What is a California native plant? and "Why should I care?" These are two great questions, and each of us can glimpse the answers through the kaleidoscope of activities that your chapter has invented.

What kind of activities? Well, for instance, your chapter Gardening committee is organizing and hosting a great native gardens tour in April, where people are planting urbanized properties with creative snapshots of what they love about our wonderful wild plant heritage.

Your inspired Rare Plant Survey Committee taught about thirty members how to locate rare plant species and located thousands of them in 2010, and is planning a terrific program for 2011. Your Invasive Plant Committee is teaching members how to beat back invasive plants so the native plants and animals can flourish again, and having fun doing it.

Through dedication of time and labor, your incredible Plant Sale Committee succeeded in raising over $15,000 for the chapter to use on carrying out valuable projects. What kind of projects? In January 2011 your Board granted $500 to the San Diego River Park Foundation to more fully equip their dandy new propagation facility at the Point Loma Native Plant Garden where they teach people how to grow plants and then use the plants to restore native habitats near the San Diego River.

Other projects require more time at the desk. Your Conservation Committee is taking tough political stands in the conservation of native plants in the wild, and positioning CNPS for legal challenges if needed.

And the list goes on. See all the chapter committees on the back of the newsletter, and look for the one that might give you a chance to develop a sharper focus or a more brilliant panorama of our native plants.
If you want to jump in and work on an important native plant issue that currently doesn’t have an active committee chair, please contact me, as your chapter president for 2011, and I’ll invite you to come to a Board meeting to get you started.

~ Kay Stewart

BOARD MEETING

The next Board will meet on Wednesday, February 2 at 6:30 at the San Diego Audubon office at 4010 Morena Boulevard, Suite 100. From the I-5, exit Balboa east and turn north on Morena. Board meetings are always held on the first Wednesday of the month.

BOARD NOTES

From January 5, 2010. Kay Stewart was unanimously elected chapter president and Tom Oberbauer was elected chapter vice-president, also by a unanimous vote. Congratulations to both Kay and Tom. Paul Hormick was elected co-chair of the Field Trip Committee. Paul will share chair responsibilities with Kay Stewart. Margy Day was elected chair of the Outreach Committee, replacing David Varner who resigned. Kay Stewart and Bobbie Stephenson were authorized by a vote of the board to sign checks drawn on chapter bank accounts. The board voted to hold an Annual Native Plant Art Contest. Submissions will be due in March. The board authorized $200 of postage from the Board’s administrative funds to return contest artwork submissions to the artist. Frank Landis was authorized to screen contest judge candidates. A $500.00 mini grant was approved for the San Diego River Park Foundation to purchase books, tools and supplies.

~ Tom Beltran, Secretary

DONATIONS FOR SDNHM

Dr. Jon Rebman, Curator of Botany at the San Diego Natural History Museum (SDNHM), leads a number of projects of interest to our chapter. We are all familiar with the San Diego Plant Atlas (www.sdplantatlas.org), which CNPS has supported for a number of years. This project engages citizen scientists and provides public access to the information. Funding for this project has been reduced, but the work continues thanks to grants and donations.

Another worthy project that has stalled because of lack of funds is work on flora of Baja California. Nancy Nenow, a volunteer at the museum, recently sponsored a fund raiser to bring our awareness to this need, and several of us made donations to the project. Donations will be used to complete the Checklist of Vascular Plants of Baja California, the Baja Plant guide, and increasing the online resources at bajaflora.org. All of these will benefit CNPS San Diego members who travel to Mexico and wonder about the interesting and unusual flora. Some of our members work on projects in Mexico, and the museum sponsors strong US-Mexico interactions between botanists and herbaria. The current Baja Plant guide is the only non-expert guide to flora, but it has needed updating for years, and we’ve been eagerly awaiting the completion of this project. Jon says that the plant information is all done, just the details remain, but he cannot work on it without funding.

Jon is exceptional in the ability to stretch resources and to make the results available to the general public. I would encourage our members to donate to the museum to support the completion of these efforts. Send checks, made out to SDNHM/Botany, to SDNHM, P.O. Box 121390, San Diego CA 92112-1390.

