



GOLD FIELD NOTES

EL DORADO CHAPTER ☉ CALIFORNIA NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY ☉ NOVEMBER-DECEMBER 2004

FALL PLANTING AND PLANT SALES GO HAND IN HAND

CALENDAR

November 13 (Saturday)

4th annual Empty Bowls Dinner. Hosted by the non-profit El Dorado Peace and Justice Community, Empty Bowls has three objectives: 1) to raise funds to feed hungry people, 2) to raise awareness about the issues of hunger and inequality in our local and global communities, and 3) to remind people that through artistic creativity we can help to create positive social change. The basic idea is simple. Local potters, both professional and student, donate handmade bowls for use in serving a simple dinner of bread and soup. Guests make donations for their meal and can keep the bowl their soup was served in as a reminder that hunger exists all year long. 5-8 PM at the Hangtown Grange, 2020 Smith Flat Road, Placerville, CA. Suggested donations \$15-\$50. Call (530) 622-6900 or (530) 642-1120 for more information.

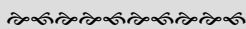
November 16 (Tuesday)

Monthly program. Join Joanne Geggatt for an evening with slides of some of California's beautiful wildflowers. See inside newsletter for additional program note. Refreshments will be served.

REMINDER: No Program meeting in December. Happy Holidays!

January 18 (Tuesday)

Monthly program. Plant Species Diversity in California Serpentine: Regional Patterns and Possible Causative Factors. Ecologist Hugh Safford will tell us about serpentine soils in California and the unusual plants that grow on them. Details on this program on the website and in the next newsletter.



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

For updates between newsletters
www.eldoradocnps.org

Fall is for planting, as they say, and fall is for plant sales too! We had another beautiful day on October 2nd for our semi-annual (mostly) natives plant sale. This time we offered some different plants than before, and some plants from a new supplier. Steve Dowty provided us with a nice variety of grasses, sedges, rushes, and flowers. Cornflower Farms added some interesting plants to their assortment this time, including *Dudleya setchellii*, and the native *Iris douglasiana* (Douglas iris). We got several dozen plants from a new supplier, Floral Native Nursery of Chico, including a striking white-flowered California Fuchsia. In all, we sold about 1800 plants, several of Wally's fine hiking sticks, and over 30 books. At the end of the day, we had one of our most successful sales ever, grossing nearly \$7500. As usual, much of the proceeds will go to the Clark Youth Fund, Calflora, and other worthy chapter activities.

We'd like to thank all our invaluable volunteers for all their help: Sue Britting (seeds, plant photos, and much appreciated help in open sales), Rosemary Carey (publicity, including a beautiful color ad in the Mountain Democrat), Phil and Doris Corson (main checkout), Steve and Valerie Dowty, Susan Durham, Virginia Feagans and Tilly Holtrop (home-grown plants and expert gardening advice), Sandy Folmer, V.J. Harris, Gail Herron, Jim Higbee, Amy Hoffman (manager of the open sales area), Marge and Wally Jungnitsch (hiking sticks and other neat stuff), Greg Kiefer, Irene Martin, Karla

Meadows (delicious lunches and snacks), Marty Oberlander (books, posters, hats, and pre-sale plant labeling), Ben Parks, Cindy Podsiadlo (pre-sale checkout and treasurer), Mike Taylor, Rich Wade, and Annie and Doug Walker. Thanks to Janet Gerland of Cornflower Farms for helping us with our order of nearly 900 plants. Thanks to Fred Hoffman of KFBK and KSTE for letting us plug our sale on both his shows again this time. Thanks to the nice folks at Floral Native Nursery in Chico for their help. And thanks to Steve Tyron for posting our pre-sale form and announcements on the chapter Web site.

Special thanks again this time to Joanne Geggatt for making up another great plant sale flyer, for plugging the sale on

Fred Hoffman's radio shows, and for letting us use her house to sort and label the plants. Maximum thanks go out to Shellie Perry for her tireless help from beginning to end. Shellie started on the pre-sale form in mid-August, processed most of the pre-sale orders, handled all of the ordering from Cornflower Farms, organized the volunteers, helped Steve and Val label their plants, and made sure that every detail of the sale was covered. Thanks Shellie!

We'll be back next April with a new format for the spring sale. See you then!

Steve Perry, Plant Sale Co-Chair



RON LANNER EXPLAINS THE VAGARIES OF TREE ROOTS

By Shellie Perry

For our October meeting, Ron Lanner was the speaker, and the topic was "The Vagaries of Tree Roots". So, now you're thinking, "What kind of nerdy technobotanist geekazoid wants to spend ninety minutes hearing about (yawn) tree roots? Dull, dull, dull." Actually, it was anything but. Ron's presentation was chatty and informative, not dry or technical, and the slides he showed were really a treat. It was more like a visual tour of the plant world than a lecture.

