



GOLD FIELD NOTES

EL DORADO CHAPTER ☼ CALIFORNIA NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY ☼ SEPTEMBER-OCTOBER 2008

OAKS ARE LOSING LEAVES EARLY THIS YEAR

Most years, deciduous oak trees' color change coincides with signs of autumn -- Halloween pumpkins, Thanksgiving cornucopias, shorter days and cooler nights. But the 2008 drought already has some blue oaks in the Sierra Nevada foothills changing color and losing their leaves.

This is not the first time scientists have observed early leaf loss in California oak trees.

"In 1987, during a severe drought, many oaks in the Sierra Nevada foothills, as well as in the Coast and Transverse mountain ranges, began turning brown and dropping their leaves in August," said University of California Cooperative Extension oak specialist Douglas McCreary.

Oak trees' ability to shed foliage early is a survival mechanism, he said. All plants and trees require moisture to survive. Their roots pull moisture from the soil, channel it through the trunk, branches and stems in water-conducting tissues called xylem, and into the leaves. Some of the moisture is released into the atmosphere through small pores in the leaves called stomata.

The pores allow carbon dioxide to enter the leaves and be converted into food through photosynthesis. When faced with low soil moisture, the trees can either keep their foliage and continue losing water through the leaf pores, or drop their leaves and conserve moisture. Shedding foliage does suspend photosynthesis, but in the long term it keeps the trees from drying out completely and dying, McCreary said.

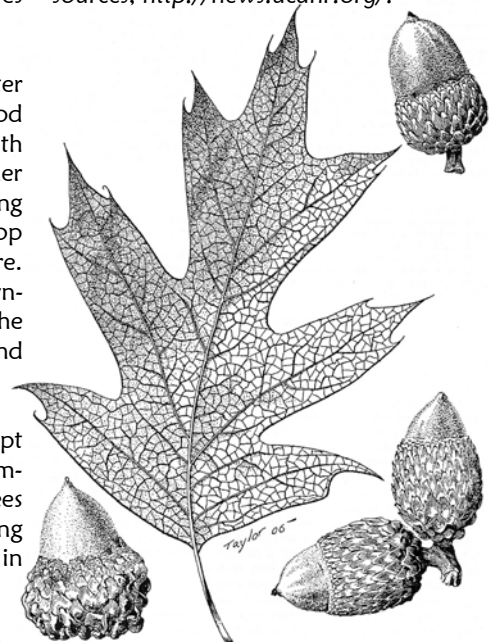
"Trees in dense stands are particularly apt to turn brown since there is greater competition for soil moisture," he said. "Trees in shallow, rocky soils or on south-facing slopes will be affected more than those in valleys or swales."

County researched oak trees during the 1987 drought and found that trees that lost leaves early suffered no detectable long-term damage.

"Drought does stress the trees, so they usually grow slowly and become more susceptible to insect and disease attacks," McCreary said. "The long-term consequences of repeated droughts are probably harmful. But we expect that most of the trees that change color and drop their leaves early this year will probably recover during the winter and leaf out normally next spring."

Early leaf loss may be more harmful to the ecosystem than to individual trees. Loss of leaves can hamper acorn development and maturity, reducing the number of acorns that will germinate and develop into seedlings. Reduced acorn production also adversely affects the many wildlife species that rely heavily on acorns for food.

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Black Oak
(*Quercus kelloggii*)

CALENDAR

September 16 (Tuesday)

Monthly program.
Weed management on the Eldorado National Forest. Details inside newsletter.

October 11 (Saturday)

Twice yearly plant sale.
Native plants, seeds and books will be on sale from 9 AM to 2 PM at the El Dorado Fairgrounds, Corker Building, 100 Placerville Drive, Placerville.

October 17 (Saturday)

Field trip.
Ellicott Bridge, El Dorado County. Contact Annie Walker for details (botanist@d-web.com).

October 21 (Tuesday)

Monthly program.
Rare plants of Red Mountain. Details inside newsletter.

