



The Cypress Cone

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

Volume 32, No 2

www.cruzcnp.org

March - April 2007

Springtime in Santa Cruz

The coming of star lilies and shooting stars hints of the arrival of spring. And rain, at least this year. Of course, those early flowers also predict that the Spring Plant Sale will soon be here - on April 21, no less!

Our Field Trip coordinator has organized a bounty of delightful outings to enjoy wildflower displays and explore of some of our distinctive local habitats. Special areas abound nearby, and if there are some which you haven't seen please check out the field trips and acquaint yourself with a new place.

Spring Plant Sale at the Arboretum Eucalyptus Grove Sat April 21

10:00 - 12:00 noon CNPS & Arboretum members

12:00 - 4:00 pm Public

Once again our chapter will be joining the UCSC Arboretum in our Spring Plant Sale. You can turn your garden into a spring flower display by selecting from an array of annuals in a rainbow of colors. Both native and hybrid irises will also be available, along with manzanitas, ceanothus and more. Wondering what to plant and how to care for it? Experts will be on hand to answer all your questions. While you're there check out the books and posters too. Come out to the sale to buy, learn, meet other CNPS members, and find out what programs the chapter has to offer.

If you would like to help with the behind-the-scenes activities, (e.g transporting plants, cashier, ...) call Karen Hildebrand at 426-1172.

Publicity Position Open

Our very capable Abbie Blair is stepping down from her position as publicist for the Chapter. She has been doing a wonderful job and we thank her immensely. We're now looking for a new volunteer to help spread the word about field trips, plant sales, and other chapter events. Please contact Brett Hall <brett@ucsc.edu> for more info.

Santa Cruz Sunflower Video Available

One of our local specialties is the Santa Cruz Sunflower, *Holocarpha macradenia*, the subject of Dr. Grey Hayes talk at our January meeting. A video of the presentation was broadcast in February. A variety of local elected and staff governmental officials were given DVD copies to help spread the word about the special nature of the species and its fragile hold in Arana Gulch. DVD and QuickTime versions are also available where needed. Contact cnp@koester.com if you'd like a copy.

General Meeting & Presentation

Shrubby Treasures of California

Speaker: Nevin Smith

**Cosponsored by CNPS and
the UCSC Arboretum**

**Monday March 12, 2007
6:30 pm potluck; 7:30 pm lecture**

*** UCSC Arboretum Horticulture Building ***

Nevin Smith will give us his personal account of the sheer joy of prowling the California wilds, of some of their most enchanting shrubby plant inhabitants, and of what can happen when one attempts to bring them into cultivation and commerce. Some of his favorite native plants will be used to illustrate these points, and more.

While growing up in the hills of Sonoma County, Nevin explored its habitats whenever he got the chance. You could say the plants grew on him and so did his love of everything else in the native landscape. Working summers in his father's nursery, Nevin enjoyed it, but vowed to try something different. He followed a university path in political science, culminating with a Bachelor's at UC Berkeley and a Master's at Johns Hopkins School of Advanced International Studies in DC.

Returning to California in 1970, he worked at the old nursery just for the summer, and serendipitously, life as a nurseryman. Over the years, Smith developed a general interest in unusual plants and a more specific interest in natives while traveling, eventually launching what has become a career in introducing new and forgotten plants to California gardeners.

Nevin has managed and owned local nurseries, and is currently the Director of Horticulture at Suncrest Nurseries in Watsonville. He authored *Native Treasures: Gardening with the Plants of California*, (published in 2006 by UC Press), a descriptive and pragmatic guide, yet full of personal musings on the diversity and beauty of California's flora.

*** Important: Please note the change in venue ***

The UCSC Arboretum is on the west side of campus. Take High Street west of its intersection with Bay Street and head uphill about 1/2 mile. The entrance to the Arboretum will be on the right. If you reach the West Entrance to the campus, you've gone too far.

