The El Niño rains of 1998 brought a record 5.8 inches of rainfall to Death Valley (average rainfall, 1.7 inches). The rains were spaced just far enough apart to ensure an extensive growth period and continuous bloom for much of the Death Valley flora. Rosemary Foster, the Monterey Bay Chapter’s former president, was there for a week in March and a week in April of 1998 to see and photograph the phenomenal display.

Death Valley’s geologic history, topographic diversity and climatic extremes make it home to a fascinating flora. Of the nearly 1,000 plant species found in this National Park, 22 are found nowhere else and another 33 have only a few populations found elsewhere. Many of these bloomed in record profusion in the El Niño rains, some for the first time in years. Come see the vast fields of desert gold, the rare golden carpet, Gilmania luteola, rock mimulus, Death Valley sage and other beautiful treasures of one of our state’s magnificent National Parks.

Rosemary Foster studied horticulture and botany at Cal Poly, San Luis Obispo and is a landscape designer and horticultural consultant in Carmel. Her current projects include compiling and editing a collection of Lester Rowntree’s articles on the horticultural use of California native plants for publication by CNPS. Her bibliography of Lester Rowntree’s periodical publications (720 entries) was recently published by UC Press in the reprint of Rowntree’s Hardy Californians (2006).
JANUARY

Tues. 1/2  Goethe Park
8am-12 noon
Leader: Jack Hiehle (967-0777)
Join Jack for a morning walk through this beautiful park along the American River. Jack will meet at the end of Arden Way on the north side of the River and walk across the bridge into Goethe Park. This trip is great for beginners and more experienced birders alike.

Fri. 01/12  California Heartland “Out in Nature Nearby”
Rancho Seco/Howard Ranch trail ~ California Prairie & Vernal Pools
10:00 a.m.
Leader: Chris Lewis (916) 482-5282
Want to get out in nature but don’t want to travel too far? Join us for a walk along the lake trail at Rancho Seco, a nice lake surrounded by native vegetation. The area is a wide-open California Prairie. Beautiful in all seasons, an advantage to being out there in late fall/winter is to see the migrating birds. In spring, vernal pools are full of water and life!
This is a child-friendly hike. If you’d like to bring your child, bring a jogging stroller (umbrella strollers are tough to push on trails!) or baby backpack. The trail is a 7-mile loop but depending on time and interest we may just walk along the lake for an hour and then head back. Bring a picnic lunch. Rain postpones. Sorry, dogs and bicycles are not allowed. There is an entrance fee of $5 per vehicle. If interested, please contact Chris at (916) 482-5282 or for more information on the California Heartland project: www.Habitat2020.org.

Mon. 1/15  Pt. Reyes Mammal Trip
7 a.m.
Leader: Jack Hiehle (967-0777)
Gray Whales, Elephant Seals, Tule Elk and Axis Deer will be the focus of Jack’s trip. He will, of course, not ignore birds, but they will be a sidelight of the trip. Bring lunch, liquids and warm clothes as the trip will last into the afternoon. Meet Jack on the north side of Fulton Avenue just before it intersects with Fair Oaks Boulevard.

FEBRUARY

Sat., 2/3  EcoLandscape Conference
Samuel C. Pannell Meadowview Community Center
2450 Meadowview Road, Sacramento
8:45 to 3:30  See story on page 6.
The conference is targeted toward landscape businesses and professionals and will feature speakers on such topics as how to ecologically design, build and maintain landscapes; soil management; turf management and alternative weed control methods.
Our CNPS chapter will have an exhibit at the conference. Contact: Melinda Rivasplata, melirivas@earthlink.net or 916 454-5937. For more information on the EcoLandscape Conference go to <www.ecolandscape.org>

SAVE THE DATE!

California Native Plant Society
Sacramento Valley Chapter presents
Wildflower Weekend
April 21-22, 2007

ONGOING

Native Plant Demo-Garden
Saturdays and Sundays
7:45 am until noon (Rain cancels)
Wear a hat, long shirt and boots (or sturdy tennis shoes). Also bring gloves, gardening tools and knee pads if you have them. RSVP by Friday at 1 p.m. to confirm 929-7896.
For more info, Sabrina soj@surewest.net

Native Plant Nursery meeting
7:00 p.m.  1st Tuesday of each month
Goethe Ranch site
If interested please contact: Chris, lewisc@surewest.net / (916) 812-2876
See story on p. 6

Habitat 2020 Conservation meeting
7:00 p.m.
2nd Monday of each month
Carmichael Library, 5605 Marconi Ave.
For more info Chris at lewisc@surewest.net / (916) 482-5282

Chapter Meeting  7:00 p.m.
2nd Wednesday of month (Jan-June; Sept.-Nov)
Shepard Garden & Arts Center, McKinley Park, Sacramento.
Meetings are free and open to the public. Each meeting includes a “Know Your Natives” Plant Identification Challenge. Books, Wildflower Seeds, and our SacValley t-shirt always available for purchase. Refreshments.

