



THE BLAZING STAR

March-April 2003

GENERAL MEETING AND MEMORIAL PROGRAM

Friday, March 21, 2003 at 7:30 pm
Los Altos Library Program Room
13 So. San Antonio Road, Los Altos

Topic: THE NATIVE PLANT ROCK GARDEN
Presenter: Lori Hubbart

Please join us March 21 for our chapter's sixth annual Brenda Butner Memorial Lecture.

This month's program will be design and plant palette ideas for rock gardens using lowland California native plants, including:

- Different types of rock gardens
- Rock placement from naturalistic to stylized
- Plant requirements
- Species and cultivars to try
- Contrast and harmony in design

Lori Hubbart started out in the Santa Clara Valley Chapter of CNPS, where she was Wildflower Show/Plant Sale Co-Chair, Vice President/Programs and then Chapter President. She headed a state membership committee before being catapulted into the job of State President, and is presently serving as Secretary on the State Board.

Lori worked for seven years at the Yerba Buena Nursery in San Mateo County, propagating and selling California native plants. She and her husband, Greg Jirak, now live in coastal Mendocino County, where Lori is long-term President of the Dorothy King Young Chapter. She is working toward starting a small native plant nursery.

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. For additional information, contact chapter Vice President Judy Fenerty at judy@fenerty.com or (408)378-6272.

CHAPTER ACTIVITIES

Spring Wildflower Show April 26 and 27

The Chapter Wildflower Show will be held **Saturday and Sunday, April 26 and 27**, at **Mission College in Santa Clara, a new location for this event**. Show hours are **10am to 4pm** both days, in the Hospitality Management Building. Parking is free in Lot C, immediately next to the show location. In addition to a display of wildflowers collected specifically for the show or grown by Chapter members, there will be a number of plant-related displays and vendors offering a variety of plant-related items. The show is co-sponsored by the Environmental Awareness Association, a conservation-oriented student group at Mission that is, among other projects, working to preserve habitat for burrowing owls located on the campus.

Note that the **Spring Plant Sale** is a separate event that will be held on **Saturday, May 10**. Look for details below, in this issue of the Blazing Star.

Help needed for the Wildflower Show

It takes between 60 and 80 volunteers to make the annual Wildflower Show a successful event. You need not make a major time commitment to help; **even an hour or two** will be a major contribution to the Show's success. We need assistance in all areas, including many tasks that require no or only minimal plant identification skills. Help is needed with distributing posters advertising the show, collecting plant specimens, assisting those collecting specimens, setting up the exhibition area, keying plant specimens, placing plants and name cards on the display tables, greeting visitors, serving refreshments for all the volunteers, staffing the Chapter sales table and displays, providing plants grown in pots to limit the number that

need to be collected, taking down the exhibition area, and preparing post-show reports of plants displayed. Since this is our first show at this location, its success depends more than ever on getting information about the show out to as many people as possible. Please tell everyone you know about the show and distribute posters to as many locations as possible.

To volunteer please contact the Wildflower Show Co-Chairmen, Stella Yang & Stephen Buckhout at (408)255-6233 or yscottie@pacbell.net.

Directions: To reach the Mission College campus take 101 to Great America Pkwy/Bowers in Santa Clara. Go north towards Great America. Turn left onto Mission College Boulevard and then right at the first traffic light and follow the road around the campus perimeter to Parking Lot C. Drive to the far end of the lot, which faces the Hospitality Management Building.

Spring Native Plant Sale and Call for Volunteers

Our Spring Native Plant Sale will be held on **Saturday, May 10, from 10am to 4pm** at our Hidden Villa nursery. There are lots of ways to help with the sale! **We need the following items:**

- **Gallon-size pots** at the nursery-- the best ones are clean, black, without labels from other nurseries
- **Lots of boxes** for customers to carry home their purchases;
- **Wagons** on the day of the sale to help customers cart their purchases to their cars;
- **Three or four large ice chests** on the day of the sale to hold ice and bottled water for sale;

If you can make a donation or have an item to lend, please contact Janet Gomez at (408) 978-2984 or janetg@ix.netcom.com.

