wednesday/Saturday info.

CHAPTER FIELD TRIPS

Chapter field trips are free and generally 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 and 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.

Sun-Thu July 13th – 17th Mt. Lassen Carcamp

Join Dee Wong, Ken Himes and Paul Heiple for a 4-day field trip botanizing parts of Lassen Volcanic National Park and its vicinity, which is a part of the Pacific Ring of Fire. We will be exploring the native floras and the geological

influences that make this a fascinating place. We will also visit areas outside of the park, such as Warner Valley, southeast of the park.

To reserve your spot and for more information, email Dee at dswong88@yahoo.com or call Ken at (650) 591-8560.

Sat Jul 26 10am - 2pm Crystal Springs Watershed (Mid-peninsula)

Join Don Thomas to see the rare, federally endangered fountain thistle (*Cirsium fontinale* var. *fontinale*) in the Crystal Springs Watershed, normally closed to the public. This plant is endemic to the San Francisco Peninsula, and most of the populations occur in the Crystal Springs Watershed.

We will visit a small, easily accessible fountain thistle population in the Watershed near Highway 92, where coyote brush (*Baccharis pilularis*) is invading the serpentine grassland habitat. This stop will include a **short work session** to remove the coyote brush. Tools will be provided.

We will then walk a short distance to a serpentine seep population of fountain thistle where there is an opportunity to see leopard lilies (*Lilium pardalinum*) in bloom. There is an optional trip to see a third fountain thistle colony nearby near Upper Crystal Springs Reservoir.



Alice Cummings

CNPS Field trip participants on Cascade Creek trail. The yellow flowers in the meadow are mostly *Crepis vesicaria* ssp. *taraxifolia*, weedy hawksbeard.

We will walk less than two miles in total. The activities will end in the early afternoon. The trip is limited to 25 participants. For more information, directions or **to reserve a spot**, contact Don Thomas at don_e_thomas@yahoo.com or (408) 828-4044.

Sat Aug 23 10am – Noon Bean Hollow SB (State Beach) (Hwy 1)

Join Carolyn Dorsch and Michael Yantos for a day at the beach. We will explore the summer season atop the coastal bluffs. This will be an easy and relaxed stroll on a level trail. Total distance is less than 2 miles. In addition to the botanical beauties, we probably will see some marine life, so bring binoculars. Bring lunch if you want to stay afterwards for a picnic on the beach or bluffs.

Directions: We will meet at the Bean Hollow SB at 10am. It is located 17.5 miles south of Half Moon Bay and three miles south of Pescadero on Hwy 1. There are two parking lots for Bean Hollow SB one mile apart from each other. We will be at the southern lot, which is larger.

For more information, contact Carolyn Dorsch at cdorsch1@aol.com or (650) 804-6162 (eves). More information about the state beach can be found at the following: bit.ly/1voF5W8.

Cascade Field – Trip Report Newly Posted

We've recently posted on the Chapter website Toni Corelli's report on the May 6 field trip to this area, which is part of Año Nuevo State Park. The report describes how prescribed burning of this unplowed coastal prairie is eliminating gorse, a spiny invasive weed from Europe, and helping to restore the native perennial bunch grasses and diverse species of wildflowers.

Visit www.cnps-scv.org/index.php/field-trips/field-trip-reports to read the whole story, and see page 5 for a photo taken on the walk.



Celebrating 50 Years
of Progress and Promise

CNPS Conservation Conference

The next CNPS Conservation Conference will be held in San Jose from January 13-17, 2015 at the DoubleTree Hotel. The conference will celebrate CNPS's 50th anniversary with talks, posters, field trips, workshops, and many other events. For more information on volunteering, sponsorship, registration, and key dates, visit www.cnps.org/cnps/conservation/conference/2015. Poster and session abstracts are due **July 10**, and early registration opens **July 15**.

SAVE THE DATES!

Our fall plant sale will be held on **Saturday, October 18** at Hidden Villa, **10am to 3pm**.

Our Chapter will host a horticultural **Symposium** jointly with Foothill College on **September 20, 9am to 4pm**. The theme will be "Saving Water, Creating Beauty with California Native Plants." To help organize now, or volunteer as the event draws closer, please contact Madeline Morrow at madelinemorrow@earthlink.net or (408) 741-1150.

Please watch the Chapter website and check the next issue of the Blazing Star for details and how you can help!

CHAPTER OFFICERS FOR 2014

Title	Name	Phone	Email
President	Stephen Rosenthal	(408) 923-6562	sailinsteve@sbcglobal.net
Vice President	Madeline Morrow	(408) 741-1150	madelinemorrow@earthlink.net
Recording Secretary	Radhika Thekkath	(650) 473-1537	rthekkath@yahoo.com
Treasurer	Dee Wong	(650) 670-7797	dee@thevillagegardener.com
Past President	Arvind Kumar	(408) 715-7020	arvind.kumar@cnps.org

To join our Chapter news email list please visit the signup link at our Chapter website: www.cnps-scv.org/index.php/contact-us/sign-up.

Save a Tree!

CNPS members can log in to support.cnps.org and edit their profile to receive this newsletter by email only. Look for "Chapter Newsletter" at the bottom of "My Profile."

Current and past Blazing Star newsletters are always online at the Chapter website's newsletter page: www.cnps-scv.org/index.php/blazing-star-newsletter.

DEADLINE FOR THE NEXT *BLAZING STAR*

Saturday, August 9, 2014

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

Santa Clara Valley Chapter California Native Plant Society
3921 East Bayshore Road
Palo Alto, CA 94303



Join CNPS Today!

Members receive the *Fremontia*, the *Bulletin*, and the Chapter newsletter, and other benefits listed at www.cnps.org/membership

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Donations above the membership level are gratefully accepted.

Dues and donations are tax-deductible. Make your check payable to "CNPS" and mail it with this form to:

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FIRST-CLASS

CALENDAR OF EVENTS (page # in parentheses)

Jul 9 Wed GWN - Lawn Replacement - Luna (1)

Jul 12 Sat GWN - Lawn Alt'ives - Montanari (1)

Jul 13-17 Sun-Thu Mt. Lassen Carcamp (5)

Jul 17 Thu GWN - Buckwheats - Vielleux (2)

Jul 17 Thu LIVECoRPs (conservation) meeting (4)

Jul 19 Sat Edgewood Saturday weeding (5)

Jul 23 Wed GWN – Starting a Garden - Bryant (2)

Jul 25 Fri Keying with Natives (3)

Jul 26 Sat Crystal Springs walk and weed (5)

Aug 4 Mon GWN – Starting a Garden - Bryant (2)

Aug 9 Sat Newsletter **submittal deadline** (7)

Aug 21 Thu GWN – Lawn Replace – Von Feldt (2)

Aug 21 Thu LIVECoRPs (conservation) meeting (4)

Aug 23 Sat Bean Hollow field trip (6)

Aug 28 Thu Newsletter **Mailing Party - 10am PCC**

Aug 29 Fri Keying with Natives (3)

Wed & Thu 10am-1pm Nursery work sessions (2)

Wed 5:30pm, Fri 9am Edgewood Weed Warriors (5)

The next Chapter Board meeting will be **Thu., August 14 at 7:00pm** at the PCC, 3921 E. Bayshore Road in Palo Alto.

Chapter Board meetings are open to all Chapter members and their guests.

For more information contact Stephen Rosenthal at sailinsteve@sbcglobal.net.

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 about your newsletter subscription, please contact membership@cnps-scv.org. Address changes Jul be submitted to cnps@cnps.org and please put "member address change" in the subject line.