



INSIGNIS

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

SPRING 2006

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President's Message

By Joan Stewart

SPRING/SUMMER

As I write this in March-early April, one wonders if it shouldn't say WINTER, yet flowers are blooming, the buckeyes are green, and, the pages of calendars keep turning!!

Currently on my desk this morning, is the Calendar Update and review for this INSIGNIS, The previous SPRING INSIGNIS described walks and hikes for:

April 29—visit to and work party at the California Native Plant Nursery in Porterville. See insert for details.

May 13—West side of Wishon Fork canyon, above PGE plant, to top of the ridge. This is an interesting climb through some rather unique, shrubby vegetation, including *Garrya* and *Staphylea* in bloom. If you haven't seen these, it's not surprising, as they are not common and the *Staphylea* (Bladder Pod) occurs only in isolated spots mostly north of Tulare County.

See details on back of insert.

May 27—survey of plant regeneration in the Oak Flat burn area.

June 17—explore around an old man-made pond, in the Bear Creek drainage.

June 24—Jordan Peak hike, this time with the Kern County Chapter, to

repeat what has become an annual climb. This is an easy, but mostly uphill 2+ mile climb, to the peak at about 9,000' elevation. From Giffords in Springville, it is 24 miles up Hwy. 190 to the junction with North Road, near Quaking Aspen Meadow where we will meet at 10:00 AM.

July 22—Our annual Giant Sequoia Experience. Details later.

Mountain Meadow hikes will be scheduled for July and August. No dates yet, but we will try to get out a postcard later.

SPEAKERS

Programs in February and September have traditionally been scheduled for our Alta Peak Chapter. In addition, now and then, we have had a chance to offer an extra speaker as a prelude to the summer season, when we are able to get into the higher elevations of our mountains. This year, on June 16th, Fletcher Linton, botanist for the Sequoia National Monument has agreed to share an evening with members, friends, and neighbors to talk about these places. In keeping with CNPS policy, all events are free

and open to the public.

The program he will bring to Springville was developed to show CNPS representatives from all over California what Sequoia National Monument /Forest has in the way of botanical treasures. He will give the presentation in early June in Ridgecrest at the quarterly Chapter Council meeting, as their featured Saturday evening speaker. Then on the 16th, a Friday evening, he will repeat the presentation for our own local pleasure. Several years ago, he showed us an early series of his slides and now will share the new and improved version with maps of each portion of his treks, so we can follow in our minds the places he talks about. And, of course, we'll again see the lovely floral reminders of what we will be seeking in coming months.

Mark June 16, at 7:00 PM, on your calendar and plan to be with us then, at the Springville Memorial Bldg. in Springville on Hwy. 190, for this presentation by Fletcher Linton.

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Traveling to other parts of California?

Our Chapter receives newsletters from other chapters, with their calendars of field trips and programs. This information allows us to join with others to visit a place of special personal interest, and to see different parts of California from a native plant perspective. Call me if you need this information.

Another idea:

Many other Chapters offer a pre-program "Name that Wildflower" opportunity where members bring in examples of unidentified plants learn not just names, but something about how to identify plants. We have several skilled and experienced individuals here who probably could be available at some mutually agreed-upon time/place if anyone is interested in this sort of 'workshop' practice. Let me know if this would be of interest.

VOLUNTEERISM

I've spent hours over the last weeks pondering how to present some "help needed" thoughts to all of you. Presumably, all of us here in Tulare County are CNPS members because we care about the native plants for one or another reason. We enjoy value, need, and want them to last around in years to come. Being a chapter of a large state-wide organization, gives us access to staff with expertise in legal issues, information about current legislative issues, data about species of special concern that are anywhere in the state, as well as botanists to call on when we have questions. At the state level, we maintain databases both for individual taxa and for vegetation alliances (a.k.a.: plant communities), and partner with agencies and other groups in using these data for conservation work.

