January Chapter Meeting:
Resurrecting the L.A. Moran Reforestation Center
Presented by Rich Marovich

The L.A. Moran Reforestation Center in Davis is home to the only state-run seed bank in California and formerly produced 400,000 conifer seedlings per year for reforestation projects throughout California. While seed bank operations continue today, in 2003, the container seedling program was shut down due to state budget cuts.

Rich Marovich of the Lower Putah Creek Coordinating Committee (LPCCC) will recount how the unique and innovative partnership between LPCCC, the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CalFIRE), and the Putah Creek Council brought life back to the facility. LPCCC manages the nursery that specializes in native riparian plants, while the Putah Creek Council organizes community volunteer events to collect and process seeds and cuttings, and to transplant nursery stock. Community volunteers also plant the nursery stock in restoration sites along Putah Creek from Winters to Davis. For more information on nursery and field events, see:www.putahcreekcouncil.org. For photos, see: www.watershedportal.net/gallery/lpccc.

Since their last presentation to CNPS, the LPCCC converted all one-gallon and larger pots to dripper stakes, installed open source irrigation controller (http://www.OpenSprinkler.com) and linked irrigations automatically to local weather data resulting in an estimated 50% water savings and healthier plants.

Rich Marovich has a BS in Horticulture/Nursery Management from U.C. Davis. Since 2008, he has managed a native plant nursery at the L.A. Moran Reforestation Center in Davis. His biggest challenge at the nursery was to detoxify (boron/alkalinity) Davis municipal water for native plants through acid/fertilizer injection. During the past year, he converted half of the nursery to drip irrigation saving an estimated 50% of water use, introduced bokashi compost (probiotics for plants) and recycled green waste as worm food.
Northern California Botanists 2016 Symposium
Plant Adaptations: Research, Conservation, and Management
January 11-12, 2016
California State University, Chico
Bell Memorial Union Auditorium

Northern California Botanists will host their 7th botanical symposium on January 11-12, 2016 on the campus of California State University in Chico. Optional workshops will be held on Wednesday January 13. A two day schedule of presentations by working botanists will include sessions on Plant Genetics 101, Managing in a Changing Climate, Locally Rare and Peripheral Plant Populations, Evolution of the California Flora, Restoration, New Discoveries, Now the Good News, and Lightning Talks.

Northern California Botanists is an organization with the purpose of increasing knowledge and communication among agency, consulting, academic, and other botanists about botanical issues concerning science, conservation, education, and professional development. Our primary objectives are to establish a communication forum via occasional meetings, a scholarship fund for students working on botanical problems in northern California, a job forum, and symposia that focus on the botany of northern California. For more information about Northern California Botanists and the symposium visit www.norcalbotanists.org

Northern California Botanists Botany Research Scholarship Program

Northern California Botanists (NCB) provides competitive botany and plant ecology research scholarships to undergraduate and graduate students attending a college and university. Research scholarships will be funded by NCB with the goals of encouraging undergraduate students to pursue academic endeavors toward a career in botany, promoting undergraduate and graduate botany and plant ecology research, and implementing objectives of the NCB mission.

Research scholarships consist of $1,000 awards, designed to support basic undergraduate and graduate research. Students may reapply and receive a scholarship award up to a maximum of two years for undergraduates and graduates pursuing a Master’s degree and up to a maximum of four years for graduate students pursuing a Doctorate degree.

Applications are due March 31, 2016.

Sacramento Valley CNPS Adopts a River Mile

New in 2016: Our chapter is adopting a river mile of the American River Parkway. We’ll be hosting workdays throughout the year to keep the riverfront clean of trash and weeds. Our stewardship will be guided by the American River Parkway Foundation's Adopt the Parkway Program.

Our river mile is River Bend Park, on the south side of the river opposite William B. Pond Recreation Area and downstream of the bridge. It’s a beautiful stretch with channels, bars, riffles, and river rock, and is vegetated in many places by natives such as California broom. Herons, cormorants, raptors, ducks, and geese abound. There are no paved trails, but there are plenty of paths and picnic spots.

Mark your calendars: our first workday will be January 9th from 9:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Hot drinks and snacks will be provided. Preregister to receive a free parking pass and directions. More information is coming soon at SacValleyCNPS.org and from our Steward Coordinator, Heather Ogston (hogston@harveyecology.com).

