



California Native Plant Society
Santa Clara Valley Chapter

THE BLAZING STAR

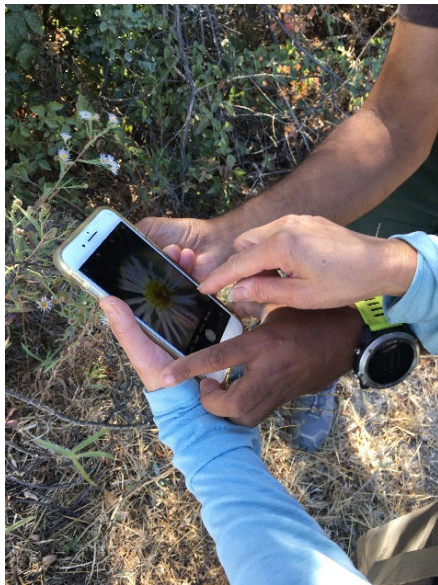
January-February 2019

MEMBERS' NIGHT AND GENERAL MEETING

**Friday, February 1st at 7:30 PM
Los Altos Library Program Room
13 So. San Antonio Road, Los Altos**

**Topic: Members' Night Slide Show
Native Plants and Places in 2018**

In this annual tradition, Chapter members share photos of notable plants and places they have visited in 2018. Native plant species are well-adapted to thrive in wet and dry years, and 2018 was somewhere in between. There were still some fantastic displays of wildflowers in some parts of California – did you find and photograph any of these wildflower displays? Or maybe you found something more subtle and maybe a bit sublime? If so, please consider showing your images and/or stories with others at this fun event. Even if you don't have any photos to share, join us for a fun midwinter celebration of the beauty and tenacity of native plants and their habitats.



Carol Mattsson

Join our Photography Group to learn to hold your phone, macro loupe over the lens, tap to focus and squeeze to click the shutter, with two hands instead of four. Learn more on page 5. Photo group's Skyline Ridge Photo Walk November 2018.

If you'd like to display your photos, please **RSVP by Sunday, January 27th** by emailing Kevin Bryant at mtngreen17@gmail.com or calling (408) 348-9470; and let him know about the materials you'd like to share from 2018. Time allotted per person will depend on how many participants RSVP. CNPS General Meetings are free and open to the public.

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

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

By Vivian Neou, Chapter President for 2019

We've had the good fortune to have Madeline Morrow as our Vice President for four years and President for the past two years. Some of the Chapter's highlights over her last year as President include:

Conservation: Our Chapter worked with a coalition of environmental groups to ensure the right outcomes for three measures affecting Coyote Valley in San Jose: defeating Measure B to prevent development, passing Measure C to protect the "Green Line" and passing Measure T to buy land. We also had a rare plant treasure hunt training session and continued to have weekly workdays at three restoration sites.

Wildflower Show: The show was attended by over 800 people – the highest attendance in Chapter history. We are grateful for our strong partnership with West Valley College, which provided the excellent venue, engaged students and the opportunity to introduce CNPS to many members of the general public.

Scholarship program: Four scholarships were granted to excellent candidates. We have received multi-year funding for two annual scholarships in recognition of CNPS Fellows Don Mayall and Sally Casey.

Nursery: The renovation completed in 2017 enabled us to use best management practices while producing more plants. We had one public sale, ten monthly sales, and two public pop-ups sales. We sold over 2,500 plants and made almost \$25,000.

We restarted our **photography group** with a new chair, Atul Chaudhari. The group has attracted new members and is currently focusing on macro photography with mobile phones.

Gardening with Natives (GWN): We held over 30 talks at libraries across two counties, reaching over 800 people with around a fourth of the audience new to CNPS.

Going Native Garden Tour: 55 gardens across two days. Held in conjunction with Master Gardeners.

Field trips: There were over 30 field trips including several backpacking and overnight trips.

I thank Madeline for everything she's done for the Chapter and am grateful that she will continue to provide guidance in her role as Past President.

We have an exciting year ahead of us as we continue to grow our programs and expand our reach. Our work to protect California's native plants and biodiversity is critical now more than ever, and all of you play an important role in our success. I look forward to working with you over the coming year. Please don't hesitate to contact me with your ideas and questions.

Vivian may be reached at techchair@cnps-scv.org.

CHAPTER ACTIVITIES

CNPS SCV Nursery at Hidden Villa

Come help propagate plants for our future plant sales by volunteering at one of our nursery work sessions, every **Wednesday, from 11am to 2pm**. Also, we'll hold a work session during each **member sale day** that takes place at the nursery, listed below.

Bring garden gloves, sunhat, liquids 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.

The next **Monthly Member Sale** will be **11am to 2pm on Saturday, February 10**

Read on to learn about a **pop-up sale** at the PCC, open to the public on **Sunday, January 12**

An inventory of available plants will be updated the week before each sale. Visit www.cnps-scv.org and go to **Events, then Plant Sale**.

