



GOLD FIELD NOTES

EL DORADO CHAPTER ☼ CALIFORNIA NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY ☼ November-December 2012

NOVEMBER 27TH PROGRAM: THE OAKS OF EL DORADO COUNTY

CALENDAR

November 27 (Tuesday)

Program.
Oaks in El Dorado County. See details on this page.

December 8 (Saturday)

Gathering.
Tea and Toyon, a winter gathering hosted by chapter member Cindy Podsiadlo. See inside for details.

January 14-16 (Mon.-Wed.)

Symposium.
From the Redwoods to the Sagebrush: Botany Ranging Far and Wide. Hosted by Northern California Botanists at California State University, Chico. Also included: a poster session, reception, banquet, keynote speaker, field trip, workshops. Student stipends available. For a details, see: www.norcalbotanists.org

January 19 (Saturday)

Workshop.
Introduction into Mushroom Foraging and Identification with Phil Carpenter. Hosted by the Friends of the Chico State Herbarium, Chico, CA. For a details, see: <http://www.csuchico.edu/biol/Herb/Events.html>

January 22 (Tuesday)

Program.
Pine Hill plant community. See details inside this newsletter.

Evening programs are held on the fourth Tuesday of January, March, May, July, September, and November, and begin at 6:30 PM in the conference room of the Bethell-Delfino Agriculture Building, 311 Fair Lane, Placerville.

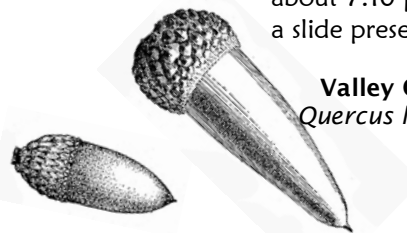
**For updates between newsletters
www.eldoradocnps.org**

Certified Arborist John Kipping (530-644-5929) is considered by many to be the most knowledgeable arborist in El Dorado County. A fascinating speaker, John will share his knowledge of oak trees with us. Oaks are anchor species of the Sierra foothills, providing habitat for a wide array of wildlife, from deer to birds and salamanders. Learn the natural history of the different oak species, their uses by indigenous peoples, and best landscape practices.

This program is one of a series on growing native plants in the home landscape that is being featured by the chapter this year. See note inside for the programs scheduled for the final program of this series in January.

This program will be held in the conference room of the Bethell-Delfino Agriculture Building, 311 Fair Lane, Placerville. The meeting begins at 6:30 pm for plant identification, business, and socializing. The program starts at about 7:10 p.m. and generally includes a slide presentation.

Black Oak
Quercus kelloggii



Valley Oak
Quercus lobata

Interior Live Oak
Quercus wislizenii



Blue Oak
Quercus douglasii

RESTORING FOREST MEADOWS AND FOREST SERVICE CREDIBILITY

The "Region 5 Ecological Restoration Leadership Intent" memo from Regional Forester Randy Moore, signed in March 2011, claims ecological restoration is the "driving force" behind the agency's work. Forest Service goals in the next 15 to 20 years include "restore 50% of accessible, degraded forest meadows to improve their habitat function and ability to hold water longer into the summer and deliver clean water when most needed." Californians are about to see how serious the Forest Service is about its goals for restoring Sierra Nevada ecosystems and increasing the State's water supply.

restoration. The Sierra Nevada Ecosystem Project (SNEP), a study commissioned by Congress, concluded in 1996: "The aquatic/riparian systems are the most altered and impaired habitats in the Sierra." On the Eldorado National Forest (ENF), surveys between 2004 and 2007 showed 90% of meadows surveyed are "functioning at risk or non-functioning," impacted by roads, OHVs, grazing, logging, weeds and water development. Roads and trails within meadows can intercept surface and subsurface hydrological flow, reducing standing water, and resulting in drying and loss of the cover of herbaceous vegetation that is important for many wildlife species. There is also the

The Sierra desperately needs meadow

(cont. page 2)

Roads and Meadow Degradation

(from page 1)

likelihood of illegal off-route motorized use occurring and damaging meadow vegetation when meadows are accessed by open routes. Such use can have profound effects upon the suitability of meadow habitats by increasing bare soil, and creating ruts and gullies (Eldorado National Forest Travel Management Final Environmental Impact Statement, 2008, p. 3-147).

