January Meeting
of the California Native Plant Society’s
Sacramento Valley Chapter

Date: Wednesday, January 12, 2005
Time: 7:00 pm
Place: Shepherd Garden & Arts Center
       McKinley Park
       3330 McKinley Blvd (E Street’s eastern continuation)
Contact: Diana Hickson, Program Chair
        (916) 362–8022

One of the dragonfly images we’ll see at the program.
© Greg Kareofelas

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Dragonflies Don’t Bite
Natural History and Gorgeous Scans of the
Dragonflies of Northern California

Greg Kareofelas will present a talk about some of the superstitious surrounding dragonflies in general and the natural history of the dragonfly species here in Northern California. He’ll illustrate the talk with his incredible digital images of both Dragonflies and Damselflies. Greg learned the scanning process when he was playing around scanning Korean coins to sell on eBay! He will also discuss collection techniques, scanning techniques and provide a list of resources for those who are interested in learning to identify dragonflies.

Greg has been a member of the Sacramento Valley Chapter of CNPS for many years and has had a longtime interest in butterflies and dragonflies. He has offered to lead a field trip in the summer of 2005 to a dragonfly hotspot or two. So come to his talk to see both the familiar species and the elusive ones you must “search out” in some of Northern California’s most remarkable habitats.

We’ll have our first Know Your Natives Plant ID Challenge. Books, wildflower seeds, posters and our new Sac Valley CNPS Chapter T-shirts will be available for purchase at the meeting. Refreshments will be served. The meeting is free and the public is welcome.

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Calendar

January
3   Nature Walk with Jack Hiehle
     8:00 AM–Noon. Goethe Park
8   Weed Warriors
    8:45-Noon. William Pond
12  Chapter meeting & Know Your Natives Challenge
    7:00 PM. Shepherd Garden & Arts Center
14  Point Reyes trip with Jack Hiehle
    7:00 AM–Evening

February
5   Weed Warriors
    8:45-Noon. Location TBA

April
16-17 Wildflower Weekend
    10:00-4:00. Crawford’s Barn
Plant Protection News Update
An interview with Dr. Glen Holstein, Chapter Botanist

Chapter Botanist Dr. Glen Holstein reported on several issues affecting rare plants and native plant communities in Yolo and Sacramento Counties.

During the summer Holstein, Jennifer Hogan (past chapter president), Sami LaRocca (CNPS member) and Jim Baxter (CSUS professor) sought protection for a population of rare alkali milkvetch (*Astragalus tener var. tener*), which was threatened by drainage pond construction in the city of Woodland. They were unsuccessful. The best that can be said about this tragic loss is that it taught lessons that can be used elsewhere. The most important is to advocate early with those best able to influence the decision and to establish these contacts even earlier if possible, i.e. get to know your local politicians before you need their help. On a more positive note, another population of *Astragalus tener var. tener* recently received protection when the Yolo Bypass Wildlife Area expanded southward (www.dfg.ca.gov/lands/wa/region2/yolo).

Holstein was soon able to use the lessons learned in Woodland when the same contract planning team that had killed plants there moved on to the town of Winters, where they attempted to destroy a vernal pool and burrowing owl nesting area through a negative declaration that avoided doing an EIR or any plant surveys. Glen spoke to the Winters Planning Commission on June 22 and to its City Council on September 7 about the importance of both doing EIRs and doing them with adequate plant surveys. The final result, in each case decided by a single vote, was an order to do an EIR specifically including rare plant surveys. Thanks to cooperation with other environmental groups and numerous concerned Winters citizens, it was a clear victory over the development machine that has been dominant in Yolo County. It was also an excellent opportunity to raise the consciousness of Winters officials about the importance of protecting rare plants. In retrospect, the outcome in Woodland might have been different if all those steps had been followed there from the beginning.

One of the best environmental education outcomes of the Winters issue also resulted in excellent publicity for CNPS when, following the June Planning Commission hearing, Glen and two other environmentalists were interviewed by Debra Lo Guercio, editor of the Winters Express, the local newspaper. She wrote an excellent front-page story, illustrated by color wildflower photos, that prominently discussed CNPS as well as the importance of protecting vernal pools and rare plants. In retrospect, the outcome in Woodland might have been different if all those steps had been followed there from the beginning.

