



California Native Plant Society  
Santa Clara Valley Chapter

# THE BLAZING STAR

November-December 2020

## ANNUAL MEETING & PROGRAM

**Saturday, November 14 at 4:00pm**

**Via Zoom and YouTube**

Join us for a virtual annual potluck. Cook your favorite food and remember when we could meet in person.

**Starting at 4:00pm**, our Chapter's General Meeting will include our **annual election** and recognition of volunteers, Fellows and others. Learn more, including the proposed slate of officers, on page 2.

**After the meeting, at about 5:00pm**, we offer a program on how each one of us can help reverse declining biodiversity.

### **Nature's Best Hope A talk by Doug Tallamy**

Recent headlines about global insect declines and three billion fewer birds in North America are a bleak reality check about how ineffective our current land management practices have been at sustaining the plants and animals that sustain us. Such losses are not an option if we wish to continue our current standard of living on Planet Earth. The good news is that none of this is inevitable. Doug Tallamy will discuss simple steps that each of us can – and must – take to reverse declining biodiversity and will explain why we, ourselves, are nature's best hope.

**Doug Tallamy** is a professor in the Department of Entomology and Wildlife Ecology at the University of Delaware, where he has authored 103 research publications and has taught insect related courses for 40 years. Chief among



Rob Cardillo  
Doug Tallamy

his research goals is to better understand the many ways insects interact with plants and how such interactions determine the diversity of animal communities. His book *Bringing Nature Home: How Native Plants Sustain Wildlife in Our Gardens* was published by Timber Press in 2007 and was awarded the 2008 Silver Medal by the Garden Writers Association. *The Living Landscape*, co-authored with Rick Darke, was published in 2014.

Doug's new book, *Nature's Best Hope*, released by Timber Press in February 2020, is a New York Times Best Seller.

**How to attend:** The Annual Meeting will be live-streamed over Zoom only. After the meeting we'll continue live-streaming the program over Zoom. We'll email the Zoom link ahead of time to CNPS Santa Clara Valley Chapter members. See page 6 for how to "**Keep in Touch**" with us by keeping your contact information up to date at the [State CNPS website](#).

**At 5:00pm**, like other talks in our new Native Plant Lecture Series, Doug's talk will be live-streamed to YouTube. The general public is invited to view Doug's talk via YouTube. Watch it live or later on our YouTube channel: [www.youtube.com/c/CNPSSantaClaraValley](http://www.youtube.com/c/CNPSSantaClaraValley)

CNPS General Meetings are free and open to the public. For more information, contact Chapter President Vivian Neou at [president@cnps-scv.org](mailto:president@cnps-scv.org) or the Chapter phone at (650) 260-3450.

## NATIVE PLANT LECTURE SERIES

Our December talk will be held on **Wednesday, December 16 at 7:30pm:**

**Project 467: Enhancing Native Plant  
Diversity and the "Coefficient of Beauty" at  
Edgewood Natural Preserve**

**Presented by Stuart B. Weiss, Ph.D.**

Edgewood Natural Preserve near Redwood City is famous for its flower-filled serpentine grasslands. But the 467 acres of Edgewood support great biodiversity in the chaparral, oak woodlands, and grasslands on more fertile soils. The 100+ acres of fertile grasslands are by far the most weed-invaded habitat, and have been the focus of successful control of “macroweeds.”

Friends of Edgewood and Creekside Science are pursuing the goal of decreasing “microweeds” and increasing native cover and diversity. A Rapid Assessment Plot (RAP) inventory with over 80 plots documented more than 90 native species in the fertile grasslands, albeit often at low cover. We are investigating treatments to reduce annual weed seedlings just after germination, including hydromechanical pulverization (HMP, basically pressure-washing the grassland) and close-mowing with string cutters. Once the flush of non-native annuals is cleared, extant native perennials can vegetatively expand and occupy space in a newly created clean seedbed.



*Barrie Moore*

Friends of Edgewood volunteer Perry McCarty, who runs the new Edgewood Farms, used organza gift bags to collect California poppy seeds. These seeds will be used in their Project 467 habitat restoration efforts, which aim to remove invasive plants and help native wildflowers and grasses thrive at Edgewood.

Besides commercially available local seeds, we are using more than 15 species of “boutique” seeds grown at Edgewood Farms and the Native Garden. We are trying to develop a long-term “indigenous” approach to restoration, whereby a beautiful, colorful diversity of native plants is

established and can spread naturally given occasional management.