Newsletter Assembly party
7:00 p.m.  3rd Wednesday of month
Held in Carmichael. Phone if you can help out. (916) 482-5282

Chapter Board meetings
7:00 p.m.  4th Wednesday of month
(Jan-June; Sept.-Nov)
WHERE DID 2 1/2 YEARS GO?
By Peggy Berry
It’s true! The citizen committee working on the update to the 1985 American River Parkway Plan finished its work this past June—two and a half years from the starting date.

Frank Wallace was your CNPS representative to the Update Committee, I was Supervisor Illa Collin’s appointee and Betsy Weiland served while I had to take a leave of absence. Many CNPS members have been active in support of preserving this Crown Jewel in our midst. Sadly, not everyone shares our concerns about preserving the Parkway’s natural attributes.

Will YOU take a few minutes now, before the Plan goes to the elected officials for review, to voice your desires to preserve the natural aspects of the Parkway? Be sure to state that you are a member of the California Native Plant Society.

Please send an email to:
Sunny Williams, Project Manager
Sacramento County Planning and Community Development
Email: WilliamsSu@saccounty.net

WE ARE LOOKING FOR A RARE BIRD:

It is rare to find people willing to help! We need YOUR help to save the remaining habitat in and around Sacramento County. You decide how much time you can commit, and which activities feel right for you. What you can do: Write letters to our elected officials; attend city council and county hearings; make presentations to local groups; review & report news; fundraising; GIS mapping.

The member organizations you’ll be working with: CNPS, ECOS, Friends of Swainson’s Hawk, Sacramento Audubon. Save the American River Assn, Sierra Club- Mother Lode Chapter, SOS (Save Our Sandhill) Cranes, Urban Creeks Council, Sac.

WHERE DID 2 1/2 YEARS GO?

A CELEBRATION FOR VERNAL POOLS
By Carol Witham

On November 4th, about 85 vernal pool enthusiasts gathered at the Splash Education Center at Mather to celebrate and support the Sacramento Valley Chapter’s ongoing efforts and local leadership in vernal pool conservation and educational outreach. This fundraising event included beverages and gourmet finger foods, a raffle and silent action, tours of “Critterville”, vernal pool photography exhibits, a native plant display and a live folk music concert by RSVP (rock stars 4 vernal pools). It was a great evening for networking with vernal pool experts and leaders in other local conservation organizations. It was a fun event and we raised $4,000 to help support our continuing efforts to preserve vernal pools.

The evening was a great success thanks to all of the people who donated food, silent auction items and their volunteer labor before, during and after the event: Andy Anderson, Ann Ranlett, Betsy Weiland, Bill & Peggy Berry, Cornflower Farms, Cynthia Belgum, David Rosen, Diana Hickson, Ellen Dean, Emily Butler, Gabe Lewin, Greg Kareofelas, Greg Suba, Jaymee Marty, Jeff & Ann Chandler, Jennifer Buck, John Vollmar, Keith Wagner, Kris Stevens, Lu-Ann Hartle, Mary Maret, Melinda Rivasplata, Pamela Joy Dransfeldt, Robert F. Holland, Russ Huddleston, Steve Hartman, Strands Salon & Spa, Taylor’s Market, Tina Suarez-Murias, Trader Joe’s, The Naturalist, Tim Nosal, Vic’s Ice Cream, and Virginia Dains. Special thanks to Slow for helping to organize the event, especially the folk music.

RSVP during the grand finale: Andy Anderson, Steve Hartman, Slow, Gabe Lewin and Jaymee Marty. Keith Wagner also played at the event.

BIG VICTORY FOR VERNAL POOLS

On November 2nd, a decision was handed down by the federal court on the Vernal Pool Critical Habitat lawsuit. We won! Or more importantly, the threatened and endangered species that live in vernal pools won! The court rejected the claims of the Home Builders Association and ruled that the U.S. Fish and Wildlife had acted illegally in excluding several areas originally proposed for Critical Habitat designation. This was the third lawsuit filed by CNPS and other conservation organizations trying to protect vernal pools and we have been victorious in all. For more information on this lawsuit and what it means, see the April 2007 issue of the CNPS Bulletin.