River Mile 13S, as seen from the upstream bridge

Visit the Stockton subchapter’s website for latest news: eepurl.com/u8mNj
Use this link to subscribe to the Stockton sub-chapter e-mail list: eepurl.com/u8ITb
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, (209) 931-5151.
Sacramento Valley Native Plant Gardening Club

Preliminary Meeting: Tuesday, Jan. 19, 12 p.m. – 3 p.m. Carmichael Library, 5605 Marconi Ave, Carmichael, CA 95608.

At the Elderberry Farms Native Plant Nursery and CNPS Plant Sales we meet many people who are either just starting to garden with native plants or who know a lot about native plants and their natural habitats. When I gave a presentation to the Folsom Garden Club I realized we need to have a garden club devoted to native plants. There is so much interest in native plants and so many people with expertise. So let’s do it! Join us for the preliminary meeting! The Carmichael Library has seating for 70 people and we expect a crowd. It has plenty of free parking and there is a RT Bus stop in front of the library.

We’ll need officers to run the club so start thinking about what you can help with. Club officers include: President, President-elect, Presentations Chair, Meetings Chair, Treasurer, Secretary, Membership Chair, Refreshments Chair, Community Gardening Chair, and Outings Chair.

Meeting Agenda:
• Introductions
• Local Native Plant Spotlight. Two or three native plants will be presented.
• Suggested open mic discussion: 
  - Show and Tell (Ethnobotany) – share with the group something that you made with native plant materials (example: Mugwort Mosquito spray).
  - Critter Report – share a bird, bee, or butterfly sighting.
  - Community Gardening - Any tending on public land; ARP Stewardship Mile update?
• Club elections
• Close of meeting.

Questions about the garden club? Contact Chris at cnpschris@gmail.com.

Membership in the Sacramento Valley Native Plant Garden Club is outside of CNPS membership.

Save this date: Saturday, April 18, 2016

Wildflower Wonders
Native Plant Sale and Celebration

Thanks to Ashton Smith, Wildflower Wonders planning continues! He painted an Oak Woodland that you’ll be seeing much more of in the next several months. Ashton had been volunteering at the Nursery since we ran into him on the American River Parkway trail on a Friday Walk. He had been walking many trails for years as he looked for plants to sketch or paint. He became a regular on our Friday Walks, at the Nursery, and at Wildflower Wonders sharing his artistic talent and working with youngsters. Unfortunately for us, his family moved back to the Redding area in December. Now we have a destination for a Field Trip!

Thank you to Heather Ogston for the graphic layout.

To help with planning Wildflower Wonders, please contact Chris at CNPSchris@gmail.com.

Upcoming New Books from CNPS Press

In early 2016, two new books will be available from CNPS Press:
California’s Botanical Landscapes: A Pictorial View of the State’s Vegetation, by Michael G. Barbour, Julie M. Evens, Todd Keeler-Wolf, and John O. Sawyer, is a beautiful exploration of our native vegetation, with a phenomenal array of photographs paired with interpretive descriptions from California’s top plant ecologists. Kern County Flora: A Key to Vascular Plant Species of Kern County, California, is a modernized 2nd edition from L. Maynard Moe, including updated nomenclature and nearly 300 additional taxa. Stay tuned for exact release dates!

Call for Native Landscape Design Photos

The CNPS Horticulture Program is working on building a library of native landscape design photos to be used for horticultural education, and needs your help! If you have photos of a native garden, before and after photos of a converted lawn, or just a beautifully designed native landscape, please send them to Caroline Garland, at cgarland@cnps.org.
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 cnpsgarden@gmail.com or (916) 678-0317.

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.ceanothustenderfieldbotanist.blogspot.com for more information. Email questions to ceanothustenderfieldbot@gmail.com.

Other Items of Interest

Northern California Botanists Symposium Monday- Tuesday Jan 11-12 See page 2 for details.

Northern California Botanists Workshops Wednesday Jan. 13, 9:00 - 3:00 p.m. Chico State Herbarium Workshop 1: Surveying for Rare California Bryophytes Workshop 2: An Expanding Threat: Exotic Phytophthora Species Entering Native Landscapes Workshop 3: Making Herbarium-Quality Plant Specimens These workshops are scheduled for the Wednesday following the Northern California Botanists 2016 Symposium. For details about the workshops please go to the NCB 2016 Symposium workshops web page: www.norcalbotanists.org/symposia/symposium2016_workshops.htm.