There are also lots of ways to **volunteer your time** to help with the sale. Most of the jobs listed below don't require expert knowledge of plants, and you can choose to work one or two hours or all day.

Volunteer opportunities before the sale:

- About 3 weeks before the sale, we'll prepare fliers to mail to potential customers. We'll send out details later.
- On **Monday through Friday** before the sale (**May 5 - 9**), we'll have **work sessions at the nursery** (see details and location in the next article, below) to prepare the plants and the nursery for the sale, from **10am to 4pm**.

On the day of the sale, we need:

- Two to four people for parking and traffic control;

- One or two people who will put up signs along the road before the sale to help people find the nursery, and one or two people to take them down after the sale;
- People to help set up tables and move plants before the sale (starting at 9am);
- People to help clean up after the sale;
- People who will write up the sales tags before customers go to the cashiers to pay for their plants;
- People who will help customers take their purchases to their cars and bring the carts back to the nursery;
- People who will answer customers' questions about the plants and help them decide which plants to purchase.

The plant sales are always lots of fun to work at, and we hope you'll come and help! Lunch will be provided to volunteers, too. If you would like to help with the sale, please contact Janet Gomez at (408) 978-2984 or janetg@ix.netcom.com, and specify what you would like to do and the times that you'd like to work.

Nursery Work Sessions

Besides the special sessions the week before the sale, our regular native plant nursery work sessions continue throughout the winter, every **Wednesday** from **12noon to 4pm**.

Bring garden gloves, sunhat, clippers, and your lunch if you like. Other tools will be provided at the nursery. We may need help weeding, cleaning the nursery, making signs, rearranging the pots and generally getting the place ready for the sale. Knowledge of plants is not necessary, your willingness to help is all that's required.

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

Our next meeting will be **Thursday, March 6th at 7:30pm** at the PCC in Palo Alto. The topic for our March meeting will be: Native Plants for Container Gardens.

Our April meeting will also take place at the PCC, on **Thursday, April 3rd at 7:30pm**. Our meeting topic will be: Tough Natives for Front Yard Parking Strips. We will discuss as a group which plants are most trample resistant when it comes to people and dogs, as well as what plants are not good choices.

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 Peregrine 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 GWN website at its temporary address: <http://home.earthlink.net/~vcpelton/gwn/>

Habitat Restoration: Edgewood Park

Join Ken Himes to help remove invasive exotic plants and protect Edgewood's sensitive habitats. **Friday sessions, at 8:30 am**, occur year-round. **Wednesday evening sessions begin April 9 at 5:30 pm** with the return of daylight savings time.

For information or the schedule of Wednesday work and meeting places call Ken at (650)591-8560. For the Friday sessions call Ken or contact John Allen at jcakwa@aol.com.

Photography Group

The next meetings of the revived Chapter photography group will be **Mondays, March 17 and April 21, from 7-9pm** in the Peregrine Room at the PCC.

In February we were treated to prints and images (slide and digital) from Grant Ranch, Death Valley, and other locations (thanks Ken J., Carol H., and Karl G.). We spent some time discussing the ins and outs of storing and printing images online. We are also considering publishing a calendar again, and will be discussing this at the March meeting.

Questions came up about making use of new technologies to print your images at home. If you are interested in learning more about it, or could contribute to the discussion, please join us. You don't have to be a regular to join us. We would love to hear your ideas and see your photographs. 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.

An Evening with the Grasses at De Anza College

Save the dates: on **May 1 or 2** there will be a class specializing in the grass family. Contact Sally Casey for further information at (408)377-0989.

