



# Hibiscus

June 2004

Sacramento Valley Chapter Newsletter • California Native Plant Society  
www.sacvalleycnps.org

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.

## Sacramento Valley CNPS Invites You to Our Dessert Social and Volunteer Recognition Night

❧ Elegant & Decadent Desserts by Master Chef Tim Nosal ❧



Hibiscus lasiocarpus or Rose-mallow  
Sacramento National Wildlife Refuge, Willows, CA;  
Riparian Loop Trail  
Photo courtesy of CalPhoto © 2002 George W. Hartwell

❧ Wednesday Evening,  
June 9th, 7:00-9:00

❧ Sacramento Garden & Arts  
Center in McKinley Park

❧ Music by Sue Jones &  
Dave Wright

❧ Nature Slide Show

❧ Plant Identification  
Challenge !

❧ \$10 Adults ♦ \$3 under 12 ♦ Free 3 & under ❧

Coffee & Tea provided ♦ Bring your own spirits

❧ Reservations requested ❧

Contact Mary 961-4057/ Mmaret@mindsync.com

❧ Proceeds to benefit our new Central Valley Botanist Fund ❧



## Nature Walks with Jack Hiehle

Bring binoculars and suitable footwear.

### June Nature Walks

Wed. June 6, 8:00 AM–noon. Effie Yeaw Nature Center in Ancill Hoffman park. Meet at Effie Yeaw parking lot.

Sat. June 26, 7:00 AM–late afternoon. Wright's Lake, botanizing or birding with the Audubon Society. Meet at N. end of Raley's parking lot on El Dorado Hills Blvd., just off Hwy 50. A good hike for those who want to learn the common names of many native plants.

Wed. June 30, evening. First Beaver Walk of the season. Call Jack for details. Limit 8 people; this walk is best for ages 7 & up.

### July Nature Walks

Wed. July 7, evening. Beaver Walk.

Sat. July 10, 9 AM–late afternoon. Mt. Judah botanizing: learn common names of many Sierra plants. I-80 east to Soda Springs exit. Take road to summit; right at summit about ¼ mile to Pacific Crest trail head.

Wed. July 21, evening. Beaver Walk.

Sat. July 24th. Carson Pass botanizing. Limit 10. Call Jack for time and location.

### Habitat Improvement at Effie Yeaw

Sun. June 13th, 8:00 AM. Call Jack for location.

Sun. July 25th, 8:00 AM. Call Jack for location.

To contact Jack for Beaver Walks, Habitat Improvement, etc., call (916) 967-0777.

## Sacramento Chapter CNPS Field Trip Schedule

JUNE 2004

### Feather Falls (Plumas)

Sun. June 6, 9:00 AM

**Field Trip Leaders:** Glen Holstein and Tim Nosal  
**Meet at:** Park & Ride at the West Capitol exit off I-80 in West Sacramento

**Contact:** Glen Holstein holstein@cal.net, Tim Nosal trnosal@aol.com

### Point Reyes National Seashore (Marin)

Sat. June 19, 9:00 AM

**Field Trip Leader:** Tim Nosal  
**Meet at:** Park & Ride at the West Capitol exit off I-80 in West Sacramento

**Contact:** Tim Nosal trnosal@aol.com

## Wanted: Old Redwood Fencing

Are you tearing down an old fence? How about letting Bill Jenkins recycle that wood into the bird houses, bat houses, and bird feeders that he makes and sells to benefit our chapter? If you have used lumber to donate, please call Bill at (916) 961-7772 or email him at wjenk6314@cs.com.

## The Human Race—A Fun Time Had by All

Saturday, May 1 began as a beautiful morning and a perfect way to begin our chapter's first annual involvement in the Human Race, held at the Maidu Regional Community Center in Roseville and organized by the Foothill Volunteer Center of Auburn. We began our pre-race preparations with coffee, juices, fruit, and Krispy Kreme donuts. The 5K (3.2 miles) course was relatively flat and wrapped around an oak woodland open space.

