



California Native Plant Society
Santa Clara Valley Chapter

THE BLAZING STAR

September-October 2014

GENERAL MEETING & PROGRAM

Friday, October 3 at 7:30 PM
Los Altos Library Program Room
13 So. San Antonio Road, Los Altos

The Plant - Rock Connection:
A talk by **Paul Heiple**

Have you ever gone on a field trip to see a rare plant, or even a common plant that you just want to see? Have you ever thought upon being taken to its site, why is this plant in this location, why not some other nearby location?

The answer to this question is complex and often difficult to answer. Join us for this talk, which will describe some of the factors that might explain, "Why is this plant here?" Paul Heiple's view of this question comes from geology and how soils differ. He hopes to open a world of interesting natural factors and inspire all of us to look for the answers. The goal is to have us think and observe. Perhaps you will experience the joy of saying, "I bet I can find (name a plant) that grows in this location." It is a thrill Paul has experienced several times.

Paul Heiple is a naturalist, interested in all aspects of science in the natural world. His interest in plants goes back as far as watching pumpkins and other plants grow in a family garden and houseplants such as his mother's collection of African violets. He currently has a collection of succulent plants, carnivorous plants and a hillside restored to native plants. His interest in weeds started early as well, as anyone working in a garden quickly learns they need to be removed. Paul continues to weed today as head Friday weeder at Edgewood County Park.

Paul is currently our Chapter's San Mateo County Invasive Plant Chair, Chapter representative at the San Mateo County Weed Management Area and an associate at Jasper Ridge where he works in the herbarium. Outside the world

of plants, Paul is a geologist by training. He worked for Getty Oil Company exploring for oil in the Williston Basin of North Dakota. The connection between the locations plants grow and the rocks underneath was an early observation that was very useful when mapping the geology in the Eastern US, where most rocks are covered by soil.

Directions: From Foothill Expy., travel ½ mile on San Antonio Rd. towards the Bay, cross Hillview and turn right into the driveway; library is on the left. From El Camino, travel towards the hills on San Antonio Rd., cross Edith and turn left into the unmarked driveway just before Hillview. The sign on San Antonio Rd. reads "Civic Center, Library and History Museum." Enter through the lobby of the main entrance.

CNPS general meetings are free and open to the public. For more information, contact Chapter President Stephen Rosenthal at sailinsteve@sbcglobal.net or the Chapter phone at (650) 260-3450.

Save the Date!

Our November Chapter General Meeting will include our **annual potluck dinner and Chapter elections**. It will be held on **Saturday, November 8** at the Shoup Garden House in Los Altos.

CHAPTER ACTIVITIES

The topic for our September 20 **Horticultural Symposium** at Foothill College is **Saving Water, Creating Beauty with California Native Plants** from **8:45am to 5pm**. Join us and attend talks by California's top horticultural leaders. Learn more and register by reading the **enclosed poster** and/or visit **cnps-sev.org**.

Native Plant Sale October 18 at Hidden Villa 10am - 3pm; Call for Volunteers

Our Fall Native Plant Sale will be held on Saturday, October 18, from **10am to 3pm** at our Hidden Villa nursery

in Los Altos Hills. Once again we're asking everyone who can to come and help with the sale. Most of the jobs listed below don't require expert knowledge of plants, and **you can choose to work one or two hours** or all day.

Before the sale, you may help prepare the nursery at three special nursery workdays, including labeling plants and weeding the garden outside the nursery. We'll work from **10am to 1pm on Wednesday - Friday, October 15-17.**

On the day of the sale, we will need people to:

- Help set up before the sale (**starting at 8am**)
- Help with parking
- Answer customers' questions about the plants and help them decide which plants to purchase
- Write up the sales tags before customers go to the cashiers to pay for their plants
- Work as cashiers
- Help customers take their purchases to their cars and bring back the wagons and carts to the nursery
- Help clean up after the sale (**3-4pm**)

The plant sales are always lots of fun to work at, and we provide **lunch** to volunteers. To volunteer on sale day please contact:

Horticultural consultation: Ray Deutsch (650) 365-6136, ray.deutsch@yahoo.ca

Writing sales tags & cashiering: Georgia Stigall (650) 941-1068, georgiastigall@yahoo.com

Parking director: Stephen Buckhout (408) 255-6233 or yscottie@pacbell.net

Miscellaneous: Melanie Cross (650) 847-1350 or Melanie@pcross.com

After the sale, we'll resume our usual **Wednesday and Thursday nursery workdays**, but switch to winter hours, which are from **noon to 3pm**.

