



California Native Plant Society
Santa Clara Valley Chapter

THE BLAZING STAR

March-April 2025

**Register Now to Visit our Free
Growing Natives Garden Tour
Saturday April 12 and Sunday April 13
10:00 AM – 4:00 PM Both Days**



Krzysztof Kozminski

Growing Natives Garden Tour (GNGT) is a free, self-guided tour of gardens within our Chapter area that feature California native plants. Sign up to tour the gardens or volunteer as a docent or greeter! **Read more on page 7.**

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**Fiftieth Annual Wildflower Show
Saturday April 26 9:30 AM – 4:00 PM
West Valley College in Saratoga**

Join us for our Chapter's 50th annual Wildflower Show on **Saturday, April 26th from 9:30am – 4:00pm** at West Valley College in Saratoga. This family-friendly event features hundreds of native wildflowers and plants on display as well as a variety of activities for all ages. The event and parking are all free to the public.

To celebrate our fiftieth show, we are featuring two popular speakers: **John Muir Laws**, renowned naturalist and nature journalist, and **Kate Marianchild**, author of *Secrets of the Oak Woodlands*. Other talks and workshops will offer the opportunity to learn about bioblitzes, wildflower arrangements, macrophotography and more.

Attendees will also be able to take tours of the Vasona Creek Restoration Project and the Biology Department's Moon Garden. A selection of native plants and native plant art, T-shirts, books and other related goods will be available for purchase.



Vivian Neou

Visitors view live plant displays at Chapter Wildflower Show. West Valley College, April 2024.

A SOD (Sudden Oak Death) Blitz Station will be available at the show for people who would like to participate in the 2025 SOD Blitz. This is your opportunity to participate in this important citizen science effort to understand and control this deadly disease that threatens our oak trees.

More information is available at nature.berkeley.edu/matteolab/?page_id=148.

West Valley College is located at 14000 Fruitvale Ave. in Saratoga. For more information see the schedule at www.cnps-scv.org/wfs.



Vivian Neou

Wildflower Show setup at May 2024 Show

Volunteers Needed for Wildflower Show

Our show depends on volunteers. We are looking for help on Friday before the show and Saturday on show day:

- Show set-up
- Transport of items to and from our office
- Plant runner
- Table tidy-up
- Greeter
- Assist with book sales
- Show take-down

If you'd like to help, please sign up at www.cnps-scv.org/volunteer-wfs.

We are happy to accept your gently used **plant books** to sell at the show. Contact Judy Fenerty at judy@fenerty.com by **Monday, April 21** if you have books to donate.

Chapter Elections – Vote in May

May is Chapter elections month. In May our Chapter members will vote for Chapter officers. Members will receive an email on or about **Wednesday, May 7** containing information on how to vote online. **Please vote by Wednesday, May 14.**

Anyone wishing to run for office can **self-nominate** by filling out the form at www.cnps-scv.org/self-nomination by **Saturday, March 29.**

The Leadership Development Committee is particularly interested in identifying candidates for the **position of Treasurer**. The role involves maintaining the Chapter's finances, so some experience in financial accounting or bookkeeping is a must. The new term begins June 2025 with monthly Board meetings (on Zoom). The Chapter has a standing finance committee and this support team of (mostly) past treasurers is here to help the new treasurer get started in this position. If you are interested in learning more about this position, please contact Radhika Thekkath at cnpsradhika@gmail.com.

To make sure you receive your voting instructions, please check your email address, at the CNPS membership portal at secure2.convio.net/cnps/site/UserLogin. Log in and do this **by May 1**. Paper ballots will also be available.

The May-June issue of the *Blazing Star* will contain information about the candidates.

Questions concerning the online voting procedure or the self-nomination process should be directed to Stephen Buckhout, Chair of the Leadership Development Committee, stephen@yscottie.com or (408) 255-6233.

CHAPTER ACTIVITIES

Seed and Cutting Exchange + Plant Sale March 25 – 29

This free event provides an opportunity to share and receive both cuttings and seeds of native plants. Browse the diverse offerings, ranging from easy-to-grow to hard-to-find, and go home with cuttings and seeds of new native plants! We will provide coin envelopes for seeds but do bring containers in which to carry cuttings home.

Online Plant Sale: March 25-26
(subject to pickup slot availability)

Plant Sale Pickup: Friday, March 28
(CNPS SCV Nursery)
& Saturday, March 29
(Peninsula Conservation Center)

Seed and Cutting Exchange: Saturday,
March 29 from 1:00 – 3:00 PM
at the Peninsula Conservation Center,
3921 E. Bayshore Road in Palo Alto.

If you have native plant material from your own garden to share, please bring some. Label it to make it easy to browse – some gardeners attach helpful hints about growing; others display photos of plants in bloom. You may find it convenient to use www.calscape.org for this – there is a link on each plant's information page to make a printable sign for most native species and cultivars.

If you bring cuttings, keep them cool and moist in a bucket of water. **You don't have to bring anything if you don't have any native material to share** – there is usually plenty for all.

Several popular gardening books will be available for sale during the event, including *Wildflowers of California* from CNPS, *Seed Propagation of Native California Plants* (2021 ed.), by Dara E. Emery, and *California Native Plants for the Garden* by Carol Bornstein, David Fross and Bart O'Brien.