Glen strongly advocated for bringing the plan up to date by giving protection to the tarplant prairie plant community and updating the plan’s rare plant protection element to reflect the latest CNPS Inventory. Important but previously ignored, tarplant prairie needs recognition comparable to other plant communities. Until it gets that, it will be a magnet for development proposals like the one attempted at Mather last year.

Glen also provided input to similar Yolo County plan updates. On July 21 he advocated for more natural community protection in its parks plan update and on November 3 he testified about the need for adding rare plant and plant community protection to a General Plan Conservation Element now focused almost exclusively on protecting farmland. That misguided policy must be changed since it pushes development into the remaining natural areas that were never farmed. That was the root cause of the tragedy in Woodland and a similar policy in Merced County was what started the UC Merced problem. Glen’s recommendations were well received by county staff and participating county supervisor Helen Thomson.

Glen’s efforts on behalf of plants and their communities were helped significantly by cooperation with Tuleyome (www.tuleyome.org), a conservation umbrella group that functions in Yolo and other nearby counties much as Habitat 2020 does in Sacramento County. Tuleyome is significantly better connected politically than 2020, however, since its head, Bob Schneider, hosted events attracting numerous politicians including Senator Barbara Boxer. Glen participated regularly in Tuleyome activities including the following:

- June 25 and August 6 environmental planning meetings with Assemblywoman Lois Wolk
- a November 6 retreat at Soda Springs
- co-hosting a November 15th slide show in Davis featuring noted conservationist and author Tim Palmer, whose most recent book on nature conservation is the stunning *California Wild: Preserving the Spirit and Beauty of our Land.*

Glen Holstein can be reached at holstein@cal.net or at (530)758–6787. Glen Holstein and Janie Booth
**Wildflower Weekend**  
April 16 and 17, 2005 ~ 10:00 – 4:00  
Sacramento’s Plant Communities—
their beauty, their importance, their future

What do we need to make this work? We need Chapter Members to be involved! This event is for you, for our community, and for our community leaders. Please plan to attend. Or plan to help out if you can.

**MARK YOUR CALENDARS.**
Contact Chris Lewis if you can help out: lupine@cwnet.com or (916) 482-5282

Luckily we have talented friends!
Glen Holstein, Chapter Botanist will be the Master of Ceremonies.

Plant Community Champions!
- **California Prairie** ~ Glen Holstein  
- **Chaparral** ~ OPEN  
- **Fresh Water Marsh** ~ Jeff Hart  
- **Oak Woodland** ~ OPEN  
- **Riparian Woodland** ~ Bonnie Green Ross  
- **Serpentine, Ione & Gabbro Islands** ~ John Hunter  
- **Vernal Pools** ~ Eva Butler

What we need—
1. PHOTO CONTEST—professional quality photos of individual plants & plant communities. Details will be put on our website.
2. Volunteers to set up the Hall: tables, chairs, exhibits.
3. Volunteers to help with the **PLANT SALE**—Horticulture help, Cashiers, etc.
4. Volunteers for Plant Community exhibits:  
   - **California Prairie**  
   - **Chaparral**  
   - **Fresh Water Marsh**  
   - **Oak Woodland**  
   - **Riparian Woodland**  
   - **Serpentine, Ione, & Gabbro Islands**  
   - **Vernal Pools**
5. Volunteers for tables & booths:  
   - **KID ZONE**  
   - **Native American Uses**  
   - **Horticultural Uses**  
   - **Information Table**: Membership, Conservation, and Rare Plants  
   - Book sales, poster sales, tee shirts  
   - Snack Bar: cooks, bakers, cashiers
6. Volunteers for Clean up: After the Plant Sale at 3:00 on Saturday & a final clean up on Sunday at 4:00.

**Think Globally, Act Locally!**
Mistletoes: A Blessing and a Curse

Have you ever felt sad for a tree so covered with mistletoes that it seemed to bend under their weight? Well, I have, but I also feel that mistletoes deserve a little more appreciation than they usually get.

Over the ages, northern Europeans have considered mistletoe to be a healing herb, a cure against poisons, an inducer of prophetic dreams (when placed under your pillow), a divining rod for hidden treasure, and a countercharm to sorcery. Its more magical uses were associated with the summer and winter solstices, and here today, at Christmas, some of us still kiss under mistletoe hung in a doorway.

This culturally significant plant is but one of many parasitic plant species referred to as mistletoes. These plants grow on, and in, the stems of other plants, and derive their water, mineral nutrients, and some or all of their carbohydrates from their host. Though they are parasites that harm their host to some degree, they also are important food sources for insects and birds because they produce prolific quantities of high quality nectar and fruits over prolonged flowering and fruiting periods.

