Our chapter recently received a $2,500 donation from a member wishing to remain anonymous. The board would like to express our appreciation for this donation which will further our free public education programs and enable us to continue our important local conservation work.

If you're interested in contributing to CNPS - either to the state organization or the local chapter, please contact me (Carolyn Martus) directly.

Another way to support CNPS is to buy your books from our book table at our chapter meetings or through the on-line bookstore at www.cnpssd.org. The chapter also sponsors two plant sales (March and October) each year to help support chapter programs.

Please join us and support us in our efforts to preserve and enjoy our states rich flora.

Carolyn Martus (Volunteer Pres)

This spring, we will again be offering introductory-level plant walks for members and the general public. Latin names will be avoided as much as possible. Last year’s veterans Julie Kirker, Betsy Cory, and Dave Flietner will be teaming up with newcomers (to public field trips, anyway) Matt Jones, David Di Donato, and Paul Hormick, respectively to lead nine trips into the wilds of the greater San Diego metropolitan area. Arne Johanson and Kay Stewart are designated hitters, ready to step into the breach when needed.

We also need volunteers to help publicize the field trips by submitting brief announcements to local daily and weekly newspapers. This is a great opportunity for someone who may not be able to get out and actually hike. If you’re interested, please contact me.

The field trips will start in March. Look in next month’s newsletter for times and locations.

Dave Flietner, Field Trip Chair

The El Nino rains of 1997-8 brought a record 5.8 inches of rainfall to Death Velly. The rains were spaced just far enough part to ensure an extensive growth period and continuous bloom the much of the Death Valley flora.

Rosemary Foster, an accomplished horticulturist and past president of the Monterey Bay Chapter of CNPS was there, and will share her impressions and her photographs with us this evening.

Rosemary Foster studied horticulture and botany at Cal Poly, San Luis Obispo and is a horticultural consultant in Carmel. Her current projects include compiling and editing a collection of Lester Rowntree’s articles on the horticultural use of California native plants for publication by CNPS. Her bibliography of Lester Rowntree’s periodical publications (720 entries) was recently published by UC Press in the reprint of Rowntree’s *Hardy Californians*.
In Peñasquitos Canyon this is a great year for acorns. Lots of trees groaning under the weight of a good crop. I mention this because many people interested in collecting acorns for restoration projects may be assuming that drought means poor acorn crops. That’s not the case, at least in Coastal San Diego. Coast live oaks and their acorn crops don’t track the previous year’s rain, etc. They’ve evolved a different pattern, hence this year’s bumper crop after years of drought.

Perhaps 25% of the crop has browned up and dropped off the tree but I’m seeing most still green to light brown and still on the tree. If you have restoration projects involving oaks for next year I estimate you have 2-3 weeks, to about XMAS, of a window for collecting. Scrub oak acorns are largely on the ground, but there are small numbers of brown ones still on some shrubs if you look hard. One I harvested was germinating on the bush. In Peñasquitos Canyon and other parks you’ll need permission to legally collect acorns. They’re usually good about giving it for worthwhile projects.

When you collect, collect from a variety of trees and get a variety of small to large acorns to ensure genetic diversity. Discard those that are soft, have holes, are split already, etc. At home, do the float test. Dump the acorns into a bowl of water. Discard floaters. Insects have already eaten the germ plasm. I add 10% bleach to kill a common fungus often on them, then rinse them with non-bleach water and pat them dry with paper towels. Plant right away since stratification (cold) is not needed in SoCal, or store them in your refrigerator until ready to plant.

Mike Kelly
(mkelly1@san.rr.com)

Howdy weed workers,

You may have seen neat wooden bowls made of weedy wood among our Symposium raffle items. Earle Cummings is the artist behind these, and he is interested in hearing about nice hunks of weedy wood that he can use.

He writes, "it will help if your red-hot tree slayers (and I hope you have many of them) can give me a heads-up when they’re on a search and destroy mission so I can get some obnoxious wood. Have saw, will travel. The last couple of years I got lucky and had a block of Russian olive and a privet stump, both of them big enough to work with. It doesn't always happen. Usually I turn things out of local hardwood. That doesn't have the same poetic fitness for fundraising as a bowl made out of a nuisance."

