



California Native Plant Society
Santa Clara Valley Chapter

THE BLAZING STAR

September-October 2005

GENERAL MEETING AND PROGRAM

**Friday, September 23rd at 7:30pm
Saratoga Library Community Room
13650 Saratoga Avenue, Saratoga**

**Topic: CNPS Horticulture Program: Going Native,
Going Sustainable
Speaker: Peigi Duvall**

We live with many different landscapes, whether they be in our own yard, at our place of work, or even at the places we frequent everyday, such as the parking lots of stores and banks, or freeways and walkways. So many of these plantings require large amounts of water, pesticides, herbicides, fertilizer, and often quite a bit of effort as well. Living in a drought-prone area with a still expanding population, this type of landscaping does not seem wise nor sustainable.

We are happy to have Peigi Duvall, Horticulture Program Director for CNPS, share her ideas and experiences about the use of native plants in the landscape. Peigi is a landscape designer and a Santa Clara Valley Chapter member, and we are very pleased to have her working at the State level to bring more awareness to the public about our wonderful California flora.

Directions: From Highway 85 take the Saratoga Exit (NOT Sunnyvale-Saratoga Road) and travel southwest towards the Village of Saratoga. Stay in the right lane of Saratoga Avenue. About ½ mile from the highway exit, there will be a two-lane left turn for West Valley College at Fruitvale Avenue. Proceed through this intersection in the right lane, and take the next left turn into the library parking lot. The community room is at the front right of the library building.

CNPS general meetings are free and open to the public. For more info. contact Chapter Vice President Kevin Bryant at mtngreen17@verizon.net or (408)353-8824.

Save the Date! Chapter Potluck Nov 12

Our November Chapter General Meeting will include our annual potluck dinner and Chapter elections. It will be held on **Saturday, November 12** at the Shoup Garden House in Los Altos.

CHAPTER ACTIVITIES

Native Plant Sale and Call for Volunteers

Fall is the perfect time to plant in our area, and our Native Plant Sales are the best place to start filling your garden with some of our beautiful native plants! **Our Fall Native Plant Sale will be held on Saturday, October 15, from 10am to 4pm at our nursery at Hidden Villa.**

Help is always needed for the sale, and there are lots of ways to help (and most of them don't require a great deal of knowledge about our native plants). If you can donate boxes for customers to carry home their purchases, please bring them to the nursery during the week before the sale.

There are also lots of ways to **volunteer your time** to help with the sale. Most of the jobs listed below don't require expert knowledge of plants, and you can choose to work one or two hours or all day. Before the sale, you can help during our **Wednesday work sessions** at the nursery from **12noon to 4pm** (see below).

Special workdays will be held from **10am to 4pm** on the following days (although we might leave earlier if it's very hot):

**Saturday, October 8
Sunday, October 9
Friday, October 14**

On these days we will prepare the nursery and the plants for the sale. If you'd like to come and help, bring your hat, sunscreen and water, and your lunch if you'd like.

Help Needed on the Day of the Sale

On the day of the sale, we need:

- People to help set up before the sale (starting at 8am)
- People to help with parking
- People to help clean up after the sale (4-5pm)
- Cashiers
- People who will write up the sales tags before customers go to the cashiers to pay for their plants
- People who will help customers take their purchases to their cars and bring back the wagons and carts to the nursery
- People who will answer customers' questions about the plants and help them decide which plants to purchase
- People to conduct a survey of sale visitors

The plant sales are always lots of fun to work at, and we hope you'll come and help! Lunch will be provided to volunteers on the day of the sale, too. You do not need to sign up in advance: just come to the nursery at the time you'd like to work. If you would like to sign up in advance, please contact one of the coordinators listed below with the time you'd like to work and the job you'd like to do (if you have a preference).

Contact information for the coordinators:

Janet Gomez, plant sale co-coordinator, (408)978-2984, janet.gomez@gmail.com
Kevin Bryant, plant sale co-coordinator, (408)639-0493, mtngreen17@verizon.net

Directions: Hidden Villa is located on Moody Road west of Foothill College. From Hwy 280 in Los Altos Hills, take the Moody Road exit and head west. Two miles west of Foothill College, look for the Hidden Villa sign and driveway on the left. Proceed over the bridge, and park in the visitor center parking lot to your right. The Native Plant Nursery is at the greenhouse just beyond the visitor center.