Our Wildflower Ambassadors will be giving out free seed packets and information as well.

Online Plant Sale

There is still time to plant before the rainy season ends and we are having another online plant sale at california-native-plant-society-santa-clara-valley-chapter.square.site, **starting Tuesday, March 25**. The store will close when we reach our pickup capacity or at the **end of the day on Wednesday, March 26** – whichever comes first.

In addition to plants, the nursery's online store includes books, labels and plant signs. **There is a minimum order of \$40.**

Pick your plants up with a *scheduled* pickup at the CNPS SCV Nursery on **Friday, March 28** or the Exchange at the Peninsula Conservation Center on **Saturday, March 29**. No drop-in pickups or sales.

The Peninsula Conservation Center is located at [3921 E. Bayshore Road in Palo Alto](#). The meeting rooms are on the first floor.



Vivian Neou

Plant pickup at last September's Seed and Cutting Exchange at the Peninsula Conservation Center in Palo Alto

Native Plant Talks

Join us for our native plant talks, in-person at local libraries and online via Zoom and YouTube. Whether you're curious about native plants, an experienced or aspiring native plant gardener, a professional botanist or beginning naturalist, you will find something to interest and educate you in our offerings. From gardening to plant science to climate change to tours of botanical hot spots, there's something here for you.

Our virtual talks are livestreamed simultaneously to Zoom and YouTube. View talks on our YouTube channel at www.youtube.com/@CNPSSantaClaraValley (no registration needed) or join on Zoom by registering at the Zoom link provided in each lecture's description. Most of our upcoming talks are listed below. Recordings of our virtual talks and some of our library talks may be viewed on our YouTube channel.

We occasionally schedule additional talks. You can learn about these talks by subscribing to our Chapter News email list. To subscribe, see "Stay in Touch" on page 14.

The organizing committee has periodic meetings on Zoom and welcomes new volunteers. If you have ideas for future talks or are interested in helping set up upcoming talks, please send a message to Priya Pharate at priya4cnps@gmail.com to receive notifications of upcoming meetings. By the way, the next quarterly

program meeting will be **Monday, April 14, 7:00 – 8:30pm** on Zoom.



Stephanie Morris

Native plant garden design, showing manzanita, woolly bluecurls and saffron buckwheat in spring

Get Inspired!
Design and Maintain Native Plants
a Talk by Stephanie Morris
 (In Person Only)

Thursday, March 13 7:00 - 8:30 PM, Cupertino Library Community Room (Second Floor), 10800 Torre Ave., Cupertino

If you've wanted to get started with including California native plants in your garden, this talk is for you! Come get inspired with an overview of native plant design basics. Learn how to set functional, aesthetic and ecological goals for your yard and draw a simple plan.

We will discuss the selection of native plants for year-round blooms and how to group them for pleasing design aesthetics, especially during our dry summers. Photos will be shared of attractive garden renovations and groupings of native plants that work well in sun or shade. Become familiar with favorite native plants that entice a variety of pollinators, birds and butterflies to the garden. Native planting design basics work well for a small area with just a few plants or a larger full garden design.

This is the first talk in a three part series. Talk #2 on May 8 will cover native plant garden installation: planting, irrigation and mulch. Talk #3 on July 24 will cover native plant garden maintenance: pruning and garden cleanup.

Stephanie Morris has been designing California native plant gardens since 1999 in the Bay Area. Her goal is to design creative, beautiful landscapes that are ecologically oriented and practical. Areas of particular focus include suggesting plants for pollinators, converting lawns to drought tolerant plants, incorporating California native plants within existing gardens and combining edible plants with native plant gardens.



Calochortus Treasure Hunt, Parts I & II
Two talks by Dee Himes
Mondays, March 24 & 31 7:00 - 9:00 PM
 (Virtual only)

Zoom registration:

Calochortus Treasure Hunt, Part I:

www.cnps-scvc.org/talk-20250324

Calochortus Treasure Hunt, Part II:

www.cnps-scvc.org/talk-20250331



Dee Shea Himes

Alkali mariposa lily (*Calochortus striatus*), a CNPR 1B.1 ([rare plant rank](#)) found in Los Angeles County May 2023

Dee Himes will share her multi-year Calochortus Treasure Hunt, which aims to find and photograph all the mariposa lilies in California. *Calochortus* belongs to the *Liliaceae* family, and California has the greatest number of taxa of

any state in North America. There is at least one *Calochortus* species found in every county in California. Dee will highlight their distributions with maps and charts, demonstrate morphological differences between the species and, most importantly, showcase photographs of some of the beautiful flowers she and her husband, Ken, have encountered during their three-year treasure hunt.

This video trailer offers a fantastic preview of Dee's talk: www.youtube.com/watch?v=jRpi261ywgQ.



Dee Himes at Teakettle Junction in Death Valley, on her way to find *Calochortus panamintensis*.

Dee Himes has been an active member of California Native Plant Society (CNPS) since 2012. In addition to serving on the state CNPS Board, she has held roles as our Chapter Treasurer, a board member, and Field Trip Chair. She was also an active "Weed Warrior" at Edgewood County Park and Preserve. Dee has worked as a professional horticulturist in landscape maintenance and served as an Adjunct Instructor of horticulture at Foothill College in their Environmental Horticulture and Design program. She has a strong interest in botany, geology, ecology, habitat restoration, fauna and photography and she is passionate about sharing her knowledge.