Gardening with Natives

Gardening with Natives (GWN), a special interest group within the Chapter, includes a mix of landscape architects, designers, seasoned native plant gardeners and beginners. GWN offers talks throughout the year, which are free and open to all.

This year's themes are *Maintaining Your Native Garden* and *Native All-Stars*. The monthly speakers will share tips on specific garden tasks or on native plant families and how to care for them. For more information, visit www.cnps-scv.org/index.php/gardening/gardening-with-natives.

These programs are made possible by the co-sponsoring libraries and our volunteers who help with program logistics. If you would like to help organize similar programming at a library near you, contact arvind.kumar@cnps.org.

Attracting Pollinators with Native Plants, a Talk by Stephen Rosenthal

**Wed., September 10, 6:00-7:30 PM, Almaden Library,
6455 Camden Ave., San Jose (408) 808-3040**

Please note the earlier start time

Bees populations are increasingly coming under threat from colony collapse disorder, neonicotinoids and varroa mites. But you can help, by eliminating pesticides in your garden and planting California native plants. Find out how to choose and grow the plants most attractive to bees and other garden pollinators. Learn how easy these natives are to cultivate without chemicals or fertilizers.

Stephen Rosenthal is the current president of our Chapter of CNPS. He's a retired high tech worker and amateur photographer. He volunteers with Alum Rock Park in San Jose to help restore its native habitat. He became interested in science because the world seemed like the most wonderful puzzle. After he retired, he discovered an even more entrancing puzzle right in his own garden.

Year Round Color with Drought-Tolerant California Native Plants, a Talk by Cayce Hill

**Wed., Sep. 17, 7:00 - 8:30 PM, Morgan Hill Library,
660 West Main Avenue, Morgan Hill (408) 779-3196**

Learn how to select and group plants with varying bloom times so your garden is never without color. You'll enjoy it and so will the bees, butterflies, and hummingbirds! See how to choose different plant forms and include beautiful bark, berry, and seed producing species for maximum interest all year long.

Cayce Hill has been growing California natives since she moved to San Jose in 2008. She works as a professional gardener, designing and maintaining culinary gardens for restaurants and homeowners in the Bay Area (www.caycehillgardens.com). Her previous experience includes being a head gardener, program manager, and the treasurer for the Friends of Master Gardeners of Santa Clara County.

**California Fuchsias
for Fall Color and Hummingbirds,
a Talk by Toby Goldberg and Sherri Osaka**

**Tuesday, Sep. 23, 7:00 - 8:30 PM, Saratoga Library,
13650 Saratoga Ave., Saratoga (408) 867-6126**

Birds, especially hummingbirds, make a garden truly come alive. They are a source of endless entertainment: dashing, fluttering, feeding, jumping, scratching, drinking, bathing, and flying. Our California hummers, in particular, are independent spirits, but if you provide what they need – food, water, shelter, and nesting spaces – they will return to your urban garden again and again. California fuchsias are one of the hummingbirds' favorite nectar plants. Learn about the different types that are best for your bird-attracting garden.

Toby Goldberg is the Programs Coordinator for the Santa Clara Valley Audubon Society (www.scvas.org). She'll discuss what makes our Bay Area hummingbirds so much fun to watch, and how best to attract them to your garden. **Sherri Osaka** is a licensed Landscape Architect and Bay-Friendly Qualified Designer, who started her company, Sustainable Landscape Designs, over 17 years ago. She'll talk about California fuchsias in a garden setting.

**Biodiversity and the Native Plant Gardener,
a Talk by Arvind Kumar**

**Wednesday, Oct. 15, 7:00 - 8:30 PM, Sunnyvale
Library, 665 W. Olive Ave, Sunnyvale (408) 730-7300**

What makes California a world hotspot of biodiversity? Why should a home gardener care? Learn about the critical role native plants play in a healthy environment, how human pressures are driving them to the brink of extinction, and what you as a home gardener can do to save and celebrate them. Learn how to provide habitat for wildlife, conserve natural resources, save effort and money, and give your garden a sense of place – by using native plants. Plant lists will be available.