On the ENF, meadows are a scarce and valuable habitat type; of 596,724 acres in federal ownership, meadows occur over only 10,416 acres, or 1.7 per cent of the forest. These habitats are used by wildlife disproportionate to their availability (Gaines et al. 2003, SNEP 1996). Roads, on the other hand, are far from scarce; the ENF has about 2,000 miles of roads criss-crossing it.

Meadows are crucial to the survival and reproduction of many species, some of them extremely rare. On the Eldorado NF, eleven sensitive plant species occupy higher elevation meadows and riparian areas, including five species of moonwort, two hump-mosses, Bolander's bruchia, Blandow's bog-moss, and subal-

pine fireweed. Meadows are important deer fawning areas and are an important component of black bear habitat. They form a critical component of Sierra Nevada Red Fox and other furbearer habitats. The Riparian Habitat Joint Venture project identifies riparian areas as the single most critical habitat for avian conservation across California. For all the above reasons, both the ENF Land Management Plan (LMP) and the Sierra Nevada Forest Plan Amendment (SNFPA) prohibit roads in meadows.

Despite the value of meadows for wildlife and the State's water supply, and contrary to Forest Service policy and law, in 2008 the former ENF Supervisor Ramiro Villalvazo signed the Travel Management Plan (TMP), which included 42 OHV routes through and bordering meadows. In doing so, he was bowing to pressure from a small but loud off-road community. Years of legal challenges by conservationists finally resulted in Federal Judge Lawrence K. Karlton ordering the meadow routes closed last year. Now the Eldorado has initiated a Supplement to the Travel Management Environmental Impact Statement (SEIS), proposing to re-open the 42 roads. The new

ENF Supervisor, Kathy Hardy, proposes to amend the Forest Plan and lift the prohibition on meadow roads for 20 of the 42 routes, despite findings by her own staff that these roads are damaging the meadows. The proposal denies meadow impacts from the other 22 routes, but there is insufficient analysis on which to base that conclusion.

The Center for Sierra Nevada Conservation, Center for Biological Diversity, California Native Plant Society and five other conservation organizations have offered an alternative proposal. While we believe some of the roads may not impact meadows, we have asked for sufficient analysis to make that determination. We remain opposed to plan amendments to open routes in meadows where analysis shows hydrological or wildlife impacts. A draft SEIS is due out in January 2013. Then we'll see if the Leadership Intent is just happy talk, or if the Forest Service really intends to make the tough decisions necessary if it is serious about restoring Sierra Nevada ecosystems. Because in order to restore a meadow, one must first get rid of the cause of its degradation.

Karen Schambach

Center for Sierra Nevada Conservation



Roads intersecting these meadows on the Eldorado National Forest disrupt the hydrology and degrade the function of these meadow systems. Photo: Karen Schambach.

A GOOD FALL PLANT SALE

A hearty "thank you" to the following businesses and volunteers, without whom the Fall Native Plant Sale, and the El Dorado CNPS itself, would not be possible:

Special thanks to our nursery vendors: Mahala Young and Jinnah Benn of Lotus Valley Natives; Taylor Lewis from Cornflower Farms in Elk Grove; Steve Dowty and his natives nursery on Cedar Ravine; Roger Snell from High Ranch Nursery in Loomis; and Brian Austin and his natives nursery at Chili Bar. Other individual growers from the Chapter – with some really terrific plants - were Ben Parks, Doni Mae, Janet Cicero and Rocky, and Cindy Podsiadlo. Karen Schambach from the Center for Sierra Nevada Conservation (CSNC) grew western redbud which were offered at the sale.