So if you think you've got some good raw materials, let Earle know! earlewc@yahoo.com

Doug Johnson
Executive Director
California Invasive Plant Council
This spring, we will again be offering introductory-level plant walks for members and the general public. Latin names will be avoided as much as possible, and we’ll discuss life history traits, native usage, and wildlife habitat value. Last year’s veterans Julie Kirker, Betsy Cory, and Dave Flietner will be teaming up with newcomers (to public field trips, anyway) Matt Jones, David Di Donato, and Paul Hormick, respectively to lead nine trips into the wilds of the greater San Diego metropolitan area. Arne Johanson and Kay Stewart are designated hitters, ready to step into the breach when needed.

We also need volunteers to help publicize the field trips by submitting brief announcements to local daily and weekly newspapers. This is a great opportunity for someone who may not be able to get out and actually hike to help promote native plants and CNPS to the general public. If you’re interested, please contact me.

The field trips will start in March. Look in next month’s newsletter for times and locations.

Dave Flietner, Field Trip Chair

FIELD TRIP Saturday, March 1, 9 a.m. - 4 p.m.
Grapevine Canyon and Anza Borrego State Park.

Enjoy the spring desert bloom with Larry Hendrickson. We will use 4WD vehicles to explore wilderness areas in Grapevine Canyon threatened by the proposed Sunrise Powerlink. Bring lunch, lots of water, sun protection, sturdy shoes, and long pants. Bring binoculars to check out the abundant wildlife.

Maximum 20 participants (assuming four 4WD vehicles). RSVP to kaya@stbglobal.net. Please say if you have a 4WD vehicle. Please leave a cell phone # that we can use to track late arrivers!

Meet: at 7:30 a.m. at the I-15/S-56 Park and Ride (Thomas Bros 1189-J3) and we’ll caravan to junction of PCT & S22  OR  Meet: at 9:00 a.m. at Jct of PAC. CREST TRAIL & S22 (Thomas Bros 409-L9)

Directions:
To Park and Ride (Thomas Bros 1189-J3): Exit I-15 east @ SR 56, take ramp right onto Sabre Springs Pkwy; turn left under 56, you’ll see Park & Ride on right.
To PCT and S22: From Santa Ysabel take 79N ten miles; right (SE) on S2 (San Felipo Road); left (E) on S22 (Montezuma Grade) one mile. Look for parking lot on right where the Pacific Crest Trail crosses the highway.

A MESSAGE FROM THE OC FIELD TRIP CHAIRS:
Our field trips are open to anyone, members and non-members, but we would prefer that you pre-register with your name, phone number, email, and the number of expected participants so that we can notify you in case of last-minute changes or cancellations. A few of the trips will require reservations due to limited space or access. These are clearly marked. Full information (at least what is available to date) is available on our website at http://www.occnps.org/. Click the field trip link at left.

How to contact us:
Pre-registration and information:
email Rich Schilk, birdGuy@naturalista.net
No email? Call Joan Hampton, (714) 283-9146

Saturday, March 15, 10:30AM
Santa Margarita River/De Luz  Leader: Tom Chester
The trail on the south bank of the Santa Margarita River may hold the record for the most native plant species of any trail in southern California. It has almost 200 native taxa in its 2.53 miles, thanks to its low elevation and number of habitats, including riparian habitat. In contrast, a typical trail would have only ~120. The trail is almost dead flat, and almost completely shaded, which is very unusual for such a low-elevation trail. It follows the railroad route carved in the 1880s that was San Diego’s attempt to be the terminus of the Intercontinental Railroad. We’ll see banks of ferns, Dudleys, fiesta flowers, and Jepsonia, with a strong-flowing river in view much of the time. Hopefully, we’ll get some 31 inch tall owl’s clover and the Venus looking-glass (Triodanis biflora) again this year. The first 1.45 miles burned in the 2002 Fallbrook fire, but has recovered nicely. For a plant trail guide go to http://tchester.org/fb/plants/guides/smr.html

Saturday, April 12: San Diego County
Leader: Fred Roberts
The destination for this trip is yet to be determined.