November 18 (Tuesday)

Monthly program.
To be announced.



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

Scientists at the UC Sierra Foothill Research and Extension Center in Yuba

NEW DATE!

FALL PLANT SALE

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 11
9 am to 2 pm
COUNTY FAIRGROUNDS

The cooler mornings and evenings are just starting, and it is time to start thinking about the fall planting season. With the wet weather of winter just around the corner, fall is the best time to plant most native plants — especially here in the foothills where the spring and summer tend to be hot and dry.

This fall's sale will include native bulbs and seeds in addition to potted native and drought tolerant plants that grow well in our area. Books on gardening with native plants and natural history will also be avail-

able at the sale.

If you are new to gardening with native plants, there will be several 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.

SAVE THE DATES! GROWING NATIVES: CELEBRATING CALIFORNIA'S BEAUTY IN DRY TIMES

Two day Symposium—March 28, 2009 at Lafayette Community Center, Lafayette, and March 29, 2009 at Regional Parks Botanic Garden, Berkeley

Co-sponsored by *Pacific Horticulture*, the California Native Plant Society and the Friends of the Regional Parks Botanic Garden

We are pleased to present a 2-day program of talks and workshops exploring the possibilities for creating beautiful waterwise gardens with plants native to California.

For more information, please visit:
www.nativeplants.org
www.cnps.org
www.pacifichorticulture.org

HELP, VOLUNTEERS! IS ANYONE OUT THERE?

The El Dorado Chapter needs help. We're worn out and tired and need fresh folks with ideas, enthusiasm, dedication, and a little bit of time to volunteer to help out in a variety of ways. Opportunities galore!!!

Volunteer commitments can range from a few minutes at chapter meetings setting up chairs and tables for refreshment ----- to a couple of hours at the plant sale or providing refreshments during meetings ----- to filling a position on the board or heading a committee. We are in need of a President, Treasurer and Hospitality committee chair. If you would like to take on a board position or committee chair, you can take on bits of it at a time or even share the position while learning! TRY IT, YOU'LL LIKE IT! Other opportunities are usually a one time effort working on a special project or leading/co-leading a plant hike or

interpretive walk. Some projects may need artistic/ computer/ design skills or just a good eye and steady hands or attending a county meeting and bringing back notes of what occurred. Whatever your skills or time, we need them! Please let us know of your willingness. Every little bit helps.

Here are some wonderful lures!
Our chapter sets up educational displays at the libraries in El Dorado County; we're scheduled for March 2009 at the Placerville library and May 2009 at the Cameron Park library. These are fun group projects to work on!

Our next plant sale is October 11th at the Corker building at the El Dorado fairgrounds. Before the sale, you can help during our Friday work session at Joanne Geggatt's house to help unload and organize plants as well as label them with names and prices. We may need trucks or cars to take plants home until the next day.

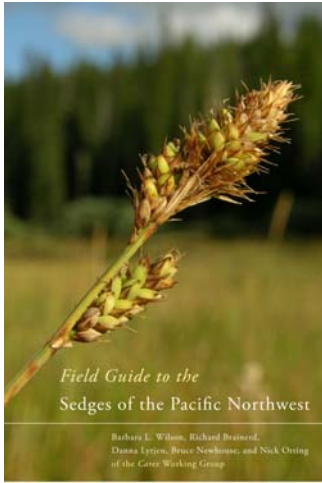
On the day of the sale, we will need people to:

- help set up before the sale (starting at 7 am) or help clean up after the sale
- unload plants, books and posters and help set up
- set up plant sale signs at the fairgrounds; set up tables and displays
- write up the sales tag before customers go to the cashiers to pay for their plants
- work as cashiers
- help customers take their purchases to their cars and bring back wagons and carts
- provide advice to customers as a plant consultant and answer inquiries.

If you are interested in helping out, Please contact Shellie Perry (530) 644-6335.

Many hands are needed!

