April Chapter Meeting:
Diversification of Ceanothus in California

Presented by Dylan Burge

Ceanothus is one of the best known groups of shrubs in western North America, especially California. It is appreciated by naturalists for the color it lends to spring landscapes, by horticulturists and gardeners for the variety and beauty of its cultivars, and by botanists for its interesting diversity of form and ecology. There are about 53 species of Ceanothus, all restricted to North America. Though the genus is widespread in the United States, Canada, and Mexico, the center of diversity is in our very own state of California.

Like many diverse groups of plants with a highly restricted geographic distribution, Ceanothus has an interesting origin story. In fact, like many good things, the origin story of Ceanothus begins in western North America, particularly California. But until recently, this story was shrouded in mystery, locked up in the genomes of wild plants. Fortunately, recent research has shed some light on the evolution of Ceanothus, suggesting how and when the genus diversified, how new species of Ceanothus evolve, and how hybridization and extreme soil chemistry may play a role in the ecology of this remarkable genus. It also confirmed that Ceanothus is awesome. Enjoy an evening with Dylan Burge as he shares his enthusiasm and knowledge about Ceanothus.

Dylan Burge grew up in rural northern California, where he developed a love for biodiversity very early on. He attended UC Davis and Duke University. He has conducted post-doctoral research in Australia and British Columbia, and has done field work around the world. In addition to botanical research, he likes to spend time hiking on the Pacific Crest Trail, and taking photographs of plants in the wild. He is also “totally obsessed with Ceanothus.”
Farewell to Mike Finan

If you have been to a Sacramento Valley Chapter CNPS event, you undoubtedly met Mike Finan and may recall his helpfulness and cheery smile. He enthusiastically volunteered for many, many of our chapters' projects. You might have encountered him on a Friday walk, sitting on the side of the trail to key out an unassuming plant. If you met him at one of our plant sales, he attentively answered your questions, or found someone who could, and then helped carry your plants to the car. While on field trips, Mike offered bits of his own vast knowledge that enriched the experience for both attendees and the field trip leader. Mike would also roll up his sleeves and do heavy lifting for our projects—nailing the roof onto our greenhouse, loading and unloading plants, digging and weeding, setting up and taking down tents and tables.

Mike loved nature. He was the kind of guy who would rescue plants that were about to be destroyed in order to pot them up in coffee cans and gift them to others. Many of his friends have Japanese maples that he rescued as seedlings five years ago from Capitol Park just before the mower sliced them up. The chapter has hundreds of the rare Sanford’s arrowhead that Mike rescued from the edges of a construction project. Mike was a bit of a straggler on the Friday walks, but was truly interested in examining and identifying every unknown or forgotten plant. While often teased about this, he always had an entourage and entertained everyone with his knowledge and enthusiasm.

Mike loved people. He lent a helping hand to everything and everybody. He was thoughtful, unassuming and gentle. He was a teacher, always willing to explain, never too busy or impatient to explain again, calm and caring, and so funny. Mike’s jovial humor was spontaneous, his puns were often irreverent and he wasn’t afraid to be the butt of his own jokes. The chapter has many photographs of Mike goofing off for the camera—demonstrating how to collect grape seeds, posing with a dead fish that he “caught,” peeking through knot holes in trees. Mike wrote a song for the vernal pool celebration entitled “Life is hard when your hardpan’s cracked.” Stories of funny, kind and warm interactions with Mike are endless.

As active as Mike was with CNPS, in his professional capacity as the Wetland Specialist at the Army Corps of Engineers, he supported staff throughout the area primarily on the difficult stuff. His trove of knowledge—biology, laws, policy plus sense of place and purpose—made him an important mentor and touchstone to those he worked with. His professional colleagues, some having worked with him for over two decades, have many funny, irreverent and sweet, caring nature stories to tell. Mike also loved music, Rivercats games, tennis, fishing and cooking. One of Mike’s most infamous contributions to a potluck was a salsa that included curry and carrots.

So while it is with great sadness we announce that Mike Finan passed away unexpectedly on February 28, at the youthful age of 61, he will forever live in the hearts of those he touched during his adventures in life. Mike was intelligent, inquisitive, thoughtful, kind, honorable and funny. He will still be there alongside us even while we miss him dearly.

A celebration of Mike’s life will be held on Sunday, March 29 at 2:00 p.m. at the CSUS Alumni Center on the California State University Sacramento campus. See our website for a pdf of directions and map. www.SacValleyCNPS.org
Wildflower Wonders 2015 – April 18th from 10:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.

WILDFLOWER WONDERS
Native Plant Sale and Celebration

Native Plant Sale: A wide variety of native plants from Elderberry Farms, Cornflower Farms, and Hedgerow Farms will be available for purchase. “Ask a Designer” – You will be able to sign up for a half hour consultation for a nominal donation.

Native Plant Exhibit and Celebration: Several plant communities will be on display through hundreds of fresh-cut native wildflowers, shrubs, trees and grasses. Expert naturalists will be there all day to provide knowledgeable interpretation at each exhibit. This year Alicia Funk, author of *Living Wild*, will have a recipe card using a plant from each plant community. She will also have tastings at the book table. Plus other exhibits: Monarch Butterfly Waystations, Bees are not Optional, and Birds of a Feather.

