



# GOLD FIELD NOTES

EL DORADO CHAPTER ☼ CALIFORNIA NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY ☼ MAY-JUNE 2011

## BEHIND THE SCENES AT PLANT SALES

### CALENDAR

#### May 17 (Tuesday)

Program.  
Vernal Pools. See inside newsletter for details.

#### June 7-9 (Tuesday-Thursday)

Workshop.  
Vegetation Rapid Assessment/Relevé Workshop. Location: Sonoma County. Check <http://www.cnps.org/cnps/education/workshops/> for details on registration.

#### June 25 (Saturday)

Workshop.  
Introduction to the Serpentine Ecosystem. Chico State Herbarium. <http://www.csuchico.edu/biol/Herb/workshops/>

#### July 16 (Tuesday)

Program.  
To be determined. Check website and next newsletter for update.

#### July 28 (Thursday)

Workshop.  
**Introduction to Native Bees as Pollinators.** Chico State Herbarium. <http://www.csuchico.edu/biol/Herb/workshops/>

#### Sept. 22-24 (Thursday-Saturday)

Workshop.  
Legends of the Fall: exploring the clandestine flora of early fall in the eastern Mojave Desert. Location: UC Granite Mountains Desert Research Station. Check <http://www.cnps.org/cnps/education/workshops/> for details on registration.

*Evening programs are held on the third Tuesday of January, March, May, July, September, and November. Programs begin at 6:30 PM. Check details inside for location.*

The Chapter's biannual native plant sales held on the first Saturday in April and October have become a part of the fabric of community life in Placerville. The Chapter Board is pleased to be able to bring native plants from major native plant wholesale nurseries in Elk Grove and Loomis, as well as stock from our smaller, local native plant nurseries, to an easily accessible central location in Placerville. Our plant sales are an opportunity for the public to buy plants not otherwise locally available without setting aside the better part of a day and the increasing expense of a 100 mile or more round trip to the Valley. It's a fun, fair-like atmosphere where people shop, catch up, ask horticulture questions, look at an inspiring array of native plant and nature guides, and get exposed to the dangers of noxious weeds. And last but not least, the Chapter raises money to support core programs including the Clark Youth Fund grants for learning about native plants in El Dorado County schools and after-school programs alike. It's a classic win-win situation that we're all proud of.

I think of successful plant sales as those which provide a good experience for our customers, so that they are able to find the right plant for their site and to learn something about its establishment and maintenance. So what is required to reach this objective? First think of an iceberg, with nine-tenths of the work invisible under the surface: that is my best analogy for putting together a plant sale. Work starts six to eight weeks ahead of events for Plant Sale Chair Shellie Perry with early outreach to growers to touch base, remind them of our sale, and see how their stock is. Like any agricultural endeavor, nurseries have their share of ups and downs, particularly seed lot failures and facilities malfunctions, which can limit what they are able to bring to our sale. Then there

is the issue of venue selection and scheduling, and along with that, equipment rental and transport. Plants at eye level on tables are a lot easier to evaluate for form and small details than are container plants sitting on the ground – a fact well supported by our sales numbers. Publicity Chair Rich Wade runs an ad in the Mountain Democrat, but newspaper subscriptions are declining, so flyers are also needed. Shellie must design a poster with all of the relevant details and get it printed on bright and durable paper. She also needs to oversee distribution of flyers to local nurseries, libraries, partner organizations, health food stores, and coffeehouses, and in years where volunteers don't step forward to make the rounds, to drive to these places and drop them off.

The day of the plant sale arrives and a new round of work begins at dawn for Shellie. Facilities staff must be met and an inspection done. Volunteers must be directed to the tasks of setting up sandwich board signs pointing the way, arranging tables, taping up banners and price information, carrying in plants, and pricing them. All of these set-up jobs are why we need as many Chapter members to turn out as possible. Even if you're just beginning to get into native plants, there are jobs which require only a cheerful attitude and a willingness to pitch in. And you will meet Shellie Perry, a can-do gal who has inspired me over the past 12 years that she's been the Plant Sale Chair. So this is my tip of the hat to her, and here's another fact too: she's also the Field Trips Chair who leads first-rate trips from the Valley to the Crest every spring and summer. The Chapter is truly lucky to have her doing all that she does.

Rosemary Carey  
Chapter President

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

## SPRING AND SUMMER PLANT WALKS

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

### MAY 21 (SATURDAY) OLMSTEAD LOOP, COOL

**Meeting time and location:** 10 am at the Olmstead Loop parking lot picnic table by the big bare cottonwood tree. From Cool (junction of Highways 49 and 193), go north on Highway 49 one block and turn left on Saint Florian Court. Parking is \$10. **Alternative** free parking may be available at the strip mall located on the west side of Hwy. 49 between the highway intersection and Saint Florian Court. Park near the Cool Animal Clinic and the Cool Fitness Gym. Look for the fenced alley for walkers to the Olmstead Loop parking lot.

