



THE BLAZING STAR

March-April 2004

GENERAL MEETING AND PROGRAM

Friday, March 19, 2004 at 7:30 pm
Saratoga Library Community Room
13650 Saratoga Avenue, Saratoga

Topic: OAKS OF CALIFORNIA
Presenter: Pam Muick, Ph.D., CNPS Executive Director

Join us for a talk by Pam Muick, Executive Director of CNPS and co-author of the popular book *Oaks of California*. Pam will talk about her work on oaks as well as give us an update on current CNPS activities statewide. Pam is an engaging speaker and will be happy to autograph copies of her books.

Before Pam joined CNPS, she served as the Executive Director of Solano Land Trust for six years where she was responsible for protecting over 8,000 acres of farmland and open space, including King Ranch, Jepson Prairie and Lynch Canyon. Prior to her work with the land trust, Pam was actively engaged in land management, particularly of California's oak habitats, for over twenty years.

Pam received masters and doctoral degrees from UC Berkeley, in Forestry and Wild land Resource Policy & Management, based on research on oak regeneration and restoration. She has taught at San Francisco State University, UC Berkeley and UC Extension.

Directions: From Highway 85 take the Saratoga Exit (NOT Sunnyvale-Saratoga Road) and travel southwest towards the Village of Saratoga. Stay in the right lane of Saratoga Avenue. About ½ mile from the highway exit, there will be a two-lane left turn for West Valley College at Fruitvale Avenue. Proceed through this intersection in the right lane, and take the next left turn into the library parking lot. The community room is at the front right of the library building.

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 24 and 25

The Chapter Wildflower Show will be held **Saturday and Sunday, April 24 and 25**, at Mission College in Santa Clara, (the same location as last year). Show hours are **10am to 4pm** both days, in the Hospitality Management Building. 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 College 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 8**. Look for details below.

Help Needed for the Wildflower Show

It takes numerous volunteers to make the annual Wildflower Show a success. Neither a major time commitment nor advanced plant identification skills are required. 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, taking down the exhibition area after the show, and preparing post-show reports of plants displayed.

To volunteer please contact the Wildflower Show co-chairpersons, 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. **Parking is free ONLY in Lot C.**

Spring Native Plant Sale and Call for Volunteers

Our Spring Native Plant Sale will be held on **Saturday, May 8, from 10am to 4pm** at our Hidden Villa nursery. Please save the date and tell all your friends and neighbors.

Once again we're asking everyone who can to come and help with the sale. There are many ways to help that don't require a great deal of knowledge about our native plants. You can choose to work one or two hours or all day.

We need the following items:

- Boxes for customers to carry home their purchases. Please save these and bring them to the nursery during the week before the sale.
- Wagons on the day of the sale to help customers cart their purchases to their cars.

Before the sale, you can help during our regular Wednesday work sessions at the nursery from 12noon to 4pm (see the next article in this issue).

On the day of the sale, we need volunteers to:

- Help set up before the sale (starting at 8:30am)
- Help with parking control
- Greet customers at the entrance and ask them where they heard about the sale
- Staff cashier table
- Write up the sales tags before customers go to the cashiers to pay for their plants
- Help customers take their purchases to their cars and bring back the wagons and carts to the nursery
- Answer customers' questions about the plants and help them decide which plants to purchase
- Help clean up after the sale (4pm to 5pm)

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.

To sign up to help, or for more information, contact the plant sale co-coordinators: Janet Gomez at (408)978-2984 or jgomez51@sbcglobal.net; and Kevin Bryant at (408)639-0493 or mtngreen17@verizon.net.

Native Plant Nursery

Our regular native 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 henrymarsh@yahoo.com (note Ray's new email address.)

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.

Native Hill News

Work continues at the Native Hill garden, on the Foothill College campus. Don Brandeau contributed three new plants for the vernal pond area: *Carex pansa*, San Diego sedge, and a willow with broad leaves. We appreciate his help and many donations.

