



California Native Plant Society
Santa Clara Valley Chapter

THE BLAZING STAR

January-February 2006

MEMBER'S NIGHT AND GENERAL MEETING

Friday, January 20th at 7:30 pm
Los Altos Library Program Room
13 So. San Antonio Road, Los Altos

Topic: Members' slide show – special plants, places and times of 2005

The year 2005 will be remembered as an incredible wildflower year throughout California. The rainfall season in our region came early and often, and supported a vigorous growing season for most natives (and many weeds!). Join us as we relive this bounty and show our favorite slides from 2005. Photos of anything, any place, or anyone related to native plants in 2005 are welcome. There will also be space for displaying prints, drawings and other plant-related material.

If you'd like to share photos or other materials, please RSVP to Kevin Bryant by **Jan. 13th** at mtngreen17@verizon.net or (408)353-8824, and let him know how many photos/what type of materials, and approximately how many minutes you'd like. Time allotted per person will depend on how many participants RSVP.

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 or (408)353-8824.

Save the Dates!

Our **Spring Wildflower Show** will be **Saturday and Sunday, April 22 and 23, 2006** at Mission College in Santa Clara, just a week before the **Going Native Garden Tour** to be held **Sunday, April 30.**

Our **General Meeting** on **Friday March 17** will feature *Dirca* expert Bill Graves presenting his research to us.

Finally, our Chapter **Spring Native Plant Sale** will be held at Hidden Villa on **Saturday, May 6.**

CNPS Member Recognition

The San Jose City Council's recognized the Lake Cunningham Volunteers, including several CNPS members. See the article at the end of this newsletter.

CHAPTER ACTIVITIES

Native Plant Nursery Expansion Underway

The expansion of our native plant nursery at Hidden Villa is underway. We are adding about 600 square feet to the end of the nursery so the stock plants can have some sun.

Two corner posts are in the ground thanks to Gerry Ellis and Dave Struthers. Dave is working on a gate for the connection. Gerry cleared the land and did some pruning. Jean Struthers and Sue Welch did the light work. We will be putting down mulch instead of ground cloth. Then we can install the deer fencing.

If you would like to help work on the nursery expansion, volunteers are welcome. Just let Jean or Ray know (see contact info below). Besides help with the above tasks, we will need help with an irrigation plan and installation.

Even as we expand our nursery, we will continue our usual native plant nursery work sessions, which take place every **Wednesday** from **noon to 3pm**. Bring garden gloves, sunhat, clippers, and your lunch if you like. Other tools

will be provided at the nursery. Knowledge of plants is not necessary: your willingness to help is all that's required. Tea is served at **3pm**.

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 (GWN) is a special interest group within the Chapter which meets on the first **Thursday** of each month, usually at the Peninsula Conservation Center (PCC) in Palo Alto (directions below). The group is open to all, and includes a mix of seasoned native plant gardeners as well as beginners. Newcomers are always welcome.

Thursday, Jan. 5, 7:30 to 9pm at the PCC. Winter Blooming Natives. Bring plant lists, pictures, and cuttings of your favorite winter blooming California natives. Think *Ceanothus*, *Ribes*, manzanita, etc. Show us what's happening in your garden for an informal roundtable discussion, or come and listen in order to plan for next year. Host: Sherri Osaka.

Directions: 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 LEFT onto East Bayshore. This will curve around to the left, then right. Turn right on Corporation Way. Then turn into the first driveway on your left, which leads to the PCC parking lot. The GWN meeting is in the **Raptor Suite** on the first floor.

Thursday, Feb. 2, 7 to 9:30pm at Cubberley Community Center, Room H-1. Irrigating Native Plants: Spray, Drip, Hand, or Not at all. A panel discussion with Frank Niccoli of The Village Gardener, Inc.; Andrew Bolt of Rainbird; Gary Porter of Netafim; and Ivy Munion of ISC Group, Inc.; and our own Jeff Caldwell. Hosts: Chris Todd, Stephanie Morris, and Sherri Osaka.

Directions: To get to the Cubberley Community Center in Palo Alto, from the 101 Bayshore Freeway, exit at San Antonio Rd, go towards Palo Alto (away from the Bay) to the 2nd major stoplight. Turn right onto Middlefield. Get

into the left lane and turn left into the parking lot signed as "Foothill College-Cubberley Community Center-Cubberley Theatre." Follow the building signs to room H-1.

