May Chapter Meeting: Introducing Cordova Creek
Presented by Lilly Allen

Cordova Creek, formerly known by the nickname “Clifton’s Drain,” runs through Soil Born Farms at the American River Ranch in River Bend Park in Rancho Cordova. Up until recently, it existed as an ugly, graffiti-lined concrete channel. Its sole purpose was to move stormwater as quickly as possible to the American River. But a beautiful and “natural” Cordova Creek has long loomed in the imagination as a huge potential for the area. The dream was to break up the concrete, add a few curves, soften the steep slopes, and establish native plants and it starts to resemble a natural creek. Add trails and interpretive signage and it transforms into a desirable Parkway destination for walkers, nature lovers and wildlife alike.

After years of imagining, much hard work by many dedicated people (including CNPS volunteers), and a 1.7 million dollar grant from the State of California, a beautiful, functional Cordova Creek is now being realized. Lilly Allen will explain the process for the creek naturalization and will showcase the amazing results. The concrete is gone, and the creek now meanders through 15 acres of planted riparian and wetland habitat. A walking trail now follows the Cordova Creek to connect to the Parkway bike trail, to Soil Born Farms at the American River Ranch, and to Rancho Cordova neighborhoods.

Lilly Allen is an outdoor enthusiast, scientist, and project manager at the Water Forum. She grew up roaming the high deserts of New Mexico and has been fascinated by water in the west since she migrated to U.C. Davis in 2003. She has been managing restoration projects for the Water Forum since 2012, and has been a representative for the diverse team that brought Cordova Creek to life.
Botany from the Road - Anza-Borrego Super Bloom

by Pam Kirkbride

As I watched the rain storms continue to sweep beyond the usual rain shadows in our southern deserts, I was hopeful that we might see a super bloom in Anza-Borrego State Park. I had never been to this part of the Colorado Desert and was excited when my camping buddy, Eva Butler, suggested we spend a week there. As I watched the Desert USA wildflower report meter climb into the upper levels of “wildflower greatness,” it appeared that we would arrive at the best bloom time. This would become a journey of a lifetime to see one of the best displays of wildflowers ever!

We drove to Borrego Springs from San Diego. I had reserved a camp-site for two nights. We were glad for the shade ramada at our site, as the temperatures had soared to the mid 90’s. We hiked the next morning up the Borrego Palm Springs trail and spotted a group of Desert Bighorn Sheep rams. These endangered animals are endemic to this area. All around us bloomed hundreds of flowers – Brittlebush (Encelia farinosa), Brown-eyed Evening Primrose (Chylismia claviformis), Notch-leafed Phacelia (Phacelia crenulata), Chuparosa (Justicia californica), Barrel Cactus (Ferocactus cylindraceus), and Beavertail Prickly Pear Cactus (Opuntia basilaris). We got pollen on our shoes.

Borrego Springs had become a zoo of humans. The park is only 2 hours from San Diego and many people came in for the day to enjoy the flowers. The small town was running out of gasoline – the stores were packed, campgrounds overflowing and you could not even get close to the Visitor Center. So we got water and ice and headed out to see the bloom near town. The Desert Sunflowers had opened turning the flats yellow. These were mixed with purple Sand Verbena (Abronia villosa) and white Evening Primrose (Oenothera deltoides).

Then we were off to the “wilderness” at Arroyo Salado where we planned to camp for two nights. We visited Font’s Point and found our first Desert Lily (Hesperocallis undulata). Stopping along the road to walk a rocky hillside we found Bristly Gilia (Langloisia setosissima ssp. Setosissima) and Broad-leafed Gilia (Aliciella latifolia ss. latifolia). The Arroyo Salado road is typical of the 4-wheel

Lots of Color at Anza-Borrego
drive roads in the park – sandy washes and rocky places surrounded by spectacular scenery and lots of flowers – Indigo Bush (*Psorothamnus schottii*), Fagonia Bush (*Fagonia laevis*), Sand Blazing Star (*Mentzelia involucrata*) and Dead Man’s Fingers (*Cistanthe ambigua*). While camping here, we looked for scorpions with my UV light and found two. The next morning one of them had crept under our camping box! We were constantly serenaded by Phainopepla birds that flew back and forth hunting insects. The wind was the only other noise we heard – the days very hot; the nights cool and bright with stars.