Locally, there are opportunities to share our ideas and to further the CNPS mission to a wider audience but this is not getting done. For

REMINDER

Cal Natives Nursery and Demonstration Garden

Visit and Work April 29, 2006, Saturday Afternoon, at home of Cathy Capone

The nursery will be open from 1:00 pm to 4:00 pm. Come for any portion of those hours, stay as long as you choose, "play" with plants, or just visit.

Cool beverages and oranges fresh off the trees will be provided, as will chairs in the shade. Cathy will lead 'tours' of the nursery and demonstration garden on the hour (1,2,3) and everyone is welcome to explore on their own or participate in propagation, pruning, labeling, and weeding. Cathy will be working with us to design and create new labels for the demonstration garden, and will show us how to take tip, stem and division cuttings from different species. Cathy would like to propagate, as her first priorities, *Epilobium* (California Fuchsia), *Eriogonum fasciculatum* (buckwheat), *Malacothamnus* (bush mallow), *Rosa californica* (wild rose), then others according to time and interest.

Participants will be blending potting mix from its basic elements in a cement mixer and potting up small container plants into one gallon or larger sizes. This afternoon will be at your pace; many of these activities can be done in the shade. Cathy has learned a wide range of species-specific methods for various taxa, both by reading, talking with native plant growers throughout the state, and from her own experience locally. This is a very special opportunity for CNPS members to enlarge their own knowledge of gardening with native plants.

Cathy notes that *Ceanothus* are in bloom right now as are the Coral Bells (*Heuchera*) and Redbud. The *Fremontodendron californicum* are setting their flower buds. She expects it to be a beautiful weekend for working with friends and native plants.

The nursery is in back of the house at 806 West Westfield Avenue, at the corner of Westfield and Indiana. Park on Indiana and walk into the west driveway. Continue past the house, to the right of pool, beyond shop buildings, and into the nursery area. Bring your favorite gloves and come in your workclothes. Restrooms-- in the house.

Plant lists of available nursery stock will be available, and this would be a good time to ask all those questions about your own native plant gardens!.

Cathy Capone 361-9164

cathy@

phone/fax 559.783.0201

806 W. Westfield Ave

Porterville CA 93257

May 13. This is a walk we have taken before, but because of the interest in the plants along the road, the attraction of seeing the components of a 1910 hydroelectric plant (flume brings water from the river from near the Wishon Campground down to the ridge top where our road ends, thence from forebay down the penstock to the power plant), and the views along the way and from the top, it is one worth repeating for newcomers as well as those who have been with us in an earlier year. It's about two hours up a dirt road that begins on the road to Wishon/Doyle Springs. Elevation is between 3000' and 4100' elevation. As for the fire area walk, (see below, for 27 May) let's meet at Stone Steps pull out on Hwy 190, before the junction with the Wishon Road, at 10:00. We can eat lunch, or snack, or...., at the top. As for all CNPS walks, dress for weather, and steady hiking up/down.

May 27. For our visit to the burned site, now going on two years into Recovery, meet at the "Stone Steps/Stairs" parking, pull-off on 190, about 7 miles above Springville at 9:30. From there we will car pool about 2 miles up the road to Wishon Campground, to junction with Forest Road 20S97. Leaving cars there, we will walk to end of road, then (no trail) proceed into the burned area. Elevation is about 3000'. Dress for weather.... and for brushy terrain (long pants? hat, water, sturdy shoes).

(Repeated from previous Insignis:) One of our members has come up with two prospective walks that I explored and found of great interest. First, a short walk to a man-made pond uphill from Bear Creek Rd, just above the Mt. Home Camp, about 4500' elevation. Marshy edges, aquatic taxa, and I suspect there is an interesting history concerning when, why, the spring-fed (?) creek (flows into Bear Creek drainage?) was dammed. We'll go **17 June**, assuming roads will be clear. Perhaps a good meeting place would be at the pull out near the bridge at junction of Bear Creek and Balch Park roads, 9:30. We'll continue up Bear Creek road, leaving some (?) cars at this site. Narrow trail, and steep in places....hike could be considered 'moderate'? Gary Hohnstein will co-lead. The CNPS-sponsored walk begins and ends here, but anyone wanting to continue up, spend additional time in Balch Park or Mountain Home State Forest, can do this independently.