Discovery Zone: Naturalists and volunteers will be there to facilitate your experience. Focus on Flowers - several microscopes; art table - with flowers in vases posing for the artists; scavenger hunt; plant pressing and identification activities. Jen Hogan will lead this in memory of Mike Finan.

Volunteers of all backgrounds and interests are asked to contact Chris to sign up. cnpschris@gmail.com

Photos by Chris Lewis

Photo by Jim Wadsworth

California Native Plant Society – Sacramento Valley Chapter

2015 WILDFLOWER WONDERS
Native Plant Sale and Celebration

SACRAMENTO VALLEY CHAPTER
NATIVE PLANT EXHIBITS
Discovery Zone
Butterflies, Birds, Bees

SACRAMENTO VALLEY CNPS 2015

Saturday, April 18, 10 a.m.–4 p.m.

Elderberry Farms Native Plant Nursery
2140 Chase Drive
Rancho Cordova, CA 95670
On the American River Parkway at Soil Born Farms
$5 suggested donation  SacValleyCNPS.org
California Natural Diversity Database and BIOS software training for Rare Plant Treasure Hunters

Slots are available for training on software for the California Natural Diversity Database (CNDDB) and BIOS, a mapping application that allows you to search and query CNDDB data. We are allowed to send 1 or 2 rare plant treasure hunter volunteers to these training sessions for free, provided that they will be using the training for not-for-profit volunteer work (i.e. leading a Rare Plant Treasure Hunt). After the class, we encourage volunteers to follow up with their Chapter Plant Chair or President so that they can access the CNDDB data and use it to help guide their rare plant volunteer work. There are spots still available at the following dates and locations. Email dslakey@cnps.org to RSVP for one of these trainings.

- Redding - Wed, April 15th  (2 spots available)
- Sacramento - Thurs, April 23rd  (2 spots available)
- Napa - Wed, April 29th  (2 spots available)
- Sacramento - Thurs, May 14th  (2 spots available)
- Fresno - Wed., May 27th  (2 spots available)
- Sacramento - Tues, June 9th (2 spots available)

The 2015 Gardens Gone Native Tour is shaping up to be a very good representation of what can be done with California Natives in a homeowner’s landscape. We have 31 gardens in the Sacramento, Placer and Yolo county regions representing an array of sizes, landscape approaches and creativity. One of the gardens, owned by Mike and Annette Heacox, will be on the tour and was featured in the Sacramento Bee in February in the Home and Garden section. The interest in natives as an alternative to lawns and other ornamentals continues to grow. Register for the tour at gardensgonenative.eventbrite.com.

Get Your eNews Here!

The Sacramento Valley Chapter CNPS emails announcements about upcoming events (talks, hikes, sales, and events). The eNewsletter is another way to get information about what’s happening in our Chapter. Don’t worry, signing up for the eNewsletter does not interrupt your Hibiscus newsletter service. Sign up at: sacvalleycnps.org or contact Chris at cnpschris@gmail.com.

Gardens Gone Native Tour

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We are still looking for docents to help our garden hosts on the day of the tour. A couple of hours of volunteer time would still allow time for tour docents to visit several gardens before or after their volunteer hours. If you can spare a couple of hours on April 11, 2015, email us at gardensgonenative.eventbrite.com or clrauh1@gmail.com.

Consider being part of this growing event and helping to educate the public on the benefits of growing California native plants.
Upcoming

Deer Creek Hills Hike
Saturday, April 4, 9:00 a.m. – 1:00
Join us with a docent from the Sacramento Valley Conservancy (SVC) to explore Deer Creek Hills and enjoy spring wildflowers. You will wander through shallow canyons, climb to the tops of ridges, and ford small streams on rock stepping stones at high use crossings. Open land and ponds form habitat for over 300 species of plants, 125 species of birds and 40 wildlife species. The area is also rich in history and prehistory. Native American grinding holes are found in the bedrock along Crevis Creek. There are remains from the Gold Rush and a few old homestead sites. Bring sturdy shoes, water and lunch.

Contact Shellie Sullo at shellie_sullo@yahoo.com for further information and to confirm that you will be there. Also, please register at the SVC Event page for this outing. After logging in, please select April 4 to reserve your slot and register those in your group who will be attending the trip. On the SVC registration form, add “Sac Valley CNPS” in the “How did you hear about us?” box. This will help SVC determine how many docents they will try to have available. Once hitting “submit,” you’ll be emailed what to expect, what to bring, what not to bring, map/directions and a liability form to fill out. Easy and free. Please donate to the Sacramento Valley Conservancy as you can. SVC is limiting the group size to 30 people. We encourage travelling to this event with like-minded friends.

Find directions for the SVC registration and a link at http://www.SacValleyCNPS.org under the Field Trips section.

Ongoing

2nd Wed. of the month, 7 p.m.  
(Jan.–June; Sept.–Nov.)
Chapter Meeting & Guest Speaker
Shepard Garden & Arts Center,
McKinley Park, Sacramento
See page 1. Contact John Hunter, jhunter@harveyecology.com for more information.