One slide was of a tree root in a dry area that was at least one hundred fifty feet from the nearest tree - worth remembering when you are caring for your native Oak trees. Another was a fifteen hundred year-old Bristlecone Pine which was growing on top of a big hunk of granite. Fifteen hundred years earlier the pine seedling had survived by sending tiny roots down into equally tiny cracks in the granite, where they found enough moisture to keep growing. Over the years the tree's roots had grown bigger and stouter, until finally some of them cracked a large piece of the rock completely off. The severed piece of granite fell over on its side, exposing the formerly sheltered roots to the dry mountain air, which killed those roots,

which, in turn, killed the branches of the tree that had been served by those particular roots. The rock's revenge? There was a long, hard story in that picture.

Just in time for Halloween, we saw pictures of a "living stump". This one takes a little explaining. What happens when two seedlings of the same species are growing very close together? Usually, the faster-growing tree shades out the slower-growing tree, which eventually dies. But not always. Sometimes both trees stay healthy and keep growing vigorously, their roots and trunks getting closer and more crowded for space as the years go by, until eventually they may begin to merge together, to "self-graft" into one super-tree that shares a common root system, and sometimes a common trunk. They become the Siamese twins of the plant world. It gets weirder. Imagine now that you've got a pair of these Siamese-twin trees, with separate trunks and branches, but with a common root system. Fred the Forester comes along and cuts one twin down, leaving the other standing. (Fred is into selective logging.) There is nothing left of one twin except a stump and some roots. Roots cannot photosynthesize energy, so if a stump cannot sprout new stems and leaves it will normally die. BUT our stump is connected to roots that are still connected to stems and leaves, which means that our stump can draw nourishment from its twin, so the

stump doesn't die. Since it is still alive, it reacts to a wound the way any living tree does - by covering the wound with scar tissue. So, the cut surface of a living stump will eventually become completely covered with bark, which looks as strange as it sounds. The notion of a living stump, with roots but no leafy canopy, is slightly uncomfortable, rather like a butterfly with no wings. Is the living stump just a useless parasite, sucking nourishment out of its twin? Well, maybe. On the other hand, the living stump's roots can still gather water and minerals, and make them available to its still-green twin, which should be really useful during drought years. What is it that causes (or allows) two trees, to stop competing with each other and merge their circulatory systems together? Ron's talk certainly gave me things to think about. It is hardly surprising; Ron Lanner has spent much of his life studying trees. He has written several books on the subject, including "Conifers of California" and "Made for Each Other; a Symbiosis of Birds and Pines", both of which can usually be found on the "books for sale" table at our regular monthly meetings. Ron's writing style is approachable, not overly technical, similar to his speaking style. Those of you who were not fortunate enough to make the October meeting might consider consoling yourselves by acquiring one of his books.

FELLOWS OF CNPS NOMINATION PROCEDURES

The naming of individuals as Fellows of the California Native Plant Society is a means of awarding special recognition to persons who have made an outstanding contribution to furthering appreciation and conservation of California native flora and to the success of the Society.

Nomination of any CNPS member in good standing for Fellowship can be made at any time by any CNPS member, chapter, board, committee or officer.

The nominator may discuss a proposed nomination with the Fellows Committee.

The nominator should select a knowledgeable person or persons to write a formal letter of nomination for consideration by the Fellows Committee. The letter should explain why the nominee should be confirmed as a Fellow. It should generally not be more than one to three pages in length. Copies of newspaper articles, reports, publications or other supporting documentation may be attached.

The letter of nomination must contain:
The name, address and phone numbers of the nominee and nominator(s)
The nominee's offices held, areas of service or organizational roles
The nominee's projects of work or goals accomplished

The nominee's age and years of service in specific offices, roles or activities.

Letters of nomination should be sent to:
Fellows Committee
California Native Plant Society
c/o Linda Chipping
1530 Bayview Heights Drive
Los Osos CA 93402

Nominations are reviewed and recommendations are made by the Fellows Committee.

Approval decisions are made by the Board of Directors and the Chapter Council.

SCOTCH BROOM LOPPING TRIAL

September 2003-September 2004, Traverse Creek Botanical Special Interest Area

By Mike Taylor

Background Information:

The Eldorado National Forest (ENF) botany crew (Annie Walker, Rosemary Carey, Dirk Rodriguez, and Mike Taylor) and volunteers from the El Dorado Chapter of the California Native Plant Society and Eldorado National Forest Interpretive Association (Steve Dowty, Don Smith, Steve and Shellie Perry, Steve Tyron, Ben Parks, Susan Durham, Howard Williams, and others) have been lopping Scotch broom (*Cytisus scoparius*) at the Traverse Creek Botanical "Special Interest Area" (SIA) for several years (at least since 1998). The last few years we have timed most of these treatments for late summer or early fall (August – October). We began to focus efforts toward late season lopping after noticing the lack of success (+ resprouting) from spring or early summer treatments and reviewing results of lopping experiments done in the Georgetown area by Carla Bossard in 1987 and 1988 and published in her masters thesis, *Secrets of an Ecological Interloper: Ecological Studies on Cytisus scoparius (Scotch broom) in California* (1990).

It is believed that late season lopping treatments result in fewer crown sprouts (vegetative regrowth from the lower stem area just above and below the soil level) because the plants are experiencing maximum drought stress during this time period and lopping physiologically affects their ability to produce shoots from latent/dormant buds in the crown.