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 Dana Center parking lot to your right. Continue walking a short distance on that road and you will see the CNPS SCV Nursery ahead of you, just past the Dana Center building. Parking is free while volunteering or attending a Member Sale.

Pop-Up Public Native Plant Sale January 12

We are going to have a pop-up sale rather than a member sale in January. Held at the PCC in Palo Alto, it'll be combined with a showing of Doug Tallamy's talk from the CNPS Conservation Conference. Here's the schedule:

10:30am - 12noon: Showing of Doug Tallamy's talk from the Conservation Conference followed by discussion. **Space is limited** for the talk, please **sign up** on EventBrite. Look for "**Video and Discussion: Restoring Nature's Relationships, at talk by Doug Tallamy.**"

12noon - 1:30pm: Pop-up sale. Check the plant inventory mentioned above to see what's available. We'll allow preorders for pickup at the sale.

The theme for this sale and talk will be "Bring a Neighbor," because there's greater wildlife value if a planted area is larger and connected. New and gift memberships purchased during the sale will receive a voucher for a free plant.

For directions to the PCC (Peninsula Conservation Center), please see the Keying with Natives article later in this newsletter.

People Behind Our Nursery Renovation

Our CNPS SCV Nursery, founded by Jean and David Struthers, has been totally transformed in the last year and a half. Aging buildings and new protocols to combat phytophthora required reorganization and rebuilding. The process was complex and a Nursery Advisory Committee was put together to help the nursery manager.

We now have wonderful metal benches for our front and stock areas, and all of our plants are off the ground. Our old wood-framed greenhouse has been replaced with a metal-framed one, and we have a new shed for our office and propagation area. We managed to do all of that while still growing and selling plants. The process is almost complete, so at our November General Meeting we recognized the key people who made all this possible:

John Jenkins brought professional expertise as a soil scientist who worked in the nursery industry. He installed irrigation for the new benches and also installed the new greenhouse, including irrigation.

The renovation wouldn't have happened without him! He lives in Morgan Hill, so in addition to all of the work he did onsite, he had to deal with a long, grueling commute.

Bill Bunch saved the day when the unwelcome realization came that the newly ordered benches had to be assembled. He figured out an efficient method, trained other volunteers in the process and assembled many himself. Without him, the benches would have taken twice as long (or even longer) to finish – it would have been a disaster.

Linda Hsi put the nursery layout into a CAD program so that the Nursery team could play with different layouts. She was there to help with everything else, including much of the research to figure out what was needed and what to order, as well as providing moral support through a long and difficult process.

Melanie Cross, like Linda, was there to guide/help with EVERYTHING. She was also a part of the Nursery Advisory Committee.

Stephen Buckhout worked on all aspects of the renovation and was very helpful as liaison to the board. He

spearheaded the work to put together the Nursery Advisory Committee.

Tara Lee was one of the most consistently helpful volunteers during the renovation, keeping the plants growing through the long renovation process.

Ray Curiel and Tomás & Alejandro Neou-Curiel jumped in to help with assembly, installation, repairs, moving stuff and anything else the nursery needed help with.



Vivian Neou

Nursery renovation volunteers Alejandro and Tomás Neou-Curiel, John Jenkins and Stephen Buckhout pose in front of the "new" greenhouse under construction

Vivian Neou, our nursery manager, brought her energy, her passion for native plants and her technical and management expertise to this project as nursery manager. Without her the nursery would have crumbled to the ground. She constantly kept the nursery needs in view for our board and membership.

Come to one of our monthly member plant sales, or volunteer for a plant sale or at the nursery to see our practically brand-new nursery!

Gardening with Natives

Gardening with Natives (GWN), a special interest group within the Chapter, includes beginning and seasoned native plant gardeners, along with landscape architects and designers. GWN offers over 35 free talks throughout the year at public libraries in San Mateo and Santa Clara counties. For more info., visit www.cnps-scv.org/gwn.

These programs are made possible by co-sponsoring libraries and volunteers who help with program logistics. If you would like to help organize similar programs at a library near you, please email gwn@cnps-scv.org.

**Movie Night: Living Landscape
a video by Douglas Tallamy**

**Thursday, Jan 10, 7-8:30 PM, Mountain View Library,
585 Franklin St., Mountain View (650) 903-6337**

Bring some popcorn or your favorite movie snack. We'll be watching a video on Douglas Tallamy's latest book, *The Living Landscape: Designing for Beauty and Biodiversity in the Home Garden* and discussing the information in the

movie. You'll learn how to change your landscape to attract more creatures, especially caterpillars! Your garden can become a food hub in the middle of suburbia. We will meet in the First Floor Program Room.

Doug Tallamy is currently professor and chair of the Department of Entomology and Wildlife Ecology at the University of Delaware in Newark, Delaware, where he has taught insect taxonomy, behavioral ecology and other subjects. Chief among his research goals is to better understand the many ways insects interact with plants and how such interactions determine the diversity of animal communities.

