Meetings are held on the second Wednesday of the month (except July, Aug, & Dec) at 7pm at the Shepard Garden & Arts Center in McKinley Park, 3330 McKinley Blvd, Sacramento

NEXT MEETING: Wed., April 13
Questions? Contact John Hunter, jhunter@harveyecology.com

Chapter meetings are free and open to the public.
Books and Sacramento Valley Chapter T-shirts are available for purchase at meetings. Refreshments provided!

Join or renew today!
CNPS’ success depends on members’ support. To join or renew, go to www.cnps.org and select the Join/Support or Join CNPS options. Or mail membership dues (individual $45; student or limited income $25) to CNPS, 2707 K Street, Suite 1, Sacramento, CA 95816-5113. Other membership levels are also available.
Send questions or address changes to cnps@cnps.org.

April Chapter Meeting: A Visit to the California Prairie
Presented by Glen Holstein

The earliest visitors to California’s valleys and foothills found a sea of wildflowers where grasses were scarce and vast elk herds grazed. Why then do so many call these areas “grasslands” when even today native wildflowers can so completely cover them that hardly a grass blade is seen? Answering that takes looking back at some plant ecology history still hugely affecting California native plant conservation.

California’s prairies are its lost ecosystem hiding in plain sight. Dr. Holstein will explore their misunderstood history, their unique ecology, their great biodiversity, and their urgent conservation challenges.

Dr. Holstein first learned about California’s plants and wildlife in the chaparral and deserts of southern California. This inspired him to study biology at Cal Poly San Luis Obispo, and botany at UC Davis, back in the great days when Ledyard Stebbins, Dan Axelrod, Jack Major, and Grady Webster were there. Dr. Holstein has participated in the founding of the California Natural Diversity Data Base, as well as in the creation of the Cosumnes, Cold Canyon, Nipomo Dunes, and Carrizo Plains reserves. He is the author of many publications, including one of the first peer-reviewed articles questioning California’s bunchgrass paradigm. He has been a CNPS member since the 1970’s and has held several board positions within our Chapter. For his conservation work Dr. Holstein was named 2013 Environmentalist of the Year by the Environmental Council of Sacramento.

The mission of the California Native Plant Society is to conserve California native plants and their natural habitats, and increase understanding, appreciation, and horticultural use of native plants.
A Historic Day
By Glen Holstein, Chapter Botanist

March 3, 2016, was an historic day. That's when a plan for the Lower American River Conservancy was first presented to the public at McKinley Park’s Clunie Center. The plan calls for creation of a Conservancy by California’s legislature so that the American River and its local watersheds from Hazel Avenue to the Sacramento River can receive state and other funding for habitat acquisition, protection, and enhancement. It’s a joint project with Sacramento City and Sacramento County, sponsored by Assemblymembers Ken Cooley and Kevin McCarty. McCarty led the Conservancy roll-out meeting along with Cooley; Supervisor Phil Serna; City Councilmember Jeff Harris; Jim Wiley of the American River Parkway Foundation; Jeffrey Leatherman, Director of Sacramento County Parks; and Corey Brown of the Resources Legacy Fund. The Conservancy would finally give proper attention and funding to the American River Parkway, Sacramento's crown jewel and the centerpiece of its Heartland Project, but also, in that night’s words by Assemblymember Cooley, potentially provide funding for projects enhancing American River water quality like Sac Splash and the Mather area vernal pools.

Public testimony at the meeting was overwhelmingly positive. The next step is getting AB 1716, which would create the Conservancy, through the state legislature. Assemblymembers McCarty and Cooley have presented a wonderful gift in introducing this bill. Now it’s our turn to help them since support from groups like the California Native Plant Society (CNPS) is vital. Especially important are CNPS members living outside Cooley and McCarty’s districts who can communicate to their Assemblymembers and Senators what a treasure all Californians have in the American River and its nearby vernal pools. This will help immensely in passing AB 1716 and finally creating a much needed Lower American River Conservancy.

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.