Office Challenge Grant

An anonymous but generous donor has given the Chapter a "challenge grant": the party has donated one month of rent for our new PCC office (\$400), and if donations sufficient to pay ten more months of rent are made by the end of the year, another month's worth of rent will be given by this donor. The goal is to pay for the entire year's rent with donated money, instead of money from the Chapter's 2003 budget.

An unexpected benefit of our new office has been the synergy found by meeting with other non-profit groups headquartered in the PCC. The office space also opens the possibility of our Chapter hiring interns to carry out environmental research, and reviews.

So, if you want to rise to the "challenge," please make a contribution to the Santa Clara Valley Chapter of the CNPS at the address on the back page of this newsletter, and include a note earmarking your donation for the "Office Challenge Grant."

Chapter Plant Raffle Coordinator Needed

If you enjoy visiting nurseries and want an extra-good reason to get outdoors, then this activity is a viable solution. There are lots of places to visit that combine nicely with procuring raffle plants for the bi-monthly general meeting. Everyone enjoys meeting local folks and local flora! For more information, please call Ann Griese at (650)969-2399.

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.

CHAPTER FIELD TRIPS

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.

Mar 2, Sunday, 10am, Edgewood County Park & Preserve

Edgewood is the park our Chapter saved from development. It contains eleven rare plant species, one of which is found nowhere else. Join Ken Himes and Paul Heiple on a walk up the Clarkia Trail and into the serpentine grasslands. We expect to see some nice early spring flowers and plants in season. We hope to see the mouse eared mimulus *Mimulus douglasii* and the fragrant fritillary *Fritillaria lilacea* in flower.

The hike will be an easy three miles, that we expect to last until about **3pm**. Bring water and lunch.

Directions: The hike will begin at the head of the Clarkia Trail, located on Canada Road southeast of the underpass of I 280. (See the enclosed Edgewood wildflower walks flyer for a map.) Call Ken (650) 91 8560 or Paul (650)854 7125 or LogH3o@aol.com for more information.

Mar. 9, Sunday, 10am La Honda Creek OSP

Join Tom Cochrane for a hike at this limited access (**reservations** are required) Mid-pen Open Space Preserve, located at the crest of the northern half of the Santa Cruz Mountains. We should see early spring wildflowers, coastal views (if it is not foggy), a large douglas-fir, a large redwood, and a good population of the rare Kings Mountain manzanita. The hike will be about 3 miles long with one steep, 400 ft. hill and one moderate, 300 ft. hill to climb. We will have a lunch break and return at about **2-3 pm**. Dress for variable weather, as it could be sunny, foggy and/or windy.

For pictures, see <http://www.bahiker.com/slideshow/lahondapics.html>. These are pictures from the Bay Area Hiker website from this preserve, taken in April.

Contact Tom Cochrane at (650)969-3181 or trailtraveller@webtv.net for more information, directions, and to **reserve** your spot.

Mar 12, Wednesday 7pm Field Trip Planning Meeting

Bring your ideas for trips to this planning meeting, particularly any that you might like to lead or attend.

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

Mar 15, Saturday, 10am Stile's Ranch

Dick Gehrler and Sally Casey will co-lead a 3-4 mile wildflower hike to Stile's Ranch, through serpentine grasslands and chaparral. With the cooperation of the seasons, expect to see *Claytonia gysophiloides*, Allium, Linanthus, Gilia, Goldfields, Morning Glory, Leather Oak and Black Sage. The hike is expected to last until **1pm**. **Directions:** From Highway 85 south, exit Almaden Expressway south. Proceed to the end, turn right onto Harry Road (traffic light). Left on McKean Road, continue about 1 mile. Left on Fortini. Go to the end, turn left on San Vicente. Parking lot on right about 300 feet. For more information, contact Sally at (408)377-0989 or Dick at (408)268-6922 or mrge@jps.net.

Mar 16, Sunday, 10am Richards Road Trail, Huddart County Park

Join Ken Himes for a leisurely walk along West Union Creek on the Richards Road Trail. We will see plants of the redwood and mixed evergreen plant communities. Trilliums, Fritillarias and the rarely seen Oregon wind flower, *Anemone oregana* should be in flower.