**Winning the War on Weeds
a talk by Rebecca Schoenenberger**

Wednesday, January 16, 7-8:30 PM, Sunnyvale Library, 665 W. Olive Ave, Sunnyvale (408) 730-7300

The rains are bringing much needed water to our gardens, but they also sprout pesky weed seeds that hide in the soil. Ridding your garden of these weeds is typically a back-breaking, time-consuming endeavor, but there are techniques that can save you lots of time and effort. Join us to learn about sheet mulching and other simple tricks that you can do now, so you can enjoy your garden later. Bring along a sample of one or more of your weeds for the speaker to identify.

Rebecca Schoenenberger has a diverse background in sustainability and natural systems with an Associate of Science in Park Management and a Bachelor of Science in Environmental Studies. She is the owner of the landscape company California Nativescapes, and has an extensive knowledge of native plants, including selecting plants which will thrive in specific locations. Since 2011 Rebecca has also been a Santa Clara County Master Gardener.

Rethinking Weeds, a talk by Frank Niccoli

Tuesday, January 22, 7-8:30 PM, Saratoga Library, 13650 Saratoga Ave., Saratoga (408) 867-6126

If weeds had a tattoo it would be "misunderstood" – in bold print and colors. A weed to one is a medicine to another. And the word weed has such a negative connotation. It is as if we need to degrade them before we eradicate them. Spend some time with Frank Niccoli to learn why weeds

should have a name change. From now on we will call them "les herbes sauvages." Find out why.

Frank Niccoli has been a gardener for over 50 years and is the past president of the founding chapter of the California Landscape Contractors Association. He was voted Member of the Year by his peers in 2001 and 2004. He has written the curriculum and teaches numerous classes at Foothill College.

**Rain Gardens, Rain Barrels & Cisterns, Oh My!
a talk by Sherri Osaka**

Wednesday, February 27, 7-8:30 PM, Campbell Library, 77 Harrison Ave., Campbell (408) 866-1991

There is still time to gather the spring rains for your garden. Hear how to use passive forms of rainwater harvesting to keep water in your soil so you can start irrigating later than normal. Learn about active forms of rainwater harvesting to store water and use it when you need it. Find out about the new rebates offered by the Santa Clara Valley Water District and how you can take advantage of them.

Sherri Osaka is a licensed Landscape Architect, Bay-Friendly Qualified Designer and a member of the Santa Clara Valley Water District's Landscape Board. She is our Chapter's GWN chair and started her company, Sustainable Landscape Designs, over 20 years ago. In 2018, she received the Water Champion distinction from the Silicon Valley Water Conservation Award Coalition.

Keying with Natives

Join us as we learn and practice methods of identifying the native plants of our region (aka keying). We use the current edition of *The Jepson Manual*, of which there will be copies to share. Bring your own copy and a hand lens and plant samples if you have them. Microscopes are also available.

The upcoming meeting dates are **Fridays, December 21, January 25 and February 22, from 6:30 - 8:30pm**. We meet at the Peninsula Conservation Center (PCC), 3921 E. Bayshore Road in Palo Alto. For more information please contact Joe Cernac at joecernac@sbcglobal.net or (408) 292-5465.

Directions to the PCC: From Hwy. 101 take the San Antonio Rd. exit and head north. Take the next left onto East Bayshore, which will curve left then right. Take the next right onto Corporation Way. The entrance to the PCC parking lot is the first driveway on the left.

Photo Group

Our Photography Group is a great place to meet other native plant enthusiasts while improving your photographic skills and learning more about our native plants. We announce activities to our online discussion group (groups.io/g/CNPS-SCV-Photography), so if you'd like to receive updates, please join via the web interface or by email. Learn more by visiting the Photography Group page at our website: www.cnps-scv.org/index.php/field-trips/336-photography.

**Capturing the Beauty of Native Plants
Through Photographs
by Atul Chaudhari, Photo Group Chair**

Tuesday, January 15, 7-9 PM, PCC Raptor Suite

Has this ever happened to you: it was a beautiful day, the plants were stunning, but your photos didn't live up to expectations? Want to know how to better capture the beauty of native plants around you, on the trails or even in your garden?

In this presentation, Atul will go through outstanding photos of California native plants and landscapes and share tips on composition, lighting and postprocessing that make images pop. Pose your questions/comments during the Q&A session.

Beautiful images of nature are more than just eye candy: they help us share the beauty of natural systems with others and build awareness about the urgent need to conserve natural habitats. Join us and become a better photographer and a better communicator.

The program is free and open to all. **Please RSVP through meetup.com** ("California Native Plant Society – Santa Clara Valley Chapter").

Directions: For directions to the PCC in Palo Alto, please see the Keying with Natives article above.

Help Wanted: Assistant Coordinator(s) for Wildflower Show

Are you interested in becoming involved with your local community, and getting the public interested in nature? Then consider volunteering as a Wildflower Show Coordinator.

