



Insignis

Newsletter of the Alta Peak Chapter, celebrating and supporting the native plant communities in Tulare County, serving the Central Valley and Sierra Nevada Mountains and Foothills.

Volume 23, Number 1

March 2013

Chapter Program
"Invasive Plants, A Threat to California's Rich Biodiversity"
 with Bob Case
 Page 1 and 2

President's Report
 Joan tells us what's up with our Chapter...
 Page 1 and 2

Board Meeting
 Join our Chapter Board and help to invigorate the Chapter...
 Page 2



Native Plant Sale
 We need your input for future planning...
 Page 4

Winter Garden Tasks
 Helpful suggestions for working in your winter and spring garden...
 from Cathy Capone
 Page 3

Vernal Pool Walk
 with Sequoia Riverlands Trust
 Page 3

Join CNPS
 Membership form to share with friends...
 Page 4

Contact Information
 List of our Chapter Board of Directors...
 Page 3



Spring Chapter Program

March 29, 2013 at 7 pm

"Invasive Plants, A Threat to California's Rich Biodiversity What We Can do to Meet the Challenge."

Presenter *Bob Case*
 Co-Chair CNPS Statewide Invasive Exotics Committee

Springville Memorial Building

Directions: East on Highway 190 to Springville.
 Memorial Building will be on the left hand side of the highway.

Invasive plants are a growing threat to California's native biodiversity and diverse habitats. We are losing hundreds of acres a day to invasive grasses, thistles and others exotic weeds. How big is the problem? How do the pests get into our state and environment? How can we stop the introduction of these invaders?

How can we manage problem plants that are already here and how can CNPS chapters and individuals make a difference in meeting the challenge of stopping the spread?

This program will address these questions, providing some answers and discussion about recent developments in the fight against invasive species in California.

cont'd on page 2

Chapter President's Report

by Joan Stewart

Looking ahead into 2013, there are several ideas circulating about moving beyond just commenting on degradation of natural sites, to working toward restoring them. This may be along a river, lands adjacent to public lands, or simply open spots that are available for undesirable non-native species to take over. It has been awhile since members of CNPS in Tulare County have come together to work on a project that is satisfying, both to our individual interests, and that, in some way, helps support CNPS mission.

I have talked with several of you, wondering if we might want to help restore an area that could become an interesting and pleasant place for others to enjoy native landscapes. Portions of trails in the Porterville area have been brought to my notice. This idea will take more than 2 or 3 of us to plan, organize, and develop. Any volunteers? Think about this. Don't simply say, "oh no, not for me".

As with all our Chapter activities, we must move ahead, draw on those not yet committed to taking on responsibilities that promote what we pay lip service to. Look at the list of chapter leaders on page three of this *Insignis*.

cont'd on page 2

If the Alta Peak Chapter is to continue, new energy is essential. So, please give some thought to why you joined and what you believe is important in our area.

I also want to think back to the Fall 2012 events that signaled high points of Alta Peak Chapter's yearly activity. The Plant Sale and the Fall Program by Bart O'Brien from Rancho Santa Ana brought us together, as a chapter, and reached out to a broad range of community interest throughout Tulare County. Each of you who came to Three Rivers on Friday to unload and arrange plants, then again on Saturday to answer questions, carry plants, and generally welcome the many who came to find out about using native plants in their home or business landscapes, helped make this event its usual success, both financially and as outreach. Thanks and acknowledgment to all who provided a warm evening for the talk by Bart, a comfortable and friendly occasion—Betty, Elsay, Melanie, Janet, Cathy, and others whose names are too often taken for granted as quiet and competent support.

Conservation Report: In December, local papers announced that ten appeals were filed directed toward the Monument Management Plan for Sequoia National Forest. (CNPS was not one of these.) These will be reviewed and considered. By May updated Plans will be available. We find the comment by Elliott, Forest Supervisor, to basically reflect what CNPS believes, "Even through a collaborative process, when you reach a middle ground that many people can accept, there are still folks who have a fundamental values conflict, and they are not going to be able to accept a compromise or something other than their perspective."

A revised plan for managing the part of SNF that is outside the Monument will be available for study and comment later this spring. We will review this with the same concern as we studied the Monument Plan, and will attend meetings to share ideas with others who have particular concerns with how these forest lands will be managed in coming year.

Alta Peak Chapter Board Meeting

March 20, 2013 at 3 pm

This meeting will include a discussion about the future direction and activities of the Chapter. Several long term Board members would greatly appreciate help from other members to shift tasks and generate help and energy.

*Held in Three Rivers at the home of Melanie Keeley.
Call 561-4671 for directions and more information*

Please Join the Chapter Board of Directors!

Bob Case holds a Masters Degree from San Francisco State University in Ecology and Systematics. He taught biology and environmental science classes in Bay Area community colleges for twenty-five years. He recently retired as Deputy Commissioner from the Contra Costa County Department of Agriculture where he worked in integrated pest management, nursery regulation and invasive species exclusion.

Bob is Co-Chair of the CNPS Invasive Exotics Committee, serves on the Board of Directors of the Friends of the Regional Parks Botanic Garden, is an Associate Director for the Contra Costa Resource Conservation District and is the president of the Northern California Entomology Club.

