



GOLD FIELD NOTES

EL DORADO CHAPTER ☉ CALIFORNIA NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY ☉ March-April 2015

MARCH 24TH PROGRAM VERNAL POOLS: KALEIDOSCOPIES OF LIFE



Photo: USFWS

COMING ACTIVITIES

March 24 (Tuesday)

Chapter Program.

Vernal pools. See article to right for details.

March 27

Workshop.

Learn about Rare Plant Treasure Hunt opportunities in El Dorado County. See note inside for details.

April 4 (Saturday)

Native Plant Sale.

Twice yearly plant sale. See details in article to right.

April 8 (Wednesday)

Film.

PAY 2 PLAY: Democracy's High Stakes is a fun guidebook to returning the United States government to its People. Hosted by Sierra Club and Coalition for Change at Cozmic Café. Doors open at 6 pm, film at 6:30 pm. Suggested donation: \$3.00

April 11 (Saturday)

Workshop.

Plant Families in the Garden and in the Wild. Hosted by Chico Herbarium. See http://www.csuchico.edu/biol/Herb/workshops/Plant_Families_4-11-15.pdf for details.

May 9 (Saturday)

Workshop.

Water efficient gardening. Hosted by El Dorado County master gardeners. See http://ucanr.edu/sites/EDC_Master_Gardeners/ for details.

Evening programs are held on the fourth Tuesday of January, March, May, July, September, and November. The program begins at 7 PM at the Planning Commission Room, Building C, 2850 Fairlane Court, Placerville.

Kaleidoscopes were a favorite holiday gift for children years ago. They displayed a series of changing colored patterns like California's vernal pools. Vernal pool expert Carol Witham will help us to explore the short-lived, weird-looking, fascinating fauna that evolved millions of years ago, and dazzling swaths of tens of thousands of tiny flowers that change from week to week through the two- to- three month vernal pool "season". This virtual tour of California vernal pools will answer questions such as "what makes a vernal pool" and "why are they found almost nowhere but California" plus explore vernal pools from throughout the state.

This program will be held on March 24. The program begins at 7 PM at the Planning Commission Room, Building C, 2850 Fairlane Court, Placerville.



PLANT SALE SATURDAY, APRIL 4 9 AM TO 1 PM

Once again it's time for our twice yearly plant sale. We 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 of 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. Cash or checks only; all sales are final.

The sale will be held at the El Dorado County Government Center between buildings A and B at 330 Fair Lane, Placerville (across the street from the library).

INVASIVE PLANTS AND NATURAL AREAS

Members of the Eldorado Chapter of the California Native Plant Society have been working on controlling several species of Invasive plants in our area for many years. For instance in cooperation with the Eldorado National Forest several CNPS members have spent significant personal time in an effort to control Scotch broom and yellow star thistle and recently barbed goat grass at the Traverse Creek Special Interest Area (SIA) near Georgetown.

You may ask what harm do invasive plant species cause. Many undesirable plant species that evolved in one region of the globe have been moved by humans to other regions, a few of them flourish, crowding out native vegetation and the wildlife that feeds on it. Invasive plants can significantly degrade wildlife habitat. Nationally, invasive species are the second-greatest threat to endangered species, after habitat destruction.

Many of our invasive plant species are native to southern European countries, especially those with a Mediterranean climate similar to ours here in California. For the

most part they were introduced accidentally, although a few were imported for ornamental or other purposes and have escaped cultivation.

One invasive plant that most of us in California recognize is yellow star thistle. This species typifies the rapid spreading ability common to all invasive or "noxious" weeds. This species and other common invading plants were introduced accidentally via shipments of agricultural crop seeds brought in from Europe and other areas of the world.

Yellow star thistle is native to southern Europe and Asia Minor and reportedly came to California as a contaminant in shipments of alfalfa seed. Its introduction is thought to have occurred about the time of the gold rush. A capability to spread rapidly is typical of invasive plants and by the early 1900's yellow star thistle had become a serious weed in the Sacramento Valley (Newman 1917). This rapid spread was noted by Willis Jepson who observed the spread of yellow star thistle in Vacaville. He noted in 1919 that its distribution had increased by 1,000 times in the 6 to 10 years he'd been observing it in Vacaville. State-wide by the late 1950's yellow star thistle had spread to over a million acres

and by 1965 to 2 million acres. Today the infestation area has reached nearly 15 million in our state alone. It has also become a problem in parts of Oregon, eastern Washington and Idaho as well (*Yellow Star Thistle Management Guide*; <http://www.cal-ipc.org/ip/management/pdf/YSTMgmtweb.pdf>).

Control methods yellow star thistle include: mechanical (hand pulling, hoeing, mowing); cultural (burning, grazing, revegetation); biological control using natural enemies such as insects and other parasites. To achieve success using any of these methods due diligence is absolutely necessary as this exotic species has adaptations that can thwart casual treatments. It's seed germinates quickly over a long season (fall through early summer) with only a small amount of precipitation. Late germinating seedlings may remain small and only produce one or a few inflorescences but produces a seed bed that will lead to dozens new plants next season.

