



The Cypress Cone

The newsletter of the California Native Plant Society
SANTA CRUZ COUNTY CHAPTER

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Great Response to 2007 Plant Sales

The spring and fall plant sales put on by our Santa Cruz chapter were exceptionally well attended and net a total of approximately \$7,700. Weather, which brought us the very cold week last January as well as the dry late summer and fall, may have been a factor. But we also like to think that the message that fall is the best time to plant natives may be reaching more people. Whatever the reason, the plants walked out the gate in very short order. As always, most of the plants were grown by the Propagation team led by Denise Polk and Mike Luther. The turn-out has been big lately, with ten or more members showing up regularly. As many of you know, our chapter is the only one in the state that propagates most of the plants for the sales. This lowers our overhead and helps our profits.

Looking ahead to the April sale, we have just spent two sessions dividing and repotting the Douglas iris, and most should be in bloom. Sources of the iris are as close as Highway 9 in Felton. How can you fault folks for getting excited about iris, bulbs, and flowering *Ribes*, among the joys of spring?

Karen Hildebrand

2007 Conservation Conference Proceedings Now Available

The state CNPS Conservation Conference took place at the UCSC Arboretum this past September. The proceedings of this day-long event are now available online:

<http://cnps.org/cnps/conservation/conference/2007/index.php>

Many of the presentations given at the conference are included. The conference topics covered Partnerships in Plant Conservation, Genetic Pollution and the Use of Native Plants in Restoration and Landscaping, and Chaparral and Fire Management.

Local presenters included Angel Guerzon on halting horticultural use of invasive species, and Jodi McGraw on the efforts to save the habitat of the Zayante Sandhills.

Chapter General Meeting

January 14, 2008
7:30 pm

• UCSC Arboretum Horticulture Building •

A Potpourri of Eastern California Plants & Places

Aaron Schusteff

Aaron will share photos of many botanical beauties from portions of the montane and trans-montane parts of our diverse state. There will be plenty of floral treats, ranging from Asteraceae to Zygophyllaceae. A number of special locales will be visited, starting in the Sierra Nevada, and moving east and south to the Mojave Desert. This will be a chance to enjoy *Hulsea algida* without huffing and puffing to the alpine crest, and *Salvia mohavensis* without baking in the June heat of the desert! There may even be some vertebrates and invertebrates thrown in for a bit of biological balance.

Aaron Schusteff was born in Chicago, and moved west to Tucson at five years old, at which point, his world changed from black and white to technicolor. He has had a lifelong love of mountains, deserts, and nature. In 1998, after spending too many years indoors studying and teaching Mathematics, Aaron immersed himself in a passion for field botany. This provided a richly fulfilling experience of beauty and fascination, and a good excuse to spend lots more time out in the wild! Aaron's study of botany began with evening classes taught by Glenn Keator at the California Academy of Sciences, and has been immensely enriched by countless CNPS field trips and members.

Come join us and help keep the flame of floriferous faith alive during the short, cold, winter days of January. Share your wonder and comments, and perhaps get some ideas for new places to visit and plants to look for this coming spring.

Many of Aaron's plant photos can be viewed on the Cal Photos website at: www.calphotos.berkeley.edu

Very Important: Please note the change in venue.

Seen Any Spring Wildflowers Lately?

How could that be – we’ve just gotten into winter!

Regardless of the date, some plants are acting as if it is early spring. In late December some newly flowering Henderson’s shooting stars (*Dodecatheon hendersonii*) were noticed in Napa. Some of the blossoms had already faded! This was several weeks earlier than they’d been seen before at that location. The speculation is that the rains in mid-autumn and a stretch of relatively dry weather since then might have triggered the early bloom.



Roger Raiche

Similar eagerness to blossom might be occurring in our area as well, so keep an eye (or two) on the lookout.

Be sure to check the field trips section of our website for field trips or other events which might have missed this issue’s deadline.

Touring the Challenged Pajaro River

By Kris Houser

Five adventurous CNPS members were treated to a private tour of the Pajaro River in Watsonville on Sunday, Nov. 18, 2007. Our leaders were members of the Sierra Club’s Pajaro River Watershed Committee: Lois Robin, Kenn Reiller, and Patricia Matejcek. In addition,

landowner Mark Farris escorted us on our first stop, his riverside property at the confluence of Salsipuedes Creek and the Pajaro River.

As we leapfrogged our cars along the north side of the levee, we visited several problem spots up close & personal. On Salsipuedes Creek, we saw City-owned riverfront that had neither been cleared nor reconstructed, and thus has some mature riparian habitat. But it is also the site of a semi permanent homeless encampment. The riverbank opposite the riparian/encampment area has been cleared in the past and is now heavily eroded and infested with nonnative invasive species.

We were impressed with the beauty and potential of some areas on the river – for example, a charming meadow where several old apple trees (left inside the levees when the Army Corps of Engineers completed the project many years ago) were now laden with fragrant late-season fruit (delicious!). The trees grow in a meadow on the riverbank where Patrick Orozco, local Ohlone leader, has built a native Californian structure and fire ring on Mark Farris’s land.

We learned quite a bit about erosion, flood management, and habitat restoration on rivers. For example, we learned that culverts ought to be attached to sediment basins, that trees planted along the river can serve as “tax-free bank protection,” and that a river flowing around an impediment will gain velocity and so will drop less sediment. Sandbar willows grow along the low flow channel of the river and serve to hold it in place. Many ideas were planted in our heads that day.

