



[Santa Clara Valley Chapter](#)

THE BLAZING STAR

July-August 2000

GENERAL MEETING

SPEAKER: Jodi McGraw

TOPIC: Conservation Ecology of the Sandhills Plant Community

Friday, July 21, 2000 7:30 P.M.

Recognized as one of the most significant natural areas in the state of California, the inland sandhills of Santa Cruz County support a rare community of vegetation found nowhere else in the world. The unique soil of the sandhills supports two endemic plant communities which contain an assemblage of "sand-specialty plants." This includes sandhills endemics as well as undescribed ecotypes or subspecies of more widespread plant species. Also present are disjunct populations of otherwise inland or coastal strand plant species. Due to the combination of limited geographic range – the Santa Cruz Mountains – and narrow habitat specificity – sand soil of the sandhills – the endemic plant species of the sandhills are naturally rare. Widespread habitat destruction threatens the persistence of these species.

Our speaker, Jodi McGraw, is a graduate student in the Department of Integrative Biology at the University of California at Berkeley. She is presently conducting research to understand the role of disturbance in the persistence of rare plant species and the maintenance of community biodiversity amidst the threat of exotic species in the sandhills. She has been studying the ecology of the sandhills community since 1993 as an undergraduate at UC Santa Cruz. Jodi will talk about the ecology of the unique and diverse flora of the sandhills and discuss the ecological factors that must be considered for successful conservation. Jodi received one of the three scholarships our Chapter provided this year. You read about Jodi and

the scholarship awards in the last newsletter. Now, come find out more about one of the exciting projects our Chapter's scholarship dollars are helping to fund.

You can join our speaker for dinner at Jing Jing Chinese Restaurant, 443 Emerson in Palo Alto, before the meeting, if you will call for reservations. Make your reservation with Mary Simpson (e-mail marysimpson@earthlink.net or leave a message at 408-370-2177) no later than Tuesday, July 18, 2000. (Anyone calling the day before the meeting to add your name to the list will be placed in charge of dinner reservations for the next meeting.) We meet for dinner at 5:45 pm.

Driving instructions to the meeting: From the Bayshore freeway (Hwy 101) take the Embarcadero Road East exit. Drive on Embarcadero Road past the Palo Alto Municipal Golf Course and the Airport until you reach a stop sign and turn left. The Baylands interpretive Center is one half mile further on your left. The parking lot is on your right. Lighting is poor, flashlights are helpful.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE SETTING PRIORITIES

The board that governs the statewide organization of the California Native Plant Society has been engaged in a strategic planning process since the beginning of the year. As chapter president, I serve on the state board of directors, and have been participating in this process, as has chapter vice president Mary Simpson in her role as Director at Large. This ambitious activity began with a goal setting process which is now almost complete; the state board, with its organizational consultant, is moving on to issues of organization structure and governance. The result of the

goal setting will be, among other things, a system of priorities which will allow the state board to focus on programs and activities which advance our mission and to evaluate their effectiveness.

It is becoming obvious to me that our chapter would benefit from priority setting, as well. Over the years we have taken on a broad range of goals and activities: field trips, public meetings and forums, the wildflower show, the gardening with natives program, the photography program, books, posters, the plant sale, help for schools, rare plant identification and monitoring, conservation, invasive plant control. We have been able to do these things because we have a large and enthusiastic base of volunteers.

But there are limits to what can be accomplished with the resources we have. We cannot deal with all the invasive exotics in our two-county area, we cannot assist every school wanting help with a native plant garden, or participate in every fair or special day, and we cannot save every rare plant under threat. While the number of worthwhile activities is really limitless, we are constrained by our numbers, our knowledge, and sometimes by a lack of sense of priority.

I think this chapter can focus its resources effectively. I have some ideas as to how this can be done. Before saying more I want to hear what other people think. Write me or email me. Soon.