The Richards Road Trail is excellent but the connecting trails are narrow and moderately steep with an elevation gain/loss of about 350 feet. Total distance is slightly under 3 miles and the hike will last to about 2:30 pm. Bring lunch and water and wear sturdy footwear.

Directions: Take I280 to the Woodside Road exit and proceed west on Woodside Road for 1.5 miles to Kings Mountain Road. Turn right onto Kings Mt. Road and continue for 1.5 miles to Huddart Park entrance. Continue to parking lot directly beyond entrance station. Expect to pay user fee at entrance station. For info call Ken at (650) 591-8560.

Mar 23-28, Sunday-Friday, Desert Trip, Anza-Borrego Desert State Park & Joshua Tree National Park
Join other Chapter desert flower fans to see what the winter rains created in some Southern California locations. Stella Yang and Stephen Buckhout are coordinating a currently botanically leaderless trip to Anza-Borrego Desert State Park and Joshua Tree National Monument from **Sunday, March 23, through Friday, March 28.**

Group campgrounds have been reserved at the Borrego Palm Canyon campground at Anza-Borrego near Borrego Springs from Sunday night through Wednesday morning and at the Cottonwood Spring campground in the southern portion of Joshua Tree from Wednesday night through Friday morning. For those who do not wish to camp with the group (RVs are not allowed at the group sites) other sites at both camp-grounds are available, as well as hotel/motel accommodations in Borrego Springs, Indio, and Twentynine Palms.

Advance notification to Stella or Stephen before March 10 is required for anyone planning to join the group, along with a non-refundable \$20 per person camping fee. Contact them at (408)255-6233 or yscottie@pacbell.net for additional information or to reserve a spot. A package with more detailed information about campground locations and meeting times will be provided as the departure date approaches. A list of all participants will be provided should anyone wish to make carpool arrangements.

Mar 29, Saturday, time TBA, Coyote Ridge
In spring, after the rains stop, the Bay checkerspot butterfly emerges and the sheets of wildflowers appear on Coyote Ridge. Join your leader Don Mayall for a walk focusing on serpentine plants and ecology on the ridge. Coyote Ridge

is a research facility, managed by Stanford University, and access to this fragile area is strictly controlled. There is a limit on the number of people we can take. The meeting place is about 40 minutes drive south from the Palo Alto area. The walk will be **in the morning and last about two hours.** Last year's conditions were such that a three mile walk, with 600 foot elevation gain was necessary for participants.

You may reserve a space by calling Don Mayall (650)856-7579. We will need your phone number to re-confirm. Rain affects conditions and the trip will not be finalized until the Friday before it is scheduled. Directions and hike starting time will be provided to reserved participants.

Mar 30, Sunday, 10am Sweeney Ridge, Golden Gate National Recreation Area.

Join Ken Himes for a walk atop Sweeney Ridge to see plants of the coastal scrub and coastal prairie plant communities. In addition, expect excellent views of the northern peninsula and adjoining area. The San Francisco Bay Discovery Site is located along the trail and we will see the view that Gaspar de Portola's scouts encountered encountered when they saw "a great estuary extending many leagues inland."

This hike will last to about **4pm** and will involve a car shuttle. The distance will include an additional 2.5 mile loop to the south end of the ridge. The total distance will be about 6.5 miles. Expect 700 foot elevation gain/loss.

Directions: Meet 10am at the Sneath Lane trailhead. Take I280 to Sneath Lane exit and proceed west on Sneath Lane to off street parking at Sweeney Ridge gate. For info call Ken at (650) 591-8560.

Mar 31 Monday 9am Mt. Tamalpais

Join Paul Heiple for a hike on this mountain, which is well known for its views. It also has some spectacular plants to see. We should see hundreds if not thousands of fairy slipper orchids, *Calipso bulbosa* and the large flowered and rare Brewer's milkvetch, *Astragalus breweri* along with many other interesting and unusual plants.