Arvind Kumar has been gardening with native plants for over 12 years and is a past president of our CNPS Chapter. A true advocate of the environment, he helped start the Going Native Garden Tour in 2003, has worked on native plant restoration projects at Lake Cunningham in San Jose, and received the Water Champion award from the Silicon Valley Water Conservation Coalition in 2013.

Keying with Natives

Join us as we learn and practice methods of identifying the native plants of our region (aka keying). From beginners to more advanced, there are challenges for all. Bring in plant samples if you have some or just come and work with the materials provided. We discuss the various plant books and practice keying with them. Microscopes are also available.

The upcoming dates are **Fridays, September 26 and October 24** (not Halloween), **from 6:30pm - 8:30pm**. We meet at the Peninsula Conservation Center (PCC), 3921 E. Bayshore Road in Palo Alto. For more information, please contact Dave "Tex" Houston at 350co2now@gmail.com or (650) 303-2777; or Sally Casey at (408) 377-0989.

Directions to PCC: From Hwy. 101 take the San Antonio Rd. exit and head north. Take your next left onto East Bayshore, which will curve left then right. Take your next right onto Corporation Way and immediately left into the PCC parking lot. The meeting rooms are on the first floor.

LIVECoRPs Conservation News

Please read our three articles that follow about Rare Plants, new website content and partnering with PlantRight. These are some of our many activities which help conserve and enhance native plant habitat.

LIVECoRPs meets the 3rd **Thursday** of the month at the PCC. Our next meetings will be **September 18th and October 16th**. There *will not* be a December meeting.

Please join us! For questions, comments or concerns, please contact LIVECoRPs Chair Linda Ruthruff at ldruff@hotmail.com. For **directions** to the PCC, please see the previous Keying with Natives article.

PlantRight Update

Many of you may have seen the article on PlantRight in the last volume of the CNPS Bulletin. Our Chapter's goal is to convince more of our local nurseries to take the PlantRight pledge and prevent costly invasions by horticultural stock.

Invasive plants can degrade ecosystems, alter fire regimes, and threaten native flora and fauna. To combat these effects, California spends approximately \$82 million annually on invasive plant control, but the most cost-effective way to fight invasion is to avoid using invasive



ornamental plants in the first place. PlantRight's Retail Nursery Partnership seeks to educate California nursery retailers about ornamental invasive plants and offers recommendations for noninvasive alternatives. To learn more, visit www.plantright.org/retail-nursery-partnership.

This year PlantRight updated its **Plant List** of problematic species to include a popular and commonly available plant in our area: Mexican feather grass (*Nassella tenuissima*). Learning that a grower had 14,000 mature plants ready to distribute to California's nurseries, PlantRight worked out a deal with the grower to buy plants at cost. In a FundRazr web campaign, PlantRight solicited donations from the public and raised \$8,295 to purchase these plants and dispose of them appropriately. Keep an eye out for these campaigns in the future if you'd like to contribute to the effort!

We are also looking for volunteer PlantRight ambassadors to cultivate local nurseries as PlantRight partners. Training and materials are available through PlantRight's Continuing Education program (plantright.org/continuing-education). To get started, please contact Karen Tanner at karen.e.tanner@gmail.com or (408) 355-0764.

The White Jewelflower Flourishes

This spring marked the second year of surveying the Metcalf Canyon jewelflower, *Streptanthus albidus* ssp. *albidus*. This white-flowered annual is listed as endangered by the US Fish & Wildlife Service and found growing only on serpentine in or near Metcalf Canyon in Santa Clara County. The surveys were conducted by Dr. Justen Whittall and Aaron Thom of Santa Clara University and Christal Niederer of Creekside Center for Earth Observation, and were part of a study funded by the US Bureau of Reclamation. The surveys provided extensive data on the location and number of remaining populations of the rare jewelflower in this rapidly urbanizing county, and also revealed a surprising population explosion of the jewelflower in Metcalf Canyon itself.

