

Wildflower Conservation and Etiquette

Wildflowers are the jewels of the public lands. Like any treasure, they must be protected for all to enjoy. You can join the Forest Service, Fish and Wildlife Service, Bureau of Land Management, the National Park Service, California State Parks, and the California Native Plant Society (**CNPS**) in the stewardship of these priceless resources.

- Take a hike and stop to smell the fragrant native wild roses.
- Take only photographs and memories when you leave.
- Please, don't pick the flowers.
- Tread lightly and stay on the trails.
- Ask about plants at **CNPS** meetings, which are free and open to the public.
- Get involved! Explore volunteer opportunities on your public lands.



Mule ears in Stebbins Cold Canyon

Native Plant Appreciation

Over 15,000 different species of native plants are recognized in the United States and Canada. Several areas of the country are particularly rich in plant species, including California, Florida, Hawaii, and the Southwest. Many new species are discovered each year. Just recently the Shasta Snow Wreath, an attractive shrub, was discovered in the hills of northern California.

The first step towards appreciating wildflowers is to explore public lands. Numerous guided walks, displays, presentations, and guidebooks have been developed to aid in public appreciation and interpretation of the values and wonders of wildflowers. Educational materials include plant identification books, coloring books, and trail guides to highlight the best ways to learn and enjoy our native wildflowers.



*Lupine & Clover
Table Mountain*

Please, do NOT pick the wildflowers.

Volunteer Opportunities

If you are interested in learning more about native flora, or would like sharing your appreciation with others, join in the activities of your local **CNPS** chapter.

Make a Difference

Here is just a few ways you can help:

- Volunteer at our outreach event on April 8 & 9, 2006 - Wildflower Weekend !
- Help survey lands to discover new plant species.
- Write a letter supporting plant preservation.
- Join efforts to remove alien plants.
- Restore native plant populations and their habitats.

Please include me as a **CNPS** member.

(Just send us your name, address, phone and email address along with your desired level and describe your preference for any additional gifts)

___ Student/Retired/Limited Income.....	\$20
___ Individual or Library.....	\$35
___ Family or Group.....	\$45
___ Supporting.....	\$75
___ Plant Lover.....	\$100
___ Patron.....	\$250
___ Benefactor.....	\$500

For higher levels, please contact the State Office (916) 447-2677.

- In addition to my dues, I am enclosing a gift to support **CNPS Sacramento Valley Chapter** activities. Please use my contribution:

- ___ Where most needed.
- ___ Mather Vernal Pools Preservation Campaign.
- ___ Old City Cemetery Native Plant Demo Garden.
- ___ Kids in Native Gardens Project.

Please make check payable to "CNPS" and mail to:
2707 K Street, Ste 1, Sacramento, CA 95816-5113



Puppet Show audience at Wildflower Weekend, 2005

CNPS Sacramento Valley Chapter

Please visit our web site at:
www.SacValleyCNPS.org

For more information or to find out how you can become involved, please contact Chris Lewis, Chapter President: lewisc@surewest.net, (916) 482-5282

The Importance of Plants and Plant Communities



Hibiscus lasiocarpus, Photo by George Hartwell

The mission of the **California Native Plant Society** is to

increase understanding and appreciation of California's native plants and to conserve them and their natural habitats through science, education, advocacy, horticulture and land stewardship.



Importance of Plants and Plant Communities

(Adapted by the Sacramento Valley Chapter Board From 'Celebrating Wildflowers', A Cooperative Document By The US Forest Service, US Fish and Wildlife Service, National Park Service and Bureau Of Land Management)

Plants and plant communities are critically important to humans and our environment.



Putah Creek near Davis, CA
Photo by Marc Hoshovsky

Aesthetics

Plants have great aesthetic value. How many of us would be willing to live without the plants around us, including the forests, oak woodlands, wetlands, grasslands, and vernal pools surrounding our towns and cities? Native plants also provide a link with nature and our nation's diverse cultural history.

Food

Herbivores on the planet survive by eating plants. Plants, therefore, are the ultimate source of the animal products we consume, such as meat, milk and eggs. Although some 3,000 species of plants have been used by humans for food, 90 percent of the world's food comes from only 20 plant species. Three species of grasses - rice, corn, and wheat - are by far the most important food plants. Native plants have great-untapped potential as sources of improved genetic traits, such as disease resistance and drought tolerance, which cultivated species lack.

Medicine

Throughout history plants have been of paramount importance to medicine. Forty to 50 percent of all medicinal drugs originate from wild plants. One example is the anti-cancer drug Taxol, derived from the Pacific Yew tree, which has worked against a broad range of cancers. Today, 25% of all prescriptions written annually in the US contain chemicals from plants like those mentioned here. Despite the technological and medical advances, most plants remain untested for their medical potential. More drugs may be found from wild plant species, and some of those species are yet undiscovered.

Industrial Products

Plants are immensely important for the consumer goods they provide. For example, fibers from plants provide clothing, rope, and the paper for this document. Wood, with its many uses is a plant product. Future fuel needs may also be met by plants, in the form of hydrocarbons derived from such species as the Gopher Plant, or alcohols derived from corn and sugar cane. While many of the most important industrial products come from relatively common plants, rare and uncommon plants have provided useful substances ranging from insect repellent to lubricants.

Recreation

Plant communities form the basis for many important recreational activities, including hiking, fishing, hunting, photography, and nature observation.

Air Quality

The oxygen in the air we breathe is derived from the photosynthesis of plants. The quality of the air can be greatly influenced by plants. Vegetation can restrict the movement of dust and pollutants. Plants, through the intake of carbon dioxide, can moderate the greenhouse effect resulting from the burning of fossil fuels.

Water Quality

Plants are extremely important in maintaining the quality of the water we use.



Dragonfly on Cattails

A diverse cover of plants aids in maintaining healthy watersheds, streams, and lakes by regulating stream flows, absorbing oils, and filtering toxins and sediments from water.

Soil Maintenance

The delicate wildflowers that dot the hillsides through spring and summer protect the soil from rampaging rains as they have done for thousands of years. Without adequate plant cover, wind and water can erode the fertile soil upon which all life depends for survival.



"Splash" students at Mather Vernal Pools

Climate

Plant cover influences regional climates. Forest and marshes, for example, can greatly moderate local climates. Natural disasters, such as drought, have been attributed to the destruction of forests and other critically important plant communities.

Fish and Wildlife Habitat

Plant communities provide the habitat necessary to sustain wildlife and fish populations. Plant communities are the first link of complex food chains for virtually all terrestrial and aquatic animal communities.

Ecosystem Stability

As described above, diverse plant communities are extremely important for sustaining healthy ecosystems. Every species counts. Plant habitats must be protected before species become critically endangered. With your support, we can conserve the more than 472 threatened and endangered plants and the 5,000 other plant species that are at risk of extinction.