



California Native Plant Society  
Santa Clara Valley Chapter

# THE BLAZING STAR

May-June 2022

## NATIVE PLANT LECTURE SERIES

The talks in the CNPS SCV Native Plant Lecture Series cover a broad range of topics with a native plant theme. Whether you're curious about native plants, an experienced or aspiring native plant gardener or a professional botanist, you will find something to interest and educate you in our offerings. From gardening to plant science to conservation to tours of botanical hot spots, if you're interested in California's native plants, there's something here for you.

Most of our lectures take place on **Wednesday evening at 7:30pm**. Our talks are livestreamed simultaneously to Zoom and YouTube. View talks on our YouTube channel at [www.youtube.com/c/CNPSSantaClaraValley](http://www.youtube.com/c/CNPSSantaClaraValley) (**no registration needed**) or **join on Zoom** by registering at the Zoom link provided in each lecture's description.

**California Ethnobotany for Learners of All Ages, a talk by Jane Rieder**  
**Wednesday, May 11 7:30 - 9:00 PM**

Zoom registration: [www.cnps-scv.org/npls-20220511](http://www.cnps-scv.org/npls-20220511)

California has a wealth of diverse ecosystems for plant and animal communities, which gives our beautiful state a variety of habitats for people and other creatures. The



native people of California have practiced sophisticated ecosystem engineering for thousands of years, using plants to meet human needs for food, shelter, tools, decorations, medicine and fiber. In this talk, we'll learn about the discipline of ethnobotany and explore some of the traditional human uses of California native plants.

When **Jane Rieder** was two years old, her parents called her the Baby Botanist, so she thinks it's fair to say that she's a lifelong lover of plants. As an adult, she uses her

knowledge and interest in plants in her roles as a high school botany teacher, a parent, a gardener, a hiker, an amateur scientist and a cook. She loves teaching other people about the amazing world of botany!

See the schedule of upcoming talks at [www.cnps-scv.org/activities/native-plant-lecture-series](http://www.cnps-scv.org/activities/native-plant-lecture-series).

## CHAPTER ACTIVITIES

### **New Wildflower Ambassadors Program**

The Santa Clara Valley Chapter of CNPS is excited to announce the launch of the CNPS SCV Wildflower Ambassadors (WFA) program. We are teaming up with Chapter member **Jennifer Dirking**, the founder and inspiration for the Bring Back Bay Area Bees and Butterflies group on Nextdoor.



### **Bring Back Bay Area Bees and Butterflies**

Open group:

BBBABB seeks to restore native bees and butterflies in the San Francisco Bay Area through gardening, information sharing, and other activities. By starting locally (midpeninsula), we aim to encourage our neighbors to grow pollinator friendly and nectar producing plants, with a special focus on native plants that feed local caterpillars, and nourish native bees. We also recognize that: 1) Pesticides kill the caterpillars, bees, and butterflies we are trying to grow, so avoid these (and herbicides) completely. 2) By "leaving the leaves" in our yards, we can save thousands of butterfly and moth chrysalises that would otherwise be destroyed. 3) Sharing native butterfly and moth host plants and seeds with neighbors can help us create 'butterfly

Over the last six months, Jennifer has bought and disseminated hundreds of free packets of local wildflower and milkweed seeds to neighbors and strangers via her social media reach on Nextdoor. She has created an active group on Nextdoor and informative handouts for people who receive these free seeds.

Chapter President Radhika Thekkath is championing the vision for the Chapter by creating a close partnership between the Chapter and Jennifer to allow us to expand and scale these efforts. To do this, we are recruiting Wildflower Ambassadors (WFA), who can be novice native plant gardeners and yet play a critical role via social media to increase butterfly and pollinator habitat in urban and suburban spaces. We will make it easy for someone to be a WFA by providing a training video with Jennifer's simple step-by-step methods, and the Chapter will provide a kit with all the necessary materials.

The program was launched at the Wildflower Festival on April 23rd with training and kits available for new Wildflower Ambassadors. If you would like to become a Wildflower Ambassador in your neighborhood, we will train you and provide you with a kit to take home. This kit will include wildflower seed packets, instructions, handouts and other materials needed to empower you to become an ambassador for butterflies, bees, and birds in your neighborhood. Please join us in this critical effort to increase biodiversity in our urban spaces!