An Important Victory for Protecting the Robust Spineflower in the City of Santa Cruz

By Vince Cheap, Conservation Committee Chair

CNPS has had an important victory in its efforts to protect a federally endangered robust spineflower population that has its home in the City of Santa Cruz in an open sandy area bordered by Branciforte Creek on the west and Highway One on the south. With the expert help of attorney Bill Parkin commenting on our behalf we have forced the City of Santa Cruz to recirculate a revised alternatives section for the proposed Branciforte Creek Residential Development Final EIR. This Project will surround and impact the Branciforte Creek spineflower population with 44 housing units on 6.3 acres of the total 9.3-acre site. The legal basis for this recirculation was the Project's fatal flaw of not including any real alternatives that were environmentally superior to the proposed project. Specifically, the Project was proposing to protect the spineflower within a 2.6 acre privately owned open space parcel but was allowing only a 30 foot buffer from the housing units. All the available published peer reviewed data, draft EIR comments from US Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) and the opinions of most local spineflower experts clearly state that the only way to provide moderate protection from residential impacts is to incorporate an 80 foot buffer along with a scientifically based habitat management plan. The City has chosen to disregard the best science and instead put forward a theory to rationalize a 30-foot buffer that lacks any peer review or FWS support. The new Alternative 1 provides a plan with 80 foot buffers removing 14 units and portions of roadway; but it lacks a clear map of what the project will look like, especially new grading limits. CNPS will have to see more complete map analysis before we can support Alternative 1. To build these houses on such sandy soils the developer needs to excavate over 2500 cubic yards and import nearly 5300 cubic yards. Such massive grading impacts are potential significant threats to the spineflower and appear to lack adequate analysis and

mitigation in the DEIR or the recirculated alternatives section. Even with this new 80-foot buffer alternative the City may well approve the developer's preferred plan using 30-foot buffers. I will be consulting with my conservation committee, my Board and legal counsel to see how CNPS can best respond/comment to the revised alternatives. The public comment period for the new alternatives section will close on March 29. The City is required to respond to public comments but only on the new alternatives section.

Since the majority of CNPS's comments on the Draft EIR have not had adequate responses this project still remains a very dangerous threat to the long-term survival of the spineflower. Questions remain about what the specific spineflower habitat management plan will be, what third party will implement and oversee the plan and how it will be funded. CNPS expects developers to try to make maximum profit and we would expect in turn that the City as the regulatory/lead agency uphold protections as defined by the best available peer reviewed data. This Branciforte Creek development may be an example of the City's need for housing being considered more important than its responsibility to protect the rare biotic heritage within its jurisdiction.

The next scheduled hearing in the City approval process is the Planning Commission meeting on April 5. At the last Planning meeting there was a small group of neighbors, CNPS members, a plant scientist and Sierra Club members all in attendance to voice their concerns about the different threats posed by this project. Come, be a part of rare plant protection and democracy in action.

Thanks for CNPS Board and Chapter support, especially the funds to retain attorney Bill Parkin. His expertise and support of CNPS goals has been key to our success.

Victory in Bio-Engineered Bentgrass Case

The September issue of *The Cypress Cone* mentioned that an unapproved variety of a genetically engineered creeping bentgrass had been found growing in the wild. On February 2nd the U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia ruled that the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) failed to enforce rules governing the cultivation of this herbicide-resistant bentgrass. The USDA improperly waived environmental assessments under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and failed to assess the potential for bentgrass to become a noxious weed, as required by the Plant Protection Act. Bentgrass in Oregon test plots interbred with wild grasses and established colonies of hybrid plants that carried engineered genes up to 9,800 feet beyond the 900-foot containment recommended by the USDA. The ruling eliminates the USDA's current practice of waiving environmental assessments of experimental engineered crops. NEPA is one of the laws we depend on, and we're glad it received support by the Court.

CNPS Chapter Council Meeting: If It's September It Must Be Santa Cruz

The Santa Cruz Chapter will be hosting the quarterly CNPS Chapter Council meeting taking place this September, from Friday the 9th through Sunday the 11th.

The Chapter Council is the body responsible for setting the goals and policies of CNPS. Members of the local Chapter Boards from all over the state will come here to meet in conferences as well as explore our area.

It is a great opportunity to meet a plant aficionado from another part of the state. If you might like to offer a spare room for a visitor or two, please give Peggy Waters a call at 336-9283.

