



California Native Plant Society
Santa Clara Valley Chapter

THE BLAZING STAR

November-December 2005

ANNUAL MEETING AND POTLUCK

Saturday, November 12, 2005 at 6:00 pm
Shoup Garden House, Los Altos

ESCAPE OF THE INVADERS: PEST PLANTS IN THE GARDEN

Speaker: Paul Heiple

Chapter member and weed warrior Paul Heiple will discuss the challenges of living in an increasingly disturbed (developed) area with a climate range that allows many non-native plant species to flourish and threaten remaining native plant habitats. Many of these invasive weeds started as ornamental garden plants, and some are still sold and planted in our area. Other invaders show up as volunteers in our gardens, sometimes inadvertently introduced from a nursery plant pot, and often blown in by the wind or by hitching a ride on clothing or animal fur. Learning to identify and eradicate the worst weed offenders can help to ensure that our beautiful native flora will survive this onslaught.

CNPS members know Paul for his work with Ken Himes, leading the removal of invasive exotics for habitat restoration at Edgewood Park in Redwood City. Paul also has lead many docent tours of the park's native flora, fauna, and geology.

We will also have a silent auction of books and other items of interest to members. If you have extra books or other items to donate to the auction, please contact Kevin Bryant at (408)353-8824 or mtngreen17@verizon.net, or drop off the books at our office at the PCC at 3921 E. Bayshore Rd. in Palo Alto (label them CNPS).

This is our annual potluck dinner and election meeting. This year, we're happy to welcome our Gardening with Natives friends to this combined meeting. Bring your favorite dish, whether it be a dessert, salad, main dish, or beverage, it always works out that we have just the right

amount of everything! Also, be sure to bring plates, drinking glasses, and eating utensils for yourself, as well as a bag in which to take home unwashed dishes.

Please arrive at **5pm** to help set up. We will begin eating at **6pm** and the program should start at **7pm**. We will also need help with clean-up at the end of the evening.

Directions: From Highway 280 take the El Monte exit east. Turn left (north) on University Ave. The Garden House is about a quarter mile ahead on the left (west) side of the street. From Highway 101, take the San Antonio exit west/south. Then turn right on Main St. in Los Altos (3rd stoplight after crossing El Camino Real). Cross Foothill Expressway and turn left immediately onto University Ave. The Garden House is a short distance ahead on the right.

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

Chapter Annual Election

The annual potluck is also the time to elect constitutional officers for the coming year. Following is the slate put forth by the nominating committee:

President	Judy Fenerty
Vice-President	Kevin Bryant
Treasurer	Paul Heiple
Recording Secretary	Vicki Silvas-Young

All Chapter members may run for office-- nominations may also be made from the floor at the potluck. Many thanks to our 2005 nominating committee: Georgia Stigall, Arvind Kumar, Stephen Buckhout, Kevin Bryant, and Judy Fenerty, and also thanks to the officers who served in 2005.

CHAPTER ACTIVITIES

Fall Plant Sale Update

Once again, with the help of our many dedicated volunteers (and in spite of a little rain the night before and even a few sprinkles just after the sale opened), we had a very successful Fall Native Plant Sale. Thank you to everyone who helped at the sale and before the sale!

Our Spring Plant Sale will be held on **Saturday, May 6, 2006**, at Hidden Villa. Please note: the hours for the spring sale will be from 10am to 3pm. We encourage you to come and help – there are lots of ways to join in this effort. See the article below for information about helping at the nursery to grow the plants we sell, and watch future issues of the *Blazing Star* for the many ways that you can volunteer to help in the Spring Plant Sale.

Native Plant Nursery Plans Expansion

Good news for the native plants at the nursery! After almost a year we now have permission to expand the nursery at Hidden Villa. We will be adding about 600 square feet to the end of the nursery for the stock plants so that they can have some sun. These plants are the specimens that we use for propagating some of our sale plants. They have been languishing in the shade for years and should grow better in some sun.