Sixth Annual Gardens Gone Native Tour

It happens on April 9, 2016, 9:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. and features free self-guided tours with twenty-two gardens in the Sacramento and Yolo county areas. Interest in California natives continues to grow and this year’s garden tour should draw more attendees than ever. We have a wonderful blend of gardens that have been on the tour in the past as well as many new gardens. Registration for the tour is now open at: gardensgonenative.eventbrite.com. Upon registration a confirming email will be sent with garden descriptions and maps. There are several new gardens on this year’s tour including a rain garden in Carmichael designed and implemented by the staff of Growwater (growwater.org) our Partner of the Year award winner. Please visit these creative landscapes featuring California native plants. Also check the CNPS website for additional garden tour information: SacValley.CNPS.org/Events/Native Plant Garden Tour.

News from the Jepson Herbarium
By Hazel Gordon, as related by Herbarium staff

The Jepson Herbarium at UC Berkeley has announced the development of a new electronic plant key in its Jepson eFlora site (http://ucjeps.berkeley.edu.eflora/) that organizes flora to key out by Jepson bioregions. The KeyBase (http://ucjeps.berkeley.edu.eflora/filter_keys.html) is very user-friendly as you type in the bioregion and the genus or family of interest. It’s fun to compare various genera across the state to locate the hotspots of diversity over these broad areas. These locations are not the final word on actual distribution patterns, but are a good starting point.

The eFlora is now in its third revision and has added newly described taxa as well as those recently recognized as naturalized. They are summarized on the website rather than given a full supplement to the printed Jepson manual. Watch out for such invaders as the Canary Islands and Morocco knapweeds, the stinging Wingandia, the creeping Jenny, the dog rose, the Holly Oak and others coming to a site or hybridizing with natives near you. If you download Supplement 2 from eFlora, make room for 80 pages of taxonomy.
Wildflower Wonders

Wildflower Wonders
Saturday, April 16 10:00 a.m.– 3:00 p.m.
2140 Chase Dr, Rancho Cordova, CA 95670,
on the American River Parkway at Soil Born Farms
Catch a ride on a Golf Cart from the parking lots down the street from Soil Born Farms to Wildflower Wonders!

Wildflower Show and Plant Exhibit
All day expert naturalists will provide friendly and knowledgeable interpretation at each exhibit. Hundreds of fresh-cut native wildflowers, shrubs, trees, and grasses illustrate each display. Rounding out each habitat area are inspiring photographs of the landscape.

Plant Community
Chaparral
Oak Woodlands
Riparian Woodlands
Vernal Pools/ CA Prairies

Expert Naturalist
John Hunter, Ph.D.
Jennifer Neale, Ph.D.
Bonnie and Sarah Ross
Tara Collins and Glen Holstein

Discovery Zone: Experts and enthusiasts will be there to facilitate your experience!
- Focus on Flowers– several microscopes will give you an in-depth look of flower and leaf morphology
- Art table– with flowers in vases posing for the artists
- Scavenger Hunt table (get your clues then go outside to gather for the hunt)
- Plant Community Food Chain game

Other Exhibits
- Birds of a Feather – Audubon Society
- Protecting California’s native flora – Welcome & CNPS Information
- Bees are Not Optional – Dr. Christine Casey
- Monarch Butterflies & Butterfly Waystation – Greg Kareofelas
- Urban Stream Restoration Program, DWR – Stephen Layton, Melissa Roberts, Kevin Marr

Native Plant Sale
Elderberry Farms will have their local native plants. Cornflower Farms and Hedgerow Farms will offer a broad assortment of native plants for sale. Bring your own boxes.

Suggested donation: $5 but no-one will be turned away for lack of funds.
Receive a free plant with your membership! Join CNPS or renew your CNPS membership and choose a plant from Elderberry Farms.

