



# GOLD FIELD NOTES

EL DORADO CHAPTER ☼ CALIFORNIA NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY ☼ MARCH-APRIL 2009

## CALENDAR

### March 17 (Tuesday)

Monthly program.  
Ecological gardening. Details inside newsletter.

### March 21 (Saturday)

Field trip.  
Nimbus Dam overlook. Details inside newsletter.

### March 28-29 (Saturday-Sunday)

Symposium.  
Growing Natives: Celebrating California's Beauty in Dry Times. Held in the East Bay Area. For details: <http://www.nativeplants.org/symposium2009/>

### April 4 (Saturday)

Twice yearly plant sale.  
Native plants and books will be on sale from 9 AM to 1 PM at the El Dorado Fairgrounds, Floriculture Building, 100 Placerville Drive, Placerville.

### April 11 (Saturday)

Field trip.  
Red Shack. Details inside newsletter.

### April 21 (Tuesday)

Monthly program.  
Living with oaks. Details inside newsletter.

### April 25 (Saturday)

Field trip.  
Lava Cap walk. Details inside newsletter.

### May 9 (Saturday)

Field trip.  
Iowa Hill Road. Details inside newsletter.

*Monthly programs are held on the third Tuesday of each month with the exception of August and December. Programs begin at 7 PM and are held at the Placerville Library, 345 Fair Lane Placerville, CA.*

**For updates between newsletters  
[www.eldoradocnps.org](http://www.eldoradocnps.org)**

## SPRING PLANT SALE

**SATURDAY, APRIL 4**

**9 am to 1 pm**

**EL DORADO COUNTY  
FAIRGROUNDS**

**SEE DETAILS INSIDE**

## A WIN FOR THE PINE HILL PLANTS: APPELLATE COURT REVERSES CONGREGATE PROJECT DECISION

In an opinion issued January 28, the Third District Appellate Court determined that the El Dorado County Board of Supervisors improperly approved the Congregate Project, a proposed assisted-living facility in Cameron Park located in an area where rare plants were growing. The development, affecting about 27 acres adjacent to the Marshall Medical Center offices in Cameron Park, is within the recovery area designated by the US Fish and Wildlife Service for several rare plants occurring in the Pine Hill area, but is outside the County's designated Pine Hill Ecological Preserve. The project site supports two listed species, Roderick's ceanothus and the Stebbin's morning glory, and three other plants considered to be rare by the California Native Plant Society.

The El Dorado Chapter of the California Native Plant Society (CNPS) and Center for Sierra Nevada Conservation (CSNC) filed suit against the El Dorado County Board of Supervisors in January, 2007. The Court of Appeal agreed with CNPS and CSNC on a number of issues. First, it found that the County's environmental review of the project was inadequate and ordered an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the project. The Court of Appeal also found that El Dorado County and El Dorado County

Superior Court Judge Daniel Proud erred in their review when they disregarded comments submitted by experts from the California Department of Fish and Game, the US Fish and Wildlife Service, the US Bureau of Land Management, and CNPS. The Court of Appeal also ruled that the County's rare plant fee mitigation program has never been reviewed under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and until such a review is completed the program cannot claim to mitigate the impacts from development projects on rare plant species. The Court of Appeal also found that the County violated their own ordinance since the annual review of fees that is required by law has not been completed since its adoption in 1998.

CNPS and CSNC see the ruling as an opportunity to address deficiencies in the rare plant program and ensure that the rare plants are adequately protected. This success would not have been possible without the expertise of Michael Graf and Keith Wagner, the excellent attorneys who represented us in this suit. Our success on the suit can also be credited to the financial support of our members. The Appellate Court's full opinion may be download from: <http://www.courtinfo.ca.gov/cgi-bin/opinions.cgi?Courts=C>

## **SPRING PLANT SALE SATURDAY, APRIL 4 9 AM TO 1 PM**

Spring is nearly here and it's time for our twice yearly plant sale. Once again will be offering a great selection of native and drought tolerant plants that will grow well in our area. Books on gardening with native plants and natural history will also be available for sale.

If you are new to gardening with native plants, there will be plenty experienced gardeners at the sale to answer your questions.