Full information on our trips (at least what is available to date) is available on our website at http://www.occnps.org/. Click the field trip link at the left.
In response to several emails I’ve received, here are some tips for those of you planning on going to abdsp soon.

For the baby annuals and most blooming plants, you can see those almost anyplace. although I took the panorama overlook trail, that was just because I’d been many times to other trails. If you haven’t done the Borrego Palm Canyon trail, or the Hellhole Canyon trail, I strongly recommend you do those first. They are much more beautiful, with many more plant habitats and thus a larger diversity of species, have flowing water along them, and have plant trail guides you can carry along, linked here: http://tchester.org/plants/lists/guides.html#ab

both can be accessed from the visitor center, which is on the southwest side of Borrego Springs, 1 mile west (left) of the first stop sign on $22 as you enter Borrego Springs coming down the Montezuma grade from Ranchita. There is a sign at that intersection directing you to the visitor center.

Note that if you drive to the Palm Canyon trailhead itself, you’ll have to pay $5 to park. Parking is free at the visitor center, and it is only a mile flat walk to the trailhead.

Pilostyles can be seen in many places in the badlands, which stretch for many miles on the east and southeast of Borrego Springs. My webpage on pilostyles gives a large-scale map with locations that shows how widespread it is in the badlands.

Font’s Point wash is 10.5 miles east on $22 from the visitor center intersection, at milepost 29.3. Simply park just off $22 at that point and walk in either direction to hunt for the host plants, and then check for the presence of pilostyles on them.

Inspiration Wash is the first signed wash just before Font’s point wash, and it also contains plants with pilostyles.

For those of you planning on going to see the pilostyles, I want to make sure you know how underwhelming these flowers are in the field. These are flowers only a serious botanist or photographer could love, which is, of course, part of the fun.

The flowers are LESS THAN 2 MM ( = 1/13 of an inch) in size; many of us have freckles on our skin that are larger. Unless you have very sharp eyes, you won’t even be able to see the difference between open flowers and closed flowers. all you can easily detect is that this year’s flowers are dark brown, whereas last year’s flower remnants are black. even that "aha! moment" took me several minutes the first time I studied these plants in 2005.

Furthermore, you in general won’t be able to get close to them to use a hand lens, since the other stems of the host plant get in the way. Please DO NOT break off any branches to "see the pilostyles better"! There simply are not many easily-accessible plants with pilostyles in bloom on them; leave them for your fellow botanists to enjoy. If I find broken-off branches on my

future visits to Font’s point this year, I will not ever send out such an email alert again.

You have to admit it is pretty pathetic when this year’s flowers don’t look much different from dried-up remnants of last year’s flowers. Even finding the host plant, Emory’s indigo-bush, Psorothamnus emoryi (= Dalea emoryi), is not a piece of cake. A lot of people might even walk by the host plant when it is in bloom, since its blooms are somewhat less than a spectacular show. Worse, there are vastly more plants of ambrosia dumosa and other species in these washes, and so it takes a while just to "tune in" to the host plant.

To give you a clear idea of just how small these flowers are, here is the bush with both the host plant and pilostyles in full bloom right now (the pix is from 2005, but it looks the same now): http://tchester.org/plants/analysis/pilostyles/pilostyles_1_25.jpg

Now, mentally take a typical mole from your skin, and possibly cut it into half or quarters depending on how big it is. (a typical mole might be 2-4 mm in diameter, so it is 1-2 times the size of these flowers.) then mentally glue the mole pieces to the twigs of the plant in the above pix that approximates well what you will see in the field in almost every respect.

You can tune your eyes by looking at the plants right next to the sign "Font’s Point wash". There are several host plants there WITHOUT pilostyles, so you can learn to recognize the host plant. They of course, have indigo-colored flowers. There is one now-dead plant that has pilostyles remnants on it, the closest one to $22. study that plant so you’ll know what you are looking for. Don’t touch the pilostyles remnants on that plant; they will fall off.

Of course, serious botanists, and serious photographers, love a challenge, so go to it! Just don’t bring along a non-botanist who actually expects to see beautiful pilostyles flowers, unless you can show them a much-enlarged picture taken by a good camera and completely amaze them.

