



California Native Plant Society
Santa Clara Valley Chapter

THE BLAZING STAR

November-December 2007

ANNUAL MEETING AND POTLUCK

Saturday, November 17, 2007 at 6:00 pm
Shoup Garden House, Los Altos

Topic: SLO & Jefferson Field Trips
Speakers: Judy Mason and Toni Corelli

Join us for one of our favorite get-together events of the year, our annual potluck dinner and election meeting.

Chapter members Judy Mason and Toni Corelli will treat us to vibrant slideshow presentations that will bring us all on the two away field trips our Chapter had this year: one to coastal San Luis Obispo County, the other to the State of Jefferson. If you were with us on these trips, now you can relive those moments, and if you weren't able to come, well now here's your chance!

Before the talk, we'll have our potluck. Bring your favorite dish, whether it be a salad, main dish, dessert, or beverage; it always works out that we have just the right amount of everything! Also, be sure to bring plates, drinking glasses, and eating utensils for yourself, as well as a bag in which to take home unwashed dishes.

We will also have a silent auction of books and other items.

We encourage members to donate items for the auction that they have created that reflect nature and native species, including photos, prints, textiles or other items that might be of interest to our members. We will set minimum bids where appropriate, so please include that information with your donations. This could turn into a good event for getting some of your holiday shopping done!

If you have extra books in fair to good condition, or other items to donate, please arrive early at the potluck so we have time to include them. If you want to donate but are unable to attend, contact Kevin Bryant at (408)353-8824 or mtngreen17@verizon.net. Or put your items in a bag

labeled "CNPS Auction" and drop them off at our office at the PCC at 3921 E. Bayshore Rd. in Palo Alto.

Please arrive at around **5pm** to help set up. We will begin eating at **6pm** and the program should start at around **7pm**. We will also need help with clean-up at the end of the evening.

Directions: From Highway 280 take the El Monte exit east. Turn left (north) on University Ave. The Garden House is about a quarter mile ahead on the left (west) side of the street. From Highway 101, take the San Antonio exit west/south. Then turn right on Main St. in Los Altos (3rd stoplight after crossing El Camino Real). Cross Foothill Expressway and turn left immediately onto University Ave. The Garden House is a short distance ahead on the right.

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

Chapter Annual Election

The annual potluck is also the time to elect our Chapter officers for the coming year. Following is the slate put forth by the nominating committee:

President	Kevin Bryant
Vice-President	Open
Treasurer	Paul Heiple
Recording Secretary	Open

All Chapter members may run for office-- nominations may also be made from the floor at the potluck. Thanks to outgoing Recording Secretary Susan Sundberg for her good work in 2007, and to the other officers who served this year. Also thanks to our Nominating Committee: Judy Fenerty, Kevin Bryant, Georgia Stigall, Stephen Buckhout, Paul Heiple, and Arvind Kumar.

CHAPTER ACTIVITIES

Native Plant Nursery

Our regular native plant nursery work sessions take place every **Wednesday**, from **12noon to 3pm**. Bring garden gloves, sunhat, clippers, 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.

If you missed out on our chapter's fall sale, plants can still be purchased at the nursery on Wednesdays during the work sessions **until Dec. 5** (checks only please). For more information, contact Jean Struthers at (650)941-2586 or JeanStruthers@aol.com; 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 center parking lot to your right. The Native Plant Nursery is at the greenhouse just beyond the visitor center.

Gardening with Natives

Gardening with Natives (GWN) is a special interest group within the Chapter which meets on the first **Thursday** of each month, usually 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.

Thursday, November 1, 7-9pm, at PCC, Palo Alto

Native Habitats and Favorite Plants

Presented by Ken Himes, Hosted by Agi Kehoe

For our November meeting, our group will have the privilege of hearing long time CNPS member extraordinaire, Ken Himes, discuss native habitats and some of his favorite plants from those habitats. He will also share some of his fall photo collection and discuss native irises.

Ken has been a CNPS member since 1974. He leads native plant hikes around California, and has been instrumental in the Chapter's efforts to preserve and maintain native plants at Edgewood Preserve. He has recently been named a CNPS Fellow and he's also one of our plant experts, who helps customers at our Chapter's semi-annual plant sales at Hidden Villa.