Bob is a member of the California State Parks foundation, The Lewis and Clark Trail Foundation and the National Parks Foundation. He has a goal to visit all National Parks in the US and has only four more parks to visit to realize his goal.



Yellow Starthistle (*Centaurea solstitialis*)

Photo by Bob Case

Our unofficial state weed covers from 10 to 16 million acres in California and is toxic to horses. "The Yellow Starthistle has the ability to create monotypic stands and habitats in the cultivated soil of fields, graded dirt sites, and disturbed natural ecosystem lands. Its colonization eliminates and prevents other plant species from growing terminating the habitat's biodiversity", via wikipedia.

Late Winter Garden Tasks

by Cathy Capone

Deciduous Trees – While these trees are bare it is an excellent time to study the branch structure and consider corrective cuts. Gardens under the canopy of trees can become too shady over time. When this happens trees can be thinned to let more light into the understory or the plants that thrive in denser shade can replace those that need more light.

Established Landscapes – Gardens overtime can lose balance and direction. Some plants grow faster than others, birds or the wind introduce plants, gift plants come into the garden, or a plant you thought would be three feet tall grew overtime into an eight foot tall obstacle. This is great time to rethink your garden plan and reduce the number of plants as your garden matures. Selective removal of trees and large bushes allows the gardener to refocus the views within the garden and opens garden space for preferred plants.

Irrigation – Our natives need additional water at this time. I suggest at least one deep irrigation now while the temperatures are low to help make up for the lack of rain. Check all valves, lines and heads by running the circuit and observing each emitter or head for flow. Clean, repair or replace any problem parts so you are ready to start using the system. If you have areas that you want to water automatically but do not have a controlled valve at the location consider a battery operated hose end valve. I recommend the DIG 9001. I have used several types of battery operated valves and the DIG model lasts longer. The program can be changed during the year as your water needs change. My experience is that if you protect battery operated valves from direct sun and water they last longer. The DIG model has a hinged cover which protects the buttons and the LCD screen from the elements and improves the durability of the value.

Flowering Plants – Trim off last year's flower stocks and correct the shape of plants before the spring growth starts. Examples penstemon, fuchsia, malocathamnus, salvias

Redbud – If possible wait to trim redbud until you have enjoyed the spring flowers. I suggest you plan to make major cuts to correct shape or reduce the number of trunks mark the cuts with yarn or plastic tie tape now while the branches are bare. This will guide your cuts later when the branching pattern is more difficult to see.

Plant – It is still a very good time of year to plant natives. Visit nurseries for inspiration.

James K Herbert Wetland Prairie Preserve Vernal Pool Walk

Saturday, April 6, 2013 at 10 am with Sequoia Riverlands Trust (SRT)
Suggested donation: \$3.00 for SRT Members, \$6.00 for non-SRT members, kids \$1.

Historically, for much of the year the San Joaquin Valley supported a thriving network of streams, rivers and seasonally flooded depressions known as vernal pools. As rivers were diverted, pools sucked dry, and the valley floor leveled for agricultural purposes, vernal pools became more and more isolated and rarified. To date, more than 90% of California's vernal pools have been lost. Vernal pools are unique habitats in which highly specialized flora and fauna have adapted to wintertime inundation followed by summertime drying. While the Herbert Preserve is closed to the public most of the year, this spring, Sequoia Riverlands Trust is offering a special guided field trip with local biologist, Bobby Kamansky. He will discuss not only the fascinating life history of the preserve's existing vernal pools, but also his experience locating, resurrecting and restoring a vernal pool site that had been previously buried. Additionally, Bobby will detail various management tactics that he and SRT have employed to best ensure the proper working of this rare and valuable ecosystem. For more info, call 559-738-0211.

Alta Peak Chapter Board of Directors



WE INVITE OUR MEMBERS TO
JOIN THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS
TO "SHARE THE GOOD STUFF"
ABOUT NATIVE PLANTS
FOR ALL OF TULARE COUNTY!

President, Conservation

Joan Stewart
559-539-2717
tori2toli@ocsnet.net

Vice President, Newsletter Editor

Elsah Cort
559-561-4671
elsahc@dishmail.net

Treasurer, Membership, Plant Sale

Janet Fanning
559-561-3461
janetfanning@att.net

Secretary

Joy Semple
559-539-7927
jdsemp@springvillewireless.com

Outreach

Melanie Keeley
559-799-7438
mbarkeeeley@gmail.com

Horticulture

Cathy Capone
559-783-0201
cathycaponemail@gmail.com

Education

Betty Avalos
559-561-3211
elizabeth.avalos@rocketmail.com

Website: altapeakcnps.org
See newsletter in color in a pdf file here.

Chapter facebook page:
facebook.com/altapeak.chapter

Alta Peak Chapter Annual Native Plant Sale

Date TBA

We will be reviewing our native plant sale and perhaps making some possible changes in date, location and logistics. We hope you'll volunteer input and help.



CNPS MEMBERSHIP FORM

Name: _____

Address: _____

City/Zip: _____

Telephone: _____

Email (optional): _____

I wish to affiliate with: Alta Peak Chapter

Other Chapter _____

Membership Category:

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

Mail with check to CNPS, 2707 K St., Suite 1, Sacramento,

Elsah Cort, Editor
PO Box 245
Three Rivers, CA 93271