Photography Group

Our Photography Group is a great place to meet other native plant enthusiasts, improve photographic skills, and learn more about our native plants and best places to view them. Discussions range from photography tips to organizational ideas to plant hotspots. The group is open to all and has an active email list.

The photo group's meetings usually take place over Zoom on the last Friday of the month. Our next meetings will be on **Fridays, February 28, March 28 and April 25** at

7:00pm. You can learn more and join the email group at: www.groups.io/g/cnps-scw-photography.

The group has an ongoing #MyPhotoOfTheWeek activity on the email list for group members to share their favorite shots with the group on a weekly basis. Photo Group member Nathan Davis sent us the following #MyPhotoOfTheWeek. About this photo he wrote:

I spotted this *Arctostaphylos regismontana* while hiking in El Corte De Madera Creek OSP this weekend (CRPR 1B.2)*. This was the first time I was able to identify a manzanita from my hiking photos because I've gotten better at capturing the necessary features of the plants for ID.



Nathan Davis
Kings Mountain manzanita, *Arctostaphylos regismontana*,
El Corte De Madera Creek Open Space Preserve,
January 2025

* About *Arctostaphylos regismontana* being ranked CNPS 1B.2: a CNPS rare plant ranking of **1B** means rare, threatened, or endangered in California and elsewhere. The **0.2** means a "threat rank" of moderately threatened in California. The CNPS ranking is noted in the CNPS rare plant list, which is a continually updated list of sensitive rare plant species that assesses the current conservation status of our state's rare, threatened and endangered plants. Learn more at www.cnps.org/rare-plants/california-rare-plant-ranks.

Native Plant ID

We are now a year into reviving Keying with Natives as Native Plant ID post-COVID. The keying group was a regular gathering of people who were interested in learning to use botanical keys to identify plants. Many familiar names in our Chapter have participated and honed their skills with the group. Janet Hoffmann took over the group a year ago with the hope of reviving this activity. She has focused the meetings over the past year to educate participants about botanical terminology and key features of different plant groups. Several other Chapter members have contributed their time and expertise to this effort.



Vivian Neou

Native Plant ID meeting, using apps and guides (e.g. plantID.net) to identify plants. August 2024.

At this point the group needs the interest and support of people who want to get together on a regular basis and look at plant samples. If you are interested in doing this, please bring samples of plants that you are interested in identifying from property where you have permission to collect. You can also bring photos of plants that you have seen and been unable to identify. We will use a variety of plant books and online resources as we endeavor to improve our understanding of botanical terms to identify these plants. The Chapter has 10x hand lenses that we can use to look at small plant parts or bring your own lens. Also bring any reference books or apps that you like to use.

Native Plant ID meets the **fourth Tuesday of the month at 7:00pm** at the Peninsula Conservation Center, at [3921 E. Bayshore Road in Palo Alto](https://www.peninsulaconservation.org/). The meeting rooms are on the first floor. Our next meetings will be on **Tuesdays, March 25 and April 22**. Join other native plant enthusiasts in a fun and educational atmosphere, as we hone our skills at

plant identification (aka “keying”). For details, contact Janet Hoffmann at janet@cnps-scv.org.

Chapter Receives Commendation from the San Jose City Council

On Tuesday, January 28, our Chapter received a commendation from the San Jose City Council. Kathy Kleinsteiber, Deb Hiraki, Tom Lee, Nancy Martin, Priya Pharate, Arvind Kumar and Vivian Neou represented the Chapter at the meeting. It was the first city council meeting of the year, and it was packed because new members were being sworn in. Our commendation was sponsored by Arvind’s councilmember, Domingo Candelas and the mayor, Matt Mahan, who were both sworn in just before the commendation ceremony. Since this was the first term for both of them, it also was the second thing both of them did after being sworn in (the first thing was recognition for National Human Trafficking Prevention Month).



Hayley Nguyen

Chapter representatives receiving commendation from the City of San Jose. They are standing with San Jose City Councilmember Domingo Candelas (leftmost) and Mayor Matt Mahan (rightmost). January 28, 2025.

While the recognition was a result of the work we do at city parks (Lake Cunningham (Arvind & Ashok Jethanandani), Alum Rock Park (Steve Rosenthal), Kirk Park (Kathy Kleinsteiber) and Cataldi Park (Tilak)), it was the connection that Arvind made with his local council member, Domingo Candelas, and the mayor, Matt Mahan at Lake Cunningham, that drove the choice to recognize our Chapter. While Chapter representatives were chatting after the event, Arvind made the excellent point that members who lead projects that have relevance to their locality should be sure to reach out to their council member to let them know about the project.



Vivian Neou

Plaque commending our Chapter for the volunteer work we do at City of San Jose parks

Blazing Star Mailing Party April 24

The Chapter’s newsletter, the *Blazing Star*, is sent electronically to all its members every two months. These days, the Chapter does not usually send out paper copies. But just before our annual election of officers, we do, to make sure everyone is informed. It is a big mailing, as you can see, and we need all the help we can get, to get the job done.