If you are willing to help work on this please let Jean and Ray hear from you soon (see contact info below). We want to start planning and building before winter. We need help on an irrigation plan and installation, putting up deer fencing and laying floor material. After that we will cut a hole in the existing fence for a door, and move the stock plants into the new space. This will allow two of the existing tables and another aisle for our plant sales. Hopefully the stock plants will love it too.

Even as we expand our nursery, we will continue our usual native plant nursery work sessions, which take place every **Wednesday from noon to 3pm**. Bring garden gloves, sunhat, clippers, and your lunch if you like. Other tools will be provided at the nursery. Knowledge of plants is not necessary: your willingness to help is all that's required.

If you missed out on the sale, plants can still be purchased at the nursery on Wednesdays until December 7 (checks only please). 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.

Directions: Hidden Villa is located on Moody Road west of Foothill College. From Hwy 280 in Los Altos Hills, take the Moody Road exit and head west. Two miles west of Foothill College, look for the Hidden Villa sign and

driveway on the left. Proceed over the bridge, and park in the visitor center parking lot to your right. The Native Plant Nursery is at the greenhouse just beyond the visitor center.

Gardening with Natives

Gardening with Natives meets monthly and includes a mix of seasoned native plant gardeners as well as beginners. Newcomers are always welcome. Our **November** meeting is combined with the Chapter potluck and talk by Paul Heiple on Pest Plants in the Garden on Saturday, Nov 12, in Los Altos. See page 1 for complete details. All GWN members are invited to attend.

In **December**, GWN will take its annual break, and there will be **no meeting** that month. For native plant gardeners, this is the busiest month, when many plants need to be cut back, divided, and planted. Meetings will resume in January 2006.

You can 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.

Progress at Native Hill

Native Hill at Foothill College is now starting to show the benefits of our hard work. Weeds have been successfully abated at several key locations, which are now mulched and are awaiting the fall rains, when California poppy seeds will be sown. The key locations are sites with high public visibility along the road and walkways.

With the coming rains we also plan on planting some perennials to complement our annual display of poppies and Clarkia. We also plan on having a bunchgrass habitat along one of our slopes to highlight the diversity and form of our native grasses, which will be interplanted with blue-eyed grass, yarrow and lupines.

If you would like to volunteer at the garden or be added to the email list to be notified of upcoming workdays, contact Phil Higgins at phidor@juno.com or (650)941-4752.

Keying with Natives

Join 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 **October 28, November 18, and December 16**. (Note that the November and December meetings are on the third Friday of the month.)

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.

Photo Group

Please join us for the monthly meeting of the Chapter Photography Group in November as we wrap up our year. Photo Chair Jerry Welch will be showing color and black & white images from a recent trip to the White Mountains and Bristlecone Pines. Everyone else is invited to bring in your best images from the year as a celebration of a great year of photography!

The meeting will be **Monday, November 21 from 7-9pm** at the PCC. Seasonal goodies will be provided. There will be **no December** meeting. For more information contact Jerry Welch at (408)353-8352 or jdwelch@yahoo.com.

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 will resume in spring after daylight savings time begins.

For more information, including locations for the weeding sessions, call Ken at (650)591-8560 or contact John Allen at jkakwa@earthlink.net.

Thistle Eradicators at Foothills Park

Jean Olmsted reports that the Thistle Eradicators team is alive and well. Lately they have been working on French broom since the yellow star-thistle has pretty much gone to seed by now. As a result of their past efforts, this summer's workload has been light.

But once the rains come, they will have much to do! Then the broom is easier to pull out, and the Italian thistle will be plentiful. The team's primary goal is to maintain the areas they have already cleared. Then each year they are able to add a small area more to the cleared areas.

Everyone is welcome to help weeding! The group meets at **9am every Sunday morning** in the Orchard Glen parking area of Foothills Park, or at the Page Mill/280 Park and Ride lot. Non-Palo Alto residents enter as the team's guests. For meeting location, please call Jean Olmsted at (650)493-3468 or send an email message to jwo@sypal.org to get on the notice list.