Native Plant Nursery

Our regular native plant nursery work sessions take place every **Weds.** from **12noon to 4pm**. For more information, contact Jean Struthers at (650)941-2586 or JeanStruthers@aol.com, or Ray Deutsch at (650)365-6136 or henrymarsh@yahoo.com.

Gardening with Natives

Gardening with Natives meets monthly and includes a mix of seasoned native plant gardeners as well as beginners. Newcomers are always welcome.

On **Thursday, September 1, from 6-8pm** we will visit the Mountain View Mercy-Bush Park. This community park, located at the corner of Mercy and Bush streets near downtown Mountain View, was constructed in 2001 on 0.6 acres. It features a wide variety of native plants (coexisting with exotics) and a man-made dry creek. We will have an opportunity to see how these natives cope in a community park setting with low maintenance.

For more information about the park, see www.ci.mtnview.ca.us/citydepts/cs/parks/mercy%5Fbush.htm.

Directions: Take Hwy 101 to Shoreline Blvd. South. Turn left on El Camino Real, left on Castro St. and right on Mercy St. Follow Mercy St. to the Bush St. intersection.

Our meeting on **Thursday, October 6**, is a very special one: a talk at **6:30pm** on "Propagating California Natives" by Matt Teel of Yerba Buena Nursery, followed at **7:30pm** by the popular Seed and Cutting Exchange. Bring seeds and cuttings of native plants from your garden to share. Bring plastic bags and/or containers in which to take them home. **Location** will be at the PCC-- see directions below.

Contact the GWN Steering Committee at GardeningWithNatives@yahoo.com or call Arvind Kumar at (408)274-6965, to be added to the GWN newsletter email list, provide input, or receive more information.

Directions to the PCC: The PCC (Peninsula Conservation Center) is located at 3921 E. Bayshore Road in Palo Alto. From Highway 101, take the "San Antonio North" exit, get immediately into the left-hand turn lane, and turn onto East Bayshore. This will curve around to the left, then right. Turn right on Corporation Way. Then turn into the first driveway on your left, which leads to the PCC parking lot.

Keying with Natives

Join us on the last **Friday** of every month, from **6:30pm - 8:30pm**, in a fun gathering to meet with other native plant enthusiasts to sharpen your keying skills. We meet at the PCC building in Palo Alto. The next meetings will be **August 26, September 30, and October 28**.

David Houston has provided a few entries from a journal the KWN group has started keeping, which contains some of the plants they've keyed out and some of the tips they've learned.

A type of hedge nettle, *Stachys ajugoides*, is one of the plants we attempted to key. This plant belongs to the mint or Lamiaceae family. We started with Toni Corelli's book

on Edgewood Park since it contains fewer mints than the book by Thomas and other books we use. Also Toni's book was a good choice because Michael Yantos collected the plant sample at Edgewood Park. According to Beidleman and Kozloff's book the subspecies is likely to be *ajugoides* (bugle hedgenettle) or *rigida* (rigid hedgenettle).

I chose this entry from the journal because it demonstrates a few of the tricks we've learned from experienced participants such as Sally Casey. Most important is that choosing the book with the least number of choices can greatly speed up the process. Another interesting point which is less obvious is that if you have the flower, fruit, leaves, stem and root of the plant you have a much better chance of completing the keying process. Yet another interesting fact about this entry is that sometimes a trinomial or subspecies approach is necessary in order to identify the plant in question.

Mulefat, *Baccharis salicifolia*, [*B. viminea*], is a plant that is in the sunflower or Asteraceae family. I collected a sample of this plant from Arastradero Nature Preserve and brought it to our KWN meeting last fall. Note that the name of the species of this plant has been changed. This happens quite often as botanists continue to learn more about the origin or details of a particular plant as more in depth analysis occurs.

Oso berry, *Oemleria cerasiformis*, is a plant that is in the Rose or Rosaceae family. Even though the plant's collector, Melanie Cross, couldn't join us that evening, we gladly keyed out the plant for her and emailed her our results. This is a great service that our group provides for the CNPS community. We encourage you to join us in the future at our monthly KWN meetings.

