Annual Fall Native Plant Sale
A Great Opportunity to Add
Native Plants to Your Landscaping

Saturday, October 4
CNPS Members only: 9:00 am – 9:30 am
General Public: 9:30 am – 3:00 pm
Three Rivers Arts Center
North Fork Drive, Three Rivers, CA

We will need extra help on Saturday morning this year, especially from those who know and can sell native plants. If you are available to help us out either Friday morning when the plants arrive from the grower or on Saturday for the sale, please note your interest on the pre-order sales form or call Janet Fanning (559-561-3461). It is much appreciated!

Conservation Report
By Joan Stewart

We just received notice from the Forest Service announcing the preparation of an Environmental Impact Statement for the Sequoia National Forest Plan. This is part of the process of rewriting the Forest Plan which was approved in 1988. The Giant Sequoia National Monument Plan will be incorporated as a subset of the revised forest plan.

Conservation continued on page 2

Fall Chapter Program
Making the Switch: Landscaping with California Natives for Regional Beauty and Water Conservation

Friday, September 26, 7:00 – 9:00 pm
College of the Sequoias
915 S. Mooney, Visalia

For further information call 559 799-7438

Presenter Melanie Baer-Keeley

Consider this presentation a short-cut to transforming your yard into a beautiful, natural haven, that is low care and uses significantly less water. Become familiar with which of California’s many native species work well in the Central Valley’s hot, dry climate. Learn best practices for landscaping with them, whether you are integrating them into an existing garden, or removing your lawn and starting from scratch. Drought tolerant native plants will be colorfully illustrated, showing growth habit and desirable characteristics. Maximize your garden’s blooming seasons, create habitat for birds and butterflies, and learn simple, manageable landscaping principals to enable you to make the leap into a less stressful, more sustainable way of gardening.

Melanie Keeley has many years’ professional experience focused on a variety of aspects involving native plants: education, conservation, cultivation, propagation, landscaping and even botanical illustration. She is currently Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Parks’ horticulturist/botanist and is also the president of the Alta Peak Chapter of the California Native Plant Society.

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Changes in the plan are expected in five major areas: Benefits to People and Communities, Tribal Relations and Uses, Fire, Ecological Integrity, and Designated (Wilderness, for Sequoia) areas. There is a 30 day scoping period and the draft Environmental Impact Statement is planned for April 2015. Our Chapter will offer comments on this project.

President’s Welcome
By Melanie Baer-Keeley

Autumn approaches! The days are still certainly hot, but, because of shorter days and lower night time temperatures, the weather is tolerable, or at least not as intensely intolerable. Rather than desiccated and sagging vegetation, in some cases, I am noticing relief reflected in the posture and coloring of the plant foliage around me. In this climate, and for me, fall has always been the bona fide beginning of the year with the prospect of impending precipitation, growth and renewal. This is the most opportune time to plant here in the Central Valley and along the Sierra Nevada foothills. And the best plants to plant in our landscapes in this extreme climate are definitely drought tolerant natives.

To help you in planning your garden, in September, I will be presenting our chapter’s fall program, entitled: “Making the Switch: Landscaping with California Native Plants for Regional Beauty and Water Conservation.” Consider this your “cheat-sheet” or “short-course” on transforming your yard into one that is lower maintenance and significantly less water consumptive. Plant species recommendations will be shown in a colorful presentation showing growth habit and characteristics.

The chapter’s annual native plant sale, will take place the following Saturday, October 4. Many of the plants featured in this talk will be available at the sale. We will need extra help on Saturday morning this year, especially from those who know native plants.

Photo by Cathy Capone  
Carpenteria californica

Native Plant Grants Available for 2015

By Betty Avalos

The Alta Peak Chapter Board is pleased to announce that we are in our second year of providing grants to promote projects and research that will increase appreciation and understanding of native plants and natural areas of Tulare County, the Central Valley and the Southern Sierra Nevada Mountains and Foothills. The Chapter’s 2014 grant went to Marcia Goldstein and Bonnie McCassy of Three Rivers who are developing a brochure for the Three Rivers Community Native Plant Gardens. Two grants, between $250 and $500 each, will be awarded based on the project’s itemized proposed budget. The Chapter is especially interested in supporting the efforts of K-12, as well as college students and their professors. Preference will be given to applications that demonstrate the following:

- relevance of the project to native plant education, conservation or restoration
- a focus on native plants, and their habitats, of Tulare County, the Central Valley and the Southern Sierra Nevada Mountains and Foothills
- a combination of academic background, work experience, and personal commitment needed to successfully complete the proposed project, or to participate in a profession that seeks to further the mission and goals of CNPS
- feasibility of successfully completing the project

Proposal applications should not exceed three pages in length and should be submitted in the following format:

1. title page with the project’s title and applicant contact information
2. statement of applicant’s qualifications
3. project objectives
4. methods employed to implement the project
5. description of the final product and its duration

In addition, the proposals should include an itemized proposed budget and letters of support for the project. Applicants who are awarded grants will provide a progress report to the Alta Peak Chapter at the end of the first year. They will be asked to give a talk about their project at a chapter meeting, or to write a brief explanation of their work for this newsletter.

2015 Grant Proposals are due by January 31, 2015.

Notification of grant awards will be given by April 1, 2015.

For more information, please contact

Betty Avalos, Education Chair at bavalos@hotmail.com
**CALENDAR OF EVENTS**

**PLANT PREORDER DUE TO JANET FANNING**  
September 22, 2014

**FALL PROGRAM**  
**MAKING THE SWITCH**  
Friday September 26, 2014 7-9 pm  
College of the Sequoias  
The presentation by Melanie-Baer Keeley focus on proven techniques and beautiful available plants that will create a natural haven that uses less water.

**PLANT SALE**  
Saturday October 4, 2014  
Three Rivers Art Center on North Fork Drive  
9:30am-3:00pm  
Opens to members at 9:00am

**CNPS Conservation Conference**  
January 15-17, 2015  
(Early Registration ends Oct 31st)

**Grant Proposals Due**  
January 31, 2015

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**Volunteer opportunity**

The chapter newsletter needs an editor. Cathy Capone is available to walk you through the process, at your request. The newsletter changes with each editor, since each of us brings different skills, resources, and editorial views to this job. The responsibilities of the editor include:

1. Gathering articles and information from chapter members and other sources
2. Editing articles
3. Adding short sections such as calendar
4. Pasting the items into a newsletter format
5. Sending or taking the digital document to a printer
6. Stamping, labeling, and mailing
7. Email final digital document to Elsah

Please contact Cathy or Melanie for more information.  
Cathy 361-9164  
Melanie 799-7438

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**Field Trip Report -Long Meadow Loop Walk Sequoia National Park**  
By Ann Huber

It’s hard to imagine a better place to be on a hot summer day than in a High Sierra mountain meadow. On Saturday June 14, a small group of plant enthusiasts along with Alta Peak Chapter members spent a glorious day strolling among the verdantly lush meadow flora at Long Meadow in Sequoia National Park (7,250 ft in elevation). Park botanists Erik Frenzel and Tyler Schmitt led the 2-mile walk and named all the plants along the way. The day started out with picnic lunch on the deck at Wolverton, with a short talk about the meadow’s hydrologic setting and history. Then we set off for the trail, which started out in red fir / white fir open dry forest with a well-developed shrub layer then crossed over an open granite slab slope before dropping into the meadow.

In the forest we saw many plants still in bloom including *Lilium washingtonianum* (we learned is named after Martha Washington, not the state), *Corallorhiza maculata* (spotted coralroot orchid), *Monardella odoratissima* (mountain monardella), and *Kelloggia galoides*, among others. On the granite slab we met the diminutive *Mimulus whitneyi* and *Hemizonia minima*. The trail then dropped down back into the forest then along the margins of the meadow, which is aptly named, for it is indeed quite long!

*Loop Trail continued on page 4*
In the meadow, there were swaths of flowers still in bloom, such as *Eucephalus brewerii* (Brewer’s aster) and *Platanthera sparsiflora* (sparse-flowered bog-orchid), and others not in bloom yet such as *Bistorta bistortoides* (formerly named *Polygonum*) and *Veratrum californicum* (corn lily). We documented six *Carex* spp. from the meadow (*Carex echinata, C. jonesii, C. russii, C. utriculata, C. vesicaria, C. hoodii*). Some of the shrubs we saw along the way included *Arctostaphylos patula* (Greenleaf manzanita), *Ceanothus cordulatus* (whitethorn), *Prunus emarginata* (bitter cherry), *Ribes cereum* (wax current), *Holodiscus discolor* (oceanspray), and *Chrysolepis sempervirens* (bush chinquapin). We started a list of plants for the trail, documenting 85 taxa for a start! We hope to continue to make this trip in future years, and keep adding to the list as we go along. Thanks to Erik, Tyler, and all those that came out for a wonderful day. We hope you can join us next year!

