



California Native Plant Society  
Santa Clara Valley Chapter

# ***THE BLAZING STAR***

*January-February 2005*

## **MEMBER'S NIGHT AND GENERAL MEETING**

**Friday, January 21, 2005 at 7:30 pm**  
**Los Altos Library Program Room**  
**13 So. San Antonio Road, Los Altos**

**Topic: Member's slide show – special plants, places and times of 2004**

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. If you have digital photos you would like to show, please e-mail them in advance to [mtngreen17@verizon.net](mailto:mtngreen17@verizon.net) 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 Kevin Bryant at [mtngreen17@verizon.net](mailto:mtngreen17@verizon.net) or (408)353-8824 by January 12, so we can organize the logistics in advance.

**Directions:** From Foothill Expy., travel ½ mile on San Antonio Road towards the Bay, cross Hillview and turn right into the driveway; library is on the left. From El Camino, travel towards the hills on San Antonio Road, cross Edith and turn left into the unmarked driveway just before Hillview. The sign on San Antonio Road reads "Civic Center, Library and History Museum." Enter through the lobby of the main entrance.

CNPS general meetings are free and open to the public. For additional information, contact Chapter Vice President Kevin Bryant at [mtngreen17@verizon.net](mailto:mtngreen17@verizon.net) or (408)353-8824.

## **Save the Dates!**

The **Going Native Garden Tour** will be held **Sunday, April 17**. The next weekend will be our **Spring Wildflower Show**, on **Saturday and Sunday, April 23 and 24** at Mission College.

Finally, our Chapter **Spring Plant Sale** will be held at Hidden Villa on **Saturday, May 14**.

## **CHAPTER ACTIVITIES**

### **Nursery Floor Workday January 17**

We need some brawny persons to help us spread new gravel at our nursery at Hidden Villa. The workday will be on Martin Luther King's Birthday, **Monday, January 17**. We will start work around **10am**, and quit when we're done. Probably it would be best to bring some lunch; drinks will be provided. For more information, please contact Jean Struthers at (650)941-2586 or [JeanStruthers@aol.com](mailto:JeanStruthers@aol.com), or Ray Deutsch at (650)365-6136 or [henrymarsh@yahoo.com](mailto:henrymarsh@yahoo.com).

Our regular **nursery work sessions** continue every **Wednesday from 12noon to 4pm** throughout the winter. Bring garden gloves, sunhat, clippers, and your lunch if you like.

**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**

Gardening with Natives meets monthly and includes a mix of seasoned native plant gardens as well as beginners. Newcomers are always welcome. Our next meetings will be **Thursdays, January 6, February 3, and March 3**. All

**meetings start at 7:30pm.** The GWN 'Steering Committee' meets before each meeting from **7-7:30pm** to organize future topics, speakers, etc. Anyone is welcome to join the steering committee meeting. All meetings are held at the PCC Building in Palo Alto unless otherwise noted.

In **January**, we will have a general 'show and tell' meeting. Bring pictures of plants or gardens you would like to share with the group. Also, plant cuttings to share are always welcome. We will have the opportunity to view (even though it will be dark outside) our newly installed native plant garden at the PCC building. If it hasn't been done before the meeting, we may make labels for the PCC native plant garden. This is also the time to plan our meeting topics for late spring and summer.

In **February**, we will have Mark Bourne join us to speak about an approach to Japanese garden design which will enable gardeners to enjoy the native flora of California in a truly authentic 'Japanese' context. Mark will show slides of Kyoto to illustrate concepts of Japanese garden design and then discuss how these concepts can be applied to the creation of locally-appropriate gardens. His discussion will include tips on the selection of native plants and materials as well as techniques for pruning and maintaining native plants in the Japanese garden setting.

Mark Bourne apprenticed to a master Japanese garden designer in Kyoto for four years, and is one of only a handful of Americans to have trained in the same way as master Japanese designers. In 1999 he returned to his home in the Bay Area and started Windsmith, a design-build landscaping company which combines Mark's passion for California wilderness with his extensive knowledge of Japanese design.

In **March**, we will have Alrie Middlebrook, local native plant designer and owner of Middlebrook Gardens, discuss her new non-profit California Native Garden Foundation with our group. The foundation's mission is to demonstrate the beauty, garden worthiness and ecological appropriateness of California Native Gardens, and to advance knowledge of native plants and increase their availability.