Wildflower Wonders is Sacramento Valley CNPS’s primary educational event of the year. If you have volunteered before, welcome back (and let Chris know). If you new to volunteering for this event – we need you! Please contact Chris at cnpschris@gmail.com
Calendar of Events

Upcoming

Gardens Gone Native
Saturday April 9, 9:30 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.
Registration for the tour opens at: gardensgonenative.eventbrite.com on March 11, 2016. If you are interested in volunteering, please send an email to gardensgonenative@gmail.com or call Colene at (916) 717-5517.

Wildflower Wonders Native Plant Sale and Celebration
Saturday April 16, 10:00 a.m. - 3 p.m.
Elderberry Farms Native Plant Nursery
2140 Chase Drive, Rancho Cordova, CA 95670

Wildflower Wonders planning is in full swing on the American River Parkway at Soil Born Farms. For more information, please email Chris at cnpschris@gmail.com

Vernal Pool Tour at Yolo Bypass
Sunday. April 17, TBA
This field trip is tentatively scheduled based on weather and if the conditions allow. Please contact Mary Schiedt for more information. (916) 400-7094

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

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

Elderberry Farms
Native Plant Nursery
Located at Soil Born Farms
2140 Chase Drive, Rancho Cordova
Wednesday Workday 10 a.m. – 1 p.m.
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.

Garden Work Parties at the Native Plant Demonstration Garden
Sacramento Historic City Cemetery
1000 Broadway, Sacramento
Learn about native plants, bees, and more while helping us maintain the largest California native plant garden in the City of Sacramento. Bring a hat and water and wear garden-appropriate clothes. Gardening tools available for use and refreshments provided. Free plants and seeds are available to volunteers to take home. For more information, contact Cassandra at cnpsgarden@gmail.com

Ceanothus—Collaborative Plant Identification Workshops
9a.m. - noon. UC Davis Herbarium
(Center for Plant Diversity)
Michael Bower, (530) 902-8721
Bring any plants you’re curious about and the Jepson Manual. Visit www.ceanothusfieldbotanist.blogspot.com for more information. Email questions to ceanothusfieldbot@gmail.com.

Native Plant Garden Club
Meets the 3rd Tues. of the month, April 19
12:30 p.m. - 2:30
Carmichael
Library, 5605 Marconi Ave, Carmichael.

For more information on the Native Plant Garden Club visit SacValleyCNPS.org/Gardening/Garden Club

Other Items of Interest

2016 California Botanical Society Annual Banquet and Meeting
Sat. April 9
Padre Hotel in Bakersfield, CA
Registration closes March 31, 2016 http://calbotsoc.org/events/

Native California Orchid Show
Scottish Rite Temple
6151 H Street Sacramento, CA
Sat. April 9, 10 a.m. - 5 p.m.
Sun April 10, 10 a.m. - 4 p.m.
This year’s Orchid show has a Native California Orchid Theme.

Water and Fire: Impacts of Climate Change Conference
Sun. and Mon. April 10-11
The Institute on Science for Global Policy and Sacramento State are hosting a conference at the campus. The conference is free – please register at www.waterandfire2016.com; call 520-343-8181 to be mailed a registration.

Friends of The Chico State Herbarium Workshops:
Photography workshop - Native Flowers as Compositional Elements
Sat. April 16, 9:00 a.m.
Workshops are open for registration. For more information go to: www.friendsofthechicostateherbarium.com

Visit the Stockton subchapter’s website for latest news: cepurl.com/u8smNj
Use this link to subscribe to the Stockton sub-chapter e-mail list:
cepurl.com/u8Tb
CNPS members living in Stockton who would like to find others in the area to carpool to chapter activities in Sacramento should contact Nadia Zane, at (209) 931-5151.
Notes from the Sacramento CNPS Test Kitchen: Volume IV
Cattail Wild Rice Pilaf

Until the test kitchen selected this month's recipe, I didn't realize cattails were even edible. I also didn't realize I should have been better prepared prior to going out and harvesting them. My intent was to go over a weekend but due to the rain storms we had in early March, my weekend plans were rained out. Forced by the looming deadline for this article, I put my daughter's old rain boots and a backpack in my car so I could go harvesting in the evening after work.