We are looking for one or more enthusiastic volunteers to learn the ropes of putting on our Chapter's annual Wildflower Show. The Show is a fun day-long event offering many ways the public can learn about and enjoy our local native plants. Our current coordinators Vivian Neou and Toni Gregorio-Bunch have been managing this event for several years, and would like to work together with some new volunteers, showing them the process along the way.

Coordinators work closely with the Biology Department staff at West Valley College where the Show is held. Coordinators recruit volunteers from our Chapter, organizing plant collectors, keyers, plant sales and speakers. We have been putting this show on for more than 40 years, and many of our same members help put together the show year after year, so there will be plenty of volunteers to learn from and share the work with. It is a fun filled day of lectures, plant viewing, listening to lectures, shopping, etc.

For more information about this position please contact Toni Gregorio-Bunch at tidytip.lp@gmail.com or (408) 373-4497; or Vivian Neou at techchair@cnps-scv.org.

Going Native Garden Tour: May 4-5

Now is the time to plan your visits to the Going Native Garden Tour (GNGT) gardens! Please register as a visitor at gngt.org and mark your calendars. Registering ensures that you will receive a few timely reminders and downloadable maps. As always, the gardens are in the Santa Clara Valley (Santa Clara and San Mateo Counties). There will be more than 50 gardens to visit. Tell your friends and neighbors too! We'd also love more postings in NextDoor -- feel free to post as an event. (If you want some standardized text, send an email to socialmedia@gngt.org with NextDoor as the subject line.)



Cynthia Typaldos
Krzysztof Kozminski in front of flannel bush in bloom in his garden

Volunteer Opportunities

Registering as a visitor is great, but some of you may want to do more! We are always seeking volunteer greeters and docents. Being a GNGT volunteer is fun, plus the benefits are enormous: a unique t-shirt with a native plant design to wear on tour day, an invitation to the exclusive volunteer party a month or two after the event and monthly private garden previews from January to October. To find out more about volunteering, visit gngt.org.

GNGT Has Much to Offer All Year Round

The GNGT website, gngt.org (which is separate from the CNPS-SCV website), lists all of the gardens that have been on the tour since the website was created in 2006.* Each garden has its own webpage complete with garden description, lots of photos, a unique hashtag and a plant list. This garden information is an invaluable resource for native plant gardeners to plan and expand their own gardens. Kudos to Krzysztof Kozminski who created, manages and enhances our website.

(*Note: GNGT started in 2003 but the website was created in 2006.)

Follow us on Facebook and Twitter at @GoingNativeGT

GNGT has its own Facebook and Twitter accounts, which post/tweet local native plant gardening events and relevant gardening and field trip information from our Chapter, along with highlighting some of our tour gardens. The tour hashtags are #GoingNativeGardenTour and #GNGT2019. Each garden also has a hashtag in the form of #GardenName_GNGT. If you are aware of a relevant event to post/tweet please send it to socialmedia@gngt.org.

Sponsors Always Welcome

We continually seek sponsors to help us spread the word about the beauty, joy and habitat value of California native plant gardens. For more information email info@gngt.org. **See you in the spring!**

CONSERVATION CORNER

Conservation Committee

Our Chapter's conservation committee usually meets on the **Tuesday** following the first Thursday of the month. The next meetings will be on **Wednesday, January 9th and Tuesday, February 12th** at 7:30pm at the PCC in Palo Alto.

Please join us in our important work! For questions, comments or concerns, please contact Conservation Committee Chair Carolyn Dorsch at cdorsch1@aol.com or (650) 804-6162. For directions to the PCC, see the previous Keying with Natives article.

Conservation End of Year Report

We offer three reports by Conservation Committee members Linda Ruthruff, Paul Heiple and Stephen Rosenthal. Following these reports we report on the Lake Cunningham Native Garden project.

Conservation Chair

by Linda Ruthruff, Conservation Chair

As Conservation Chair, I represent our Chapter at many events, advocating for conservation in our region. This includes speaking at government meetings, writing comment letters to policymakers, collaborating with corporate real estate teams, tabling at outreach events, advising the Board on issues, and educating the public. There are a myriad of target audiences: elected officials, government staff, private industry and the public. Each group represents a unique challenge in communicating our conservation message.

A recap of 2018 activities follows:

We protected Coyote Valley with three San Jose ballot measures: all wins!

- San Jose Measure B: We opposed this developer initiative that would have allowed urban sprawl in Coyote Valley. **Defeated**
- San Jose Measure C: We supported this measure protecting Coyote Valley from housing development within one-half mile of the "Green Line." **Passed**
- San Jose Measure T: We supported this bond, which included \$50M to purchase land in North Coyote Valley for "green" infrastructure to prevent floods, protect water quality and refill aquifers. **Passed**

Public Meetings: Spoke in support of protecting the environment during the public comment period at local and regional government meetings:

- San Jose City Council
- Campbell City Council
- Santa Clara County Board of Supervisors
- Santa Clara County Parks and Recreation
- Santa Clara Valley Water District
- SAAG (Station Area Advisory Group) – Advisory group regarding Diridon Station.