Friends of Edgewood sent us an update on their activities during the pandemic. See page 5.

### **About our New Native Plant Lecture Series**

The CNPS SCV Native Plant Lecture Series has something for everyone – whether you’re curious about native plants, an experienced or aspiring native plant gardener or a professional botanist, you will find something to interest and educate you in our offerings.

Our General Meeting Program presentations, Gardening with Natives (GWN) talks, and Going Native Garden Tour (GNGT) Live Sessions, will all be part of this series. From gardening to plant science to conservation to tours of botanical hot spots, if you’re interested in California’s native plants, there’s something here for you.

Most of our lectures are in the evening, although we occasionally schedule them during the day. Our talks are live presentations followed by Q&As with the viewing audience. They are live streamed simultaneously to Zoom and YouTube. They are all recorded on YouTube, so you can see them later on our YouTube channel:

[www.youtube.com/c/CNPSSantaClaraValley](http://www.youtube.com/c/CNPSSantaClaraValley)

## **CHAPTER ACTIVITIES**

### **Chapter Annual Election**

The Chapter annual meeting (see page 1) is also the time to elect our Chapter officers for the coming year. All Chapter members may run for office; nominations may also be made from the (virtual) floor at the meeting. Here is the slate put forth by the nominating committee:

**President:** Vivian Neou

**Vice President:** Priya Pharate

**Treasurer:** Janet Hoffmann

**Past President:** Madeline Morrow

**Chapter Council Delegate:** Vivian Neou

Members seeking more information or wishing to run should contact Leadership Development Chair Stephen Buckhout at [stephen@yscottie.com](mailto:stephen@yscottie.com) or (408) 255-6233.

## Photography Group

Our Photography Group is a great place to meet other native plant enthusiasts while improving your photographic skills and learning more about our native plants. It is open to all. The group has periodic meetings, photography outings and an active email list.

The group has an on-going **#MyPhotoOfTheWeek** activity on the email list for group members to share their favorite shots with the group on a weekly basis. There is also a monthly virtual meeting on Zoom on **the second Wednesday of each month**, for members to share photos and more – everything from photography tips to organizational ideas to plant hot spots.

You can learn more and join the email group at: [www.groups.io/g/cnps-scv-photography](http://www.groups.io/g/cnps-scv-photography).

The next meeting will be **Wednesday, November 11 at 7:00pm**. Anyone who has pictures of their adventures that they would like to share is welcome to participate. Please sign up for a time slot if you would like to show pictures (join the email list to get the signup link for the next meeting). You don't have to share pictures to attend the meeting. More information is available on Meetup at [www.meetup.com/California-Native-Plant-Society-Santa-Clara-Valley-Chapter](http://www.meetup.com/California-Native-Plant-Society-Santa-Clara-Valley-Chapter) and through the group's email list.

The photo group will take a **hiatus in December and January** for the holidays. Photography group sharing meetings will resume in February.

## SCHOLARSHIP

### Student Research Scholarships Available

Since 1999, our Chapter has sponsored scholarships for students doing research on native plant or plant community conservation, plant ecology, plant community restoration, plant systematics, rare plants or other related botanical studies of native plants that grow in habitats in Central and Northern California.

There are three scholarships available. Two are awarded to research that focus on specific (non-exclusive) topics. The Sally Casey Shooting Stars Research Scholarship is focused on research involving native wildflowers, native grasses and grasslands, soil carbon, and soil interactions. The Don Mayall Conservation Research Scholarship is focused on research on rare plants and serpentine ecosystems.



Charley Pow  
Easy to grow, the California fuchsia 'Catalina' (*Epilobium canum*) bears scarlet blooms in the late summer and early fall, providing much-needed color at the end of California's six-month-long dry season. Charley contributed this photo in October via the Chapter Photo Group's **#MyPhotoOfTheWeek** activity.

Scholarship amounts range from \$1,000 to \$1,500. Evaluation of applications will focus on the stated purpose of the research, experimental design, relationship to native plant and native habitat conservation, and overall impression of the research project.

We encourage students to apply. More information and applications are available at [www.cnps-scv.org/education/scholarships](http://www.cnps-scv.org/education/scholarships). Applications must be postmarked by **Monday, November 23**.

If you would like to **contribute to the scholarship fund**, a check written to "CNPS", with a notation to "SCV Ed. Scholarship" may be mailed to the address below. Company matching programs are welcome.