Several years ago, when my daughter was ten years old, I bought her a pair of purple cowgirl style rain boots, decorated with orange, white, and blue flowers. Although they no longer fit her, I've kept them because they are so cute and I can squeeze my feet into them even though they are two sizes smaller than I usually wear.

Cattails will absorb pollutants so I didn't want to collect them near a road or anywhere there could be pollutants in the water. One evening, I meet up with my mom and we walked a mile and a half to harvest the cattails from a clean pond we knew about. Not thinking about bringing a flashlight, I hoped we could be done before dark.

Water irises are toxic and look similar to cattails. The easiest way to tell the difference between the two is by the stalk of the plant. The stalk of a cattail is round and each leaf is wrapped around the stalk, like a green onion. Whereas, the stalk of a water iris is flat and the leaves fold out like a fan.

Cattails are easy to collect. If you reach all the way down to the root and pull, the stalk will easily break off at the root. Cowgirl rain boots have a rubber heel which makes them bad for hiking. As I stepped down the bank, I slipped on the cobbles and stumbled into the water. After taking two steps towards the cattails, the water was at my knees and my boots were rapidly filling up with water. I hastily began harvesting the cattails. As I bent over and reached down, I heard the clinking of my car keys as they fell out of my backpack and splashed into the water. Unable to see much because it was getting dark, I began gently patting the ground. Fortunately, I was able to find them after a few minutes of panicked searching.

I decided we had collected enough cattails and I climbed out of the pond very wet. I sat down to take my rain boots off but since they were too small to begin with and now wet, they were glued to my feet. Luckily, my mom was able to pull them off but as she did the water poured out of the boots and formed a small puddle where I was sitting. Soaking wet, I began our long walk back to the car barefoot and in the dark.

Once the cattails were brought home they were washed and dried. The outer layers of the cattails were peeled and discarded. The whitish base of the cattail shoot (before the leaves start) is the edible part. On the new shoots, it's the first five or six inches. I was surprised that the shoots smelled and tasted very similar to a cucumber.

This month's recipe was adapted from cattail-wild rice pilaf from http://www.cattails.info/Cattail_Recipe.html and pecan wild rice pilaf from https://kripalu.org/resources/kripalu-recipe-pecan-wild-rice-pilaf.

At the test kitchen, we heated olive oil and a tab of butter in a large pot on medium-high heat until hot. The brown rice and wild rice were added to the pot and sautéed until it began to smell nutty, approximately 5 minutes. One cup of green onion, celery, and carrots were added to the saucepan and cooked until fragrant, approximately 5 minutes. Then the garlic was added and cooked until slightly softened. The water and chicken broth were added and stirred until combined. The mixture was brought to a boil, covered, and then the heat was reduced to a simmer. It simmered until the liquid was absorbed and the rice was fully cooked (approximately 45 minutes).

In the meantime, the cattail shoots were sautéed in several heaping tablespoons of butter along with the remaining green onion, thyme, and a pinch of salt until they were softened and fragrant, approximately 15 minutes.

The rice and cattails were mixed together and salt was added to taste.

To complete the meal, we had a salad of miner’s lettuce with roasted garbanzo beans, topped with parmesan cheese and a side of Wild rice cooking with veggies.
Tending My Wild Garden and A Cure for Nature Deficit Disorder

By Chris Lewis

This is all about my cat Louie. Board members from 10 years ago remember his as the friendly kitten who went from lap to lap getting petted. To bring everyone up to speed, Louie was very sick in February and I had to take him to the emergency vet. The vet said Louie had a malignant tumor and had two or three days to live. After a few days of caring and crying, I decided to take him outside because he loves it outside even though he is an indoor cat. At first he just sniffed the grasses but eventually started nibbling on them. He would walk a few feet and then need to rest. I'd bring him back inside to encourage him to eat or drink. After a few more times walking him around my garden he started eating the grasses, drinking pond water and walking farther! In time, he’d walk the whole yard in search of the next patch of grass. (He liked Deer Grass, Berkeley Sedge, and a few weeds that I’ve left for him.) I continued taking him outside and Louie has continued to get stronger. It’s been four weeks and he is becoming more like his old self. I didn’t know I too was suffering from Nature Deficit Disorder. I don’t know if Louie is actually cured but I know he is one happy cat now!