**Duration:** 3-5 hours

**Description:** This will be our first trip on the Auburn State Recreation Area's Olmstead Loop, where we will do a loop of 5 or 6 miles through open and closed foothill oak woodland with a wide variety of spring wildflowers. This trail also crosses seasonal streams with riparian vegetation and skirts some ponds, so binoculars may come in handy for birding. Additional attractions are Native American grinding rocks and historic homestead remnants.

**Level of difficulty:** Moderate, because of eroded trails, primitive water crossings, and other users (equestrians, mountain bikers, and runners.)

**Bring:** Hat and sunscreen, water, lunch, sturdy shoes.

**Contact:** Rosemary Carey; rosemary-carey@comcast.net; (530) 620-3631

### JUNE 4 (SATURDAY) HIGHWAY 89 VERNAL POOL AND LEVIATHIN MINE ROAD AREA (ALPINE COUNTY)

**Meeting time and location:** 8:00 a.m. at the Perry household.

**Duration:** All day

**Description:** We will drive scenic hiway 89, and visit a high-mountain vernal

pool that teems with Fairy Shrimp, Porterella, and other curiosities. We will make a plant list, and document off-road vehicle damage. Near the intersection of hiway 89 and Leviathin Mine Rd. we will find a large meadow full of fragrant and beautiful eastern Sierra natives like *Prunus andersonii*, *Erigeron bloomerii*, *Cirsium canovirens*, *Argemone munita*, and the gorgeous *Balsamorhiza hookerii* v. *lanata*. There will also be a Mystery Onion for us to identify.

**Level of Difficulty:** Easy roadside botany, with no long walks or big hills. This trip is dog-, kid-, and senior citizen-friendly.

**Bring:** Lunch, water, hat, bug juice. Bring sandals if you want to walk into the vernal pool.

**Contact:** Shellie Perry; 530-644-6335; seperry55@comcast.net\

### JUNE 25 (SATURDAY) RED LAKE PEAK ENVIRONS (ALPINE COUNTY)

**Meeting time and location:** 8:00 a.m. at the Perry household.

**Duration:** All day

**Description:** From Carson Pass we will go north on the Pacific Crest Trail to a saddle with a pond and meadow, then explore Red Lake Peak, with lots of early-blooming, subalpine wildflowers. Expect *Viola beckwithii*, *Iris missouriensis*, *Geum triflorum*, *Polemonium pulcherrimum*, and some great scenery. If I remember correctly, the parking charge is three dollars.

**Level of Difficulty:** Moderately difficult. Approximately 1,000 feet elevation gain.

**Bring:** Lunch, water, hat, bug juice, something warm. Sturdy walking shoes REQUIRED.

**Contact:** Shellie Perry; 530-644-6335; seperry55@comcast.net

### JULY 9 (SATURDAY) WRIGHT'S LAKE (ELDORADO COUNTY)

**Meeting time and location:** The walk starts at 10:00 A.M., at the gate near the northeast end of Wright's Lake. Due to limited parking, carpooling is seriously recommended; you may contact me for carpooling arrangements.

**Duration:** Half- or all- day, as you wish.

**Description:** Eldorado CNPS members regularly lead 60-minute wildflower walks for people recreating at Wright's Lake. It is always a lot of fun. You are invited to join us! You are also welcome to continue botanizing after the scheduled walk is completed. Some folks might even like to park at the south end of the lake, and botanize your way to the north end. Or not.

**Level of Difficulty:** Very, very easy.

**Bring:** Water, bug juice. Lunch if you like. Kids if you have any available.

**Contact:** Shellie Perry; 530-644-6335; seperry55@comcast.net

### JULY 23 (SATURDAY) CARSON PASS TO FROG LAKE (ALPINE COUNTY)

**Meeting time and location:** 9:00 A.M., at the Perry household.

**Duration:** All day

**Description:** From the Carson Pass Red Lake overlook, we will walk a short way down a dirt road, then follow a little snow-melt creek that takes us up to the "back" side of Frog Lake, from fertile Red-fir forest to rocky, alpine ridgetop. It is beautiful, and relatively isolated. There may be a charge to park.

**Level of Difficulty:** Moderately easy. Around 500 feet elevation gain, and a bit of a scramble at the top.

**Bring:** Lunch, water, hat, bug juice, something warm. Sturdy walking shoes REQUIRED.

**Contact:** Shellie Perry; 530-644-6335; seperry55@comcast.net

## SPRING HIKES TO THE RARE PLANT PRESERVES

The Bureau of Land Management's Mother Lode Field Office will host naturalist-led walks on Saturdays to the Pine Hill Preserve.

May 21	Pine Hill
June 4	Salmon Falls

Trips start at 9 a.m. and are limited to 25 participants. Participants must pre-register with the Pine Hill Preserve. For more information or to sign up for a tour, contact Graciela Hinshaw, preserve manager, at (916) 941-3134 (ghinshaw@blm.gov) or Wynia at (916) 941-3135 (JWynia@blm.gov).

