



GOLD FIELD NOTES

EL DORADO CHAPTER ☉ CALIFORNIA NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY ☉ JULY-AUGUST 2020

CALENDAR

July 28 (Tuesday)

Chapter program.

Ceanothus and manzanita with Jeff Bisbee. Zoom meeting online—details to the right.

September 22 (Tuesday)

Chapter program.

To Be determined.

Due to the requirements of social distancing, many of our events are on hold.

LEARN PLANTS WITH THE [JEPSON HERBARIUM](#) [YOUTUBE CHANNEL](#)

Check out these short (2-4 minute) videos on native plants. These are part of the Jepson Herbarium's new Visual Guide to the Plants of California. Recent additions include western bluegrass, pussy ears, and death camass.



JULY 28 PROGRAM

ECOLOGICAL FORESTRY, FUELS MODIFICATIONS, FIRE SAFETY, AND CONSERVATION

The El Dorado Chapter is pleased to host Chris Paulus for a ZOOM (web-based) presentation at 7 PM. Chris Paulus is a former CalFire Battalion Chief, and currently is Operations Section Chief for the North Fork of the American River Shaded Fuel Break Project and will talk about Fuels Reduction Zones and Performance Based Holistic Fuels Management. He will focus on what is commonly referred to as "defensible space", but the emphasis will be on understanding fire adaptive strategies and traits of native plants within the fire adaptive ecosystem where homes and businesses are located.



These Whiteleaf Manzanitas (*Arctostaphylos viscida*) were thinned to both reduce fire intensity and increase the likelihood they would survive fire passage. Photo: C. Paulus

New Format! Online Zoom Presentation

While this presentation is open to the public and free of charge it will only be accessible through a Zoom link invitation sent via email several days prior to the event. The message will contain instructions on how to RSVP and join the teleconference. Those who are NOT on our email list should write to web.eldoradocnps@gmail.com and ask to be added.

To access the talk, you do not need an account as CNPS has purchased the Zoom license, but you will need to install Zoom ahead of time – a free download. We recommend you install Zoom on your computer to appreciate the photos that Chris will share, although it can also be installed on a smartphone. Out of respect for the speaker, during the talk please keep your microphone muted, video off, and avoid using the chat feature. We will invite questions at the end. Unfortunately, we will likely not be able to address individual technical difficulties during the talk, but please email web.eldoradocnps@gmail.com if you experience difficulties so that we can address them for next time.

ON THE TRAIL OF STINKWORT

If you want to adopt a trail or insure that stinkwort doesn't invade your property, you can learn more about this invasive weed, @ this FB page: *Invasive Weed Group - El Dorado Chapter CNPS* or you can click [here](https://www.eldoradocnps.org/conservation/invasive-plants) (<https://www.eldoradocnps.org/conservation/invasive-plants>) to download our informative brochure. Other invasive plants of concern are also at that link.

I consider myself fortunate to live just one-quarter mile from the newly-refurbished section of the El Dorado Trail that crosses Forni Road in Placerville. This five-mile stretch of trail runs from Missouri Flat Road behind Walmart to the town of El Dorado. Soon after the trail was walkable, Lola, my Labradoodle puppy, and I made a habit of walking a different stretch each day. Once shelter-in-place was enacted, this became our go-to trail. As March blended into April, it was here that we were able to see some spring wildflowers – Red Maids (*Calandrinia menziesii*), Fiddleneck (*Amsinckia intermedia*), Blue-eyed grass (*Sisyrinchium bellum*), White fair-lanterns (*Calochortus albus*), California goldfields (*Lasthenia californica*), just to name a few.

When our Chapter brought up the threat of stinkwort (*Dittrichia graveolens*), an invasive weed which chokes out our native plants and grasses – much like yellow starthistle (*Centaurea solstitialis*), I eagerly volunteered to adopt “my” five-mile stretch of the ED Trail to keep stinkwort at bay.