Carol Mattsson

Friendly faces at last April’s newsletter mailing party

Our next paper copy will to be the May-June newsletter. The mailing party for this event will be held on **Thursday, April 24**. We’ll work together, with **setup starting at 9:00am and we’ll finish by 2:30pm**. We need help to label and stamp the copies, as well as to set up and clean up the room. Please sign up for a task by using the SignUp Genius link: bit.ly/blazing-star-mailing. Snacks, drinks and tales of our own CNPS adventures will be provided.

We’ll hold the mailing party in the Raptor suite meeting room, downstairs at the Peninsula Conservation Center, located at [3921 E. Bayshore Road in Palo Alto](https://www.peninsulaconservationcenter.org/).

Community College Scholarship Available

Our Chapter is offering a scholarship of \$1,500 for a community college student with a goal of studying or working in a field with a focus on native plants, native ecology, native habitat and/or parks management. The application is open to students whose primary residence is in San Mateo or Santa Clara County, or are attending, or have applied to college in one of these counties. As the purpose of this scholarship is to support those who wish to deepen their knowledge of native plants, applicants must have taken a course in California native plants or plan to take one in the next year.

To apply, you must have completed a minimum of eight units in your program (or be a high school senior who has applied and been accepted in a relevant college program.) All applicants must have a minimum cumulative GPA of 2.5. You can find the application here www.cnps-scvc.org/cc-scholarship-application. **Please submit the application and the requested materials by Saturday, March 15.** Please email Janet Hoffmann at janet@cnps-scvc.org with questions or for further information.

Growing Natives Garden Tour
Saturday April 12 and Sunday April 13
10:00 AM – 4:00 PM each day

The Growing Natives Garden Tour (GNGT) is a free, self-guided tour of gardens within our Chapter area that feature a minimum of 70% California native plants. Sign up to tour the gardens or volunteer as a docent or greeter! Or consider becoming the coordinator for our year-round Garden Previews.

All are welcome to tour the gardens in this, our 23rd Annual GNGT, but advance registration is required to receive garden addresses. These tour gardens are attractive, water-wise, and low maintenance. They also use a minimum of chemicals and provide habitat havens for birds, butterflies and pollinators. California’s native plant gardens increase wildlife corridors in fragmented habitats, preserve our natural ecosystem and promote biodiversity in our built environments. They help restore nature, one garden at a time! Native plant tours provide inspiration and information for native gardeners, designers, and growers.



Krzysztof Kozminski

Garden on the Growing Natives Garden Tour

Over 50 of our home and public gardens landscaped with California native plants will be open to the public for in-person tours on **Saturday, April 12 and Sunday, April 13, from 10:00am to 4:00pm**. On Saturday, registered visitors may tour the gardens in these **southern** Chapter locations: Alviso, Campbell, Cupertino, Gilroy, Los Gatos, Morgan Hill, San Jose, Santa Clara and Saratoga. On Sunday, registered visitors may tour the gardens in these **northern** Chapter locations: Los Altos Hills, Mountain View, Menlo Park, Palo Alto, Portola Valley, Redwood City, Belmont, San Mateo, Hillsborough and Sunnyvale.

If you can't attend in person on tour days, you can visit online anytime at www.gngt.org, which has a page for each garden including descriptions, photos, videos and plant lists.

Admission to participate in GNGT is free, but registration is required at www.gngt.org to obtain tour maps with garden addresses. Register for the tour early to ensure access to late-breaking information. Only one person per group needs to register.

Help spread the word! Print or post the GNGT flyer from here: www.gngt.org/GNGT/Pressroom.php.

Call for GNGT Volunteers on April 12 & 13

The 2025 Growing Natives Garden Tour is seeking volunteers for our 23rd tour, which will take place on **Saturday, April 12** (Southern Gardens) and **Sunday, April 13** (Northern Gardens). The tour hours are **10:00am to 4:00pm** each day.

As a volunteer you will help to educate garden visitors about the pleasures and benefits of gardening with California native plants. Volunteers receive a custom designed T-shirt featuring a California native plant and are invited to attend GNGT garden previews throughout the year. We ask volunteers to select a minimum of one half-day shift. Knowledge of native plants is not required, as we have shifts for both greeters and docents.

There will be a virtual, **pre-tour orientation on Thursday, March 27 at 7:00pm**, with details to be provided to registered volunteers. To volunteer for the 2025 tour, please complete the Volunteer sign-up form at www.gngt.org/volunteerForm.php.

Help spread the word! Print or post the GNGT call for volunteers flyer from here: www.gngt.org/GNGT/Pressroom.php. The tour takes place entirely outdoors.

There will be a virtual, pretour orientation in late March, with more details to be provided to registered volunteers.

Coordinator Needed for Garden Previews

Do you love exploring native gardens and fostering community spirit? The Growing Natives Garden Tour (GNGT) is seeking a new coordinator for our exclusive Garden Previews.

About the Role

Purpose: These Previews are our way of thanking GNGT garden owners and Tour Day volunteers by offering them a special look at other native gardens, away from the hustle of Tour Day.

Commitment: This role requires minimal time but provides a delightful opportunity to enjoy native gardens throughout the year, not just during their peak bloom.

Current Coordinator: After eight years of dedication, Barbara Hunt is ready to pass on this enriching role to a new enthusiast.