NEW FIELD GUIDE



The Carex Working Group is pleased to announce the publication of the "Field Guide to the Sedges of the Pacific Northwest." The book is an illustrated guide to all 164 species, subspecies, and varieties of Carex that occur in Washington and Oregon. Botanists will find it useful throughout much of California particularly in northern California and in the mountains throughout the state. It contains identification keys, descriptions, color photographs, and distribution maps for each species, along with information about sedge ecology, habitat, and management.

The field guide is available by calling 1-800-426-3797 or it can be ordered by going to <http://oregonstate.edu/dept/press/e-f/FieldGuideSedges.html> and then clicking on "Secure online ordering form."

NEW! CHAPTER PROPOGATION GROUP

The El Dorado Chapter has a few folks that propagate plants for our plant sales as well as increase native habitat around their homes and there are many out there including myself that were interested in learning propagation techniques. The chapter does have members who form a formidable fountain of knowledge from a combination of the Master Gardener program, academic and practical knowledge of horticulture and botany, on the job knowledge and finally trial and error. Since the last plant sale and during meetings, I have been compiling a list of interested folks who can either provide the knowledge and expertise and those interested in learning how.

SEPTEMBER PROGRAM WEED ERADICATION AND CONTROL ON THE ELDORADO NATIONAL FOREST

The Eldorado National Forest is developing a proposal for treating noxious weeds and other invasive plant species across the Forest. The proposal will take an integrative approach toward

control or eradication of invasive species, utilizing a variety of manual, mechanical, and chemical treatments. Susan Durham, ENF botanist and team leader for the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) analysis for the project, will present information on targeted invasive species, proposed control methods, and a brief review of the NEPA process.

This event will be held at 7:00 pm, September 16, at the Placerville County Public Library at 345 Fair Lane, Placerville.

OCTOBER PROGRAM LONG-TERM MONITORING STUDIES OF ENDANGERED PLANTS ON RED MOUNTAIN

Michael Baad, Professor Emeritus of Ecology and Systematics (and Part-time Faculty), Arboretum Director and Herbarium Curator at California State University, Sacramento

A 15-year study of sensitive plants found

on Red Mountain in northern Mendocino County has revealed a clear pattern of decreased health of populations of McDonald's rock cress and three other serpentine endemics on this 4000-foot mountain of ultra-mafic rock. Colonizing sites after fire, these slow growing perennials are locally endangered by successional changes slowly closing the canopy over their heads. The natural history of McDonald's rock cress will be discussed as an unique example of how an intensive and long-term study of a species aids in its conservation.

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

To hone our interest, Armond Chase had provided a great idea to get us started: a tour of the Chase Horticultural Research facility located in Mt. Aukum. A small group of interested and available folks met there on August 16 where we had a wonderful and informative tour of the facilities provided by Anne Chase and her sister Linda Hunderfund as well as Armond giving information about the natives and other interesting species that they have growing at the ranch. The tour provided us with the various methods for propagating shrubby species as well as a look at the various mediums to grow them in.

We are trying to get the propagation group up and running. Since some folks work and others are retired or have free time, we are trying to figure out days to get together. A combination of alternating week days with weekends may work to provide everyone with the opportunity to participate. During the week, we can meet at Institute of Forest

Genetics (IFG) on Carson Road in Placerville. There are facilities here that have been provided to the chapter for use in propagating plants as well as irrigation and having plants "stored" after the plant sale. On a weekend, we can vary by meeting at various folks' homes or out in the field to collect seed and/or cuttings and then learning the "how-to".

We're tentatively holding our first meeting at IFG either on September 18 (Thursday) or September 19th (Friday) at 9:30 AM depending on availability of folks. Please contact Cindy Podsiadlo at 530 642-0648 for your preference of dates or if you want to be added to the propagation group list and kept informed of other meetings (weekends). We'll try to establish a consistent time to meet as well as having information on our website. If you like to get your hands dirty, this is the group for you!



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

September-October 2008

NEW DATE!
FALL PLANT SALE
SATURDAY, OCTOBER 11
9 AM to 2 PM
County Fairgrounds
Details 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, or visit www.cnps.org to join online.

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