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., June 12

Questions? Contact John Hunter, botanyjohnhunter@gmail.com.

Chapter meetings are free and open to the public.
Books 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 $50; 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.

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.

June Chapter Meeting:
Finger Foods and Gardens Gone Native! Virtual Tour

No utensils needed! Just bring yourself for a relaxing evening. Or, if you like, you may bring a favorite finger food or non-alcoholic beverage to share. We’ll provide napkins, plates, and cups—but feel free to be really earth-friendly and bring your own re-usable dishes.

Snack time will be followed by a Powerpoint of the Gardens Gone Native tour. If you missed the gardens during our April tour, or were not able to get to all of the gardens you wanted to see, here’s your chance to see what you missed. This virtual tour will showcase our own CNPS member gardens and take you all over town in just one evening. The tour includes drought tolerant gardens and ponds, well-manicured “traditional look” gardens, habitat gardens, artistic gardens, and “wild” gardens. From newly planted to long-established, our members’ gardens are as diverse as we are! Our tour will certainly have something for everyone to inspire your own native landscaping ambitions.
How Sacramento Valley CNPS Saved Grasslands Park’s Rare Plants

By Dr. Glen Holstein

The 320 acre Grasslands Park in Yolo County is unremarkable looking but remarkably home to some of the world’s rarest plants. Solano grass (Tuctoria mucronata) and Colusa grass (Neostapfia colusana) survive there. Solano grass exists virtually nowhere else. That happened because unlike the intensively farmed land that surrounds it, Grasslands Park was left mostly natural by the military that used it as a Cold War communication site. When no longer needed for that its transfer to Yolo County through a National Parks Service branch that created urban recreation parks began.

By 2012 there were already disturbing reports from UC Davis Herbarium curator Dr. Ellen Dean that Yolo County was mismanaging rare plant protection at Grasslands Park, but worse was to come. While leaving work on the Yolo Habitat Conservation Plan on December 17, 2012, I glanced at a list of new county projects and was shocked to see that one would cover Grasslands Park with a solar farm.

From Ellen I found it was greenlighted by a consulting firm claiming after a brief fall walkthrough that it had not one native plant. A survey by Ellen demonstrated that claim’s absurdity, so I believed that telling this to wildlife agencies, conservation groups, and local officials might cause the plan to be reconsidered, but on February 26, 2013, Yolo supervisors moved ahead with the solar farm.

They did agree to delay the project and meet with me about mitigating its worst features but instead put off the meeting and started immediate construction far ahead of schedule without pre-construction biological surveys.

Meanwhile our chapter paid $500 to attorney Keith Wagner to send a letter that had no discernable effect, but on April 16 Jude Lamare of 2020 suggested Don Mooney of Davis be tried instead. I met and provided documents to Don just before a pre-arranged Florida trip but left on April 26 dispirited by so much loss at Grasslands Park.

The Everglades’ beauty cleared my mind, however, and I remembered Grasslands Park might be federally designated critical habitat that Yolo County had illegally built on. Sure enough it was, not only for the two plants, but also vernal pool tadpole shrimp (Lepidurus packardi). So the long delayed May 8 meeting with Yolo supervisors and staff turned out very differently than they expected. Instead of presenting a finished project I hadn’t been able to stop they left after learning they’d built on federal critical habitat they didn’t know existed in their own county. Alan Pryor, the Sierra Club representative at the meeting, was so impressed that he was an important Grasslands Park ally from then on.

Don Mooney reported the county was shocked and ready to settle after the May 8 meeting but first a 60 day notice of intent to litigate was needed from CNPS and the Sierra Club. Both organizations needed to approve this but that was surprisingly hard to get. At the Sierra Club solar was prioritized over biodiversity conservation, but problems were more ambiguous at CNPS, which seemed to resist new players in its litigation club. Still a summer of lobbying finally overcame resistance and the 60 day notice was sent on October 4, 2013.

As Don Mooney predicted, Yolo County was immediately interested in settling and talks began on a Grasslands Park management plan. These initially included the Center for Natural Lands Management (CNML), but eventually bogged down. The county also blamed delays on the National Park Service, which seemed less than eager to preserve biodiversity in what it considered an urban parks only program.

2014 passed with little progress, but when I briefed Cay Goude of US Fish and Wildlife Service on Grasslands Park in February 2015 and she then encouraged Petrea Marchand of the Yolo Habitat Conservancy (YHC) to get involved, things began moving toward a settlement again. Petrea had a good working relationship with both County Council Phil Pogledich and myself from our work with YHC and was ready to replace CNLM with YHC as Grasslands’ Park manager.