Advocacy: Met with individual elected officials, including Santa Clara County Supervisor Joe Simitian and San Jose Councilmember Chappie Jones.

Comment Letters: Collaborated with other environmental organizations on providing written comments on various issues and project proposals which would negatively impact the environment. Signed and co-signed a total of 11 comment letters this year.

Outreach Events

- Coyote Hills Butterfly & Bird Festival: Booth with information about planting native plant habitat for wildlife. With Jeffrey Caldwell.
- Wildflower Show: Engaged attendees in discussion of Measure B. With Carolyn Dorsch.
- “Oaks Among Us”: Matt Ritter talk sponsored by Canopy. Promoted planting native plants. Tabled with Judy Fenerty.

Outreach with Corporations: I met with Google’s real estate development team on multiple occasions. We continue to collaborate on increasing the habitat value of their corporate landscaping through the use of California native plants.

Public Events: Promoted CNPS-SCV at environmental awards events, including Water Awards (recipient Sherri Osaka), Bay Nature Awards and Sierra Club “Guardians of Nature.”

Conferences attended

- California Native Plant Council (Cal-IPC) Conference: A 2½ day educational conference about controlling invasive plants, and protecting, restoring and creating native plant habitat
- Habitat Conservation Planning. Attended with Carolyn Dorsch.

Meetings (lots): I attended 40 regularly scheduled meetings. These included monthly collaboration with other environmental advocates and organizations, Chapter conservation committee meetings and board meetings.

Edgewood Park Habitat Restoration

By Paul Heiple, project co-founder and Invasive Plants Chair, San Mateo County

Volunteers have been restoring habitat at Edgewood Park and Natural Preserve for 29 years. We meet year-round on Friday mornings, and during daylight savings, we work Wednesday late afternoons until civil twilight. In addition to the “regulars,” several schools and corporate groups have worked with us. The work consists of weed removal, scouting throughout the 467 acres for issues, visiting and re-visiting sites. There are now NO locations within the park where yellow star-thistle (YST) (*Centaurea solstitialis*) has not been touched – it is ALL under management.

In addition to the field work, we regularly consult with the San Mateo Parks Department about our work and notify

them if we find any new invasives. We keep up to date on restoration protocols through Cal-IPC events and other sources. I also meet with the Edgewood docents and docent trainees, and have them come out to the “wilds of Edgewood,” showing them what we are working on and why it is so important. Many end up learning as they weed with us.



Friends of Edgewood
A group of Saturday morning weeders at Edgewood Park, May 2002.

Here are details on some of the 2018 restoration work:

We know of over 80 non-natives in the park. Besides YST, the most significant weeds that we have been dealing with are: poison hemlock (*Conium maculatum*), stinkwort (*Dittrichia graveolens*), Italian thistle (*Carduus pycnocephalus*), tocalote (*Centaurea melitensis*), French (*Genista monspessulana*) and Spanish brooms (*Spartium junceum*), English (*Hedera helix*) and Algerian ivies (*Hedera canariensis*). We are also targeting the following grasses: hedgehog dogtail (*Cynosurus echinatus*), rattlesnake grass (*Briza maxima*), Harding grass (*Phalaris aquatica*) and common velvetgrass (*Holcus lanatus*).

For 2019, our focus will also include the following invasives: cotoneaster spp., Bermuda buttercup (*Oxalis pes-caprae*), and a “new” weed, herb Robert (*Geranium purpureum*), plus the grasses: medusa head (*Elymus caput-medusae*) and veldtgrass (*Ehrharta erecta*).

Wrapping up, we feel good about how our efforts contribute to making Edgewood one of the premier grasslands in the Bay Area. But we can never walk away, as **new invasives are coming in all of the time**. If you are interested in joining our corps of volunteers, feel free to visit the Edgewood website with more information at friendsofedgewood.org/habitat-restoration or contact me at pheiple@gmail.com.

Alum Rock Park Habitat Restoration

By Stephen Rosenthal, project founder and Invasive Plants Chair, Santa Clara County

Volunteers do year-round restoration at Alum Rock Park in San Jose, with workdays every Monday plus the 2nd and 3rd Saturdays each month. In addition to the “regular” volunteers, several larger groups have helped out, such as schools and corporate groups. The work consists of weed removal, seed-collecting, and planting seeds. Working closely with park staff, ten signs were installed in May, highlighting plants with information on native peoples’ uses, uses by wildlife, etc.



Stephen Rosenthal

Here are details on some of the 2018 restoration work:

The most significant weeds that we have been dealing with are black mustard (*Brassica nigra*), wild mustard (*Brassica rapa*), poison hemlock (*Conium maculatum*) and milk thistle (*Silybum marianum*). There are still seed banks of these plants, and that will remain the case for quite a few years.



Stephen Rosenthal

One of ten newly installed interpretive signs identifies native plants used at the Todd Quick restoration site in Alum Rock Park. Plants in view include sagebrush, coyote brush, jimsonweed and California poppy.