Reporting an Insect

By Cathy Capone

I was visiting Balch Park with family members July 12, 2014 and we saw a beetle that we did not recognize. I took a photo and at Melanie’s advice I reported the sighting to the California Department of Forestry at their online hotline whatisthisbug.org. I am relieved to find out that this was the native White Spotted Pine Sawyer Beetle which is often mistaken for the very invasive Asian Long Horn Beetle (ALB). The staff, both at the website and the Senior Environmental Scientist who determined the identity of the White Spotted Pine Beetle, were concerned, provided me with additional information, and worked quickly to address that potential problem. The following is the letter that Susan Sawyer sent about the sighting.

Ms. Capone,

We have an answer! Our State Entomologist looked at the image, and what you saw and the image you sent is of a White Spotted Pine Sawyer (*Monochamus scutellatus*). It is a native insect of North America. It is a pest to pines, but also uses other trees for boarding. It has several other pine sawyer “cousins” that look very similar and all are pests to pines. We will not be making an attempt to collect this specimen because it is not an invasive species. Thank you for sending the report to us and alerting California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA) to what you saw. While this was not an invasive species sighting this time, CDFA has found out about infestations due to the sightings and response by citizens, like you. THANK YOU! CDFA literally could not keep out the unwanted species without help from our citizens.

I have included for your general information other sites to look at. I must tell you, when I saw the image, I about had heart failure because the beetle image you sent looked very similar to Asian Longhorn Beetle (ALB). I had to take a second (third and fourth!) look before I could return to normal breathing. I have also included another site you may want to share with the CNPS group, and that is “What is This Bug whatisthisbug.org and the sister site What is This Plant” whatisthisplant.org. These are general information sites and offer mobile app options for reporting on the run. These apps, like the electronic form you used will allow you to take an image (of insects, plants, animals or diseases) and report your suspicions to a State official for action.
Californian Native Plant Society

Websites as References

By Melanie Baer-Keeley

If you have a compelling desire to learn about California native plants, the search for answers can be terribly daunting. Often many references must be consulted in order to find something as seemingly simple as plant identification or of other questions, answers may be entirely elusive. Fortunately, recently numerous websites have cropped up that will facilitate your quest for plant information. Over the next few Insignia newsletters, I'll feature a few that I've found to be most helpful.

The California Native Plant Society’s main internet site, located at cnps.org contains an amazing amount of information. On the home page, you can tab into the basics: organizational mission, associated chapters, as well as how to become a member. Further along in these tabs, you can also find a list of CNPS’s publications as well as other gift items to purchase. You can quickly immerse yourself into your choice of plant topics such as “Conservation,” “Education,” and “Gardening” or into more academic pursuits, such as “Rare Plant Science,” or “Vegetation Science.” The “Gardening” tab opens up to a long, very useful list of links including “Planning Your Garden.” “Where to Buy Natives,” sends you to a handy page entitled the “California Native Plant Link Exchange” – Just enter the plant name and it will generate a list of prospective nurseries and locations that carry that species! Or benefit by searching for “Sales & Events” or “Propagation,” “Arboreta and Botanic Gardens,” “Invasive Weeds & Pest Management.”

You can even find samples of native landscape templates to borrow from. To top it off, if you cannot find specific enough gardening answers on this website, you can join a “Gardening Blog” to discuss issues with specialists directly. These blogs or conversational threads cover a vast variety of subjects, from obscure gardening conundrums to restoration, to rare plant sightings or conservation concerns. Get many of your questions answered on this site! Additionally, there are even botanically-oriented job listings along with many opportunities to volunteer (one of the best ways to learn about native plants!).

If you are a Facebook user, I urge you to “Like” the California Native Plant Society page, or you can find the site here: facebook.com/CaliforniaNativePlantSociety. Many of its posts are paired with really colorful, stunning native plant pictures and are subject-targeted for native plant lovers. People from all over the state show what they’ve seen in the field, providing enticement to visit some unique botanical locations. Some posts request quick plant identification. Within moments sometimes, botanists respond with the plant’s identity, and they are more often than not correct, although admittedly sometimes I’ve noticed some questionable ID’s. On this Facebook page you will be privy to some of the most current plant-related events and environmental articles which are often shared immediately upon being unveiled in the press. While the content, of course, is plant-centric, all relevant biological issues are fair game: butterfly and bee pollinators, invasive plants, conservation, etc.