While the fundraiser was a smashing success, conservation efforts can be costly, especially when they involve lawsuits or having to hire an expert or attorney to help with negotiations and strategies. Please consider a gift to CNPS Sacramento Valley Chapter to support vernal pool conservation.

Checks should be made payable to CNPS and mailed to Bill Patterson, 2624 4th Ave., Sacramento, CA 95818. Please note “vernal pool conservation fund” on your check. Contributions are tax deductible.

www.SacValleyCNPS.org
State CNPS is starting a multi-year study to classify and map grasslands focusing on Central Valley and Southern Coastal grasslands. Three expected outcomes are 1) a better understanding of the distribution and abundance of native annuals in the grassland community; 2) a clearer definition of what is a native perennial grassland; and 3) identification of rare grassland types. It is an ambitious project that is sorely needed because this vegetation type is one we know the least about and are losing at the fastest rate.

CNPS is applying to various foundations to fund this project. Most foundations require matching funds, which can take many forms including volunteer time and that of other experts. While valuable, that is not nearly enough. So at the November Chapter Board meeting, all 15 Board members voted to contribute $5,000 to this important research effort. This is your Board working for the best interests of plants and habitat!

Below are Diana’s email to Amanda (our Executive Director) and Julie Evens (our Senior Vegetation Ecologist) and their THANK YOUS.

From Diana Hickson

The SacValley Board tonight approved $5,000 to support the grassland (aka prairie!) project, with the encouragement that the study portion includes late season native annuals, bulbs and other native perennials, and the historical grassland flora. . The Board affirmed that this is the kind of work for which CNPS is known—solid science as a basis for conservation—and that we wholeheartedly support it. We hope our contribution encourages other chapters to support this project as well.

From Amanda

This is great news! Foundations like having matching funds from the organizations that request their support. The Sacramento Valley’s financial contribution is very generous indeed. In addition to the Sacramento Valley’s contribution we will include a $2,000 contribution from the Channel Islands chapter as well as CNPS volunteer hours.

I am very enthusiastic about the way all the “pieces” of this project are coming together! Once we have the project developed and ready to be submitted to foundations, we will be glad to share it with the Chapter Board of Directors. Thank you all for your support and interest in developing CNPS research capacity.

Amanda Jorgenson, Executive Director, California Native Plant Society 2707 K St., Suite 1, Sacramento, CA 95816-5113 Tel: (916) 447-2677 ajorgenson@cnps.org

From Julie

I wanted to second Amanda’s thank you for the support that your chapter is able to provide in a grasslands project. The Vegetation Program looks forward to working collaboratively on this science-based project, so that we can better understand the diversity, complexity, and importance of native grasslands. Hopefully we can support a strong project with funds from chapters, foundations, donations, and other sources, so that we address the variability of this ecosystem in CA while addressing the impacts of active development, agriculture, and other land management activities in the Central Valley and beyond.

We are looking forward to getting this project rolling more actively by next fiscal year. . We surely will address the importance of native annuals (including early and latiseason species), geophytes and other perennials, as well as the abundance of non-natives in this ecosystem. We definitely see this as a multi-year (5+ yr) project, and we will need all the help we can get to better describe, quantify, map and conserve grasslands. Thus, your funds will be duly applied to this important research project!

Cheers, Julie

Photo: Carol Witham
CHAPTER MEMBERSHIP TO VOTE ON PROPOSED BYLAWS CHANGES AT JANUARY MEETING

Our Chapter’s bylaws require a vote of the general membership on any proposed changes to those bylaws. The Chapter’s Board discussed the following changes at its September and November meetings and unanimously recommends that the members adopt them. We will hold a vote on these changes at the January 10th meeting. If you have questions about the proposed changes, please contact Chris Lewis or Diana Hickson.

As this is the first issue of the new year, it seems an opportune time to print the bylaws in full, with the proposed changes indicated. Additions/replacements are shown in italics. Deletions are struck through.

BYLAWS

SACRAMENTO VALLEY CHAPTER of the CALIFORNIA NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY

ARTICLE I. NAME. This organization shall be known as the Sacramento Valley Chapter of the California Native Plant Society.

ARTICLE II. PURPOSE. The purpose of the organization is to encourage the preservation, conservation, and propagation of the native flora of California through research and education.

ARTICLE III. MEMBERSHIP

Section 1. Members. Any person, family, or group interested in the native plants of California is eligible for membership in the Chapter. Membership in the California Native Plant Society is a requirement for membership in the Chapter.