First I had to learn to identify the plant, which was more of a challenge than I anticipated. Stinkwort should be reasonably easy to identify because its foliage actually “stinks,” and its leaves are sticky and hairy. But it took two scouting missions and multiple photos before I finally felt “certified” and headed out with Lola to do our first weed pull. Annie Walker, CNPS weed chair, had reported seeing plants behind the dumpster at the Animal Services Center. The trail runs directly behind the Center, so this is where we headed first. And there they were, growing in the gravel right along the trail. Not just a few, but lots of plants. Wearing gloves, because stinkwort is nasty and can cause dermatitis, we pulled all the plants and pushed on. We found more plants, but they were well spaced. Sometimes, we'd walk for yards without seeing another.

About four days later, we went back to finish the trail and to my dismay, the area we had weeded so well had more plants. We got those and continued until we had walked more than half the trail. Because it was getting dark, we saved the final stretch until the next day. On our third trip out, we didn't see so many new plants in our previously weeded areas, and we completed the trail from Forni to Missouri Flat Road.

On our next trip, we took the trail from Forni toward El Dorado. Luckily, there were not so many plants to pull so we made faster progress and got only about 2-3 dozen small stinkwort starts, but the yellow starthistle was rampant, so I decided to add clippers to my bag of weeding supplies and dog treats, so I could tackle the thistle as well.

On our fifth scouting trip, we drove down to the trail's end in El Dorado and started from there. Other CNPS members had weeded from that end, and I saw the efforts of their pull all along the gravel. But there was still plenty for us to remove. We worked our way back toward Forni until I felt we had covered the entire trail.



Stinkwort in Shingle Springs area July 2020. Photo: Ola Jane

This won't be the end of our weed pulling. I know that on each trip out, Lola and I will find newly emerging stinkwort and will stop to pull, or if too deeply rooted we will cut them to the ground. When the plants start to flower in August-September I will have to bag them up and carry them out so that seeds will not be left to start the 2021 infestation.

Ola Jane Gow

Check out this new chapter brochure for more information on stinkwort: https://www.eldoradocnps.org/images/conservation/Invasives/Stinkwort_BrochureMar_18_2020.pdf

LEARN ABOUT EL DORADO CHAPTER CNPS—NEW CHAPTER BROCHURE

Thanks to the leadership of Deb Ayres (Vice President) and the assistance of several chapter members, we have a new brochure highlighting what we do as a chapter. The new brochure is in-

cluded in the final pages of this newsletter. The brochure can be printed (double-sided) on standard 8.5" x 11" paper and finished off with a Z-fold.

RESTORATION EFFORTS MAY START, WITH COVID-19 ALTERATIONS

Staff from the Eldorado National Forest had approached our chapter this winter with various restoration projects they hoped we could help with- and then Coronavirus hit! A few of these projects may still be able to start this summer. - things like fuel reduction around specified magnificent legacy pines (like we did last summer at Caples Creek), spreading mulch in bare soil areas in the Silver Fork American River area, or possibly stream and meadow improvement projects.

We're working carefully with the Forest to incorporate effective COVID 19 safety measures. Some that are likely to be included are requiring face masks, social distancing, and no carpooling for group work days, or instead possibly pre-staging (marking) projects and then allowing volunteers to go out individually or in family groups to work on them alone. If you are interested in helping on restoration projects, please let us know by sending a note to web.eldoradocnps@gmail.com and we will notify you of upcoming opportunities. Let us know too whether you would be comfortable with a socially distanced, masked group event, or would

prefer to work individually. We look forward to being able to help forest habitats again!



Area along Silver Fork American River in need of mulching to reduce erosion and create soil. Photo: L. Lubetkin.

SEPTEMBER 22 PROGRAM

Stay tuned for what's to come in September. This may be another Zoom program meeting. We will have more details about that in the next newsletter.

“VIRTUAL” PLANT WALKS ON EL DORADO CHAPTER WEBSITE NOW AVAILABLE

Because our usual spring and summer plant walks have been cancelled due to COVID-19 mitigation efforts in California, we are developing videos of walks along trails for you to enjoy on YouTube. Links to the YouTube videos are found on our chapter website: eldoradocnps.org. Along with these, you will also find accompanying descriptions and plant lists for the walks.

