



California Native Plant Society
Santa Clara Valley Chapter

THE BLAZING STAR

November-December 2009

ANNUAL MEETING AND POTLUCK

Saturday, November 14th at 6:00 PM
Shoup Garden House, 400 University Avenue,
Los Altos

**Topic: Santa Clara Valley Conservation:
What's Working, What's Not, and Does It Matter?**
Speaker: Craig K. Breon

Join us for one of our favorite get-togethers of the year: our annual potluck dinner and election meeting, followed by a stimulating talk on local conservation efforts.

We will hear from Craig K. Breon, the former Executive Director of the Santa Clara Valley Audubon Society, where his work focused on preservation of creeks, wetlands, open spaces, and habitats for rare fish and wildlife species, with occasional forays into flora. In addition, Mr. Breon has taught Environmental Law and Environmental Activism at Santa Clara University, hosts a public radio program of environmental news and issues and African music (KKUP 91.5 FM 2nd & 4th Thu, 10pm-midnight), and sits on the Board of Carbondale Conservation Fund, a new nonprofit designed to protect existing tropical forests and sell carbon offset credits.

Most recently, Mr. Breon completed a two-year contract with the Audubon Society investigating mitigation monitoring under CEQA (a.k.a. determining whether local developers have kept the promises they made to protect wildlife and habitat). CNPS Santa Clara Valley Chapter helped fund this project.

Mr. Breon will be drawing on 15 years of experience as a conservationist in the Santa Clara Valley to highlight some of the biodiversity hotspots of the area, provide an evaluation of the conservation community's success, and discuss the role of local conservation in the face of larger trends such as climate change and the too-slow evolution of

the human species. The talk is bound to be stimulating and inspirational. Don't miss it!

The evening begins at **6pm** with our **annual 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**. We need lead time for volunteers to properly label and price the items to be sold.

If you can help with setup, please arrive at around **5pm** to set up chairs and tables. We will begin eating at **6pm** and the program will start at **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 on to 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 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	Toni Gregorio-Bunch
Treasurer	Julie Scherer
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.

Many thanks to outgoing Treasurer Paul Heiple, who has served the Chapter so well in that position for 8 years! That's over 45 board meetings! We appreciate the job you've done keeping an eye on our finances, Paul. Thanks also to Vice President Arvind Kumar for his hard work and leadership in 2008. Arvind will continue to serve on the CNPS State Board, and will remain close to the Chapter leadership as our State Board Liaison. Thanks to all of the Board members who work so hard to make this chapter work so well!

By the way, we are still looking for volunteers to serve in other, non-officer Board positions, especially **Publicity Committee 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 through the end of the year (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, and includes a mix of seasoned native plant gardeners as well as beginners. The group is open to all, and newcomers are always welcome.

Native Plant Propagation and Seed Exchange

Thursday, November 5, 7-8:30 PM
Peninsula Conservation Center
3921 E. Bayshore Road, Palo Alto

For our **November** meeting we will have a talk on native plant propagation by **Matt Teel**, the Manager of the Yerba Buena Nursery, who is also a member of our GWN Steering Committee. Our annual seed exchange will follow the talk. Please bring seeds and plant descriptions to share and small envelopes or bags to take seeds home.

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.

Native Succulents for the Garden

A talk by Paul Heiple

Thursday, December 3, 7-8:30 PM
San Carlos Library Community Room,
610 Elm Street, San Carlos

Dudleya, sedum, agave, yucca, and cactus -- California is home to many native succulents. Find out which ones are suitable for the garden, and get tips on propagation and care from an expert.

Paul Heiple has been growing Dudleyas and other succulents for many years. His Portola Valley garden has been on the Going Native Garden Tour, and he leads field trips in the Bay Area and elsewhere in the state.

Directions to San Carlos Library: HIGHWAY 101 (traveling North or South): Take the Holly St. West exit. Drive across El Camino Real and at Elm Street, turn left. Cross San Carlos and almost at the end of the block, you will see a sign "Civic Center" on the right hand side of the

road. Turn right into the parking lot and the library is straight ahead.

For more information on the Gardening with Natives group, visit its website at www.GardeningWithNatives.com. GWN maintains a Yahoo group with over 800 members, a true resource for native plant gardeners in our 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.

Going Native Garden Tour

It is official! The Going Native Garden Tour is now a California Native Plant Society-Santa Clara Valley (CNPS-SCV) activity, as per a motion approved at the Chapter's August 2009 Board meeting.

The Tour was born in late 2002 out of CNPS-SCV's Gardening with Natives group. Stephanie Morris chaired the GWN group at the time and provided the initial candidate list of native home gardens. Volunteers and gardens have been solicited at CNPS general & GWN meetings ever since, and many Chapter members have played key roles in the Tour's growth. The Tour also benefited greatly from becoming an official volunteer project of the Master Gardeners of Santa Clara County. Today, the Tour is one of the largest native plant gardening events in the state, attracting 5,000+ registrants and 12,000+ garden visits in 2009.