There will be no GWN meeting in **December**. The Steering Committee wishes everyone happy holidays and see you in January!

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.

For more information on the Gardening with Natives group, visit its website at **www.GardeningWithNatives.com**. GWN maintains a Yahoo group with over 480 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 GardeningWithNatives@yahoo.com or call Arvind Kumar at (408)715-7020.

Native Hill

Under Phil's consistent and devoted care the native garden at Foothill College is recovering from the assault of the construction work last year. With the help of a small but devoted group of helpers, new plants have been planted and most of the garden has a neat layer of wood chip mulch. Gum plant, narrowleaf milkweed, asters and coyote mint are some of the newly planted fall color plants. There are also some new orange-red penstemon hybrids that can survive considerable abuse. The parent plant was the sole survivor of an experimental batch of hybrids donated by Don Brandeau several years ago. It is a real winner with nice color, robust growth, and great tolerance of severe conditions.

The flowers of the St. Catherine's lace (*Eriogonum giganteum*) are now russet brown and are a beautiful contrast to the golden gum plant and orange poppies. The best part is that California quail love to live under them, taking advantage of the abundant seed, and there is a flock of three to four dozen that congregate under the great expanse of these plants at Foothill. If you visit the garden in the early morning on a weekend and walk around a bit you are very likely to see several flocks of the quail flying up and across the road. It is quite a spectacle to see them flying right above one's head.

Our busy time of the year is just around the corner, since we have three main areas weeded, mulched and now ready for planting. Two areas will be planted as grasslands with

annuals while the third area will have small shrubs, predominantly habitat plants. We have had a lot of success with gum plant (*Grindelia* spp.) along the edge of the parking lot this year, an area where plant survival was minimal in the past with the additional heat reflected from the concrete. The grindelia was planted late in the season, a chance we took, but the survival rate was very encouraging and the plants have provided an excellent nectar source for butterflies.

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.

Habitat Restoration at Edgewood Park

Join us as we remove invasive exotic plants and protect Edgewood's sensitive habitats. **Friday weeding sessions, starting at 9am**, occur year-round. Wednesday evening and Saturday morning sessions will resume next spring.

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

Photo Group

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

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.

Monday, November 19, 7-9pm, at PCC, Palo Alto **Photography and Documentation of Plants**

This meeting will feature a **presentation by Robin Myers**, an accomplished photographer and photography color expert, see www.rmimaging.com/information/color_accurate_photography.pdf. Mr. Myers is also an avid native plant photographer and he will talk to us about his plant photography and documentation techniques.

Monday, December 17, 7-9pm, at PCC, Palo Alto **Photography and Documentation of Plants**

We will continue to explore this topic and consider how to use these techniques to aid the varied goals of CNPS.

For more information, please contact Patrick Gallagher, at (408)483-9366 or drust@greenisles.com.

Keying with Natives

Join us on the last **Friday** of every month, from **6:30pm - 8:30pm**, in a fun gathering to meet with other native plant enthusiasts to sharpen your keying skills. The next meetings will be **November 16** and **December 14** (earlier Fridays due to holidays) at the PCC building in Palo Alto. Contact David "Tex" Houston or Sally Casey for details. Contact David at tex009@sbcglobal.net, and Sally at (408)377-0989.

CONSERVATION NEWS

Save Tejon Ranch: Stay Tuned

By Kevin Bryant, Chapter President

If you've ever driven down into Southern California on Interstate 5 in the spring, you've probably encountered an amazing mosaic of colors, from wildflowers as far as the eye can see, just before you head into the mountains on the Grapevine. This wondrous sight is but a small slice of the largest privately owned property in California, the 270,000+ acre Tejon Ranch. This incredibly diverse area is a crossroads for several of the state's botanical regions, where the Sierra Nevada meets the South Coast Range meets the Mojave Desert meets the Central Valley. It contains critical habitat for the California condor, and is home to over 60 rare and endangered species.

The owners wish to continue the sprawl of Los Angeles and environs, and propose to bring hundreds of thousands of people to this relatively unscathed land. There is a significant movement underway to stop this destruction of habitat and natural heritage, and it's important that we all become aware of the conservation alternatives that would keep this biologically important area from becoming yet another sad story of human "progress". Please visit savetejonranch.org for more details, and stay tuned!