4th Wed. of the month, 7 p.m.  
(Jan.–June; Sept.–Nov.)
Chapter Board Meetings
CNPS, 2707 K Street, Suite 1
Sacramento CA 95816
Contact: John Hunter, jhunter@harveyecology.com

Elderberry Farms
Native Plant Nursery
Located at Soil Born Farms
2140 Chase Drive, Rancho Cordova

Wednesday Workdays 10 a.m. – 1:00
We pot up seedlings and learn plant propagation techniques. Peanut butter and jelly sandwiches provided. RSVP to Chris, cnpschris@gmail.com.

Friday Walks 9 a.m.–noon.
Plant identification, photography, art and fun! Go to sacvalley.cnps.org, find Friday Walks under Events and Field Trips.

Habitat 2020
Day and Time TBD
For information contact Glen Holstein, holstein@cal.net; (530) 758-6787.

Ceanothus—Collaborative Plant Identification Workshops
9 a.m. - 12p.m. UC Davis Herbarium (Center for Plant Diversity)
Michael Bower, (530) 902-8721
Bring any plants you’re curious about and the Jepson Manual. 2015 sessions scheduled for April 25, May 16, June 20, July 18, August 15, September 19, and October 17. Visit www.ceanothusfieldbotanist.blogspot.com for more information. Email questions to ceanothusfieldbot@gmail.com.

Garden Work Days at the Native Plant Demonstration Garden
Sacramento Historic City Cemetery
1000 Broadway, Sacramento
Bring a hat and water and wear garden-appropriate clothes.
Gardening tools available for use and refreshments provided. A plant will be available to take home. For more information, contact Cassandra at cnpsgarden@gmail.com

Other Items of Intrest

Friends of the Chico State Herbarium
For details, contact info, and a registration form, please go to: www.csuchico.edu/biol/Herb/Events.html

Saturday, April 11, 9:00 a.m. - 4 p.m.
Plant Families in the Garden and in the Wild By Linnea Hanson and Emily Meigs Doe

Saturday, April 18, 9:00 a.m. - 1 p.m.
Wildflower Phyto-Blitz Workshop in the Field By Marjorie McNairn and Rob Schlising.

Sacramento Valley Conservancy
Deer Creek Hills
For details, contact info, and a registration form, please go to: http://www.sacramentovalleyconservancy.org/calendar.asp

Saturday, April 25, 9:00 a.m. - 1 p.m.
Wildflowers of Deer Creek Hills Hike
Saturday, April 25, 7:30 p.m.-11 p.m.
Night Shift Hike - Bats, Birds and Other Mammals

Saturday, April 25, 9:00 a.m. - 4 p.m.
Early Settlers History Hike
Saturday, April 25, 7:30 p.m.-11 p.m.
Night Shift Hike - Bats, Birds and Other Mammals

Calendar of Events

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Come on, we’re all volunteers and could really use your help! Dear native plant enthusiast, (Do you notice that I don’t say gardener. Why? It’s because we grow for restoration and educational projects too!)

The time is now - we need all volunteer hands on deck! Come out on Wednesdays from 10:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.
(There are no Sunday Workdays in April or May because of plant sales on Saturday, April 18 and Sunday, May 17.)

We need help with:
- Propagation trainees – people who want to learn how to lead workdays (ask about the special time)
- Botanists – people who can help identify new-to-us species
- Demonstration Gardens - needs weeding and mulching (we also need more Lead Gardeners)
- Plants moved to next size container.
- Help with customer service (share native plant gardening advice – great for landscape designers)
- Inventory control – we have a new system but need more people willing to train to use it!
- Writers- every plant has a story. “Bee” one of our nature writers!

Knowledge of plants is not necessary: your willingness to help is all that’s required.
CNPS treats volunteers to peanut butter and jelly sandwiches but you are welcome to bring your own lunch if you prefer. Questions and comments:

Chris at cnpschris@gmail.com

Plant Sales: Yes, we sell plants during our Wednesday Workdays, though we try to hold some for our Plant Sale at Wildflower Wonders, sometimes people are awfully convincing! If you are interested in annual native plants please come to buy them on Wednesdays. They will not last until April 18th.

Annual Native Plants For Sale
- *Mimulus guttatus*-Seep Monkeyflower
- *Nemophila menziesii*-Baby Blue Eyes
- *Collinsia heterophylla*-Chinese Houses
- *Gilia capitata*-Globe Gilia
- *Clarkia unguiculata*-Elegant Clarkia
- *Sidalcea hartwegii*-Checkerbloom
- *Madia elegans*-Tarweed
plus a few more

Photos by John Schmidt

Photos by Jim Wadsworth
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Remembering Mike Finan
Submit content for the May Hibiscus by April 4!
Be sure your membership is current! See your address label for your renewal date.

April 2015
sacvalleycnps.org
The Sacramento Valley chapter newsletter, Hibiscus, is published monthly, except for July, August, and December. Deadline for Hibiscus contributions is midnight of the Friday before the monthly meeting for possible inclusion in the next month’s newsletter. Please send your submittals to editorhibiscus@gmail.com.