



THE BLAZING STAR

July-August 2002

GENERAL MEETING AND PROGRAM

Friday, July 26, 2002 at 7:30 pm
Los Altos Library Program Room
13 So. San Antonio Road, Los Altos

**Program: OUR GREATEST CHALLENGE:
INCREASING PUBLIC AWARENESS**

Presenter: Carol J. Baird, Ph.D.

As the chair of the California Native Plant Society's Education & Outreach Program, Dr. Baird is involved in efforts to increase public awareness about the importance of native plants and natural habitats, and the need to protect them.

Join us for an informative presentation on a topic of great interest to our chapter, and for the opportunity to share ideas and concerns.

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 more information, contact chapter Vice President Georgia Stigall at gstigall@aol.com or 650-941-1068.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGES

by Mary Simpson

It Wasn't Just Another Spring Field Trip

This spring, CNPS members from the Santa Clara Chapter, the East Bay Chapter, and the Santa Cruz Chapter were all involved in an exciting discovery. Word of mouth had

spread about a really good display of *Downingia* in a vernal pool in Dublin. One CNPS member found a rare *Trifolium*. Discovery of the *Trifolium* led to more visits to the property. During one of the visits, a CNPS member collected a popcorn-flower which looked interesting, but a bit different. Like most popcorn-flowers, it just wasn't easy to identify from the plant key. This popcorn-flower has now caused quite a bit of excitement.

The collected plant has characteristics which are intermediate between the *Plagiobothrys glaber* and *P. stipitatus*. Exciting? Well, there is serious speculation that the collected plant may be *Plagiobothrys glaber*, also known as the hairless popcorn-flower, a plant whose last reported sighting was in 1955 just east of 101 in San Jose by John Hunter Thomas. The plant was once found in Alameda, Merced, Marin, San Benito and Santa Clara counties, but there has been no reported sighting of the plant in nearly half a century. The ultimate identification may have to be done from 50 year old herbarium specimens. The specimens from the Dublin site have been sent out to the experts, and those involved with the "find" are eagerly awaiting the final word on the identity of the plant.

As a bonus, the visits to the site resulted in a new reported location for the following rare plants: *Trifolium depauperatum* var. *hydrophilum*, *Atriplex joaquiniana*, and *Centromadia parryi* var. *congdonii*.

Tragedy Narrowly Averted

Keen-eyed CNPS members learned that a population of the San Mateo woolly-sunflower (*Eriophyllum latilobum*), a state and Federally listed Endangered plant, was greatly damaged by spraying with Roundup by the Hillsborough Public Works Department. Nearly 60 per cent of the plants were killed. A Mitigated Negative Declaration prepared by Environmental Science Associates (ESA) failed to mention the existence of this endangered plant in the project area. All parties involved were immediately notified about the destruction of a significant portion of the population of this endangered plant. After notification, ESA is modifying the environmental documentation, and the Department of Fish and Game and US Fish and Wildlife Service are now involved. It is hoped that monitoring, and perhaps even

more pro-active steps, will occur as a result of this reporting. This incident is one more example of how individual CNPS members make a significant difference in whether or not rare plant populations survive.

State CNPS: New Executive Director

Our Chapter welcomes Pam Muick to her new post as Executive Director of State CNPS, effective August 12. Pam was Executive Director of the Solano Land Trust for six years. During her time there she successfully worked with her Board of Directors to raise over \$5 million to protect open space lands in Solano County. Pam's past experiences also include teaching at the University of California, Berkeley and San Francisco State University, research on oak woodlands and habitat restoration, and international work with a focus on protecting biodiversity in Nepal, Pakistan, and Thailand. Pam has been a CNPS member since the mid-1970's.

CHAPTER ACTIVITIES

Spring Wildflower Show Report

For our spring 2002 wildflower show, 482 species from eighty families were displayed. Twenty-six species had never been displayed at our previous wildflower shows. Four hundred and three of the species displayed were native, and seventy-nine were alien.

For the last several years, members have been bringing more garden plants for display so as to avoid impacting native plant populations. A decision was reached that no rare plants would be displayed unless they have been garden grown.