For more information or if you have questions, see our Chapter website's new Wildflower Ambassadors page at [www.cnps-scv.org/wfa](http://www.cnps-scv.org/wfa) or email us at [wildflowers@cnps-scv.org](mailto:wildflowers@cnps-scv.org).

## Volunteer Spotlight: Jennifer Dirking

*By Jennifer Dirking, Chapter Member, Wildflower Ambassador and Accidental (CA Native) Gardener*

### How I Leveraged Social Media to Give Away Wildflower Seeds and Help Neighbors Grow Wildflowers for Wildlife

When I started my first garden in 1991, I thought that organic gardening was the epitome of environmentalism. I wanted to make sure that my family had produce untouched by pesticides, that my garden attracted a wide variety of insects and that I had armloads of fragrant flowers in every season. Of course, I thought my garden was a success, because the beneficial insects thrived and the butterflies stopped by for some nectar now and then.

But it wasn't until the autumn of 2020 that I discovered that my garden needed to do much more than grow pretty flowers and organic vegetables. Instead, this land was an essential piece in a massive national puzzle that, once completed, could reverse the extinction trajectory of our native bees, butterflies and birds. It was just by chance that I learned this.



*Sherri Moody*

Jennifer Dirking and Radhika Thekkath at the Gamble Garden outreach event on April 9. Note wildflower seed packets on the table, and native wildflowers in the vase.

It was a November evening, just after my husband and I had ordered about 40 seed packets and were preparing our garden for more armloads of flowers, when we heard Doug Tallamy's lecture for the California Native Plant Society, Santa Clara Valley Chapter. He clearly outlined how our gardens are "Nature's Best Hope" (also the title of his NY Times Bestseller) for fighting back against the "insect apocalypse." As he spoke, our whole perception of the purpose of a garden was flipped on its head. Now we could see that we needed to replace the hundreds of imported and inedible plants in our yard with the plants that grew on that land hundreds of years ago. Most importantly, we needed to focus on plants that would host as many butterflies and moths as possible, since many of these species are now endangered. Furthermore, 96% of local terrestrial birds needed these caterpillars to feed their babies (at least 6,000-9,000 for tiny chickadees, much more for larger birds).

We ripped out our lawn and created a California native garden in our front yard so that it could also serve as a demonstration space for my neighbors. I bought a large bag of local narrow-leaf milkweed (*Asclepias fascicularis*) (for monarchs) and another bag of local wildflowers, then created handouts showing which butterflies and moths would eat these plants. I set up dedicated Instagram and email accounts under the name EcoGardenista so I could keep track of my wildflower outreach activity and promote saving bees and butterflies. My goal was to help at least 100 people create native host plant mini-gardens, 100 square feet each, over the course of a year. By offering free seeds on Nextdoor and either mailing them or putting seeds in "Little Libraries" I found that demand for this and desire for information about native host plants, was stronger than I

had ever imagined. I gave out 60 seed packets in two weeks.

In the process, people started asking for more information and wanting to connect with others who were growing these pollinator gardens. So, I started the “**Bring Back Bay Area Bees and Butterflies**” group on Nextdoor. Members started sharing ideas, inviting friends to join, alerting everyone about upcoming events and posting pictures of their gardens and of wildflowers they saw on hikes. Now, five months later, the group has almost 200 members. Together we’ve shared hundreds of posts and distributed 1,620 seed packets, each one covering a 100 square foot area on average. The best part is that we’re working together to bring about positive change and restore both habitat and a greater sense of community.

Jennifer may be reached at [EcoGardenista@gmail.com](mailto:EcoGardenista@gmail.com). Visit the Bring Back Bay Area Bees and Butterflies group on Nextdoor at [nextdoor.com/g/7zda4zk0b/](https://nextdoor.com/g/7zda4zk0b/).



*Cynthia Gingerich*

Our Chapter’s Growing Natives Garden Tour includes gardens that create pollinator habitat. Learn more by turning to the 2022 tour report on page 7.

### CNPS SCV Nursery at Hidden Villa

Nursery volunteers continue to propagate plants, raising funds for the Chapter through sales from its online store at [california-native-plant-society-santa-clara-valley-chapter.square.site](https://california-native-plant-society-santa-clara-valley-chapter.square.site). The online nursery store will be open for sales for one week toward the end of May before closing for the summer. Current Chapter members will be notified by email before the store opens.