Due to insurance issues, CNPS-SCV was until now a Tour supporter, not the official organizer. Those issues have now been resolved. Going forward, the Tour under CNPS-SCV will have formal nonprofit status, accounting support, additional insurance coverage, etc. The synergy between the Chapter and the Tour is now formalized, and the Chapter will be able to serve its audience better.

We thank Susan Stansbury at Conexions for being the tour's fiscal agent during the last four years and providing stellar support.

Gardens Sought for Going Native Garden Tour

The Going Native Garden Tour scheduled for Sunday, April 18, 2010, is looking for gardens. Participating gardens are bird- and butterfly-friendly, pesticide-free, and water conserving. 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 **submission**

deadline is December 1, 2009. For more information, email info@GoingNativeGardenTour.org.

Native Hill Garden at Foothill College

Our Chapter maintains a large California native plant garden called Native Hill at Foothill College in Los Altos Hills. Volunteers plant, weed, mulch and prune the plants on occasional Saturday and Sunday morning workdays.

Students from Frank Niccoli's horticulture class at Foothill College are scheduled to help us care for the garden and we look forward to working together with them.

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.

Keying with Natives

Join other native plant enthusiasts in a fun and educational atmosphere, as we hone our skills at plant identification (aka "keying").

Last month we enjoyed keying out plants brought back from the Eastern Sierra and White Mountains. With autumn's arrival now is an opportune time to brush up on keying skills focusing more on fruit and vegetative features rather than on flowers.

KWN usually meets on the last Friday of each month, but our next two meetings will be at **6:30pm-8:30pm on the second Friday** of the month. That is, we'll meet on **November 13 and December 11**, at the PCC building in Palo Alto. For details, contact David "Tex" Houston at tex009@sbcglobal.net or Sally Casey at (408) 377-0989.

Volunteer with the Chapter

Interested in learning more about our chapter and CNPS in general? Want to help steer the direction of CNPS? Volunteering is a great way to do that, while meeting other like-minded and enthusiastic members. Several opportunities are available at this time:

- **Education**
- **Corresponding Secretary**
- **Legislation**
- **Keying table coordinator for general meetings**
- **Invasive plants-Santa Clara County**
- **Posters**
- **Office manager**
- **Newsletter mailing coordinator** (see next article)
- **Publicity committee**

If you have an interest in any of these topics, please contact any officer or board member for more information. (See the last page of this newsletter for a partial contact list.)

Volunteering in our chapter is never an isolating activity -- there are always others to help with any given topic or event. Interested in doing something that isn't listed? Let us know that too! We all know the expression, "many hands make light work." But another way of looking at it is, why let just a few have all the fun?

Newsletter Mailing Coordinator Needed

Putting together the document you are reading requires many hands and some key people to direct them. Every two months, our newsletter editor gathers articles from many contributors; our printer in Los Altos puts the electronic document onto paper; and our newsletter mailing coordinator arranges an event at which several volunteers prepare the paper document for mailing to our members.

Our previous newsletter coordinator, Mary Alice Bethel, made sure the mailing party volunteers had all the newsletters, labels, mailing seals and stamps they needed, found a location with a big table, and created a friendly, social environment in which to assemble the newsletters. Since she has retired from her coordinator position, we are sharing the various duties but we'd really like a volunteer willing to coordinate the mailing party.

If the newsletter mailing coordinator position sounds interesting to you, please contact Carol Mattsson at mattsson@surfpix.net or (408) 255-3767, or Georgia Stigall at GeorgiaStigall@yahoo.com or (650) 941-1068 between 8am & 8pm.

Santa Clara Valley Chapter to Host December Chapter Council

On the weekend of **December 4-6**, it's our Chapter's turn to host the quarterly CNPS Chapter Council for delegates from around the state. These meetings include opportunities to socialize and attend field trips with like-minded people working to conserve our wild places and native flora.

Our Chapter last hosted Chapter Council at Stanford University in September of 2001. This year we've chosen Santa Clara University, on El Camino Real in Santa Clara, as the location. Our Chapter President Kevin Bryant is also currently Chapter Council Chair. Members of the state Board of Directors (including Chapter VP Arvind Kumar) and the state CNPS staff will also be in attendance.

Host homes and other volunteers are needed! If you can help please contact Judy Fenerty at judy@fenerty.com or (408) 655-3493 for more information, as a committee is being formed to plan this event. All CNPS members are welcome to attend; let Judy or any Board member know of your interest.

ADVANCING SCIENCE IN YOUR GARDEN

By Jeffrey Caldwell, Chapter member. This article was originally posted to the Gardening with Natives e-group

Kathy Biggs was a schoolteacher who built a little pond in her backyard and got interested in the dragonflies that were developing in it. She went on to write books about dragonflies and give lectures...

Yesterday at her pond website I found a note and photograph showing that the common buckeye butterfly had laid eggs and developed caterpillars on a plant in her pond, *Hippuris vulgaris*, mare's tail.

Mare's-tail is a wind pollinated emergent aquatic plant native to much of the northern hemisphere, including California. The common buckeye is an adaptable insect which lays its eggs on many plants of the Plantain, Figwort, Verbena and *Acanthus* families.