**Directions to the PCC:** (for to all three meetings): The Peninsula Conservation Center is located at 3921 E. Bayshore Road in Palo Alto.

From Highway 101 north, 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. We will meet in the Peregrine suite at the back of the building (door opens up to the parking lot).

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

## Photography Group

Starting in January 2005 the Photography Group will be meeting on the **3rd Monday** of each month. That puts the next two meetings on Mondays, **January 17** and **February 21**. We will still be meeting in the Kestrel Room from **7-9pm**. As always you are welcome to bring digital images (either on CD or your laptop), slides, or prints.

For January there will be a brief presentation on setting up your monitor and printer to get the best results. Also, Jerry would like to assemble a group slideshow for Member's Night (Jan 21st), so keep that in mind when selecting your images.

If you would like to be added to the email or phone lists, contact Jerry Welch at (408)353-8352 or [jdwelch@yahoo.com](mailto:jdwelch@yahoo.com).

## Native Hill News

Spring is coming early to Native Hill; lupines and poppies are coming up everywhere, many birds are visiting, as are a few jack rabbits, and there are a lot of new plants. There are several areas that need weeding, there is lots of pruning to be done and we are planning another 'County Assisted Work Day'.

Just as for last years' very successful event we will need help in supervision. This is the most productive way to help as we will have lots of workers who need to be taught and watched. If you can only help once this is the day to do it. The date is not scheduled as yet but write if you want to help and I will keep you posted. We will also need help in setting up the week before.

The next scheduled workdays are all from **9am to 12noon**. Bring gloves and small tools if you have them:

**Sunday, January 2**

**Sunday, January 16**

**Saturday, February 5**

**Sunday February 13**

**Saturday, March 5**

We also need some help with special projects: taking out the invasive native rose plants, putting in drip irrigation, digging a trench for a drain pipe to water a riparian area, and putting together some log and board benches. If you have or know of a garden type bench that needs a new home we would love to have another one. Many thanks to the anonymous donor of the metal and wood bench that mysteriously appeared last year. It is used often by many people.

For more information or to offer help, contact Ellie at (650)494-6276 [elliegms@uf.znet.com](mailto:elliegms@uf.znet.com).

### **Habitat Restoration at Foothills Park**

Congratulations and a hearty "thank you" to Chapter members Jean and Frank Olmsted and their Friends of Foothills volunteer group for their ongoing volunteer work (7 years for some of them) at Foothills Park in Palo Alto, removing invasive non-native plants. Be sure to read about their efforts which were featured in a full-page article in the Oct-Dec 2004 CNPS Bulletin.

Jean and Frank invite everyone to come and help weed. The group usually meets at **9am every Sunday morning** in the Orchard Glen parking area of Foothills Park. That is the parking area at the head of the main picnic and grass area of the park. Occasionally they meet at the 280/Page Mill Park and Ride lot. Non-Palo Alto residents enter the park as guests. Call Jean Olmsted at (650)493-3468 or send an email message to [jwo@svpal.org](mailto:jwo@svpal.org) to check on the meeting place and get on the notice list.

### **Habitat Restoration at Edgewood Park**

Join Ken Himes to help remove invasive exotic plants and protect Edgewood's sensitive habitats. We weed every **Friday** morning, starting at **8:30am**. Bring sunscreen, gloves and liquids.

For more information, including locations for the weeding sessions, call Ken at (650)591-8560 or contact John Allen at [jcakwa@earthlink.net](mailto:jcakwa@earthlink.net).

## **COMMITTEE REPORTS**

### **Phragmites Threatens Palo Alto Baylands**

Conservation (South) Chair Libby Lucas sent this report on Chapter members and others working together to tackle an invasion of non-native reeds in the Palo Alto Baylands.

Although the Palo Alto Baylands have long been considered the prime marsh of South San Francisco Bay,

the inner basin is presently under attack by an invasive non-native strain of *Phragmites*; a dense, high and thick version of Common Reed. Recognized as a problem in Suisun Marsh for over a decade, *Phragmites* is the subject of university research on the East Coast, where it has taken over extensive marshes.

Our local invasion was first brought to our attention by Santa Clara County's Vector Control Dep't., who spray the local marshes. After this notification, Palo Alto Recreation Commissioner Ellie Gioumousis persuaded Paul Heiple to estimate the size of the *Phragmites* infestation, which he found to be approximately 17 acres. Palo Alto Parks' Darren Anderson was told of the threat and indicated that mapping the stands was necessary before contracting out the spraying job.