~Don Mayall

CHAPTER ACTIVITIES

PHOTOGRAPHY GROUP EXHIBIT OPENS Edwards Wildlife Refuge, Newark July 1 to September 30

Wildflower photographs by sixteen members of the photo group were chosen for display at the Edwards Wildlife refuge this summer. The photo group is an interest group of the Santa Clara Valley Chapter of CNPS. They meet the first Monday of every month at 7:30pm at the Peninsula Conservation Center, at 3921 E. Bayshore in Palo Alto. The exhibit is at the visitor center of the Don Edwards San Francisco Bay National Wildlife Refuge in Newark. The exhibit opens with a reception from 2 to 4pm on July 1 and the pictures will remain on display until the end of September. To reach the refuge, take the Dumbarton Bridge to Fremont. After you cross the bridge, go right on Thornton then right on Marshlands.

The following members of the group will have prints on display:

- Gloria Heller, "Lupines" Russian Ridge, April 2000.
- Andy Butcher, "Brodieia, *Triteleia Laxa*" Coe State Park, April 1998
- Don Mason "Field of Poppies and Valley Oak" near Pinnacles NM April 1998
- Ken Himes "Sand Lily" Mono County, May 1980
- Pete Henshaw "Coast Iris" San Bruno Mt. April 1997
- Philippe Rigault "Hound's Tongue" Foothill Park, April 2000
- Norma Jean Galiher "Oak in Fog" Russian Ridge April 1995
- Carol Hankermeyer, "Golden Lanterns" Mendocino June 1996
- Holly Harper, "California Phacelia" San Bruno Mt. April 1997
- Ann Baldwin, "Bitterroot" near Farmhill Blvd April, 1999
- Ken Gardiner, "Bitterroot" Mt. Diablo, May 1995
- Bob Weller, "Spice Bush" Napa May 1998
- Sonja Wilcomer, "Bird's Eye Gilia" Almaden-Quicksilver Park April 1993
- Hazel Tilden, "Salal Blossoms, Kruse State Park
- Zoe Chandik, "Steer's Head" Siesta Lake, Yosemite June 1993
- Lottie Jenvey, "Harlequin Lupine" Sierra June 1995

For more information call Sonja Wilcomer at 650-494-0104.

GARDENING WITH NATIVES

Our next meeting will be held on our normal first Thursday, July 6. We will have a general meeting Vicki Pelton's house starting at 7:30 pm with a potluck dinner. Vicki has a modest yard with a native garden still in progress. Please bring a potluck item to share, input for the monthly gardening calendar, and anything you wish to discuss with the group. Newcomers are always welcome! Please contact Stephanie Mangels at 408.629.8004 or stephmangels@hotmail.com for more information or to be on the group's mailing list.

CAPE IVY REMOVAL ON LOS GATOS CREEK TRAIL

Saturday July 15, 10 A.M.
Saturday, August 5, 10 A.M.
Saturday, August 26, 10 A.M.

We are continuing our efforts to remove Cape Ivy from the Los Gatos Creek Trail, just below Vasona Dam. The sessions have been moved to Saturday mornings to beat the summer heat. The site is shaded, which also helps. As always, wear a long-sleeved shirt and gloves to guard against blackberries.

Directions: from Hwy 17 southbound, take the Lark Avenue exit. Proceed straight through the intersection onto Garden Hill Drive. Follow it as it curves left, then right. Proceed 0.2 miles south, then park in the residential area as you approach a leftward bend. The locked gate on the right is the entrance to Los Gatos Creek Trail; head down and follow the trail to the right. The Cape Ivy patch is about 40 yards below the dam. From Hwy 17 northbound, take the Lark Avenue exit, turn left onto Lark Avenue and cross the freeway, then turn left at the first light onto Garden Hill Drive and follow the above directions.