Section 2. Rights of Members to Vote. Each member shall be entitled to one vote on any question requiring vote of the membership. Each family holding a family membership is entitled to two voting delegates. No absentee or proxy votes shall be permitted. Any other group having a single membership shall have one vote. The official voting delegate of this group shall be so designated in writing.

Section 3. Termination of Membership. Nonpayment of dues shall terminate membership. Membership may not be transferred.

Section 4. Meetings of the Membership. The members of the Chapter shall hold meetings at such times and places as they deem suitable, necessary, or convenient to accomplish the purposes of the Chapter. There shall be at least six meetings annually (not including field trips) as required of each Chapter by the Bylaws of the California Native Plant Society.

Section 5. Quorum. Five percent of the Chapter membership shall constitute a quorum at any meeting when business is transacted or elections held. Any action requiring membership approval shall be published in the Chapter Newsletter prior to the meeting at which action is to be taken. Decisions shall be made by a majority of the members present.

Section 6. Fiscal Year. The fiscal year is the calendar year.

ARTICLE IV. EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Section 1. The elected officers, Chapter Council Delegate (if one is appointed) and standing committee chairs shall constitute the Executive Committee of the Chapter. Members of the Executive Committee must be Chapter members in good standing.

Section 2. A quorum of the Executive Committee shall be six members, or four if three elected officers are present.

Section 3. The Executive Committee is responsible for authorizing those expenditures of the Society which exceed the amount of $100.00 and for bringing unusual or particularly large proposed expenditures to the Chapter membership for vote. A majority vote of the Executive Committee is needed when voting on matters involving money greater than $100. The Executive Committee shall prepare an annual budget, which shall be approved by a majority vote. Expenditures authorized in this budget do not need further approval.

Section 4. The Executive Committee shall hold at least four meetings annually. Additional special meetings may be called by the President as necessary.

ARTICLE V. ELECTIVE OFFICERS

Section 1. Officers. The officers of the Executive Committee of the Chapter shall be: President, Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer.

Section 2. President shall: preside at all regular and special meetings of the Chapter and the Executive Committee; appoint, with Executive Committee approval, a Delegate to the Chapter Council if the President wishes to delegate responsibility for representation on the Council, chairman of committees, as needed to conduct the work of the Chapter, and be an ex officio member of all committees except the Nominating Committee.

Section 3. Vice President shall: perform the duties in the absence of the President or at the President’s request; assist the President in carrying out duties of the office.

Section 4. Secretary shall: keep records of all business meetings of the Executive Committee and of the membership; and perform such other duties as may be designated by the Committee.

Section 5. Treasurer shall: keep files of all correspondence and maintain accounts of the Chapter including assets, liabilities, receipts and disbursements; deposit all moneys and other valuables in the name of and to the credit of the Chapter; disperse funds of the Chapter as may be ordered by the Executive Committee, upon request, an account of the financial transactions; provide the State Treasurer annually with a financial report for the calendar year and quarterly with a report on taxable sales; and perform other such duties as may be prescribed by the President or by the Executive Committee.

Section 6. Election of Officers. A three member Nominating Committee appointed by the Executive Committee shall nominate officers at the October meeting of the Chapter. Members shall be notified by mail of the slate of officers nominated. Elections shall be held at the November Elections Meeting of the Chapter. Nominations for officers may also be made from the floor at the November meeting provided that consent has been obtained from the nominees.

Section 7. Vacancies. A vacancy in any office may be filled by a majority vote at a meeting of the Executive Committee. Any officer thus elected to fill a vacancy shall hold office for the unexpired term of his/her predecessor and until a successor is elected by the membership.

Section 8. Term. The term of the office shall be two years or until a successor is elected. Terms will begin in January after the previous year’s election.

Section 9. Records. Each member of the Executive Committee shall, upon expiration of his/her term of office and upon the election of a successor, deliver to the successor all pertinent records of the office.

ARTICLE VI. COMMITTEES

Section 1. Standing Committees. As the need arises, the Executive Committee shall appoint chairmen of the committees to assist in the duties and functions of the Chapter. Such committees may include, but are limited to, the following: Conservation, Newsletter, Field Trips, and Hospitality.

Section 2. Temporary Committees. The President may appoint such temporary committees as may be deemed necessary for the business of the Chapter.

Section 3. Duties. The Chairman of each committee is a voting member of the Executive Committee. Each committee shall keep a record of its activities and make it available upon request of the Executive Committee.

ARTICLE VII. COMMITMENTS.

In the absence of express authority of the Executive Committee, no officer, committee chair, nor member shall have the power to act or bind the Chapter in any manner.