From our crew, Brian Collett (of The Dangermond Group) finished eighth place overall. Hazel, adorned in native foliage, left us in a flash of green stockings and finished in 37 minutes. John Hunter, our fern, Diana, our Tidy Tip, Bonnie, with a crown of vines, Chris, adorned with Dutchman's Pipevine and Spicebush, and me, the Queen Bee, all ambled across the finish line within a leisurely 55 minutes. We stopped occasionally to examine the roadside wildflowers in bloom.

The only group in costumes, we generated much interest in the California Native Plant Society and even earned over \$80 in books and seed sales. Our fundraising efforts, not including sales, net us over \$500.

Our fundraising winners, including their prizes, were:

**1st Place, Diana Hickson**—raised \$240; \$100 Gift Certificate to REI.

**2nd Place, John Hunter**—raised over \$100; \$75 Gift Certificate to Capital Nursery; also, through the random drawing held at the race, a Gift Certificate to Applebees.

**3rd Place, Hazel Gordon**—raised \$85; \$25 Gift Certificate to Corti Bros.

I would like to thank everyone who donated and helped us in our efforts with the Human Race. I would especially like to thank Paul Weller, of Foothill Associates, and my husband, Mike, whom I conscripted to staff our table during the race.

Cassandra Nguyen Musto



Our race participants pause to key out some flowers. L-R: Bonnie Ross, Chris Lewis, Cassandra Nguyen Musto, Diana Hickson, & John Hunter

The California Native Plant Society and the Davis Botanical Society

# Grass Identification for People Afraid of a Grass Spikelet

A Beginners' Grass Identification Workshop

Saturday, June 12, 2004, 9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.

The emphasis of this one-day class will be familiarizing participants with grass morphology and terminology. We will dissect a range of common weedy and native grasses found in California. By the afternoon, we will begin to key out grasses, using the grass keys in the Jepson Manual of Higher Plants of California and the new Jepson Desert Manual. Students will spend the day dissecting grasses in a laboratory setting, using dissecting microscopes. If students own a Jepson Manual, they should bring it. We will have extra books on hand, for those that need them, although students may have to share. Dissecting tools will be loaned out for the duration of the class.

Instructor: Ellen Dean, UC Davis Herbarium

Cost: \$50 members (either CNPS or Davis Botanical Society), \$70 non-members

Location: University of California Davis, 291 Robbins Hall

Details: We will break at noon for lunch. Lunch is not provided. Maps will be provided upon receipt of payment.

*Enrollment cap is for 20 participants so register early!*

**Registration Form:** Registration Deadline is June 4, 2004

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_ I am a member of CNPS or DBS (circle one)

Amount Enclosed: \_\_\_\_\_

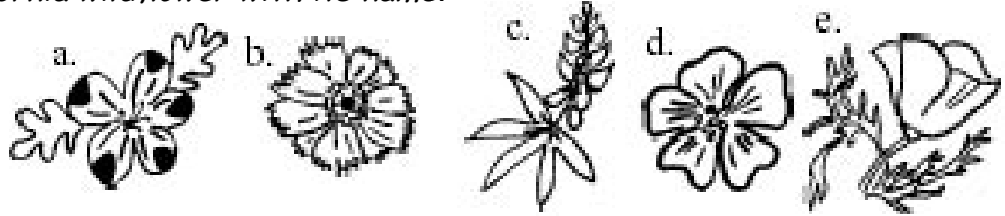
Please send payment to: UC Davis Herbarium, Section of Plant Biology, UC Davis, One Shields Ave., Davis, CA 95616

Questions? Call the herbarium at 530-752-1091

## CNPS Kids Challenge

Can you match the California wildflower with its name?

poppy  
tidy tips  
five spot  
meadowfoam  
lupine  
(answers at bottom of page)



*Did you know:*

The California Poppy (*Eschscholzia Californica*) was voted to be the State Flower on December 12, 1890 by the California State Floral Society.