For details, call David Chapman at (408) 296-3587, email dchapman@aimnet.com or Don Thomas at (831) 336-3224, email don_e_thomas@yahoo.com

EDGEWOOD EXOTICS - EXPANDED SUMMER SCHEDULE

Beginning June 17 Friends of Edgewood and the Santa Clara Valley Chapter will expand our schedule to include Saturdays through September 30. Our target exotic will be yellow star thistle. We need to hand pull thistle under shrubs and other difficult to reach areas. Meet 9am at the Park & Ride at I-280 and Edgewood Road. We will proceed to Mow Site I located along the Serpentine Loop Trail at the southwest base of the Central Ridge. If late, enter Edgewood on the Edgewood Trail and look for a map to Mow Site I at the west kiosk. Sessions last till noon. Bring gloves, water, sun screen, long-sleeves. Call Ken Himes for information, 650-591-8560.

July 11, 12: Mow Site I. Meet 5:30pm at west kiosk, junction Edgewood and Serpentine Trails. Park along Edgewood Road.

July 18, 19: same as July 11,12

July 25, 26: Yampah Meadow. Meet 5:30pm at west kiosk.

August 1, 2: Carex Meadow. Meet 5:30pm at west kiosk

August 8, 9: Meadows near west kiosk. Meet 5:30pm at west kiosk. Park along southside of Edgewood Road on west side of I-280.

August 15, 16: Lower Clarkia Trail. Meet 5:30pm at Clarkia Trailhead on Ca,ada Road. If late, proceed east on Clarkia Trail to work site.

August 22, 23: West kiosk meadows. Meet 5:30pm at kiosk.

August 29, 30: same as August 22,23

September 5, 6: same as August 22,23.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

COMMON GROUND TV: INVASIVE CORDGRASS

Our chapter, as part of the Common Ground Video Coalition produces a TV show or two every year on subjects of environmental importance. The next such program will be a discussion of the impact of the invasive cordgrass, *Spartina alternifolia* on Baylands and other parts of San Francisco Bay. Featured on the program will be Shannon Klohr of the Coastal Conservancy, Deborah Bartens, City of Palo Alto Naturalist, and Palo High Senior Alex Dukes who has been studying cordgrass at Baylands. You can catch the show on Cable Channel 6 in the Midpeninsula on Monday July 3, at 10pm or Thursday July 6, at 8pm. Elsewhere in the bay area you can see it at 6am on Sunday July 30 or August 6 on broadcast channel 65 or cable channel 21.

If you would like to be involved in producing environmental TV shows, call Don Mayall 650-856-7579 or email seleve@netcom.com

YOSEMITE NONNATIVE PLANT ERADICATION

This summer I will once again be leading habitat restoration volunteers (non native plant eradication) as a volunteer with National Park Service (NPS) in Yosemite. I still have openings available for several weekdays and a few weekends. No prior work experience or botanical expertise is necessary, however participants must be experienced cross country hikers (day hiking only) in very good physical condition. NPS provides free shared camping and free entrance to Yosemite while working. If you would like to volunteer, please email gstigall@aol.com with a subject line of "Yosemite Restoration" or leave a message at 650.941.1068. Be sure to include your postal address, phone number(s) and email address. This is both a fun and rewarding opportunity!

~Georgia Stigall

WILDFLOWER SHOW REPORT, YEAR 2000

We started 2000 with the same momentum as in previous shows. Friday evening was inspiring as the tables filled up with 527 specimens (434 native, 93 alien) in 87 families, including 37 species not exhibited before. This total almost tied the record of the past 12 years (528 in 1992). We continued showing living plants in pots (lots of beautiful bulbs!), or gathered in members' gardens; these totaled about 20% of the plants on exhibit. As is our policy, many specimens were "recycled" after the show for use by

instructors, artists, photographers, and seed collectors. The information cards and the database that tracks species exhibited continue to be the ongoing heart of the Wildflower Show. The cards come from patient and dedicated work by Olive Zappacosta, Mary Alice Bethel, Sally Casey, Jim Sugai, and others. David Chapman, who has charge of the electronic database, added features this year to improve tracking where the plants are collected. At this year's show, as for last year, Nora Monette made and laminated cards to take care of the many new species we exhibited. Ellie Gioumouis once again secured the rooms (back in winter!), set up the directional signs for the show, and got our bottles from storage.