Tom Chester

TECOCOLE CANYON WALKS

Sun Feb 3, 9 a.m. - 11:00 a.m.

Tecolote Canyon, meet at Tecolote Canyon Nature Center
Learn about the plants of this urban nature preserve. This walk is hosted the first Sunday of every month.

From I-5, exit Sea World Drive/Tecolote Road. East on Tecolote Road, past the cul-de-sac and onto the road/parking area for the ballfields. At the very end of the lot is the Nature Center.
LOCAL GRANT RECIPIENTS

CNPS (the state organization) gave $8,000 in graduate student research grants this year. Two San Diego State University students were among the successful applicants:

Kristen Hasenstab, student in Master of Science program at San Diego State University, wants to collect data with which to infer a phylogeny of members of the genus *Cryptantha*, with most of its species in the American southwest. She views the study as potentially providing information to revise classification of the group, with “special attention focused on rare and endangered species”. Of interest to many of us, she writes that preliminary study has shown that the genus *Amsinkia* “is actually embedded in the genus *Cryptantha*.”

Michael Silveira, San Diego SU Master’s student wants to work in the broader field of vernal pool ecology by focussing on the genus *Pogogyne*. He has narrowed his research to concentrate on this genus to study the evolutionary transition from a non-vernal pool habitat to a vernal pool habitat. Some species of the genus occur in such pools while others do not. [Two species in San Diego County vernal pools are federally listed.] DNA sequences of herabium material and from plants collected in the wild will be analyzed. Questions that may be addressed include the evolution of the genus, the vernal pool habitat, and management of vernal pools.

LOCAL PLANTS & PLACES

For our friends who enjoy the natural environment of San Diego County, there is a wonderful web site that has the great local nature films by Henry Shenkman:

http://naturebytesvideo.com

Included on the web site are videos of San Diego Audubon’s Silverwood Wildlife Sanctuary, the Sunset Cliffs Natural Park, and Famosa Slough. There are also videos on plants, animals and other fun stuff.

Here is link to Silverwood video which was filmed approximately 1998 (50th anniversary of SDAS):

http://naturebytesvideo.com/bytes_S-T/silverwood.html

Here is Sunset Cliffs video link, filmed approximately 2002:

http://naturebytesvideo.com/bytes_S-T/sunset_cliffs_nature_park.html

Here is link to Famosa Slough video, filmed in early 2002:

http://naturebytesvideo.com/bytes_D-F/famosa_slough.html

These films are especially fun to watch if you happen to know some of the volunteers and other folks who appear in them.

Jim & Barbara Peugh

Spring Native Plant Sale

At the Tree of Life Nursery, just north of San Diego
Saturday March 1
9 AM – 4 PM
33201 Ortega Highway, San Juan Capistrano
7 miles east of San Juan Capistrano on Ortega Highway
(Highway 74).

Enter at the green gate on the north side of highway.
For more information, contact Tree of Life Nursery
www.treeoflifenursery.com, or 949-728-0685

Books, posters, seeds and free advice will be available.

Free Talk at 11:00:
“Backyard Habitats with Native Plants”

CNPS members will be available to help you choose plants and to give free native plant gardening advice

Some of the proceeds benefit the San Diego Chapter of the California Native Plant Society
info@cnpssd.org
www.cnpssd.org

FALL EARLY PLANNING NOTE

Our Fall plant sale will be Sat. Oct 18th,
10am for members, 11am for the general public
Casa del Prado Courtyard, Balboa Park.

SUSTAINABLE LANDSCAPING

The American Society of Landscape Architects (ASLA), The University of Texas at Austin's Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center, and the United States Botanic Garden announced the development of a new rating system for sustainable landscape design, called the Sustainable Sites Initiative. The announcement took place at the 2007 ASLA EXPO in San Francisco, California.

