



GOLD FIELD NOTES

EL DORADO CHAPTER ☉ CALIFORNIA NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY ☉ March-April 2018

MARCH 27TH PROGRAM GROWING NATIVE GRASS MEADOWS

CALENDAR

March 27 (Tuesday)

Chapter program. See article to right for details.

April 7 (Saturday)

Twice yearly plant sale. 9 am to 12 pm, County Building C, Placerville. See details inside.

April 14 (Saturday)

Workshop. Identifying lichens to genus. 9 am to 4 pm, Chico State Herbarium. For more information: <http://www.friendsofthechicostateherbarium.com/eventsviewcalendar/>

April 21 (Saturday)

Workshop. Introduction to Keying Manzanitas. 9 am to 4 pm, Chico State Herbarium. For more information: <http://www.friendsofthechicostateherbarium.com/eventsviewcalendar/>

May 22 (Tuesday)

Chapter program. Dylan Burge on native plants and genetics.

June 23 (Saturday)

Workshop. Willows of California. 9 am to 5 pm, Chico State Herbarium. For more information: <http://www.friendsofthechicostateherbarium.com/eventsviewcalendar/>

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.

There are more than 300 native grass species found throughout California. These grasses grow in a wide range of habitats; from cool and shady oak and pine forests, to chaparral studded hillsides. Over many years, botanical surveys have found that 40% of California's entire native plant species need the habitat provided by native grasslands in order to sustain their survival. 90% of California's rare and endangered plants grow in these grasslands. More than 80% of the state's grasslands are privately held. Educating property owners about the benefits of growing native grasses and developing management practices to reduce non-native plants, is crucial to ensuring habitats are conserved and maintained.

Overcoming the introduced and natural challenges faced by California's native grasses is one of the topics featured our March presentation. Local nurseryman Steve Dowty will provide information about California's grasslands, including El Dorado County, sharing his expertise of more than 40 years using photographs and tips to "Growing Native Grass Meadows." Steve will explain how to evaluate an existing meadow area; including identifying existing native, introduced, and invasive vegetation; management practices that may be used to effectively reduce non-native plants and increase the number of native grasses by planting or seeding; and how native grasses may be integrated into residential and commercial landscaping arrangements.

Many of the plants featured in Steve's presentation will be available for purchase at the native plant sale Saturday, April 7, 2018, at the same location.

This program will be held on Tuesday, March 27, at 7 PM at the Planning Commission Room, Building C, 2850 Fairlane Court, Placerville. The program is free to both members and the public.

WATER-WISE DEMONSTRATION GARDEN HIGHLIGHTS NATIVE PLANTS

Imagine a special garden in Placerville. Plants in this garden use very little water and do not need fertilizers or pesticides to thrive. The natural beauty found in this space welcomes pollinators, and people, to enjoy El Dorado County's ecological diversity.

Where is this garden located? The Xeriscape Demonstration Garden, located on the south side of the Placerville Library and visible through windows inside the children's part of the library, was planted in 1991 and updated in 1998. *(continued page 3)*



Purple needle grass
Stipa pulchra

Photo: Deb Ayres

NATIVE PLANT SALE, SATURDAY, APRIL 7 9 AM TO 12 PM

Spring is around the corner and a perfect time to join us at our twice yearly native plant sale. Come by and check out our incredible selection of native plants, including a wide variety of drought tolerant and deer resistant species that 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 El Dorado County Government Building C (below the library) at 2850 Fairlane Ct, Placerville.

YOUR HELP NEEDED AT PLANT SALE ON APRIL 7

We need help setting up in the morning and assisting throughout the day on Saturday. If you are interested in helping out, please contact Tal Blackburn, nblackburn@zetabroadband.com or (530) 417-6885.



Plants - Books
Gardening Advice - Live Demos

Date: Saturday, April 7th

Time: 9am to 12pm

Location: 2850 Fairlane Ct. • Bldg C • Placerville

SPRING PLANT WALKS

April 15 (Sunday), Railroad Tracks along Deer Creek (off Latrobe Road)

WHERE: Meet Annie or Tal, on site at 10:00 AM. Driving from El Dorado Hills south on Latrobe Road. There is a wide dirt parking area after you cross the bridge over Deer Creek. This is on the west side of Latrobe Road. Duration is mid-morning to mid-afternoon. If you need to return early, please let the leaders know.

BRING: Your lunch or snack, water bottle; wear suitable hiking boots or shoes. There isn't a trail, we will be walking part of the time on the railroad tracks and there are two trestle crossings.

WHAT TO SEE: This area has wonderful shows of lupine, and many kinds of spring annuals and early bulbs. If we are lucky and it's not still too wet, there is a small vernal pool near the tracks. This pool has *Eryngium* sp., and a *Downingia*.

CONTACT: Tal Blackburn (nblackburn@zetabroadband.com) if you are interested in joining this walk.

May 18 (Friday) Quarry Trail, Middle Fork American River

WHERE: Meet Ginna Meyer to carpool at the Northwest Park 'n Ride at the Ponderosa Rd exit off Highway 50 in Shingle Springs at 8:30 AM. We will carpool to

the site from here. If you need to return early, please let the leaders know.

BRING: A knapsack with your lunch or snack, water bottle; wear suitable hiking boots or shoes; sunscreen and insect repellent.

WHAT TO SEE: This trail runs along the south side of the middle fork of the American River and is within the Auburn Recreation Area. There are seven different species of oaks to see, including the shrubby form of *Quercus garryana*, Oregon white oak. There are wonderful banks with many species of wildflowers and ferns, and, of course, many shrubs, including snowdrop bush (which should be in bloom!), *Styrax redivivus*, and skunk bush, *Rhus aromatica*.