Both Sally Casey and Vickie Silvas-Young brought stunning displays of garden grown plants, artistically arranged in pots. Other members, including Carolyn Curtis and Jim Sugai, brought bouquets of natives from their gardens. Ellie Gioumouis took care of many of the arrangements and Olive Zappacosta provided assistance in arranging specimens and providing appropriate name cards. Many thanks to all of the members who contributed their time, energy, and garden-grown plants.

We plan to hold our fall plant sale on **October 19, 2002** at Hidden Villa.

Photography Group

The Chapter photography group is looking for a new leader. We need new ideas for programs and someone to take over coordinating the meetings. If you have ideas or would like to help out please contact Sonja Wilcomer at 650-494-0104.

We thank Sonja for leading the group over the last several years, providing a pleasant venue for members to present slide programs on photographic topics of interest and to discuss camera techniques including digital photography.

We've had a lot of fun under Sonja's leadership, including creating a beautiful wildflower calendar, presenting a photo exhibit at the Don Edwards San Francisco Bay Wildlife Refuge, and enjoying some great potlucks.

Sonja is grateful to everyone who composed and presented programs. Special thanks go to Ken Himes, Carol Hankermeyer, Hazel Tilden, Bob Weller, Ken Gardner, Lottie Jenvey, Karl Gohl, and Carol Mattsson. Thanks to Gloria Heller for hosting potlucks at her house, to Kathy Dolton for helping to mount exhibits, to Vickie Silvas-Young for help with the calendar and other tasks, and to Holly Harper for mailing out announcements.

Sonja apologizes to anyone whose name she might have forgotten to mention in appreciation. Thanks again to Sonja for all her work in organizing this group and helping us all to share and enjoy photography. For more information call Sonja Wilcomer at 650-494-0104.

Gardening With Natives

We will have our July meeting on **Thursday, July 11th** starting at 7:30 pm. Location will be the DeAnza ESA.

Directions: The DeAnza ESA is located at the corner of McClellan and Stelling within the DeAnza College Campus. From Highway 85, exit at Stevens Creek Boulevard.

Enter the DeAnza campus to the right off Stevens Creek. (or, alternatively, go down to Stelling Road, turn right, and enter the Campus to the right off of Stelling.) Follow the perimeter campus road past the parking lots on your right hand side. You will pass a grassy baseball field on your right. After the field you will see a chain link gate on your right up a short gravel/asphalt road. Drive through the gate and park for free in the dirt area between the ESA and the baseball field if there's room. The ESA building will be behind you (the only building nearby with lights on). If you happen to miss the ESA and drive around the corner, you will see the tennis courts on your right and McClellan road on your left. Parking is also available by the tennis courts for 8 quarters if the ESA lot is full. This is a short walk away from the ESA building. If you need a map, see <http://www.deanza.fhda.edu>.

The August meeting is yet TBD. Contact Stephanie Morris at StephLMorris@hotmail.com or 408-629-8004 to be

added to the newsletter mailing list, provide input, or receive more information. New members are always welcome!

Non-Native Plant Removal: Edgewood Park

Join Chapter volunteers to pull weeds at Edgewood Park **Friday mornings at 8:30am and Wednesday evenings at 5:30pm**. Bring gloves, long sleeves, sunscreen, water and a snack. Target species are Yellow Star Thistle and in August, Bristly Ox-tongue. Come out and enjoy the summer flora!

We are also having some special **Saturday** sessions, on **July 20 and August 3rd, from 9am to 12noon**. Meet at **9am** at the Edgewood Park & Ride lot at the corner of Edgewood Road and Hwy 280. Or if you arrive late, see the map posted at the west kiosk for the work site location.

For Friday sessions, contact John Allen at jcakwa@aol.com or 650-366-4910, or Ken Himes at 650-591-8560 for information and meeting place.

For Wednesday sessions, contact Paul Heiple at 650-854-7125 or LogH30@aol.com, or Ken Himes at 650-591-8560 for more information. Here is the Wednesday evening schedule with locations. Wednesday sessions meet at **5:30pm**.