In addition to plants, the nursery’s online store includes T-shirts, books, labels and plant signs. Orders can be

scheduled for pick-up at the nursery in Los Altos or delivered between Belmont and San Jose.

Proceeds from plant sales are the major source of funding for Chapter activities and scholarships.



*Vivian Neou*

CNPS-SCV Nursery volunteers working on plants, April 2022

### Photography Group

Our Photography Group is a great place to meet other native plant enthusiasts while improving your photographic skills and learning more about our native plants. It is open to all. The group has monthly meetings and an active email list.



*Bill Lundgren*

Blazing Star, (*Mentzelia lindleyi*) photographed in Sierra Vista Open Space Preserve late February 2022

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 chair Bill Lundgren provided this #MyPhotoOfTheWeek taken

last February. The Blazing Star is our Chapter flower as well as the name of our Chapter newsletter.

The photo group's meetings take place over Zoom, for members to share photos and more – everything from photography tips to organizational ideas to plant hot spots. The next meetings will be **Fridays, April 29, May 27 and June 24 at 7:00pm**. You can learn more and join the email group at: [www.groups.io/g/cnps-scvc-photography](http://www.groups.io/g/cnps-scvc-photography).

## President's Message

By Radhika Thekkath, Chapter President

How many of you are aware that 2022 is the Golden Anniversary of the founding of our Chapter of CNPS? It was in 1972, only seven years after CNPS was founded as a state organization, that our Santa Clara Valley Chapter was founded and the first issue of the *Blazing Star* appeared on June 1st, 1972. This was 50 years ago, to almost within a month of this issue! What an achievement to celebrate!



As I have been settling into my role as President of the Board this year, I marvel almost daily at the volunteers who work for this Chapter, how much has been accomplished over the last 50 years and how much continues to get done each month. Dedicated people come together to pull off minor miracles. Take the garden

tour for example: held in-person April 2-3 by the GNGT team after holding two virtual tours; the nursery volunteers who are real heroes; or a new budget getting pulled together by our new treasurer Brett Tucker on a tight schedule; and I could go on and on. You read all about these things in each issue of the *Blazing Star* and in our News emails.

To honor this special year, we are throwing a Golden anniversary celebration party on **Saturday, September 17**; with details to be revealed this summer. Please plan to join us – as volunteers, members, and the public – to celebrate together.

Wishing you all a happy late spring. There is still time to get out and see some wildflowers, so take that hike soon! Then use shredded leaves to mulch your gardens to provide an ecosystem habitat for butterfly cocoons, cooler hiding spots for beetles, food for birds and to shelter the soil from the summer heat.

Radhika may be reached at [president@cnps-scvc.org](mailto:president@cnps-scvc.org).

## SCHOLARSHIPS

### 2021-2022 Scholarship Recipient Projects

This year our Chapter awarded six scholarships to support California native plant research by college students. We announced all winners in the March-April *Blazing Star* and described two of the student projects. Later in the year each student will give us a short talk about his or her project. Here, we describe the projects of three more student winners. We'll describe the remaining project in a future newsletter.

**Michael Hahn, UC Santa Cruz**  
(Undergraduate Scholarship Winner)  
**Santa Lucia Fir – Post Fire Stand Survivorship and Regeneration**

*Abies bracteata*, the Santa Lucia fir, is the rarest species of fir in North America and is endemic to the Santa Lucia mountain range on the Big Sur coast. In a series of backcountry expeditions, Michael will be conducting surveys of Santa Lucia fir stands that burned at varying severity levels in the Soberanes and Dolan fires. The goal of this project is to inform the literature on the Santa Lucia fir's postfire regenerative habits, specifically focusing on changes in stand composition, individual survivorship and seedling recruitment.



Michael setting off for a weekend of backcountry surveys in the Santa Lucias

Michael hopes that the results of this research will inform conservation strategies for this sensitive species in the context of a changing climate. Warmer and drier weather patterns are likely to continue increasing the frequency, size, and severity of wildfires across our state and in mountains in which the Santa Lucia fir grows.



Michael Hahn

A landscape of the rugged Ventana Wilderness interior, where the majority of Santa Lucia fir stands occur



Michael Hahn

Left: A stand of Santa Lucia Firs, growing on either side of a steep ravine. Fire refugia such as these prohibit the accumulation of duff and understory vegetation, making it difficult for fires to spread.