YHC used CNPS and Sierra Club to help develop a Grasslands Park management plan providing for recreation while entirely avoiding vernal pools and rare plants. We had final cut on this plan, and on the beautiful spring day of March 30, 2018, Yolo County’s Kevin Yarris gave a full tour of the Grasslands Park trail system we helped design to the Sierra Club’s Pam Nieberg and myself.

Progress was rapid through the rest of 2018 and by November 5 after final edits a settlement with Yolo County was approved by the Sacramento Valley Chapter Board, the CNPS Litigation Committee, and the Sierra Club, and signed on November 9, 2018.

On February 7, 2019, CNPS Sacramento Valley Chapter received a check from Yolo County as part of the settlement for $4,360.00. Since the chapter had earlier paid Don Mooney $2,180 and Keith Wagner $500.00 this was a total return on our Grasslands Park litigation investment of 163% or 27% for each year the campaign continued. More significantly the rare plants and animals as well as their habitat at Grasslands Park now have full legal protection.

Continues on page 5
Our coastal redwood was suffering from no summer water. As a solution, we built an outdoor shower. Most of the shower water is directed to the rain garden but it also waters the redwood. Rainwater rolling off the patio cover is also captured in the Rain Garden. The redbud volunteered in the Rain Garden which is dominated by *Aster*. I’ve also added a button willow.

If we’re building a shower area, why not build a bath also? Then while sitting in the bath I have a window to view island alum root, redbud, *Styrax*, poppies, the pond with yellow willow, button willow, and beyond that the elderberry and much more. Creating another watering source, the bathtub drains out the side – watering a spice bush, foothill penstemon, island alum root, mock orange, and of course a redwood. We built a moveable deck, now my yoga deck, to cover and protect the drainpipes going to all those plants.
# Sacramento Valley CNPS 2019 Calendar of Events

Our CNPS Sacramento Valley Chapter events are free and open to the public. Other organizations’ Fairs & Events may have admission fees (unless you volunteer for tabling). For more information on these and other programs, visit our website at [www.SacValleyCNPS.org](http://www.SacValleyCNPS.org).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter Meeting (2nd Wed, Jan-Jun &amp; Sep-Nov, 7 p.m.)</th>
<th>Friday Walks (year round) &amp; Field Trips</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Shepard Garden &amp; Arts Center in McKinley Park 3330 McKinley Boulevard, Sacramento 95816</td>
<td>See website for dates, locations and times.</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fairs &amp; Events (tabling)</th>
<th>Elderberry Farms Native Plant Nursery 2140 Chase Drive, Rancho Cordova 95670</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Contact <a href="mailto:maryolo1@netscape.net">maryolo1@netscape.net</a> to volunteer Calendar excludes May Earth Day related events.</td>
<td>Reproduction of this nursery is encouraged. For a planting guide, to schedule a TABLING, or if you are interested in making a donation, please email <a href="mailto:maryolo1@netscape.net">maryolo1@netscape.net</a>.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## 2019 Calendar of Events