We are also working on new labels for all the plants. Ellie is considering a different color (instead of white) for the labels. Your suggestions are welcome. A less obtrusive color that would blend in the landscape and still be fairly easy to read is the goal. Upcoming workdays, **9am to Noon**, are:

Saturday, March 13

Sunday, March 21

Saturday, April 3

Call Ellie Gioumousis at (650)494-6276 or email her at elliegms@uf.znet.com for details.

Gardening With Natives

Our next meeting is on **Thursday, March 4 at 7:30pm** at the PCC Building in Palo Alto. Inspired by a GWN member who would like to identify some plants she photographed during last year's Going Native Garden Tour, our meeting topic will be, "What is this native?"

Bring photos, printouts, or digital photos of plants in either natural or garden settings. Photos on CD are the best option because we can view them together as a group using the CNPS digital projector. Multiple photos including

close ups of foliage, flowers and other identifying characteristics are helpful. Plant specimens are also helpful, but focus on garden-related species and avoid gathering plants from wild areas.

This will be an informal meeting based on visual identification rather than detailed plant keying. Join us as we put our heads together to try to help each other out with identifying that unknown plant!

We will also meet **Thursday, April 1 at 7:30pm** at the PCC Our April meeting topic will be "Native plants from riparian and pond environments." We will discuss as a group California natives that can be planted in wet areas of the garden.

Contact Stephanie Morris at StephLMorris@hotmail.com or (408)371-9376 to be added to the GWN newsletter email list, provide input, or receive more information.

Directions to the PCC: The PCC (Peninsula Conservation Center) is located at 3921 E. Bayshore Road in Palo Alto. From Highway 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 leads to the PCC parking lot.

Habitat Restoration: Edgewood Park

Join Ken Himes to help remove non-native species from Edgewood Park. Weeding sessions take place **Friday mornings all year, 8:30am**. Once daylight savings time begins, our work sessions will also take place on **Wednesday evenings at 5:30pm**.

Here is the Wednesday evening schedule with locations:

Date	Meet at 5:30pm	Work Site
April 7	West Kiosk	West Kiosk Meadows
April 14	West Kiosk	Mow Site One
April 21	Day Camp	Upper South Wing Sylvan Loop
April 28	Day Camp	Edgewood Trail, bush Mallow Site
May 5	West Kiosk	Mow Site Three

For more information, call Ken at (650)591-8560. For the Friday sessions call Ken or contact John Allen at jcakwa@earthlink.net (note John's new email address).

Wildlands Weed Workshop March 6

Please join us for a Wildlands Weeds Workshop that our chapter is co-sponsoring, in our participation with the San

Mateo County Weed Management Area. Material presented will be relevant for private and public land managers, restoration volunteers and anyone seeking more information about this critical ecological topic.

Note that seating is limited and we request **RSVP's by March 2**, using the contact information below.

The workshop will be held **Saturday, March 6 from 8:30am –12Noon**, with an optional hands-on weed removal project nearby from **1-4pm**. The location is Portola Valley Town Center, 765 Portola Road in Portola Valley.

Presenters for the morning sessions include Paul Heiple and Ken Himes of our chapter. Other presenting agencies include National Park Service, San Mateo County Ag. Department, Sierra Club, California Invasive Plant Council, San Francisquito Watershed Council, Friends of Edgewood, POST, MROSD and Pescadero Conservation Alliance.

To RSVP, or for complete schedule details, including the optional afternoon work party, email WeedAware@aol.com, call (650)941-1068 or write to Weeds Workshop, c/o CNPS, 3921 E. Bayshore Blvd., Palo Alto, CA 94303.

Participants who work for or lead projects are encouraged to bring handouts and small tabletop displays about your invasives projects, as a means of both soliciting volunteers and helping to spread the word about invasive control efforts in our area. If you plan to bring materials for display, please let us know by emailing WeedAware@aol.com by March 2.