Right: A young Santa Lucia Fir individual still surviving five years after the Soberanes fire, in which it suffered extensive cambium damage and heartwood burnout

**Alyssa Anzalone and Nicholas Mazzotti,  
UC Santa Cruz**  
(Undergraduate Scholarship Winning Team)  
**Does Seeding and Planting Plus Nitrogen  
Addition Result in Differentiated Seed Bank  
Composition in Restored California  
Coastal Grasslands?**

Nick is exploring how different planting versus seeding methods contribute to site seed banks, which serve as an indicator of long-term restoration success. Alyssa is investigating how nitrogen fertilization affects emerging seed bank species composition by simulating anthropogenic nitrogen deposition in a greenhouse setting.



Alyssa Anzalone

Collected soil samples germinating in a UCSC greenhouse

Alyssa and Nick will evaluate how different revegetation methods influence the resulting seed bank post-implementation and whether increased nitrogen affects native species density. They will create a short summary memo about their applied research to be distributed to local restoration practitioners.



Justin Luong

Nicholas Mazzotti and Alyssa Anzalone: two enthusiastic botanists at the greenhouse



Justin Luong

Regular maintenance of soil flats



Alyssa Anzalone

A mix of native and non-native species germinating from collected soil samples



Dylan MacArthur

Reed looking for annual *Juncus* near Donner Pass

**Reed Kenny, UC Davis**  
(General Graduate Scholarship Winner)  
**Systematics of the Genus *Juncus* Using DNA  
Analysis of Various Gene Regions**



Dylan MacArthur

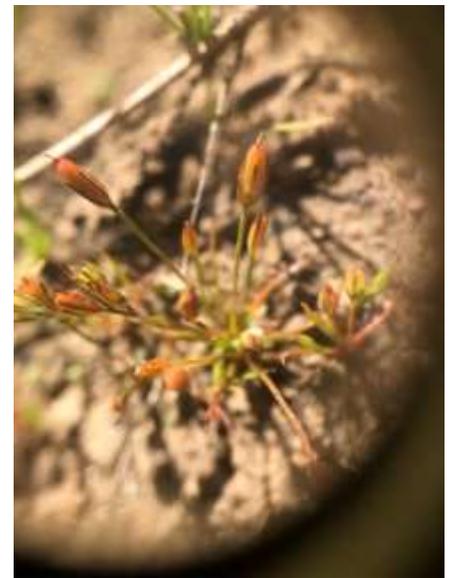
Reed gearing up to collect in the San Gabriel Mountains

Reed is working to determine the relationships between several species of *Juncus* native to California and four small genera found only in South America. Currently, molecular data indicates that these South American genera are closely related to some *Juncus* species and that the genus *Juncus* does not form a good evolutionary group. These data have not

yet resulted in any taxonomic changes.

Reed is working to collect *Juncus* species from California that are hypothesized to be closely related to the South American genera. He is currently extracting and sequencing DNA from specimens he collected last summer.

In his PhD research and dissertation, Reed hopes to be able to resolve the relationships between the California native *Juncus* and the related South American genera and be able to publish a revised taxonomy that reflects the true evolutionary relationships in the group.



Reed Kenny

California native *Juncus hemiendytus* var. *hemiendytus* as seen through a 10x hand lens

## CONSERVATION CORNER

### **Conservation Committee**

Our Chapter's next conservation committee meetings will be held via Zoom on **Tuesdays, May 10 and June 14, from 7:00 to 9:00pm.**

Please join us in our important work! Meeting details will be sent to committee members. If you are not on the committee but are interested in attending the Zoom meeting, email [cdorsch@cnps-scv.org](mailto:cdorsch@cnps-scv.org) for the meeting link. For questions, comments or concerns, contact Conservation Committee Chair Carolyn Dorsch at [cdorsch@cnps-scv.org](mailto:cdorsch@cnps-scv.org) or (650) 804-6162.

## GROWING NATIVES GARDEN TOUR

### 20th Anniversary Tour Report

Hundreds of people attended the 20th anniversary Growing Natives Garden Tour on April 2 and 3. Visitors enjoyed sunshine and warm temperatures in the 70s both days. Many plants were blooming in GNGT gardens, even as the manzanita and ceanothus blossoms of winter lingered in some areas.