The Alta Peak Chapter also has its own Facebook page, which is administered by Elsah Cort and myself: facebook.com/altapeakchapterCNPS. This site is certainly the most regionally relevant. We would like more of our membership to “Like” and follow this page so that our interactions are more expedient and so that we can immediately address questions and concerns. Conversely, we can notify you of significant events or field trips that would be of interest, of those that either the Alta Peak Chapter or other local organizations are offering. Refer to this page to emphasize Tulare County specific regional plants, field trips, conservation issues and information.

Each of these sites has come a long way and contributes valuable and copious content. Take some time to explore, although time is what everyone seems to be lacking these days. Okay, consider these sites one-stop resources. You are now only a click away from get almost any information you need on native plants!

Conservation Conference

January 15-17, 2015
San Jose, CA

Celebrate the progress made in conservation throughout the past 50 years, and contribute to goals and research for the future of California native plants!

Who attends the Conservation Conference?

Join over 1,000 conservation and native plant enthusiasts in San Jose! Attendees include scientists, conservationists, CNPS chapters, university professors and students, policymakers, professional and amateur botanists, landscaping professionals, and land-use planners from California and beyond.

Registration is now open at cnps.org/cnps/conservation/conference/2015.
Native Plants
Selections for your Garden Background
By Cathy Capone

A garden design can be thought about in three areas, background, mid-ground and foreground. This article will focus on California native plants that you can use in the background of a garden setting. All of the featured plants are native to Tulare County. The pictures for this article were taken in my garden during August 2012.

California Bay Laurel, *Umbellularia californica*

California Bay is native to the foothills of Tulare County. This tree grows well in valley gardens if given some protection from the midday summer sun and regular water until established. The California Bay has a strong tendency to become a multi-trunked tree, but can be single trunked with consistent pruning. I have found the California Bay to be a very useful, it is densely covered with leaves which provide a near 100% screen year-round. It grows at a moderate rate, of approximately one and a half feet per year, and in my Porterville yard has grown to 20 feet in 15 years. It grows best and fastest in deep soil with ample water. It will grow in deep shade and ultimately becomes a shade maker itself; it casts a very dense shade unless thinned. California Bay is always neat, it is a good patio tree, background tree, or tall hedge. The leaves from the California Bay can be substituted for commercially available bay leaves in cooking.

*Background Plants continued on page 7*
Western Redbud, *Cercis occidentalis*,

Western Redbud, is native to the Tulare County foothills below 4,000 feet. Redbud is a small tree 10-18 feet in height and spread. Redbuds grow several trunks from the base. It has all-year interest. In spring it delivers a 3 week display of delicate sweet pea shaped, brilliant magenta flowers. They are ½ inch long and cover the branch ends before leaves appear. The summer foliage is green to blue-green round leaves which flutter in a breeze. Seed pods are flat pea pods which produce a crinkling sound in a light breeze. In fall, the whole plant turns light yellow to orange or red. In winter, Redbuds have bare branches in picturesque patterns which hold clusters of reddish brown seed pods. Redbud is resistant to oak root fungus. Plan to water regularly in the first few years and then decrease to twice monthly summer water for five or more years. Since Redbuds are deciduous, use them in backgrounds which do not require 100% screening.

Blue Elderberry, *Sambucus mexicana*,

Blue Elderberry is native to Tulare County growing on the valley floor and up to 8,000 feet. Elderberries are fast growing and wild looking. They can be effective as a screen or windbreak in large gardens. Birds eat the fruit, but it can also be used to make juice, jam, pies, or wine. Hummingbirds are observed frequently visiting the flowers. One of the charming things about elderberry is that it has flowers from April to late fall. Berries ripen from June to late fall. Elderberry tree/shrubs grow to 30 feet in 15 years and handle drought by losing leaves. If you want to keep an Elderberry heavily in leaf, you must provide summer water.
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 Mail with check to CNPS,
_____ Family, $75 2707 K Street, Suite 1
_____ Patron, $350 Sacramento, CA 95816
_____ Benefactor, $600
_____ Mariposa Lily, $1500
Or you can join or renew automatically via the website
www.cnps.org and click on JOIN

Ms. Cathy Capone
806 W. Westfield Avenue
Porterville, CA 93257-1254

ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED

Photo by Cathy Capone
*Lilium pardalinum*, Leopard Lily
Balch Park July 12, 2014