Jul 3	Mow site #1. Park along Edgewood Road, west side of 280, Meet at west kiosk.
Jul 10	Mow site #3, at junction of Edgewood and Serpentine Loop trails. Park along south side of Edgewood Road, west of 280, meet at west kiosk.
Jul 17	Same as Jul 10
Jul 24	Western Clarkia Trail area. Meet at Clarkia Trailhead along Cañada Road.
Jul 31	Same as Jul 24
Aug 7	Meadows complex near west kiosk. Park along Edgewood Road, meet at west kiosk.
Aug 14	Same as Aug 7
Aug 28	Mow site #3. Park along Edgewood Road, meet at west kiosk.
Sep 4	No weeding session.
Sep 11	West kiosk meadows. Park along Edgewood Road, meet at west kiosk.

Volunteer Needed for Book Sales Chair

The Chapter offers books for sale on environmental topics ranging from plant identification guides, California natural history, trail guides, gardening with native plants, to the Jepson Manual. We need a volunteer to help us out, and possibly serve as Book Sales Chair. Tasks include bringing books to meetings and events, staffing the book table, and

ordering new books. If you can help, please contact Tom Cochrane at trailtraveller@webtv.net or Paul Heiple at 650-854-7125 or LogH30@aol.com.

COMMITTEE NEWS & REPORTS

Field Trip Report: On a Clear Day...

by Don Mayall

The Mount Hamilton Range is the largest repository of wildflowers and diversity within our Chapter area, and mid-May is typically the best time to see the flowers at their peak. In consequence we often find the annual Mt. Hamilton field trip scheduled for Mother's Day. This Mother's day, with perfect weather forecast, twenty of us assembled at the OSH parking lot to begin the trip. Our group contained chapter founders and brand new members, under-tens and over-eighties, hikers, gardeners, photographers, botanists, and amateur flower lovers.

Trip leader Joanne Geggatt provided trip lists with mileages marked where each stop would take place. She had carefully researched these locations ahead of time to find good displays of flowering plants, habitat diversity, views, the occasional rest stop, and parking. One stop featured five kinds of oaks and three ferns, and another, banks of blazing star. The weather was indeed perfect.

Although this was considered by knowledgeable observers to be a poor year in terms of wildflower displays, we certainly had plenty to see. There were roadsides of service-berry in bloom and fields of lupine, at least five species, not counting false lupine. Our first rarity was a patch of *Linanthus grandiflorus* on a grassy hillside overlooking San Jose. A high point for me was confirming the continued existence of *Lomatium observatorium*, a CNPS LIST 1B rarity, newly discovered in 1993, not in the Jepson manual. We GPSed the coordinates and filled out the form to report the find to the California Natural Diversity Database. Other rarities we saw included *Linanthus ambiguus* and *Clarkia brewerii*, both CNPS LIST 4, on serpentine slopes on the east side of Mt. Hamilton.

Our final stop was Fanny Arnold's ranch on Arroyo Bayo. Fanny is a long time Chapter member and her property contains much unusual habitat. She graciously gave us access to a remote valley with a stream, marsh, and meadow between chemise-covered hillsides. In the small acreage we saw plants ranging from *Ranunculus aquatilis* in the stream to *Eriastrum abramsii* in the ecotone of the chaparral. Posing for a group photo beside this meadow, we ended our wonderful day.

This trip is truly one of the classic field trips of the Santa Clara Valley Chapter. Joanne, who has led many of these trips, now lives in El Dorado county and is active in the local chapter there. She told us that she would probably not lead this trip in future years. Her detailed trip plans and plant lists will provide a solid basis for a new leader to carry on this tradition. We thank Joanne for providing this wonderful experience for so many of us over the years and look forward to seeing her at future Wildflower Shows and other events.

CHAPTER FIELD TRIPS

Jul 7, Sunday, 9:30am Eagle Rock Trail in Big Basin

Join your leader Tom Cochrane for a hike to a remote piece of Big Basin State Park off Little Basin Rd. There is a 360° view at the top where there is an abandoned Fire Lookout Tower. Uncommon summer flowering plants include: Golden Fleece (*Ericamera arborescens*), Rock Daisy (*Erigeron petrophilus*), and Red Rock Penstemon (*Keckiella corymbosa*). This is also one of the five locations of the endangered Santa Cruz Cypress (*Cupressus abramsiana*). The trail is about 4 miles round trip with a 1000ft. elevation gain. Parts of the trail are rocky and narrow with a few tree obstacles.