Later, we bravely walked across the old RR bridge on Thurwachter Drive; which gave us a view of the river far below us as it divides Watsonville from the little town of Pajaro. When we had walked halfway across the bridge, the sound of a train whistle echoed from the south. At first we didn’t know whether to turn back or to go ahead. But without much ado, we all started running ahead (toward the train whistle). Was this suicide? We were willing to gamble that we could reach the end of the bridge on the Monterey side of the river before the train could reach the bridge. And I for one did not want to turn my back on an approaching train. Our decision was correct – the train was actually moving south, away from the river, so we were safe.

Then we took a little walking tour of the riverfront in the town of Pajaro as we walked up to and over the Main Street Bridge. We were more than a little uneasy about some of the locals who frequented the river there on unofficial paths into the trees. We enjoyed the artwork along the pedestrian lane on Main Street Bridge, which celebrated the culture and agriculture of the Pajaro River

Valley. Once on the Watsonville side, we could find no way back to the river except to walk about half a mile on city alleys and streets to where we parked our cars.

One important thing we learned that day is that the Main Street Bridge is a restrictive point on the Pajaro River. This restriction or funnel effect probably contributed significantly to the flooding of the town of Pajaro in the late 90's. This funnel effect needs to be anticipated, and preventive measures need to be implemented.

In 2006, the Pajaro River was named one of the ten "most endangered" rivers in the US by the American Rivers organization. The Pajaro River is in urgent need of restoration. In 2008, momentous things will happen for the Pajaro River. The long-awaited flood management plan is expected from the Army Corps of Engineers. CNPS will try to find a way to participate in the rehabilitation of this embattled river.



Redwood Education

by Fred Mc Pherson

For several years I have been reviewing and contributing information to a publication about Redwood Education being compiled by Michael Roa. Finally, the materials have been published and are now available for use. I think that this publication may be of interest to many of our chapter members and hopefully very useful to some. The full name of this new publication is *Redwood Ed: A Guide to the Coast Redwoods for Teachers and Learners*. It is being published by the Stewards of the Coast and Redwoods along with California State Parks. It is a 430-page resource for teachers, docents, parents, youth group leaders, naturalists, and anybody else who wants to learn about the coast redwood community and help others learn about the redwoods. It is a useful, easy to use and understand educational guide for the redwood region, from southern Oregon to Big Sur.

In one document, Redwood Ed provides the user with:

- Information on the human history of the coast redwood region;
- Information on basic scientific principles (sort of a review of high school science);

- Information on the science particular to the coast redwood ecosystem;
- Information on how to set up and conduct a field trip to a redwood park;
- Lessons and activities for before, during, and after a park visit with references to California State Curriculum Content Standards for grades four through seven as well as the California Environmental Principles and Concepts; and
- Up-to-date resources and contact lists.

Teachers or others leading groups on field trips to the coast redwoods may copy all or part of Redwood Ed for use in their classes or with their field groups. A compact disc of Redwood Ed can be obtained by contacting California State Parks' Interpretive and Education Division at P. O. Box 942896, Sacramento, CA 94296-0001. A free on-line version can be obtained at www.stewardsofthecoastandredwoods.org. A coil-bound print copy is available from Stewards of the Coast and Redwoods for \$15 or a 3-hole punched print copy for \$10 (see their website for details).

Please pass this information on to any redwood educators you know who might find it of interest and use. Thanks.

Habitat Restoration Team

We are a volunteer group working to restore native habitat in the parks and protected lands in Santa Cruz County. Our program provides an opportunity for people to learn about the natural systems that surround them while helping to restore special and wild places. No prior work experience is necessary, just show up at the park. We welcome individual volunteers from 8 to 80 years, as well as special group projects. Wear comfortable layered clothing, bring something to drink, and lots of enthusiasm! We work rain or shine, but if things get particularly unpleasant, we call it a day. Tools provided; bring gloves.

Contact: Program Leader, Linda Brodman 831.462.4041, redwdrn@pacbell.net

January 5, 2008 10 am to 1 pm
Twin Lakes State Park

January 26, 2008 10 am to 1 pm
Quail Hollow Ranch County Park

February 16, 2008 10 am to 1 pm
Quail Hollow Ranch County Park

Join the California Native Plant Society!

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: ____ Zip: _____

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Chapter (County) Affiliation: _____

Please make your check payable to CNPS and send to: Membership Chair, CNPS, 2707 K Street, Suite 1, Sacramento, CA 95816

- Student/Limited Income \$25
- Individual \$45
- Family, Group or Library \$75
- Plant Lover \$100
- Patron \$300
- Benefactor \$600
- Mariposa Lily \$1500

All dues and gifts to CNPS are tax deductible.



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CNPS is a non-profit organization dedicated to the preservation of California native flora. CNPS has 31 chapters throughout the state and membership is open to all persons – professional and amateur — with an interest in California's native plants. Members have diverse interests including natural history, botany, ecology, conservation, photography, drawing, hiking, and gardening. Your membership includes *Fremontia*, a quarterly journal with articles on all aspects of native plants; the *Bulletin*, a statewide report of activities and schedules; and the *Cypress Cone*.



California Native Plant Society Santa Cruz County Chapter

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