Why You Should Apply

- Dive into the world of native plants and landscapes at your leisure;
- Build connections with fellow native plant lovers and community volunteers;
- Play a pivotal role in promoting the beauty and importance of native gardening within our community.

Interested?

Reach out to Barbara for more information. Contact her at barbara@gngt.org or (408) 921-6495.

Join us in spreading the love for native plants and gardens with the GNGT! Experience the tranquility and beauty of native landscapes year-round.

CONSERVATION CORNER**Conservation Committee**

Our Chapter's next Conservation Committee meetings will be held via Zoom on **Mondays, March 3** and **April 7**, from **7:00 to 8:30pm**.

This committee covers many issues affecting native plants: conservation, advocacy, legislation, habitat restoration and rare plants. The committee meets once a month to provide information and support for these conservation issues and efforts. Members of our committee work on projects throughout the Chapter area, coordinating with our state CNPS program staff and other conservation organizations.

Please join us in our important work! For questions, comments or concerns, contact Committee Chair Carolyn Dorsch at cdorsch@cnps-scv.org or (650) 804-6162, or Conservation Chair Judy Fenerty at judy@fenerty.com.

If you are interested in joining our committee meetings on Zoom, please email Carolyn for the link.

CHAPTER SERVICE OUTINGS**Alum Rock Park Restoration**

Come help us weed out invasive plants at this natural gem of San Jose. Our habitat restoration efforts allow the native plants to "come to light."

Our workdays take place one **Saturday morning** per month. No experience is necessary. All tools and instruction will be provided. Please bring a filled water bottle and snacks; wear closed-toe shoes and long pants.

Forms and **reservations** are required to volunteer. Start by visiting the City's volunteer opportunities page at www.sanjoseca.gov/your-government/departments-offices/parks-recreation-neighborhood-services/get-involved/volunteer-with-us. You will see Alum Rock Park Trail Crew as one of the options. The next workday is

TBD. For more information, contact Stephen Rosenthal at sailinsteve@sbcglobal.net or (650) 260-3450.

Lake Cunningham Native Garden

The California Native Garden project in Lake Cunningham Regional Park controls invasive plants in a 2-acre area and beautifies it with California native wildflowers, perennials, shrubs and trees.

Workdays take place on **Saturdays from 8:00 to 10:00am**. New volunteers are welcome; City-issued guidelines are followed. The work depends on the season: in winter now, the work is mainly weeding and mulching. For **details, directions, a waiver for first-timers and to RSVP**, see our Chapter's Meetup page at www.meetup.com/California-Native-Plant-Society-Santa-Clara-Valley-Chapter.

Edgewood Restoration

Help restore habitat at Edgewood Park and Natural Preserve, known for fabulous wildflowers and amazing diversity near Redwood City. Weeders see far more than weeds: we get to be up close to the native plants, some of which are seen **only** by weeders.

Sturdy gloves are recommended; you might also want to bring sunscreen, water, a hat, layered clothing and wear long sleeves/pants.

We weed year-round **every Friday at 9:00am**. Our **5:30pm Wednesday sessions** will resume on **March 12**, once Daylight Savings Time resumes. For an overview, please visit www.cnps-scv.org/restoration/edgewood-park.

To participate, join the email list and sign the electronic volunteer agreement, by sending an email to weed-warriors-coord@friendsofthewood.org. Please check the email list for each weeding session's meeting place. For questions about Friday sessions, contact Paul Heiple at pheiple@gmail.com or (650) 854-7125.

Cataldi Park Native Garden

Join us to restore habitat in San Jose's Cataldi Park. We mulch, plant, weed, water and otherwise care for the native plants we've planted in this newly created native garden. Wear a hat and garden shoes and bring water to stay hydrated. Work gloves will be provided.

In January and February, volunteers watered plants, sheet mulched and weeded. The giant mulch pile provided by the City is now almost exhausted and we've been able to suppress weeds in some areas outside the fenced phase 1

area. In mid-February, some of the ceanothus and desert sages started blooming.



Tilak

One of the Cataldi Park volunteers organized a weeding party on Sunday, February 16. Afterwards they had lunch in the garden. Note garden in the background.

How to Volunteer

Workdays are usually held at **9:00am on Saturdays**. If you're interested in volunteering, check the dates and sign up at our Chapter's Meetup page, at www.meetup.com/california-native-plant-society-santa-clara-valley-chapter/.

First-timers: Please bring a signed waiver form available at lakecunninghamnativegarden.files.wordpress.com/2022/01/2021-volunteer-service-agreement-adoptapark-version.pdf.

Workdays are sometimes rescheduled or canceled. Always RSVP to confirm and check the latest updates Friday night. If you can't make it, please change your RSVP so we know and wait-listers get a chance.

Kirk Park Pollinator Garden

Community volunteers regularly care for this native plant garden at Kirk Park in San Jose. We are always happy to have help at the garden! **We meet regularly on Saturday mornings from 9:00 to 11:00am**, weather permitting, for light maintenance such as weeding, watering; and occasionally we have plants or seeds to plant.

The park is open every day, so please come visit! The garden is located along the north edge of the park. If you would like to help out, please sign up for our Saturday work days on the [CNPS-SCV Meetup page](#). If we know you are coming, we can be sure to have tools available for you to use. We can also notify you if, for some reason, we will not be meeting. New volunteers will need to fill out a form for the City.