A total of 12 *Streptanthus* sites listed in the California Natural Diversity Database were visited by the survey team. They found the jewelflower had gone extinct in two locations and was misidentified in five locations. Populations with varying degrees of health and vigor were found in five locations, including more than 100,000 at Motorcycle Park near Metcalf Road. Additionally, the surveyors identified a new nearby population in a roadcut on Hellyer Avenue.

Population explosions are not unheard of for this species. People who drive Metcalf Road regularly have seen it happen a few times in past years. Perhaps the dry winter and sparse late season rains favored this annual over competing nonnative annual grasses. The related "most beautiful jewelflower" (*Streptanthus albidus* ssp. *peramoenus*) also increased its population this season at nearby sites on Coyote Ridge.

The goal of this federally-financed project is the reintroduction of the Metcalf Canyon jewelflower to a location where it formerly flourished, Tulare Hill, an isolated rise in Coyote Valley opposite Metcalf Canyon. Seeds for the reintroduction have been gathered and grown at the botany labs at Santa Clara University. Chapter volunteers helped in the effort last September, as reported in the November-December 2013 issue of the *Blazing Star*.

New Rare and Endangered Plants Page

By Toni Corelli, Rare Plants Chair for San Mateo County

Coming soon to our Chapter website is more information about our rare plants that occur in San Mateo and Santa Clara County. The site will include plant pages with photos and other valuable information. Watch it grow at www.cnps-scv.org/index.php/conservation/rare-plants.

This project is being done with valuable help from Toni Corelli, Charley Pow and Karen Tanner. For more information, contact Toni at corelli@coastside.net.



Celebrating 50 Years
of Progress and Promise

The next **CNPS Conservation Conference will be held from January 15 - 17 at San Jose's DoubleTree Hotel.** The conference will celebrate CNPS' 50th anniversary with talks, posters, field trips, workshops, and more. For more info. on volunteering, sponsorship, registration, and key dates, visit cnps.org/cnps/conservation/conference/2015.

Volunteers Needed: CNPS is looking for people to fill positions in committees now for tasks leading up to the conference in January, in addition to the many volunteers needed during the week of the conference. Registration discounts will be available for volunteers, and all volunteers should be current members of CNPS. We especially encourage **students** who want to perform work-exchange in order to attend the conference. Please contact the conference committee at if you are interested in volunteering, at volunteers@cnps.org.

Register for the Conference by October 31 for Early Registration Savings! Registration includes conference materials, admission to concurrent, plenary, and poster sessions as well as the exhibit hall, refreshment breaks, social hours, and arts events. The banquet, workshops, and field trips carry additional fees. **CNPS Members** receive an additional discount. Register soon to save!

Shaping the Chapter's Future – We Want You!

By Georgia Stigall, 2003/2004 Chapter President

Have you ever considered why so many past presidents and other Chapter officers and chairpersons are still involved in Chapter activities and decision-making, some for many years after they held a position? The simple answer is that our Chapter is vibrant and inclusive in our advancement of the CNPS mission. Anyone who volunteers for the Chapter has a built-in team of helpers and idea generators as part of the package.

We also strive to keep our Chapter healthy by bringing in fresh voices and perspectives to combine with the institutional memory and wisdom of long-time volunteers.

If you believe in what CNPS Santa Clara Valley Chapter is doing, remember we need leaders to organize all the wonderful work our members do. This is where you come in! If you have ideas, musings, opinions or any other input about the direction of our Chapter, **please consider a leadership position**. You could even “learn the ropes” by sharing a position with someone who has done the job before. Our Chapter election is held in November and information about openings will be shared via our newsletter, the Chapter e-mail list and our Facebook page.

Of course for those who wish to volunteer without official position or title, we welcome you as well in our all-volunteer Chapter! Please feel free to contact us via e-mail, phone, postal mail or in person at any of our events or activities. The author of this article also welcomes input on this topic, to be shared with Chapter leadership, at georgiastigall@yahoo.com (please put “CNPS” in the subject line.)

CHAPTER SERVICE OUTINGS

Edgewood Weed Warriors

Our 25-year volunteer restoration program strives to make Edgewood Park and Natural Preserve an inspirational showcase of all CNPS stands for. Come share the beauty of Edgewood with us, learn a ton, and help keep Edgewood

native! Our **9am Friday** sessions run year round; **5:30pm Wednesday** sessions continue through Daylight Savings Time (DST). Since DST ends November 2, our last Wednesday session will be **October 29**.