We next visited the Fish Creek area and made a wilderness camp for one night. This area offers great geological formations and an anticline (a type of rock folding in an arch shape) and lots more flowers. We saw many black and white Inflated Blister Beetle that are numerous here and constantly on the move. We spent our last two nights in Tamarisk Grove Campground. The wind had come up and the trees provided lots of shade. We rested after days of the sun beating down on us. Our last journey was out to Mountain Palm Springs. Stopping to walk various washes along the way, we encountered Desert Monkeyflower (*Mimulus bigelovii*) in abundance, Ghost Flower (*Mohavea confertiflora*) and a small Fishhook Nipple Cactus (*Mammillaria dioica*). At Mountain Palm Springs we visited several Washingtonia Palm (*Washingtonia filifera*) oases. We had found many Colorado Desert plants new to us and seen lots of spectacular country. What an incredible adventure this had been!

I could only show so many photos in this article. If you would like to receive a more complete 4-part series on the Colorado Desert, including videos (or get my “Expedition Stories” on a regular basis as I travel), please contact me at pamkirkbride7@gmail.com.
Wednesday Workdays: 10:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m.
So much going on! With all the rain the weeds started getting ahead of us so we have started doing a Weeding Blitz each week. We pick an area that needs immediate attention and then we do 30 minutes of dedicated weeding by those willing and able. It’s working great! Four to six pairs of hands can make a big difference. Boy, do we have plants to move up! Any given workday people drop by and check out our plants, sometimes buy a few or loads of plants. Today two people came in to buy plants and then volunteered with us for a couple of hours before they left. Bring your own lunch or have one of our famous peanut butter and jelly sandwiches.

May Weekend Workday May 21
We’ll have a Workday (and plant sale) during Soil Born Farm’s event: A Day on the Farm event (10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.). This is a fund-raising event for Soil Born Farms and there will be a $5 entrance fee per person. If you would like to volunteer (admission is free for our volunteers if you sign up in advance), email Chris at CNPSchris@gmail.com. We will have several passes for our volunteers so please sign up as soon as you can.

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. For more information visit SacValleyCNPS/ Friday Walks or email John Schmidt at john_waif@msn.com or phone 916-500-8456. Note: no walk on May 26th

Friday walkers

Panorama of the Elderberry Farms Nursery as we are starting to fill up benches after Spring Plant Sale

Get Your eNews Here!
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.

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.
Calendar of Events

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, botanyjohnhunter@gmail.com for more information.

4th Wed. of the month, 7 p.m. (Jan.–June; Sept.–Nov.)
Chapter Board Meetings
Yolo Bypass Wildlife Area Headquarters, 45211 County Road 32 B, Davis 95618
Contact: John Hunter, botanyjohnhunter@gmail.com

Elderberry Farms
Native Plant Nursery
Located at Soil Born Farms
2140 Chase Drive, Rancho Cordova
We pot up seedlings and learn plant propagation techniques. Peanut butter and jelly sandwiches provided. RSVP to Chris, cnpschris@gmail.com.
Sun. May. 21, 10 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.
We will have a Workday (and Plant Sale) during Soil Born Farm’s event.

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
3rd Sat. of the month, 9 a.m.
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.ceanothus.org 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

Native Plant Garden Club
See page 6.
Come and meet fellow native plant gardeners! For more information on the Native Plant Garden Club visit SacValleyCNPS.org/Gardening/Garden Club

Other Items of Interest

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

Big Day of Giving Celebration
Thurs. May 4th 6p.m.-8p.m.
Enjoy live music from The Garage Openers. Free parking, entrance, and bike valet - Suggested donation of $10 supports our non-profits!
Bring your own picnic basket & blanket or camp chairs. Picnic tables and adirondiac chairs are first come, first serve. Coolers and outside beverages will be allowed.

A Day on the Farm
Soil Born Farms
2140 Chase Dr, Rancho Cordova
Sun. May 21 10 a.m.- 3 p.m.
There are free gardening and cooking classes, kid’s garden and art activities, live music, delicious food, community education demonstration tables and lots of fun for the whole family.
Soil Born Farms organic plants and produce will be sold at our ever-popular plant sale and Farmstand.

