“Those who submissively allow themselves to be packed and brined down in the seats of a stage-coach, who are hurled into Yosemite by ‘favorite routes,’ are not aware that they are crossing a grander Yosemite than that to which they are going…” John Muir, referring to the “great central plain of California.”

From the cracked mud and seemingly barren plains comes an eruption of color on the alluvial terraces of the Great Valley of California. A succession of rainbows of color in concentric rings around the drying vernal pools – small, rain-filled depressions with an impermeable layer of clay, hardpan or volcanic material that prevents the water from percolating downward – vernal pools support a flora and fauna found nowhere else on the face of this planet. Vernal pools were once widespread in the Great Valley, as were the wildflowers that characterize these unique habitats; about 90% of the state’s vernal pools are now gone.

Enjoy a program on this fascinating habitat by one of the state’s authorities on the subject. Carol Witham, editor of *Ecology, Conservation, and Management of Vernal Pool Ecosystems*, will present a slideshow on the distribution, ecology, and unique flowers and aquatic organisms of vernal pools.

Carol Witham is a botanical and biological consultant. She is regarded as an expert in vernal pools and their rare, threatened and endangered plants and animals. In 2013, Carol received an Environmental Achievement Award from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency for her work on vernal pool education and advocacy. As a volunteer with CNPS, Carol leads its campaign to preserve vernal pools and their associated grasslands. She owns and maintains the website [www.vernalpools.org](http://www.vernalpools.org).

**Directions:** From Foothill Expy., travel ½ mile on San Antonio Rd. towards the Bay, cross Hillview and turn right into the driveway; the library is on the left. From El Camino, travel towards the hills on San Antonio Rd., cross Edith and turn left into the unmarked driveway just before Hillview. The sign on San Antonio Rd. 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 Stephen Rosenthal at sailinsteve@sbcglobal.net or the Chapter phone at (650) 260-3450.

**Save the Date!**

Our November General Meeting will include our annual potluck dinner and Chapter elections. It will be held on **Saturday, November 7** at the Shoup Garden House.

---

**Chapter Nursery Introduces Monthly Member Sale Days**

See page 2

**Chapter Fall Native Plant Sale, October 17**

See enclosed poster for details, and page 2 to volunteer
CHAPTER ACTIVITIES

Monthly Sales at Native Plant Nursery
Have you wished the Chapter Nursery was open more often than just twice a year (for the Spring and Fall Plant Sales)? We have some exciting news to share with Chapter members: the nursery will now open once a month every month to make it convenient for you to browse and buy plants at any time of year.

The Monthly Member Sale days will coincide with nursery workday hours when volunteers will be available to assist you. Due to limited resources, the Monthly Member Sale days are open to CNPS members only; you can join or renew your membership on the day of the sale itself. Proceeds from nursery plant sales are the major source of funding for all Chapter activities.

By the time you read this, our first Monthly Member Sale may already have taken place, on Wednesday, August 26, 10am - 1pm. The September Monthly Sale will take place on Wednesday, September 30, 10am - 1pm.

The Fall Sale is scheduled for Saturday October 17, from 10am - 3pm, and will be open to the general public.

The Monthly Member Sales will resume on November 4 and continue on the first Wednesdays of the month during winter workday hours, noon - 3pm. In May 2016, the nursery switches back to summer hours, 10am - 1pm. Volunteers are welcome to attend regular nursery workdays, every Wednesday and Thursday during these hours.

The nursery will maintain a current inventory of sale plants on the Chapter website (www.cnps-scv.org) so you can check if the plants you are looking for are available. Sale dates are posted under “Events” on the website.

If you have any questions about the new Monthly Member Sale days, please contact Chapter Nursery Manager Melanie Cross, at melanie@pcross.com or (650) 847-1350.