This is an all day trip so bring water, lunch and clothing for variable weather. We expect to return between **4 and 5pm.** The hike length is about three to four miles and the elevation gain is about 500 to 600 ft., and some moderately steep terrain will be encountered.

Directions: We will meet at the Edgewood park and ride on Edgewood Road and I 280 at 9am. (See the enclosed Edgewood wildflower walks flyer for a map.) Call Paul (650)854 7125 or LogH3o@aol.com for more information.

Apr 5, Saturday, 10am St. Joseph Hill/Lexington

Join Dick Gehrler and Sally Casey for a beautiful hike of approximately 6 miles on the same trail that the native Americans used many years ago. St. Joseph's Hill is at the 1,250-foot level, which will give us some nice views as we wander in our search for wildflowers (Allium, Linanthus, Gilia, Goldfields, Morning Glory, Leather Oak, Black Sage, etc.). The hike is expected to last until about **1pm**.

Directions: meet at the Lexington Dam boat launch parking lot. From southbound Highway 17, take the Bear Creek Road exit, cross over the highway and go 0.4 miles north on Highway 17 to Alma Bridge Road. Follow Alma Bridge Road over the top of the dam. Continue beyond the dam to the parking lot on the right. For more information, contact Sally at (408)377-0989 or Dick at (408)268-6922 or mrge@jps.net.

Apr 11-13, Friday-Sunday Camp Roberts

Join Margriet Weatherwax and Beth Painter who are co-leading a joint trip with the Monterey CNPS chapter to Camp Roberts **Friday April 11 through Sunday April 13**. Military installations often support substantial areas of relatively undisturbed native vegetation and often serve as refuges for rare and endemic species. The California National Guard is providing an opportunity for both chapters to visit this location on Hwy 101 on the border of Monterey and San Luis Obispo counties. We will explore vernal pools, oak woodlands, chalk barrens, and limestone cliffs and palisades via paved or good hard-pack dirt roads.

The dates are April 11-13, but we will be there on the 10th as well, for early birds. When folks sign up, they can tell us which dates they want to be there. The number of participants is limited by CA ARNG, so people should sign up early.

Providing there is **no** military emergency, there will be housing available on Camp Roberts. The barracks have a huge kitchen and living room, with individual single bedrooms and community bathrooms-- ideal for a group. Civilian housing rates are \$18.50 per night. There are nearby motels in San Miguel and Paso Robles. We will have people bring their own breakfast and lunch foods, and we can eat our dinners out in Paso Robles. We can send electronic photographs of the barracks.

People should contact Margriet via email at margriet@uclink4.berkeley.edu, or call her at home in the evening at 510-568-6929. Email is easier, because she's not home a lot. People can contact her to sign up, get housing information, meals, and to talk about the trip. We will email a plant list to everyone in plenty of time.

See the May-Jun Blazing Star for descriptions of the following upcoming field trips:

May 3, Saturday, 10am	Calero Park with Dick Gehrler and Stella Yang
May 4 Sunday, 10am	San Bruno Mountain County Park with Ken Himes
May 17 Saturday 10am	Pescadero Marsh and Bean Hollow with Toni Corelli
Jun 7 Saturday	Grass Walk at Los Trancos with Sally Casey

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

by Georgia Stigall

As I write this we have just experienced one of the warmest Januarys in the history of the San Francisco Bay Area. It will be very interesting to observe the botanical effects over these next months.

Meanwhile, the California Native Plant Society is increasingly known as "having something for everyone". And indeed this is true!

Our collective focus includes presentations, rare plant conservation, gardening with natives, field trips, public outreach, ecological restoration and much more. Our chapter has terrific teamwork and camaraderie, about which we can all be proud.

So just as CNPS has something for everyone, it is also true that everyone has something for CNPS!