Conservation Committee

Chapter members have been working on conservation issues throughout San Mateo and Santa Clara County, and a conservation committee meeting was recently held to exchange information and plan future activities. Current issues include: comments on Environmental Impact Reports for projects in San Carlos, Los Gatos, and Woodside; the Santa Clara County HCP/NCCP process; invasives control (particularly *Phragmites*); High Speed Rail; oak woodlands protection; proposed logging near Lexington Reservoir; and the federal Endangered Species Act changes.

If you would like to get involved, our next meeting will be **Wednesday, November 9th at 6pm** at the Peninsula Conservation Center. We'll supply pizza! For more information contact Kevin Bryant at mtngreen17@verizon.net or (408)353-8824.



Toyon

©2005 Ann Miller

Toyon (*Heteromeles arbutifolia*) lights up the winter landscape with its gorgeous displays of bright red berries. An evergreen shrub to 8 feet, it has dark green foliage that is attractive throughout the year. The white flowers of spring turn into green berries in summer, maturing to red in winter and attracting flocks of birds. This hardy shrub is found throughout California, and is a carefree plant in the garden, tolerating a wide variety of soils, exposures, and watering regimes. Toyon is a native alternative to cotoneaster and pyracantha. - *Arvind Kumar*

ENDANGERED SPECIES PROTECTION UNDER THREAT

By Don Mayall, Chapter Rare Plants Coordinator- South

On September 29 the US House of Representatives passed, 229 to 193, a bill which many environmentalists say will gut the Endangered Species Act. For 32 years the Endangered Species Act has been a safety net for plants and wildlife on the brink of extinction. It has been successful in preventing the extinction of the American Bald Eagle, and in fact, the act has saved 99 percent of its listed species. It was instrumental in gaining protection for rare species at Edgewood Park and provides the basis for protecting the serpentine habitat at Coyote Ridge and elsewhere in our chapter area.

Under the bill which passed the house last month, the process for listing endangered species would become more difficult. It opens up a number of loopholes for developers, oil, timber, and mining companies. It allows federal agencies to avoid their responsibility to protect endangered species. Most significantly, it eliminates the current system of designating "critical habitat," areas considered essential to a species' survival. In our chapter area we have critical habitat areas in San Mateo and Santa Clara Counties designated for the protection of the Bay checkerspot butterfly and other serpentine endemics, as well as for the red-legged frog.

The House bill now goes to the US Senate. The indications are that there is a small margin of time for supporters of continued protection for endangered species to express our views to our senators, Diane Feinstein and Barbara Boxer. I urge Chapter members to do so. The campaign for support of endangered species is being undertaken by several groups of environmentalists. Working for our Chapter and CNPS as a whole is Emily Roberson of the Native Plant Protection Coalition. She is coordinating information on the current legislative attack on the Endangered Species Act and gaining support from our local county boards of supervisors to pass resolutions for protecting endangered species.

Her website is www.plantsocieties.org. Other sources of information include the Endangered Species Coalition www.stopextinction.org and Defenders of Wildlife www.saveesa.org.

For more information, contact Don Mayall at seleve@ix.netcom.com or (650)856-7579.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE:

Volunteer Recognition

By Judy Fenerty, Chapter President

The CNPS Chapter Council meets four times a year around the state, and the Santa Clara Valley Chapter has had very good representation at the last few meetings. Several of our Chapter members, including Peigi Duvall, Don Mayall, Georgia Stigall, and Janet Gomez have been participating in state-wide activities. State meetings are wonderful opportunities to share ideas and learn about exciting new approaches to native plant issues.

After these meetings (including the most recent one held in September in San Clemente), I often think that we should do more to recognize the volunteers in our wonderful Chapter. At the last meeting, two new CNPS Fellows were introduced, and other dedicated volunteers were honored through the state Volunteer Recognition Program. It would be wonderful to recognize more of our Chapter volunteers through these programs, and I know there are many deserving candidates.