These mistletoes are a diverse lot. Over 1,300 plant species in 10 different families have this growth-form. They can be bird, insect or wind pollinated, and have fruits of red, blue, purple, black or white. Though many mistletoes are dispersed by birds, others are self-dispersed, including our dwarf mistletoes (the genus Arceuthobium) that spit their seeds at 60 mph.

In California, our native mistletoes include 12 species of dwarf mistletoes, which have reduced scale-like leaves and are parasitic on conifers, and 7 species of “mistletoe” (the genus Phoradendron), most of whom have green fleshy leaves and parasitize both conifers and broadleaved trees. In addition, we have the non-native European mistletoe (Viscum album), which has naturalized in the outer North Coast Ranges.

This time of year in the Sacramento area, as the leaves fall, the evergreen clumps of Phoradendron become more and more conspicuous. Phoradendron species (P. macrophyllum and P. villosum) are considered serious pests of shade trees, and in large numbers can seriously harm a tree. Removing branches as soon as the mistletoe is observed is an effective means of control on smaller branches. Where mistletoe has established on larger branches, which can’t be removed without harming the form of the tree, mechanical control is more problematic, though still possible. Chemical control measures also exist.

However, complete eradication of mistletoe from the Sacramento area is exceedingly unlikely. Thus, a happy coexistence is the best we can do, and this depends just as much on forethought and perspective as it does on removal efforts. Planting trees resistant to mistletoe establishment is the most effective way to avoid hosting large numbers of mistletoe. (Resistant species include sycamores, Chinese pistache, ginkgo, and crape myrtle.) Appreciating the beauty and ecological value of mistletoe, and its connections to human cultures, also goes a long way towards happy coexistence.

Relevant References


All-Native Privacy Screen

Nobody likes to look over their back fence at their neighbor’s house, right? And we certainly don’t want those neighbors peering over the fence at us! So what can we plant along the back fence to give us some privacy?

That’s the question I faced over the past couple of years as I removed the non-native shrubs that had provided privacy, but offered nothing else of any interest. It was time for a change, and the challenge was to find California natives that would look great, stay green all year, and provide us that privacy. Oh yeah—I almost forgot the power lines! They run along the fence line and I need plants that will not get entangled in the power lines. Otherwise SMUD will come along and trim them back. I’ve seen how that works and it isn’t pretty. So my requirements were evergreen natives that wouldn’t get more than 15–20 feet tall, and of course ones that look great.

After doing a bit of research I came up with a nice selection. First of all, I chose 2 Ceanothus cultivars, Ray Hartman and Snow Flurry. The first gets 15 feet tall but not much more and has normal blue-purple blossoms. Snow Flurry will be about 8 feet tall with cream-colored blossoms. Then I had to have a flannel bush, *Freemontodendron californicum*, partly because it meets the requirements, although it might get REAL BIG, partly because they are so beautiful, and partly because they are a bit of a challenge to grow. Next to the flannel bush went a spice bush, *Rhus ovata*. It gets high marks for quick growth, since 2 years after its planting it is taller than the fence and providing some privacy. Now somehow when I wasn’t looking a western ninebark, *Physocarpus capitatus*, snuck into the line-up. It’s deciduous, but it does have other redeeming qualities, with growth to 8 feet tall and attractive white flowers. It can stay. Its neighbor is a very slow-growing scrub oak, *Quercus berberidifolia*. It also may get to be a good privacy screen, but that will take a few years. Still, everyone should have a scrub oak in their yard. Next is another ‘Ray Hartman’ Ceanothus, which will help out until the Quercus has grown up.

And then a tall Manzanita, the ‘Dr. Hurd’ cultivar, which will work its way up to 12–15 feet, but not too quickly. Lastly, we have a Pacific wax myrtle, *Myrica californica*, a small evergreen tree with an pleasing form and nuts that should attract birds.

Most were planted in the fall of 2003, some a year or 2 earlier, but all are healthy and looking better every day. I’ll let you know in a couple of years how they are progressing, and if you have any questions or comments, or want to see them in person, call me at 489–1744 or e-mail at woodzos@comcast.net.

Steve Woodward

Bill Jenkins
One-Man Fundraising Machine!

Bill Jenkins, pictured with some recently completed Bluebird houses, added $1,395 to the CNPS Sacramento Valley treasury last year by making and selling his popular Bluebird Houses, Cabin Feeders, and Bat Houses. He also sold $588 worth of seeds!