~ Carrie Schneider

FIELD TRIPS

Get to know more of San Diego’s great plants in 2011! The Chapter members’ field trips are shaping up for this year. At this time we hope to explore the plants in the following areas:

- Santa Margarita River, Fallbrook (mid-March)
- Anza Borrego Desert, another great canyon (end of March)
- Rattlesnake Canyon, Poway (mid-April)
- McCain Valley (late April)
- Penasquitos Wetlands (mid-May)
- Crestridge: Ceanothus cyanus, etc. (late May)
- East Santa Ysabel Preserve (mid-June)
- Cottonwood Creek, access near Mt. Laguna/Sunrise Highway (late June)
- Upper Cedar Creek, entering from north side via Pine Hills (July)

If you want to help plan and lead any of these trips, please contact Kay at fieldtrips@cnpssd.org.

~ Kay Stewart and Paul Hormick

Have your newsletter delivered direct to your computer terminal!

Just send the name on your mailing label to enewsletter@cnpssd.org. You won’t save a tree if you print it out, but you will save CNPS-SD a stamp.
TECOLOTE CANYON
MONTHLY WALK
February 6. 9:00 a.m.-noon. Kay Stewart will lead this walk that leaves from the Tecolote Canyon Nature Center. From the I-5, take the Sea World Drive/Tecolote Drive exit and go east. The Nature Center is at the far end of Tecolote Road, up the driveway and beyond all the ballfields. This walk is repeated the first Sunday of every month. Rain at 8 a.m. cancels the walk. The walk is repeated the first Sunday of every month.

NATIVE PLANT ART CONTEST

Native Plant Week is April 17 to 23, and San Diego County has more native plants than any other county in the U.S. To celebrate native plants, we are holding a Native Plant Art Contest. Attendees at the March 15th General Meeting will select the winning image. The chapter will use the image on our website and in other formats during Native Plant Week, and we will distribute it to the media and other non-profits to promote and celebrate native plants.

Calling all artists!

You can enter one or more times, and the winner will receive a prize: a one-year individual membership in CNPS or cash equivalent ($45). The contest is open to everyone.

Both photos and artwork are welcome, but the image must meet four criteria, under the judgment of the volunteers running the contest. The criteria are:

1. A California native plant that is native to San Diego or Imperial County must be the dominant feature in the image. Native means that it has grown wild in San Diego or Imperial County since 1491. Dominant feature means that the native plant is noticeably larger than any other feature of the image. Non-native plants are not acceptable.

2. The plant must be identified in the application, and it must be recognizable. An orange lollipop is not a California poppy.

3. The image must not contain the title of the piece, the artist’s name, a copyright or other watermark, or other problematic material.

4. The image must look good under multiple formats. The image will be used in a variety of media, and four versions of the image must be submitted to demonstrate its versatility.

Images must be submitted online to franklandis@cnpssd.org by February 26, 2011. The email application must include:

1. Applicant’s name, address, phone, and email address.
2. The title of the piece, and the name (common and/or scientific) of the plant represented in the image.
3. Four versions of the image, either in jpg or pdf, attached to the email, the biggest no more than 3 megabytes in size: a) an 8.5” x 11” color image; b) an 8.5” x 11” grayscale copy of the image; c) a 1” wide color image, and d) a 1” wide grayscale image. If the image is naturally grayscale, only images b and d must be submitted. These must all be versions of the same image: simply resize the image and change color to grayscale to make the different versions. Do not crop or recolor the image.
4. A statement saying: A) that the artist(s) owns copyright to the image, B) that they are the creator of the image, and if the work is derived from another copyrighted artwork, they either own the original artwork or had permission to create the image submitted. C) That they will allow CNPSSD to use the image without cost or issue until January 1, 2012, and D) that they take responsibility for any issues of ownership, and they release CNPS and CNPSSD from all legal responsibility in regard to issues arising over questions of ownership of the images submitted.