Courtesy of Paula Sanders, Walk on the Wildside 2004

### How the *Hibiscus* Got Its Name

California Hibiscus was chosen at a chapter meeting called back in the early eighties (or possibly late seventies) to pick a chapter logo flower. At that time other chapters had flowers symbolizing their chapters but we didn't. I suggested the California Hibiscus because it was a big and beautiful rare and threatened species that occurred in riparian and wetland habitats, which at that time were a major focus of chapter conservation activities. Many areas like Stone Lakes and Bannon Island were unprotected and very much at risk then just as Mather is now. The folks on the committee, which included Betty Matyas and Kay Antunez, liked the idea and thus the Hibiscus newsletter and logo were born. Since then California Hibiscus has been lumped as a species with eastern hibiscuses, but our obviously different California variety is still a unique and beautiful native that's now safer thanks to CNPS.

Glen Holstein



Hibiscus photos courtesy of CalPhoto © 2002 George W. Hartwell

### Suggestions - Let us hear your voice.

- We have **Programs at Chapter Meetings** in January, February, March, April, May, June, September, October, and November. What programs have been your favorite?
- What/who would you like to see?
- We go to **Fairs and Events** year round. Is there a festival, educational fair, or other event you think the California Native Plant Society should be?

Let us know your ideas. Email us at [SacValleyINFO@yahoo.com](mailto:SacValleyINFO@yahoo.com) or phone Chris at 482-5282

Answers: poppy, e; tidy tips, b; five spot, a; meadowfoam, d; lupine, c.

## All We Are Saying Is Give Grass a Chance

What if I told you that there is a horticultural technique that you could use which would reduce the use of water, reduce water/air/noise pollution, provide habitat for native wildlife, save you time, and add beauty to your life? Would you believe me?

Now sit down, take a few deep breaths and suspend your disbelief for a moment. I would like you to consider downsizing the lawn surrounding your home. I know, everyone has a lawn, your parents had a lawn, your grandparents had a lawn, etc. Nonetheless, a lawn of exotic grasses really does not make sense in the Central Valley of California. I would like you to consider giving native Californian grasses a chance.

To avoid scaring your significant other and the neighbors, it might be advisable to start slowly, with a native grass “experiment.” Try taking out a portion of your existing lawn and replacing it with native grasses. For the first step you will need a flat headed square shovel and a wheelbarrow. A good area to start with your native grass border is at the far edge of your lawn where it might meet a fence or a sidewalk. Use the shovel to dig a shallow trough about 6 inches deep around the area that you are planning to remove lawn from, to create a tidy look. Then hold the shovel with one hand near the end of the shovel handle and the other about 1/3 of the way up the shovel from the shovel head. Swing the shovel laterally using the shovel’s momentum to sever the grass roots about 4 inches below the turf surface. After you have severed about 2 feet of roots laterally, use the shovel to chop off this section with the now severed roots, throw it in the wheelbarrow, and head off to the mulch pile. This technique will allow you to quickly remove a small portion of grass. If you are feeling really ambitious, rental companies often rent turf cutters for removing as much turf as you want in short order.

Once the turf has been removed, rake the site smooth with a hard rake. You probably want to minimize the weed seed bank to make your life easier. To germinate weed seeds, water the site well once a day for about one week when the weather is warm. After the weed seeds have all sprouted then do not water the site any more until all the weed seedlings have been killed by this engineered drought. Now that the site has been sterilized, you are ready to plant with native grasses.

Select grasses that will tolerate the sun/shade conditions in your yard from the chart below. It is a good idea to use more than one species to add diversity to your native grass border.

Native grasses are available from distributors as seeds or as plugs. Seeds can be started by spreading them on the ground and covering them with native grass straw. Then the seeds should be watered regularly to keep the soil moist (once or twice a day in the summer depending on the site).

For faster establishment you can use native grass plugs. If you are going with this option, then be sure to do your planting on a cool overcast day or in the early morning or evening. Direct sunlight on a hot day can kill the roots of a grass plug in just a few seconds. Insert your trowel into the earth and bounce it from side to side to open up a hole. It is important to minimize disturbance to the soil, to avoid exposing more photodormant weed seeds to the light of day after you just sterilized the soil. Then insert the native grass plug and firm the soil around the roots. To further minimize weeds and to retain soil moisture spread a 2-inch thick layer of woody mulch on the ground between grass plugs. Be sure to give all of the grass plugs a good watering as soon as you can after planting, but avoid planting in wet soil as this can damage soil structure.

