



GOLD FIELD NOTES

EL DORADO CHAPTER ☼ CALIFORNIA NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY ☼ May-June 2019

MAY 28 PROGRAM VERNAL POOLS OF CALIFORNIA

Vernal pools are ephemeral wetlands with unique floras resulting from the unusual annual alternation of aquatic and very dry habitats occurring in one place. Ginna will talk about California's expression of these beautiful and largely native floras that include many California endemics and rare species. As one might expect, our vernal pools are home to endemic and rare species of animals, too! Come and experience a tour of these fascinating systems, found from the Santa Rosa Plateau in Riverside County to the Modoc National Forest in the northeastern part of our state, with the greatest concentrations found in our neighboring Great Valley.



Vernal pool at Nimbus Overlook. Photo: V. Meyer

This program will be held on Tuesday, May 28, at 7 PM at the Planning Commission Room, Building C, 2850 Fairlane Court, Placerville. The program is free to both members and the public.

SPRING PLANT SALE – THANKS TO OUR SUPPORT- ERS!

A sea of green in the middle of the County Building C parking lot was a welcome sight for those attending the Spring Native Plant Sale held on Saturday, April 6th.

We are sincerely grateful to everyone who came out for this major chapter event. Your support provides important funding allowing us to meet our education and conservation goals, as well as to inspire beautiful and sustainable gardens full of native birds and beneficial insects. Plants were provided by Cornflower Farms, Devil Mountain Nursery, Floral Native Nursery, Gold Country Flora, and Steve Dowty Nursery. An inspiring selection of books were offered, from Sierra wildflower field guides to native garden design and more. Not to worry if you

missed it, as we'll have another sale in the fall (tentative date 10/5/19).

This event could not happen without help from long-time and new chapter members or without Volunteer Coordinator Tal Blackburn. A special thank you to the following volunteers who made the day a success: Kathleen Barco, Tal Blackburn, Sue Britting, Alice Cantelow, Gail Cosmo, Ola Jane Gow, Mahala Guggino, Ernie Hartley, Pamela Hoover, Barbara Houghton, Lester Lubetkin, Ginna Meyer, Chelsea Morgan, Marty Oberlander, Shellie Perry, Cindy Podsiadlo, Jane Reed, Gloria Rill, Marcia Scott, Gwen Starrett, Mike Taylor, Annie Walker, Trevor and Judith Whiffin, and Ellen Yevekimov.

If you have suggestions or comments on this or future sales, please email Plant Sale Chair Christie Johnson at mwdesigns@suttercreek.com.

CALENDAR

May 11 (Saturday)

Workshop.
Introduction to Willow Identification hosted by Friends of the Chico Herbarium. To register: <http://www.friendsofthechicostateherbarium.com/eventsviewcalendar>

May 11 (Saturday)

Plant walk.
Pine Hill Preserve, Pine Hill Unit (PHP/CNPS). To carpool meet at 8:45 am, Rescue Elementary School, Rescue. Return 1 pm. RSVP to Ginna Meyer, vcmeyer@mac.com.

May 18 (Saturday)

Plant walk.
Old Flume Trail, Highway 49. To carpool: Meet at 9:45 am, Placerville Library, Fair Lane, Placerville. Return by 3 pm. RSVP to Ginna Meyer, vcmeyer@mac.com.

May 26 (Sunday)

Lava Bluffs Trail, Calaveras Big Trees State Park. To carpool: Meet at 8:45 am, Placerville Library, Fair Lane, Placerville. Return by 6 pm. RSVP to Ginna Meyer, vcmeyer@mac.com.

May 28 (Tuesday)

Chapter program.
Vernal Pools of California. See details to right.

July 23 (Tuesday)

Chapter program.
Alternative Lifestyles of Plants with Jamie Kneitel.

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.

A LOCAL SUCCESS STORY FOR OUR OAK WOODLANDS

Our chapter was involved in the recent saving of a small blue oak woodland near Union Mine High School. Good news is so nice to have lately!

A good plan initially sidetracked

The El Dorado Union High School District is working to reduce their carbon footprint and create local green jobs by installing solar panels to offset much of the electricity used at the four high schools. The High School District had set a priority to place the solar panels over existing parking lots, and this was the plan for three of the four high schools. However, at Union Mine High School, near the town of El Dorado, the solar panels were planned to be placed on open space adjacent to the campus instead, for economic reasons. But that meant removal of 30 to 40 trees, including a large number of Blue oaks (*Quercus douglasii*).