Just two weeks earlier, GNGT gardens from San Mateo down to Gilroy were washed in light late season rain showers, preparing them naturally for their in-person debut after the past two years of virtual tours. While many visitors had attended in-person tours in previous years, we were pleased to welcome a number of first-time attendees at GNGT 2022.

Garden owners, designers, volunteer greeters, and docents were on hand to answer visitors' questions. Some gardens displayed before and after photos showing lawns and yards with crabgrass and nonnative plants converted to gardens with native grasses, annuals, perennials, vines, shrubs, trees, and spring wildflowers. A garden in Los Altos displayed photos of plants that were not currently blooming, to show visitors how the plants look in other seasons. The volunteers at Bol Park in Palo Alto gave away seeds from the previous season's crop of hummingbird sage and tansy-leaved phacelia, both in full bloom at the park on tour day. Garden owners in one San Jose garden provided light refreshments for their visitors.



Thanks to our sponsors for their financial contributions and to the garden owners and volunteers for their hard work over many hours.

The **next annual GNGT will be held on April 1 and 2, 2023** and you can **submit your native garden by October 31, 2022**. More information and applications for garden submissions to GNGT 2023 are at [www.gngt.org](http://www.gngt.org).

If you missed the in-person tour this year, you can still view photos and videos online at each garden's webpage at [www.gngt.org/GNGT/AllGardens.php](http://www.gngt.org/GNGT/AllGardens.php)



[Longer presentations of individual gardens](#) during our virtual tours in 2020 and 2021 are available on our Chapter's YouTube page. Go to [youtube.com/c/CNPSSantaClaraValley](https://youtube.com/c/CNPSSantaClaraValley) and go to the first playlist, entitled "Growing Natives Garden Tour (GNGT) - Garden Visits and Talks."

(All photos taken of 2022 tour gardens by Cynthia Gingerich.)



### Volunteer Spotlight Award: Cynthia Gingerich

*By Tejashri Pradhan, Lake Cunningham Volunteer*

This month, the Chapter is presenting the **Volunteer Spotlight Award** to Cynthia Gingerich. Cynthia took over publicity for the Growing Natives Garden Tour in 2019 and has made a huge impact in her nearly three years on the committee. Even before joining, Cynthia was an active member of the CNPS Facebook Group. Once she became a

part of the GNGT Steering Committee, Cynthia was a breath of fresh air and a guiding light who helped keep GNGT alive and well during the pandemic.



Vivian Neou

Cynthia Gingerich creating the video of Krzysztof Kozminski showing how to do mud planting, September 2020

About Cynthia's contributions, Penny Pollock says, "I am not sure where we would be if she hadn't been there with publicity, taking notes, helping with fliers and nudging us to keep on going with the virtual tours when the pandemic hit." Cynthia led the initiative to switch from in-person to virtual garden tours in 2020, personally reaching out to private and public gardens and encouraging them to create their own amateur video tours.



Although Cynthia is stepping down after the tour this year, she's taken steps to ensure her role will be filled even after she leaves. Vivian Neou says, "She went to the extra effort to find a replacement who could shadow her this year so there wouldn't be a gap in PR coverage." We are proud to honor Cynthia's contributions, and she will be missed!

## CHAPTER SERVICE OUTINGS

**Fountain Thistle Work Party - Sat June 25  
(San Mateo) 10am - 12 noon**

Join Ken Himes and Don Thomas for an in-person conservation project to protect the native fountain thistle. Fountain thistle (*Cirsium fontinale* var. *fontinale*) is a rare federally endangered plant that grows in an unusual specialized habitat, serpentine seeps, and is found only in a few locations on the Peninsula. Once almost completely displaced by jubatagrass (Andean pampas grass), the fountain thistle has largely recovered as a result of the work done by CNPS volunteers.



Robert Hall

Fountain thistle from October 2017 workday. Color shades of gray, green, purple and yellow occur often. These endangered fountain thistles have less competition from jubata grass in their favorite seeps thanks to the work of CNPS volunteers.

In keeping with our over 10-year tradition of working with Jake Sigg and the Yerba Buena Chapter, we are going to continue our biannual fountain thistle restoration project.

Although our efforts have made the recovery of fountain thistle a restoration success story, the plant is under ongoing threat from jubatagrass and other invasive non-native plants, such as yellow star-thistle, sow thistle and wallaby grass (*Rhynchospora caespitosum*) and by woody plants trying to convert the area to shrubland or woodland.