You will need to water the native grass boarder regularly for the first year to establish the plants. You should give a deep watering to the native grass border at least once a day during hot summer weather and less often as the weather cools off. The following year you will probably only need to water the grasses once a week or less during the summer.

Now you can sit back and enjoy a cool drink while your recreational mower neighbor runs around pouring fertilizer, pesticides and water on his lawn and creating more pollution running over the lawn with a gas guzzling, noise polluting mower. Come to think of it you might want to get your neighbor to put in a native grass border as well, but that is another article...

Send any native plant horticulture questions to davidbergendorf@hotmail.com and you might see the answer in the next newsletter.

David Bergendorf and Shelley Gardner

California Native Grasses for Your Border		
Common Name	Scientific Name	Light requirement
spike bentgrass	<i>Agrostis exarata</i>	full sun, dry/wet
alkali sacaton	<i>Sporobolus airoides</i>	full sun, dry/wet
deergass	<i>Muhlenbergia rigens</i>	full sun, dry/moist
California meadow barley	<i>Hordeum brachyantherum</i>	full sun, moist/wet
purple needlegrass	<i>Nassella pulchra</i>	full sun, dry/moist
beardless wildrye	<i>Leymus triticoides</i>	sun/shade, dry/moist
blue wildrye	<i>Elymus glaucus</i>	sun/shade, dry/moist

## Using CEQA to Protect Plant Communities

In enacting the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), the legislature declared the State's policy "to preserve for future generations representations of all plant and animal communities." By participating in the CEQA public review process, one may be able to require changes in a proposed project that will reduce or avoid impacts to plant communities. Public participation also establishes legal standing in the event that a court challenge becomes necessary.

The key to effectively using the CEQA process to protect plant communities is to focus on gathering and submitting "substantial evidence" in the form of *facts, expert opinion, and reasonable inferences* based on those sources. This article discusses provisions of CEQA and the CEQA Guidelines that can be used by the public to help protect plant communities.

**Plant communities supporting rare species:** Section 15065 of the CEQA Guidelines requires an EIR if a project may "reduce the number or restrict the range of an endangered, rare or threatened ["RTE"] species." In cases where any RTE plant (or animal) may be affected by a proposed project, comments should request that an EIR be prepared to mitigate or avoid impacts to the entire natural community (including plants) upon which RTE species may depend.

**Plant communities threatened with elimination:** Section 15065 also requires an EIR if "the project has the potential to ... threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community." Comments on large projects that threaten to completely eliminate a plant community should request that an EIR be prepared to mitigate or avoid the loss of such communities.

**Riparian plant communities:** Section IV (b) of the CEQA Environmental Checklist (Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines) requires a lead agency to consider whether the project may have "a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat." Comments should request analysis and mitigation or avoidance of potential impacts to riparian communities that may be directly, or indirectly, adversely affected by the project.

**Wetland plant communities:** Section IV(c) of the CEQA Environmental Checklist asks if a project would have "a substantial adverse effect on federally protected wetlands." The State of California and the Fish and Game Commission (FGC) have also independently recognized the value of the State's wetlands with a "no net loss of wetlands" policy. Comments should request analysis and mitigation or avoidance of potential impacts to wetland plant communities that may be directly, or indirectly, adversely affected by a project.

**Identified sensitive natural communities:** Section IV (b) of the CEQA Environmental Checklist asks if a project may have "a substantial adverse effect on any...sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, regulations..." Section IV (b) also asks if a project

will have a substantial adverse impact on a "sensitive natural community identified ... by the California Department of Fish and Game or US Fish and Wildlife Service." Similarly, section IV (e) asks if a project will "conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources..." If a plant community is identified as sensitive in state or federal listings, such as CDFG's California Natural Diversity Database (located on the web at [www.dfg.ca.gov/whdab/pdfs/natcomlist.pdf](http://www.dfg.ca.gov/whdab/pdfs/natcomlist.pdf)), or in an overlying General Plan or local ordinances, comments should request analysis of, and mitigation of impacts to, such communities.