CNPS-SD will screen all submissions to determine whether they are complete and meet our criteria. If the submission passes, we will contact the artist and ask them to submit a physical copy for the March 15th contest. We will ask the contest winner to grant CNPSSD sole use of the image until January 1, 2011 without charge, and free use of the image thereafter.

CONSERVATION

We have added some new Conservation volunteers, and that is a good thing. Feel like joining us? We are always looking for members of CNPS-SD to join the Conservation Committee!

Things will be busy in 2011. Many of the issues from 2010 remain unresolved: the City of San Diego's Stormwater EIR, the Fiesta Island Redevelopment Plan (now moving to an EIR), the County of San Diego's General Plan, and others. 2010 was a fairly quiet year on the local conservation scene, but mostly because the decision makers were contemplating their decisions. This year they act.

In January, we commented on the proposed USFS project to “manage brush” in the Laguna Mountains. This is bureaucratic lingo for grinding up the chaparral and depositing the chips somewhere, on the highly problematic theory that this will make the people in the area safer from fire. Unfortunately, it will not. Chaparral does burn, but it doesn’t ignite very well.
Grasses and weeds ignite much better, especially when dry. This would take a relatively non-flammable landscape and replace it with a highly ignitable one in the name of fire protection. Additionally, weeds have shallow roots that do not hold slopes so well, so we will see more landslides, if there are unusually heavy rains. There is no legitimate science behind it, and the USFS is trying to fast track it without writing an EIS. If this sounds like what the County attempted to do last year, you’re right. It’s a bad idea. Again.

This spring, the City of San Diego will start working on its Vernal Pools Habitat Conservation Plan, which is an excuse for them to destroy more vernal pools in the name of land development. Over 97% of the pools are already gone. There is no need to develop any more of the last 3% that remains.

On a more positive front, we are involved in producing the 2011 Environmental Report Card on San Diego’s City Council. More on that next month.

~ Frank Landis, Conservation Committee

THE 8th EDITION OF CNPS INVENTORY NOW ON LINE

The 8th Edition of the CNPS Rare and Endangered Plant Inventory, a primary data reference for information about the conservation status of over 2,200 of California’s rare and endangered plants, is now available on line at the Society’s website or you can go directly to the Inventory introductory page at http://www.cnps.org/cnps/rareplants/inventory.

The search page is more user friendly then the 7th Online Inventory version. You can run a simple search, an advanced search, or simply type in the name of a species to get information. The page also informs the reviewer of recent deletions or changes to the inventory and informs the user which species are currently in review. This is a very useful addition. While anyone with access to the Rare Plant Forum can get this information, it still required that one actually log in to the forum(if they remember their pass word!). Most people will only find this of passing interest but it will be very helpful for local experts to keep abreast of what is happening and whether they can be helpful in the review process. Recent changes from June through December 2010 are included. In January 2011, there were no species under review that directly affect San Diego County.

Like the old inventory, you can still search by species, county, quadrangle, or a number of other methods. The data are much easier to understand and displays more information than the old page. The most interesting addition is a box summarizing the occurrence data from the California Department of Fish and Game. Included are the total number of occurrences, the Element Occurrence quality ranks (A=excellent, D=poor, X=extirpated, and U=uncertain), population status (historic populations not observed in 20 years vs. more recent occurrences), and presence (extant, possibly extirpated, and extirpated). Under notes, threats are briefly summarized along with information on when the taxon was described, the date it was added to the Inventory, and the last time the account was updated.

In addition to a list of USGS quadrangles, a general map of the western United States indicates whether the species is endemic to California or found in multiple states or countries. Finally, an expandable map illustrates either the counties or the quadrangles where the species has been reported to occur.

One additional change has been incorporated into the Inventory. For decades these plants were on the CNPS Lists and the ranking was called the CNPS ranking system. Last summer, it was decided to use “Rare Plant Rank” in place of “CNPS Rank.” The ranking remains the same even if the label is new. Adopted with some controversy, the new ranking system recognizes contributors (especially CDFG) as well as CNPS for their efforts. It was also a political decision for those who were concerned CNPS was seen as being too influential in the regulatory process.