Rare Plant Treasure Hunter news Upcoming CNDBB/BIOS Trainings January 13th and February 11th Sacramento New dates have been set for the CNDBB and BIOS trainings for the early part of 2016. These classes are designed to get you up to speed on the geographic databases that let you view and query rare plant data. CNPS has an agreement with CDFW to offer two free spots in each of these classes to our volunteers. Sign up for them by RSVPing to dslakey@cnps.org. Specific time and location info at www.dfg.ca.gov/biogeodata/training.asp

Sacramento Valley Native Plant Gardening Club Meeting Tuesday, Jan. 19, 12 p.m. – 3 p.m See page 3 for details

Botany From the Road By Pam Kirkbride January 2016: I am always happy to find gentians, as it usually means that I am in the mountains. While in Yellowstone National Park, I began noticing these Fringed Gentians, Gentianopsis thermalis around the hot pools and geyser basins. Their four petals are a marvel – they twist and fold over each other and then open wide when the sun comes out. Petal tips are slightly scalloped, delicately fringed on the lower side, and streaked with darker lines of purple. They are found from Montana to Arizona and from Nevada to Colorado. Their species name thermalis means “of warmth.” If you wish to receive stories of my adventures on a regular basis, please contact me at pamkirkbride7@gmail.com.
2015 was a challenging year! The good news is we have a wonderful team of volunteers who are stepping up. The volunteer team is: Alex Morton, Ashton Smith, Bobbi King, Carol Clifton, Carole Gates, Chris Jakle, Chris Lewis, Christine James, Jami Rains, Jim Wadsworth, Joan Kodani, John Schmidt, Mary Schiedt, Mary-Ann Robinson, Meg McAneny, Pat Gilbert, Robin Rietz, Robin Rogerson, Steve Sax, Steve Woodward, and Suzanne Guthrie.

How did we transport over 2,000 plants from the Nursery to the Fall Plant Sale? Although we have many volunteers at the nursery, and over 50 volunteers for the plant sale, moving those 2,000 plants was a daunting prospect. We were delighted when Jeff Leatherman, Director of County Regional Parks, offered his staff to pick up our plants and deliver them in one of their large trucks. David Boyer and Ron Nelson were extremely helpful and friendly and were able to pack all of our plants into the large truck and trailer. They even helped us unpack and set up. Thank you Jeff Leatherman, David Boyer and Ron Nelson for coming to our rescue!

We’re upgrading our best management practices at the Nursery due to the dire results of the pathogen Phthophthora tentaculata. It is a water and/or soil transmitted disease whose primary host are a few native plants. Wood is also a conductor of the disease. We will be implementing the following as preventative measures:

- Commercial organic soil blend only - stored in a bin (no soil touches the ground or wood)
- New or sterilized pots only - we are buying 1 gallon pots now, then sterilizing all others that we reuse.
- Pots do not touch ground – whether planted or not, pots are only on benches above gravel. We’re upgrading by adding benches 24” tall for the entire nursery. Our team decided to work over the holidays to get the benches in.
- No standing water anywhere in Nursery.
- Clean work surfaces, wipe down with disinfectant prior to working.
- We are getting pathogen testing help from Sacramento County Agriculture Inspector when plants die. They tell us that no phthophthora tentaculata has been found in Sacramento County to date.

In December the wild wind caused the Nursery’s Shade cover to rip at the seam. This cover not only gives us shade in the summer, it helps protect plants from frost and keeps some of the London Plain leaves out of the Nursery. In short- we need it! Suzanne Guthrie, Christine James and I have two thirds of it hand sown at this printing.

**Workdays on Wednesdays or the 2nd Sunday January 10th from 10:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.**

Nursery leaders are often working at home or at the Nursery outside our official workday hours. If you’d like to be more involved, talk with Chris at the Nursery or let her know via email CNPSChris@gmail.com or phone (916) 812-2876.

**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

**Special Outing**

Friday, Jan 1st, 10:30 a.m. -1:00 p.m.  
Where: Salmon Falls trail  
What to bring: dress in layers, snack, water, sun and rain protection, walking stick. For more information contact Chris Lewis. NOTE: Cell phone coverage at the site is very poor.

Walk will be canceled if there’s rain. There will be an update on the Friday Walks webpage on Wednesday evening Dec 30. Visit SacValleyCNPS.org/Friday Walks for details.
The idea of a Sacramento CNPS test kitchen was dreamed up during the September Chapter Board Meeting. Our goal is to seek out interesting native plant recipes and try them out for our readers. We hope the reoccurring column will be a useful resource to adventurous readers who might want to try these recipes for themselves.

For our inaugural column, we chose an acorn recipe since acorns were available when we came up with this idea. Acorns were a dietary staple in many parts of the state for thousands of years before Europeans arrived, and you can still find them in abundance all over. We chose the recipe for acorn vanilla cookies from Wolfgang Rougle’s 2012 book, Sacramento Valley Feast.