CNPS Fellows: Three Santa Clara Valley Chapter members have become CNPS Fellows: Carl Sharsmith (1974), Gerda Isenberg (1980), and Sally Casey (1997). Fellows are individuals who have made an outstanding contribution to the organization's success and to the appreciation and conservation of native flora.

State Volunteer Recognition: Members honored under this program are tireless volunteers working "in the trenches," as well as agency personnel, legislators, and rare plant activists. Our most recent chapter member so honored was Arvind Kumar, Publicity Chair.

If you know of people that you've worked with at CNPS that you feel deserve to be recognized, I would be interested in forwarding nominations to the state committees overseeing these awards. In addition, several Chapter Board members are brainstorming volunteer appreciation ideas for all of our participating members. Please let me know if you have ideas, or if you'd like to help out. You guys all deserve a big pat on the back!

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.

Nov 19 Sat 10am Long Ridge Open Space

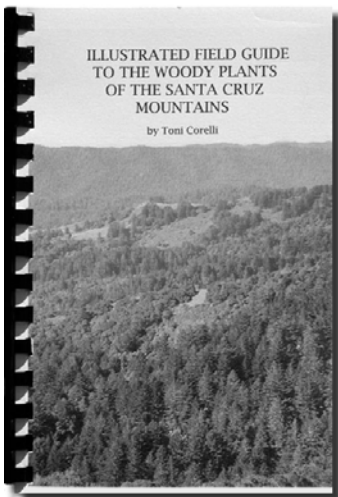
Join author Toni Corelli on an autumn walk where we will focus on ways to identify plants using only vegetative characteristics. The hike will be about 5 miles with an elevation range of about 300', and we anticipate returning by **3pm**. Bring water, lunch, and sturdy hiking shoes.

Directions: Long Ridge Open Space Preserve is on Skyline Blvd. Park for the Hickory Oaks trailhead, on the roadside approximately 2 miles north of Hwy. 9.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

News and Activities from Other Organizations

Toni Corelli's Woody Plants Book Available



The book *Illustrated Field Guide to the Woody Plants of the Santa Cruz Mountains* by Toni Corelli is now available.

Published by Monocot Press, 178 pages in soft cover with spiral binding, with 206 woody plant species described and illustrated. A preview of this book was the topic of the May 2005 CNPS General Meeting. It is easy to carry in the field

and has location information such as what public land the plants occur on. This book updates John Hunter Thomas' *Flora of the Santa Cruz Mountains*, for the woody plants.

Toni will be available to sign books at the Chapter Annual Meeting and Potluck on **November 12** (see page 1.) Our Chapter helped fund this project and we will be selling it for \$20 at our meetings and other upcoming events. If you would like a copy via mail, call or email Toni Corelli at (650)726-0689 or corelli@coastside.net.

CNPS 40th Anniversary Party in Berkeley

The East Bay Chapter and the Willis L. Jepson Chapter are organizing a fun evening party celebrating the 40th anniversary of CNPS. The party coincides with the CNPS Chapter Council meeting in Berkeley on December 3rd. All CNPS members are invited to come to this very special celebration. There will be a silent auction along with food and drink, a jazz duo, and a live auction later in the evening.

Date: Friday, December 2

Time: 7:30 pm to 10:30 pm

Place: Brazilian Room, Tilden Region'l Park, Berkeley

Cost: \$10 plus a few dollars for wine or beer

What to Bring: A contribution to the Auction (see CNPS website for more) and money to spend on the auction items

To attend, please RSVP by **November 25**. To RSVP, or for more information, please contact Elaine Jackson at elainejx@mindspring.com or (925) 372-0687. Or see the CNPS website at www.cnps.org.

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

To join our Chapter email list please send your request to judy@fenerty.com or cnps_scv@yahoo.com.

DEADLINE FOR THE NEXT *BLAZING STAR*

Saturday, December 3, 2005

Email: mattsson@sbcglobal.net
Phone: (408)255-3767