Comparative results of Bossard's treatments where all plants were lopped at 3 cm (~ 1 inch) above ground level:

March 1988: 95-100% resprouting plants

May 1988: 50% resprouting plants

August 1988: 0-5% resprouting plants

(note – In the March and May trials lopping at 0 cm resulted in fewer resprout-

ers and in all trials lopping at 10 cm resulted in more resprouters)

2004 Lopping Trial:

Previous late season lopping treatments at Traverse Creek Special Interest Area (SIA) were anecdotal and based on random observations of the previous seasons efforts. Estimates of success ranged from 75 to 90 percent.

In 2003, ENF botanists set up two test plots in areas of relatively heavy infestations of Scotch broom. Site 1 was considered "upland" and was approximately 200 yards from Rocky Canyon Creek, a perennial stream and a tributary to Traverse Creek. Site 2 was nearby but along the edge of Rocky Canyon Creek in a slightly more mesic (less xeric) site but only the last 1-2 feet of the plot's southern edge was adjacent to the creek and could be considered riparian. No broom plants had established in this "riparian" zone. I mention this only because if plants were growing in a riparian zone, as have been observed elsewhere, it would be expected those plants would not be experiencing the same degree of drought stress as broom growing on upland sites.

Both plots were flagged off and lopped on September 30, 2003. Sites were chosen in areas not previously treated. Great care was taken to lop every broom plant in the plot and efforts were made to lop the stem(s) as close to the soil as possible.

Site 1 was approximately 45 x 30 feet and 348 broom plants were lopped.

Site 2 was smaller about 45 x 20 feet and 104 broom plants were lopped.

These sites/plots were evaluated on September 21, 2004. The sites were carefully searched, sometimes on hands and knees, for resprouts, seedlings or small broom plants that may have been missed in 2003.

Results:

Site 1 - 12 resprouts, and seven small seedlings (some which were likely missed during the initial treatment) were found. [3.5% resprouted - 96.5% ef-

November Chapter Program

Look forward to spring! Enjoy an evening with slides of some of California's beautiful wildflowers. Explore pollination and survival techniques of native plants and why California has more wildflowers than any other state. Learn how Native Americans and pioneers used native plants and which native plants will grow in your garden. Joanne Geggatt is a botanist, Master Gardener and a long time member of CNPS who will lead us on this fabulous tour of wildflowers.



The meeting takes place at Placerville Public Library (345 Fair Lane, Placerville) and begins at 7 PM.

fective]

Site 2 – seven resprouts and 20 seedlings were found. [6.7% resprouted - 93.7% effective]

Note: the new seedlings and the small broom plants that were missed in 2003 did not figure into the calculation. All of these plants were pulled or lopped at the time of the 2004 monitoring. It is expected that new seedlings will continue to appear for many years, as Scotch broom seeds remain viable for decades. The good news is that due to the lack of soil disturbance in these plots (and in the SIA in general) numbers of seedlings are expected to diminish over time as the seed bank diminishes and/or becomes buried under organic litter/duff. Of course maintenance of the plots and of other treated areas in the SIA must continue in order to prevent new seedlings from maturing to flowering age (as young as 3 years old) and renewing the seed bank.

Thanks to everyone who has helped us cut Scotch broom at Traverse Creek the last several years. As you can see from Mike's report, we are making a difference!
Steve Perry



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


November-December 2004

Save the Date!
 January 18, 2005

Hugh Safford will tell us all
 about the unusual plants
 growing on serpentine soils.

November Program note inside.

Learn more about State CNPS at:
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.

CHAPTER OFFICERS AND COMMITTEE CHAIRS

PRESIDENT	Amy Hoffman	(530) 676-7658	ahoffman@kieferconsulting.com
VICE PRESIDENT	Steve Perry	(530) 644-6335	seperry@concentric.net
SECRETARY	Joanne Geggatt	(916) 939-3394	joannegeggatt@sbcglobal.net
TREASURER	Cindy Podsiadlo	(530) 642-0648	cpodsiadlo@fs.fed.us
BOOKS AND POSTER SALES	Marty Oberlander	(530) 333-1536	jober@innercite.com
CONSERVATION	Sue Britting	(530) 333-2679	britting@innercite.com
FIELD TRIPS	Steve & Shellie Perry	(530) 644-6335	seperry@concentric.net
HOSPITALITY	Karla Meadows	(916) 939-6828	kmateik@HorizonEnvironmental.net
INVASIVE EXOTICS	Annie Walker		awalker@d-web.com
MEMBERSHIP	Marge Jungnitsch	(530) 622-9249	
PLANT SALES	Steve & Shellie Perry	(530) 644-6335	seperry@concentric.net
PROGRAMS	Virginia Feagans	(530) 626-1469	
PUBLICITY	Rosemary Carey	(530) 620-3631 (after 5 PM)	rcarey@innercite.com
WEB MASTER	Steve Tyron	(530) 622-6567	steve@TyronGraphicDesign.com
NEWSLETTER EDITOR	Sue Britting	(530) 333-2679	britting@innercite.com