URGENT: We need storage space to store our precious hoard of bottles for the exhibit. The bottles are all in cardboard boxes about the size of wine or beer cases.

Attendance reached 843 (a bit lower than last year), despite our usual good coverage in the Mercury News. Paul Heiple reports that visitors patronized the CNPS book (posters, etc.) tables to the tune of about \$3975 (compared to \$3200 in 1999, \$4400 in 1998, and \$3600 in 1997). Donations and vendor contributions added another \$800.

In the plant exhibit, we added inexpensive hand lenses with small notes called "A Closer Look," and added biographical information to appropriate plant names (Kellogg, Fremont, Lewis, and Clark, besides Brandegee, Chamisso, and Eschscholtz from past years). Lastly, we laminated six double-sided information pages, gleaned from current books on sale, for the oak display.

To add to our displays of invasive exotics, Friends of Edgewood, and plants of the Baylands, Hawkeye Rondeau contributed a small carnivorous plant display; Paul Heiple created a fascinating small exhibit on native bees. Chapter members exhibiting included photographers Sonja Wilcomer, Lottie Jenvey, and Norma Jean Galiher, and artist Judy Miller Johnson. Toni Corelli, Judy Mason, and Linda Bea Miller hosted a display on their forthcoming Edgewood flora. Our other old friends were there: Larner Seeds, Dragon Prints, and the Growing Native Newsletter. The eight docent tours of Native Hill, the native plant garden at Foothill College, were popular with visitors, as were the several tours of the plant exhibit.

Almost 100 people, including brand-new members, helped with the Wildflower Show and Plant Sale (many serving at both). For some the effort included hours of work before the show weekend. We enjoyed socializing in our break room always stocked with delicious treats thanks to Vicki Silvas-Young. Takedown on Sunday was swift and efficient thanks to Dick Gehrre's excellent management again this year.

This is my sixth and final year as your Wildflower Show chair. I want my prospective successor(s) to know that I have kept complete records, created a thorough, easy-to-follow timeline, and would be glad to give advice and training (except during February and April 2001, when we'll be out of town). This job is easily divided into several areas of responsibility. Most important, a great many people can advise and support on specific parts of the show. You'll have lots of help! I'm sure you'll feel a tremendous surge of pride in the chapter as you see all the incoming specimens and you'll love getting to know all the chapter stalwarts better.

Three cheers and a heartfelt thanks to all who have helped through the years I've been chair!
~Carolyn Curtis 650-856-2636; seleve@ix.netcom.com

FIELD TRIPS

JULY 7-9, MONITOR PASS, EASTERN SIERRA

The Milo Baker Chapter is inviting other CNPS chapters to join them on a weekend adventure in the Eastern Sierra. Monitor Pass, one of the most scenic of all the Sierran passes, will be the focus. Carson Pass, south Lake Tahoe, and the Sweetwater Mountains are all within a short drive from the Monitor Pass area as well.

Five campsites (8 people/2 vehicles each) have been reserved for Friday and Saturday nights. The camping fee is \$10/person for one night and \$15/person for two nights. Each campsite has a fire pit and grill, cupboards, bear-proof lockers and tables, and is near drinking water and restrooms (no showers). The park's mineral springs are channeled into concrete pools, where you can swim or just soak (\$4 for adults, \$2 for children). Carpooling is recommended. Drivers of extra vehicles will need to arrange for offsite parking at the park and/or pay a fee. Please bring the materials you need for meals and their preparation.

Reservations can be made by sending payment (payable to CNPS - Milo Baker Chapter) to: Peter Warner, 555 Magnolia Ave., Petaluma, CA 94952-2080. Contact leaders Peter Warner at (707) 763-7405 or peterjwarner@earthlink.net, or Ann Howald at 939-0775, annhowald@vom.com for more information.

📅 Deadline for the next *Blazing Star*: Friday, August 17, 2000. Cynthia Gilbert, Newsletter Editor, 650-320-9225 or cgilbert@jps.net

☎ Recording Hotline for CNPS Events 415/853-5634

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