MARCH PRESENTATION:
Sharing “Nature Near-by” on the American River Parkway
Peter J. Hayes and Tim Nosal

Two different speakers will reflect on the beauty, interest, and new ways to experience nature through the ebb and flow of the seasons. First, author Peter J. Hayes will take us on a literary stroll along the American River as he presents his newest publication, “An American River Journal,” co-authored with the late Jo Smith. Come listen as Peter conveys the beauty and peace of a walk along the river.

Next, local botanist Tim Nosal will reveal what he discovers on daily lunchtime wanderings from his office near the Upper Sunrise Area on the American River. Winter, spring, summer, and fall, through daily walks and keen observations, Tim catalogs the plants in this botanical hotspot, with its many unusual specimens and interesting history.

These two speakers may just inspire you to build a relationship with your own special place in “nature near-by.”

Peter Hayes is an author, former editor of the Sacramento Union and is the publications chair of the American River Natural History Association. He was recognized by the Sacramento County Board of Supervisors as 2008 Outstanding Volunteer of the Year for his service to Sacramento County Regional Parks. Tim Nosal is a local botanist with deep roots in our community. He currently serves as the Timber Harvest Review Botanist for California Department of Fish and Game. Formerly a Park Ranger Assistant and Effie Yeaw Nature Center Naturalist for the American River Parkway, Tim earned a Master’s degree studying rare plants in the Pine Hill Preserve and cataloged rare plants for the California Natural Diversity Database. Tim has also taught at the college level.
Mather Field’s Vernal Pools – Worth a Visit, Worth a Lifetime

by Eva Butler

Following the soil-cracking dry season, winter rains fill Mather Field’s vernal pools with water. The rain spawns a complex web of life after months or years of dormancy. Within their ponded playgrounds, dozens of tiny animal species paddle, kick, and wiggle their way through the winter months, eating or being eaten. By March a fringe of green is revealed around the edges of the waning pools – a carpet of tiny seedlings. Nestled at their feet lie the microscopic eggs, cysts, and dormant stages of earlier tenants. Throughout the month of April, the carpet of green becomes a dynamic floral palette, a kaleidoscope of changing colors and patterns.

Like their animal predecessors, the plants in vernal pools have only days or weeks to grow and reproduce. As seeds ripen, the mid-May sun draws a curtain of tawny gold across the landscape. Behind the curtain, other denizens of the prairie perform their own well-practiced roles through summer and fall. They prosper in the dry season, as active as they are unseen.

The perfection of this prairie performance is owed to over 200,000 years of practice by the hundreds of species of plants and animals that live at Mather Field. These species once inhabited much of Central Valley in vernal pools that covered vast acreage. Although less than 10 percent still exist, Mather Field offers an eyeful of what was once a massive annual flower show. More than 200 species can be found across the vernal pool prairie. These plants support a vast array of animal species from unnamed invertebrates to the feathered and furry creatures familiar to us all.

To get a ring-side seat for the show in 2010, sign up for a free docent-led tour at www.sacsplash.org.

Become a Docent for the Mather Field Vernal Pools

Over the past 13 years, the Mather Field Docents have introduced thousands of people to the vernal pools at Sacramento’s Mather Field. Docents escort visitors in small groups through the grasslands, sharing their knowledge of this landscape and its denizens. Please consider becoming a docent. Training materials and mentoring are provided. Training opportunities are available February through April. To volunteer or learn more, leave a message for Eva Butler at the Splash Education Center at (916) 364-2437. Or go to www.sacsplash.org; select “Make a Difference.” From the drop-down menu choose “Become a Docent.”

Sacramento Splash Nature in the Neighborhood presents a family event:

Pollywogs, Frogs and Vernal Pools

Sat., March 6, 1:00 – 4:00 p.m. & Sun., March 7, 1:00 – 4:00 p.m.

Pollywogs and frogs fascinate children and adults alike. Right now Pacific Chorus Frogs, Spadefoot Toads, and Western Toads are gathering around the Mather Field Vernal Pools where they sing, mate, and make the pollywogs that will become next year’s chorus! Join us for this fun, interactive program to make or renew a friendship with these amiable amphibians. The first half of the program will be indoors at the Splash Education Center, followed by a walk to the vernal pools to search for wild frogs and pollywogs. Rain or shine. Bring boots or sturdy shoes, long pants, and outerwear to stay warm and dry.

For more information visit www.sacsplash.org and click on the blue “Hop to It!” link on the homepage.

Reservations are required. Reserve a spot on our website or by calling Splash at (916) 364-2437.