UCSC Arboretum Workshops

Introduction to the Salicaceae of California: Cottonwoods and Willows

John Bair

Saturday May 12, 9-5 pm at UCSC Arboretum
Sunday May 13, 9-2(5) mostly in the field

The willow family is one of the most important flowering plant families in the state of California and contains two genera *Populus* and *Salix* (cottonwoods and willows respectively). Cottonwoods and willows are found throughout the state at many elevations and within all bioregions. The cosmopolitan nature of this family and its place as the canopy dominant within most riparian systems make it a “must know” family that every field botanist should have familiarity. The morphological plasticity of the group makes it a challenge to learn and identify many members of this family- this workshop is your ticket to a greater personal understanding of this complex group. Almost 1/3 of all North American willow species can be found in California. This workshop will cover all native members of the genus *Populus* that can be found in the state and introduce students to almost all of the species of *Salix* found in California. The goal of the workshop is to instill confidence in students regarding critical characteristics used in the Jepson keys. The workshop will begin with a brief presentation focusing on the taxonomy, geographic distribution and key identification characteristics. Fresh cottonwoods and willows material will be available to illustrate the variety of vegetative and flowering characteristics used in the Jepson keys. Special emphasis will be placed on willow species commonly found in northern and central western California. All experience levels are encouraged to participate. We will use the Keys in Jepson extensively. Additionally, the instructor will provide some helpful corrections and updates to the Jepson key.

Participants should bring hand lens dissection equipment, including extra-fine forceps; a Jepson Manual, lunch and water. Further details will be sent out in mid April.

Registration is \$100 for CNPS or Arboretum members and \$120 for non-members.

For more information contact Brett Hall brett@ucsc.edu or Ellen Holmes ellen@centralcoastwilds.com.

To register, call the UCSC Arboretum main office at (831) 427-2998. Credit Cards are accepted. There is no online registration at this time.

(Be forewarned – John Bair’s enthusiastic appreciation of Willows may be infectious! – Ellen)

Identifying Dudleya in the Field Stephen McCabe and Brett Hall

Santa Cruz, Monterey, and Santa Clara Counties.
Friday, June 1, 2-6 pm
Saturday, June 2, 9 am-5 pm, returning to starting point about 7pm.

The class will coincide with the blooming period for many *Dudleya*s and several kinds of early summer blooming wildflowers. Using the brand-new key to the genus, plants in the wild, and plants in cultivation, we will learn tips for more easily identifying those plants that can be keyed. Hiking will be easy and relatively minimal, and there are no fitness requirements. Friday class will be at the Arboretum, where the largest collection of *Dudleya* is housed, and the Saturday class will be all in the field, with much time spent along the spectacular Big Sur coast.

Instructor: Stephen McCabe is coordinator of research and education at the Arboretum. Brett Hall is Arboretum Director of Horticulture (as well as our Chapter President), and will assist. Participants receive a potted *Dudleya* and a copy of the new key. Bring water, a bag lunch, comfortable shoes, and sunscreen.

Registration is \$100 for CNPS or Arboretum members; \$120 general public. Call (831-427-2998) to sign up. Limited to 18 participants.



Spring 2007 Field Trips

Please check the website for additional trips and updates:
<http://www.cruzcnp.org>

As I write this in early February, we are all wondering what surprises Mother Nature has in store for us this year. After one of the coldest and driest Januaries on record, it is finally starting to rain, and it's still unclear whether the weather pattern will help or hinder the wildflower displays yet to come. We are grateful for the talented field trip leaders who are offering to lead hikes now, not knowing what kind of spring will arrive. In their experienced hands, our precious wildlands will come to life for you, even if you are not immediately dazzled by the flowers. Sometimes a small floral detail, or an ecological footnote will be the thing that shines out at the end of the day, providing a new window into the easily overlooked complexity of our home on planet Earth. – Ellen

Ceanothus at Seacliff with/ Angel Guerzon Saturday March 17, 10-noon

We'll examine the use of Ceanothus in public landscaping with local horticultural consultant and garden designer Angel Guerzon. If you could use some help sorting out some of the myriad cultivars of the gorgeous Wild Lilacs, come on down to the beach! Do you wonder how much of your garden will be taken over in 5-10 years by Ceanothus 'Dark Star' or 'Snowball'? At the Seacliff State Beach entrance you can see numerous varieties of mature specimens, which should be in heavenly-scented bloom, and if Angel can't make a good guess as to their origin, probably no one can!

Meet at 10 AM at Seacliff State Beach (site of the Concrete Boat aka "Cement Ship").

Take State Park exit off of Hwy 1 (between the Park Ave. exit and the Rio Del Mar exit)

Head towards the beach. Go over the RR tracks. There is free parking just to the left of the park entrance on the corner of State Park and California, where we'll meet. If you get lost call (831) 212-8359 for guidance.