Since reducing (but certainly not eliminating) these species we now see more of the following invasive weeds: yellow star-thistle (*Centaurea solstitialis*), tocalote (*Centaurea melitensis*), coastal heron’s bill (*Erodium cicutarium*), bristly ox-tongue (*Helminthotheca echinoides*), prickly lettuce (*Lactuca seriola*) and white horehound (*Marrubium vulgare*).

Work continues on the Todd Quick restoration site: the number of natives has about doubled. This spring we started placing tree tubes over five newly planted coast live oaks and the seedlings have all survived so far. This fall we also planted about ten valley oaks and 20 blue oaks from seed. As the acorns germinate, we’ll place tree tubes on the stronger plants.

Volunteers from a Christian high school helped remove weeds at the Todd Quick restoration site. June 2018.

A few years ago there was only one Satan’s goldenbush (*Isocoma menziesii* var. *diabolica*). With the restoration efforts, in 2017 there were four plants. This year there are about 20 of these CNPS List 4.2 plants (meaning limited distribution – moderately threatened).

The same story applies to milkweed: narrow leaf milkweed (*Asclepia fascicularis*) is popping up over a wider range. Jimsonweed (*Datura wrightii*) was planted from seed last year and the plants seem to bloom from early summer through late fall.

We are seeing good results due to our restoration efforts. We invite Chapter members to come out to Alum Rock Park and see our progress, and we always welcome new volunteers. Please contact me at sailinsteve@sbcglobal.net if you are interested in joining our restoration team.

Our Chapter manages THREE habitat restoration projects. The third project, at Lake Cunningham Park in San Jose, is successfully re-creating habitat in an urban environment. The project is landscaping a highly disturbed, altered area with native plants to create wildlife habitat for all to enjoy. Our next End of Year Report describes this Lake Cunningham Native Garden project.

Please see the previous or next newsletter issue for details on how YOU can volunteer at any of these projects, or visit our habitat restoration page at www.cnps-scv.org/index.php/restoration.

Lake Cunningham Native Garden

By Arvind Kumar, project founder and Chapter board member

Through the City of San Jose's Adopt-a-Park program, CNPS volunteers maintain the Native Garden at Lake Cunningham Park. Located at the southern shore of the lake, this garden has grown to nearly 2 acres. It now attracts visitors of many species: birds, butterflies, herps, mammals, even humans of the walking, birding, botanizing and photographing variety. Vicki Silvas-Young leads four well-attended First Day of the Season walks at the park, in which the native garden is a lengthy stop.

In 2018, the native garden continued to impact areas of the park well beyond its physical boundaries. The native tree planting project begun in 2017 entered Phase 2, with the planting of an additional 31 valley oaks, black walnuts, and Fremont cottonwoods between the Marina and the Amphitheater. Underground irrigation was installed by park staff, and will help young trees to get established. This project is volunteer Tilak's brainchild, who has taken it from concept to planning to successful execution, eliciting full engagement from park staff. This year's funding came from the City of San Jose's BeautifySJ grant program and from the Parks Department.

A Native Garden Steering Committee was constituted and it met to prioritize and plan future activities. Volunteers Kara and Tilak initiated the design and installation of a native landscape for the hillside between the parking lot and the bike track. This large area was mulched and planting was begun; it is expected to be completed before the new year.



Arvind Kumar

Lake Cunningham volunteers pose at a new hillside work area, to be landscaped with California native plants. October 2018.

Volunteers are welcome at the native garden. Weekly workdays are announced on our Chapter's meetup site, usually **Saturdays 9am-noon**. RSVPs are requested so that we can plan workday activities better. For more information, contact Arvind at chhaprahiya@gmail.com or (408) 715-7020.

CHAPTER FIELD TRIPS

Chapter field trips are free and generally 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 and 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, clothing 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.

Tue Jan 1 10am - 1pm Año Nuevo State Preserve New Year Hike (San Mateo County)

Join us as we celebrate a Chapter tradition of welcoming the New Year with a walk and picnic at Año Nuevo State Preserve on the San Mateo County coast. Trevlyn Williams, a docent at this preserve, will lead the hike, highlighting its marine ecology and history.

The preserve is located south of Pescadero on Highway 1, just north of the Santa Cruz County line. We'll meet in the parking lot (\$10 day use fee or valid CA State Park Pass) at **10am**. Latecomers will find us on the trail in the coastal prairie. We'll enjoy ocean views, sea cliff vegetation, raptors, songbirds and maybe marine mammals.

We will face an outgoing tide that morning and will see whether we can picnic on the beach (in the area in which seal tour reservations are not required). As this is a day to have fun at the beach with fellow Chapter members, the ending time and depth of botanical discussion may be extended depending on participants.

We will finish at the visitor center. Bring binoculars and layers of clothing for variable conditions including wind, sun and fog. Extreme weather cancels. For more information, contact Field Trip Chair Joerg Lohse at joerg4cnps@gmail.com.