The common buckeye has never been recorded in scientific literature as utilizing mare's-tail as a larval host, nor has any other butterfly species listed in Scott's *The Butterflies of North America: A Natural History and Field Guide*. I brought the photograph and notice to the attention of Arthur Shapiro, the U.C. Davis butterfly expert, because I thought he'd be interested. Portions of his reaction:

"Sensational record (on a rare plant in CA; I only know two colonies myself). We knew *Hippuridaceae* was in the *Scrophulariaceae* "cluster." ... The clear implication of this record is that *Hippuris* makes iridoid glycosides. ... **THIS RECORD SHOULD BE PUBLISHED ...**"

It is believed that the butterflies 'taste' plants and lay eggs based on chemical cues ... 'iridoid glycosides' seem to be among them. Chemistry is being relied upon more and more as taxonomy moves forward, and it seems 'the butterflies are good chemists' as Don Mahoney says...

Go out in the garden, there's a good chance you can learn something -- 'new to Science' even...!

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, contact Paul Heiple at (650) 854-7125 or pheiple@gmail.com, or email John Allen at 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.

Wed Dec 2 7-9pm Field Trip Planning Meeting

Believe it or not, it's already time to start planning field trips for 2010! This will be a planning meeting to schedule most of our spring trips. Please join us if you are interested in leading a trip, or have ideas for field trips you would like to see next year. If you are unable to attend the meeting, please feel free to contact Carolyn Dorsch with your ideas so we can consider them as we plan the 2010 field trip calendar.

Contact Carolyn, our new Field Trip Chairperson, at cdorsch1@aol.com or (650) 804-6162 (evenings).

The meeting will be held at the PCC (Peninsula Conservation Center), 3921 East Bayshore Rd, Palo Alto. See page 2 for directions.

Sat Jan 9 10am Año Nuevo State Park

Join us as we revive a Chapter tradition of welcoming the New Year with a walk and picnic at Año Nuevo State Park

on the San Mateo County coast. The park is located south of Pescadero and just north of the Santa Cruz County line.

Meet in the parking lot (day use fee collected) **at 10:00am**. Latecomers will find us on the trail through the coastal prairie. We'll also enjoy sea cliff vegetation, raptors, songbirds and marine mammals. Pack a lunch; low tide is at 12:38pm., so we'll picnic on the beach in the area in which seal tour reservations are not required.

As an "exploratory" field trip, the ending time and depth of botanical discussion will depend on participants, but the complexity of natural history at Año Nuevo is engaging at any level! Bring binoculars and layers for variable conditions including wind, sun and fog.

Heavy rain or State Park budget-related closure cancels; there will be a **status message** on (650) 941-1068 starting at 7am on January 9. For more information or to RSVP (appreciated but not required) contact Georgia Stigall at (650) 941-1068 or georgiastigall@yahoo.com.

CHAPTER OFFICERS FOR 2009

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
President	Kevin Bryant	(408) 353-8824	mtngreen17@verizon.net
Vice President	Arvind Kumar	(408) 715-7020	chhaprahiya@yahoo.com
Recording Secretary	Leighton Nakata	(650) 947-9989	LeightonNakata@yahoo.com
Treasurer	Paul Heiple	(650) 854-7125	pheiple@gmail.com
Past President	Judy Fenerty	(408) 655-3493	judy@fenerty.com

To join our Chapter email list please use the signup link at the bottom of our Chapter home page at www.cnps-scv.org, or send your signup request to judy@fenerty.com.

DEADLINE FOR THE NEXT *BLAZING STAR*

Saturday, December 5, 2009

Email: mattsson@surfpix.net

Phone: (408) 255-3767

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

(page # in parentheses)

- Oct 31 Sat** Book donation deadline (1)
- Nov 5 Thu** GWN - Seed Exchange - Matt Teel (2)
- Nov 13 Fri** Keying with Natives (3)
- Nov 14 Sat Annual Meeting and Potluck** (1)
- Dec 1 Tue** GNGT garden deadline (3)
- Dec 2 Wed** Field trip planning meeting (5)
- Dec 3 Thu** GWN - Succulents - Paul Heiple (2)
- Dec 4-6 Fri-Sun** CNPS Chapter Council (4)

- Dec 5 Sat** Newsletter Deadline (5)
- Dec 10 Thu** Chapter Board meeting
- Dec 11 Fri** Keying with Natives (3)
- Jan 9 Sat** Año Nuevo Field Trip (5)
- Wed afts** Nursery work sessions (2)
- Fri morns** Edgewood Park weeding (5)
- Via Email List** Native Hill work sessions (3)

The next Chapter Board meeting will be **Thursday, December 10 at 7:00pm.**
 It will be our annual budget meeting, at a location TBD.
 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 or email henryMarsh@yahoo.com.

The *Blazing Star* web address: www.cnps-scv.org
 Acknowledgement: Anne Warren for the *Blazing Star* logo. Printed on recycled paper.

FIRST-CLASS

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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Membership level (check one):
 \$45 Individual
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Areas of interest:
 Advocacy
 Botany
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 Education
 Field Trips
 Gardening
 Plant ID

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:
 CNPS Membership, 2707 K Street Suite 1, Sacramento, CA 95816 • 916-447-2677 • fax 916-447-2727

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