This newsletter includes a list of plants that are likely to be at the sale so that you can plan ahead for your shopping trip. As in recent sales, we will not be taking orders for



plants prior to the sale, so make certain you come down when we first open at 9 AM for the best selection.

## **AT THE FAIRGROUNDS**

The sale will be held at the El Dorado County Fairgrounds. You will find us located in the Floriculture Building; signs will be posted to help you find us.

The fairgrounds is at 100 Placerville Drive, Placerville, right next to the Raley's Supermarket.

### **VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!**

We need help setting up in the morning and assisting throughout the day on Saturday. If you are interested in helping out, Please contact Shellie Perry (530) 644-6335.

## **LANDSCAPING WITH NATIVES DISPLAY**

Come and check out the El Dorado Chapter display "Landscaping with Natives" at the Placerville Main Library. It is colorful with great pictures of a variety of native plant gardens to stimulate your imagination; informative with "mythbusters" and ways to transform your lawn from a water guzzling, boring monoculture to a dynamic low-water habitat; and fun with insects and other creatures as pollinators that you can attract to your gardens. The display will be up for the month of March and will coincide with Ellen Zagory's talk on creating ecological garden habitats.

Thanks to chapter members, Alice Cantelow, Mahala Young, Susan Durham, and Cindy Podsiadlo for their efforts, great ideas, time and energy. Thanks to Rosemary Carey for her contribution of materials for the lawn alternative. If you are interested in volunteering to set up displays or make posters in any capacity, we need you! The Chapter has another one coming up for the Cameron Park library in May (focus on oaks, creatures associated with oaks, and/or oak woodland habitats) as well as changing the displays at the El Dorado Trail kiosk (focus on oaks?, invasive weeds? and what's blooming on the trail?). Ideas and help welcome. Please contact Cindy Podsiadlo if you are interested in helping out.

## **SPRING HIKES TO THE RARE PLANT PRESERVE**

This year the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) will host naturalist-led walks on Saturdays to the Pine Hill Preserve.

May 2	Cameron Park Unit
May 16	Pine Hill Unit
May 30	Cameron Park Unit
June 6	Salmon Falls Unit

For more information call Barb Williams (916) 985-4474 or check out the web at: <http://www.pinehillpreserve.org/tours/index.htm>

## **KUDOS TO SUE BRITTING - OUTSTANDING VOLUNTEER!**

The El Dorado Chapter has recognized Sue Britting, our long-serving Conservation Chairperson, as Outstanding Volunteer for her leadership, commitment, and clear insights into the issues of the Congregate lawsuit in Cameron Park. As Conservation Chair she recommended initiation of the lawsuit against El Dorado County and the developer because of the inadequacy of the mitigated negative declaration for the Congregate Project. Subsequently, this allowed the project to be built with only a low "mitigation fee" rather than a full-scale Environmental Impact Report (EIR) which would have examined all of the im-

pacts to the gabbro soil plants before the project was permitted. The lawsuit and appeal took over two years to bring victory for the Chapter in the 3rd District Court of Appeal. She not only arranged legal representation but consistently worked with our lawyers through the layers of paperwork (briefs, emails, letters, testimony, compiling the records, etc.) as well as keeping us informed. Through it all, she kept "swimming upstream" against all odds and her follow through has inspired us all. Thank you for your continued efforts on the behalf of the El Dorado Chapter and the rare plants of Pine Hill.

## **NEED VOLUNTEER FOR HOSPITALITY COMMITTEE - Now!**

Doris Corson will be stepping down as Hospitality Committee Chair in March, and we need someone to step forward and take on this responsibility. The commitment can be for a 3 month time period or until the end of the year. Basically, the position focuses on setting up and providing refreshments during our program meetings which are held at the Placerville Main Library on the 3rd Tuesday of the month at 7pm (no meetings in August or December). We have an automatic coffee pot and any food, drink, or utensils that is bought can be reimbursed. Please contact Cindy or Doris if you are interested or want more information.

## SPRING PLANT WALKS

Please contact the trip leaders by the Wednesday prior to the hike to let them know you will be attending.