Sunset State Beach with Tim Hyland Saturday, March 24, 10am-2pm

The beaches of Santa Cruz once contained a remarkable array of plants especially adapted for life at the exposed edge of the continent. Much habitat has been lost to development, agriculture, and invasive weeds. Tim will show us one of the sites where State Parks has been burning invasive dunegrass and watching the natives spring back to life. Our 2-mile mosey will include foredunes, wetland, and the reardune, home to the only rare sand gilia in Santa Cruz County. We'll visit the hopefully extirpated veldtgrass site, and see the largest population of *Chorizanthe robusta robusta* in the world. Birds abound, so bring your binoculars as well as hand lens and lunch! At the beach entrance, let the kiosk operator know you're there for "the CNPS fieldtrip", then head down to the south end of the lower day use parking area. A scenic lunch stop is included. Tim, 831-359-3722

Byrne Forest with Julie Anne Delgado Sunday March 25, 10am-2pm ish

The Land Trust's Byrne Forest is located just north of Corralitos. We will meet at the Corralitos Market at 9:30 a.m., but please try to carpool from your home. The hike is

moderately strenuous to easy, with an elevation gain of approximately 500 feet and 3-4 miles in length. Expect to enjoy redwoods and mixed forest with a diverse under story, wonderful vistas, and other interesting surprises along the way. Bring snacks, water, adequate hiking boots, sun block, and layered clothing and watch your step for banana slugs and salamanders. This is a great trip for birders as well. Trip leaders, Julie Anne and Jeff. Please contact Julie Anne to sign up, well ahead of time at julianne@cruzio.com or 831 566-6012.

Fort Ord Early Spring Wildflowers Sunday March 25, 9am-4pm

Ready for a 6-9 mile hike? Enjoy the diversity of vistas, crisp air, and incredible variety of wildflowers found in the oak woodlands, maritime chaparral, coastal grasslands, and wetlands across Fort Ord Public Land. Not yet peak of spring wildflower season so we will cover lots of ground on foot, stopping along the way to enjoy the early beauties in bloom. We'll discuss rare plants and animals, plant communities, soils, habitat restoration, fire ecology, and feral pigs. Indulge ourselves and get to know Fort Ord's sights, sounds and spring aromas. Meet 9am at the Thrift Store parking lot inside the Fort Ord main entrance off Hwy. 1. Bring water, weather protection, lunch, and wear good walking shoes. Call Bruce at 394-8314 or 277-7690 or email him at bdelgado@blm.gov or bdelgado@mbay.net.

Bonny Doon Sandhills with Casey Stewman Saturday March 31, 10:30-12:00ish

Vegetation ecologist Casey Stewman will lead a spring wildflower and sandhill natural history walk at the Bonny Doon Ecological Reserve. One of the ecological crown jewels of the central coast, this DFG reserve supports numerous endemic species such as *Chorizanthe pungens* var. *hartwegiana*, *Arctostaphylos andersonii*, *Arctostaphylos silvicola*, and the Ben Lomond wallflower. Meet at 10:30 AM with hiking boots, water and bag lunch at the volunteer fire dept. parking lot on Martin Rd. Hike will last about 1.5 -2 hrs. Due to the fragile habitat, you must RSVP: 831- 331-8947 or gentiana43@sbcglobal.net to reserve a spot.

Pinnacles National Monument with Sharon Franklet and friends

Tentative Dates: STAY AS YOU MAY from Thursday April 5 through Sunday April 8.

Join us for a "bioblitz" at Pinnacles National Monument as we do rapid vegetation surveys of key areas on newly acquired lands for which we have no baseline vegetation information. Staff from multiple NPS parks as well as other agencies will be here. We plan on good company and a good time! Refreshments provided. Tentative Dates: STAY AS YOU MAY from Thursday April 5 through Sunday April 8. Please contact Sharon Franklet at 831-389-4485 x 259 or sharon_franklet@nps.gov.

Pacific Grove Museum of Natural History's 46th Annual Wildflower Show

Friday, Saturday. & Sunday April 13-15

Don't miss this outrageous display at the Museum, corner of

Forest and Central (648-3116) in Pacific Grove. Countless volunteer hours will provide you with a sensual and intellectual overload, as you realize there are approximately 600 species of flowers, labeled and organized by family. Go Friday for freshest scents!

Peak of Spring Wildflower Tour of Fort Ord

Saturday April 21, 9am-2pm

We will visit the best of wildflower displays that were discovered earlier while scouting for specimens for the previous weekend's Wildflower Show. We will drive and hike short distances into recently burned areas and various glorious plant communities. Clovers, phacelias, popcorn flowers, sunflowers, paintbrushes, wild carrots, evening primroses, flowering shrubs, and miniscule floral treasures abound! Meet 9am at the Thrift Store parking lot inside the Fort Ord main entrance off Hwy. 1. Bring water, weather protection, lunch, and wear good walking shoes. Call Bruce at 394-8314 or 277-7690 or email him at bdelgado@blm.gov or bdelgado@mbay.net.