To begin the “virtual” plant walks program, we have started with the Pipi Campground Accessible Trail in the Eldorado National Forest. The campground is within a gorgeous lower montane forest habitat along the beautiful Middle Fork of the Cosumnes River. At Pipi, the river widens and calms revealing multi-hued river cobbles and supporting large stands of umbrella plant or Indian rhubarb (*Darmera peltata*). The accessible trail begins near the river within the mixed conifer forest and winds along the river side of the campground, with several platforms along the way with benches to sit and enjoy the river and surroundings. Toward the east end of the campground, you will come to a lovely wet mountain meadow, ringed by trees such

as black cottonwood (*Populus trichocarpa*) and mountain dogwood (*Cornus nuttallii*), and filled with corn lily (*Veratrum californicum*), big-leaf lupine (*Lupinus polyphyllus*), and cow parsnip (*Heracleum maximum*). Other plants you'll see are too numerous to list here, so see the plant list posted and use links provided to view videos of plant walks at Pipi from May and from June visits on the chapter website.

Look for additional “virtual” plant walks posted on the chapter website as the season progresses. We hope to develop more, along with descriptions and plant lists, so that you can not only learn about them through the videos, but also by visiting these places on your own, armed with the plant lists and images in your mind from the little films. We will be going to places that are (at least at present) open to the public, as long as mask-wearing and distancing guidelines are followed. Enjoy!

Ginna Meyer, Field Trip Chair

Links to Virtual Hikes:

[YouTube Video of Pipi Campground Trail - June 25, 2020.](#)

[YouTube Video of Pipi Campground Trail - May 27, 2020.](#)

TAKING UP A CARBON NEUTRAL PLEDGE

By being members of CNPS, we are champions for native plants in our community – not just plants, but pollinators, birds, and other wild creatures that thrive among the plants in the forests, woodlands, chaparral, and in our own backyards. Even as we enjoy and conserve nature, our activities release carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases into the atmosphere.



...And now for something a little different: An interesting history snippet...

It is now thought that the first reference to carbon dioxide gas' characteristic of intensifying the greenhouse effect was in the paper written by Eunice Foote and presented in 1856 at the 10th annual meeting of the American Association for Advancement of Science in Albany, New York.

Foote, a farmer's daughter, was born in 1819. She was

educated in science, and was a creative thinker and resourceful investigator.

This particular paper (she published at least one other and is given the credit for several patents) presented her experiments comparing the temperature differences of glass cylinders filled with various gases. She placed these cylinders in the sun. "The highest effect of the sun's rays I have found to be in carbonic acid gas," concluded Foote. "An atmosphere of that gas would give to our earth a high temperature; and if as some suppose, at one period of its history, the air had mixed with it a larger proportion than at present, an increased temperature from its own action, as well as from increased weight, must have necessarily resulted."

Her work was forgotten until 10 years ago. This likely happened because she is an amateur scientist, an American (America was considered a backwater in those days), and a woman. If you are interested in more of her story, I encourage you to begin with Rachel Brazil's article: "Eunice Foote: the mother of climate change", dated 20 April 2020, retrieved June 28, 2020 from the *Chemistry World* website, <https://www.chemistryworld.com/culture/eunice-foote-the-mother-of-climate-change/4011315.article>

Estimating the carbon footprint associated with the El Dorado Chapter: At the beginning of the year we did a quick 'n rough calculation of the chapter's transportation carbon footprint. The definition of "carbon neutral" is a current hot topic of discussion; however, most agree that when we burn fossil fuel energy, that some sort of carbon is released into the atmosphere. At the chapter level, this carbon is associated with how far members traveled to get to meetings, to hikes, to conservation work parties, and to the plant sales.