Please contact me (m.taylor@live.com; 530-626-1196) if you are interested in more information about this weed or want to join our next weeding party.

*Mike Taylor
Invasive Plant Co-Chair*

UPCOMING PLANT WALKS

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

March 29 (Sunday)

Deer Creek, El Dorado County (along railroad tracks in Latrobe)

Meeting Time and Location: Meet at 10 am on Latrobe Road south of Deer Creek near railroad tracks. From El Dorado Hills at Highway 50, drive south on Latrobe Road about 5 miles, cross bridge over Deer Creek, and park on the west side of the road in a dirt pullout. You will see the railroad tracks.

Duration: The length of this trip is flexible; half day or longer.

Description: Deer Creek with its old mining mounds greened over with grasses and forbs, and its tall cottonwoods. We may be able to catch a train ride with folks on their monthly excursion to the Latrobe pancake breakfast that morning.

Level of Difficulty: Easy

Bring: Hiking shoes, drinking water, food, and appropriate clothing for the weather.

Maybe bring a walking stick for the trestles. Contact: Tal Blackburn, nblackburn@zetabroadband.com. If you don't have email, then leave a message on the phone at (530) 417-6885.

April 16 (Thursday)

Codfish Falls Trail, North Fork of the American River, Ponderosa Way, Placer County

Meeting Time and Location: Meeting in Cool at the Holiday Market at the intersection of 49 and 193 at 8:30 am and at the Raley's Parking lot, 13384 Lincoln Way in Auburn at 9:00 am.

Duration: 4 to 5 hours

Description: This trail provides excellent views of the river and ends at an impressive 40 foot waterfall. In this riparian woodlands ecosystem there are many species that will be in bloom. A fuller description of this trail is in the book, American River Canyon Hikes by Jim Ferris, Michael Lynch and Sheila Toner.

Level of Difficulty: Easy, but trail narrows at times with steep drop-offs to the river.

Bring: Hat, sunscreen, insect repellent, water, lunch and sturdy shoes and hand lens

(optional). Plant list will be provided. Dogs must be on leashes.

Contact: Diane Cornwall dancingwildflowers@me.com (530)888-1404

April 25 (Saturday)

Stevens Trail, North Canyon Way in Colfax, Placer County

Meeting Time and Location: 8:30 am at Holiday Parking Lot, intersection of 49 and 193 in Cool, or 9:00 am at Raley's, 13384 Lincoln Way in Auburn, or at the trailhead at 9:30 am.

Duration: 6 hours

Description: It is 3.2 miles to the river and about one and one half hours down and 3 hours back up with over 1000 feet change in elevation. The wildflower displays are very beautiful with many colors and species. Beautiful views of the North Fork of the American River are around very bend. A full description of the trail can be found in the American River Canyon Hikes by Jim Ferris, Michael Lynch, and Sheila Toner.

Level of Difficulty: Moderate up and down, narrow in places and some steep drop-offs.

(continued p. 3)

FROM THE PRESIDENT

Flowers and shrubs are bursting into bloom, as is the recent interest in native plants. What a wonderful thing! Some of you have begun advocating for our oak woodlands as general plan change requests multiply. Others are seeking to expand their understanding of native plants - attendance at our talks is strong and interest in keying workshops is being expressed. Others still are stepping up to help with local native plant demonstra-

SHOWCASING OUR NATIVE FLORA

We may be turning our attention now to three other more accessible demonstration gardens that are in need of rejuvenation-ones at the Placerville library, Cameron Park library, and County fairgrounds. These had all been maintained by the Resource Conservation District, but that funding was recently lost. Conversations with the librarians and fair authorities have begun.

Demonstration gardens can be a valuable showcase for the use of native plants in landscaping, encouraging homeowners to install native plants themselves. Gardens rich in native plants can not only bring people to an appreciation of our native flora, but, if numerous enough, can also provide important habitat corridors. If you are interested in joining our chapter's demonstration garden project, contact Alice Cantelow at alicecantelow@gmail.com.

PLANT WALKS *(continued p. 2)*

Bring: Water, lunch, bug spray, hat, sunscreen and sturdy shoes. Hand lens is a good option. Plant list is available. Dogs must be on leashes.

Contact: Diane Cornwall, dancingwild-flowers@me.com, (530) 888-1404

SAVE THE DATES!

May 30 (Saturday)
Lake Clementine Trail, Placer County

June 27 (Saturday)
Near Carson Pass, Alpine County

August 22 (or 29) (Saturday)
Lake Margaret, Alpine County

tion gardens, hunts for rare plants, and weed pulling.

