



California Native Plant Society  
Santa Clara Valley Chapter

# ***THE BLAZING STAR***

November-December 2008

## **ANNUAL MEETING AND POTLUCK**

**Saturday, November 8th at 6:00 pm**  
**Shoup Garden House, Los Altos**

**Topic: Edaphic Islands of California: Model Settings for the Study of Plant Ecology and Evolution**  
**Speaker: Nishi Rajakaruna**

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

Nishi Rajakaruna is a geobotanist studying the role unusual soil conditions play in plant ecology and evolution. His past research in California led to the characterization of edaphic races within the *Lasthenia californica* complex (Asteraceae). ("Edaphic" pertains to soil and edaphic races are distinct populations of a particular species that are restricted to specific soil types.)

Nishi's recent research has documented bryophytes, lichens, and vascular plants of under-explored serpentine outcrops and guano deposits in Maine. Nishi joined San Jose State University in the fall of 2008 and is looking forward to continuing his research on the role edaphic islands such as serpentine outcrops and guano deposits play in generating and maintaining plant diversity in California. His presentation will highlight his ideas for current research as well as summaries of his previous geobotanical endeavors.

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. If you have extra books in fair to good condition, or other items to donate, please 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 **before October 31**. If that's not possible, please drop them off at the office as soon as you can before the event, or drop them off at the event **by 5pm**. We need lead time for volunteers to properly label and price the items to be sold.

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 **Freeway 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 **Hwy. 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 or **to help with office clean-up and silent auction prep.**, contact Chapter President Kevin Bryant at [mtngreen17@verizon.net](mailto: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	Arvind Kumar
Treasurer	Paul Heiple
Recording Secretary	Leighton Nakata
Past President	Judy Fenerty

All Chapter members may run for office-- nominations may also be made from the floor at the potluck.

Thanks to outgoing Vice President Drew Shell for his leadership and conservation work in 2008, and to all the other officers who served this year. Also thanks to our

nominating committee: Kevin Bryant, Drew Shell, Georgia Stigall, Stephen Buckhout, Paul Heiple, and Arvind Kumar.

By the way, we are still looking for volunteers to serve in other, non-officer Board positions, especially **Publicity Chair and Education Chair**. Contact any of the Chapter officers (see list on page 5) if you have any input on any of the open positions.

## **CHAPTER ACTIVITIES**

### **Native Plant Nursery**

Our regular native plant nursery work sessions take place every **Wednesday**, from **noon 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. 3** (checks only please). 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 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. The group is open to all, and includes a mix of seasoned native plant gardeners as well as beginners. Newcomers are always welcome.

### **Sustainable Landscaping**

**A talk by Stephanie Morris & Sherri Osaka**  
**Thursday, November 6, 7-9pm**  
PCC, 3921 E. Bayshore Road, Palo Alto

Gardening with California native plants is an excellent way to reduce water use and create habitat for a sustainable planet, but there are many other ways to "green" your

garden. Stephanie Morris and Sherri Osaka have their own businesses designing with sustainability in mind. They are two of the four co-founders of the Sustainable Landscape group and have been meeting and discussing ecological practices for over six years.

Stephanie and Sherri will focus on the natural cycles in a landscape and present ways to work with them, reducing energy, water, and materials while improving the "natural capital" of a garden. They will display sample materials and provide online access to a web site containing even more information for delving deeper.

**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.

### **Gardening for Hummingbirds**

**A talk by Freddy Howell & Arvind Kumar**  
**Thursday, December 4, 7-9pm**

Saratoga Library, 13650 Saratoga Avenue, Saratoga

Who isn't charmed by these iridescent visitors to the garden? Find out which hummingbirds are likely to be seen in the Bay Area, and how to attract them to your garden.

Freddy Howell, the owner of Wild Bird Center of Los Gatos, has years of birding experience. Arvind Kumar has been growing native plants for over eight years. Handouts (bird lists and plant lists) will be available.

**Directions to the Saratoga Library:** From Highway 85, take the Saratoga Avenue exit. At the light, turn on Saratoga Avenue (**northbound** travelers turn left on Saratoga Ave; **southbound** travelers turn right on Saratoga Ave.) Go past Fruitvale, and then take the first driveway on the left into the Library 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 GardeningWithNatives@yahoo.com or call Arvind Kumar at (408)715-7020.

