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CALIFORNIA NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY ALTA PEAK CHAPTER NEWSLETTER

Please send changes of address to Membership Chair, Janet Fanning,
41118 Blossom Dr., Three Rivers, CA 93271

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Joan Stewart

Grass Posters

At long last our beautiful Grass posters are available to chapters...the approximately 12" X 18" posters are of four designs; three are of Native Grasses, and one is of Non-native Grasses. There is different information about grasses on the backs: grass anatomy, general biology of grasses, California's native grasslands, and effects of invasive non-native species. One each of the four designs are assembled in a clear plastic sleeve, and sold as a set. Janet Fanning has our chapter's supply and they will be available at the CNPS meeting in Springville on Friday, May 20 along with the spring and Sierra posters, or you can call her at 561-3461. Laminated sets, possibly useful as place mats, are also available.

Springville Area Flowers

You don't need to drive out of your way, or even leave your car to see one of this springtime's more spectacular flower fields. Driving west on Hwy 190, on the right side of the road across from the golf course, see the field of creamy-white Calochortus/Mariposa lilies. These were here last year also, but fewer, less noticeable. Most are on the other side of the barbed wire fence, but you can picture in your mind what they would look like up close. All mariposa lilies have lines, or patches, of hairs inside the petals, associated with glandular spots or lines. Look for other species wherever you hike in coming weeks, and try to see the differences in color, and patterns inside the petal cups. The now-blooming Fairy Lantern and Globe Lily, are also Calochortus but ones where the flowers hang over rather than turning upwards, and the petals are two shades of lighter/darker purple.

May Day at Circle J

The walk at Circle J Ranch with Nancy Bruce on May Day, Sunday, May 1, left the 12 of us, who took a chance on a rainy afternoon, speechless. To say something new or different about the hillsides of color, or to elaborate on the many different colors, shapes, clusters, expanses...! Suffice it to say that this indeed has been a most amazing springtime!! Several of us continued on to the Hohnstein place, adjacent to Circle J, to see Scutellaria, or Narrowleaf Skullcap which is rare in California, more of what the Circle J had provided, plus several plants not seen earlier in the afternoon.

Thanks to Nancy (and the Tulare County Dept. of Education), and to Gary, for sharing.

Calendar of Events - May-August

To headline our Calendar, we start with the May 20 Muir-to-Monument program, by Michael Kunz. More publicity will be appearing locally. Put the date on your calendars and invite friends, neighbors, and anyone who has thought about how our Tulare County Giant Sequoia heritage came to be known and valued.

Dr. Kunz attended high school and COS in Visalia, then transferred to U.C. Davis where his graduate work focused on Sierra vegetation, particularly the Red Fir forest community. He currently directs the Biology Program at Fresno Pacific University.

His evening talk begins with Muir's travels to groves in 1875, and continues with a review of both their biology and changes since then. Last October he visited the three southern-most groves in Tulare County, and will include them in his surveys. This program is additionally an introduction to the July 9 walk through a mid-elevation grove above Springville. As with all CNPS events, the program is free and open to all.

7:00, Friday, May 20, Springville Veterans Memorial Building.

Walk/hike schedule listed by date.

See details for each below.

May 14 - Dedication of Native Plant Garden in Three Rivers

May 15 - Explore the area burned in last year's Deep Fire north of highway 190 to see the post-fire recovery of foothill plant communities.

May 28 - Flowering Dogwoods, by popular "demand", up Balch Park Road, as high as snow removal allows.

June 18 - Jordan Peak, an annual event that draws hikers from other parts of the state.

July 9 - This year's venture into Giant Sequoia territory will be to the Alder Creek/Wishon groves.

July 30 - A mountain meadow, not yet selected, with orchids and all the other enticing flowers that will predictably be in bloom by mid-to-late summer.

August ? - A high elevation, near timber-line hike...to-be-determined. Mule Peak? Call Joan later in the summer to confirm the date and location.

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May 14 - Fire Prevention Week in Three Rivers will feature the dedication ceremony of the new fire station and the NCPS "Fire Safe" Demonstration Native Plant Garden. The dedication will be held at 11:30 AM in Three Rivers, Hwy 190 (40900 Sierra Drive).

The whole event will start at 10:00 AM and end at 2:00 PM featuring tours of the fire station house, several fire trucks on display, three musical venues, strolling through the garden, and Smokey the Bear will be on hand for pictures with your kids.

May 15 - Deep Fire burn area. Fletcher Linton, Botanist with Sequoia National Forest will lead us on Sunday afternoon. He asks that we meet him at 1:30 PM at the "Stone Steps/Stairs" parking pull-off area on Highway 190, about 6.5 miles beyond the White Barn as you leave Springville. From there, in as few vehicles as possible, we will drive up the Wishon Campground-Doyle Colony road to the Oak Flat Road that goes west through the area burned last year. Regeneration, Re-growth, and Recovery of plants and wildlife is the theme for this walk.