### MARCH 21 (SATURDAY)

#### NIMBUS DAM OVERLOOK, SACRAMENTO COUNTY

Duration: half day/full day

Meeting Time and Location: Shingle Springs park-n-ride, 9:00 am

Description: The bluffs overlooking Nimbus Dam produce a fabulous Spring wildflower display, with enough poppies to put Dorothy and Toto to sleep! We will also see a healthy relict stand of Purple needlegrass and a huge population of Live-forever. Atop the bluffs is a shallow vernal pool area where we can see some early vernal pool bloomers like Geranium carolinianum, Lomatium caruifolium v. caruifolium and Saxifraga integrifolia. After lunch we can take an optional trip to another nearby vernal pool area that has some different plants. Plant lists will be provided. Dogs must be kept on a leash..

Level of Difficulty: easy

Bring: water, lunch, sturdy walking shoes, \$5 per car for parking

Contact: Shellie Perry, (530) 644-6335, seperry@concentric.net

### APRIL 11 (SATURDAY)

#### RED SHACK TRAIL, EL DORADO COUNTY

Duration: ½ day or longer if interested

Meeting time and location: 8:30 am, Raley's parking lot, Placerville for carpool. 9 AM at Red Shack Trailhead. We'll carpool from Placerville to the trailhead, which is on Highway 49 across from the Red Shack Fruit Stand, or you can meet us at the trailhead. (Parking is limited; carpooling is encouraged). This will be a half day trip (back to trailhead by 1:30 pm) with options to walk down to the South Fork American River or to turn around before then based on participants' schedules and/or enthusiasm.

Description: Discover the foothill natives as we drop down toward the American River. Fairly easy down hill but climbing back up can get your heart pumping! This hike will have frequent stops as we explore a variety of microhabitats and their plants along this north to east facing slope. Expect ferns like maidenhair and woodfern, shooting stars, fairy lanterns, buttercups, larkspur, fritillaria (chocolate bells), Clarkia, wild grape, mock orange, California bay, and hop tree. Both the understory and overstory yield quite a variety of shrubs and trees.

Level of Difficulty: Easy; moderate on the uphill unless you go slow

Bring: Water, lunch or snacks, sunscreen, hat, and the usual accoutrements.

Contact: Cindy Podsiadlo, (530) 642-0648, clpodsiadlo@yahoo.com, or Susan Durham, (530) 626-6736, durhamsus@yahoo.com

### APRIL 25 (SATURDAY)

#### LAVA CAPS, EL DORADO COUNTY

Duration: full day

Meeting time and location: Pollock Pines Safeway at 9 am

Description: Visiting spring annuals peculiar to the Miocene mudflows. This extremely diverse plant community is formed on very rocky and volcanic soils eroded from the Mehrten formation mudflow. These are herb and grass dominated openings within the Upper Montane Chaparral. These support small, low growing herb species, which are adapted to high soil temps, full sunlight, and droughty conditions. These openings are often completely isolated within dense manzanita. Snowpack melts quickly in spring because of sunny slopes, lack of canopy. Seeps are common in upper swales and slow gradually during the late spring and summer. The sequence of flowering is from March to August. Two species are 'sensitive' and endemic to ENF. There is a plant list available. Possible special plant species to see are yellow bur navarretia, Pleasant Valley Mariposa lily, True's manzanita.

Level of Difficulty: Easy to moderate. A high clearance vehicle will be handy to have.

Bring: Water, lunch or snacks, sunscreen, hat. Wear hiking boots or shoes. Long sleeves are useful for barging into the manzanita.

Contact: Annie Walker, (530) 626-3678, agastache@att.net

### MAY 9 (SATURDAY)

#### IOWA HILL ROAD, PLACER COUNTY

Duration: full day

Meeting time and location: Placerville Raleys, under the big sign, 8 am

Description: This little stretch of Iowa Hill Road offers a wonderful display of easily accessible wildflowers, including Lotus argophyllus v. fremontii and the rare Clarkia biloba v. brandegeae. Lots of pretty flowers!! After lunch we will walk uphill into a serpentine area, and see what's blooming there. Plant lists will be provided.