The chapter's carbon footprint for this year was estimated to be 20 tons. Our plan is to become involved with tree planting or other local conservation work to offset these 20 tons. If we aren't able to offset the total, the Board is committed to making a donation at the end of the year to an organization which had its own on-going carbon offset projects. (We think this would be at most a donation of \$350.)

How does COVID-19 change our carbon neutral plan?

With board meetings via conference call and general meetings via Zoom, so far the chapter's transportation carbon footprint is less than we anticipated. We are pushing for the Forest Service to start allowing volunteers to participate in conservation projects in the forest, maybe raking duff from around WOW trees, similar to the work at Caples Creek last year. Most likely there will be no carpooling to project areas – depending on how soon projects begin and if there is a good turn-out of volunteers, the transportation carbon for may go up or down. For now, we are sticking with offsetting the 20 tons. The Board can always reevaluate at the end of the year.

Respectfully,

Tal Blackburn

Life is a dream, realize it.

WEBINAR ON ASPEN ECOLOGY AND CONSERVATION—JULY 21, 9-10 AM (PT)

JULY 21, NOON EDT
ASPEN ECOLOGY & CONSERVATION: THE CHANGING LANDSCAPE OF A KEYSTONE SYSTEM
webinar presented by Dr. Paul C. Rogers

natural areas ASSOCIATION

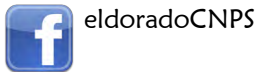
Learn more about this event and register here: https://www.memberleap.com/members/evr/reg_event.php?OR-GCODE=AREA&EVID=21871035



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

July-August 2020

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 journal *Fremontia*, quarterly magazine, *Flora*, 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

Contact Chapter Leadership at web.eldoradocnps@gmail.com

- | | |
|-------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| PRESIDENT | Alice Cantelow |
| VICE PRESIDENT | Debra Ayres |
| SECRETARY | Kathleen Barco |
| TREASURER | Ola Jane Gow |
| BOOKS & POSTERS | Vacant |
| CONSERVATION CO-CHAIRS | Lester Lubetkin
Sue Britting |
| CLARK YOUTH FUND | Chelsea Morgan |
| FIELD TRIPS | Ginna Meyer |
| INVASIVE EXOTICS | Annie Walker |
| LIBRARY DEMO GARDEN CO-CHAIRS | Cindy Podsiadlo
Madeline Franke |
| MEMBERSHIP | Vacant |
| PLANT SALE CHAIR | Christie Johnson |
| PROGRAMS | Debra Ayres |
| RARE PLANTS | Annie Walker |
| VOLUNTEER COORDINATOR | Tal Blackburn |
| Facebook | Annie Walker |
| Instagram | Kathleen Barco |
| WEBMASTER | Deborah Nicolls |
| NEWSLETTER | Sue Britting |

Our Projects

The Chapter's projects are designed to increase awareness, appreciation, and understanding about the conservation of native plants, and their horticultural use.

Pine Hill Preserve

The Pine Hill preserves are located on the gabbro soil lands surrounding Pine Hill in western El Dorado County and are home to 5 federally listed rare plant species. Since 2011, several governmental agencies and representatives from our Chapter have regularly met to develop conservation strategies to identify remaining habitat sites and develop a conservation plan.

The Chapter has been working with the California Dept. of Fish and Wildlife and Cal Fire to survey and map

rare plants on the perimeter of Pine Hill before and after clearing to create a fire break between Pine Hill and surrounding homes. A re-



Pine Hill Flannel bush, *Fremontodendron decumbens*, D. Ayres

search project by the Chapter looking at native and exotic species colonization, and survival and growth of Pine Hill Ceanothus is ongoing there until 2022. The preliminary study will be published in the CDFW journal in 2020.

Invasive Weeds

The Chapter identifies new weed species invading the County, such as Stinkwort, or problematic known weeds, such as barb goatgrass along Traverse Creek, and organizes weed pulls that focus on hand removal. Volunteers usually work for about two hours during the cooler parts of the day.

Restoration and Conservation Activities

The chapter actively leads a variety of hands on projects ranging from blocking illegal OHV trails and associated damage, replanting impacted areas, stream restoration, fixing fences and collecting trash, and helping to prepare forest areas for prescribed fires. We work to protect the natural beauty and native plants of the County.

