Chapter meetings are free and open to the public

Next Meeting: November 13th
Refreshments provided!

Chapter Meetings are 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

Questions? Contact Tara Collins, svcnpspresident@gmail.com

Using Native Plants to Create Pollinator Habitat:
Lessons Learned and New Perspectives

Tom Landis will present a discussion about how to establish monarch waystations—specialized pollinator gardens that include milkweed (Asclepias spp). Since milkweed is the only plant that monarch caterpillars can eat, we’ll discuss the native milkweed species in California and how to propagate and cultivate them. California is unique in that all four generations of monarch butterflies can occur in the state, especially the critical first generation after monarchs overwinter along the coast. Due to global warming, monarchs are arriving later and leaving sooner from their overwintering sites, so it is critical to propagate and plant early growing milkweeds.

Nectar from flowers is the only food source for butterflies, including monarchs, so we’ll discuss the best native nectar species that flower in the early season, mid-season, and especially late season. Late blooming nectar plants are critical to fuel migrating monarchs and help them build-up fat reserves to sustain them overwinter.

Tom Landis is a forester who retired after thirty years of working as a nursery specialist for the US Forest Service. Using his nursery experience, Tom has been creating pollinator habitat by growing and planting native milkweeds and other nectar plants in monarch waystations throughout the Rogue Valley. Tom is a founding member of the Southern Oregon Monarch Advocates (SOMA), which has been creating pollinator habitat in southern Oregon for over five years. Tom has given over one hundred “Monarchs and Milkweeds” workshops including one at a Society of Ecological Restoration meeting in Manchester, England. To encourage the use of local native milkweeds and other pollinator plants, Tom helped write the booklet Native Pollinator Plants for Southern Oregon. He also co-authored an article published in the Spring 2018 issue of the Native Plants Journal titled “Using native plants to create pollinator habitat in southwest Oregon: lessons learned.”
Notes from the Editor(s)

As one of the new editors for the *Hibiscus*, I wanted to say hello and introduce myself and co-editor Guy Harrison. Guy will be responsible for formatting the newsletter for printing, as Jamie LeFevre steps down, and also for managing the membership list, after Linda Sanford—a big job by itself. I will take on the role of compiling and editing the content, after Linda Ramos. Many thanks to all for your years of dedicated service putting out the *Hibiscus*.

I’d like to reach out and ask the membership to send us your stories, ideas, and photos that we can feature in the newsletter. I will want to regularly feature articles about conservation issues relative to rare native plants and native plant communities and habitat. I am also interested in restoration of native plant populations and habitat, and in growing natives for restoration and for landscaping. These are probably your interests too. My goals for the *Hibiscus* are to further communication, education, and engagement. Send your ideas to: editorhibiscus@gmail.com. Vivian Parker, co-editor

Tools to Aid in Plant Identification

Learning to identify native plants to species may seem daunting at times, after all, there are at least 7,400 species, subspecies and varieties of plants in the state, of which 6,270 are native and 2,331 of these do not occur anywhere else except in California (in other words, they are endemic). While learning the names of plants seen along a guided botanical walk remains the easiest way to learn, particularly to learn the names of species in a given area, there is nothing like sitting down with a plant and getting very familiar with it, your hand lens and your Jepson Manual by your side. Signing up for a plant ID workshop is a great place to start. We will be posting notices here to let you know when these are happening within our chapter area, and further afield as well, when they are available.

Sacramento City College and the American River College both teach field botany and identification courses periodically. But short of formal training, or even a workshop, today there are many new tools available to help with this task, thanks to the digital age. We are going to help you with that, right here in the *Hibiscus*.

Plant lists are enormously helpful. Most of the CNPS chapters have a website link to popular hiking spots, and the plants that have been documented there. If you can identify plants to the family level, you can frequently narrow the possibilities using a plant list. Here are links to plant lists for the Sacramento Valley, Redbud, and El Dorado chapters:

Sacramento Valley CNPS:  
https://www.sacvalleycnps.org/home/resources-links

Redbud Chapter CNPS:  
http://www.redbud-cnps.org/floras.htm

El Dorado Chapter CNPS:  
https://www.eldoradocnps.org/plant-places/plant-walks

The second digital tool that can be a huge help is Calflora. Here you can enter your location of interest, and generate a plant list based on herbarium records as well as observations reported by citizens like yourself. Start at calflora.org. In the menu bar on the left, choose “What Grows Here.” When the page opens, zoom into the map to the area where you want to generate a plant list. You can then type in the name of a known area in the location box, such as “American River Bend Park,” then click SEARCH.