Level of Difficulty: very easy before lunch, moderately easy after lunch

Bring: water, lunch, sunhat, bug spray, sturdy walking shoes

Contact: Shellie Perry, (530) 644-6335, seperry@concentric.net

### MAY 30 (SATURDAY)

#### LOCATION TO BE DETERMINED

Duration: full day

Meeting time and location: Placerville Raleys, under the big sign, 8 am

Description: This trip will be led by Tom Peterson. Tom is a backcountry hiker, naturalist, environmentalist, and author of several books, including "Trespasser's Paradise" and "Georgetown Hiking Trails". He will pick somewhere beautiful for us to explore.

Level of Difficulty: probably moderate.

Bring: water, lunch, bug spray, sturdy walking shoes.

Contact: Annie Walker, (530) 626-3678, agastache@att.net, or Tom Peterson, twcoyote532@hotmail.com

## MARCH PROGRAM

### Creating an Ecological Garden with California Native Plants

Gardeners are just beginning to realize that their landscapes can be an oasis not only for themselves but also for the "three B's": birds, bees and beneficial insects. Ellen Zagory, Director of Horticulture, UC Davis Arboretum, will discuss the wildlife value and importance of using California native plants in our gardens, based on the plants and her observations in the UC Davis Arboretum. Ms. Zagory is a spokesperson for the Arboretum's education and outreach programming, which promotes more sustainable garden plants and practices. She has also written a series for Pacific Horticulture Magazine on the UC Davis Arboretum All-Star program and travels the state lecturing to UCCE Master Gardeners and regional garden clubs about beautiful heat-tolerant and low-water use plants. She recently has become more interested in the interactions our gardens have with the fauna of surrounding wild lands and how our constructed landscapes can help support the biodiversity of native insects and other wildlife.

This event will be held at 7:00 pm, March 17, at the Placerville County Public Library at 345 Fair Lane, Placerville.

### APRIL PROGRAM LIVING WITH OAKS

El Dorado County is graced with handsome and enduring California Oaks. New construction, irrigated lawns and cultivated land can endanger these trees. To ensure that our native oaks continue to thrive, they need proper care. Master Gardeners Forrest Lockhart and Randy Meyers will discuss methods of maintaining and protecting these wonderful trees.

This event will be held at 7:00 pm, April 21, at the Placerville County Public Library at 345 Fair Lane, Placerville.

## COMING PROGRAMS

May 19 **Eschscholtz and California Poppies** Ernie Hartley

June 16 **Discover California Grasslands** Wade Belew, California Native Grasslands Association



El Dorado Chapter  
California Native Plant Society  
P.O. Box 1948  
Placerville, CA 95667

March-April 2009

**SUMMER-FALL 2009 HIKES**

All are welcomed! Save the dates!

March 21	Nimbus Dam overlook
April 11	Red Shack
April 25	Lava Cap walk
May 9	Iowa Hill Road
May 30	location to be determined
June 13	Traverse Creek Extravaganza
July 7 (Tues.)	Rubicon Trail
July 10-12	White Mountains & Bristlecone Pines
July 18	Highway 88 Plants Near Parking Lots
July 31-Aug1	Picayune Valley
August 15	Echo Summit area
August 29	Ring Two Fen and Four Corners Fen
Sept., TBA	Hope Valley Fall Colors

Details on Spring Hikes inside newsletter

Learn more about State CNPS at: [www.cnps.org](http://www.cnps.org)



**DEDICATED TO THE PRESERVATION OF CALIFORNIA'S NATIVE FLORA**

The California Native Plant Society is a statewide nonprofit organization of amateurs and professionals with a common interest in California's native plants. The mission of the Society is to increase understanding and appreciation of California's native plants and to preserve them in their natural habitat through scientific activities, education, and conservation. Membership is open to all.

Membership includes the quarterly journal, *Fremontia*, the quarterly *Bulletin*, which gives statewide news and announcements of Society activities and conservation issues, and the chapter newsletter *Gold Field Notes*. To join, call our main office in Sacramento, (916) 447-2677, or visit [www.cnps.org](http://www.cnps.org) to join online.

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