Rougle provides a good overview of the range of acorns that are broadly available in the Sacramento area. The test kitchen selected a group of magnificent old blue oaks since they were conveniently located at a park where my daughter has practice. The acorns were very ripe when we harvested them; they were a lustrous dark brown and easily knocked loose from the branches. Collecting the acorns was a lot of fun. We were delighted when we found a good one, and disappointed when we picked up one that had already been cracked open. Plus there was the added bonus of completely embarrassing my daughter with our behavior.

Any means of separating the shells will work, but nothing is quick. We shelled each nut individually by hand using a hammer to crack the tough shells. We also shelled a handful of valley oak acorns we had on hand. The variability of shell to meat ratios, and shell hardness was striking. The valley oak acorns have less meat, but their shells are much more easily broken. Your shelling method will depend on the specific acorns you harvest.

After shelling, the nuts went into the blender with a little water to grind up before leaching. Acorns leach more quickly and effectively if they are ground up first. Rougle describes three good means of leaching acorns: in a creek, under a faucet, and by boiling. The test kitchen does not have a creek and, in light of the on-going drought, placing the acorns under a dripping tap seemed wasteful. We opted not to boil the acorns because boiling may alter the character of the nuts in an undesirable way.

Using two large canning jars, we cold leached the nuts over the course of a few weeks. This entailed filling each jar approximately halfway with ground acorns, then topping them up with water. After simmering the lids on securely, we placed our acorns in the refrigerator and let them soak, changing the water every couple of days. The residual water lightened after several changes, indicating that our efforts to leach out the mildly toxic tannins were working. The water never became fully clear, but was a light brown when the nuts were ready.

Once the acorns were leached, we dried them out. Sitting in the refrigerator, the starch leaches out of the acorns and clumps on the bottom of the jar. To keep that starch in our flour, we stirred it back into suspension and shook the jars up well before straining them through a cheesecloth. After preheating the oven to 200 degrees, we spread the soggy blob of acorn out in an even layer on a cookie sheet and popped it into the oven for about an hour to dry.

The dried acorns are ground relatively finely, but they aren’t flour yet. Since we didn’t have stone mortars and pestles on hand, we used a clean coffee grinder. Neither the blender nor the food processor was able to get the flour as fine as we wanted it to be.

Once the flour was made, following Rougle’s recipe was easy—we mixed the ingredients, dolloped them onto a cookie sheet and put them in the oven at 350 degrees for 14 minutes.

The cookies weren’t pretty to look at, but they tasted good. The cookies did not hold together completely and the surface was pocked by small cracks and gaps. The texture was very sweet and buttery with strong vanilla flavor. The texture was a little odd; one taste tester said the cookies didn’t have the soft and chewy texture she preferred, and another taste tester noted that it was more like a soft graham cracker.

We thought the cookies might be improved by more flour, so we made a second experimental batch, increasing the amount of acorn flour from ¾ cup to 1 cup. The second round cookies were plumper, spongier, and looked more like one expects cookies to look. The grainy texture and the flavor were unchanged.

The texture problem was caused simply by how finely we were able to grind the flour. The coffee grinder was able to get the nut meat down to a pretty fine texture, but certainly not as fine as we expect store bought baking flour to be.

Rougle’s book is not intended to compete head to head with your Betty Crocker cook book. Her book takes you through the seasons, month by month, and suggests simple recipes that can be made using seasonal ingredients the reader can go out and forage. The test kitchen staff are unanimous in this; snacking on these cookies while out foraging for tasty plants would do nothing but improve the experience!
Backpacking is a great way to experience the outdoors and see California’s native plants. Photo was taken from Emigrant Wilderness by S.Joe Griffin. Emigrant Wilderness is in the Stanislaus National Forest and lies on the on Northern Border of Yosemite.
In this issue:

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Join or Renew today!

Read about our results on page 6.

We will try all native plant recipes.

Introducing the Sac Valley CNPS Test Kitchen!

Presented by Rich Marovich

January 2016

January 2016

Hibiscus

Sacramento Valley Chapter Newsletter
California Native Plant Society

Sacramento, CA 95816-5113

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.

Submit content for the February Hibiscus by January 8!

Be sure your membership is current! See your address label for your renewal date.

January 2016 Presentation:

Resurrecting the L.A. Moran Reforestation Center

presented by rich marovich

Public event: open to the public.

Our chapter meeting is free and open to the public.

Sacramento, CA 95816-5113

sacvalleycnps.org

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.