Directions: Hidden Villa is located on 26870 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 drive about 1/4 mile to the large parking lot on the right. The Native Plant Nursery is at the greenhouse just beyond the Dana Center. On the day of the plant sale, parking volunteers will direct you where to park.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Native Plant Sale – Sat., October 17</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10am – 3pm</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Free Talk 1 - 2pm: Must-Have Native Plants for Bay Area Gardens
With over 6,000 California native plants to choose from, how can you decide which ones to grow in your home garden? Come to this talk to learn about a short list of plants that are easy to grow, beautiful to look at, and attract beneficial insects and birds to your garden year round.

GWN Table, All Day: Help in Choosing the Goals and Right Plants for Your Garden Site
Bring an accurate scaled drawing of your garden, along with printed pictures, and your garden’s sun exposure and views. We’ll give you suggestions on which plants would do best in your garden. Many of these plants will be available for sale that day.

We’ll also have sample garden plans gathered from various sources that you can use as a template for your own garden design. You can also let us know about other factors, such as whether you have deer, gophers, extremely heavy clay or rocky soil, how much you want to water, and any creatures you’d like to attract. We’ll have four garden designers available to help you with your plant selection.

Native Plant Sale - Call for Volunteers
Our Fall Native Plant Sale will be held on Saturday, October 17, from 10am to 3pm at our Hidden Villa nursery in Los Altos Hills. Once again we’re asking everyone who can to come and help with the sale. Most of the jobs listed below don’t require expert knowledge of plants, and you can choose to work one or two hours or all day.

Before the sale, you may help prepare the nursery at three special nursery workdays, including labeling plants and weeding the garden outside the nursery. We’ll work from 10am - 1pm on Wednesday - Friday, October 14 - 16. On the day of the sale, we will need people to:

- Help set up before the sale (starting at 8am)
- Help with parking
- Answer customers’ questions about the plants and help them decide which plants to purchase
• Write up the sales tags before customers go to the 
cashiers to pay for their plants
• Help customers take their purchases to their cars and 
bring back the wagons and carts to the nursery
• Help clean up after the sale (3 - 4pm)

The plant sales are always lots of fun to work at, and we 
provide lunch to volunteers. To volunteer on sale day 
please contact:

Horticultural consultation: Ray Deutsch (650) 365-6136, 
ray.deutsch@yahoo.ca
Writing sales tags: Georgia Stigall (650) 941-1068, 
georgia.stigall@yahoo.com
Parking director: Carolyn Dorsch (650) 804-6162 
(evenings) or cdorsch1@aol.com
Miscellaneous: Melanie Cross (650) 847-1350 or 
Melanie@pcross.com

Gardening with Natives
Gardening with Natives (GWN), a special interest group 
within the Chapter, includes beginning and seasoned native 
plant gardeners, along with landscape architects and 
designers. GWN offers over 30 talks at public libraries 
throughout the year, which are free and open to all.

This year’s themes are How I Did It and Maintaining Your 
Native Garden. The monthly speakers will share tips on 
how they created their native garden or on a specific garden 
maintenance task. For more information, visit www.cnps-

How I Did It: Creating a Bee-Friendly 
Garden, a talk by Jamie Pawelek

Wednesday, Sept 2, 6-7:30 PM, Pacifica Sharp Park 
Library, 104 Hilton Way, Pacifica, (650) 355-5196

Come hear about the benefits of native bee habitat 
gardening. Learn about the biology and ecology of native 
bees and their important role in our ecosystems. The 
presenter will describe the most common bees found in 
urban areas and how homeowners can use native plants to 
attract these valuable pollinators to their own gardens.

Jamie Pawelek is the project manager for the California 
Statewide Urban Bee Survey in the Urban Bee Lab at UC 
Berkeley. Her work includes identifying the lab’s 
collections of Californian and Costa Rican bees, managing 
the experimental bee garden on campus, updating the 
website and Facebook page, and giving talks and garden 
tours throughout the state. She also designs bee-friendly 
habitat gardens with her business, Wild Bee Garden 
Design. Look for the lab's new book, California Bees & 
Blooms: A Guide for Gardeners and Naturalists, available 
now through Heyday Books.