Another way to visit the Kirk Park Pollinator Garden, is to see it on the **Growing Natives Garden Tour (GNGT) April 12**. Learn more about the GNGT on page 7. You can visit the garden's GNGT page at gngt.org/GNGT/GardenSaturday.php?year=2025&gid=kirk

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.

Cell service is mainly restricted to cities and major highways. To find your way to an outing, please do not rely solely on your phone.

Check our field trips page www.cnps-scv.org/activities/field-trips for changes and cancellations, as well as information about newly added field trips.

For field trips listed here that require **reservations**, please visit our Chapter's **Meetup page**, here: www.meetup.com/California-Native-Plant-Society-Santa-Clara-Valley-Chapter/. **We open the RSVPs one week before the event.** Find your event within the page and tap/click the "Attend" button to reserve your spot.

Sat Mar 15 10:00am - 2:00pm Stile Ranch Trail (South San Jose)

Join Tom Lee and Nabeel Al-Shamma on the Stile Ranch Trail, located at the Southwest corner of Santa Teresa County Park. This trail is known for its native plants. With the late winter rains this hike will feature wildflowers such as poppies, fiddlenecks, salvias and many others. The trail starts with a climb with some rocky switchbacks, crosses some grassland and a creek before returning in a loop. The distance is 2.6 miles, and the elevation gain is 450 feet.

There are no restroom services at the parking area or on the trail, however there is a restroom on McKean Road just across from Fortini Road at Rancho San Vicente Open Space parking area.



Dee Shea Himes

Woodland shooting star, *Primula hendersonii*
Stile Ranch, March 2015

Please bring sturdy shoes, appropriate layering, hat and lunch. Heavy rain cancels.

RSVP is required. Limited to 15 people due to narrow trails. No drop-ins please. To register, see the instructions at the beginning of this Field Trips section to **RSVP on Meetup**.

We will meet at the Santa Teresa Park Stile Ranch parking area on San Vicente Ave. **Driving directions** are provided on Meetup.

Wed Mar 19 9:40am-1:00pm Tulare Hill Wildflower Walk (San Jose)

Join Craige Edgerton and Alyssa LoGalbo on a wildflower walk at Tulare Hill. The hill and surrounding 330 acres (130 ha) of serpentine grasslands are home to the endangered Bay checkerspot butterfly and *Dudleya setchellii* wildflower. Bay checkerspot larvae depend on dwarf plantain (*Plantago erecta*), which grows on serpentine soil.

A portion of the hill makes up the Tulare Hill Ecological Preserve. The walk will be 2-3 miles in length and includes a short walk up the hill, about 300 feet elevation gain.

Please bring snacks and plenty of water. Heavy rain cancels. Liability waivers for Tulare Hill are required. They will be available at the meeting place.

RSVP is required to join the walk. Since this walk is **open to CNPS members only**, please ensure your **CNPS membership** is current. Or visit www.cnps.org to become a member. No drop-ins please and space is limited. To register, see the instructions at the beginning of this Field Trips section to **RSVP on Meetup**. **Driving directions** are provided on Meetup.



Ron Horii

Craige Edgerton (center) holding a dwarf plantain, explaining how Bay checkerspot butterfly larvae depend on this plant. Tulare Hill, May 2014.

Sun Mar 23 9:00am - Noon Bird and Plant ID Walk at Lake Cunningham Park (San Jose)

With the onset of spring, join us for a beginner's bird and plant identification walk through Lake Cunningham Park. This lake is a major destination for waterfowl and migratory birds and its native garden draws many birds due to its habitat value. On this walk, Vicki Silvas-Young will show you how to identify the common birds of our area, while Arvind Kumar will identify the native plants that they depend on for food and shelter.

The distance is 2 miles round-trip on a level path. Bring a hat, water, your bird and plant lists and binoculars. Wear comfortable walking shoes. **Parking fee is \$6, credit card only.**

RSVP is required to join us for the walk. No drop-ins please and space is limited. See the instructions at the beginning of this Field Trips section to **RSVP on Meetup**.

Driving directions and parking tips are provided on [our Chapter's Meetup page](#). This event is cosponsored by

CNPS, Santa Clara Valley Bird Alliance and Santa Clara Valley Open Space Authority.

Thu Mar 27 10:00am - 2:00pm Bonny Doon Ecological Reserve Flora Walk (Bonny Doon)

Join Joe Cernac for an exploration of the Bonny Doon Ecological Reserve. The reserve is located atop the higher Santa Cruz Mountains, with lots of moisture and humidity throughout the year and a unique sterile sandstone. It hosts some unusual flora, including ponderosa and knobcone Pine, five manzanitas, endemic Santa Cruz Cypress and Bonny Doon manzanita among them. The walk will be about 3 miles in length with negligible elevation gain.

Please bring lunch, snacks and plenty of water. Heavy rain cancels.

RSVP is required to join the walk. No drop-ins please and space is limited. To register, see the instructions at the beginning of this Field Trips section to **RSVP on Meetup**. **Driving directions** are provided on Meetup.

For more information call Joe Cernac at (408) 499-2515.