CNPS Santa Clara Valley Chapter  
3921 E. Bayshore Road Suite #20S  
Palo Alto, CA 94303

## CONSERVATION CORNER

### Conservation Committee

Our Chapter's conservation committee will meet on **Tuesdays, November 10 and December 8**. Both meetings will be via Zoom, from **7:00 to 9:00pm**.

Please join us in our important work! Meeting details will be sent to committee members. If you are not on the committee but are interested in attending the Zoom meeting, email [cdorsch@cnps-scv.org](mailto:cdorsch@cnps-scv.org) for the Zoom meeting link.

For questions, comments or concerns, contact Conservation Committee Chair Carolyn Dorsch at [cdorsch@cnps-scv.org](mailto:cdorsch@cnps-scv.org) or (650) 804-6162.

## Fountain Thistle Restoration November 7

Join Ken Himes and Don Thomas for an **in-person** conservation project, on **Saturday, November 7, meeting at 10am** in San Mateo.

In keeping with our ten-year tradition of working with Jake Sigg and the Yerba Buena Chapter, we are going to continue our fall fountain thistle restoration project. Fountain thistle (*Cirsium fontinale* var. *fontinale*) is a rare Federally endangered plant that grows in an unusual specialized habitat, serpentine seeps, and is only found in a few locations on the Peninsula.



Dee Himes

Volunteers pull yellow star-thistle at the fountain thistle restoration site, at the intersection of I-280 and Hwy 92. The photo was taken during the October 2015 CNPS Fountain Thistle workday.

Our work at this site is a restoration success story. Once almost completely displaced by jubatagrass (Andean pampas grass, *Cortaderia jubata*), the fountain thistle has largely recovered, as a result of the work done by CNPS volunteers. However, fountain thistle is still under threat from jubatagrass and other non-native plants, such as yellow star-thistle, sow thistle and wallaby grass (*Rhytidosperra caespitosum*) and by woody plants trying to convert the area to shrubland or woodland.

This is the project started by, and formerly led by, CNPS Fellow Jake Sigg. At Jake's request, Don has stepped in to continue leading the fountain thistle restoration workdays.

Because this is an in-person event, we will observe the CNPS COVID safety precautions. These are:

- Physical distancing of workers at least 6 feet apart. Where workers work together, they should maintain this physical distance.
- Wearing of face mask or other face covering while working. Face masks must be put on when coming within 30 feet of another worker and be worn the entire time workers are within this distance.
- Workers are encouraged to bring their own tools. No exchange of tools or other objects unless they are thoroughly disinfected first.
- Workers are encouraged to wear disposable gloves and disinfect gloves at regular intervals.
- Group size will be ten or fewer people.

Although disposable gloves will be provided, sturdy gloves are also recommended. You might also want to bring sunscreen, water, a hat, layered clothing and wear long sleeves/pants. If you cannot bring your own tools, tools will be provided, along with appropriate decontamination procedures.

Contact Don at [don\\_e\\_thomas@yahoo.com](mailto:don_e_thomas@yahoo.com) to **reserve a spot** and for direction to the meeting place.

## Reminder: Vote Yes on Measure T

Residents within the Open Space Authority area will be voting on Measure T in the upcoming November 3 election. Our Chapter supports this measure, and urges its members to **vote YES** in November.

Measure T ensures that the **Santa Clara Valley Open Space Authority (OSA)** has the funds to continue their important work of preserving, protecting and making access to nature and recreation available for all to enjoy.

To learn more about Measure T, read the article on page 4 of the [September-October Blazing Star](#) or visit OSA's website at [www.OpenSpaceAuthority.org](http://www.OpenSpaceAuthority.org).

## CHAPTER SERVICE OUTINGS

### Alum Rock Park Volunteers

Come help us weed out invasive plants at this natural gem of San Jose. Our habitat restoration efforts allow the native plants to "come to light."

We have weeding sessions **every Monday morning** and an **Inspiration Point Walk-and-Weed Day the third Saturday morning** of each month. Please visit

[groups.io/g/AlumRockParkVolunteers](https://groups.io/g/AlumRockParkVolunteers) to check the schedules or join the email list. You may also visit [www.cnps-scv.org/restoration/alum-rock-park](http://www.cnps-scv.org/restoration/alum-rock-park) to learn what to bring and get directions to the usual meeting places.

For more information contact Stephen at [sailinsteve@sbcglobal.net](mailto:sailinsteve@sbcglobal.net) or (650) 260-3450.

