



California Native Plant Society
Santa Clara Valley Chapter

THE BLAZING STAR

January-February 2003

MEMBER'S NIGHT AND GENERAL MEETING

Friday, January 24, 2003 at 7:30pm
Los Altos Library Program Room
13 So. San Antonio Road, Los Altos

TOPIC: Member's slide show – special plants, places and times of 2002

This is the time to bring your favorite slides of the last year, including special plants, special places and special times. Anyone with one or more photos is welcome. We do have to limit everyone to five minutes so all can participate, so please plan your photos accordingly. If you're bringing photos please arrive early. If you have a carousel slide tray, bring it loaded. Otherwise, bring your slides sorted in order and we'll provide tray space. This year we will also offer members the option of showing digital photographs. If you have digital photos you would like to show, please e-mail them in advance to judy@fenerty.com or burn them on a CD to bring to the meeting.

There will also be space for displaying prints, drawings and other plant-related material. If you plan to participate in displaying photos or other items, please RSVP to Judy Fenerty at judy@fenerty.com or (408)378-6272 by January 20, so we can organize the logistics in advance.

Directions: From Foothill Expressway, travel 1/2 mile on San Antonio Road towards the Bay, cross Hillview and turn right into driveway; library is on the left. From El Camino, travel towards the hills on San Antonio Road, cross Edith and turn left into unmarked driveway just before Hillview. The sign on San Antonio Road reads "Civic Center, Library & History Museum." Enter through the lobby of the main entrance, which faces a driveway located off San Antonio Road between Hillview and Edith. If the library lot is full, proceed to the adjoining lot for Hillview Community Center.

CNPS general meetings are free and open to the public.

CHAPTER ACTIVITIES

Spring Wildflower Show/Sale Dates Set

Save these dates! We will have our spring wildflower show at Mission College, on **Saturday and Sunday April 26 and 27. NOTE THE NEW LOCATION.**

The plant sale will be one day only, **May 10**, at Hidden Villa, same place as last year.

Nursery Work Sessions

Our regular native plant nursery work sessions continue throughout the winter, every **Wednesday from 12noon to 4pm**. Bring garden gloves and your lunch if you like. Other tools will be provided at the nursery. For more information, contact Jean Struthers at (650)941-2586 or JeanStruthers@aol.com, or Ray Deutsch at (650)365-6136 or rdeutsch@stanford.edu.

Directions: Hidden Villa is located on Moody Road west of Foothill College. From Hwy 280 in Los Altos Hills, take the Moody Road exit and head west. Two miles west of Foothill College, look for the Hidden Villa sign and driveway on the left. Proceed over the bridge, and park in the visitor center parking lot to your right. The Native Plant Nursery is at the greenhouse just beyond the visitor center.

Gardening With Natives

The Gardening with Natives group will try out a new location and an earlier start time for our next meeting, on **Thursday, January 9 at 7pm**. The Peninsula Conservation Center (PCC) has a meeting room that we'd like to try out, to supplement our past gatherings at the DeAnza ESA.

The topic for our January meeting will be "Arctostaphylos, the Manzanitas." We will discuss as a group: how to plant, care for, propagate and enjoy these early-blooming plants.

Our February meeting will be held on **Thursday, February 6, at 7pm**. The topic will be "Native plants for your garden from the redwood forest community." The location is TBA.

As in past years, we hope to continue to intersperse some garden visits with our monthly meetings. If anyone would like to volunteer to host a garden visit this year or knows of a great public garden to visit, contact Stephanie Morris (see contact info below).

Directions: the PCC is located at 3921 E. Bayshore Road in Palo Alto. From Hwy 101: Take the "San Antonio North" exit, get immediately into the left-hand turn lane, and turn onto East Bayshore. This will curve around to the left, then right. The first street on your right is Corporation Way, turn right. Then turn into the first driveway on your left, which is the PCC parking lot. There is no sign near the lot entrance. A map is available at <http://www.acterra.org/contact/locations.html>.

We will meet in the Raptor suite, which has a door at the back of the building that opens up to the parking lot.

Contact Stephanie Morris at StephLMorris@hotmail.com or (408)629-8004 to be added to the newsletter email list, provide input, or receive more information. New members are always welcome!

You may check out our **new GWN website** at its temporary address:
<http://home.earthlink.net/~vcpelton/gwn/>

Native Hill Work Days: Foothill College

Our next days of gardening at Native Hill (on the Foothill College Campus) will be **Sunday, January 5**, and **Saturday, January 18**, both from **9:30 am to 12:30 pm**.

Everyone is welcome and experience is not necessary. Park for free beside the garden. Bring gloves, small tools (pruning shears, weeder), liquids, and a sack lunch if you would like to stay and picnic as a group. We will be doing pruning and planting and possibly some mulching.