“He is amazing!” said Chris Lewis, Sacramento Valley President.
Weed Warriors

Monthly Community Work Groups

Sat. Jan. 8, 8:45–noon
William Pond Recreation Area

Sat. Feb. 5, 8:45–noon
Location: TBA

For details and directions about these events, contact Crystalaura Jackson, SWW Volunteer Coordinator at the American River Parkway Foundation, at (916) 456-7423, or email sacweedwarriors@yahoo.com to request a flyer.

WEEKDAY WEED WARRIORS WANTED !!!

SWW is beginning a new strategy: working with small ROVING TEAMS (RTs) one day a week. If you can volunteer once a month (or more!), we want to conduct a weekly RT with 4 or 5 volunteers in order to monitor our most invasive target plants: Red Sesbania and Spanish Broom. These will be enjoyable walks—with a purpose: Finding and either removing or marking invasive plants for a larger work group. If you want to join us to explore some unusual parts of the American River Parkway, please send us an email at sacweedwarriors@yahoo.com.

New Outdoor World Guide Issued

A revised and expanded edition of The Outdoor World of the Sacramento Region, a natural history field guide originally authored by legendary kindergarten teacher and environmental activist Effie Yeaw, is now on sale.

The 230-page volume, published by the American River Natural History Association, contains descriptions and drawings of more than 600 native plants, birds, mammals, reptiles, amphibians, fish, and insects. The plants section alone contains 265 species.

In a testimonial on the back cover, Eva Butler, CNPS Chapter past president, writes, “This expanded new edition of this time-tested guide throws open more doors to the Sacramento area’s outdoor world. It is one of a kind!”

The guide, co-edited by Jo Smith and Peter Hayes, was originally published in 1963 under the authorship of Effie Yeaw, the Carmichael teacher who introduced thousands of children to nature on walks near the county center now named for her. $12.95 at CNPS chapter meetings.

Sacramento Chapter Rare Plant Program Co-Chair Sought

California’s flora is considered to be among the most endangered in the United States. Nearly 33 percent of the state’s native species are considered rare, threatened, or uncommon. The mission of the Rare Plant Program of the California Native Plant Society is to develop current, accurate information on the distribution, ecology, and conservation status of California’s rare and endangered plants, and to use this information to promote science-based plant conservation in California. Local chapters are an integral part of the Society’s rare plant program: they provide information on the distribution, population trends, and conservation status of regional rare and uncommon species. Monitoring existing populations as well as conducting focused surveys for particular species are among the ways local chapters provide information used to maintain and update the Society’s statewide inventory of rare, threatened, and endangered species. Local rare plant programs also work with the chapter’s conservation committee to advocate for rare plant protection and conservation by reviewing Habitat Conservation Plans, Environmental Impact Reports, and other environmental documents.

The Sacramento Chapter covers a large part of northern California including Sacramento, Yolo, Colusa, Sutter and parts of Yuba and Placer Counties. Within our area there are currently 14 species listed by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and/or the State as threatened or endangered. An additional 51 species are listed by the Society as rare, threatened, or endangered. Over the next few months we will be working with the State rare plant program staff to develop priorities and program goals for the Sacramento Chapter’s rare plant program. If you would be interested in serving on the rare plant committee or helping as a rare plant co-chair please contact Russell Huddleston at (916) 456–1988 or (916) 286–0239 or by e-mail at rhuddel1@ch2m.com.

Jepson Herbarium Weekend Workshops in 2004–2005

The Friends of the Jepson Herbarium are pleased to present a broad range of topics for this year’s weekend workshop series. For more information, or to register, please consult http://ucjeps.berkeley.edu/jepwkshp.html or phone Cynthia Perrine, Public Programs Coordinator at the Jepson Herbarium, (510) 643-7008.

Jan 29–30: Photoshop for Botanical Photographers
Feb 5: Diversity and Ecology in the Archaea
Feb 26: What Happened to “Plants”?
From the President…

I have to admit I was heartbroken by the outcome of this year’s national elections. I knew I’d lost it when I snapped at a fellow environmentalist. The result is an almost overwhelming sense of urgency that the environment needs a strong voice. Eventually I remembered all the hard-working volunteers I am privileged to work with, and I know that, with your help, CNPS can be that much-needed voice.