The enthusiasm is catching! Keep bending our ears, do fill out our upcoming surveys, and bring forward your ideas. We your board will continue trying our best to meet these varied interests, all of which will contribute to our shared mission: the understanding, preservation and promotion of native plants.

Alice Cantelow
Chapter President

BOOKS ON NATIVE PLANTS AND GARDENING FOR SALE

There are many new arrivals and restocked titles available at our plant sale and program meetings:

Redbud Chapter's Trees and Shrubs of Nevada and Placer Counties, California

Oaks of California (7th printing (2014) with revisions)

Conifers of California

Living in the Wild

California Foraging

The Chapter has many books of Gardening with Native Plants:

Native Treasures

Reimagining the California Lawn

The California Native Landscape

California Native Plants for the Garden

Designing California Native Gardens

The California Wildlife Habitat Garden

Butterfly Gardening

With more titles available AND some new books to be added to the Chapter's Inventory SOON, as well as a list of the books we have available to be included on the Chapter's website in the very near future.

Bonnie East
Books and Poster Chair



RARE PLANT TREASURE HUNT COMING OUR WAY

MARCH 27: KICKOFF MEETING
MAY 26: EVENING PROGRAM

With over 2,300 rare plants in California, it's all too easy to lose track of the most vulnerable ones. Enter CNPS botanists Danny Slakey and Aaron Sims. Since 2011 they have been in charge of the fledgling Rare Plant Treasure Hunt with the goal of seeking out critically rare species, determining whether and where they still exist, and ranking the most imperiled for conservation intervention. Danny Slakey will be visiting us twice., first on March 27 with those interested in helping with our local effort (flower season is imminent!), and then on May 26 as an evening talk on the statewide program.

The **Friday March 27 morning meeting** for both experienced hunters and newbies is being organized by Annie Walker in Placerville at 9 AM. Danny will discuss local rare plant survey needs, briefly go over the survey forms and methods, and provide volunteers with a chance to connect with other local RPT Hunters. For a preview of some of the survey forms and support materials check out the RPTH webpage: http://www.cnps.org/cnps/rareplants/treasurehunt/data_collection.php. Contact Alice Cantelow (alicecantelow@gmail.com) or Annie Walker (agastache@att.net) for details and to reserve your place.

The **Tuesday May 26 evening program** on the rare plant treasure hunt will be at our regular meeting Tuesday at 7 PM at the Planning Commission Room, Building C, 2850 Fairlane Court, Placerville. The program is free to both members and the public.

YOUR HELP NEEDED AT PLANT SALE ON APRIL 4

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.



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

March-April 2015

SPRING PLANT SALE
SATURDAY, APRIL 4
9 AM TO 1 PM
COUNTY BUILDINGS A & B
 (DETAILS INSIDE NEWSLETTER)

For Updates Visit Us on the Web
www.eldoradoCNPS.org and



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 conserve California native plants and their natural habitats, and increase understanding, appreciation, and horticultural use of native plants. 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.

CHAPTER OFFICERS AND COMMITTEE CHAIRS

PRESIDENT	Alice Cantelow	(530)622-5306	alicecantelow@gmail.com
VICE PRESIDENT	Debra Ayres	(530) 672-9976	drayres@ucdavis.edu
SECRETARY	Stephanie Johnson		stephanie.jmail@gmail.com
TREASURER	Cindy Podsiadlo	(530) 642-0648	clpodsiadlo@yahoo.com
BOOKS & POSTERS	Bonnie East	(530) 417-1086	redshldr.1002@yahoo.com
CLARK YOUTH FUND PROGRAM	Jinnah Benn	(916) 508-2982	jinnahbean@yahoo.com
CONSERVATION	Sue Britting	(530) 295-8210	britting@earthlink.net
EDUCATION & OUTREACH			
	Mahala Guggiano		mahala@flourishontheweb.com
Field Trips	Diane Cornwall	(530) 888-1404	dancingwildflowers@me.com
HOSPITALITY	Marty Oberlander	(530) 333-1536	mober44@gmail.com
	Pat Guge	(530) 620-6583	pguge@yahoo.com
INVASIVE EXOTICS	Mike Taylor	(530) 626-1196	m.taylor@live.com
	Annie Walker	(530) 626-3678	agastache@att.net
MEMBERSHIP	Ben Parks	(530) 401-3499	baparks38@yahoo.com
PLANT SALES	Shellie Perry	(530) 644-6335	seperry55@comcast.net
PROGRAMS	Debra Ayres	(530) 672-9976	drayres@ucdavis.edu
WRIGHTS LAKE WILDFLOWER WALKS			
	Rich Wade	(530) 644-7210	rwade@spi-ind.com
COMMUNICATIONS & PUBLIC RELATIONS			
	Tripp Mikich	(530) 748-9365	trippdmnh@yahoo.com
WEB MASTER	Vacant		
NEWSLETTER	Sue Britting	(530) 295-8210	britting@earthlink.net