CONTACT: Ginna Meyer (vcmeyer@me.com) if you are interested in joining this walk.

May 27 (Sunday), Independence Trail, South Yuba River State Park (Nevada County)

WHERE: Meet Ginna Meyer to carpool at the Northwest Park 'n Ride at the Ponderosa Rd exit off Highway 50 in Shingle Springs at 8:30 AM. We will carpool to

the site from here. If you need to return early, please let the leaders know.

BRING: A knapsack with your lunch or snack, water bottle; wear suitable hiking boots or shoes; sunscreen and insect repellent. The insect repellent is a must. The mosquitoes can be quite bothersome here!

WHAT TO SEE: This accessible trail has been developed in an old water diversion canal. This is great, since so many of the wildflowers grow on the banks of the canal, and as you walking in the canal, the plants are at eye level - much less bending over! This is on a north-facing slope with lower montane conifers, broad-leaved trees, shrubs and herbs. We will see gorgeous canyon oak, *Quercus chrysolepis*, madrone, *Arbutus menziesii*, western spice bush, *Calycanthus occidentalis*, and wildflowers, including, I hope, Washington lily, *Lilium washingtonianum*! There are rocky slopes, too, with succulents including *Sedum spathulifolium*, Pacific stonecrop.

CONTACT: Ginna Meyer (vcmeyer@me.com) if you are interested in joining this walk.

DEMONSTRATION GARDEN

(continued from page 1)

Since that time, many of the original plants died, have become overgrown, or are no longer thriving due to shading by the mature Tulip trees and irrigation system failures.

The El Dorado Chapter CNPS recognized the garden needed a major make-over. Last summer, Chapter members created a landscape design and began working to clean-up the area. This project is a community effort. Currently, the El Dorado County Facilities Division, and County Librarian Jeanne Amos are collaborating with our CNPS to transform the area into a water-wise garden. Water-wise gardening includes appropriate plant selection, efficient irrigation techniques like drip, suitable turf use, mulches to reduce water evaporation and retard weeds, and regular maintenance. To date, nine volunteers have spent more than 130 hours weeding, removing dead foliage, and pruning overgrown plants. The El Dorado County Facilities Division removed old, weed-filled planter boxes and will install and maintain a new drip irrigation system.

During Spring 2018, the water-wise demonstration garden will be planted with native plants while keeping most of

the mature trees and shrubs. The new irrigation system, a thick layer of mulch, and new signs will be installed. An educational brochure will be created with a garden map, information on water-wise gardening, the benefits of gardening with native plants, and a list of community sponsors.

California droughts are a reality. The renovated garden will educate visitors about the beauty of water-wise landscaping using native and ornamental plants. Each plant will be identified with signs listing common and scientific names, and whether the plant is native; larger signs



Demonstration garden after weeding and trimming.

will contain information about specific sections of the garden, such as "Pollinator Garden," "Oak and Meadow," and "Native Shrubs." Visitors to the garden will see a large full-color, "Welcome" sign inviting them to the site.

PINE HILL PRESERVE TOURS

Beginning in April, the Pine Hill Preserve, in coordination with the El Dorado Chapter of the California Native Plant Society, will offer a guided bird tour and three guided plant tours in different areas of the Preserve. The tours are free and open to the public. There is a limit of 25 participants for the plant tours and 20 participants for the bird tour. Led by volunteer naturalists, each plant tour will focus primarily on the plants growing within the chaparral and oak woodland ecosystems of the Pine Hill Preserve, but will also include information about wildlife, pollinators, and geology.

With exception of the bird tour, the following tours will begin at **9:00 AM and conclude by 1:00 PM**. The bird tour will begin at **7:00 AM and concludes at noon**.

- Sunday, April 8** - Kanaka Valley Bird Hike
- Saturday, April 21** - Kanaka Valley Plant Hike - CNPS/PHP
- Saturday, April 28** - Cameron Park Unit through hike from Palmer Dr. to Meder Rd. - CNPS/PHP
- Saturday, May 12** - Pine Hill Unit - CNPS/PHP

Field trip participants will meet at designated areas and carpool to the site; Pine Hill Preserve will notify participants of the

MAY 22ND PROGRAM NATIVE PLANTS AND GENETICS

Dylan Burge, PhD, will talk about the secret life of plants revealed by modern genetics.

This program will be held on Tuesday, May 22, at 7 PM at the Planning Commission Room, Building C, 2850 Fairlane Court, Placerville. The program is free to both members and the public.

Necessary on-going maintenance requires work to keep the garden a vibrant visitor's destination. Monitoring plant health, replacing signs, weeding and light pruning will be coordinated by the Chapter using volunteers from the Chapter and community. Community support is crucial to ensure this local garden spot is maintained and thrives for everyone to enjoy. If you would like to join in this community project you may volunteer to work in, or support, the Placerville Library Demonstration Garden, by contacting Tal Blackburn (nblackburn@zetabroadband.com). To view the landscape design, visit the Chapter website at: <http://www.eldoradocnps.org/>. Adapted from an article by Pamela Hoover and appearing in the Mt. Democrat on January 26, 2018.

bird tour via email one week in advance regarding the meeting location. CNPS El Dorado will notify plant tour participants one week in advance regarding the meeting location for the plant tours.

What to wear and bring: Sturdy shoes, hat, water, a lunch or snacks, sunscreen, and insect repellent.

How to register: For the bird tour, contact Graciela Hinshaw, Pine Hill Preserve Manager by email (pinehillpreserve@gmail.com) or phone (916-941-3134). For plant tours, contact Debra Ayres by email (drayres@ucdavis.edu).



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

March-April 2018

SPRING PLANT SALE
SATURDAY, APRIL 7
9 AM TO 12 PM
COUNTY BUILDING C
 (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.

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