**Other rare communities, not previously identified:** Even if CEQA does not specifically address a vegetation community, comments requesting analysis of impacts to such communities may be made based on accompanying submittals to establish the nature and existence of the community. One might be able to show that a study should be done, based on site-specific factors. For example, if site characteristics for a proposed project are generally similar to a nearby, known rare community, one might infer that the plant community may exist on the project site. Or, "substantial evidence" that a rare vegetation type may exist on the site may be inferred by providing data from adjacent or nearby areas with similar environmental characteristics that support such vegetation types.

Excellent additional resources for understanding the CEQA public review process include the Planning and Conservation League's "Community Guide to the California Environmental Quality Act" by J. William Yeates (see [www.pcl.org](http://www.pcl.org)), and "How to Comment on a CEQA Document" by T. Peterson in *Fremontia* 29 (3-4):27-37.

Keith Wagner is an attorney with the Law Office of J. William Yeates. He can be reached at (916) 860-2006. For the full article, see Volume 5 of The Sampler at [www.cnps.org](http://www.cnps.org), under Vegetation Program.


Keith G. Wagner



## Jepson Herbarium Weekend Workshops

The *Friends of the Jepson Herbarium* are pleased to present a broad range of topics for this year's weekend workshop series. For more information on the workshops, or to register, please consult <http://ucjeps.berkeley.edu/jepwkshp.html> or phone Cynthia Perrine, Public Programs Coordinator at the Jepson Herbarium, (510) 643-7008.

**June 4-6:** Fire and Oak Ecology; **June 17-20:** Spring Mountains (Nevada) Flora; **July 22-25:** Mt. Lassen Flora; **Sept 8-12:** Vegetation Mapping and Classification in Yosemite



**Volunteer Opportunities**—CNPS depends on volunteers for the success of its programs and activities. If you would like to volunteer, please contact Chris at 482-5282.

- |                  |                  |                |                      |
|------------------|------------------|----------------|----------------------|
| ❖ Plant surveys  | ❖ Horticulture   | ❖ Website      | ❖ Hospitality        |
| ❖ Letter writing | ❖ School gardens | ❖ Reporter     | ❖ Membership         |
| ❖ Conservation   | ❖ Grant writing  | ❖ Photographer | ❖ Fundraising        |
| ❖ Nature guides  | ❖ Newsletter     | ❖ Book sales   | ❖ Exotic pest plants |
| ❖ Education      | ❖ Outreach       | ❖ Plant sale   | ❖ Legislation        |

### Board Bios

#### Russell Huddleston

1. How long have you been a CNPS member? Six years; prior to that I was a member of the Native Plant Society of Oregon.

2. What got you interested in CNPS? An interest in native plant conservation and science. CNPS books, conservation programs, symposiums, hikes and other activities offer a great way to learn more about native plant ecology, conservation, gardening, etc. CNPS provides an excellent opportunity to interact with other people who share a common interest in native flora.

3. What does your board position involve? I'm the rare-plant co-chair with Heidi West. I'm somewhat new to this position and Heidi and I are working on developing plans for the Sacramento Chapter's rare plant program. Things we are interested in are updating the existing information on known populations of rare plants in our area and looking for opportunities to survey areas for potentially new populations. We are also looking at ways to promote education and awareness of rare plants in the Sacramento region.

4. Any special projects you're working on now? Unfortunately not at the moment.

5. Any special project you worked on in the past that was especially important to you? Other CNPS positions you've held? I think to date my most memorable project was having the opportunity to participate in the long term monitoring program and conservation efforts for two species endemic to southern Oregon: Cook's lomatium (*Lomatium cookii*) and large-flowered meadowfoam (*Limnanthes floccosa* ssp. *grandiflora*). These two species were listed as endangered by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife service in 1992.