Wed Apr 2 9:30am - 1:30pm Red Hills Serpentine Walk (Tuolumne County)

Join Joe Cernac as we observe, heads bowed to the ground, this flora rich area. Red Hills is a foothill sierran serpentine region in Tuolumne County, about a two-hour drive from the Bay Area. We will walk two sections, observing what we hope will be early blooming flowers in the shoulder season. Rare serpentine endemic tripod buckwheat (*Eriogonum tripodum*), Red Hills soap plant (*Chlorogalum grandiflorum*) and the rare Rawhide Hill onion (*Allium tuolumnense*) are present. Hopefully bitterroot will be in bloom.

Please bring lunch, snacks and plenty of water. Heavy rain cancels.

Directions: We will meet at the Red Hills Parking Area at **9:30am**. There is a bathroom at the parking lot. Email Joe Cernac at JoeCernac@fastmail.com for directions and any other questions. To learn more about the area, visit www.blm.gov/visit/red-hills-recreation-management-area.

Wed Apr 9 10am - 2pm Coyote Lake Harvey Bear Ranch County Park (Gilroy)

Join Judy Fenerty and Stella Yang for a moderately paced hike on the Mendoza, Mummy Mountain and Coyote Ridge trails in the Mendoza Ranch section of Coyote Lake-Harvey Bear Ranch County Park.

This 4-mile, 400+ foot elevation gain hike will take us through valley grasslands and up an oak-studded ridgeline with spectacular views of the south Santa Clara Valley, Coyote Lake and Palassou Ridge. This varied habitat supports a wide range of native plants including several stands of big-scale balsamroot, *Balsamorhiza macrolepis* var. *macrolepis*, a CNPS 1B.2 rare plant. If there's time and interest, we can add an optional foray to check out the serpentine area on the Calaveras Trail.

Please bring lunch, snacks and plenty of water. Heavy rain cancels.

RSVP is required to join us for the walk. No drop-ins please and space is limited. To register, see the instructions at the beginning of this Field Trips section to **RSVP on Meetup**. **Driving directions** are provided on Meetup.

For more information contact Judy Fenerty at judy@fenerty.com.



Joe Cernac

Joe posing in front of a stream in the Red Hills BLM area



Judy Fenerty

Big-scale balsamroot, *Balsamorhiza macrolepis* var. *macrolepis*, Coyote Lake Harvey Bear Ranch County Park, April 2022



Ken Himes

A *Darlingtonia fen*, an iconic habitat in the Eight Dollar Mountain area of southwest Oregon. July 2023.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

News and Activities from Other Organizations

Save the Date! Choose May or June Trip Siskiyou Region of Southwestern Oregon Camping Trip

First Session: Sun May 4 to Sat May 10
Repeat Session: Sun June 1 to Sat June 7

MEMBERS ONLY TRIP. Please make sure your CNPS membership is current before signing up. Or become a member by visiting www.cnps.org.

IMPORTANT NOTE: Please sign up for only the first or second trip, to allow others to have an opportunity to participate. Signing up for both will not be accepted.

Join co-leaders Ken and Dee Himes to explore a portion of the California Floristic Province outside our state’s geographic boundary. We will combine driving tours with hikes of 2-4 miles per day, seeing a wide range of habitats, from volcanic table tops to serpentine fens.

Ken and Dee will host tent camping on their newly acquired 5-acre property. RVs (with some size limitations) are welcome, as a large gravel parking area is available.

To reserve your spot and receive trip details, please email dee4cnps@gmail.com. First come first serve. Each session is limited to 15 people. State which session you’d like to attend and how many people will be in your party.

Edgewood Spring Wildflower Hikes

The Friends of Edgewood (FoE) will kick off the 2025 spring wildflower season with a series of docent-led hikes **starting on March 7**. The hikes will be offered **weekly on Fridays, Saturdays, and Sundays through the end of May**. FoE’s expert wildflower docents share insights about Edgewood Natural Preserve’s extraordinary biodiversity and help visitors spot some of the dozens of different species that bloom throughout the season. In March, Edgewood’s oak woodland flowers begin to bloom. In April, the serpentine grasslands come alive. By May, late spring flowers dot the hillsides. Each week there is something new to discover!

The hikes typically cover about 3 miles and last about three hours, so there is plenty of time to stop and examine what you find along the trail. There will be options for starting from either the Bill and Jean Lane Education Center or the Clarkia Trailhead. These hikes are best for adults or older children interested in learning more about the plants and animals that call Edgewood home. For families with young children, shorter, kid-friendly hikes will be offered on select Saturdays and Sundays.

The hikes are free, but you must register in advance on Eventbrite at [friendsofedgewood.eventbrite.com](https://www.eventbrite.com/e/friends-of-edgewood). New hikes are typically added two weeks in advance, so check back throughout the season or follow Friends of Edgewood on Eventbrite to be notified when hikes are added. If you have questions about the hikes, email info@friendsofedgewood.org.

NEWSLETTER, ETC.

Stay in Touch!

Some late-breaking events don't make it into the newsletter and are announced electronically. Stay informed by making sure that your contact information is correct. Please visit www.cnps-scv.org/stay-in-touch for information on how you can continue to receive email to stay informed.

This *Blazing Star* newsletter is published **mostly** online only, at: www.cnps-scv.org/blazing-star-newsletter. Our next paper version will be the 2025 May-June issue.