The Splash Education Center is at 4426 Excelsior Rd., Mather, CA 95655. For directions, visit www.sacsplash.org and click “Contact Us.”

Suggested donations are $10.00/adult and $5.00/child (5-18). Children must be accompanied by an adult.

2010 VERNAL POOLS CONFERENCE

Vernal Pool Conservation: Research, Progress, and Problems: Is Recovery Possible?

March 25-26, Chico, CA

Location: Sierra Nevada Brewing Company, Chico. Field trips to explore local sites on Friday, March 26.

For details and registration go to <http://www.aqualliance.net> Eminent scholars, agency representatives, and other professionals will present research and case studies about plant and animal species dependent on the vernal pool ecosystem, conservation efforts, legal cases, and management techniques that have been used to enhance the economic and habitat viability of certain lands. Keynote speaker Ellen Bauder of San Diego State University will present Science and vernal pool conservation: research questions, methodologies and applications.

The conference will assist planners, ranchers, conservationists, students, and builders to understand the importance of the vernal pool ecosystem and what mechanisms exist or are currently under development to protect it.

Brought to you by AquAlliance and its Vernal Pool Landscapes Committee. Sponsors include the Rose Foundation, Sierra Nevada Brewing Company, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and the California Dept. of Fish & Game.
Elderberry Farms Native Plant Nursery
by Christina Lewis, Nursery Leader

Our January Workday brought out the Alpha Omega Fraternity of CSUS again for another bench build led by Nursery Supporter Jim Wadsworth. They completed four more benches. All the while Robin Rietz led the rest of us in potting up more plants. Thank you one and all!

As we go to press, another group of 15 will do more potting. If you have not been to the nursery in a while, come by—you’ll be pleasantly surprised by the progress you see!

March Nursery Workdays (and maybe April): We’ll continue meeting from 12:30 – 2:30 on Wednesdays.

Saturday Workday – March 6, 10:00-2:00. RSVP as I provide soup for all of our hard workers. Lewisc916@yahoo.com.

April Saturday Workday – April 3.

SAVE THE DATE: Sunday, April 11, 12:00-5:00
Wildflower Wonders
at Sacramento Earth Day!
Exhibit of Plant Communities, Kids Zone and Native Plant Sale!

Volunteers: Please contact Betsy Weiland at flweiland@yahoo.com
Volunteer opportunities include:
• For the Plant Sale: plant pick up, set up, plant advisors, plants returned to the Nursery
• For the Exhibit: tent pick up, set up, dismantle and return to Nursery, exhibitor help for our Plant Community experts
• Other: Book and t-shirt set up, helpers for Kidz Zone, Pipevine story, Cashiers.

Set up starts at 8:00 a.m., break down starts at 5:00 p.m.; shifts 11:30 to 2:30 and 2:30 to 5:30.

Nursery Listserve
Are you interested in learning about local native plants, propagating plants, landscape design, growing plants for habitat, or sharing your expertise? Contact Chris at lewisc916@yahoo.com. Or join the Elderberry Farms listserve by sending a blank email to: Elderberry_Farms_Native_Plant_Nursery-subscribe@yahoogroups.com.

One of the new benches built by CSUS Alpha Omega Fraternity
Photo: © 2010 Christina Lewis

It’s not all work! Terry Linton has some fun.
Photo: © 2010 Jim Wadsworth

The Nursery crew on the Parkway
Photo: © 2010 Christina Lewis

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MARCH

Elderberry Farms Native Plant Nursery at Soil Born Farms - Nursery Work Days
2140 Chase Drive, Rancho Cordova
Wednesdays, 12:30-2:30
Sat., 3/6 and 4/3
Contact Chris Lewis (916) 812-2876 or lewisc916@yahoo.com

Nursery Furlough Friday walks, every Friday.
Sign up for the Nursery’s listserve. Just send an email to: Elderberry_Farms_NativePlant_Nursery-subscribe@yahoogroups.com.
Sun., 3/7, 10 a.m.-3 p.m.
The McKinley Garden and Arts Center Spring Clean Up Day
Sponsored by the Perennial Plant Club
Give something back to the venue that has been hosting our chapter meetings for years! The clean up will focus on the outside grounds of the Garden and Art Center. Please come out and lend a hand. All help is greatly appreciated. Bring your own tools if possible.

Planning a botanical outing?
To invite others to join you on field trips, please notify:
Field Trips Chair Tony Loftin:
(916) 448-3230
HikingTony@comcast.net
Newsletter Editor Barbara Wolf:
bwolf@surewest.net
Webmaster Tom Starbuck:
tjstarbuck@ucdavis.edu

You are welcome to join the field trips of other chapters!
Links to chapter websites and newsletters are at:
http://www.cnps.org/cnps/chapters/list.php
Check in with our friends at the Stockton Subchapter if you’d like to lead or join one of their trips.
See page 6.