For Edgewood Weed Warrior (EWW) schedules, meeting places, and other details visit www.cnps-scvc.org; contact Paul Heiple (650) 854-7125, pheiple@gmail.com or John Allen (jcakwa@earthlink.net) for Friday info; or contact EWW program chair Drew Shell (shell@corp.webtv.net) for Wednesday/Saturday info.

CHAPTER FIELD TRIPS

Chapter field trips are free and generally open to the public. They are oriented to conservation, protection and enjoyment of California native plants and wildlife, and we adhere to all rules and guidelines for the lands on which we are visiting.

In our region it is very important to be prepared for hiking on rugged and steep terrain, wide temperature ranges and rapidly changing conditions at any time of year. All participants should wear sturdy footwear and carry sufficient water, sun protection, food, clothing layers, personal first aid and other supplies you may need. If you have any questions about your ability to participate in a particular field trip, please contact the trip leader in advance.

Sat Oct 25 10am – 4pm Castle Rock Fall Hike (Skyline – Santa Cruz Mountains)

Join Ken Himes and Dee Wong on this fall hike along Skyline Ridge. Several plant communities, including Broadleaf-Evergreen and Chaparral will be observed along this 4-5 mile moderately-paced walk. We'll look for fall colors from black oak and bigleaf maple trees, and we'll see if we can find late season blooms of Orchid family member rattlesnake plantain (*Goodyera oblongifolia*). We'll also look for redwood penstemon (*Keckiella corymbosa*) still in bloom.

We'll stop for lunch. Wear sturdy shoes, as part of the path crosses over sandstone outcroppings. **To reserve a spot** or for more information, call Ken at (650) 591-8560 or email Dee at dswong88@yahoo.com.

DEADLINE FOR THE NEXT *BLAZING STAR*

Saturday, October 4, 2014

**Email: mattsson@surfpix.net
Phone: (408) 255-3767**

Santa Clara Valley Chapter California Native Plant Society
3921 East Bayshore Road
Palo Alto, CA 94303



Join CNPS Today!

Members receive the *Fremontia*, the *Bulletin*, and the Chapter newsletter, and other benefits listed at www.cnps.org/membership

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Membership level (check one):

- \$45 Individual
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 \$100 Plant Lover
 \$300 Patron
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Areas of interest:

- Advocacy
 Botany
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 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 95816 • 916-447-2677 • fax 916-447-2727

FIRST-CLASS

CALENDAR OF EVENTS (page # in parentheses)

Sep 10 Wed GWN – Pollinators – Rosenthal (2)
Sep 17 Wed GWN – Year Round Color – Hill (2)
Sep 18 Thu LIVECoRPs (conservation) meeting (3)
Sep 20 Sat Horticultural Symposium (1 + poster)
Sep 23 Tue GWN – Fuchsias – Goldberg / Osaka (3)
Sep 26 Fri Keying with Natives (3)
Oct 3 Fri **General Meeting and Program** (1)
Oct 4 Sat **Newsletter submittal deadline** (5)
Oct 15-17 Wed-Fri Special Nursery Workdays (2)

Oct 15 Wed GWN – Biodiversity – Kumar (3)
Oct 16 Thu LIVECoRPs (conservation) meeting (3)
Oct 18 Sat **Native Plant Sale** (1 + poster)
Oct 23 Thu **Newsletter Mailing Party - 10am PCC**
Oct 24 Fri Keying with Natives (3)
Oct 25 Sat Castle Rock Field Trip (5)
Oct 31 Fri Conservation Conf. early reg. closes (5)
Wed & Thu 10am-1pm Nursery work sessions (2)
Wed 5:30pm, Fri 9am Edgewood Weed Warriors (5)

The next Chapter Board meeting will be **Thu., October 9 at 7:00pm** at the PCC, 3921 E. Bayshore Road in Palo Alto.

Chapter Board meetings are open to all Chapter members and their guests.

For more information contact Stephen Rosenthal at sailinsteve@sbcglobal.net.

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 \$45.00 per year. If you have questions about your newsletter subscription, please contact membership@cnps-scv.org. Address changes may be submitted to cnps@cnps.org and please put "member address change" in the subject line.

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