Please bring a locally collected plant with flower or fruit if available, and an interest in learning how to key out or identify local plants. Microscopes, lamps and keying books are supplied but you may bring your own. Contact David "Tex" Houston for more details, (650)962-9876 x347 or davidh@acterra.org.

Habitat Restoration at Edgewood Park

Join Ken Himes to help remove invasive exotic plants and protect Edgewood's sensitive habitats. **Friday sessions, at 8:30 am**, occur year-round. **Wednesday evening sessions begin at 5:30 pm**.

We will no longer meet on Wednesdays after daylight savings time ends. The **last Wednesday evening session will be October 26**.

For more information, call Ken at (650)591-8560. For the Friday sessions call Ken or contact John Allen at jcakwa@earthlink.net.

STATE CNPS NEWS

Pamela Muick Departure

Pamela C. Muick, Ph.D., Executive Director of CNPS, has recently left CNPS; her immediate plan is to take a well-deserved sabbatical, culminating nine years of serving as a non-profit executive director. Pam visited our Chapter several times and was a wonderful guest and inspiring teacher. Please join us in wishing her the best in her future activities.

Conservation Visioning Meetings

The Santa Clara Valley Chapter hosted a Conservation Visioning Meeting for state staff and Bay Area conservation volunteers on July 9. This was one in a series of meetings held around the state this year, which will culminate in a presentation at the Chapter Council on **September 10**. Minutes from the meeting can be found at www.cnps.org/programs/conservation/meetings.htm.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE: Volunteering

By Judy Fenerty, Chapter President

Although I have been a member of CNPS for many years, I only began to actively volunteer during our recent vegetation assessment project at Coyote Ridge. Since then, I have been consistently inspired by the depth of knowledge and enthusiasm for our native flora among our membership, and the dedication of our volunteers. I often wish I had jumped in sooner!

If you've been a member for a while, but haven't had a chance to volunteer, I encourage you to take advantage of the opportunity. We have many on-going committees, and we're always looking for folks who are able to tackle special projects.

One rewarding way to get involved is to serve as a Chapter Officer. A nominating committee will shortly present the slate of candidates for the 2006 Officer nominations, and the annual election will be held at the November 12 potluck. All Officer positions are open to current Chapter members. If you would like to know more about running for Chapter office, or would like to volunteer in another capacity, please contact me or any of the officers listed on page 5.

**Woolly Bluecurls**

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Woolly Bluecurls (*Trichostema lanatum*) is a strikingly beautiful evergreen shrub to 4', with fragrant foliage and fuzzy purple flowers in late spring. It wants full sun, lean soil, excellent drainage, and *no summer water*. It has a reputation for being "difficult" because the average garden is moister and richer than it can stand, but it is the ultimate combination of low maintenance and beauty. It's a favorite of hummingbirds and is a good choice for cut flowers. This member of the mint family is found from Monterey County southwards to San Diego County.

CHAPTER FIELD TRIPS

Chapter field trips are free and open to the public. They are oriented to conservation, protection and enjoyment of California native plants and wildlife, and we adhere to all rules and guidelines for the lands on which we are visiting.

In our region it is very important to be prepared for hiking on rugged & steep terrain, wide temperature ranges and rapidly changing conditions at any time of year. All participants should wear sturdy footwear and carry sufficient water, sun protection, food, 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.

Sep 20 Tue 7pm Field Trip Planning Meeting

Looking for a fun and easy way to contribute to an important chapter activity? Join us at our next field trip planning meeting, where we will be brainstorming to come up with exciting places for our Chapter to explore. We will be forming a new field trip committee to look for ways to enhance our chapter's field trip experience. If you're looking for a way to get involved, but don't have much time to give, this is a great job for you. The committee will meet at most four times per year, and no experience is required.

The meeting will be held at the Peninsula Conservation Center (PCC) in Palo Alto, 3921 E. Bayshore Road. Contact Kevin Bryant at mtngreen17@verizon.net or (408)353-8824, for details, or if you have input but can't attend.

Sep 24 Sat 10am Oaks of Monte Bello Open Space

Monte Bello Ridge is an excellent place to hone our identification skills for California's native oaks, with seven species known to reside there. We will look at ways to tell our oaks apart, with plenty of practice along the way. We'll expect to see some late summer and autumn blooming plant species as well.

This is an approx. 5 mile hike with a 600 ft. gain in elevation. Bring water, lunch, and sturdy hiking footwear. We'll have lunch near the top of Black Mountain. We will return before **3pm**.