Therefore, we invite the following:

Individuals, groups, lifters & haulers (to move equipment, chairs, displays, books, etc.), photographers, botanists, organizers, families, database administrators, computer techs, educators, ecologists, communicators, artists, hobby gardeners, writers, restorationists, horticulturalists, facilitators, professionals, amateurs, geologists, linguists, hikers, office volunteers, wildlife biologists, librarians, naturalists, historians, star gazers, journalists, weeders, philanthropists, carpenters, navigators, policy experts, vegetation monitors, backpackers, taxonomists and ... everyone else.

This newsletter carries information about many opportunities for volunteering in many different ways.

Please feel free to contact me (or any other chapter representative) at gstigall@aol.com or phone (650)941-1068 (voicemail after several rings).

Carl W. Sharsmith 1903 - 1994*by Georgia Stigall*

March 14, 2003 commemorates the 100th birthday of Dr. Carl Sharsmith. Carl was an active and beloved member of our Chapter for many years. He lead field trips in the Mount Hamilton Range, identified specimens at our annual Wildflower Show, and participated in other efforts until shortly before his death in fall 1994.

Dr. Sharsmith taught botany at San Jose State University starting in the 1950s. He also worked diligently and thoroughly at curating the 15,000-specimen herbarium at SJSU that bears his name. Summers were spent as a Ranger-Naturalist in Yosemite National Park.

Chapter member and published botanist Toni Corelli carries on his work as curator of the Carl W. Sharsmith Herbarium.

Think of Carl this spring as you enjoy the wonderful wildflowers and perhaps remember one of his often-quoted phrases: "You can't save time - you can only use it more wisely."

ANNOUNCEMENTS*News and Activities from Other Organizations***Spring Wildflower Walks at Jasper Ridge**

Join a group of wildflower enthusiasts for a docent-led 2 to 2-1/2 hour walk in the Jasper Ridge Biological Preserve. The wildflowers will be at their peak in the glorious California spring. This is an easy to moderate walk but no facilities are available.

The walks benefit Gamble Garden, a non-profit foundation in Palo Alto with a beautiful garden open to the public, free of charge, every day. Their mission is to educate, inspire and create awareness about the intrinsic value of plants and our shared environment. Their web site is at <http://www.gamblegarden.org>.

Jasper Ridge is a Stanford University biological preserve and research area. While its native grasses have been depleted due to the Hwy. 280 corridor fumes, its spring wildflower displays are superb. It is normally closed to the public so opportunities to explore it are rare and docent lead at all times. It has a web site too, at <http://jasper1.stanford.edu>.

The wildflower walk fee is \$30. Each walk is limited to nine people, with the starting location TBA. Details of the day will be mailed beforehand. Call the Gamble Garden office at (650)329-1356 for more information or to register.

CNGA Call for Papers

The California Native Grass Association (CNGA)* is soliciting abstracts for presentations at its 2003 Annual Meeting. The theme of the conference this year is "Grasslands are for everyone: Getting the public involved in conservation and restoration of native ecosystems." The meeting will be held on Friday, **May 9** near Monterey.

CNGA advocates for the conservation and restoration of native grasslands in California. CNGA trains land managers in grassland restoration techniques, promotes range management methods that enhance native grassland habitat and biodiversity, and raises public awareness of the ecological importance and natural diversity of California's native grassland ecosystems. For more information about CNGA and their annual meeting, contact the CNGA president, Jeanne Wirka at wirka@yolo.com, check the CNGA web site, at <http://www.cnga.org>, or write 5265 Putah Creek Road, Winters, CA 95694.

Going Native Garden Tour - May 18

Preparations continue for this tour, which will showcase home gardens featuring California native plants. We're still looking for gardens to consider. 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.

DEADLINE FOR THE NEXT *BLAZING STAR***Friday, April 4, 2003****Email: mattsson@sbcglobal.net****Phone: (408)255-3767**