## Lake Cunningham Native Garden

The California Native Garden project in Lake Cunningham Regional Park controls invasive plants in a 1.5-acre area and beautifies it with California native wildflowers, perennials, shrubs and trees.

Workdays continue **Saturdays 8:00 - 10:00am**. New volunteers are welcome; City-issued guidelines and COVID-19 best practices are followed. For complete details and directions and to RSVP, see our meetup page at [www.meetup.com/California-Native-Plant-Society-Santa-Clara-Valley-Chapter](http://www.meetup.com/California-Native-Plant-Society-Santa-Clara-Valley-Chapter).

## Edgewood Restoration

Our long-term habitat restoration work at Edgewood Park and Natural Preserve continues in person even during the pandemic. As with our other projects, we follow government guidelines and COVID-19 best practices. For now, the project is not looking for new volunteers; only experienced “regulars” are attending workdays.



*Sandy Bernhard*  
Friends of Edgewood volunteer **Caroline Bowker** received the Friends 2020 Habitat Hero award, for her efforts to keep the preserve clean in the face of increased visitors and litter. She has been walking the trails and picking trash several times a week.

helped grow a community of environmental stewardship that has spread far beyond the preserve’s boundaries. Seeds can wait, though, when conditions aren’t favorable: our docent-training program will skip over next year.

Though we don’t know what opportunities will arise in 2021 for docent-led hikes or the Jr. Explorers program, Friends of Edgewood volunteers are as busy as ever. Efforts continue in the native garden and newly-installed Edgewood Farms, in a variety of habitat restoration

projects, in fresh trail work and volunteer enrichments, new field and trail guides and an expanded weekly wildflower and bird survey. We’re rising to the challenge of keeping ourselves and others safe while continuing to be the best human friends possible for the plants and animals that call this special place home.

To keep track of what is blooming at Edgewood each week, visit [friendsofedgewood.org/edgewood-wildflower-survey](http://friendsofedgewood.org/edgewood-wildflower-survey). If you’d like to be put on the contact list for the next docent training, write Sandy at [docent-trainer@friendsofedgewood.org](mailto:docent-trainer@friendsofedgewood.org). For up-to-date information on Edgewood County Park and Natural Preserve, visit [parks.smcgov.org/edgewood-park-natural-preserve](http://parks.smcgov.org/edgewood-park-natural-preserve) and follow us on Instagram at [www.instagram.com/friendsofedgewood](http://www.instagram.com/friendsofedgewood) or on the Friends of Edgewood Facebook page [www.facebook.com/FOEdgewood](http://www.facebook.com/FOEdgewood).

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

*News and Activities from Other Organizations*

## Edgewood Volunteer Update

Every winter and spring for over 30 years, a training course has prepared docents to lead wildflower hikes in Edgewood County Park and Natural Preserve. CNPS volunteers began the program in 1987, as part of the campaign to save Edgewood from development, and passed it on to the Friends of Edgewood at the creation of the preserve in 1993. The annual seeds of this program have not only supplied docents for spring wildflower hikes, but have

## CHAPTER OFFICERS FOR 2020

Title	Name	Email	Phone
<b>President</b>	Vivian Neou	president@cnps-scv.org	(650) 260-3450
<b>Vice President</b>	Johanna Kwan	1calnative@gmail.com	
<b>Recording Secretary</b>	Priya Pharate	secretary@cnps-scv.org	
<b>Treasurer</b>	Janet Hoffmann	janet@cnps-scv.org	(408) 374-0435
<b>Past President</b>	Madeline Morrow	madeline.morrow@earthlink.net	(408) 741-1150

## Chapter Website Getting a Facelift

Our Chapter website, at [www.cnps-scv.org](http://www.cnps-scv.org), will soon have a new look. It will have the same news, reports, how-tos and photos, but the layout will adjust itself better to different-sized viewing devices – including yours!



Chapter website new look: coming soon!

We expect the new look to be launched in early November. Please send website comments to Vivian Neou at [president@cnps-scv.org](mailto:president@cnps-scv.org); or Carol Mattsson at [carol.mattsson@gmail.com](mailto:carol.mattsson@gmail.com) or (408) 255-3767.

## Stay in Touch!

The Chapter has gone virtual with all of our events until further notice. Please visit [www.cnps-scv.org/stay-in-touch](http://www.cnps-scv.org/stay-in-touch) for information on how you can continue to receive email to stay informed.