ONGOING

Native Plant Demo-Garden
Old City Cemetery
1000 Broadway, Sacramento
Sundays, 9 a.m.-11 a.m.
Wear hat, long shirt, boots & bring water, gardening tools, gloves, and knee pads if you have them. If interested in volunteering during the week contact Sabrina (916) 929-7896 or soj@surewest.net.

Chapter Meeting & Guest Speaker
2nd Wed. of month, 7:00 p.m.
(Jan-June; Sept.-Nov)
Shepard Garden & Arts Center, McKinley Park, Sacramento
See page 1. Meetings are free and open to the public. Books, Wildflower Seeds, and our SacValley t-shirt always available for purchase. Refreshments. For info: Jen Stock, (916) 443-3484 jstock2409@sbcglobal.net

Chapter Board Meetings
4th Wed. of month 6:30 p.m.
(Jan-June; Sept.-Nov) Arden-Dimick Public Library, 891 Watt Ave. at Northrup, Sacramento 95864
For more information call Jennifer Stock (916) 443-3484 or e-mail jstock2409@sbcglobal.net

Ceanothus - Plant identification
Email for date, time and directions. Melissa Hostler: ceanothusfieldbot@gmail.com

Elderberry Farms Native Plant Nursery at Soil Born Farms - Nursery Work Days
2140 Chase Drive, Rancho Cordova
See page 3. Contact Chris Lewis (916) 812-2876 or lewisc916@yahoo.com for work day schedule. To join the garden listserve, send a blank email to: Elderberry_Farms_NativePlant_Nursery-subscribe@yahoogroups.com

Habitat 2020
Day and Time TBD
For information contact Glen Holstein (530) 758-6787, holstein@cal.net

CNPS 2010

Plant Science Training Workshops
Upcoming workshops are posted at http://cnps.org/cnps/education/workshops/index.php Register now.

Rare Plant Treasure Hunt
Go eco-caching for conservation this spring! To learn more visit http://cnps.org/cnps/rareplants/treasurehunt/. Sign up to volunteer now by emailing us at treasurehunt@cnps.org.

Mar 1-5 Dunes, Wetlands, and Coastal Scrub Volcanoes: An Introduction to the Plants and Habitats of San Quintin, Baja California
Instructors: Sula Vanderplank and Jon Rebman

Mar 25-27 Rare Plants and Habitats of Eastern San Luis Obispo County
Instructors: David Keil, Deborah Hilliard, Kevin Merk

Mar 29-31 Vegetation Rapid Assessment Carrizo Plain.
Instructors: Todd Keeler-Wolf, Julie Evens

Lawnless and Loving It!
Saturday, March 20, 9 a.m.-noon
Soil Born Farms, American River Ranch, 2140 Chase Drive, Rancho Cordova
$20, $15 Sacramento Natural Foods Co-op owners
Tired of mowing, watering, fertilizing and weeding a lawn? You can replace the lawn with wonderful plants and create a beautiful space that will attract beneficial insects and require less maintenance. After class, join Chris for a riverfront walk to check out some of our lesser known native plants.
Register at the Sacramento Natural Foods Co-op, 1900 Alhambra Blvd., Sacramento or call Customer Service at (916) 455-2667 weekdays, 9 a.m.–5 p.m. and pay by credit card. You can also register online.
Other Events

ECOS/Habitat 2020/Heartland Project and the Herald Area Civic Association present
Herald in the Heartland
Sat. 3/27, 11:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m.
Hendrickson Hall and Community Barn Complex
12746 Ivie Road, Herald Californi
Free and open to the public.
The Herald community and visitors will benefit from a day of public outreach to advance the understanding of local land use opportunities. This event will also provide relevant resources for land owners wishing to explore a variety of ideas from land restoration to the development of Ag Tourism venues.

“Our great Central Valley is a hotspot of world-class biological resources comprised of scenic and recreational landscapes as well as important prime farmland. It is also one of North America’s most endangered eco-regions.” For more information contact Graciela Hinshaw at graciela_hinshaw@ca.blm.gov.