## CNPS RARE PLANT TREASURE HUNT

Hello Treasure Hunters! Here is the latest list of treasure hunts to join this spring and they are taking place all over California. If these don't fit your schedule let us know and we can work on putting you in touch with a group in your area that would like to go on a hunt. Also, if you have some experience with plant surveys we can send you out on your own. There is so much to see this year and it's time to start exploring—every hike can be a treasure hunt!

Learn more about the CNPS sponsored the Treasure Hunt program at <http://www.cnps.org/cnps/rareplants/treasurehunt/>. Contact [treasurehunt@cnps.org](mailto:treasurehunt@cnps.org) for more details.

### MOJAVE DESERT HUNTS

**May 13-15 (Friday-Sunday):** Silurian Hills, Valjean Hills and Avawatz Mountains—North of the Mojave National Preserve. We'll look for Desert Bear Poppy (*Arctomecon merriamii*), *Androstephium breviflorum*, Mojave Milkweed (*Asclepias nyctaginifolia*), *Camissonia boothii* and Purplenerve springparsley (*Cymopterus multinervatus*). Join us Friday afternoon/Friday night or even Saturday morning on this car camping trip.

**May 21-22 (Saturday-Sunday):** Trip led by Duncan Bell, 2010 Grand Prize winner of the Rare Plant Treasure Hunt into the unexplored areas.

**May 27-29 (Friday-Sunday):** Trip to Kingston and Clark Mtns and the Ivanpah Valley. We'll look for Mojave milkweed (*Asclepias nyctaginifolia*) and many others. Overnight camping trip, come Friday afternoon or Saturday morning.

### STATEWIDE HUNTS

**May 14 (Saturday):** Pine Hill Preserve, near Cameron Park, CA. Help us re-locate some historic populations of *Packera layneae* (Layne's ragwort) and *Helianthum suffrutescens* (Bisbee Peak rush-rose), as well as search for new populations in this botanical preserve.

**Mid-May:** (follow-up email will give a firm date) Lynch Canyon, Solano County.

Join the Solano Land Trust and help them perform an initial survey of their Lynch Canyon site for rare species. We'll be on the lookout for *Calochortus pulchellus* (Mt. Diablo fairy-lantern), *Balsamorhiza macrolepis* var. *macrolepis* (big-scale balsamroot), *Sidalcea hickmanii* ssp. *viridis* (Marin checkerbloom) and others.

**Mid-May:** (follow-up email will give a firm date) Sonoma Land Trust, Sonoma County. Join the Sonoma Land Trust and help search for rare plants on one of their properties just north of Sonoma.

**May 22 (Sunday):** Join the Mt. Lassen Chapter of the CNPS to visit a part of the Mendocino National Forest called Salt Creek Saddle and nearby China Gulch, where we'll be looking for 8 different rare species.

**June 11-12 (Saturday-Sunday):** Walker Ridge, Lake-Colusa County boundary. About 30 rare plants occur on this site proposed for a wind-power generation facility. CNPS and other organizations have petitioned the BLM to designate this site as an Area of Critical Environmental Concern. Help us protect it by gathering more accurate information about the rare species found in this area.

## MAY PROGRAM VERNAL POOLS—MAGNIFICENT MUD PUDDLES!

Come explore the amazing world of Vernal Pools! These seasonal wetlands found throughout the Central Valley are composed of a unique and diverse assemblage of plants and invertebrates that are adapted to start life in water yet survive the dry, arid summers of California. With over 90% of California's vernal pools already lost to farming and development, it is extremely important to protect what is left. Jinnah Benn has a B.S. in Biology from Humboldt State University. She grew up in the Lotus Valley but did not know what a vernal pool was until she returned to the Sacramento area after college. She has since fallen in love with vernal pools and has spent eight years working with vernal pool systems. She now works for the Army Corps of Engineers in the Regulatory Division and is dedicated to honoring the Corp's goal of "no net loss" of wetlands.

This event will be held at 6:30 pm, May 17 at the Eldorado National Forest, Supervisor's Office, 100 Forni Road (south of Highway 50), Placerville.

The photo below is the vernal pool plant *Downingia pulchella*. Check out the electronic version of the newsletter at [www.eldoradocnps.org](http://www.eldoradocnps.org) for a glorious color version of this image. Photo: Carol Witham.





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

May-June 2011

**FREE WESTERN  
 REDBUD SEEDLINGS**

Chapter member Susan Levitsky lives in the Cameron Park Airpark Estates and has lots of volunteer western redbud seedlings on her property which are available for digging. They are this year's seedlings, so are not deeply rooted yet. But the sooner they are dug, the better, as they are growing and lengthening their root systems, so every day counts. As Susan says, if you'd like to put some magenta in your spring with this beautiful foothill native, contact her at [slevitsky@sbcglobal.net](mailto:slevitsky@sbcglobal.net); (530) 676-0781; (916) 501-6008.



CALIFORNIA  
 NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY

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

The California Native Plant Society is a state-wide 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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Learn more about State CNPS at: [www.cnps.org](http://www.cnps.org)