Directions: Meet at the Monte Bello Open Space parking lot, on Page Mill Rd. 7 miles west of I-280, or 1 mile east of Skyline Blvd. Contact Kevin Bryant at (408)353-8824 or mtngreen17@verizon.net for details.

Oct 9 Sun 11am Coastal Prairie at New Brighton Beach

The tourists are gone and the weather is usually beautifully summer-like in Santa Cruz County around this time of year. It's a great time to have a little picnic at the beach, and then work it off with a 1 to 2 mile walk to explore the coastal prairie on the terrace above. There should be a few surprise plant species in bloom here this time of year, scattered among dried introduced annual grasses and perennial native grasses. Bring whatever kind of beach picnic you'd like; there are tables, BBQ grills, and facilities available here.

We will start our hike at around **1pm**, and will return to the parking lot at around **3pm**. Park in the main beach lot at New Brighton Beach off of McGregor Dr. in Aptos.

Directions: Take Hwy. 17 south to Hwy. 1 south to Park Ave. exit (not State Park Dr.), turn right at the light, then make an immediate left at the stop sign at McGregor Dr. Follow the signs to the beach parking lot. Walk down to the beach and look for people who look like they might care about plants, or perhaps a sign. Contact Kevin (see above) for details.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

News and Activities from Other Organizations

Growing California Native Plants at SJSU

You want to grow native plants in your home garden, but don't know how to start. Does this sound like you? A new class at San Jose State University will give you the information you need. The Osher Lifelong Learning Institute has teamed up with our Chapter to bring you this class that combines lecture with site visits.

Instructors are: Agi Kehoe, Arvind Kumar, Fran Adams, Judy Mason, and Tanya Kucak. No tests, no grades.

The course runs **Saturdays, 9-11am, Sep 17-Nov 19**. Tuition: \$100; Chapter members get a 10% discount. Class location: 2160 Lundy Avenue, San Jose.

For a flyer on the class with complete information email info@osher.sjsu.edu or call (408)519-1286.

Cal-IPC Symposium Oct 6-8 in Chico

The California Invasive Plant Council will hold their 14th Annual Conference-- Cal-IPC Symposium 2005: "Prevention Reinvention - Protocols, Information, and Partnerships to Stop the Spread of Invasive Plants." The meeting will be held October 6-8, 2005 at California State University, Chico, and will include the Council's first Wildland Weed Field Course on October 5th. Information on the program, registration, lodging, and sponsorship are available online at www.cal-ipc.org.

Going Native Garden Tour Wants You

The fourth annual Going Native Garden Tour will take place **Sunday, April 30, 2006**. Preparations are now under way, and the 2006 tour committee is seeking:

- Submissions of home and public native gardens located in San Mateo or Santa Clara County;
- Volunteers for the steering committee;
- Docents and greeters to help on tour day.

If you can help with any of the above, please email info@goingnativegardentour.com, visit www.goingnativegardentour.com, or call (408)274-6965.

Bringing Back the Natives Garden Tour

Members living closer to the East Bay may be interested to know about the Bringing Back the Natives Garden Tour, showcasing gardens in Alameda and Contra Costa counties, which takes place on **Sunday, May 7, 2006**.

The organization is seeking home gardens to show and volunteers to staff the gardens the day of the show and to help organize the 2006 tour.

For more information please contact the tour coordinator, Kathy Kramer, at (510)236-9558 or kathy@kathykramerconsulting.net.

CHAPTER OFFICERS FOR 2005

To learn more about our Chapter or give suggestions, please contact one of our officers listed below.

Title	Name	Phone	Email
President	Judy Fenerty	(408) 378-6272	judy@fenerty.com
Vice President	Kevin Bryant	(408) 353-8824	mtngreen17@verizon.net
Recording Secretary	Vicki Silvas-Young	(408) 293-7124	mrnngwrblr@yahoo.com
Treasurer	Paul Heiple	(650) 854-7125	LogH3o@aol.com
Past President	Georgia Stigall	(650) 941-1068	GeorgiaStigall@yahoo.com

DEADLINE FOR THE NEXT *BLAZING STAR*

Saturday, October 8, 2005

Email: mattsson@sbcglobal.net

Phone: (408)255-3767