If you can't help on the above dates, volunteers are also welcome on Friday afternoons, from 2-4:30 pm. Contact Ellie Gioumousis to confirm a Friday work day, or if you have any other questions, at (650)494-6276 or elliegms@attbi.com.

Directions: Native Hill is located on the Foothill College Campus. Take the El Monte/Moody exit from Highway 280, and follow signs to the campus. Follow the one-way perimeter road all the way around to the horticulture unit. You will notice the native plantings on your left hand side. Turn into the first lot after the Native Hill area.

Non-Native Plant Removal: Edgewood Park

Chapter volunteers get together to pull weeds at Edgewood Park on **Friday mornings at 8:30am**. Bring gloves, long sleeves, sunscreen, water and a snack. Contact John Allen at jkakwa@aol.com or (650)366-4910, or Ken Himes at (650)591-8560 for information and meeting place.

Planning for our 2003 eradication efforts will take place at an evening session in January. Call Ken for time and date.

Photography Group

Please join us for the first meeting of the revived Photography Group, on **Monday, January 20, at 7pm** in the Peregrine Room at the Peninsula Conservation Center.

We will be discussing what we want to do as a group and getting to know new members. Show up with your ideas, enthusiasm, and of course, your photos. If you would like to be added to the email or phone lists, contact Jerry Welch at (408)353-8352 or jdwelch@yahoo.com.

The Peninsula Conservation Center (PCC) is located at 3921 E. Bayshore Road in Palo Alto.

Corresponding Secretary Needed

Our Chapter is looking for a volunteer to become our new corresponding secretary. The job involves acknowledging donations to the Chapter, acknowledging work by Chapter members at Chapter events such as the wildflower show and plant sales, and communicating with the wildflower show vendors.

To obtain more information or indicate your interest, contact Stephen Buckhout at (408)255-6233 or yscottie@pacbell.net.

Education Volunteer Needed

Are you interested in education activities? The Chapter needs assistance with education programs, either as Education Chair or Co-Chair. In the past, educational activities have ranged from being a resource for schools and administering our scholarship program for graduate students to getting the word out about native plants at environmental and science fairs in the fall and spring. In addition to these programs, there are many opportunities for new activities. If you would like to serve as Education Chair or assist with education activities, please contact Nora Monette, at 408-244-5153 or nmonette@aol.com, or Georgia Stigall at 650-941-1068 or gstigall@aol.com.

COMMITTEE NEWS & REPORTS

Research Grant Report

Our Chapter makes available scholarships for graduate students doing research on plant systematics, plant ecology, plant physiology, plant community restoration, or other related botanical studies of plants that grow in habitats in Central and Northern California. Susan O'Neil received a \$1,500 scholarship from us last spring.

Susan is a student at San Francisco State finishing her Master of Science degree. She is currently working for the National Park Service on an inventory and monitoring program for all of the Bay Area parks (including Pinnacles National Monument). The inventory covers vascular plants, possibly lichens, vertebrates, plus some invertebrates in each park. Ultimately the program will develop a network of long-term "vital signs" monitoring for ecosystem health. To date, Susan has worked mostly at the John Muir National Historic Site.

Susan's research is important for conservation of *Ceanothus jepsonii* var. *albiflorus* because much of the serpentine soil that it is restricted to is on private land and could be developed with the expanding population of the Bay Area. She feels that it is important to study and understand the biology of species prior to their become rare or endangered, in order to assist in future recovery efforts should that become necessary.

Susan sends us this report:

Last spring I was selected as a recipient of the Graduate Student Project Funding from the Santa Clara chapter of CNPS. Since I received the generous (and much needed) funding, I have accomplished many things. My thesis involved studying the seed bank dynamics of *Ceanothus jepsonii* var. *albiflorus*. This species is restricted to serpentine soils from Marin County over to Solano County and up to Yolo county. My field work was done at the McLaughlin Natural Reserve in Lake County, part of the UC Natural Reserve System.

I determined that out of every 100 seeds produced only about eight actually make it into the soil seed bank. Pre- and post-dispersal seed predation account for much of the loss in seed numbers. I discovered that a beetle was laying its eggs on the seeds and the larvae were eating, thereby destroying the inside of the attacked seeds. Rodents were responsible for removing and eating up to 90% of dispersed seeds from my experimental plots.

In July, I presented my research at the Society for Conservation Biology meetings at Kent University in the UK. It was a great experience and allowed me to network with seed ecologists (and other biologists) from around the world. I also plan on presenting my work in April at an international conference on serpentine ecology. I will be

receiving my masters degree in Conservation Biology from San Francisco State University in December, 2002. Thank you!!