Tue Jan 8 7 - 8:30pm Field Trip Planning Meeting - PCC (Palo Alto)

We will be scheduling the remainder of the spring and summer field trips, plus any field trips we may want to have for the rest of the year. With more knowledge of the winter weather patterns, we may make plans for away trips.

All are welcome to join in the discussion. For further information contact Field Trip Chair Joerg Lohse at joerg4cnps@gmail.com.

Directions: For directions to the Peninsula Conservation Center (PCC), see the Keying with Natives article above.

Sat Jan 12 11am - 2pm First Wildflowers, Mushrooms and Newts in Huddart Park (Woodside)

Join Joerg Lohse along with Edgewood docents and mushroom enthusiasts Janice Rusniak and Lara Fox to see the very first wildflowers of the year. Huddart Park features fetid adder's tongue (*Scoliopus bigelovii*), a member of the lily family, in full bloom since the beginning of January. There will be little else in bloom as we hike a 1.5-mile loop on mostly level trails through a variety of trees and shrubs. However, this woodland supports an equally large variety of mushrooms that help with the breaking down of dead forest materials. At this time of the year, newts roam the trails and we will be looking for them as well.

Bring fluids and lunch, rain gear and good footwear. Hiking poles are helpful as the trails can be slippery when wet. Heavy rain cancels. For more information contact Joerg Lohse at joerg4cnps@gmail.com.

Directions: Drive west on Hwy. 84 from either Hwy. 101 or I-280 and head through Woodside, turn right on Kings Mountain Rd, look for Huddart Park and turn right. As the entrance booth is likely not staffed in January, bring exact change to pay the \$6 parking fee at the vending machine. After paying, turn right and drive to the Zwierlein picnic area, where we will meet near the restrooms.

Sun Jan 13 10am - 3pm Beginner's Plant ID Walk, Almaden Quicksilver Cty. Park (San Jose)

California is a world hotspot of biodiversity, especially its botanical heritage. Our celebrated plant diversity can feel overwhelming to the beginner, but it need not be. By observing characteristics visible to the naked eye – leaves, flowers and seeds – one can easily identify common native plants of our area. Join Arvind Kumar and Ashok Jethanandani on this walk to build your botanical

vocabulary and develop plant id skills. Beginners interested in plant identification are welcome; prior knowledge of native plants or botany is not required.

On this loop hike, we will walk up the New Almaden Trail and return via the Mine Hill Trail. The distance covered is 3 miles with 400' of elevation gain/loss.

Bring a hat, water, a bag lunch and your favorite trail accessories (camera/smartphone/hand lens/binoculars/field guide/none). Dress in layers, and appropriately for winter weather. Heavy rain cancels. For more information contact Arvind at chhprahiya@gmail.com or (408) 715-7020.

Directions: The park lies on the southwest border of San Jose. A map is here: goo.gl/maps/XuG4hafyKjy. We'll meet at the McAbee entrance of the park (**corner of McAbee Rd. and Whispering Pines Dr.**). Caution: This large park has many widely separated entrances: be sure to go to the McAbee entrance. There is no parking lot; find street parking and walk to the entrance.

Sat Feb 9 9am - 1:30pm Fetid Adder's Tongue, Pulgas Ridge OSP (Redwood City)

Join Alf Fengler and Ken and Dee Himes for a proper start to the spring wildflower season, with a pleasant walk through this easily accessible Open Space Preserve. We often see over 1,000 individual wildflowers in bloom even this early in the season!



Joerg Lohse
Fetid adder's tongue, San Francisco Water District land, February 2018

As experienced docents at Edgewood, Alf and Ken will be able to point out some flowering plants in Pulgas Ridge that don't occur at Edgewood, such as fetid adder's tongue

(*Scolioopus bigelovii*) and coast man-root (*Marah oreganus*).

This trip will be an easy 3-mile loop hike through oak woodland, mixed evergreen woodland, chamise chaparral and coastal scrub, combined with a bit of riparian woodland. If needed, we will split into two or three groups to provide a more individualized experience.

The trip will include an elevation gain and loss of about 400 feet. For more information contact Alf Fengler at afengler@acm.org or (650) 345-7045. Heavy rain cancels.

Directions: From I-280, take the Edgewood Rd. exit in San Carlos and head east. Go downhill to the first left, which will be Crestview Dr. Make an immediate left at Edmonds Rd. and proceed to the preserve parking lot on the right. If the lot is full, park on the opposite side of the road in the large unpaved area. We'll meet in the parking lot.

Sat Feb 16 10am - 3pm Dirca - Stevens Creek County Park (Saratoga)

Join Don Thomas for a four mile walk to see the southernmost population of western leatherwood (*Dirca occidentalis*). We will also see some early emerging woodland plants in flower. There will be some moderate but slow-paced hill climbing, with a stop for lunch.