Bureau of Land Management
Spring Tours at Pine Hill Preserve
The BLM’s Mother Lode Field Office has scheduled five springtime guided field trips to view wildflowers and other features at the Pine Hill Preserve in western El Dorado County. All trips are on Saturdays and start at 9 a.m. except as noted:

- April 24 Cameron Park
- May 1, Start time 7 a.m. Salmon Falls Birding featuring birder Chris Conard
- May 15 Pine Hill
- May 22 Cameron Park
- June 6 Salmon Falls

Participants will meet at a designated area and carpool to the site. Bring lunch or snacks, water, sturdy shoes, hats, sunscreen and insect repellent. Trips limited to 25 participants. You must pre-register by contacting Graciela Hinshaw at graciela_hinshaw@ca.blm.gov.

Effie Yeaw Nature Center - March 2010
Ancil Hoffman County Park, 2850 San Lorenzo Way, Carmichael, CA
All programs are FREE unless stated otherwise. Donations welcome.
Park entrance fee: $5.00 per car or FREE to ARNHA members.
Hours: Open 9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. Wednesday through Sunday, 9:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. Monday & Tuesday. Please call to confirm hours.
For more information contact: <www.eyeffeyew.org> or (916) 489-4918

New Interactive Exhibit: Bountiful Harvest: An Exploration of Maidu Culture
Wed. 4/10 at 8 a.m. – 12 Noon
EYNC Nature Walk
Meet wildlife expert Jack Hiehle in the parking lot at the Nature Center (in Ancil Hoffman Park) and take a guided walk through the Nature Area.

Sat. 3/13, 7:30 a.m. - 10:30 a.m.
Bird & Breakfast
Fee: $35, Pre-registration required: 489-4918 This is a fundraiser for the Nature Center’s educational programs. A guided bird walk followed by a hearty breakfast. Bring binocs, walking shoes, friends and a healthy appetite. Appropriate for 12 years old and older.

Sun., 3/14 at 10:30 a.m.
Nature’s Symphony
Discover the sounds of Nature—a drumming woodpecker, a soprano songbird and the bass of a bullfrog.

Sun. 3/21 at 8:00 a.m.
Habitat Improvement
Help Jack improve the Nature Area. Call Jack at 967-0777 if you can assist.

Sat. 3/27 at 10:30 a.m.
Saturday Safari
Grab your binoculars (or borrow ours) and take a guided walk to see the animals and plants of the unique habitat along the American River.

SPRING FUN DAYS PROGRAMS
Pre-registration required, call 489-4918. Non-member registration starts 2/17. $21 per child, per class, space is limited.

Tues., 3/30 – Nature Rovers for kindergartners
A Wonderful World of Color – Active games, stories, a nature walk to look for colorful wildlife (like insects and birds) and create art to take home.

Mon., 3/29 – Nature Detectives for 1st and 2nd graders
Rata-tat-tat, What Bird is That? Learn about the woodpeckers that live in our nature area through stories, crafts and games.

Sun. 3/28 at 10:30 a.m.
Nature Story Time
Join a Nature Center Naturalist to hear a tale read aloud.

Tues., 3/30 and Thurs., 4/1, 10:30 a.m. – 12 Noon
Auntie Libby’s Creative Crafting – A different nature-themed craft offered each day for adults and children in kindergarten and older (no unaccompanied children). $7 per person per class, pre-registration required, call 489-4918.

WEEKDAY NATURE PROGRAMS
Recommended for adults and children enrolled in kindergarten and older (no unaccompanied children). $5/ person per program, pre-registration required.

Mon., 3/29, 10:30 a.m. – 12 Noon
Living in Water
Discover the hidden world of water insects and polliwogs through activities and games. Catch and release to see these amazing little animals that live in our pond.

Wed., 3/31, 10:30 a.m. – 12 Noon
Beaks, Jaws, & Claws
Learn about the unique adaptations of birds, mammals, and reptiles. Games and activities and a close-up look at some of the Nature Center’s animals.

www.SacValleyCNPS.org
Friends of the Chico State Herbarium Workshops
Registration is now open for the following workshops:

3/20  Introduction to Lichen Identification with Tom Carlberg

3/27  Beginners Wildflower Identification Workshop with Linnea Hanson, Jenny Marr, et al.

For more information about these workshops and a registration form please go to:
<http://www.csuchico.edu/biol/Herb/Events.html> or contact the Chico State Herbarium office at NS@csuchico.edu or (530) 898-3511.