CHAPTER FIELD TRIPS

Jan 1, Wednesday, 11am Año Nuevo State Reserve
Join us for a Chapter tradition of bringing in the New Year with a picnic and walk at Año Nuevo State Reserve (ANSR) on the San Mateo County coast. ANSR is located south of Pescadero and just north of the Santa Cruz County line. Meet in the parking lot (small fee collected) at **11am**. The trip is expected to last until **2pm**.

We will have a short walk and picnic on the beach (the tide will be out at lunchtime!) in the area in which reservations are NOT required. We will see coastal prairie and sea cliff plants; as well as raptors, songbirds and possibly elephant seals. The depth of botanical discussion will directly depend on who attends!

Bring layers (for cold, warm, wind, sun or fog), lunch and water. For more information, contact Georgia Stigall at gstigall@aol.com or 650-941-1068.

Rain cancels this trip. There will be a recorded weather & update message at (650)941-1068 starting at 7am on January 1.

Jan 11, Saturday, 11am Field Trip Planning Meeting and Leader Skills Enhancement

Join fellow field trip enthusiasts to plan trips to your favorite native plant hot spots during 2003. Bring your ideas for trips to this planning meeting, particularly any that you might like to lead or attend. A light lunch will be provided to facilitate creative thinking.

Following the planning session there will be an introduction to our new field trip policy, developed during the past several months, to facilitate successful field trips from the point of view of both participants and leaders.

Everyone is welcome. Anyone interested in leading or assisting with any Chapter field trips is strongly encouraged to attend. Location is the Peninsula Conservation Center, at 3921 E. Bayshore Road in Palo Alto.

Jan 19, Sunday, 10am UC Santa Cruz Arboretum
Explore the wide diversity of California Flora without the tedium of journeying hundreds of miles nor the burden of lugging Jepson manual. All the plants have name tags! If we tire of the native flora, there are sections on Australia, Mexico, etc. Check out <http://www2.ucsc.edu/arboretum/> for more info. Meet at

the arboretum at 10am. The trip is expected to last until about **2pm**.

Directions: take Highway 17 south to junction Highway 1. Turn in direction of Half Moon Bay (north). Right on Bay. Left on Empire Grade Rd. Next right takes you into the arboretum. Allow 45 minutes of travel time from Central San Jose.

You may join the no-host car pool at the Los Gatos Park and Ride at **9am**. To get there, from 17 south, exit to Los Gatos road (north). The Park and Ride is just past University on the right. For more information, contact your trip leader, Joe Cernac, at (408)292-5465 or joecernac@earthlink.net.

Feb 1 Saturday, 10am, Dirca Walk in Belmont

Join Phil Darlington and Ken Himes on a visit to Hidden Valley Park and Water Dog Lake Park in Belmont. We will make a short loop in Hidden Valley Park to see *Dirca occidentalis* as part of the chaparral as well as a typical understory shrub. Striking specimens of *Ribes malvaceum* should be in bloom.

For those willing to do a longer hike we will continue by connecting trails to Water Dog Lake Park to see additional Dirca. The views are excellent. Most of the trails are made by mountain bikers and may be rough or slippery. Boots or good traction shoes and good hiking skills required. Expect the full trip to last until early afternoon, possibly **3pm**.

Directions: Meet at **10am** in the parking lot at the South end of Carlmont Drive in Belmont. It is located west of Alameda de las Pulgas and south of Ralston Ave. A map of the area may be found in Peninsula Trails guidebook Water Dog Lake section.

For information and directions contact Phil Darlington at (650)591-7843 or sierraphil@earthlink.net or Ken Himes at (650)591-8560.

Feb 8, Saturday, 10am Pulgas Ridge Hike

Join Mary Simpson for a 4 mile hike in Pulgas Ridge Open Space Preserve, climbing through oak woodland to chaparral looking for early Spring bloomers. We will see fetid adder's tongue, hopefully in flower. The preserve is near Edgewood Park but with a very different flora. Bring lunch and water. The hike is expected to last until about **3pm**.

Directions: From Hwy 280 exit at Edgewood Road. Proceed NE about 3/4 of a mile, then turn left onto

Crestview Dr. Make another left turn onto Edmonds, go about 100 yards to the parking lot on your left. For more information, contact Mary Simpson at (408) 370-2177 or marysimpson@earthhlink.net.

Feb 9, Sunday, 10am Eagle Rock Trail in Big Basin

Join Tom Cochrane for a hike within a remote piece of Big Basin State Park off Little Basin Road, near the town of Boulder Creek. We should see the rare Santa Cruz Manzanita (*Arctostaphylos andersonii*) in bloom and one of the five occurrences of the endangered Santa Cruz Cypress (*Cupressus abramsiana*). There will be a 1000ft. elevation gain in 1-1/2 miles, on an out and back trail. The trip is expected to last until about **3pm**. Be prepared for steep, rocky and slippery trail conditions.