The 8th Edition of the Inventory is sure to prove a useful tool for conservation and I encourage other members to check it out.

~ Fred Roberts, Rare Plant Botanist

RARE PLANT SURVEYS

This spring we will be looking for eight rare plant species that live only on coastal dunes, and we'll be surveying sites from Imperial Beach north. Dates are still up in the air, because we need to work around the breeding seasons of the least tern and snowy plover. If you are interested, sign up at the chapter meeting or contact me at franklandis@cnpssd.org.

~ Frank Landis, Rare Plant Survey Chair

The State CNPS office has hired Allen Tolleth as the new CNPS Conservation & Communications Coordinator. Allen is a senior at UC Davis, completing a bachelor’s degree in International Relations and Political Science, with a minor in Environmental Policy Analysis. The combination of Allen’s interest in conservation advocacy and experience writing to different audiences easily placed him at the top of a strong group of qualified applicants.
BOTANY

Whatever happened to our Scrophs?

About 20 years ago we were told that there is only one native species of Scrophulariaceae in our area (Scrophularia californica), and that all the other local former members of this easy-to-recognize family are really Plantaginaceae or the equally unimpressive Phrymaceae. James Lightner’s familiar “San Diego County Native Plants” acknowledges this change in its 2006 edition, albeit a bit reluctantly with the “old” family in parentheses. The initial reaction of amateur and professional botanists to the news ranged from head-scratching to passionate protests, but by now the matter seems settled, or is it?

What triggered this major systematic upheaval was of course DNA sequencing, a then still fairly new technology with major impact on numerous scientific disciplines ranging from paleontology and anthropology to ancestry research and forensics, and widely considered to be the molecular cure for almost all open questions in biology. Like many relatively new analytical methods, however, it tends to be applied enthusiastically with not always much concern about its appropriateness for a given problem – and even when suitable, it should only be looked at as one of several tools, not the only and infallible one available.

So what are some of the strengths and weaknesses of this great technology? It can definitely prove that two organisms are different: if your DNA does not match the one found on the crime scene, you are not the perpetrator. It can also prove beyond reasonable doubt (not beyond any, though) that two organisms are related: if your DNA is a close match to the baby’s, you are the father. That is, of course, if the sequence fragments used for the comparison are the relevant ones that differ between unrelated individuals.

This is not much of an issue for human applications, since our complete genome has been sequenced, many genes and their alleles are known, and sequences that tend to differ between individuals have been identified – so paternity tests are unambiguous. Would anybody dare to make the same statement about Scrophulariaceae, Plantaginaceae and Phrymaceae?

These plant families have a common ancestor from which they evolved to what they are now, and we are far from understanding which combination of genetic and environmental factors made Plantago, Scrophularia and Phryma into what they are today. Yet taxonomists fond of cladistics have decided that Collinsia is more closely related to Plantago than to Scrophularia, an opinion shared by the caterpillars of the Quino Checkerspot Butterfly.

HELP WANTED: Honest Energetic Member needed to sell beautiful CNPS Posters to regional gift/book shops and nature-related facilities. Help our chapter raise funds and share knowledge of our fabulous flora with the public. A positive attitude is all that is required; no botanical expertise is needed. Help is available to get you started.

Contact president@cnpssd.org

VEGETATION SAMPLING / MAPPING WORKSHOP

The CNPS Vegetation Program is conducting a field-based sampling/mapping workshop February 5-6, 2011 in eastern Riverside County. This workshop will focus on techniques to identify and survey rare natural communities using our combined CNPS/DFG protocols. The overall goals of the workshop are to learn about the diversity of desert vegetation, to highlight areas containing rare plant communities, and discuss opportunities for future surveys/mapping in priority areas. The cost of the workshop is a suggested donation of $25 for CNPS members, $65 for non-members.