Botanical Illustration of Native Desert Flora
at the Desert Studies Center, Mojave National Preserve, Zzyzx, CA.
Fri. 4/9, 7 p.m.–Sun., 4/11, 3 p.m.
A course in “art for botanists” and “botany for artists!” At the height of the desert blooming period, participants can look forward to plein- aire drawing and watercolor painting. Learn basics of line control, proportion, color, focusing/perception skills as they relate to plant identification. Also detailed dissection work in a well equipped lab!
Note: This field study is based at the Desert Studies Center (of California State University) located within the Preserve at Soda Springs (Zzyzx, CA), about a three-hour drive from Riverside. The course fee includes two nights’ lodging at the Center (dormitory rooms and some couples rooms), and meals starting with breakfast Saturday through lunch on Sunday. Upon enrollment, participants will be sent information about the Center and what to bring with them.
Art X454.5 (1 unit)/ Fee: $325 / $305 each for couples and family members / $295 each with PINE discount, REG # 094-SCF-F60, (credit & non-credit). To register, visit www.extension.ucr.edu or call 951-827-4105.
Instructor: Donald Davidson http://www.nps.gov/plants/cw/watercolor/index.htm

California Native Plant Society
Sacramento Valley Chapter
Stockton Subchapter

Hibiscus welcomes news and listings from our Stockton subchapter, serving San Joaquin Valley CNPS Sac Valley members. If you would like to contribute, please contact Martha Mallery at (209) 477-3966 or Bob Stahmer at (209) 943-2277.

Field Trips
The following trips are tentatively planned for late March or early April. Call trip leader for more information.

Chico Grunder’s Table Mountain
Covered with vernal pools. Phone Martha Mallery (209) 477-3966

Bear Valley (North) area.
We’ll search for the rare Adobe-Lily (Fritillaria pluriflora). Phone Bob Stahmer at (209) 943-2277.

April 15-18 Death Valley area.
For photography and study of the rare Panamint Daisy (Enceliopsis covillei) and late-blooming flora on the valley floor. Phone (209) 477-3966

Native Plant Garden
If you can help for a few hours at the Golden Currant at the Nature Center in Oak Grove Regional Park, please call Martha Mallery at (209) 477-3966.

Meetings
Our subchapter does not have regularly scheduled meetings, but a few of us usually attend the Sacramento programs on the second Wednesday of each month. If you would like a ride, please call (209) 477-3966.

Stay up to date on Stockton subchapter activities by visiting them on the web:
http://www.sacvalleyncps.org/stockton/stockton.html
Audubon Blue Oak Project
Seeks Volunteers for Citizen Science Oak Monitoring

Oak woodland habitat is severely threatened by suburban development and has recently been identified by the state of California as a conservation management priority. In the spring of 2010, the Audubon Landowner Stewardship Program will begin a pilot-study to learn more about the factors that influence successful Blue oak (Quercus douglasii) habitat regeneration. To collect enough data, we need the help of volunteers. Training provided.

Participation in our pilot study will include: one day of training at Audubon’s Bobcat Ranch on Saturday April 10, 2010 from 9 a.m.-3 p.m. and one to two days of Blue oak data collection on private ranches in the region in the late spring (dates TBD). Food and research supplies will be provided.

Volunteers will work in groups with trained ecologists from Audubon and UC Davis – no prior scientific experience is needed. All volunteers will have the opportunity to work on further research and monitoring projects with partner scientists.

Please contact Erin Hardie at eehardie@ucdavis.edu or (530) 204-8603 to sign up for our training session or if you have any questions. To learn more about the Audubon Landowner Stewardship Program, please visit our website: http://ca.audubon.org/lsp/

Sacramento Earth Day Festival 2010

Sun., April 11, 12 p.m.-5 p.m. • Southside Park, 2115 6th Street, Sacramento
FREE Admission FREE bike valet,
FREE parking at 8th St., between W and X Streets. RT Bus Route 51.
The first Earth Day was April 22, 1970. Celebrate the 40th International Earth Day at the Sacramento Earth Day Festival presented by the Environmental Council of Sacramento. The festival will showcase local bands playing 1970s tribute songs and EcoVillage “hubs” offering: Wildflower Wonders Native Plant Exhibit and Plant Sale, green technology, health and wellness, the latest sustainability information, real food, and exciting hands-on activities.

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March 10 Chapter Meeting:
“Nature Near-by” on the American River Parkway
Peter J. Hayes and Tim Nosal

URGENT! The Sacramento County Parks Department will close the Effie Yeaw Nature Center forever on April 1 unless a viable alternative can be found. To find out what you can do to save the Nature Center, contact ARNHA at arnha@comcast.net.

ARNHA supports educational and interpretive activities in the American River Parkway in cooperation with the Effie Yeaw Nature Center. Due to County budget cuts, the Nature Center needs your help more than ever.

View and download this newsletter and past issues online at
<http://www.sacvalleynpns.org/>