## Welcome New Outreach Coordinator

We're happy to welcome **Toni Gregorio-Bunch** as our new Chapter Outreach Coordinator. In this newly created Board position, Toni will become the contact person and volunteer coordinator for the many outreach events in which CNPS is invited to participate.

We are asked each year to set up tables at Earth Day events, Eco-Fairs, and other green events. These venues are great opportunities to spread the word about the importance of native plants, and we'd like to be able to attend more of them. We need more volunteer people power to attend more events, so if you or someone you know loves native plants and wants to lend a hand on these fun outings, contact Toni at (408)373-4497 or tonig@flash.net.

No expert knowledge of native plants is required. If you have ideas for outreach opportunities for CNPS, contact Toni or Chapter President Kevin Bryant. Kevin may be reached at mtngreen17@verizon.net or (408)353-8824.

## Other Chapter Groups and Activities

The upcoming dates and contact information for some of our other regular Chapter activities are as follows:

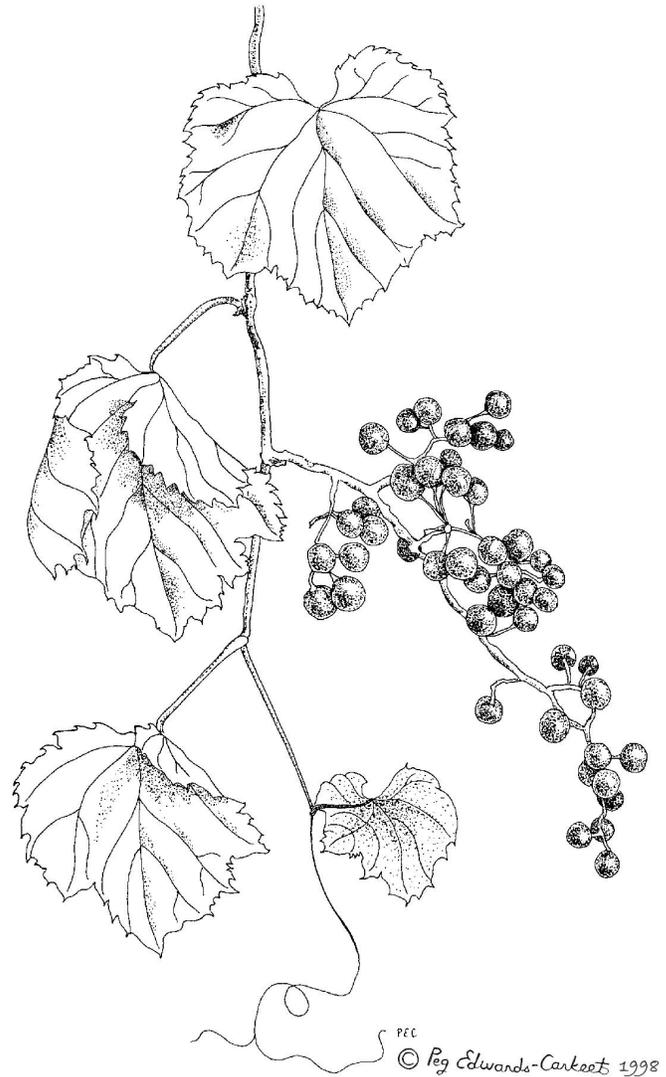
Activity	Dates	Contact
<b>Native Hill</b> at Foothill College	<b>Saturdays and Sundays at 9am</b> - see Phil's email list for dates	Phil Higgins phidor@juno.com or (650)941-4752.
<b>Photo Group</b> at PCC	<b>Monday December 15</b>	Patrick Gallagher (408)483-9366 or drrust@greenisles.com
<b>Keying with Natives</b>	<b>Fridays, October 24, November 21, and December 12</b>	David "Tex" Houston tex009@sbcglobal.net or Sally Casey at (408)377-0989

## IN MEMORIAM

**Clifford L. Schmidt**, 82, one of the founding members of our Chapter, passed away on April 23, 2008. He authored the treatment of *Ceanothus* in *The Jepson Manual* and in the *Flora of North America*. He was born in Los Angeles on March 27, 1926 and spent his early years in Texas and Bakersfield, California. Upon graduating from Kern County High School in 1943, Cliff joined the Navy. He served during WWII on the U.S.S. Canberra. Cliff received his baccalaureate and masters degrees from San Jose State University and his doctorate at Stanford University in the field of biology.