As the most southern population of this endemic species, it may be the most impacted by climate change. We will try to monitor the health and viability of the population and, if possible, get a better population count.

Bring lunch, snacks and liquid. Heavy rain cancels.

We will meet at the parking lot near the intersection of Stevens Canyon Rd. and Mt. Eden Road. For more information, please contact Don Thomas at don_e_thomas@yahoo.com or (408) 828-4044.

Sun Feb 17 10am – 3pm Beginner’s Plant ID Walk, Coyote Valley OSP (Morgan Hill)

Why do plants grow where they grow? In nature, plants grow in readily identifiable communities or associations united by location (soil, topography, and microclimate). Join Arvind Kumar and Ashok Jethanandani as we explore the common plant communities of the South Bay. Beginners interested in plant identification are welcome; prior knowledge of native plants or botany is not required.

We will take the Arrowhead Loop Trail in Coyote Valley Open Space Preserve, which goes through grassland, chaparral, and oak woodland. Expect to see serpentine

outcrops and unique native plants that grow in this inhospitable medium. The distance covered is 4 miles with 600' of elevation gain/loss.

Bring a hat, water, a bag lunch, and your favorite trail accessories (camera/smartphone/hand lens/binoculars/field guide/none). Dress in layers, and appropriately for winter weather. Heavy rain cancels. For more information contact Arvind at chhaprahiya@gmail.com or (408) 715-7020.

Directions: The park is located at 550 Palm Ave. in Morgan Hill. From Hwy 101, take Bailey Ave. west. Turn Left on Santa Teresa Blvd. Turn right on Palm Ave. The preserve is at the end of Palm Ave. We'll meet in the parking lot.

CHAPTER OFFICERS FOR 2019

Title	Name	Email	Phone
President	Vivian Neou	techchair@cnps-scv.org	(650) 260-3450
Vice President	OPEN		
Recording Secretary	Priya Pharate	ppharate1@gmail.com	
Treasurer	Janet Hoffmann	janet@cnps-scv.org	(408) 374-0435
Past President	Madeline Morrow	madeline.morrow@earthlink.net	(408) 741-1150

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To join our Chapter news email list please visit www.cnps-scv.org/index.php/contact-us/sign-up.

DEADLINE FOR THE NEXT *BLAZING STAR*

Saturday, February 9, 2019

**Email: carol.mattsson@gmail.com
Phone: (408) 255-3767**

Santa Clara Valley Chapter California Native Plant Society
3921 East Bayshore Road
Palo Alto, CA 94303



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FIRST-CLASS

CALENDAR OF EVENTS (page # in parentheses)

- | | | | |
|-------------------|---|--------------------------|--|
| Dec 21 Fri | Keying with Natives (4) | Feb 9 Sat | Pulgas Ridge field trip (10) |
| Jan 1 Tue | Año Nuevo field trip (9) | Feb 9 Sat | Newsletter submittal deadline |
| Jan 8 Tue | Field trip planning meeting (10) | Feb 10 Sun | Monthly member plant sale (2) |
| Jan 9 Wed | Conservation Committee meeting (6) | Feb 12 Tue | Conservation Committee meeting (6) |
| Jan 10 Thu | GWN – Douglas Tallamy movie (3) | Feb 16 Sat | Stevens Creek Park field trip (11) |
| Jan 12 Sat | Huddart Park field trip (10) | Feb 17 Sun | Coyote Valley field trip (11) |
| Jan 12 Sat | Pop-up public plant sale (2) | Feb 22 Fri | Keying with Natives (4) |
| Jan 13 Sun | Almaden Quicksilver Park Walk (10) | Feb 27 Wed | GWN – Rainwater – Osaka (4) |
| Jan 15 Tue | Photo Group – Capturing Beauty (5) | Feb 28 Thu | Newsletter mailing party - 10am PCC |
| Jan 16 Wed | GWN – Weeds – Schoenenberger (4) | Mon & 3rd Sat | Alum Rock weeding (8) |
| Jan 22 Tue | GWN – Rethinking Weeds – Niccoli (4) | Wed | Nursery work sessions (2) |
| Jan 25 Fri | Keying with Natives (4) | Fri | Edgewood weeding (7) |
| Feb 1 Fri | General Meeting – Members' Night (1) | Sat | Lake Cunningham workdays (9) |

The next Chapter board meetings will be **Thursdays, January 10 and February 14 at 7:00pm** at the PCC, 3921 E. Bayshore Road in Palo Alto.

Board meetings are open to all Chapter members and their guests.
For more information contact Vivian Neou at president@cnps-sev.org.

The California Native Plant Society is a statewide non-profit organization of amateurs and professionals with a common interest in California's native plants. The Society, working with its local chapters, seeks to increase understanding and to preserve the rich heritage of the native flora for future generations. Membership is open to all. Individual memberships are \$45.00 per year. If you have questions about your newsletter subscription, please contact **membership@cnps-scv.org**. Address changes may be submitted to **cnps@cnps.org**; please put "member address change" in the subject line.

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