The workshop will be conducted around Palen Lake (approximately 12 miles NE of Desert Center); and at a second nearby location just north of Blythe off of Midland Road. This area of the desert contains significant desert resources, including diverse
vegetation patterns along alluvial fans and playa margins. Additional details will be posted on the web (http://cnps.org/cnps/vegetation/workshops.php), including the precise meeting location and options for lodging (with specifics on camping as well as hotels, and important items to bring). Participants are invited to meet the group on Friday evening at Desert Center to caravan to nearby campsites.

If you are able to attend, please RSVP to Deborah Stout at dstout@cnps.org ASAP so that travel plans and other specifics can be arranged.

~ Anna Bennett, Vegetation Chair

**VEGETATION SURVEY**

**Saturday, February 19th, 9 a.m.** Join the vegetation survey group at the Salt Creek Preserve for our first survey in 2011. The group will be exploring maritime succulent scrub, a rare plant community in southern California.

If you’re new to the group, training is always provided the day of the survey by our local volunteers. The Vegetation Committee (see http://www.cnps/vegetation) works to help the California Department of Fish and Game further classify vegetation associations while also aiding local organizations or individuals get a better understanding of the property under their management. These surveys are a great excuse to get outdoors and discover/reintroduce yourself to native plants. Each survey is a learning experience no matter what your botanical skill level is.

Meet at 9 a.m. at the Starbucks parking lot at 2127 Olympic Parkway in Chula Vista. From here, we will caravan to our survey location. **Please RSVP by Friday, February 18.** Survey events are free and open to the public (although CNPS membership is encouraged!). If you are interested, we could use your help, regardless of your experience. To RSVP or request more information, email vegetation@cnpssd.org or you may call Anna Bennett at (559)443-9233.

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**GARDENING COMMITTEE**

The Native Gardening committee is moving full steam ahead planning for our **Spring Garden Tour on April 30 and May 1.** We believe this could a major annual event for our chapter, bringing in both new members and revenue. This is an ambitious undertaking, and co-chair Susan Kryzwicki and member Clay Tschudy will need lots of volunteers to make it a success.

We have already identified 26 native gardens as potential stops on the tour, but we would like to have at least 40 gardens on offer. Are you proud of your garden and willing to share it with the world (or at least the folks who have paid the $10 tour admission)? Your garden should be at least 80% native plants and available to show on at least one of the two weekend days. That’s you? Great! Email your name, address, and a one-sentence description of your garden to gardening@cnpssd.org by **February 10** to be considered.

Love natives, but your garden isn’t quite ready for prime-time? Never fear, you can still help in a big way by becoming a garden docent. We are looking for volunteers willing to spend at least two 3-hour shifts (9 – 12, 12– 3, Saturday or Sunday) answering questions, handing out literature, and just chatting with folks. Forty gardens means up to **80 volunteers,** so we really need YOUR help: you don’t need to be an expert, you just need to be friendly and enthusiastic about native plants. Taking our cue from public radio, we’re offering perks for volunteers. Everyone will get to go on a pre-tour tour lead by our native landscape professionals and a free pass for the full tour. Do another shift and get the complete compilation of Native Gardening fact sheets. Die-hard volunteers (12 hours or more) will get Care and Maintenance of Southern California Native Plant Gardens! Learn about gardens from the experts, hang out in a beautiful place on a spring day, AND get native plant swag? Send an email (gardening@cnpssd.org) and join the team!

We are going to need lots of other volunteers to help with outreach, logistics, and the hundreds of details that go into an effort like this. Again, drop an email or attend the next meeting of the Gardening Committee, **February 1, 6 p.m.** at the Mission Valley Library, Meeting Room B, (2123 Fenton Parkway, in the Fenton Marketplace west of IKEA). Let’s show the public how great native gardens can be!

~ Susan Kryzwicki and Dave Flietner Gardening Co-Chairs
Old Town State Park Native Garden: Saturday, February 12, 1:00 to 3:00 p.m.

What, Me Worry? Old Town Work Party Again?