Responding to a request for someone with GPS mapping capability, Ken Himes suggested the Edgewood Preserve equipment and convinced Bill Korbholz to help out. Bill spent close to eight hours over two days mapping stands in the flood basin wetlands (and submerging everything except the GPS!)

The GPS data was then coordinated with the USGS's Amy Foxgrover's vegetation maps of the South Bay, and integrated into a master flood basin map by Palo Alto's Dave Matson. Don Mayall, working with Jake Sigg, found the Cornell University lab that would diagnose our *Phragmites* as native or invasive. The samples were found to be an 'introduced genotype' of *Phragmites*, and a one-quarter acre test plot has now been sprayed.

Palo Alto Councilmember Dena Mossar walked the problem area and kindly said she would try to convene the concerned regulatory parties. Many financial and technical challenges remain, but these efforts by the City of Palo Alto and others will have implications for the viability of all South Bay salt marshes.

## **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.**

### **Jan. 11 Tue, 7pm Field Trip Planning Meeting**

Our chapter has a rich history of exploring California's incredible flora through the first hand experience of field trips. Be a part of this tradition by contributing ideas for future field trip locations. Do you have a favorite place that you'd like to take the chapter to see? Or maybe there's a hike where there are a few mystery plants you'd like identified?

We will meet at the PCC (Peninsula Conservation Center), located at 3921 E. Bayshore Road in Palo Alto. Bring your ideas and a sense of adventure. Or, if unable to attend, email Kevin Bryant (mtngreen17@verizon.net) with your comments prior to the meeting.

### **Feb. 12 Sat, 10am Dirca Walk at San Pedro Park**

Join Toni Corelli and Ken Himes for a walk in San Pedro Valley County Park in Pacifica. We will see the westernmost population of leatherwood (*Dirca occidentalis*) and other early bloomers.

The slow-paced walk will be 3-4 miles in length with an elevation gain of about 300 feet. We will mostly be going through maritime chaparral and coastal scrub. We will also have a view of Brook Falls.

The hike is expected to last until **2pm**. Bring lunch and liquids. For more information, contact Toni at (650)726-0689 or corelli@coastside.net, or Ken at (650)591-8560.

**Directions:** From the north (San Francisco) or the south (San Jose), use Highway 280 to Highway 1. Take Highway 1 south to the City of Pacifica. Turn east onto Linda Mar Boulevard. Follow Linda Mar Boulevard until it ends at Oddstad Boulevard. Turn right on Oddstad Blvd. Proceed on Oddstad one block to the park entrance.

### **Feb. 27 Sun, 10am Veterans Park and S.F.B. Morse Reserve in Monterey**

This unique peninsula is part of the largest indigenous grove of Monterey Pine (*Pinus radiata*). This is the only place in the world where Monterey Pine and Bishop Pine (*Pinus muricata*) occur together naturally.

We will also find the close cousin of our Santa Cruz cypress, the Gowen cypress (*Cupressus goveniana*), which grows only on the Monterey peninsula. We expect to catch

several uncommon manzanitas and dwarf ceanothus (*Ceanothus dentatus*) in bloom, and hope to see several other surprises.

The trip is anticipated to last until **4pm**, and involves less than 5 miles of hiking and less than 400' elevation gain/loss. Contact Kevin Bryant for directions/information, at (408)353-8824 or mtngreen17@verizon.net.

## **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

*News and Activities from Other Organizations*

### **Become an Edgewood Docent**

Would YOU like to lead wildflower walks at Edgewood Natural Preserve?

Docent training begins in February and includes training hikes led by our resident plant experts Toni Corelli and Ken Himes. Becoming a wildflower walk docent is a great way to learn about the diverse plant communities at Edgewood and is a great way to share your enthusiasm for Edgewood's treasured wildflowers with the community.

There are **six evening classes (7-9pm)** on Feb 2 & 16, Mar 2 & 16, and April 6 & 20 and **six Saturday hikes (9:30am-1pm)** on Feb 5 & 19, Mar 5 & 19 and April 9 & 23 (1pm - 4pm). We hope to see you there! For more info call 1(866)GO EDGEWOOD or send email to docent-coordinator@friendsofedgewood.org.

### **Invasive Weeds Day at the Capitol March 9**

CNPS members are urged to attend the 2nd Annual Invasive Weeds Day at the Capitol in Sacramento on **Wednesday, March 9 from 9am to 5:30pm**. The day will include briefings with state agencies and meetings at the Capitol with California legislators and staff. The event is hosted by the California Invasive Weeds Awareness Coalition, a group of private sector organizations including CNPS that are concerned about weeds.