We'll meet at the end of Lessingia Court in San Mateo. For more info., contact Don at [don\\_e\\_thomas@yahoo.com](mailto:don_e_thomas@yahoo.com). Optional camaraderie over Greek pizza afterwards.

## **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 every **Monday and Wednesday, from 8:30am to about noon**. Sometimes we have some special extra workdays. For now our workdays are for experienced volunteers only, as we aren't quite ready to open up to new or drop-in volunteers yet. For more information contact Stephen Rosenthal at [sailinsteve@sbcglobal.net](mailto:sailinsteve@sbcglobal.net) or (650) 260-3450.



Dee Shea Himes

Fountain thistle habitat restoration volunteers posing for a photo at the restoration site, at the end of the June 2021 workday

## Lake Cunningham Native Garden

The California Native Garden project in Lake Cunningham Regional Park controls invasive plants in a 1.5-acre area and beautifies it with California native wildflowers, perennials, shrubs and trees.

Workdays continue on **Saturdays from 8 - 10am**. New volunteers are welcome; City-issued guidelines and COVID-19 best practices are followed. The work is mainly weeding and mulching. For complete **details, directions and to RSVP**, see our Chapter's Meetup page at [www.meetup.com/California-Native-Plant-Society-Santa-Clara-Valley-Chapter](http://www.meetup.com/California-Native-Plant-Society-Santa-Clara-Valley-Chapter).

## Edgewood Restoration

Our long-term habitat restoration work at Edgewood Park and Natural Preserve continues in person even during the pandemic. As with our other projects, we follow government guidelines and COVID-19 best practices.

For now, the project is not looking for new volunteers; only experienced "regulars" are attending workdays. Check the project emails for the latest news or contact project leader Paul Heiple at [pheiple@gmail.com](mailto:pheiple@gmail.com) or (650) 854-7125.

## 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. **Please bring a face mask in case wearing one is required for COVID-19 safety.**

**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-scw.org/activities/field-trips](http://www.cnps-scw.org/activities/field-trips) for changes, cancellations, COVID rules and additional field trips.

### **Fri - Mon May 13 - 16 Eastern Sierra Nevada, Owens Valley (Inyo County)**

Join Joe Cernac and Ken Himes on our away trip to the east side of the Sierra Nevada and Owens Valley Desert. We hope to catch sight of the wildflowers as we go up to higher elevations. Owens Valley starts at 3,000 feet in elevation, so spring starts late here. We will be car-camping throughout the trip, but local lodging can be found as well.

**This trip is for CNPS members only** (please ensure your membership is up to date [or join](#)). Space is limited. No drop-ins please. For further trip information and email registration contact Joe Cernac at [joecernac@sbcglobal.net](mailto:joecernac@sbcglobal.net). Detailed trip information will be emailed to registered participants closer to the departure date.

### **Mon May 23 10am - 2pm Search for the Tiburon Mariposa Lily and Tiburon Jewelflower (Marin County)**

Join Ring Mountain Stewardship Coordinator Amanda Magallanes, Vivian Neou and Ramón Curiel to see the Tiburon mariposa lily (*Calochortus tiburonensis*) on Ring Mountain Preserve and the Tiburon jewelflower (*Streptanthus glandulosus* var. *niger*) at St. Hilary's Preserve. Both species are rare and endangered, 1B.1 listed on the CNPS Rare Plant Inventory, here: [www.cnps.org/rare-plants/cnps-inventory-of-rare-plants](http://www.cnps.org/rare-plants/cnps-inventory-of-rare-plants).

The Ring Mountain hike will be about 2 miles round trip; the trail is steep and rocky in areas. We will caravan from Ring Mountain to Old St. Hilary's Preserve to see the

Tiburon jewelflower before heading home. It can be very windy and foggy, or hot and sunny, so dress in layers and wear sturdy hiking shoes. Bring hiking poles (recommended), sunscreen, hat, water, snacks and lunch.

There's more about the Ring Mountain Preserve, including a trail map, at [www.parks.marincounty.org/parkspreserves/preserves/ring-mountain](http://www.parks.marincounty.org/parkspreserves/preserves/ring-mountain). For more information contact trip co-leader Vivian Neou at [techchair@cnps-scv.org](mailto:techchair@cnps-scv.org).