Just as the U.S. Green Building Council's LEEDR rating system measures a building's environmental impact, the Sites Initiative will measure the sustainability of designed landscapes of all types, including public, commercial, and residential projects. The U.S. Green Building Council is lending its support to this project and plans to adopt the Sustainable Sites metrics into its LEEDR system once they are finished.
As Horticulture Outreach Coordinator at Rancho Santa Ana Botanic Garden, I receive many interesting questions about garden care for California native plants. In this article I will share a few of these questions and answers with you. If you have a question of your own, please email or phone me at rsabg.hortinfo@cgu.edu. (909) 624-0838.

Q: Do native plants require pruning?
Native plants do just fine in the wild without our helping hand. Often animals graze and nibble on branches, providing their own pruning services. Winds and rain remove much of the dead material from trees and shrubs.

In our gardens, though, we may prefer a neater look. This can be accomplished by selecting the correct sized plants for the space, and grooming plants at the right time of year. Regular grooming includes removing dead branches and stems, tipping back new growth, especially on young plants, deadheading spent flowers, and removing dormant stems from plants that grow from the ground each year.

Q: Are there general guidelines for when to prune native plants?
In general the best time to prune plants is after they have flowered but before they have put on a lot of new growth. For California lilac (Ceanothus species) and manzanita (Arctostaphylos species) this is especially important because late pruning removes buds for the next season's flowers-and what a shame to miss out on these spectacular displays.

For plants that produce desirable fruits and seeds, leave the spent flowers so they can go to seed. Examples of plants with colorful fruits are toyon (Heteromeles arbutifolia); barberry (Berberis or Mahonia species); madrone (Arbutus menziesii); and summer holly (Comarostaphylis diversifolia).

Be sure to leave some seeds for birds, insects and other critters you wish to attract to your habitat garden. Wild sage (Salvia species) blooms in spring, leaving interesting dried flowers that are an important source of food for birds through the summer. California buckwheat (Eriogonum fasciculatum) is another very important food source. It blooms in summer and yields attractive dried flowers with some seed for animals in the fall. Prune sage in the fall or winter when they are just beginning to leaf out again. The exact time varies with the weather. It was early this year due to an early rain and some cool weather in the fall. Buckwheat can be deadheaded in the winter, and usually requires little pruning.

Matilija poppies (Romneya coulteri) flower from spring to fall. Depending on how much water they get, they usually go dormant in late summer and fall. When the leaves are dying back, you can remove spent stems nearly to the ground. This keeps an otherwise messy winter plant looking good so that you can enjoy its spectacular flowers in the spring and summer. Place these large and ungainly plants in the back of your garden beds so they will not be a focal point when dormant.

Prune back bunch grasses at the end of their period of dormancy. For example, prune deer grass (Muhlenbergia rigens), a summer grower, in May or June, water it well, and provide a light application of fertilizer. The plant will spring back in about a week's time, looking lush and green. If you prune it during the fall or winter, while it is dormant, you will have to look at a sheered mound for several months.

Deciduous trees should be pruned lightly, as needed, when they are leafless and dormant. You will be able to direct your pruning best when the leaves are not present, and it is healthiest for most trees to be pruned when they are not actively growing. With all mature trees, it is best to consult a licensed arborist.

Coast live oaks (Quercus agrifolia), should be pruned only in summer months, when their growth rate has greatly slowed. If you prune at other times of the year you can promote excessive, off-season growth that is susceptible to mildew when it is hot. Pruning of mature trees should be restricted to removal of dead branches and the few that truly weaken the plant's structure, such as crossed branches. Removing dead branches, especially those dangerous to people or property, should be done when necessary. For all mature trees, very little live growth should be removed. In fact, many cities have strict regulations on tree pruning, particularly for heritage or native trees. They often require city permits and the services of licensed arborists, and they may limit the amount of pruning of live growth to 10% or less of the entire canopy. Be sure to consult with city officials before pruning any oak or other significant trees.

Barbara Eisenstein
Horticulture Outreach Coord. RSABG

Here is a list of tentative Rapid Assessment vegetation survey dates to be performed by the CNPS Vegetation Committee volunteers for the first part of the year (after that, surveys become more sporadic).

Locations to be announced (except for this month, which will be at Blossom Valley).

Please let me know if any of these dates conflict with other CNPS or related events, and we can try to reschedule if possible.