For more information on the Gardening with Natives group, visit our website at **www.GardeningWithNatives.com**. We maintain a Yahoo group with over 280 members, which is a true resource for native plant gardeners in our area. To join the Yahoo group, visit **groups.yahoo.com/group/GardeningWithNatives**. To contact the GWN Steering Committee, email GardeningWithNatives@yahoo.com or call Arvind Kumar at (408)274-6965.

Progress at Native Hill

Native Hill has been progressing extremely well. Extra efforts have been undertaken to mulch areas that were problematic last year with weeds; the mulching is complete and California poppy and *Clarkia* seeds have been placed in the mulch.

Perennials including the following: *Mimulus aurantiacus*, *Salvia sonomensis*, *S. leucophylla*, and *Grindelia* have been planted with the following annuals in between the perennials: *Limnanthes douglasii*, *Lupinus bicolor*, *Nemophila menziesii* and *Phacelia campanularia*. Pruning of *Romneya coulteri* has been completed and we are now presently starting on *Eriogonum giganteum*. We are also in the process of collecting seeds from our collection to further increase our plantings for next year.

There is a regular flock of California quail (6-10 birds) every morning around the St. Catherine's lace and in late November for the first time Phil observed a brush rabbit in the garden. Hummingbirds are regular visitors at this time of the year with the California fuchsia in bloom.

If you would like to volunteer at the garden or be added to the email list to be notified of upcoming workdays, contact Phil Higgins at phidor@juno.com or (650)941-4752.

Keying with Natives

Join us on the last **Friday** of every month, from **6:30pm - 8:30pm**, in a fun gathering to meet with other native plant enthusiasts to sharpen your keying skills. We meet at the PCC building in Palo Alto. The next meetings will be **January 27 and February 24**. (Note that the December meeting was on the third Friday of the month.)

Photo Group

Please join us for the monthly meetings of the Chapter Photography Group in January and February. In January we'll be discussing what we would like to accomplish in the

upcoming year, and hopefully planning a couple of dates for photography hikes, so your attendance and participation especially important. February will include a basic discussion about composition.

The meetings will be **Mondays, January 16 and February 20** in the Peregrine room, from **7-9pm**, at the PCC. For more information contact Jerry Welch at (408)353-8352 or jdwelch@yahoo.com.

Habitat Restoration at Edgewood Park

Join Ken Himes to help remove invasive exotic plants and protect Edgewood's sensitive habitats. **Friday sessions, at 8:30am**, occur year-round. **Wednesday** evening sessions will resume in spring after daylight savings time begins.

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



McMinn Manzanita

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On dark winter days, the McMinn Manzanita (*Arctostaphylos densiflora* 'Howard McMinn') fairly twinkles with its stellar clusters of white-pink urn-shaped flowers, and is a favorite of hummingbirds and butterflies. A mounding shrub to 5', it has the characteristic sinewy, smooth bark of manzanitas, contrasting nicely with the small, vertically held leaves, an adaptation to avoid the heat of the midday sun. Easy to grow and adaptable, this sun-loving plant is suitable for home gardens as a specimen or as a hedge. This selection of the vinehill manzanita from Sonoma County, increasingly rare in its native habitat, survives in the trade due to its superlative horticultural qualities. - *Arvind Kumar*

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 29 Sun 10am

Biology and Ecology of Plants in Edgewood

Join Ken Himes and Paul Heiple as they tour of the paths of Edgewood, pointing out some of the aspects that determine why plants grow where they are found. We will show how these patterns may change over time and the ways plants compete for the locations they prefer.

The climb from the daycamp, where we will meet, is about 400 feet in elevation gain, but we will climb it slowly. The trails could be muddy, so wear appropriate footwear, and bring a lunch and water. The hike is expected to last until **1pm**. For more information contact Ken at (650)591-8560, or Paul at (650)854-7125 or LogH3o@aol.com.

Directions: Edgewood Park is east on Edgewood Road from I-280 and west of Hwy 101 on Whipple. From Whipple, turn right on Alameda de las Pulgas, left on Edgewood Road and then once inside the park, turn left into the Daycamp parking.