This is an excellent way to educate agency and elected officials about your important local weed projects and to show support for weed work throughout the state. You will hear from state agencies about the status of their programs, and have the opportunity to give feedback. Meetings will be also be set up with elected officials and their staff to discuss the importance of weed control in protecting California's wildlands and agriculture.

Contact Wendy West of the El Dorado County WMA at (530)621-5526 or wendyw@co.el-dorado.ca.us and ask to

be put on the list to receive a registration form in January. For more information, contact Chapter Rare Plants, South, chair Don Mayall at (650)856-7579 or seleve@ix.netcom.com.

## Natural Resources Database New Release

By Dennis H. Smith, NRDB Database Administrator

We are pleased to announce the November 12, 2004 release of the Natural Resources Database (NRDB) at [www.nrdb.org](http://www.nrdb.org). As always, we encourage you to let us know about new preserves and new observations. Your contributions have really helped to improve the quality and coverage of the NRDB. Here are some highlights of the release:

**New Preserves.** We have added 22 new preserves, for a total of 150.

**New Data.** There have been a substantial number of additions, including isolated reports at preserves not in the list on the home page. If you have species lists from an earlier version of the NRDB, now would be a good time to refresh them with the latest data. We especially want to thank Mark Silberstein, Director, Elkhorn Slough Foundation, for providing us with a copy of *Changes in a California Estuary: A Profile of Elkhorn Slough*, from which observations of fish species were entered.

**Invasive/Noxious Weeds.** We have added the State designations for these undesirable plants to the Special Status field for records of flora species.

**Observations Search.** We have added **Observations Search** to the set of searches available under the **Searches** tab. This gives you access to what information is available on the actual source of each observation for selected species on selected preserves.

**Immediate Search.** This is not new, only renamed under **Searches** (and in the upper right corner of NRDB web pages).

For more information, including hints on database use, contact Dennis H. Smith at [DennisHSmith60@msn.com](mailto:DennisHSmith60@msn.com), or Bill Korbholz at [bill@kortech.com](mailto:bill@kortech.com).

## Plant Taxonomy Class at San Jose State

Learn plant taxonomy, the morphological features of plants and how they are classified, by taking this class at San Jose State University. Students will learn plant keying and how to use the Jepson Manual. The class is taught by Professor Rod Myatt, who has taught botany associated classes at

SJSU for 28 years. He's an expert on oaks and Polygonaceae and more.

The class, Bio 104, is taught in person, **Tuesdays and Thursdays, 8:30am to 1:20pm**, lecture followed by lab, starting **January 27**.

The lectures are mostly on principles of systematics (a little history, characters, reproductive systems, nomenclature, classification systems, and generally how plants are classified and what the criteria are). The lab is more practical identification, using Jepson Manual (and any other keys available), and some work on collection and preparation procedures. Emphasis is on the family level, learning to recognize most of the common families and major genera.

The only prerequisite is a previous course in botany.

Dr. Myatt has occasionally invited a couple of experienced CNPS people to attend some of the labs, especially where they can provide some help or have some special needs (Sally Casey with the grasses, etc). He would be happy to send a schedule of topics or answer any other question. Contact him (408)924-4834 or [rmyatt@email.sjsu.edu](mailto:rmyatt@email.sjsu.edu). For registration info and cost, contact the school directly at (408)924-1000.

## CHAPTER OFFICERS FOR 2005

We welcome our new chapter officers for 2005, elected at the November General Meeting. They are:

Title	Name	Phone	Email
<b>President</b>	Judy Fenerty	(408) 378-6272	<a href="mailto:judy@fenerty.com">judy@fenerty.com</a>
<b>Vice President</b>	Kevin Bryant	(408) 353-8824	<a href="mailto:mtngreen17@verizon.net">mtngreen17@verizon.net</a>
<b>Recording Secretary</b>	Vicki Silvas-Young	(408) 293-7124	<a href="mailto:mrmngwrblr@yahoo.com">mrmngwrblr@yahoo.com</a>
<b>Treasurer</b>	Paul Heiple	(650) 854-7125	<a href="mailto:LogH3o@aol.com">LogH3o@aol.com</a>

## **DEADLINE FOR THE NEXT *BLAZING STAR***

**Saturday, February 5, 2005**

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