Sudden Oak Death in Santa Clara County: What you should know and can do to prevent spreading

By Shannon Dinis, ISA Certified Arborist

Editor's note: Members have surely heard about Sudden Oak Death, an incurable disease killing many of our native trees. Here's an article with a good summary of the topic, dated August 27, 2007. To see the color photos illustrating

the article, see the version posted on our Chapter website at www.stanford.edu/~rawlings/PDF/Sudden_Oak_Death.pdf

Sudden Oak Death is a disease that is becoming very prevalent in Santa Clara County and many other coastal counties in California. Known cases of the disease range from Monterey to Humboldt Counties. The number of counties is likely to increase as more research is done. The spread of the disease is mainly found in coastal areas that receive plenty of rainfall and fog because the fungus needs a moist environment to spread its spores. This disease primarily affects tanoaks (*Lithocarpus densiflorus*), coast live oaks (*Quercus agrifolia*), and various other oak and tree species of the coastal forest.

Sudden Oak Death is caused by a fungus called *Phytophthora ramorum* which infects the water flow system of the diseased trees. Eventually, the fungus spreads around the entire tree blocking the flow of water from the roots to the leaves which dehydrates it and causes it to die. Along with affecting the water flow system of oak trees, *P. ramorum* is also known to cause leaf infections on California bay trees (*Umbellularia californica*), rhododendron, redwood, and many other tree and plant species. In the case of leaf infection, the fungus does not kill the plants; rather it causes branch dieback and discoloration of the leaves. Bay trees are known to spread the spores of *P. ramorum* and so tanoaks and oaks near infected bay trees usually become infected as well.

See the website version of the article for four color photographs, showing healthy and infected tanoak, coast live oak bleeding bark canker, and a leafy branch of California bay.

The symptoms of Sudden Oak Death are usually visible on the trunk or the leaves of infected trees. The main indicative symptom in oaks is oozing dark brown to reddish sap from the trunk, called a canker, when there have been no signs of injury on the tree. This is the tree's first line of defense to try and push the fungus out of its vessels. Often, these trees will have discoloration of the leaves as well. In oaks other than tanoak, the disease usually affects adult trees, causing them to die within 2-4 growing seasons.

Tanoaks, however, are extremely susceptible to Sudden Oak Death. Seedlings and saplings are often easily infected as well as adult trees. Tanoaks do not usually show the traditional bleeding canker and leaf dieback is usually one of the first signs of infection. It has been observed that tanoaks infected with the fungus can succumb within one year while other oak species may take more time to

succumb to the disease. The most important thing to remember is that symptoms similar to that of Sudden Oak Death can be caused by various other fungi and tree diseases. Therefore, lab tests must be performed in order to determine if the diseased tree really does have Sudden Oak Death.

So what can we do to prevent the spread of Sudden Oak Death? Since there is no known cure for this disease, the most important thing to do is prevent the spread. Contaminated materials should not travel from a county with confirmed infection to an uninfected county. To find out which counties are considered infected, visit www.suddenoakdeath.org. If you are traveling to an area with known sudden oak death, it is important to disinfect your shoes, tires, dog's feet, etc., by spraying them with Lysol, 70% alcohol solution, or 10% bleach solution before returning. All of these treatments should kill any stowaway spores. If tree work is needed on an infected tree, try to limit it to dead branches and perform these activities in the hot summer months when the spores are less active. One study revealed that removing bay trees from the vicinity of an oak can prevent its infection because bay trees are known to be the best at spreading the spores. If there is a mature oak that a homeowner is worried about preserving, removing bay trees in the area is a way to prevent the spread of spores. It is important to note that if a tree is already infected, there is no cure for the disease. To learn more about possible fungicidal treatments, visit www.californiaoaks.org/html/oak_tree_care.html or www.suddenoakdeath.org.

One of the dilemmas with this disease is that it has created a large amount of fire fuel. This is particularly concerning considering how prone California wildland is to fire. If you are concerned about the fuel load on your property, consider moving and removing downed or dead trees in the hot summer months to prevent the spread of spores. Also, try not to leave the wood for anyone to pick up since you don't know if they will be moving it to an uninfected county. It is safe to burn the infected wood since high heat will kill the spores. If chipping the debris, consider composting it. The heat produced from composting usually kills the spores as well.