Jan 31 Tue 7pm Field Trip Planning Meeting

Looking for a fun and easy way to contribute to an important chapter activity? Join us at our next field trip planning meeting, where we will be looking to fill the spring calendar with some great adventures. We'll also begin to plan some special summer trips that have been proposed. New to this meeting: free pizza! Bring ideas and an appetite, and get in on the fun of helping us figure out where we'll be botanizing together in 2006.

The meeting will be held at the Peninsula Conservation Center (PCC) in Palo Alto, 3921 E. Bayshore Road. Contact Kevin Bryant at mtngreen17@verizon.net or (408)353-8824, for details, or if you have input but can't attend.

Feb 5 Sun 10am Stevens Creek Canyon

Join us on an early season hike where we hope to see *Dirca occidentalis*, Western leatherwood, in bloom. This area has the southernmost known population of *Dirca occidentalis*, a Bay Area endemic shrub and CNPS List 1B plant [1]. Our March program will feature a presentation by a leading researcher and expert on *Dirca* species. We will be hunting for other early bloomers and other signs of California spring on this less than 6 mile hike.

We will meet in Stevens Creek County Park, at the first parking lot after Monte Bello Rd., next to the reservoir. The hike has an anticipated 800' elevation gain, and should take 4 to 6 hours. For more information contact Kevin Bryant at (408)353-8824 or mtngreen17@verizon.net.

Directions: From Foothill Expressway at Hwy 280, head south on Foothill as it changes its name to Stevens Canyon Road. Continue south on Stevens Canyon Road. After passing the junction with Monte Bello Road on the right, turn in at the next parking lot on the left, next to the reservoir.

[1] Find the Status of a Rare Plant

How did we know that *Dirca occidentalis* was a CNPS List 1B plant? You can use the online CNPS Inventory of Rare and Endangered Plants to look up the Listing status and other information about a plant if you know the name. Start by visiting cnps.web.aplus.net/cgi-bin/inv/inventory.cgi.

Feb 25 Sat 10am Huddart Park Fern Walk

Join Sally Casey and Jean Struthers for a walk through Huddart Park in Woodside to see the unusual Dudley's shield fern (*Polystichum dudleyi*), fetid adder's tongue (*Scolioopus bigelovii*), and possibly Oregon windflower (*Anemone oregana*). This is also the only place on the east side of the Santa Cruz Mountains to see redwood sorrel (*Oxalis oregana*) in quantity.

The hike will be at a moderate pace, with a moderate elevation gain. Bring a hat, rain gear, lunch and water. Heavy rain cancels. The hike is expected to last until **2pm**. For details contact Sally Casey at (408)377-0989, or Jean Struthers at (650)941-2586 or JeanStruthers@aol.com.

Directions: From Highway 280, turn off at the Woodside Road (Highway 84) exit, turn west (towards Woodside), and proceed approximately 1.5 miles through the town. Turn right on Kings Mountain Road. Proceed up the hill to the main park entrance. Meet inside the gate, the first parking lot inside the entrance. There will be a \$5 entrance fee, so carpooling is encouraged.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

News and Activities from Other Organizations

Going Native Garden Tour Announces Garden Preview Series for Volunteers, Seeks Garden Submissions

Work on the 2006 Going Native Garden Tour has begun. The tour committee is planning an innovative series of garden preview events for its volunteers. It is also accepting garden submissions.

Now in its fourth consecutive year, Going Native Garden Tour is organized and operated by community volunteers. Volunteers work one 3-hour shift at one of the gardens on tour day (**April 30, 2006**) either as a docent or as a greeter. Other volunteers work on the steering committee that plans and coordinates tour activities.

In the past, volunteering meant sacrificing the opportunity to visit tour gardens, most of which are open only on tour day. Sacrifice no more! Starting next month, volunteers will be able to visit tour gardens throughout the year through the Garden Preview program. The Garden Preview schedule for January and February includes visits to private native gardens in Menlo Park, Sunnyvale, San Jose, and Campbell.

To volunteer for the Going Native Garden Tour, visit groups.yahoo.com/group/gngt **Volunteers**, click on the Join button, and fill out the form.