Directions: from Hwy. 9 in downtown Boulder Creek, go west on Hwy. 236 for 6.4 miles to Little Basin Road. Turn left (there is an 'H-P' sign where you turn) and go 1.2 miles. The trailhead is to the left of the H-P Camp gate. Parking will be on the side of the road.

You may join the no host carpool at **9am** from the Parking lot at the intersection of Hwy. 9 and Skyline blvd. Boulder Creek is about 14 miles down Hwy. 9 from there. Travel time from the City of Saratoga to Little Basin Rd. is about 55 min. Bring water and lunch. For more information contact Tom Cochrane at (650)969-3181 or trailtraveller@webtv.net.

Feb 15, Saturday, 10am Dirca Walk on Windy Hill

Paul Heiple will lead a hike up Hamm's Gulch in the Windy Hill Open Space to see the *Dirca occidentalis* that grows there. Other spring plants will be found along the trail but only a few will be in flower that early. The fun will be to see the new spring growth.

The trail is moderately steep with 1000 ft. of elevation gain and a distance of three to four miles. Bring a lunch and water, heavy rain cancels. The hike is expected to last until about **1pm**.

Directions: Meet at the Windy Hill parking lot next to the Sequoias on Portola Road. For more information contact Paul Heiple at (650)854-7125 or logh3o@aol.com.

February, Mushrooms in Butano State Park

Join local mycologist Bill Freedman for a mushroom field trip to Butano State Park. Scheduling details are not yet worked out. Check the Chapter web site (<http://www.stanford.edu/~rawlings/blazcon.htm>) for additional information or call Stella Yang at (408)255-6233.

Chapter field trips are free and open to the public. They are oriented to conservation, protection and enjoyment of California native plants and wildlife, and we adhere to all rules and guidelines for the lands on which we are visiting.

In our region it is very important to be prepared for hiking on rugged & steep terrain, wide temperature ranges and rapidly changing conditions at any time of year. All participants should wear sturdy footwear and carry sufficient water, sun protection, food, layers, personal first aid and other supplies you may need. If you have any questions about your ability to participate in a particular field trip, please contact the trip leader in advance.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

News and Activities from Other Organizations

Going Native Garden Tour - May 18

Save the date! A spin-off of our Chapter's Gardening With Natives section is the "Going Native Garden Tour," which plans this spring to showcase home gardens featuring California native plants. The tour date has been set for **Sunday, May 18, 2003, 10am-4pm**.

Committees are working on tasks such as garden selection, logistics, website, publicity, and alliances. We're still looking for gardens to consider for the tour. If you have a garden of primarily California native plants in the South Bay, Peninsula, or San Francisco, contact Tanya Kucak at tanyak@igc.org. To find out more about the tour and track our progress, join the egroup at <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/goingnativegardentour>.

Yellow Starthistle Conference - Feb 4

The San Mateo County Weed Management Area (WMA) is sponsoring a one-day workshop on control of Yellow Starthistle (*Centaurea solstitialis*). The program will include information about YST identification and biology, control options, and developing a program for YST control. There will also be a presentation on new weeds in San Mateo County.

The workshop will be **Tuesday, February 4**, at Independence Hall in Woodside (at Woodside Road & Whiskey Hill Road).

The program will be **8:30am to 3:30pm**. The fee of \$10 per person includes lunch and handouts. Those interested in attending should contact John Beall (650-363-4700 or JBeall@co.sanmateo.ca.us) by **Wednesday, January 29, 2003** to confirm a reservation.

Lake Cunningham Habitat Restoration

Community volunteers have begun work in selected areas of Lake Cunningham Park in the Evergreen area of San Jose, to restore its natural habitat. They are weeding out exotic invasive plants and planting native wildflowers and plants that were once abundant here.

The park is located at the corner of Tully and White Road. Workdays are **Saturdays 10am-2pm**. Tasks include weeding, mulching, and planting. To volunteer, contact Arvind Kumar at LakeCunninghamVolunteers@yahoo-groups.com or (408)274-6965, or visit their web site at <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/LakeCunninghamVolunteers>.

Mid-Peninsula Plants & Animals Online

The Natural Resources Database, a web-based inventory of plants and animals on Peninsula preserves, is now available for public use at <http://www.nrdb.org>.

Edgewood Natural Preserve is one of the 26 preserves featured in the database. You can look up plants, birds, and other animals found at Edgewood as well as at any of the Mid-Peninsula Regional Open Space District (MROSD) Preserves. You can customize your search to plants, animals, or even species families, and then print out a checklist for field use.

The database and web interface were co-developed by Dennis H. Smith and Bill Korbholz. Feedback, sightings, and requests for information, including how to incorporate other nature preserves are welcome and can be submitted from the website.

DEADLINE FOR THE NEXT *BLAZING STAR*

Friday, February 7, 2003

**Email: mattsson@sbcglobal.net
Phone: (408)255-3767**