ARTICLE VIII. AUTHORITY. “Robert’s Rules of Order, Revised” shall be used as a guide to govern parliamentary procedures of the Chapter.

ARTICLE IX. AMENDMENTS. These Bylaws may be amended by a two-thirds vote of the members present and voting at a regular meeting if a quorum is present, provided that a copy of the proposed amendment is included in the notice of such a meeting.

The Ecological Farming Association will hold its 2007 EcoLandscape Conference on February 3 from 8:45 to 3:30, at the Samuel C. Pannell Meadowview Community Center 2450 Meadowview Road in Sacramento. The conference is targeted toward landscape businesses and professionals and will feature speakers on such topics as how to ecologically design, build and maintain landscapes; soil management; turf management and alternative weed control methods.

Our CNPS chapter will have an exhibit at the conference to highlight how California native plants can be part of an ecologically sound landscape design. Jessica Hankins and Melinda Rivasplata are putting together the exhibit and are asking for assistance in two areas: 1) we need digital photos of native gardens, especially those that show before and after condition, and 2) volunteers to help set up and staff the exhibit and sell books—just a couple of hours of your time would be helpful.

We also encourage any landscape designers, landscape architects and landscape maintenance professionals that have expertise in native landscapes and plant materials to stop by the exhibit. We will be putting together a referral list of businesses and professionals who can provide this expertise.

If you have photos send them to Jessica Hankins at jhankins@csus.edu. If you can volunteer to help out, or have ideas for the exhibit contact Melinda Rivasplata at melirivas@earthlink.net or 916 454-5937. For more information on the EcoLandscape Conference go to www.ecolandscape.org.

The nursery committee has held several ‘visioning’ meetings, and has taken tours of other native plant nurseries in the Bay Area. We are in the process of determining the footprint, location of greenhouses, shade structures, and the cost of needed equipment and structures.

You are invited to join us at our next nursery planning meeting: TUESDAY, January 2nd @ 7:00 PM at the Goethe Ranch meeting room. For information or directions, please contact Chris at lewisc@surewest.net or 916 482-5282.
RARE PLANT BRIEF

Fragrant Fritillary
(Fritillaria liliacea)

Status: CNPS 1B - Rare, threatened, or endangered in California and elsewhere.
Habitat: California prairie, woodlands and coastal scrub
Blooming Period: February - April
Range: California endemic species occurs throughout the San Francisco Delta
Threatened by grazing, agriculture, development and invasive non-native species

For further information, please contact Russell Huddleston, Rare Plant chair.

HELP NEEDED!
Assist the Book Chair with selling books at meetings and events. Great job for bookaholics! Contact Chris Lewis at (916) 482-5282 or lewisc@surewest.net

HOSPITALITY CHAIR!
LARGE REWARDS from SMALL EFFORTS
Is there a Hospitality Chair somewhere among our 600+ Sac Valley CNPS members? This is an easy once-a-month effort for the general meetings. Responsibilities are to provide refreshments of the Hospitality Chair’s choice; set up at meetings; chat with and enjoy the company of those who appreciate the goodies; clean up and later submit receipts to the Treasurer. This volunteer can also ask others for help in providing these much appreciated offerings. Please contact Peggy Berry at 944-1184 for further information.

Gladys Lucille Smith © 1999 California Academy of Sciences
JANUARY 2007 HIBISCUS

www.SacValleyCNPS.org

The Sacramento Valley chapter newsletter, Hibiscus, is published monthly, except for July, August, and December. Subscriptions are $10 per year. To subscribe solely to this newsletter, send your $10 check to: CNPS Sac Valley Membership, 2707 K St., Ste. 1, Sacramento, CA 95816-5113. Articles for the Hibiscus must be submitted to the newsletter editor by the 8th of the month for possible inclusion in the next month's newsletter.

PHOTO OF THE MONTH

Redbud in fall splendor.

Please submit photos for possible use in this space. E-mail to bwolf@surewest.net

Your Good Quality Photographs of Plant Communities Are Still Needed for CNPS Projects!

For more information, contact hazelgordon@hotmail.com or see: <http://www.cnps.org/programs/vegetation/photocollection.htm>

Sign up for The Sacramento Valley Chapter e-mail list

Join the Sacramento Valley chapter listserv and receive event announcements, job and internship opportunities. Share your botany adventures, or post a botanical query of your own!

To subscribe to the list: send a blank email to: CNPS_SacramentoValley-subscribe@yahoogroups.com

Contact Harry Spanglet (spanglet@water.ca.gov) with questions or problems with subscribing.