The 2006 tour committee is also accepting garden submissions. If your garden is in Santa Clara or San Mateo counties, and incorporates 30% or more native plants, you are invited to submit your garden by filling out the form at www.goingnativegardentour.org/gardenSubmissionForm.php.

For more information, visit the new website at www.goingnativegardentour.org.

Spring Training for Edgewood Docents

"Spring Training" for the Friends of Edgewood Docent Program will begin **Jan. 25th, 2006**. Join us for a great opportunity to learn about the plants, animals and geology of this unique natural preserve. Edgewood Park is known for its serpentine grasslands but also for holding at least 3 plant communities within a relatively small area.

Docent training runs from **Jan. 25th through April 8th** and includes six **Wednesday** evening classes and six hikes

on the **Saturdays** following each Wednesday talk. The cost for the training is \$25 to cover materials. For more information or to sign up, please contact Mary Wilson at docent-trainer@friendsofcedgewood.org or (650)326-6365.

San Jose Mayor Recognizes Lake Cunningham Volunteers

The Lake Cunningham Volunteers, including several Chapter members, were commended by the San Jose City Council for their volunteer work in creating a native garden at the park in the Evergreen area of San Jose.

San Jose Mayor Ron Gonzales commended the volunteers for their efforts in a ceremony on Nov. 15, stating that the group "is a highly inclusive and hard-working community-based group aimed at beautification of park lands, maintenance and supplementation of a native plants garden, creation of a habitat for birds and other wildlife, and promulgation of knowledge of native plants to park visitors, all while encouraging community participation and ownership of the project."

Named in the commendation were the core volunteers who have been the steadiest contributors to the project: Arvind Kumar, Ashok Jethanandani, Susan Sundberg, Bracey Tiede, Richard Tiede, Kay Gutknecht, Sue Welch, and Barbara and Scott Springer.

A story from the Evergreen Times describing the project including color photos, how plants were obtained, and how the core volunteers recruited other volunteers, is online at http://www.evergreentimes.com/current/lake_cuning.htm.

The Wayne Roderick Lectures Winter 2005-2006

The Regional Parks Botanic Garden in Berkeley invites members to attend the Wayne Roderick Lectures, a series on botanical topics that honors that famed and beloved friend of CNPS and former director of the Garden.

The lectures take place most Saturday mornings November thru February at **10:30am** and are free to the public. For more information, visit www.nativeplants.org, call (510)841-8732 or email bgarden@ebparks.org.

Topics for January and February, 2006:

Jan	Topic	Presenter
7	"The botany of Pt. Reyes National Seashore"	Steve Edwards
14	"Joaquin Murietta country"	Steve Edwards
21	"California Classics"	Dave Fross

28	"The Oat Hill Mine Trail and Knoxville areas of Napa County"	Dick O'Donnell
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Feb	Topic	Presenter
4	"Botany and geology of Death Valley, including the great spring of 2005" and "a foray into the Panamints"	Steve Edwards
11	"A botanist's Greece"	John Game
18	"The glorious western Mohave"	Bob Gibbons
25	"The June Lake and Tioga Pass areas, plants of late summer"	Steve Edwards
		Bob Case

Cal-IPC Website Link

At our November Chapter Potluck, Paul Heiple made reference to the California Invasive Plants Council as our primary authoritative source for invasive plants information. You may learn more about Cal-IPC at www.cal-ipc.org.

CHAPTER OFFICERS FOR 2005

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

Title	Name	Phone	Email
President	Judy Fenerty	(408) 378-6272	judy@fenerty.com
Vice President	Kevin Bryant	(408) 353-8824	mtngreen17@verizon.net
Recording Secretary	Vicki Silvas-Young	(408) 293-7124	mrrngwrblr@yahoo.com
Treasurer	Paul Heiple	(650) 854-7125	LogH3o@aol.com
Past President	Georgia Stigall	(650) 941-1068	GeorgiaStigall@yahoo.com

To join our Chapter email list please send your request to judy@fenerty.com or cnps_scv@yahoo.com.

DEADLINE FOR THE NEXT *BLAZING STAR*

Saturday, February 4, 2006

Email: mattsson@sbcglobal.net

Phone: (408)255-3767