This workshop is free and open to the public. Donations will be accepted to cover costs of refreshments and handouts.

Other Chapter Activities

The next meetings of the Chapter Photography group will be **Mondays, March 8 and April 12, from 7-9pm** in the Kestrel Room at the PCC, 3921 E. Bayshore Road in Palo Alto. For more info contact Jerry Welch at (408)353-8352 or jdwelch@yahoo.com.

The next meetings of the Chapter Keying with Natives group will be **Fridays, March 26 and April 23, from 6:30-8:30pm** at the PCC. For more info contact Kuni Kitajima at kita_k@yahoo.com or (408)247-9043 (evenings only.)

CONSERVATION NEWS

As previously reported, our chapter has formed a Conservation Committee. Our next meeting is **Wednesday, February 25 from 6-8pm** at the PCC. For the meeting date following this contact Judy Fenerty at judy@fenerty.com or (408)378-6272.

Topics we are working on include, but are not limited to: the proposed High Speed Rail project, the Jefferson-Martin PG&E project impacting serpentine habitat at Edgewood, advocacy for local creeks, Salt Pond restoration issues, environmental document review, relevant legislation and more.

No matter what your conservation interests or experience are, we welcome your participation!

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 14, Sun. 10am San Bruno Mountain

Join Ken Himes for a hike along the Summit Loop Trail in San Bruno Mountain State and County Park

We expect to see manzanitas, coast rock cress, Franciscan wall flower and other early flowering plants on this 3-1/2 mile loop. Bring lunch and liquids. Expect an elevation gain of 800 ft. Bring layers of clothing to prepare for variable weather conditions.

The trip is expected to last until **3:30pm**. For more information, contact Ken at (650)591-8560. He plans to lead additional trips to this area in May and July so we can see mid- and late-spring/summer plants

Directions: Go north on freeway 101, take the Brisbane exit and proceed north on Bayshore. Continue north on Bayshore until making a left onto Guadalupe Parkway.

Follow Guadalupe Parkway uphill to the park entrance. We will **meet at the entrance parking lot at 10am**. The parking fee is \$5.00.

Mar 20, Sat. Time TBD Coyote Ridge

In spring, after the rains stop, the Bay checkerspot butterfly emerges and the sheets of wildflowers appear on Coyote Ridge. Join Don Mayall for a walk to this preserve, focusing on serpentine plants and ecology on the ridge.

The walk will be in the morning and last about three hours. It will be about 3 miles round trip, with 600 foot elevation gain. The meeting place is about 40 minutes drive south from the Palo Alto area.

An RSVP is necessary, since access to this fragile area is strictly controlled. There is a limit on the number of people we can take. The walk will not be suitable for children under 12. Note that it can be cold and windy on the ridge in March, so dress in layers. Bring water, and a lunch or snack if you like.

You may reserve a space by calling Don Mayall at (650)856-7579, or emailing him at seleve@ix.netcom.com. We will need your phone number or email to re-confirm. Rain affects conditions and the trip will not be finalized until the Friday before it is scheduled.

Mar 28, Sun. 9:30am La Honda Creek Broom Pull

Join us for a volunteer broom pull at the La Honda Creek Open Space Preserve, under the leadership of the Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District (MROSD).

This is a great opportunity to spend time at a special location, while helping to restore the habitat. The work site is also adjacent to the rare Kings Mountain manzanita, adding to the importance of removing the invasive non-native French broom in this area. MROSD will lead us in the effort, and will provide the weed wrenches and other tools. Please bring work gloves, lunch, water, sun protection and layers. Wear long pants and long-sleeved shirts, and be prepared for the possibility of ticks, poison oak and changing weather conditions.

We will have lunch at about Noon, and the work will end at about **2pm**. At that point, we'll take an optional, short, CNPS-lead hike to a spectacular vista point. The mileage will be about 2 miles round trip with one moderate hill. Expect to return from the hike at approximately **4:30pm**.