May 28 - Dogwood Day - Some of you have asked for a group walk to view flowering dogwoods, certainly one of the more spectacular experiences in our part of

California. Late May is typically the time to go up toward Balch Park-Mountain Home State Park, with canyons along the road filled with clouds of the white blossoms. Other plants, under the canopy, will also be coming into summer growth phases, although shady slopes may not have been snow-free long enough to produce summer's displays. Because road openings, even by this Memorial Day weekend, cannot be anticipated with confidence, we will simply plan to meet on Balch Park Road near the Yokohl Valley Road turnoff, at 10:00 on the Saturday morning. We'll have scouted the possible routes and trails during preceding weeks, so will have more detailed information available as the spring moves along toward summer.

June 18 - Jordan Peak, yet again, because we continue to get requests to lead a climb to see the rare Erythronium/Fawn Lily. Over and above this one species there are always lovely flowers along the trail, and the walk up through a "classic" Red Fir forest is in itself a special experience. Meet at 10:00 AM on Saturday morning, just beyond the junction of North Road/Hwy 190 (turn onto North Road near Quaking Aspen, at Pack Station sign). We then carpool/drive 9 miles to trailhead and hike about one mile up a well-maintained but uphill trail, from about 7000' to 9000' elevation. Note the elevation gain. As we approach the peak, we will enter an area of rock gardens and high meadow vegetation. You'll want a hat, sunscreen, water, and snacks.

July 9 - A Saturday outing with Fletcher Linton to walk amidst Sequoia trees of the Alder Creek/Wishon groves. Meet at 9:30 AM along Hwy 190 where the road to Sequoia Crest/Alpine village turns off (beyond Camp Nelson). We'll condense the group into a few cars to drive up to the Sequoia Crest area, probably parking near the Stag Tree trail. Fletcher will then lead us into, toward, or in the vicinity of the Alder Creek and Wishon Groves, talking about how grove boundaries are determined, and the general ecology of the trees that are the reason for the establishment of the Giant Sequoia Monument.

July 30 - Somewhere in the southern Sierra a mountain meadow will be waiting for our visit. Too early now to pick one, because access partly depends on road conditions. But by mid-July we will have chosen a site, a meeting place, time, and official leader. Bone Meadow? Horse Meadow?

We also intend to have an **August** climb to see high elevation plant life in bloom

somewhere on a mountaintop. Mule Peak, site of a Forest Service lookout, is one possibility. Call 539-2717 for further information about this or any of the other walks.

June 26 (27-28 optional) Mineral King

The Santa Cruz CNPS Chapter has organized a field trip and wanted to make it known to members of our chapter and invite them to join in.

The leader, Larry Abers, is a member of the East Bay Chapter. On Sunday, June 26, 8 AM - late afternoon (June 27-28 optional) in Mineral King, Sequoia National Park. Mineral King is a "secret Yosemite", a dramatic valley with spectacularly varied geology, and many options for day hiking up to higher lake basins. Larry Abers has spent years exploring and photographing the area, and has offered to show us some of his favorite flowery spots. An all-day, approx. 7 mile hike/botany crawl, starts at 8 AM, Sunday, June 26, at the parking lot at the very end of the road (Eagle-Mosquito Parking Area). We are rating the hike as **Strenuous** due to the elevation gain; the valley floor is 7500', and we expect to climb into the sub-alpine zone at 10,000' elevation. The full suite of Sierra wildflowers should be blooming, and we may see *Fritillaria pinetorum* and *Allium abramsii*.

First come, first serve camping (no reservations) is available near the trailhead: Cold Springs Campground, 1 mile away (a bit cramped), and Atwell Mills Campground 4 miles further. Cabins are available at Silver City Resort. If one day of sub-alpine botany isn't enough for you, Larry will lead the hunt for more botanical gems on Monday and Tuesday, June 27-28! Each day is limited to 25 people so please call to reserve your spot. Larry Abers (510) 799-6234.

Cathy Capone, of The Tule River Parkway Association is forming a group in the Porterville area to consider possibilities for better protecting old oak trees that stand in the way of "development". If you are interested in helping, contact Cathy at ccapone@eudoramail.com or 783-0201.

California Native Plant Society

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, and includes informative publications, free field trips, programs, and discounts on books and posters. Also included are the *Bulletin*, a quarterly statewide report of activities and schedules, and this chapter newsletter. Please call the membership chairperson for more information.

New Membership Application

Name _____

Address _____

City _____

State _____ Zip _____

Tele. _____

I wish to affiliate with:

____ Alta Peak Chapter (Tulare County)

____ Other _____

Mail application and check to:

Membership Chairman, California Native Plant Society, 2707 K Street, Suite 1, Sacramento, CA 95816

Membership Category

____ Student, Retired, Limited income - \$20

____ Individual, Library - \$35

____ Household, Family, Group - \$45

____ Supporting - \$75

____ Plant Lover - \$100

____ Patron - \$250

____ Benefactor - \$500

____ Other - \$1000, \$2500, \$5000, \$10,000

Chapter Board Members and Committee Chairs 2005

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