



# GOLD FIELD NOTES

EL DORADO CHAPTER ☉ CALIFORNIA NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY ☉ JULY-AUGUST 2022

## JULY 26 PROGRAM

### ALL ABOUT AN INVASION—A PLANT INVASION

If you have flown over the San Francisco Bay in recent years, coming from or going into one of the international airports, you likely have witnessed an invasion. A plant invasion. In the early 1990s there were open mudflats and salt marshes that by the late 1990s had turned into vast meadows of hybrid—*not native*—cordgrass. During the 2000s a concerted effort was made to control the cordgrass, and for the last 10 years the focus has been on restoring the salt marshes with *native* cordgrass plantings.

This evening program on July 26 will present the latest information on this invasion. Debra Ayres, Ph.D., chapter vice president and former scientist at UC Davis will discuss the biology of the invasion after the 1970s introduction of east coast cordgrass into San Francisco Bay by the US Army Corps of Engineers. Immediately following there will be a video from the Invasive Spartina Project (ISP) detailing the extensive monitoring and expensive control work, and now restoration of native marshes, that the ISP has engaged in since 2004. The video, Restoring Native Tidal Marsh Habitat and Promoting Resilience in a Changing Bay Ecosystem, is presented by biologists Jeanne Hammond and Lindsey Domecus.

The presentation begins at 7 p.m. and will be given via Zoom and is free and open to all. Advance registration is required. Visit this link to register: <https://tinyurl.com/EDC-CNPS-July-mtng>



Above: Smooth cordgrass (introduced, non-native) and California cordgrass (native) growing in the salt marshes of San Francisco Bay. Photo: Deb Ayres.

Left: Spartina researcher Deb Ayres.

#### CALENDAR

##### July 20 (Wednesday)

Plant walk.  
Lower Carpenter Valley, Truckee, CA. See details inside.

##### July 21 (Thursday)

Lecture.  
Adventures in the Native Plant Program of the UC Santa Cruz Arboretum and Botanic Garden. Zoom presentation at 7 pm. Check here to register: <http://www.friendsofthechicostateherbarium.com/eventsviewcalendar/2022/7/21/adventures-in-the-native-plant-program-of-the-uc-santa-cruz-arboretum-and-botanic-garden>

##### July 26 (Tuesday)

Chapter program.  
Plant invasion! Meeting via Zoom, See details to right.

##### August 5 (Friday)

Plant walk.  
Winnemucca Lake Trail. See details inside.



# AFTER CALDOR, WILDFLOWERS GALORE!

## CHAPTER VOLUNTEERS ASSIST WITH RARE PLANT MONITORING

Native wildflowers have exploded in the Caldor Fire footprint! Though the sheer size of tree devastation is incredible, it comes with a silver lining. Open suddenly to sun and fertilized by ash, wildflowers from rare to common have flourished. Lizards, beetles, bees and butterflies are already seen as well.

A cadre of volunteers from our CNPS Chapter have been helping the Eldorado National Forest with monitoring the condition of rare and sensitive plant populations located within the area of the Caldor Fire, or that might have been impacted by suppression efforts, such as construction of dozer lines. So far we have been focusing on the Pleasant Valley mariposa lily (*Calochortus clavatus* var. **avius**, a California rare plant rank 1B.2) and Hutchison's lewisia (*Lewisia kelloggii* ssp. *hutchisonii*, a California rare plant rank 3.2). And so far we have found lots of flowering plants - often many more than in the historic record for known sites!



Hutchison's Lewisia. Photo: Lester Lubetkin.

Volunteers received training from Forest Service staff both in the monitoring techniques to use, and in hazard recognition. Volunteers have been working in areas that have been extensively burned, and in some cases where all of the trees have been killed. The Pleasant Valley mariposa lily often grows on shallow soils in areas that commonly support thick stands of



Bicolor mimulus (*Erythranthe bicolor*) and Seep monkey flower (*Erythranthe guttata*) paint a lava cap in an area of high severity burn. Photo: Lester Lubetkin.

manzanita and ceanothus. Now, following the fire, the brush in many of these areas burned up and so it is much easier to traverse the hillsides and to see the plants.

As a part of the monitoring, we have also been recording observations of invasive plants and "watch-list" plants (those which have a limited distribution and for which little is known). We also record any observations of disturbance or impacts from the fire and fire suppression efforts.

A special thanks to El Dorado Chapter members Annie Walker, Lester Lubetkin, and Shellie and Steve Perry for organizing and coordinating many of the monitoring days, to Eldorado Forest Botanist Matt Brown and Patra Foulks for putting on the training and assisting volunteers, and to Chapter member Kaitlin Lubetkin for working with Matt Brown to provide an easy and efficient way for volunteers to collect and submit the monitoring data in to the Forest Service's database. The project has been a rewarding experience for participants.



Pleasant Valley mariposa lily. Photo: Lester Lubetkin.

## TAKING UP A CARBON NEUTRAL PLEDGE: DRIVING TO PLANT WALKS

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.

I thought you would be interested in seeing the tabulation of the carbon dioxide emissions associated with driving to hikes last year. Note: this aligns with the chapter's fiscal/activity year, not the calendar year.

This looks so good. Keep carpooling when you can, every chance you get!