No Mow Native Lawns: How to Select, Install & 
Care for Them, a talk by Jodie Sheffield

Tuesday, September 15, 7:00-8:30 PM, Saratoga 
Library, 13650 Saratoga Ave., Saratoga (408) 867-6126

Learn about the variety of native lawns which are available 
and can save you water. See photos of many installations 
that illustrate how these meadow-like sods create beautiful 
and natural spaces. Hear how to manage these water-wise 
plants and establish your native sod to give it the best start 
possible. Understand the best management options for 
mowing and caring for these sturdy native grasses.

Jodie Sheffield is a Seed Specialist in charge of Research 
and Development for Delta Bluegrass Company located in 
Stockton, California. With over 25 years of experience in 
the turf-grass Industry, Jodie has worked with plant 
breeders, seed producers and research facilities throughout 
California and the Pacific Northwest developing premium, 
quality turf-grass sod.

Easy-to-Grow and Drought-Tolerant Native 
Plants, two dates and locations

Are you new to growing drought-tolerant native plants? Do 
you want to include them in your garden for beauty, habitat
and sustainability, but don’t know where to begin? Come to these talks and learn about the many easy-to-grow native trees, shrubs, perennials, and annuals for the home garden. Include these in your garden now for low-water use next summer!

**Tuesday, Sep. 29, 7:00-8:30 PM, Morgan Hill Library, 660 West Main Ave., Morgan Hill (408) 779-3196**

**Arvind Kumar** has been gardening with native plants for over 13 years and is a past president of our Chapter of CNPS. A true advocate of the environment, he helped start the Going Native Garden Tour in 2003, has worked on native plant restoration projects at Lake Cunningham in San Jose, and received the Water Champion award from the Silicon Valley Water Conservation Coalition in 2013.

**Wednesday, Oct. 14, 7:00-8:30 PM, Los Altos Library, 13 S. San Antonio Road, Los Altos (650) 948-7683**

**Nancy McClenny** has exchanged growing bacteria and fungi in Petri dishes for exploring the science, beauty, and survival strategies of California native plants. After taking courses in California native flora from Foothill and Merritt Colleges, and having volunteer experiences with CNPS Gamble Garden, the East Bay’s Regional Parks Botanic Garden and Acterra, Nancy delights in digging in the dirt and sharing her garden experiences with others. Her Palo Alto garden has appeared on the Going Native Garden Tour for three years.

**Replace your Lawn with Drought-tolerant Native Plants, a talk by Annaloy Nickum**

**Wed., Oct. 7, 7:00-8:30 PM, Redwood City Library, 1044 Middlefield Road, Redwood City (650) 780-7018**

You stopped watering your lawn because of the drought and because you wanted something new, but now the “lawn” is full of weeds. 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 weed-filled patch called a lawn, learn to choose climate-adapted native plants, and find out how you can qualify for landscape rebates. You’ll see how to have a lush landscape without that water-hogging grass.

**Annaloy Nickum** formed Wildscapes Garden Design in 1998 to re-introduce California native plants into homeowners’ gardens. She mixes these locals with compatible non-natives and provides year-round interest to her clientele. She has been a garden design consultant for Yerba Buena Native Plant Nursery in Half Moon Bay since 2000, and has created gardens along the foggy coast, in the dry chaparral foothills of east San Jose, in the windy hills of Daly City, in the Redwood climates of Boulder Creek, and with many oak woodlands in between.

**Using Graywater with Your Native Plants, a talk by Christina Bertea**

**Wed., Oct. 21, 7:00-8:30 PM, Redwood City Library, 1044 Middlefield Road, Redwood City (650) 780-7018**

We are in our fourth year of drought and it is imperative that we conserve every precious drop of water. Graywater is a great way to re-use water from inside the house for landscape irrigation outside of the house. Come learn how you can install a simple laundry-to-landscape system and which native plants are best suited for this type of irrigation.

**Christina Bertea** served a four-year apprenticeship in Local 159, Plumbers and Steamfitters and was the first woman admitted into the program. She became a contractor in 1996 and has plumbed quite a few “alternative” houses, including straw bale and rammed earth. She is also interested in the spiritual aspects of water, and creates fountains and water features.