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event Description</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Location</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Chapter Meeting – January 9 – 7 p.m.:</strong></td>
<td>Tim Vendlinski—Arcade Creek at Del Paso Regional Park</td>
<td><strong>Chapter Meeting – February 13 – 7 p.m.:</strong> Tom Landis—Monarchs and Milkweeds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Chapter Meeting – February 23 – 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.:</strong></td>
<td>Tabling at Duck Days, Yolo Basin Wildlife Area Headquarters, 45211 County Road 32B, Davis 95618</td>
<td><strong>Chapter Meeting – March 13 – 7 p.m.:</strong> Kate Mawdsley—Jepson Prairie Preserve Vernal Pools</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Fairs &amp; Events – February 23 – 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.:</strong></td>
<td>Tabling at Shepard Garden &amp; Art Center Sale, 3330 McKinley Boulevard, Sacramento 95816</td>
<td><strong>Fairs &amp; Events – March 16 and 17 – 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.:</strong> Tabling at Shepard Garden, 3330 McKinley Boulevard, Sacramento 95816</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Spring Native Plant Sale – April 9 – 9 a.m. to 2 p.m.:</strong></td>
<td>Elderberry Farms Native Plant Nursery on the American River Parkway at Soil Born Farms, 2140 Chase Drive, Rancho Cordova 95670</td>
<td><strong>Chapter Meeting – April 13 – 7 p.m.:</strong> TBA—UCD Living Landscape Adaptation Project</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Chapter Meeting – April 13 – 7 p.m.:</strong></td>
<td>TBA</td>
<td><strong>Fairs &amp; Events – August 3 – 8 a.m. to 2 p.m.:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Chapter Meeting – September 11 - 7 p.m.:</strong></td>
<td>Gardening with Native Plants (speaker TBA)</td>
<td><strong>Chapter Meeting – May 8 - 7 p.m.:</strong> Julie Carville—Wildflower Trails of the Sierra Nevada</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Fairs &amp; Events – May 18 – 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.:</strong></td>
<td>Tabling at Walk on the Wild Side, Beach Lake Park, Freeport 95832</td>
<td><strong>Fairs &amp; Events – October 5 and 6 – 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.:</strong> Tabling at Shepard Garden &amp; Art Center Sale, 3330 McKinley Boulevard, Sacramento, CA 95816</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Chapter Meeting – June 12:</strong></td>
<td>Member Finger Food Potluck (short topic TBA)</td>
<td><strong>Fall Native Plant Sale &amp; Nature Art Market – September 28 and 29 – 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.:</strong> Shepard Garden &amp; Arts Center, 3330 McKinley Boulevard, Sacramento, CA 95816</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Chapter Meeting – October 9:</strong></td>
<td>TBA</td>
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<td><strong>Chapter Meeting – November 13:</strong></td>
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**Setting up an Instagram Account to Follow Sacramento Valley CNPS**

Would you like to follow the Sacramento Valley CNPS on Instagram? [This link](https://www.instructables.com/id/How-to-Download-and-Use-Instagram/) has step by step instructions on how to set up an Instagram account. Once you have established an account, you can search for sacramentovalleycnps and click “follow” (the blue button near the top middle of the page).
Woolly Rose-Mallow (hibiscus lasiocarpos var. occidentalis)
By Ellen Pimentel

Woolly rose-mallow is a perennial herb in the Mallow family (Malvaceae) that grows in freshwater marsh habitat throughout the Sacramento Valley. It can easily be seen by native plant enthusiasts in the Delta, often growing on the sides of levees in riprap. Borne on 3 to 6-foot tall stems, the white flowers are up to 4 inches across and have dark magenta centers, with a frilly filament tube typical of Hibiscus flowers associated with more tropical environments. Blooms appear from June through September (and sometimes even into November), and the leaves are heart-shaped and velvety-soft. It is easy to understand why this beautiful plant is the mascot of the Sacramento Valley Chapter of CNPS.

Woolly rose-mallow is included on the CNPS Inventory of Rare and Endangered Plants. It is assigned a California Rare Plant Rank of 1B.2, meaning it is rare or endangered in California and elsewhere, and fairly endangered in California. Most populations are very small and seriously threatened by habitat disturbance, development, agricultural activities, recreational activities, and channelization of marsh habitat. Individuals may also be threatened by weed control measures and erosion. As with all native wildflowers, please never collect the flowers or otherwise damage the plants; if you simply must have your own specimen, cultivated woolly rose-mallow plants are often available for sale at chapter plant sales.

Grasslands
Continued from page 2
Unfortunately habitat was lost and not regained at the solar facility. Don Mooney advised that seeking its removal was a bridge too far and we followed his advice. Just as on a larger scale in the desert, it’s a reminder that California’s wonderful biodiversity that CNPS recently achieved a state mandate to protect must not be sacrificed to technology no matter how otherwise worthy. If every one of our trees and wildflowers was sacrificed to cover the state with solar panels, the earth’s loss in biodiversity would be far greater than its gain in energy.
Submit content for the September Hibiscus by August 10!
Be sure your membership is current! See your address label for your renewal date.

Summer 2019
sacvalleynps.org

The Sacramento Valley chapter newsletter, Hibiscus, is published February, March, April, June, September, and November. 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.

In this issue:
2 Grasslands Park
3 Elderberry Farms
4 Calendar
5 Woolly Rose-Mallow

Join or renew today!

In our chapter meetings, membership dues support CNPS activities. CNPS meetings are free and open to the public!

Save the Date!

Fall Native Plant Sale will be coming in September!

JUNE PRESENTATION:
Finger Foods and Gardens Gone Native! Virtual Tour

Closing the Sacramento Valley Gap: Northern Sierra Nevada.