**This trip is for CNPS members only** (please ensure your membership is up to date [or join](#)). Space is limited and **registration is required**. To register, please visit [www.cnps-scv.org/field-trip-20220523](http://www.cnps-scv.org/field-trip-20220523). Hike details and driving directions will be provided to confirmed registrants.

### Wed May 25 10am - 2pm Bonny Doon Ecological Reserve (Santa Cruz County)

Join Joe Cernac in exploring Bonny Doon Ecological Reserve. This area is a unique ecological islet in the highlands of Santa Cruz Mountains, made possible by an abundance of erosion-resistant sandstone. This sandstone results in landscapes ranging from slopes with little soil, where beargrass makes its appearance, to deep loose sandy soils, where shrubs found in drier regions abound. Finally, at the area's margins, redwoods and ferns make their presence.

Several species of manzanita will hold our interest. Bring lunch, snacks, and recommended 2+ liters of water. This hike is open to all comers, with no registration needed.

**Directions:** Parking is limited, so **please carpool** with others you know. The Preserve is located northeast of Davenport off Hwy 1. Exit Hwy 1 at Bonny Doon Rd. and head northeast. After 3.9 mi. turn right onto Martin Rd. (Bonny Doon Rd. becomes Pine Flat Rd. just before the intersection). In a mile the Preserve entrance will be on your left. Park near the fire station.

For more information contact Joe Cernac at [joecernac@sbcglobal.net](mailto:joecernac@sbcglobal.net) or (408) 499 2515.

### Thu-Sun Jun 16 - 19 Grouse Ridge Lake Basin Backpack (Nevada County)

Join Joe Cernac and Ken Himes on this backpacking trip to this lake basin area in the northern Sierra plateau just north of I-80 at State Hwy 20. Bounded on the west and far east by volcanics, the central area is glacial-scoured granite with abundant larger and smaller lakes. We hope this date will coincide with early Sierran blooming flora, with possible purple fawn lily (*Erythronium purpurascens*) at Grouse

Ridge Lookout peak. We will have two full days of exploration, which means three nights camping.

We'll park our cars at a nearby trailhead then backpack less than 2 miles, with a 300-foot climb, to our campsite.

**This trip is for CNPS members only** (please ensure your membership is up to date [or join](#)). Space is limited and **registration is required**. For more information and to sign up please contact trip leader Joe Cernac at (408) 499-2515 or [joecernac@sbcglobal.net](mailto:joecernac@sbcglobal.net). Trip details will be sent to registered participants closer to the date.

### Sun Jun 26 9am - 12noon Bird and Plant ID Walk at Lake Cunningham Park (San Jose)

At the onset of summer, join Arvind Kumar, Ashok Jethanandani, and Vicki Silvas-Young for a **beginner's** bird and plant identification walk through Lake Cunningham Park. This park provides food, water and shelter for our local breeding birds and its native garden is utilized by these breeding birds due to its habitat value. On this walk, you will learn how to identify the common birds of our area, as well as the native plants 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 list, and binoculars. Wear comfortable walking shoes.



Ashok Jethanandani  
Lake Cunningham field trip March 19, 2022

**Directions:** The park is located at [2305 S. White Road, San Jose](#). Meet at the Marina building at **9am**. The Marina is on the western shore of the lake, next to Raging Waters, at the opposite end of the park from the main entrance on White Road. In Google Maps, search for "Lake Cunningham Marina" to be directed to the Marina. Parking fee is \$6.

**RSVP** is required to join us for the walk. Space is limited. No drop-ins please. To register, please visit the walk's

Meetup page at [www.meetup.com/California-Native-Plant-Society-Santa-Clara-Valley-Chapter/events/261044048/](http://www.meetup.com/California-Native-Plant-Society-Santa-Clara-Valley-Chapter/events/261044048/).

Organized jointly by CNPS, Santa Clara Valley Audubon Society and Santa Clara Valley Open Space Authority.

### Mariposa (County) Field Trip Report

By Radhika Thekkath, Chapter President and trip host

On April 4-6 the Chapter had its first away field trip since the pandemic began, near the town of Mariposa, an hour east of the El Portal entrance to Yosemite, in the Sierra foothills.



Radhika Thekkath

Floral swathe, Agua Fria Creek watershed, April 2022

We explored native plants and flowers on Radhika’s property located in the Agua Fria Creek watershed. The creek was still flowing, although it does dry up by summer. The group had a great afternoon exploring the 10-acre property and listed over 70 native forbs, annuals, shrubs, and trees, excluding native grasses.