**Replace your Lawn with Plantas Nativas de California, a talk in Spanish & English by Pete Veilleux**

**Wednesday, October 28, 7:00-8:30 PM, Campbell Library, 77 Harrison Ave., Campbell (408) 866-1991**

Come to this special presentation in Spanish and English designed especially for Hispanic gardeners. Hear about the benefits of replacing a dry, brown lawn with a garden full of native flowers and life. You’ll lower your water bill, while attracting butterflies, bees and birds.

**Pete Veilleux** is a master designer, nurseryman and photographer. Pete creates 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 and is a tireless advocate of native gardening.
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, September 25 and October 30 from 6:30 - 8:30pm. We meet at the Peninsula Conservation Center (PCC), 3921 E. Bayshore Road in Palo Alto. For more information, please contact Joe Cernac at joecernac@sbcglobal.net or (408) 292-5465; or Sally Casey at (408) 377-0989.

Directions to the 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.

CONSERVATION CORNER

Conservation (Formerly LIVeCoRPs)

Our Chapter’s conservation committee meets on the first Thursday of the month. The next meetings will be on Thursdays, September 3 and October 1 at 7pm at the PCC in Palo Alto. Please join us in our important work. For questions, comments or concerns, please contact Conservation Chair Linda Ruthruff at ldrruff@hotmail.com. For directions to the PCC, please see the previous Keying with Natives article.

Weed Control Strategies

By Stephen Rosenthal, Alum Rock Restoration Project

All gardeners have to deal with weeds, but efficiency is extra important when restoring several acres at a time. In addition, at Alum Rock and many other restoration sites, we are not allowed to use herbicides, so most of our efforts are focused on weeding by hand.

One of the most important tools is knowledge. Once we know what the weed is, we can go to one of several sources of information on how to best control the weed. But first, how do you identify the weed? There are several possibilities:

1. UC Davis has a weed ID tool, weedid.wisc.edu/ca/weedid.php.
2. Calflora.org offers a section entitled What Grows Here? In the status dropdown select non-native, then move the map and zoom in to the general area where you are working. If you know it’s an annual select that as well. Click search and you’ll get a list of plants with photos. It’s likely to be a long list, but the tool is easy to use and free.
3. The Jepson Manual lists many weeds; you can key out your weed there.
4. XID Services makes a Windows PC weed ID program as well as an Android app. There are also other programs that will identify weeds and native plants from Flora ID Northwest. Visit XIDservices.com.

Once you have a general idea of what the weed is, you can use these sources to find out how to control it:

1. The “bible” is the two volume set Weeds of California and the Western States by Joseph De Tomaso.
2. UC Davis has an online “Weed Research & Information Center” at wric.ucdavis.edu.

In areas that have been infested for years, there is likely to be a huge seed bank. One strategy is to scrape the soil with a McLeod, which is sort of a hoe and a rake on steroids. Scraping the soil takes up much of the seed bank, and makes weed control easier. It’s important to dispose of the scrapings, which will contain many seeds, in a way that they won’t become a problem again. This is not a strategy that you will want to repeat, as you will be removing mulch and other material that would normally break down and enrich the soil. But in heavily infested areas, like at the top of Alum Rock Park’s Todd Quick Trail, scraping also removes all the old weed skeletons which makes it easier to find weeds when they are young and easy to remove.

A small hand tool that we often use is a Hori Hori knife. It’s great for digging up the bulblets of oxalis. It’s narrow so it can disturb only a small area of the soil. It has a sharp blade on one side and a serrated edge on the other. It’s also really good for transplanting, if you need to get into a crowded area without disturbing other plants.
Where we can, we pick up weeds and remove them from the area. That way, seeds can’t reinfect the area. We remove weed material whenever it’s feasible, and especially when the plants are in flower or fruit. But sometimes, in a park, the area is a mile or more away from a road. In this case, we end up making a REALLY big weed pile. The base of the big pile stays wet, so most seeds just rot. Those that do germinate don’t get light, so they die.