Meet Tom at the trailhead at **9:30am**. (No estimate for return time.) Bring water and lunch. Be prepared for the heat! It can get hot at the top of the mountain.

Directions: From downtown Saratoga take Hwy. 9 for 22 miles to downtown Boulder Creek (or from Hwy 17 take Bear Creek Road. to Boulder Creek), turn right on Hwy. 236, go 6.4 miles to Little Basin Road. Turn left (there is an 'H-P' sign where you turn) and head west for 1.2 miles. The trailhead is next to the H-P Camp gate. Parking will be on the sides of the road. Travel time from Saratoga is 55 minutes.

For more information contact Tom Cochrane, at 650-969-3181 or trailtraveller@webtv.net.

12-14 Jul, Friday-Sunday, Lakes Basin

Ken Himes will lead an outing to this area about 50 miles north of Truckee near the town of Graeagle. The beautiful scenery and great diversity of plants found here are due to the volcanic origin and glaciation of this region. Both camping and indoor accommodations are available for those who go on the trip. Reservations should be made as soon as possible by contacting John Allen at 650-366-4910 or jcakwa@aol.com. (Two spaces remain available as the newsletter goes to press.) For more information contact John or Ken Himes at 650-591-8560.

Aug 4, Sunday, 9:00am Stile Ranch and Fortini Trails
Join your leader Tom Cochrane for a hike to Stile Ranch in South San Jose. There are a few rare plants in bloom at this time of year here including: Van Houtte's Columbine (*Aquilegia eximia*), Bolander's Sunflower (*Helianthus bolanderi*), and Mt. Hamilton Thistle (*Cirsium fontinale* var. *campylon*). We expect about 3 miles of hiking with a few moderate hill climbs. There is very little shade, so prepare for the heat!

Directions: From San Jose take Hwy. 85, exit Almaden Exp. south. Go 4.9 miles then turn right onto Harry Road, go 0.1 miles then turn left on McKean Road, go 1.3 miles then turn left on Fortini Road. Go to the end then turn left on San Vicente Ave. Parking lot is on the right about 300ft.

Plant lists for both of Tom's trips are available online on our chapter's Website under "Plant lists" at: <http://www.stanford.edu/~rawlings/blazcon.htm>. For more information contact Tom Cochrane, at 650-969-3181 or trailtraveller@webtv.net.

Aug 8-11 Thursday-Sunday, Central High Sierra

Join us for a "discover as we go" ramble in the high elevation region east of Yosemite's Tioga Pass (Highway 120). This will be a car camping trip with day hikes.

Possible day hikes include the Twenty Lakes Basin region of Saddlebag Lake, floral treasures enroute to Mount Dana, and Dana Plateau, depending on the interests and expertise of participants. Be prepared for high elevation car camping (over 9,000 feet) and hikes ranging from 10,000 to 13,000 feet. Bring your field guides, binoculars and sense of adventure!

Participation is limited to 14 people. Contact Georgia Stigall at gstigall@aol.com or phone 650-941-1068 to reserve your spot or for more information.

Chapter field trips are free and open to the public.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

News and Activities from Other Organizations

Native Gardens Tour, Spring 2003

A tour of native home gardens is being planned for next spring. If you have a native garden you'd like to include on the tour, or if you want to volunteer for organizing the tour, please contact Cynthia Typaldos or Arvind Kumar. Cynthia may be reached at 408-867-8875 or cynthia@typaldos.com. Arvind's at 408-274-6965 or chhaprahiya@yahoo.com.

CHAPTER CONTACTS

To learn more about our Chapter or give suggestions, please contact one of our officers or committee chairs listed below.

Chapter Officers and Committee Chairs		
President	Mary Simpson	408/370-2177 marysimpson@earthlink.net
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DEADLINE FOR THE NEXT *BLAZING STAR*

Friday, August 9, 2002

**Email: mattsson@sbcglobal.net
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