My spreadsheet below only includes the chemical conversion of gasoline and does not add certain carbon costs like refining and transporting gasoline to the pump. So, I pushed up the 2201 lbs. of carbon-dioxide emitted to 3000 lbs. (1.5 tons) for our overall carbon footprint calculation last year. (How did I estimate the amount of "push" to apply? I picked up tips from the "Bananas" book which I write about at the end.)

You may recall reading in an earlier newsletter that the Board voted in January to donate \$150 to Native Energy which is equivalent to about 7 tons of carbon credits. This donation supported the Medford Spring Grassland Project which is preserving short-grass prairie in Colorado. See <https://native.eco/project/medford-spring-grassland-conservation/> for more details. In a project such as this, there is the benefit of habitat conservation plus significant quantities of carbon are stored in root systems of prairie ecosystems. This underground carbon may stay sequestered even during a grassland fire.

"2021" Hike Mileage Summary		Activity year 4/1/2021 thru 3/31/2022		
Hike		Total people	Total miles	Pounds of carbon dioxide for this event
#1	Hike from Feb 2020 - not included			
#2	Quarry Trail, Auburn SRA	3	80	48
#3	Bridal Veil Falls, off Hwy 50	4	200	111
#4	Caples Creek Photo Class	12	560	232
#5	Washoe Meadow State Park	17	830	324
#6	Woods Lake to Lake Winnemucca	11	920	570
#7	Calaveras Big Tree State Park	19	1590	917
		<b>Total people</b>	<b>Total miles</b>	<b>Pounds of carbon dioxide for all hikes</b>
		66	4180	2201
				<b>Pounds of carbon dioxide per mile</b>
				0.53
				<b>Pounds of carbon dioxide per person</b>
				33

## THE CARBON OFFSET PROJECT WE ARE SUPPORTING

### Medford Spring Grassland Conservation<sup>HB</sup>



**Project Type:** Biodiversity & Wildlife Protection, Carbon Sequestration  
**Project Structure:** Help Build™  
**Location:** Bent County, Colorado  
**Year:** 2019  
**Standard:** Climate Action Reserve Grassland Protocol  
**Climate Impact:** 96,000 tonnes CO<sub>2</sub>e  
**Area:** 6,900 acres in Colorado

How much is 1 ton of carbon dioxide anyway? For those who are interested in developing a carbon instinct, I recommend *How Bad are Bananas: The Carbon Footprint of Everything* by Mike Berners-Lee. This book is organized by short chapters, like "A Cup of Coffee" or "A Car" - You can peruse a chapter or two, then put it down till later. There is a new and a 2010 edition. The old one is the only edition available through the LINK system at the county library. (Spoiler: Bananas are not so bad.)

Respectfully,  
Tal Blackburn



"You never change things by fighting the existing reality. To change something, build a new model that makes the existing model obsolete." -Richard Buckminster Fuller

## SUMMER PLANT WALKS

To sign up for the following field trips above, contact Ginna Meyer ([vcmeyer@me.com](mailto:vcmeyer@me.com)).

### Lower Carpenter Valley, Truckee, CA

**When:** Wednesday, July 20, 2022

**What:** Lower Carpenter Valley trail walk

**Where:** Lower Carpenter Valley, Truckee Donner Land Trust

**What to see:** From the Truckee Donner Land Trust Lower Carpenter Valley website: “Lower Carpenter Valley includes wet meadow, fresh water emergent wetland, riverine, and fen habitat types, as well as red fir, lodgepole pine, and mixed conifer forest....It is, in short, an example of how a subalpine Sierra meadow should work.”

We will be walking a 2.75 mile nature trail that was completed in 2020, that “wanders above Prosser Creek on the edge of the forest and meadow, with long stretches of boardwalk to help protect the sensitive meadow habitat.”

For more info about Lower Carpenter Valley and obtain a field guide to a number of wildflowers found there, visit: <https://www.truckeedonnerlandtrust.org/lower-carpenter-valley>



*Delphinium glaucum* from Winnemucca Lake trip. Photo: Ginna Meyer.

## SEPTEMBER 27 PROGRAM

To be determined. Details in the next newsletter or on the website closer to the event.



*Platanthera dilatata* var. *leucostachys* from Page Meadow and Lower Carpenter Valley. Photo: Ginna Meyer

### Winnemucca Lake Trail

**When:** Friday, August 5.

**What:** Winnemucca Lake Trail plant hike

**Where:** Winnemucca Lake Trail from Carson Pass visitors center to Lake Winnemucca, elevation 8650 ft.

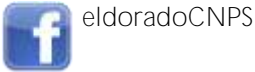
**What to see:** You will encounter open granite, mountain meadows, and fir-lodgepole conifer forest, and two lovely montane lakes – Frog Lake and Lake Winnemucca. The wildflowers are gorgeous in the late summer. Highlights include Clark’s nutcracker on whitebark pine, spectacular views, paintbrushes, lupines, polygonums, buckwheats, fleabanes, Newberry’s gentian, and much more! A plant list for Carson Pass is posted on the El Dorado CNPS website under “Plant Walks”.



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

July-August 2022

For Updates Visit Us on the Web  
[www.eldoradoCNPS.org](http://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 *Artemisia*, 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](http://www.cnps.org) to join online.

### CHAPTER OFFICERS AND COMMITTEE CHAIRS

Contact Chapter Leadership at [web.eldoradocnps@gmail.com](mailto:web.eldoradocnps@gmail.com)

PRESIDENT	Alice Cantelow
VICE PRESIDENT	Debra Ayres
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