The new bog at the Old Town Native Plant Garden will be planted with cattails and bulrushes, while other parts of the garden will benefit from those of you who like to make things neat and tidy, using weeding forks and pruning snips. We’ll see how the plants that we lovingly planted in December are growing and hope to see lots of little seedlings coming up from the seeds we spread.

The Old Town State Historic Park Native Plant Garden is located at the west end of the Park, at the corner of Taylor and Congress Streets, right across the street from the old-fashioned station building at the transit depot. Take the trolley, or if you drive, park in the free State Park parking lot off Calhoun Street next to the garden. Drive as far back toward Taylor as you can, and you’ll see us gathering at the gateway to the Garden.

Bring your favorite hand weeding tools and gloves, and sun protection. Restrooms and water are on site. If it is drizzly or rainy, wear good rain gear and bring a hot thermos of something to drink.

~ Kay Stewart

Point Loma Native Plant Garden: February 5 and 20, 9:00 – 11:00 a.m. Rain cancels; bring water; no facilities; tools/supplies provided. Usually the first Saturday & third Sunday of each month. Richard@sandiegoriver.org for more info.

North Park Community Restoration Garden. Saturday, February 26, 9 a.m. LET’S CONTINUE PLANTING! The CNPS Gardening Committee has begun planting and invites all who are interested in our combination native garden and plant restoration on a site bordering Juniper Canyon in North Park. We welcome all volunteers and neighbors who are interested in learning about the local habitat and how to use local native plants in their gardens. Be prepared to prep the site and install plants. We will park and meet at the intersection of Petra Place and Petra Drive off of Pentuckett. If you have any questions or you are interested in helping to get this project underway but can’t attend, please feel free to contact me at (619) 846-0585, or weshudson@cox.net.

~ Wes Hudson

February 26, 9 a.m. to noon. We focus on tools for controlling invasive weeds for the purpose of habitat restoration and fire prevention. We try to touch on all aspects from evaluation and planning, laws and regulations, various control techniques, through to ongoing maintenance. All members are welcome. We schedule once a month but our daily program allows for other times to fit your schedule. Boots, long pants and long sleeves are required; eye protection is optional but recommended. Contact me for meeting place, directions, gate code & further info at invasiveplants@cnpssd.org.

~ Arne Johanson, Invasive Plant Chair

CITY HEIGHTS NATIVE PLANTING

February 5 Native Planting in City Heights. 9 a.m. – 1 p.m. Ocean Discovery Institute (ODI) invites CNPS members to their upcoming community canyon event at Swan Canyon in City Heights. Meet the community, enjoy nature, and plant native plants to improve the environment and neighborhood. Event will conclude with a celebration including music, food, and a thank you from youth leaders in the community. CNPS-SD has provided volunteer help and several grants to this worthy community group. Location: Hamilton Elementary Campus, 2807 Fairmount Ave, San Diego, 92105. Register/RSVP to Tram Nguyen, TNguyen@oceandi.org, (858) 488-3849.

CALENDAR
2/1: Native Gardening Committee (p. 6)
2/2: Board Meeting (p. 2)
2/6: Monthly Tecolote Canyon Plant Walk (p. 3)
2/5: Point Loma Native Garden Work Party (p. 7)
2/12: Old Town Work Party (p. 7)
2/15: Chapter Meeting (p. 1)
2/19: Vegetation Survey (p. 6)
2/20: Point Loma Native Garden Work Party (p. 7)
2/26: North Park Garden Work Party (p. 7)
2/26: Invasive Plant Control Group (p. 7)
MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION
___Student or Limited Income $25; ___Individual $45; ___Family or Library $75
___Plant Lover $100;  ___Patron $300;  ___Benefactor $600;  ___Mariposa Lily $1,500

Name(s):  _______________________________________________________________

Address:   _______________________________________________________________

Phone:         _______________________
_  e
mail: ________________________________

Mail check payable to “CNPS” to:  CNPS, 2707 K Street, Ste 1, Sacramento, CA 95816.

CALIFORNIA NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY
C/o San Diego Natural History Museum
P. O. Box 121390
San Diego, CA  92112-1390

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