Enter parents, students, teachers, our chapter, and other environmental groups

A group of Union Mine High School students, teachers and parents decided to get involved in asking the High School District to protect the oak woodland next to the campus and instead, place the solar panels over existing parking areas. Students and concerned community members spoke to the El Dorado Union High School District Board of Trustees at their April 9, 2019 meeting, highlighting the value of oak woodlands, how the area is used as an "open-air" classroom and that it allows students to experience both the majestic oaks and the nearby streamside habitat. It was heartwarming to see so many local residents appreciate oak woodlands!

The Board of Trustees listened

Representatives from the local chapter of the Sierra Club and Rural Communities United also spoke, and our CNPS Chapter

submitted written input on the importance of retaining oak woodlands and the damage from continued fragmentation. The Board of Trustees considered the input from the students and community members and decided to relocate the solar array to the parking lot! They found a way to balance the economic concerns with conservation and protection of the oak woodland.

The actions of the forward thinking Board of Trustees will have immeasurable and far reaching positive impacts on not only the oak woodland, but on the Union Mine High School students, especially those that worked on this issue. Those students have now seen that their voices are important and can be heard, that there is a value in being engaged in our American governance, and that our decision-makers do recognize the value of our County's natural resources, while meeting budgetary constraints. Never think that our voices don't matter!

Huzzah to all involved, including the High School Board of Trustees!!

KEEPING UP WITH SCIENCE AND MANAGEMENT: CONFERENCE ATTENDANCE

CNPS Chapters support the work done by botanists in academia and agencies by attendance, participation, and financial contributions to science conferences. In the last few months, members of our Chapter have been involved in the California Invasive Plant Council (Cal-IPC) conference in Monterey, and the biennial meetings of the Northern California Botanists (NorCal Botanists) this January in Chico.

CNPS recognizes the threat posed to native plant diversity by invasive exotic plants. In addition to competitive replacement of natives by exotics, some exotic species alter ecosystem properties, such as fire frequency (e.g. medusahead grass), that can permanently change plant communities. Sixteen Chapters, including ours, supported the Cal-IPC conference in November. One intriguing focus was functional trait matching, a technique where native species most similar to invasive exotics in terms of traits like drought tolerance and growth rate are used in restoration projects to beat out the exotic species. California aster and yarrow are two tough natives to consider in your own restoration efforts.

Many of the talks were focused on controlling invasive plants. Of particular interest was Sarah Minnick's talk on barbed goatgrass control on serpentine in Marin County as our Chapter has spent several years hand-pulling barbed goatgrass on serpentine at Traverse Creek Botanical Area. They found integrated pest management to be the most effective approach, combining mowing, herbicides, and hand pulling. To download the talks go to: <https://www.cal-ipc.org/resources/symposium/archive/2018-cal-ipc-symposium/>

This year's NorCal Botanists Symposium was three days filled with the diverse and widespread applications of the amazing tools and resources developed, currently available and used by botanists and their colleagues in California. From the classification and mapping of rare communities to further their protection; the cultural significance and effective use of our wonderful herbaria and the California Consortium; newly learned lessons about fire ecology; the genetics and recognition of cryptic species, such as *Downingia yina* of our unique vernal pool communities; to the celebra-

tion of Todd Keeler-Wolf's career and contributions to our understanding of California's botanical treasure-trove with his thoroughly delightful keynote presentation - the story of his becoming a naturalist and a travel-log of his adventures in Northern California landscapes - the symposium was a plant enthusiast's delight!

Alison Stanton had been scheduled for a presentation about the how our own El Dorado County treasure - Pine Hill Preserve - came to be. Though she was unable to attend the symposium, she, Deb Ayres, and Sue Britting provided Ginna Meyers with slides and assistance for a substitute presentation, "The story of the Pine Hill Preserve: Conservation successes old and new". Our thanks go to Alison and others, for making it possible for our chapter, as well as the great work of the Preserve management lead by Graciela Hinshaw, to be a highlight of the symposium as part of the "And now the good news!" session. To virtually attend the conference, Steve Rosenthal of the CNPS Santa Clara Chapter, recorded many of the Symposium presentations here: <http://www.norcalbotanists.org/symposia/symposium2019.htm>.

CLARK YOUTH FUND UPDATE: CAMINO SCHOOL

Students at Camino Polytechnical School and the Camino School District garden program have been busy planting and learning about native vegetation, thanks to a \$500 grant from our chapter last fall. Teacher Rebecca Morgan and Sierra Pacific Industries botanist Jessica O'Brien have supported this project with action-based learning during early winter plantings. They carefully chose plants that would thrive in, and are native to, the Camino area, and have addressed a summer irrigation system.