Glenwood Preserve, with Julie Anne Delgado

Saturday April 21, 9:30am -1:00pm (or longer if we want)

This hike will be easy to moderate, and the distance is not very long – maybe 2 meandering miles. We will explore the Preserve on both sides of Glenwood Drive and see what wildflowers emerge this year. The Preserve is home to several rare species – come and learn which ones! Also, the Preserve is not open to the public at this point in time so this is a great opportunity provided by Scotts Valley City to visit the site. Bring your binoculars – the birding can be spectacular – and snacks, water, adequate hiking boots, sun block, and layered clothing Trip leaders: Julie Anne and Randy. Contact Julie Anne to get directions and meeting location, julieanne@cruzio.com or 831 566-6012.

Saturday May 5, 11am-1:30pm

Bonny Doon Ecological Reserve with Val Haley

The Santa Cruz Sandhills support some of the rarest natural communities in the world. And who better to show you their splendors than Val Haley, who has dedicated much of her life to their exploration and restoration! On this moderate 2-mile hike, Val will discuss the ecology and geology of the area, as well as pointing out such rarities such as *Chorizanthe pungens* var. *hartwegiana*, *Arctostaphylos andersonii*, and *A. silvicola*, and the lovely curly-leaved monardellas and Ben Lomond wallflowers. When was the last time you saw Western Burning Bush or Labrador Tea? (which tells you she may wander off the sandhills towards the creek). Hike is limited to 15 people. You must contact Val to reserve a spot: 831-425-0687 or vegnet@cruzio.com. Bring sun protection, water, snack, etc. Meet at the fire station on Martin Rd in Bonny Doon.

Bonny Doon Ecological Reserve with Val Haley

Saturday May 19, 11am-1:30pm

See description Saturday May 5

Año Nuevo Point with Suzanne Schettler

Saturday May 26, 9 AM (Santa Cruz) or 10 AM (Año Nuevo) to mid-afternoon

Año Nuevo Point is an almost magical place, home to thousands of elephant seals during the winter and one of the world's three natural populations of Monterey pine. It's a place of change.

We'll see native vegetation returning where Brussels sprouts grew until 1971, and then see sand dunes that are disappearing near the point. The walk out to the point is about a 3 mile round trip, more or less flat, on an improved trail. Parking at the reserve is \$6 per car – a good reason to meet in front of Office Max on River Street at 9 AM for no-host carpooling. We'll gather at the Año Nuevo parking lot at 10. Bring lunch, water, layered clothing, good walking shoes, and prepare for sun and wind. Suzanne Schettler, 336-1745.

Fort Ord Vernal Pools with Bruce Delgado

Saturday May 26, 9am-1pm

We'll focus during several short hikes on rare wetland flowers such as the endangered Contra Costa goldfields and the always beautiful Johnny Nip (*Castilleja ambigua* ssp. *Insalutata*, a wetland relative to the Indian paintbrushes), brownie thistle, ladies tresses. We'll also enjoy flowers between the pools such as early rein orchids and other late spring wildflowers such as the beautiful virgate *Eriastrum* and what will likely be many surprises. Meet 9am at the Thrift Store parking lot inside the Fort Ord main entrance off Hwy. 1. When was the last time you cavorted around mima mounds? Bring water, weather protection, lunch, and wear good walking shoes. Call Bruce at 394-8314 or 277-7690 or email him at bdelgado@blm.gov or bdelgado@mbay.net.

Bonny Doon Ecological Reserve with Val Haley

Saturday June 9, 11am-1:30pm

See description Saturday May 5

Habitat Restoration Team Events

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 bprovided; bring gloves.

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

March 4, 2007 10 am to 1 pm–Sunday!
Moore Creek Preserve
Special joint project with Trailworkers.com

March 17, 2007 10 am to 1 pm
Quail Hollow Ranch County Park

April 7, 2007 10 am to 1 pm
Sunset Beach State Park

April 21, 2007 10 am to 1 pm
Natural Bridges State Park

Join the California Native Plant Society!

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

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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Vegetation: Casey Stewman

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Publicity/Outreach: open

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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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