To repeat what has become an annual trek, we will once more explore Jordan Peak, **24 June** with *Erythronium pusaterii*, rare and exquisite, at the top, and a group of sub-alpine species, mostly above timber line, growing midst rocks on slopes below the Lookout. This is an easy, but mostly uphill 2+ mile climb, on a good trail to the peak at about 9100' elevation. From Giffords in Springville, it is 24 miles up Hwy 190 to the junction with North Road, near Quaking Aspen Meadow where we will meet at 10:00 AM. Members from the Kern County CNPS chapter, and perhaps other out-of-area guests may be with us. All are welcome.

In July, for our annual Giant Sequoia experience (we have to visit at least one of these trees/groves each year), we go to the Octopus Tree, aka the Great Bonsai Tree, the second of Gary's "discoveries". You have to see it to understand why it has been called this. Tentatively **22 July** is the date. Let's meet at Hedrick Pond, in Mt. Home State Forest at 10:00. Call Joan for further details..... Arrange car pools independently to get up to meeting site, if you wish to.

example, we were offered a booth/space at the Visalia Home and Garden Show; a Porterville school has asked us if we could prepare a classroom presentation and follow-up visit to the Pixley Vernal Pool area; we could formally interject our issues into planning for large development projects (i.e. Boswell in Yokhol Valley), and what the county General Plan will actually say/do about open space; occasionally we have the opportunity to comment on projects under review in Sequoia National Forest; frequent calls come to us about use of native plants in landscaping; other groups ask us to collaborate on efforts that overlap with the things we care about.

However, there is a lack of man (and woman) power to handle all of those issues. We certainly value and need those who join simply as dues-paying members, but ask if any of you out there could take more active roles in the name of CNPS? Help plan hikes? Make the arrangements for programs? Be part of Cathy Capone's horticulture committee? Serve as advisor or assistant to teachers wanting to introduce native plant themes into their classrooms? Be available to take our tabletop display as 'outreach' to community events?

Please contact me, Joan, for "job descriptions", or to volunteer on a one-time basis-- (refreshments at our June program, for example). Those who represent CNPS for Tulare County need re-enforcement and encouragement.

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State Legislation

Currently there is proposed State legislation to re-activate regional Weed Management Area groups, by restoring funding. The WMA program in Tulare County was formerly a valuable educational and practical resource to individuals, and private and public land managers. CNPS worked with this 'task force' in a variety of ways. If indeed new attempts are made to coordinate efforts to curtail spread of invasive 'pest plants', we will again have a chance to be a part of the program.

Anyone interested?

As we begin the season of flowers, new green growth is sprouting on twigs and stems, insects are dancing from stem to stem, and new blades are sprouting on wet margins of streams and meadows. Let's recall the reasons we joined CNPS, and maybe help to provide a more secure base for what we stand for locally.

In addition to the board members listed on the newsletter, thanks and acknowledgement to Jean Loscotoff who brings her computer skills to the production of *Insignis* as 'layout editor', and to Peyton Ellas who will maintain contact with the CNPS state Legislative Chair to track any issues that affect us.

New Membership Application

Name _____ Membership Category _____
Address _____ Student, Retired, Limited income - \$20
City _____ Individual, Library - \$35
State _____ Zip _____ Household, Family, Group - \$45
Tele. _____ Supporting - \$75
I wish to affiliate with: _____ Plant Lover - \$100
_____ Alta Peak Chapter (Tulare County) _____ Patron - \$250
_____ Other _____ Benefactor - \$500
Mail application and check to: _____ Other - \$1000, \$2500, \$5000, \$10,000
Membership Chairman, California Native Plant Society, 2707 K Street, Suite 1, Sacramento, CA 95816

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.

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