Here’s a just few overdue kudos (there are many more who deserve them!): Mary Maret, thank you for always being there to work on issues that crop up as well as your work with Conservation. Bill Patterson, thank you for ALL the behind-the-scenes work you do as Treasurer. Diana Hickson, Peggy Berry, Amy Boyer, Mike Tomlinson, and John Hunter, thank you for your tireless work on the Regional Conservationist position (along with your other duties!) Thank you to Glen Holstein, Bonnie Ross, Jen Hogan, and Eva Butler for your dedication to making the Wildflower Weekend a success. Thank you to Hazel Gordon for adding Membership Chair to your responsibilities. And welcome Janie Booth, our new Publicity Chair. Janie is a graduate student working on her Masters in Entomology, Plant-Insect Co-speciation. Welcome Janie!

We have several Board members who have had to step down because of increasing time constraints. Thank you Cassandra Nguyen-Musto for your many years of work designing and laboring in our Demonstration Garden! Thank you Heidi West and Chris Wilkinson for your dedicated work in Conservation, Rare Plants, and Membership! Thank you Shelley Gardener for starting our Publicity Chair position! Thank you Kate Brennan for taking on this year’s Fall Plant Sale! Whether you’ve given one year or many, you all have helped with the mission of CNPS greatly!

Chris Lewis

Nature Walks with Jack Hiehle

January Walks

Mon. Jan. 3 8:00 AM–Noon
Goethe Park
Meet in William Pond Park at the end of Arden Way
(cross bike bridge)

Fri. Jan. 14 7:00 AM–Evening
Annual Point Reyes trip, looking for whales, elephant
seals, birds, and such plants as are out.
Meet end of Howe Ave. near Fair Oaks.

January Habitat Improvement
Sun. Jan. 16, 8:00 at Effie Yeaw
Call Jack if you plan to come: 967-0777.

Hello Native Plant Gardeners!

We are planning a “virtual” Home Garden Tour for our June 8, 2005 Potluck and Meeting of the CNPS Sacramento Valley Chapter. We’re seeking digital photos of your native (or mixed native and non-native) landscaping to include in our Power Point show “tour.” If you have digital photos now, or can take some this coming winter or spring, we’d love to include them! Paired photos (winter and spring) of the same view or plant might be interesting, too. We would love you to come to the meeting and narrate your portion of the “tour,” but if you can’t make it, perhaps you can give us the names of plants or some interesting garden history to go along with the photos.

If you don’t have digital photos, we can come and photograph your garden. And if you know of other native plant gardeners that we should include, please let them know to contact us.

Contact Diana Hickson, Programs Chair at (916) 362–8022, dianahickson@cwnet.com or Chris Lewis, President at (916) 482–5282, lupine@cwnet.com.

Are You a “People Person?”

If you think you might enjoy helping out at our booth at an event or two, let us know how you feel. We sometimes turn down an opportunity to get CNPS in the public eye because the same few people help out every time. Your fresh face can help us avoid burn-out and lets you meet new homeowners, plant nerds, restorationists, and enthusiastic kids. Contact Mary Schiedt, Fairs and Events, at maryolo1 at netscape dot net, or (530) 661-6061. We promise not to overwork you!

Contribute to the Newsletter!

Send pictures and articles
by January 8 for the February Hibiscus
to ajboyer@dcn.org, (530) 753-6323.

This newsletter produced pro bono by
Amy J. Boyer
Getting the word out for the earth
and its people.

Writing • Editing • Software scripting
ADDRESS SERVICES REQUESTED

January 2005 Hibiscus

Hibiscus Newsletter  The Sacramento Valley chapter newsletter, Hibiscus, is published every month, except for December, July and August. Subscriptions are $10.00 for one year. If you wish to subscribe solely to the newsletter, send your check for $10, made out to: CNPS Sac Valley Membership, 2707 K Street, Suite 1, Sacramento, CA 95816-5113. Articles for Hibiscus must be to the newsletter editor by the 8th of the month for the next month’s issue.

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Member at Large:  Melinda Rivasplata, 454-5937, melrivas@aol.com

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Name__________________________
Address________________________
City________________State________
Zipcode______________________

I wish to affiliate with
Sacramento Valley Chapter of CNPS
Other chapter_________________

Membership category
Student, Retired, or Limited Income: $20
Individual, or Library: $35
Household, Family, or Group: $45
Supporting: $75
Plant Lover: $100
Benefactor: $500
Bristlecone: $1,000

Please complete form and mail with a check payable to
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