We work to restore the rare, federally endangered fountain thistle (Cirsium fontinale var. fontinale) by removing brush and trees that would like to take over this herbaceous community.

We meet at the end of Lessingia Court in San Mateo. If you can’t locate it on Google or Mapquest, email jakesigg@earthlink.net, or (415) 731-3028. Optional camaraderie over Greek pizza afterwards.

CHAPTER FIELD TRIPS

No field trips for September - October
Stay tuned for a Bryophyte hike to be announced in the next Blazing Star, plus consider volunteering at a habitat restoration project to get your dose of nature. See the list of restoration projects at the end of this newsletter.

CHAPTER OFFICERS FOR 2015

Consider “upgrading” your Chapter participation by chairing or co chairing one of our many activities or becoming a Chapter officer. For more information, contact Stephan Buckhout at yscottie@pacbell.net or (408) 255-6233; or contact any of the Chapter officers listed below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Phone</th>
<th>Email</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>President</td>
<td>Stephen Rosenthal</td>
<td>(408) 923-6562</td>
<td><a href="mailto:sailisteve@sbcglobal.net">sailisteve@sbcglobal.net</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vice President</td>
<td>Madeline Morrow</td>
<td>(408) 741-1150</td>
<td><a href="mailto:madelinemorrow@earthlink.net">madelinemorrow@earthlink.net</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recording Secretary</td>
<td>Radhika Thekkath</td>
<td>(650) 473-1537</td>
<td><a href="mailto:rthekkath@yahoo.com">rthekkath@yahoo.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Treasurer</td>
<td>Carolyn Dorsch</td>
<td>(650) 804-6162</td>
<td><a href="mailto:cdorsch1@aol.com">cdorsch1@aol.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Past President</td>
<td>Arvind Kumar</td>
<td>(408) 715-7020</td>
<td><a href="mailto:arvind.kumar@cnps.org">arvind.kumar@cnps.org</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

To join our Chapter news email list please visit www.cnps-scv.org/index.php/contact-us/sign-up.

DEADLINE FOR THE NEXT BLAZING STAR

Saturday, October 3, 2015
Email: mattsson@surfpix.net
Phone: (408) 255-3767
CALENDAR OF EVENTS (page # in parentheses)

Sep 2 Wed  GWN – Bee-Friendly Garden - Pawelek (3)
Sep 3 Thu  Conservation Committee meeting (5)
Sep 15 Tue  GWN – No Mow Lawns – Sheffield (3)
Sep 18 Fri  General Meeting – Witham (1)
Sep 25 Fri  Keying with Natives (5)
Sep 29 Tue  GWN – Drought-Tolerant – Kumar (4)
Sep 30 Wed  Monthly Member native plant sale (2)
Oct 1 Thu  Conservation Committee meeting (5)
Oct 3 Sat  Newsletter submittal deadline (6)
Oct 7 Wed  GWN – Replace Your Lawn – Nickum (4)
Oct 14 Wed  Pre-sale nursery workday (2)
Oct 14 Wed  GWN – Drought-Tolerant – McClenny (4)
Oct 15 Thu  Pre-sale nursery workday (2)
Oct 16 Fri  Pre-sale nursery workday (2)
Oct 17 Sat  Fall Native Plant Sale (2)
Oct 21 Wed  GWN – Greywater – Bertea (4)
Oct 22 Thu  Newsletter Mailing Party - 10am PCC
Oct 28 Wed  Last Edgewood weeding during DST (6)
Oct 18 Wed  GWN – Plantas Nativas – Veilleux (4)
Oct 30 Fri  Keying with Natives (5)
Oct 31 Sat  Fountain thistle work party (6)
Wed & Thu  Nursery workdays (2)
3rd Sat 8am  Alum Rock Park Restoration (7)
Wed 5:30pm, Fri 9am  Edgewood Weed Warriors (6)

The next Chapter Board meeting will be Thu., October 8 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 may be submitted to cnps@cnps.org and please put “member address change” in the subject line.