Media Releases

To all the photographers who provide photos to enrich the *Blazing Star* articles, we now request a media release. We have a **form** from State CNPS that grants CNPS permission to use specific photos for various CNPS marketing and publications, including social media. The form is here: www.cnps.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/CNPS-Image-Copyright-Release-Form.pdf.



To keep things simple, the Chapter will keep track of photos you send us and your email address. That is, by sending us (especially Carol Mattsson the newsletter editor) photos, you are agreeing to the terms of the media release. Of course, if you prefer, you may fill out the form online

and email it to carol.mattsson@gmail.com. If you have any questions, please contact Carol at that same email address, or Vivian Neou at techchair@cnps-scv.org.

Did You Know?

... that the next few months is the best time to get out there and look at wildflowers as well as visit botanical gardens and arboretums? This link provides resources to find whats in bloom www.cnps-scv.org/education/resources. And if you are planning to visit a public park, use this link for a comprehensive list www.cnps-scv.org/gardening/gardening-with-natives/69-public-gardens-of-native-plants-69. We wish you a fun time exploring wildflowers and our public parks and encourage everyone to do it in a responsible way.

CHAPTER LEADERSHIP FOR 2024-2025

Title	Name	Email
Co-President	Priya Pharate	priya4cnps@gmail.com
Co-President	Vivian Neou	techchair@cnps-scv.org
Vice President	Toni Gregorio-Bunch	tidytip.lp@gmail.com
Recording Secretary	Janet Hoffmann	janet@cnps-scv.org
Treasurer	Brett Tucker	treasurer@cnps-scv.org
Chapter Council Delegate	Vivian Neou	techchair@cnps-scv.org
Past President	Radhika Thekkath	cnpsradhika@gmail.com

To see the full list of Chapter officers and chairs, please visit www.cnps-scv.org/leadership.

DEADLINE FOR THE NEXT *BLAZING STAR*

Saturday, April 5

carol.mattsson@gmail.com or (408) 309-8314

Santa Clara Valley Chapter California Native Plant Society
 3921 East Bayshore Road, Suite #205
 Palo Alto, CA 94303-4326



Join CNPS Today!

Members receive the *Artemisia* and *Flora* magazines, the Chapter newsletter and other benefits listed at www.cnps.org/membership.

I wish to affiliate with the Santa Clara Valley Chapter

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Email _____

Phone _____ New Renew

Suggested Membership Amounts

\$50 \$75 \$120 \$500 \$1,000 Other (\$25 min.)

Send Membership Application to:
California Native Plant Society
Attn: Membership
2702 K Street, Suite 1, Sacramento, CA 95816-5130

For memberships for organizations or to become a Perennial monthly sustainer, contact www.cnps.org.

First-Class Mail

CALENDAR OF EVENTS (page # in parentheses)

- | | | | |
|-------------------|--|----------------------|---|
| Feb 28 Fri | Photo Group photo sharing (5) | Apr 2 Wed | Red Hills serpentine walk (12) |
| Mar 3 Mon | Conservation Committee meeting (9) | Apr 5 Sat | Newsletter submittal deadline (14) |
| Mar 13 Thu | Garden Design – Morris (4) | Apr 7 Mon | Conservation Committee meeting (9) |
| Mar 15 Sat | Stile Ranch field trip (10) | Apr 9 Wed | Coyote Lake / Mummy Mtn. hike (12) |
| Mar 15 Sat | Scholarship Applications due (7) | Apr 12 Sat | GNGT southern gardens (7) |
| Mar 19 Wed | Tulare Hill wildflower walk (11) | Apr 13 Sun | GNGT northern gardens (7) |
| Mar 23 Sun | Lake Cunningham bird & plant ID (11) | Apr 22 Tue | Native Plant ID meeting (6) |
| Mar 24 Mon | Calochortus talk part I – Himes (4) | Apr 24 Thu | Blazing Star mailing party (7) |
| Mar 25 Tue | Plant Sale online store opens (2) | Apr 25 Fri | Photo Group photo sharing (5) |
| Mar 25 Tue | Native Plant ID meeting (6) | Apr 26 Sat | Wildflower Show (1) |
| Mar 27 Thu | Bonny Doon flora walk (12) | May 7 Wed | Chapter election ballots arrive (2) |
| Mar 28 Fri | Plant Sale pickup at nursery (2) | Wed & Fri | Edgewood restoration workdays (9) |
| Mar 28 Fri | Photo Group photo sharing (5) | Saturdays | Lake Cunningham Garden workdays (9) |
| Mar 29 Sat | Cutting and Seed Exchange + pickup (2) | Saturdays | Cataldi Park Garden workdays (9) |
| Mar 31 Mon | Calochortus talk part II – Himes (4) | Saturdays | Kirk Pollinator Garden workdays (10) |

The next Chapter board meetings will be **Sunday, March 30 (budget meeting 3:00pm** in person at the PCC) and **Thursday, April 10 (at 7:00pm** over Zoom). Board meetings are open to all Chapter members and their guests. For more information contact Priya Pharate at priya4cnps@gmail.com or Vivian Neou at techchair@cnps-scv.org.

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 start at \$50.00 per year. If you have questions about your newsletter subscription, please contact info@cnps-scv.org. Address changes may be submitted to membership@cnps.org. Please put "address change" in the subject line.

The *Blazing Star* web address: www.cnps-scv.org. Please print on recycled paper.