Thanks also to Shellie Perry who always does a great job coordinating the sale; Angelo Troquato, CAO of El Dorado County, who helped us secure our sale location in front of the County Buildings at 330 Fair Lane in Placerville; Mimi Escobar and the Mountain Democrat for the great color spread; "Farmer Fred" Hoffman and his garden shows on KFBK and KSTE radio; Rich Wade for PR help; Sue Britting for the Chapter newsletter; Annie Walker for our new invasive weed display; Tripp Mikich for our sale poster, our new weed display and PR help; and many others, including Alice Cantelow-Lubetkin for sales, Marty

Oberlander for the book table, and Steve Perry for keeping our email list. And for things many and varied, Gail Cosmo, Karen Pitts, Marcia Scott, Amy Hoffman, Ernie Hartley, Susan Fredericks, Phil Corson, and Carl Mesick. You are all deeply appreciated for your efforts.

El Dorado CNPS is dedicated to outreach and education in the community for the purpose of preserving and protecting our unique California native plants for future generations. Bringing unusual garden-tolerant natives to the large gardening public in the County is one way to increase knowledge and appreciation of these plants. Another way is through the displays and free literature we offer at the sale. This sale saw the debut of our new "Attack of the Invasives" El Dorado County weed display, designed and built by Tripp Mikich with technical assistance from our Weed Chair Annie Walker. If you didn't get a chance to see the fun vintage-style science fiction movie posters, be sure and check them out at the Spring sale.

The funds raised through the generosity of the hundreds of shoppers - local home and business owners, curious beginners, and seasoned regulars to native landscaping (many attracted to the sale through the lovely article and photos that appeared in the Mountain Democrat the day before) – go primarily to the Clark Youth Grant Program. This program is for area schools and youth groups that educate children in El Dorado County

JANUARY MEETING GABBRO AND SERPENTINE PLANTS OF THE PINE HILL PRESERVE (JANUARY 22)

Dr. Deb Ayres (drayres@ucdavis.edu; 530.752.6852) is an Associate Project Scientist in Evolution and Ecology at U.C. Davis. She will talk about the endemic plants which are found on the gabbro and serpentine soils of the Pine Hill Preserve in the west county. She will discuss which native plants can be used in home landscapes on these soils which are widespread around Cameron Park as well as a belt extending north and south. Dr. Ayres has also been a Master Gardener and landscape designer prior to her academic career, so she is well qualified to tie all of this information together.

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about native plants. Past projects have included native plant gardens, native plant trails, a solar water fountain as part of a habitat garden, field guide purchases, a 6' deep glass planter so that students could see the root systems of native bunch grasses, and noxious weed removal (Scotch broom) at Sly Park Environmental Education Center.

Rosemary Carey
Chapter President

HOLIDAY GATHERING

"TEA AND TOYON"



It's that time of year when toyon puts on a display of red berries just in time for the holidays. So let's all get together for a holiday celebration at my house on Saturday December 8 from 1 to 5 pm. Since we are a friendly bunch, let's have a casual potluck.

Bring a dish to share (it doesn't have to be large or elaborate) and in the category of appetizer, hot dish, dessert, or

beverage. I'll have some hot cider, various teas and wines available as well as stuffed mushrooms, spanakopita (Greek

spinach pies), and a tea bread or tart. If you could fill in the gaps, that would be a great addition. Send me an email clpodsiadlo@yahoo.com or phone (530) 642-0648 with an idea of what you'll bring. The address is 1541 Highland Drive which is off Mosquito Road (about 2.5 miles from the Broadway exit off Highway 50).

Please note that if it snows, then we may have to cancel. Highland Drive is steep with two sharp turns and it may be impossible to get back up the hill even with chains and 4WD. So please call if there are questions about the weather. Hope to see you all.

Cindy Podsiadlo



Toyon
Heteromeles californica



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

November-December 2012

VISIT US ON FACEBOOK

Member Tripp Mikich has launched a Chapter Facebook page at: www.facebook.com/eldoradoCNPS. There you will find more information on our regular activities, including presentations, walks, workshops, special projects, and landscaping. Jump right in.



CALIFORNIA
 NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY

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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Learn more about State CNPS at: www.cnps.org