Over 50 students from Kindergarten through 8th grade have been enthusiastically creating a pollinator garden of native plants at their campus, and are also adding native plants to rain retention ponds. Books purchased with grant money are helping them learn to identify local plants



and wildlife, while related journaling activities are adding to the experience. According to Rebecca, "the students are really enjoying it." We love to see kids get outside and meet native plants hand to root, as well as some of the critters that use native plants for food and shelter!

If your school is interested in applying for a grant for native plants and outdoor education, contact Clark Youth Fund chair Chelsea Morgan at web.eldoradocnps@gmail.com

A VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITY COMING UP IN THE CAPLES CREEK HEADWATERS

The El Dorado Chapter, CNPS will be helping the Eldorado National Forest prepare for a critically needed prescribed burn within parts of the Caples Creek Roadless Area (an area recommended for wilderness designation by the Forest Service) to restore the health and fire resilience of some of the last remaining old growth mixed conifer forest on the Eldorado National Forest. CNPS volunteers, working in partnership with volunteers from Sierra Forest Legacy, the El Dorado Chapter of Trout Unlimited, and other volunteers, will remove vegetation and leaf litter from the bases of large legacy conifers in the Caples Creek area to help minimize the loss of these old growth trees during the prescribed fire.

Much of this work will be done by hand raking, but there will also be a small cadre of previously

trained volunteers removing small trees and other ladder fuels next to these large trees with chainsaws. We are planning to have several volunteer days of raking duff away from the base of the largest trees in July 2019, and several days at the end of June to cut the small ladder fuels in advance of the raking. Let us know if you might be interested in helping and we will add you to a project mailing list. Please submit your name and contact information to Tal Blackburn at web.eldoradocnps@gmail.com (and thanks to those that have already signed up!).



JULY 23 PROGRAM ALTERNATIVE LIFESTYLES OF PLANTS with Jamie Kneitel

FELLOW GARDENERS AND WORKER BEES

We still need help at the newly renovated native plant garden at the library. The work schedule is: **second and fourth Wednesdays of the month, and the second and third Saturdays of the month from 10am to 12pm.**

Please bring work gloves and water, and if needed sunscreen, a hat and maybe a snack; and if you have special tools for weeding or hand pruning, bring those. We do have access to a small shed that has tools, buckets, water hoses, fencing materials and gloves.

Our next tasks are: weeding and light pruning; adding a few plants to replace those that did not make it; adding irrigation-to be completed by El Dorado County Chief Administration Office (CAO)-Facilities Division; and adding mulch over the entire area.

I still envision this garden as a community project with folks helping out....you don't have to be a member of California Native Plant Society, just someone who cares and is willing to get down and dirty. There are tasks available for everyone.

PREFER AN ELECTRONIC NEWSLETTER?

Several members have indicated they would be just as happy with an electronic version of our chapter newsletter as a physical copy. If you would prefer an electronic copy, please send us that request at web.eldoradocnps@gmail.com We will try and accommodate your preferred communication method! Or, try using your ...

[Membership profile](#) Have you logged on to your online CNPS member profile yet? You can edit your address, see when your membership is due, opt out of mailed materials, etc. The state office has already set up an account for you (remember that email we all got back on Feb 14?) and you just need to set up a password. Go to the state website at cnps.org, choose the membership tab, and then hit the "my profile" button in upper right. There are profile FAQs to help with the process.



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

May-June 2019

CNPS-EDC IS NOW ON INSTAGRAM!

Check out our feed at [eldocnps](https://www.instagram.com/eldocnps) and add yourself as a follower. And--we are looking for photos taken by our members to send out on our Instagram account. The photos or videos can be of flowers, grasses, oaks--whatever you have. Send by email to Kathleen Barco at mkb842@msn.com (and be sure to include your name and the name of the plant or the setting).



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



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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, *Flora*, 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

Contact Chapter Leadership at web.eldoradocnps@gmail.com

PRESIDENT	Alice Cantelow
VICE PRESIDENT	Debra Ayres
SECRETARY	Kathleen Barco
TREASURER	Cindy Podsiadlo
BOOKS & POSTERS	Bonnie East
COMMUNICATIONS	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
WEB MASTER	Deborah Nicolls
NEWSLETTER	Sue Britting