During his career he taught at San Jose State University and spent two summers in the Pacific Studies program on Saipan and Palau. After his retirement, the family moved back to Salem where he was able to continue his research as a courtesy professor at Oregon State University.

Cliff loved learning and was always a student and a teacher.



## California Wild Grape (*Vitis californica*)

**Found in nature by stream banks, California grape is an adaptable and attractive addition even to dry gardens. This deciduous vine comes to life in spring with gray-green leaves that mature to green. In summer, it is laden with bunches of purple berries that attract birds the rest of the year. The small grapes have large pits, but when crushed and filtered make the best tasting juice you've ever had. In fall, depending on the**

cultivar, the leaves turn wine red ('Roger's Red') or yellow ('Walker Ridge'). The leafless, gnarly, sinuous trunks of mature vines form an attractive element of the winter garden, whether trained on a trellis, fence, or on the ground. In a small garden, this vigorous vine is easily controlled through reduced watering and judicious pruning. Viticulturists have used it for years as rootstock for their wine grapes due to its robustness and disease-resistance.—*Arvind Kumar*

## CHAPTER SERVICE OUTINGS

### **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 special Saturday morning sessions will resume next spring.

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

## 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.**

### **Sat Nov 15 Lexington Reservoir County Park**

When people speak of fantastic native plant habitats in the South Bay, Lexington Reservoir County Park may not be the first place mentioned. It's true that much of the habitat is very weedy due to the disturbance created by the operation of the reservoir, but it's also true that a few plant distribution surprises can be found in this area. Come see a riparian area dominated by sandbar willow (*Salix exigua*), an isolated population of serviceberry (*Amelanchier*

*utahensis*), a hybrid oak or two (likely *Quercus x chasei*), and impressive evidence of beaver (*Castor canadensis*) activity, all within the San Andreas Fault rift zone.

Come prepared to cross the creek once or twice, and to do some minor bushwhacking through weed infested areas. Total distance will be less than 2 miles, and we expect to spend less than 4 hours on this exploration.

After the field trip, there will be an optional historical exploration of low water areas of the reservoir where the former town of Lexington is partly revealed.

We will meet at **10:30am**. Please contact Kevin Bryant at [mtngreen17@verizon.net](mailto:mtngreen17@verizon.net) or (408) 348-9470 for trip details including meeting place and to **reserve your spot** on this field trip. Heavy rain cancels.

## CNPS CONSERVATION CONFERENCE

Members may be interested in attending the **CNPS Conservation Conference: Strategies and Solutions**, to be held **January 17-19, 2009** in Sacramento.

The conference features over 200 accomplished presenters in 13 session topics including: mitigation, habitat fragmentation, environmental policy, conservation genetics, and much more—highlighting the latest science and policy strategies and solutions related to native plants and habitat conservation in California.

Keynote speakers include environmental justice and clean energy advocate **Jerome Ringo**; Professor **Steven Hopper**, Director of the Royal Botanic Garden; and naturalist, educator, artist, and author **John (Jack) Muir Laws**, who presented at our July General Meeting. Contributions are being sought for a **silent auction** to benefit CNPS. For details visit the conference home page and click on the link in the right sidebar labeled Silent Auction Donations.

The early registration deadline is **November 15**. For more information visit [www.cnps.org/cnps/conservation/conference/2009](http://www.cnps.org/cnps/conservation/conference/2009).

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

*News and Activities from Other Organizations*

### **Native Garden at Overfelt Park in San Jose**

Gifted to the City of San Jose in 1959 by Mildred Overfelt, the 33-acre Overfelt Park in the heart of San Jose is the site

of the Chinese Cultural Garden, a fragrance garden, and three lakes. It also has a large area devoted to California native plants.

Park gardener Sheila Strand is working to establish a **native plant garden** for the enjoyment of the visitors. Over the last year, she has worked hard to control invasive plants, and the area is now ready for planting and mulching. For this, she is seeking help from the wider community in the form of **native plant and seed donations, or volunteer time for planting, mulching, and other gardening tasks.** Volunteers from the neighborhood are especially welcome. She works **Tuesday through Saturday from 7am to 3:30pm** and would love to have any volunteers who can work within that schedule.