Access to this preserve is limited, and **reservations are required**. Contact Tom Cochrane for directions and to reserve your space: phone (650)969-3181 or email trailtraveller@webtv.net.

Apr 17, Sat. 9am Trifoliums at Edgewood

Join Ken Himes on this wide-ranging hike in Edgewood County Park and Preserve, to see and key trifoliums (clovers) and their relatives. We expect to see 14 species of trifoliums, only three of which are non-native. Since Ken will have the CNPS weeding permit, we will be able to pull up the non-native clovers for closer inspection and keying. Bring your favorite Bay Area flora book to learn the keys to the genus trifolium.

Bring lunch and liquids. Expect an elevation gain of 300 ft. The hike and keying will last until **3 pm**. Call Ken at (650)591-8560 for more information.

Directions: We will meet at **9am** at the west Clarkia trailhead along Cañada Road. To get there, exit 280 north at Edgewood Road and head southwest 1/3 mile. Turn left onto Cañada Road and follow it southeast until it crosses under Fwy 280, then look for parking on your right.

Dates for upcoming field trips:

Sunday May 9	Mt. Hamilton with Lee Ellis.
Sunday May 16	Santa Cruz County Sand Hills.
Saturday May 22	San Bruno Mountain with Ken Himes.
Sunday May 23	Forest of Nisene Marks with Kevin Bryant.
Memorial Day Weekend, Saturday May 29 through Monday May 31	Sierra foothills and environs, Arnold, probably with Kevin Bryant.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

News and Activities from Other Organizations

Going Native Garden Tour Seeks Visitors, Volunteers

The Second Annual Going Native Garden Tour will take place on **Sunday, April 18, 2004, 10am to 4pm**. About 30 gardens from the Peninsula and the South Bay will once again be featured in an open house format. Admission is free; registration is required, at www.GoingNativeGardenTour.com. Space is limited; register early to ensure a spot. Web deadline: **April 10**. Mail deadline: **April 1**. Tour maps and garden details will be emailed the week of April 10 to registrants only.

The tour is seeking volunteers to work as docents and greeters at various gardens. Volunteers get guaranteed registration, a limited-edition tour T-shirt, a chance to learn

about one garden in depth, and an invitation to a post-tour picnic. To volunteer, email info@GoingNativeGardenTour.com or call (408)274-6965.

Class: Wildflower Families of the Bay Area

Chapter member Toni Corelli will be teaching this course, in which students will learn to identify twelve common flowering plant families and the common local species that occur within them.

Using slides, plant specimens and plant keys you will learn to classify families and plant species focusing on plant morphology, floral structure and function. There will be two field trips to look at specimens in the field. No prior experience in identifying plants is necessary, and after the course you will have the information needed to continue identifying wildflowers on your own.

The class is limited to 20 students and you must be able to attend the first class. Cost is \$50.

Class Dates: Fridays, April 2, 9, 16, from 7-9pm

Field Dates: Saturdays April 10, 17, from 9am-1pm

The class will be held in Palo Alto. Location details and other information will be provided at the time of registration. Register with Toni Corelli; e-mail: corelli@coastside.net or leave a message for her at (650)726-0689.

Pinnacles Field Trip Saturday, April 17

Pinnacles National Monument will host a flora-oriented hike through the Monument for local CNPS chapters in the Central Coast region. The hike will traverse various plant communities of the Monument, cover about 8 miles and last 5-6 hours, including a strenuous hike through High Peaks and an easy-moderate hike through Balconies caves.

For a more detailed trip description, please send an email message to cnps-info@surfpix.net. Or call Shauna Hee of Pinnacles National Monument, at (831)389-4485 x272.

DEADLINE FOR THE NEXT *BLAZING STAR*

Saturday, April 3, 2004

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