In bloom were Chinese houses (*Collinsia heterophylla*), shooting stars (*Primula hendersonii*), glassy onion (*Allium hyalinum*), tidy tips (*Layia platyglossa*), pretty face (*Triteleia ixioides*) and more. We were delighted to discover a lovely swathe of Foothill poppies (*Eschscholzia caespitosa*), silver bush lupines (*Lupinus albifrons* var *albifrons*) and fiddlenecks (*Amsinckia intermedia*).

The group went to the Hite’s Cove Trail the next day and it was a delightful walk, with many flowers in bloom in early April. Dee’s favorite was the Fremont’s birdsfoot trefoil (*Acmispon argophyllus* var. *fremontii*), a first sighting for her. The Hite’s Cove trail is narrow, so having the three experienced field trip leaders Ken Himes, Joe Cernac and Doug Krajnovich from the Sierra Foothills Chapter was a big bonus. This was a fun trip which we hope to repeat again in coming years.

### Stay in Touch!

Due to COVID-19, the Chapter remains virtual for many of our events. Please visit [www.cnps-scv.org/stay-in-touch](http://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](http://www.cnps-scv.org/blazing-star-newsletter). Our next online **and** paper version will be the September-October issue.



Dee Shea Himes

Fremont’s silver lotus, *Acmispon argophyllus* var. *fremontii*, spotted along Hite’s Cove Trail in Mariposa County

### CHAPTER LEADERSHIP FOR 2022

Title	Name	Email
<b>President</b>	Radhika Thekkath	president@cnps-scv.org
<b>Vice President</b>	Priya Pharate	priya@cnps-scv.org
<b>Recording Secretary</b>	Patricia Lang	secretary@cnps-scv.org
<b>Treasurer</b>	Brett Tucker	treasurer@cnps-scv.org
<b>Past President</b>	Vivian Neou	pastpresident@cnps-scv.org
<b>Chapter Council Delegate</b>	Radhika Thekkath	radhika@cnps-scv.org
<b>5th ExComm Member</b>	Dee Himes	dee4cnps@gmail.com

To see the full list of Chapter officers and chairs, please visit [www.cnps-scv.org/leadership](http://www.cnps-scv.org/leadership).

### DEADLINE FOR THE NEXT *BLAZING STAR*

**Saturday, June 18**

**carol.mattsson@gmail.com or (408) 255-3767**

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



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**FIRST-CLASS**

### **CALENDAR OF EVENTS** (page # in parentheses)

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <p><b>Apr 29 Fri</b> Photo Group photo sharing (3)</p> <p><b>May 10 Tue</b> Conservation Committee meeting (6)</p> <p><b>May 11 Wed</b> California Ethnobotany talk – Rieder (1)</p> <p><b>May 13 - 16</b> Eastern Sierra away field trip (9)</p> <p><b>May 23 Mon</b> Tiburon / Ring Mountain field trip (9)</p> <p><b>May 25 Wed</b> Bonny Doon field trip (10)</p> <p><b>May 27 Fri</b> Photo Group photo sharing (3)</p> <p><b>Jun 14 Tue</b> Conservation Committee meeting (6)</p> | <p><b>Jun 16 - 19</b> Grouse Ridge Lake Basin backpack (10)</p> <p><b>Jun 18 Sat</b> <b>Newsletter submittal deadline</b></p> <p><b>Jun 24 Fri</b> Photo Group photo sharing (3)</p> <p><b>Jun 25 Sat</b> Fountain thistle work party (8)</p> <p><b>Jun 26 Sun</b> Lake Cunningham bird &amp; plant ID (10)</p> <p><b>Mons &amp; Weds</b> Alum Rock workdays (8)</p> <p><b>Saturdays</b> Lake Cunningham workdays (9)</p> |
|--|---|

The next Chapter board meeting will be **Thursday, June 23** at **7:00pm** over Zoom. (There will be no May board meeting.) Board meetings are open to all Chapter members and their guests. For more information contact Radhika Thekkath at [president@cnps-scv.org](mailto:president@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 are \$50.00 per year. If you have questions about your newsletter subscription, please contact [membership@cnps-scv.org](mailto:membership@cnps-scv.org). Address changes may be submitted to [membership@cnps.org](mailto:membership@cnps.org). Please put "address change" in the subject line.

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