Or, you can draw a boundary around an area you want to examine. Click on “AREA” in the Search section. Then choose “DRAW A POLYGON,” then click on “start drawing.” Place your cursor somewhere on the map on the boundary of the polygon you want to draw. You can go around the border of your area and each time you click, a new point is generated. The dots will be connected automatically, and you have your polygon. Click “stop drawing” then click SEARCH.

A list of plants will be generated, in categories ranging from annual herb, perennial herb, grasslike, shrub, tree, vine, and fern. Click on these to display your plant lists, with beautiful images that have been provided by volunteers and professionals and all collected by Calflora’s magic. You can add points to your map from each species of interest, and you can read the details of each observation as well. Some of the observations will date back to the 1800s, based on herbarium records. When there are no recent records in the vicinity, perhaps that means that you need to go out and find that plant again. Is it still extant? Is there a subdivision on top of the population recorded in 1953? The treasure hunt begins.

You can also browse images of California native plants at the CalPhotos database, https://calphotos.berkeley.edu/. The wonderful thing about CalPhotos is the wealth of useful information attached to each image. You can link directly to the Consortium of Herbaria records, and a map that is easy to navigate directly to the site records in the county of interest. Another tool that is helpful to identify plants as well as every other kind of living thing, is the iNaturalist app and website. There is even an American River Bend Park album, be sure to check that out at https://www.inaturalist.org/guides/996. You can upload your own observations, and naturalists from all over the world may help you with the identification. Learn more at https://www.inaturalist.org/.

Browsing images and carefully examining details about the habitats in which plants are found at these online sites can go a long ways towards helping anyone to learn to identify plants to species. You will still need your dichotomous keys, but these digital tools are an enormous aid when used in conjunction with field guides and manuals.

Next month we will discuss the Consortium of California
Herbaria project which will digitize all of the herbarium records for the California flora. In other words, they are taking pictures of the actual herbarium specimens and making them available to search. But you can visit it now, if you haven’t yet, at: http://www.portal.capturingcaliforniasflowers.org/portal/index.php. Happy botanizing!

Parking Strip at Yosemite Street Village Goes Native

Report from the Stockton Subchapter

The Stockton Subchapter of the Sacramento Valley California Native Plant Society is proud to announce the completion of our first major project since the decision to restore the little subchapter to its former glory. On October 5th, a group of volunteers installed a native garden in a curb “hellstrip,” a commonly overlooked space of land that sits between the parking curb and the sidewalk, in the centrally located Yosemite Street Village. One of the purposes of this location is to show how urban spaces, no matter how big or small, can be utilized to promote wildlife habitat; as a result, our native plant selection was carefully crafted to support various local pollinator species. Can you imagine the impact that numerous native plant hellstrips could have on our local environment?

It would essentially create an urban corridor for butterflies, bees, and birds, as well as increasing available green space in our city. When you pass by, you’ll find that our flowerbed contains wonderful full-sun natives such as silver bush lupine, California fuchsia, Great Valley gumweed, narrowleaf milkweed, California buckwheat, and much more. Be sure to stop by in spring when it boasts hundreds of native wildflowers! We hope that our project has inspired homeowners, communities, and city planners not only in Stockton, but across California, to convert an empty space into a meaningful one. Special thanks to all the volunteers who helped make this project a reality!

Nellie Zapien,
CNPS Stockton Subchapter, Chair

Meet Will Van W
Candidate for Chapter Vice-President

Will Van W has been an active member of Sacramento Valley CNPS since joining the chapter in 2017. He began by participated in plant propagation at Elderberry Farms Native Plant Nursery while learning about all the wonderful aspects of the organization. When the Sacramento Valley Chapter led the charge for the Re-Oak initiative following the devastating 2017 Northern California wildfires, Will joined State CNPS as the Re-Oak Coordinator. With a herculean effort by Sacramento Valley CNPS volunteers and participants from regional chapters, the group was able to receive and process thousands of acorns sent in from around the State. Will worked with local partners, school groups, and nonprofits to distribute and grow acorns for restoration efforts. As Conservation Chair, Will has been a Chapter representative to Environmental Council of Sacramento Habitat 2020 Committee meetings and has participated in statewide CNPS conservation initiatives. Will has enjoyed being part of public outreach and membership recruitment at various regional events and loves to share his enthusiasm for California Native Plants. The chapter election for this position will be held at the Chapter meeting on November 13. At this time, Will is the only candidate. Be sure to come and cast your vote.