Surveys will typically take place on the 4th Saturday of the month from 9am to 2pm, unless there is a holiday around that weekend:
Sat. January 26th, Sat. February 23rd, Sat. March 22nd
Sat. April 26th,
Sat. May 17th (3rd weekend due to Memorial Day)
Sat. June 28th, Sat. July 26th
Lexine Schroeder
CNPS Vegetation Committee Co-chairperson
RARE PLANTS WORKSHOP

The CNPS Plant Science Training Program is pleased to present the workshop Rare Plants of Western San Diego County at the Buena Vista Audubon Nature Center, Oceanside March 4-6, Instructors: Fred Roberts and Michelle Balk
COST: $440 CNPS members; $450 non-members

Course Description: This course will focus on the identification and ecology of sensitive plants of the coast, foothills, and mountains of San Diego County.

Emphasis will be placed on endangered, threatened, and CNPS List 1 and 2 species. Key characters used in identifying easily-confused species will be presented, and specific distributions and habitat preferences will be discussed. Rare plant survey protocols, especially those developed by California Department of Fish and Game (CDFG) and the California Native Plant Society (CNPS), will also be examined in detail.

The course will include field trips to local rare plant populations to provide course participants with first-hand experience of sensitive plants of San Diego County.


We have designed the workshops to teach the skills and provide the tools necessary for conducting sound scientific surveys to protect California native plants and their habitats. Workshops are focused on improving survey skills and identification of rare plants, wetland plants, invasive exotics plants, and vegetation on a professional level.

Contact CNPS Training Coord., Josie Crawford, at (916) 447-2677 or email jcrawford@cnps.org.

WORKSHOP — GRAZING ON VERNAL POOL LANDS

Friday, February 8, 9am – 4pm;
Laguna Water Treatment Plant, Santa Rosa

Sotoyome Resource Conservation District presents a workshop for livestock producers, landowners, land managers, biologists, and others interested in grazing on vernal pool lands. The purpose of this workshop is to share information about how to make conservation grazing on these lands feasible and effective.

The day will include presentations by range management specialists and ecologists, a panel discussion with livestock producers and land managers, lunch, and field trips to local sites to illustrate grazing regimes currently used to manage vernal pool lands. For more information, contact: Joan Schwan, (707) 823-0446, schwanojo@sonoma.edu or Ruth Ark, (707) 569-1448 ext 103, rark@sotoyomercd.org

Suzanne Ullensvang
California Native Grasslands Association
530.759.8458, www.CNGA.org

WORKSHOP — GRAZING ON VERNAL POOL LANDS

WELCOME

NEW MEMBERS

Remember, membership in CNPS makes a great gift!

Suzanne Castle        Jessie Heinowitz
Anita Kaye            Grace Kirkland
Lisa Oliveres         Michelle Picket
Miriam Soto

Mary Kelly
Membership Chair

Upcoming Sage Advice Workshops:

**Please note that the usual TIME has changed for our workshops!!**

February 9, 9:30 AM
Landscaping your slope with native plants

March 8, 9:30 AM
TLC for your native landscape

April 12, 9:30 AM
Butterflies

May 10, (day before Mother’s day) – 9:30 AM
Create-Your-Own Container

For more details about any of these workshops and other events at TOLN, www.treeoflifenursery.com

Copy submissions are due by the first of the month prior to month of publication. (for example, copy for inclusion in the July issue must be received by June 1).

Send copy submittals to: newsletter@cnpssd.org

CNPS Newsletter is published 10 times per year. Chapter dues include a subscription to the chapter newsletter.
Dedicated to the Preservation of the Native Flora

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 through its local chapters, seeks to increase understanding of California's native flora and to preserve this rich resource for future generations. Membership is open to all.

Membership includes informative publications, free field trips and monthly programs and discounts on books and posters. Also included are *Fremontia*, a quarterly journal with articles on all aspects of native plants, the *Bulletin*, a quarterly statewide report of activities and schedules, and the chapter newsletter. Please call the membership chairperson for more information.

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

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PUBLICITY & LIBRARIAN  Please contact any board member if interested in any of these positions

NOTE: For newsletter mailing label issues contact Jim Harrison
at newsletter@cnpssd.org or (858) 273-5242