6. What do you do when you're not obsessed with native plants? My wife Kelly and I enjoy traveling, the arts, and good food.

7. What would other CNPS'ers be surprised to know about you? Are there any offbeat talents you have? My first career had absolutely nothing to do with plants or biology... Prior to returning to school I graduated with a Bachelors in Fine Arts and spent nine seasons as a lighting technician with the Oregon Shakespeare Festival.

### Newsletter Submissions

We can always use articles, photos and art work for the newsletter. If you've got a pent-up inner writer, photographer, or illustrator yearning for self-expression, how about turning your talents toward CNPS? Here's how:

First, drop me a line, telling me what you'd like to submit and when you think you can have it in. This is especially important if you have special formatting needs.

Second, get it in early if possible. The deadline is the eighth of the month preceding the newsletter, that is, Aug. 8 for the Sept. newsletter, but early submission helps me hash out problems.

Third, text submissions should be in Word, RTF, text-only, or .sxw (OpenOffice.org) format. Often you can just paste them into an email. The simpler the formatting, the better. For those not on email, give me a call.

Photo or graphic submissions are a little trickier. The ideal is black and white (it'll always be black and white in the end), at least 300 pixels/inch. I get a lot of color photos at lower resolutions, and it all works out, but you can't blame a girl for asking. JPEG, TIFF, Illustrator, or Photo-shop formats are all fine.

NEXT NEWSLETTER DEADLINE: Aug. 8th.

To contact Amy Boyer: [ajboyer@cal.net](mailto:ajboyer@cal.net), or call (530) 753-6323.



Board members congregated for the May board meeting at the Demonstration Garden in the Sacramento Cemetery. Standing, L-R: Mary Maret, Frank Wallace, Eva Butler, Sabrina Okamura-Johnson, Heidi West, Mary Schiedt, Chris Lewis, Bill Patterson. Seated: Cassandra Nguyen Musto, Bonnie Ross, Amy Boyer, John Hunter, Chris Wilkinson, Glen Holstein, Peggy Berry.



CNPS Newsletter  
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 Sacramento, CA 95816-0585

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JUNE 2004 Hibiscus

Hibiscus Newsletter The Sacramento Valley chapter newsletter, Hibiscus, is published every month, except for December, July and August. Subscriptions are \$10.00 for one year. If you wish to subscribe solely to the newsletter, send your check for \$10, made out to: CNPS Chris Wilkinson, PO Box 160585, Sacramento, CA 95816-0585. Articles for Hibiscus must be to the newsletter editor by the 8th of the month for the next month's issue.

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Rare Plants	Heidi West, 457-4899, corydoras22@msn.com, and Russell Huddleston, 456-1988, rhuddle1@CH2M.com
School Gardens	Jennifer Hogan, 530 661-3410, jhogan@water.ca.gov
Spring Plant Sale	Clay Courtright, 775-4428, clay_courtright@fws.gov Marin Lemieux, 447-2677, mlemieux@cnps.org
Stockton Sub-Chapter	Martha Mallery, 209 477-3966
Members at Large:	Sabrina Okamura-Johnson, 929-7896, Melinda Rivasplata melrivas@aol.com 454-5937
OPEN: Vice-President, Poster Chair, future Programs Chair, Web Site	

**MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION**

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address \_\_\_\_\_  
 City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_  
 Zipcode \_\_\_\_\_

I wish to affiliate with  
 \_\_\_ Sacramento Valley Chapter of CNPS  
 \_\_\_ Other chapter \_\_\_\_\_

Membership category  
 \_\_\_ Student, Retired, or Limited Income: \$20  
 \_\_\_ Individual, or Library: \$35  
 \_\_\_ Household, Family, or Group: \$45  
 \_\_\_ Supporting: \$75  
 \_\_\_ Plant Lover: \$100  
 \_\_\_ Benefactor: \$500  
 \_\_\_ Bristlecone: \$1,000

Please complete form and mail with a check payable to  
 California Native Plant Society  
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 Sacramento, CA 95816-5113.  
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