To protect the health of the volunteers who prepare the Blazing Star newsletter for mailing, we are only publishing it online at: [www.cnps-scv.org/blazing-star-newsletter](http://www.cnps-scv.org/blazing-star-newsletter).

**Printed newsletters** are available if you are unable to read the newsletter online. Email us at [newsletter@cnps-scv.org](mailto:newsletter@cnps-scv.org) or send a letter to our office at the address on the last page of this newsletter to request a printed copy.

Chapter activities will also be announced on our Chapter News list, [www.facebook.com/scv.cnps](https://www.facebook.com/scv.cnps) and Meetup at [www.meetup.com/California-Native-Plant-Society-Santa-Clara-Valley-Chapter](https://www.meetup.com/California-Native-Plant-Society-Santa-Clara-Valley-Chapter). Two things you can do to make sure you don't miss anything are:

### Join the Chapter News list:

The Santa Clara Valley Chapter emails announcements about upcoming events (talks, hikes, sales, wildflower show, garden tour), alerts, last-minute notices and late-breaking news. Events that are scheduled after the *Blazing Star* is published are announced to this list.

To sign up, please send an e-mail to:

**[cnps-scv-news+subscribe@googlegroups.com](mailto:cnps-scv-news+subscribe@googlegroups.com)**. This list is open to the general public. **Members are not automatically subscribed to the list, so you need to add yourself if you're not already on it.**

### Make sure that your membership information is correct:

Members should make sure that their contact information is correct by going to [www.cnps.org](http://www.cnps.org) and clicking on "My Profile" in the upper right-hand corner of the page. Log in if you have an account set up already, or set up an account if you don't. Check your email address to make sure that it's correct and make sure that you've checked the box to allow CNPS to send you email.

**DEADLINE FOR THE NEXT *BLAZING STAR***

**Saturday, December 12**

**[carol.mattsson@gmail.com](mailto:carol.mattsson@gmail.com) or (408) 255-3767**

Santa Clara Valley Chapter California Native Plant Society  
3921 East Bayshore Road, Suite #205  
Palo Alto, CA 94303-4326



## Join CNPS Today!

Members receive the *Fremontia*, the *Bulletin*, and the Chapter newsletter, and other benefits listed at [www.cnps.org/membership](http://www.cnps.org/membership)

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

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Telephone \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

Chapter \_\_\_\_\_

*Membership level (check one):*

- \$50 Individual  
 \$120 Plant Lover  
 \$500 Supporter  
 \$1,000 Patron  
 \$2,500 Benefactor  
 \$25 Student or Fixed Income  
 \$75 Library

*Areas of interest:*

- Advocacy  
 Botany  
 Conservation  
 Education  
 Field Trips  
 Gardening  
 Plant ID

*Donations above the membership level are gratefully accepted. Dues and donations are tax-deductible. Make your check payable to "CNPS" and mail it with this form to:*

CNPS Membership, 2707 K Street Suite 1, Sacramento, CA  
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**FIRST-CLASS**

### **CALENDAR OF EVENTS** (page # in parentheses)

**Nov 7 Sat** Fountain thistle restoration workday (4)

**Nov 10 Tue** Conservation Committee meeting (3)

**Nov 11 Wed** Photo Group photo sharing (3)

**Nov 14 Sat** **General Meeting – Tallamy** (1)

**Nov 23 Mon** Student scholarship submittals due (3)

**Dec 8 Tue** Conservation Committee meeting (3)

**Dec 12 Sat** **Newsletter submittal deadline**

**Dec 16 Wed** Native Plant Lecture – Weiss (1)

**Mons & 3rd Sats** Alum Rock workdays (4)

**Saturdays** Lake Cunningham workdays (5)

The next Chapter board meeting will be **Thursday, December 17 at 7:00pm** over Zoom. Board meetings are open to all Chapter members and their guests. There will be **no November** board meeting.

For more information contact Vivian Neou at [president@cnps-scw.org](mailto:president@cnps-scw.org).

(Reminder: all the events in this calendar are **virtual**, that is, held over live teleconference such as Zoom, except for weeding workdays.)

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 with its local chapters, seeks to increase understanding and to preserve the rich heritage of the native flora for future generations. Membership is open to all. Individual memberships are \$50.00 per year. If you have questions about your newsletter subscription, please contact [membership@cnps-scw.org](mailto:membership@cnps-scw.org). Address changes may be submitted to [cnps@cnps.org](mailto:cnps@cnps.org); please put "member address change" in the subject line.

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