To learn more about Sudden Oak Death and the California Oak Mortality Task Force, visit www.suddenoakdeath.org.

Sources:

- Storer, A. et al. 2002. *Diagnosis and Monitoring of Sudden Oak Death*. UC Cooperative Extension in Marin County.

- Lee, C. April 2007. *Protecting Your Oak Trees from Sudden Oak Death*. California Oak Mortality Task Force.
- Davidson, J.M. et al. 2003. *Sudden Oak Death and Associated Diseases Caused by Phytophthora ramorum*. Plant Management Network. 7 July 2003.

Shannon is currently pursuing her Master's Degree in Conservation Biology at San Jose State University. She is working for WECEI as a contractor in PG&E's vegetation management program. She is also the South County Area Coordinator for the Santa Clara County FireSafe Council, www.SCCFireSafe.org.

CHAPTER FIELD TRIPS

New Field Trip Chair Joe Cernac

It's time for outgoing Field Trip Chair Kevin Bryant to turn the chapter compass over to Joe Cernac for a while. A born adventurer, Joe has done the job before for our Chapter, and his knowledge of California's many landscapes promises a continuance of our Chapter's tradition of exciting trips to all parts of the state, as well as a wide variety of trips in our area.

Joe would like to hear your ideas for field trips, and would especially like to hear from people who would like to lead or help with field trips. It's a fun and easy way to help CNPS get our neighbors and friends out to get to know our magnificent flora.

If you have an idea for a field trip but are not well-versed on the plants, please speak up! There are plenty of other Chapter members to help with identification. Our Chapter has also enjoyed several "exploratory" field trips over the years, in which all participants team up to identify what we are seeing.

Contact Joe at JoeCernac@sbcglobal.net or (408)292-5465.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

News and Activities from Other Organizations

War on Weeds Symposium November 16

The Monterey County Weed Management Area and CSUMB's Watershed Institute invite you to the Central Coast's 9th annual War on Weeds Symposium. This Conference will provide information on weed control and management and offers speakers, field trips, and demonstrations. The keynote address will be by Dan

Gluesenkamp, Audubon Canyon Ranch. Other speakers include Pete Halloran and Cindy Roessler.

Register by November 9th for \$25. More information is available at [waronweeds.eventbrite.com](http://www.waronweeds.eventbrite.com), or contact Cheryl at (831)626.8595 x102 or Bruce at (831)277.7690.

Gardens Sought for Native Garden Tour

Gardens are being sought to participate in the Sunday, April 20, 2008 **Going Native Garden Tour**, which will showcase bird- and butterfly-friendly, pesticide-free, water conserving gardens. Gardens must be located in Santa Clara County or San Mateo County, and contain 50% or more California native plants. To submit your garden, visit www.GoingNativeGardenTour.org. The deadline is **December 1, 2007**. For more information, email info@GoingNativeGardenTour.org.

CHAPTER OFFICERS FOR 2007

To learn more about our Chapter 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	OPEN		
Recording Secretary	Susan Sundberg	(408)274-5491	sundberg27@yahoo.com
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 or cnps_scv@yahoo.com.

DEADLINE FOR THE NEXT *BLAZING STAR*

Saturday, December 1, 2007

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

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

(page # in parentheses)

Nov 1 Thu Gardening with Natives (2)**Nov 16 Fri** Keying with Natives (3)**Nov 17 Sat Annual Meeting and Potluck** (1)**Nov 19 Mon** Photo Group (3)**Dec 1 Sat** Newsletter Submittal Deadline (5)**Dec 6 Thu Chapter Board meeting****Dec 14 Fri** Keying with Natives (3)**Dec 17 Mon** Photo Group (3)**Wed afts** Nursery work sessions (2)**Fri morns.** Edgewood Park weeding (3)**Via Email List** Native Hill work sessions (2)

The next Chapter Board meeting, which will be our annual budget meeting, will be **Thursday, December 6 at 7pm** at Stephanie Morris' house in Campbell. Contact Stephanie for directions.

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
Acknowledgement: Anne Warren for the *Blazing Star* logo