Plant Science Training Workshop
Intro to Plant Identification I
May 17-19, Berkeley
Taught by Josie Crawford
$375 CNPS Members and $395 Non-Members
In small classes taught by subject matter experts, CNPS plant science training workshops provide science-backed education and hands-on experience in beautiful locales. Registration is first come, first serve for all workshops. Sign up now to secure your spot!
Workshop Now Open for Registration at: cnps.org/workshops

Rare Plant Survey Protocols
June 7-8, 2017, in Redding
Taught by Heath Bartosh & Aaron Sims
This course is designed to approach rare plant surveys using the best scientific information available. In classroom and field settings, the instructors will cover three topic areas: preparing for surveys, conducting surveys, and reporting findings. These topics will be discussed based on applicable botanical survey guidelines. Time spent in the field will be applying the concepts learned during classroom sessions. Full details: www.cnps.org/cnps/education/workshops/2017/0607_rareplantsurvey.php
Board Member Opportunity - Hospitality Chair Opening
By Cassandra Nguyen Musto

After seven years as hospitality chair, I will be spreading out my tablecloths one last time at our June meeting. This summer I will be moving on to devote more time to my other ventures, and our chapter will need a new hospitality chair.

It’s been a wonderful seven years meeting and greeting all of you at our monthly meetings. I’ve enjoyed getting to know you and being a part of a fun and dedicated team of environmental stewards. Even though I will no longer be the hospitality chair, you will still see me around. I will continue to be the garden chair for our demonstration garden at the Old City Cemetery.

The hospitality duties are very straightforward and involve just a few things:

• Marking your calendar for the 2nd Wednesday of the month (Jan-Jun and Sep-Nov)
• Procuring snacks and beverages
• Making sure we have basic supplies like cups, napkins, little plates, etc.
• Arriving before the meeting starts to set up, and then closing up.

Sac Valley Native Plant Garden Club

Did you go on the Gardens Gone Native tour? It is such a wonderful way to see many different ways to incorporate Native Plants in your garden. Photographed is one beautiful way to enjoy native plants and let rainwater infiltrate rather than run into a gutter.

The Sac Valley Native Plant Garden Club invites you to come and meet fellow native plant gardeners. Each month a member opens their garden for close up inspection and to share their journey to Native Plant Gardening. The general location is posted but to receive the address, you will need to email us. To contact us, visit our website: SacValleyCNPS/Gardening/Garden Club

As the hospitality chair, you are able to add your own personality and style to make it your own; you can even recruit a friend to help out. Tablecloths, hot water urns, seasonal decorations, and homemade goods are at your discretion. You can make it as fancy or as simple as you like. Save the receipts and your expenses for hospitality purchases will be reimbursed by the chapter.

If you are interested, please contact me or John Hunter, our chapter president, as soon as possible. I will be available to assist the new hospitality chair for a short time during the transition.

Contact: Cassandra, Outgoing Hospitality Chair cnpsgarden@gmail.com or call (916) 678-0317.

CNPS Propagation Group

The CNPS Propagation Group is a group of volunteers from the Redbud and Sac Valley Chapters of CNPS who are growing native plants at the CalFire Facility in Davis with the help of the Putah Creek Council. We will meet on the 2nd Thursday of each month from 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. Join us on May 11th. Please register through our website. For more information, contact Chris at cnpschris@gmail.com.

2017 BIG Day of Giving

On Thursday, May 4, 2017, CNPS is participating in a huge fundraising challenge for the Sacramento region called the BIG Day of Giving. For 24 hours, starting and ending at midnight, online donations made to the California Native Plant Society through the event website, bigdayofgiving.org, will be eligible for Incentive Pool funds and prizes that may help CNPS win additional money. A modest donation of only $20 may help CNPS win prizes ranging from $500 to $5000!

Worried you may not be around on May 4 to make a donation? Don’t despair! For the first time ever, donations can be scheduled in advance starting April 14 at bigdayofgiving.org/cnps. Please help us spread the word and we hope to see your support on May 4!
Thank You Volunteers at the Spring Plant Sale

by Lauren Bertelson, Plant Sale Volunteer Coordinator

Many thanks to all who volunteered this year; your hard work made the Spring Plant Sale the most successful plant sale ever! We look forward to seeing you and others in the fall. Thank you to: Bernadette Balics, Betsy Weiland, Bobbie King, Brandon Martinez, Carol Witham, Carole Gates, Carrie Black, Chris Lewis, Christine James, Dan Gannon, Diane Boul, Gin Wenslaff, Glen Holstein, Jennifer Hogan, John Hunter, John Schmidt, Lauren Bertelson, Linda Sanford, Marilyn Menard, Mark Lum, Mary Ann Robinson, Mary Beth Metcalf, Mary Schiedt, Meg McAneny, Patricia Gilbert, Paul Barth, Paul Lester, Robin Rietz, Stasia Griffin, Steve Woodward, Suzanne Guthrie, and Terry Linton.
Submit content for the Summer Hibiscus by May 5!
Be sure your membership is current! See your address label for your renewal date.

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sacvalleycnps.org

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