The Nature Nook Garden at the Placerville Library



The Nature Nook is a new public garden at the Placerville Library. This lovely haven is designed for pollinators, birds, and people and is open to visitors every day of the year. Starting in spring 2017 the Chapter began to revitalize the former Xeriscape Demonstration Garden to showcase the beauty and benefits of gardening with natives. Volunteers from the Chapter and the community spent many months preparing the site by pruning and removing declining plants, weeding, and digging in 40 yards of soil amendment. To demonstrate the possibilities and utility of using California native plants a landscape plan was created featuring an entryway shrub garden, a pollinator garden outside the windows of the children's library, a meadow garden, and a shade garden using the existing oak canopy for native plants needing shade. The garden was planted in December 2018. Look for new signage and an information brochure.



CNPS
California Native Plant Society

El Dorado Chapter



El Dorado Chapter Flower

Pleasant Valley mariposa lily *Calochortus clavatus var. avius*
Photo: S. Perry

Dedicated
to Conserving
California's
Native Plants



The El Dorado Chapter California Native Plant Society

Our Purpose

As a member of the California Native Plant Society (CNPS), the El Dorado Chapter (the Chapter) is committed to protecting our county's diverse native plants and conserving their natural habitats. We also strive to increase the public's appreciation for, and knowledge of, native plants. Our organization envisions a future in which Californians actively experience and enjoy native plants in their natural habitats and human-made landscapes.

Our History

The Chapter has been educating County residents and visitors about native plants and natural history since 1993. A newsletter was published and field trips began at the Chapter's inception. Native plant sales, free educational presentations, and native garden tours have taken place over many years. During this time Chapter members have conducted invasive plant and weed pulls, acted as watchdogs within the County to ensure legislative protections are followed, and assisted in native plant restoration projects. Early supporters included community leaders George Duffy, Don Smith, and current Board members Annie Walker and



Western Redbud
Cercis occidentalis
D. Ayres



The El Dorado Chapter California Native Plant Society

Our Members

CNPS is a statewide non-profit organization where amateur and professional botanists and people interested in gardening and conservation share a common interest in California's native plants. As a member of CNPS, the Chapter maintains a contact list of enthusiastic members and community volunteers who are notified about upcoming events.

Chapter Meetings

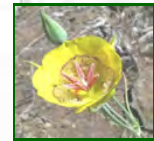
General meetings take place from 7:00 to 9:00 p.m. on the fourth Tuesday in January, March, May, July, September, and November. Meetings are free and open to the public. Topics range from moths in the forest to replacing a lawn. In addition to the featured speaker presentation, these meetings include a show-and-tell about one or more seasonal plants and a brief chapter meeting.

Field Trips

Field trips are scheduled during the spring and summer and offer the opportunity to explore various habitats and our rich native flora. Many trips are strolls rather than strenuous hikes. Check our newsletter or website for specific information.

Native Plant Sales

Typically held on the first Saturday of April and October in Placerville, a variety of native and drought tolerant plants suited to local growing conditions may be purchased. Experienced gardeners are on site to provide information about plant selection, care, and maintenance.



The El Dorado Chapter California Native Plant Society

Education Outreach

Community events are a great way to provide information about the beauty and benefits of native plants. Volunteers set up displays, hand out materials, and invite visitors to participate in an activity to increase awareness. Earth Day and the Chapter's spring and fall plant sales are typical events where educational information and activities take place.

Clark Youth Fund

This fund was established to honor George Clark, past president of CNPS and a self-taught botanist. The Chapter has provided funding to encourage native plant gardening and education. Educating young people about the importance of maintaining ecological diversity through preserving native plants is the goal of grants provided to schools and other youth organizations.

For more information:



www.eldoradocnps.org



<https://www.facebook.com/EIDoradoCNPS/>



[eldocnps](https://www.instagram.com/eldocnps)

Instagram