L-R: Merlyn Lenear, Nellie Zapien, Lisa Haggerty, Emily Westcott, Vanessa and Brock Mallory
American River Parkway Stewardship Coordinator

We’d like to thank Heather Ogston, who is stepping down after four years as the Steward for the American River Parkway CNPS River Mile. Her volunteers included CNPS-ers, corporate groups, and many young people and students, some of whom had never been to the river before. Her work to teach the important lessons of stewardship to our youth will leave a lasting impression of priceless value.

In 1993, the Parkway Foundation founded the “Adopt-the-Parkway” initiative. “Mile Stewards” adopt each of the 23 miles of Parkway along both banks of the river. When Chris Lewis first came up with the idea for CNPS to adopt a mile, Heather stepped up to volunteer for the job. The CNPS River Mile is mile 13, located on the east/south side of the river, just downstream of the footbridge at River Bend Park.

There are two types of Mile Stewards: volunteer and financial. Both are recognized on a Parkway sign located along the paved bike trail of their mile. There are 46 Volunteer Mile Stewards and 46 Financial Mile Stewards along the Parkway. According to Heather, CNPS mile 13 is one of the most beautiful and cleanest, wide gravel bed areas on the Parkway. She has rarely found a homeless camp. Volunteers pulled trash out of the wrack line, which is the line of debris that attaches to vegetation along the river, at high flows, and is sometimes deposited above head height. Trash is collected in black garbage bags, and the amount collected is recorded to report back to the foundation. Typical activities on the CNPS mile might also include pulling weeds, using tools like the weed wrench and shears for big non-native species like tree-of-heaven, sago palm, and pampas grass. Tools are available from the volunteer center. The most common invasive species is yellow star-thistle.

Over the years Heather has seen the river change dramatically. In 2016, huge deposits of sand left pools of stranded water, and new plants showed up including Nicotiana and Datura. Last winter, ten feet of bank was washed away. While the first half of the CNPS mile is expansive, the second half of the mile includes steep banks that are barely accessible. Plants closest to the river are disturbance dependent, facilitating the many invasive non-native species that are encountered. Native species include several species of oaks, Western sycamore, white alder, willow, California ash, Fremont cottonwood, wild grape, elderberry, coyote brush, buttonwillow, buckeye, pipevine, deer weed, Brickellia, Lycopus, wild rose, lupine, doveweed, blazing star, Datura, wild tobacco, and many more.

Heather is now pursuing her credential to be a middle-school science teacher. We are grateful for her service to CNPS and to conservation, now and in the future, and we wish her all the best in her studies.

If you would like to volunteer for the River Steward position, please contact Tara Collins at svcnpspresident@gmail.com. Stewards commit to twenty hours on the mile per quarter conducting clean up, trail maintenance, and weed removal, as well as attending periodic steward meetings.
Calling All Native Gardens

Save the date! The 2020 Gardens Gone Native Garden Tour is scheduled for April 25, 2020 from 9:30 AM to 4:00 PM. Show off your California native garden and inspire others to share the joy of gardening with California native plants. Do you have a garden with at least 50 percent natives? Do you need an excuse to get your garden in shape? The 2020 Garden tour will be our 10th anniversary tour celebrating our native flora in the garden. Be a part of this event and contact us at: gardensgonenative@gmail.com. The garden tour is a lot of fun and it is an opportunity for us to inspire others to plant California natives, while helping to restore native flora one garden at a time. For more information, contact Colene Rauh at 916-717-5517.

Rare Plants in November – Yes!