Test Kitchen

Continued from Page 5

of BBQ pork. The rice pilaf was delicious but with all the flavors in the rice, it was hard to notice the cattails. One tester noted the nuttiness of the rice was countered by the coolness of the cattails. Another tester suggested treating cattails like asparagus. Using cattails is a lot of fun and it can add an interesting layer to any stir fry.

If you have a recipe you’d like us to try out, or a tasty native plant you’d like us to work with, write in and let us know by emailing editorhibiscus@gmail.com. We love to hear from our readers!

Elderberry Farms Native Plant Nursery

2140 Chase Drive, Rancho Cordova, on the American River Parkway at Soil Born Farms

By Chris Lewis, Nursery Leader
cnpschris@gmail.com

The mission of Elderberry Farms Native Plant Nursery is to promote awareness of the benefits of native plant habitat, encourage community involvement, and provide a source of local native plants for restoration projects as well as gardeners.

Wednesdays Workday hours: 10:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.

Nursery leaders are often working at home or at the Nursery earlier and later than our official workday hours. If you’d like to be more involved, talk with Chris at the Nursery or via email at cnpschris@gmail.com.

Join us for propagation work on Wednesdays and help pot up seedlings and learn various propagating techniques under the excellent direction of Robin Rietz, Propagation Manager. We treat volunteers to peanut butter and jelly sandwiches (you’re also welcome to bring your own lunch).

There will not be a 2nd Sunday Workday this month:
(We’ll be recovering from the Gardens Gone Native Tour)

Weekly Friday Walks

We walk most Fridays; check our website for updates. Friday Walks are for seed and data collecting, plant identification, photography, and fun. The Nursery grows only plants that are native to the American River Parkway and/or around Folsom Lake. Our destination changes each week depending on the Nursery’s need and the group’s interest. SacValleyCNPS.org/Field Trips/Friday Walks

Cattail rice pilaf with miner’s lettuce salad and BBQ pork

Louie in the garden

The Nursery after last year’s Wildflower Wonders
**Note from the Editor:** Thank you to everyone who wrote in to guess last month’s mystery plants! The answers were: Mystery Plant #1 was California Bay and Mystery Plant #2 was Manzanita. This month’s photos were taken along the Lower American River near the Effie Yeaw Nature Center. (A color version of the newsletter can be seen at: www.sacvalley.org/Home/Newletter) Send in your answers to editorhibiscus@gmail.com.

### ELECTED OFFICERS

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<tr>
<th>Role</th>
<th>Name</th>
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### CHAPTER COUNCIL DELEGATES

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### COMMITTEE CHAIRS

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<td>Fall Plant Sale</td>
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<td>Field Trips</td>
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### ADVISORY COMMITTEE REPRESENTATIVES

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<td>Advisory Committee Representatives, Chapter Specialists, &amp; Special Project Leaders</td>
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(A color version of the newsletter can be seen at: www.sacvalley.org/Home/Newletter) Send in your answers to editorhibiscus@gmail.com.
Submit content for the May Hibiscus by April 8!
Be sure your membership is current! See your address label for your renewal date.

APRIL 2016
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.

sacvalleycnps.org
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3 Wildflower Wonders
4 Calendar of Events
5 Test Kitchen
6 Elderberry Farms

Join or renew today!
CNPS success depends on members' support. Go to www.cnps.org/join. Or mail membership dues (individual $45; student or limited income $25) to CNPS, 2707 K Street, Suite 1, Sacramento, CA 95816-5113.

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APRIL PRESENTATION:
A Visit to the California Prairie
Presented by Glen Holstein

It's happening this month!
See page 3 for more details

Our chapter meetings are free and open to the public!