The park is located at 368 Educational Park Drive (at the corner of McKee Road), San Jose. Sheila can be reached at (408)516-7027.

### Lake Cunningham Saturday Workdays

The **California Native Garden** at Lake Cunningham Regional Park, 2305 S. White Road in San Jose, welcomes volunteers to help with invasive plant removal, mulching, planting, and watering. Workdays are **Saturdays, 9-11am.**

The California Native Garden project aims to remove invasive plants from a 1-acre area and beautify it with California native wildflowers, perennials, and shrubs; to provide summer shade through native tree planting; to encourage community participation and ownership; to create a sustainable, low-maintenance landscape; to enhance nature-based recreation; and to create habitat for birds and wildlife.

For more details, visit our website at [groups.yahoo.com/group/lakecunninghamvolunteers](http://groups.yahoo.com/group/lakecunninghamvolunteers), or contact Arvind Kumar at [chhaprahiya@yahoo.com](mailto:chhaprahiya@yahoo.com), or (408)715-7020.

### The Wayne Roderick Lectures Winter 2008-2009

The Regional Parks Botanic Garden in Berkeley invites members to attend the Wayne Roderick Lectures, a series on botanical topics that honors that famed and beloved friend of CNPS and former director of the Garden.

The lectures take place most Saturday mornings November through February starting at **10:30am** and are free to the public. For more information, visit [www.nativeplants.org](http://www.nativeplants.org), call (510)841-8732 or email [bgarden@ebparks.org](mailto:bgarden@ebparks.org).

**Topics for November and December, 2008:**

Nov	Topic	Presenter
1	From summer on the Shasta limestones to spring at Mt. Lassen	Steve Edwards
8	Reconnaissance botany and volcanology of the Clear Lake region	Steve Edwards
15	Managing vernal pool grasslands for biodiversity using grazing and fire	Jaymee Marty
22	The California deserts, an ecological rediscovery	Bruce Pavlik

Dec	Topic	Presenter
6	Studying the flora of the Sandia Mountains, New Mexico, and some special places in California	Dick O'Donnell
13	Prioritizing conservation of redwood forests using geographic information systems (GIS): the master plan for the redwoods	Laura Kindsvater
20	The last days of Livermore	Steve Edwards

### CHAPTER OFFICERS FOR 2008

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

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

To join our Chapter email list please send your request to [judy@fenerty.com](mailto:judy@fenerty.com).

### **DEADLINE FOR THE NEXT *BLAZING STAR***

**Saturday, December 6, 2008**

**Email: [mattsson@surfpix.net](mailto:mattsson@surfpix.net)**

**Phone: (408)255-3767**

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**CALENDAR OF EVENTS****(page # in parentheses)****Oct 24 Fri** Keying with Natives (3)**Oct 30 Thu** Auction Donations Deadline (1)**Nov 6 Thu** Gardening with Natives (2)**Nov 8 Sat** **Annual Meeting and Potluck** (1)**Nov 15 Sat** Lexington Reservoir field trip (4)**Nov 21 Fri** Keying with Natives (3)**Dec 4 Thu** Gardening with Natives (2)**Dec 6 Sat** **Jan-Feb Newsletter Deadline** (5)**Dec 11 Thu** **Chapter Board meeting****Dec 12 Fri** Keying with Natives (3)**Dec 15 Mon** Photo Group (3)**Wed afts** Nursery work sessions (2)**Fri morns** Edgewood Park weeding (4)**Via Email List** Native Hill work sessions (3)

The next Chapter Board meeting will be **Thursday, December 11 at 7:00 pm** at **Jean Struthers' house**. It will be our annual budget meeting. Jean lives at 13690 Robleda Road in Los Altos Hills, near Foothill Expressway and Edith Ave. Hint: take the 6th driveway on the left after you leave Fremont Ave. Jean recommends bringing a flashlight to help you find your way up the long driveway.

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

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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 \$35.00 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 or email **henrymarsh@yahoo.com**.

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The *Blazing Star* web address: [www.cnps-scv.org](http://www.cnps-scv.org)

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