Suisun Marsh Aster
(Symphyotrichum lentum)

As the season settles into autumn, we may long for the wildflowers of spring and summer, but there is good news. You can enjoy native California plants and even some rare plants in the Sacramento region this month. Head out to the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta and you might find Suisun marsh aster (Symphyotrichum lentum) still blooming in the marshes, on levee slopes, and even on top of old pilings. Suisun marsh aster is a perennial herb in the Sunflower family, with small, daisy-like flowers that are pink-purple in color. Plants can grow up to nearly 5 feet in height, but are usually between 3 and 4 feet tall. The above-ground vegetation will die back soon, and the plant will overwinter as a long rhizome, waiting until next spring to grow anew. The rare Suisun marsh aster can be confused with closely-related, more common species, and it’s physical characteristics (such as stem hairiness) vary, confounding botanists for decades. Thankfully, we can review a treasure trove of herbarium specimens of this species, some collected as early as 1890 by pioneering botanists. Suisun marsh aster is listed in the CNPS Inventory of Rare and Endangered Plants with a rare plant rank of 1B.2, meaning it is rare or endangered in California and elsewhere, and fairly endangered in California—in fact, it is endemic to the San Francisco Bay Area and Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta regions. The species is threatened by loss of marsh habitat and bank erosion, so please explore its habitat gently. Ellen Pimentel

CNPS Fire Recovery Guide

92-page booklet available for download at cnps.org/fire-recovery and in print through participating community partners.

Photo by Julie Clements

Photo by Ellen Pimentel
Calendar of Events

To be notified of future upcoming events, sign up for the biweekly e-newsletter at sacvalleycnps.org, or e-mail cnpschris@gmail.com

See online at https://www.sacvalleycnps.org/fairsevents/eventsoverview

Upcoming Events

Volunteer with the Stockton CNPS at the 2019 Lodi Sandhill Crane Festival

November 2nd and 3rd
10:00 AM to 5:00 pm Saturday
10:00 am to 4:00 pm Sunday

This is a fun opportunity to talk with community members about the benefits of gardening with native plants. Email stocktoncnps@gmail.com if you’re interested in volunteering. See you there!

CNPS Garden Ambassador Fall Garden Visit

Sunday, November 3
11:00 am to 3:00 pm  RSVP required

You are invited to enjoy Patricia Carpenter’s native garden on a typical fall day. The garden, a secluded 1-acre wild escape on the slough, is located west of Davis. Started in 2005, it now features more than 300 species and cultivars of California native plants. Visit Patricia’s Garden Ambassador Profile link on the state CNPS website to learn more about this garden, access a map, view a plant list, and take a virtual tour. For more information, see www.cnps.org/events.

Chapter Board Meetings

4th Wednesday of the month, 7 p.m.
(except Jul, Aug, and Dec.)
Shepard Garden & Arts Center, McKinley Park, Sacramento
Contact Tara Collins, svcnspresident@gmail.com for more information

Elderberry Farms Native Plant Nursery

Every Wednesday workdays, from 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.
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 at cnpschris@gmail.com.

Field Trips

Sign up for automatic email notice when a new trip is planned, email John Schmidt at john_waif@msn.com. Or call or text John at 916-500-8456. You can also subscribe to the CNPS enews, and receive updates when the plant walks are scheduled. Subscribe on the home page at https://www.sacvalleycnps.org/.

Friday Walks

Friday Walks are for seed and data collecting, plant identification, photography, and fun! Our destination changes each week depending on the Nursery’s need and the group’s interest. Walks are listed in the eNewsletter and on our webpage. Contact Friday Walks leader John Schmidt at 916-500-8456.

Garden Word Days at the Native Plant Demonstration Garden

Sacramento Historic City Cemetery
1000 Broadway, Sacramento
Bring a hat and water and wear garden-appropriate clothes. A plant will be available to take home. For more information, contact Cassandra at cnpsgarden@gmail.com

Ongoing Events

Chapter Meeting & Guest Speaker

2nd Wednesday of the month, 7 p.m.
(except July, August, and Dec.)
Shepard Garden & Arts Center, McKinley Park, Sacramento
Contact Tara Collins, svcnspresident@gmail.com for more information
November 2019

sacvalleynps.org

The online version of the *Hibiscus* is in full color and contains live links to websites. If you would rather receive the link to each new issue of the newsletter in your inbox, instead of a paper copy, please let us know at editorhibiscus@gmail. Find us on the web at https://www.sacvalleynps.org/home/newsletters