Meetings are held on the second Wednesday of the month (except July, Aug, & Dec) at 7PM at the Shepard Garden & Arts Center in McKinley Park, 3330 McKinley Blvd, Sacramento

NEXT MEETING: Wed., May 8
Questions? Contact Carol Witham, cwitham@ncal.net

Chapter meetings are free and open to the public.
Books and Sacramento Valley Chapter T-shirts are available for purchase at meetings. Refreshments provided!

Join or renew today!
CNPS’ success depends on members’ support. To join or renew, go to www.cnps.org/join. Or mail membership dues (individual $45; student or limited income $25) to CNPS, 2707 K Street, Suite 1, Sacramento, CA 95816-5113. Other membership levels also available.
Send questions or address changes to cnps@cnps.org.

May Chapter Meeting:
The Native Orchids of California
Presented by Raymond Prothero, Jr.

The Orchidaceae (orchids) are a diverse and widespread family of flowering plants with colorful, interesting and fragrant blooms. They are one of the largest families of flowering plants, with more than 20,000 described species. They are mostly found in the tropical regions, but are also found growing wild in California.

Native California orchids represent 11 genera and about 40 species and subspecies. They can be found in all counties (except two: Solano and Sacramento), from the high Sierra to the ocean bluffs, and even in some of the driest desert regions of the state.

Raymond Prothero, Jr. is a fifth-generation native Californian from Vacaville. A lifelong orchid enthusiast, he started growing tropical orchids as a teenager for Future Farmers of America. He majored in ornamental horticulture at Solano Community College, and has worked at Relles Florist for the past 17 years. Raymond is a 20-year member of the Sacramento Orchid Society, and a 5-year member of the California Native Plant Society. His greenhouse houses more than 500 species of tropical orchids. After learning that California has its own wild orchids, Raymond has set out on a quest to photograph all of the known species and subspecies of native California orchids.

The mission of the California Native Plant Society is to conserve California native plants and their natural habitats, and increase understanding, appreciation, and horticultural use of native plants.
On Saturday, March 30, my girlfriend brought me and a couple friends out to Table Mountain for the CNPS guided wildflower hike near Lake Oroville, on Table Mountain. I’m not any sort of an aficionado of the native flora of our great state, but my girlfriend is, and I enjoy a hike as much as anyone. I expected a pleasant day. Indeed, it was a beautiful spring day; the sun was out, the flowers were in full bloom, and it seemed like everyone in Oroville knew it.

We arrived by a narrow winding road that leads up out of the valley, past the lake, onto the ancient basalt plateau we now know as Table Mountain. The treacherous road meandering into the hills fostered a feeling of remote isolation that promptly vanished when we pulled up to a gravel parking lot, already full of cars and bustling with cheerful hikers.

Our group was one of many that had come out that day. Groups of people gathered around their guides, listening to stories of pollination and adaptation. Photographers knelt on the ground, their lenses almost touching the earth, trying to get just the right shot of a spot of tiny color. Families spread out blankets to have picnics or stood around flying kites in the stiff breeze.

The appeal of this rugged plateau was immediately obvious. The landscape was a lush carpet of grass scattered with open patches of angular dark gray basalt, each ringed by a halo of yellow or blue flowers. Cows ambled around, absentely chewing, apparently uninterested in either the flowers or the people.

The CNPS group was impressively large. So many people showed up that the group wound up splitting in two; one half went off with the official guide, David Popp, and the rest of us wandered off with Ron Stork. Dr. Stork and several other well-informed members of our group regaled us with descriptions and stories, answered questions, and passed around hand lenses so that we might get a closer look at the minute anatomy of tiny wildflowers.

Though a new member, this trip was my third field trip so far. Each trip is a fascinating little voyage into the often overlooked world of native California plants (and lichens!). As someone whose interest grows each time I enjoy one of the CNPS field trips, I would encourage all of our members to consider taking time to come out and join us.

For a vicarious experience, if you missed the trip, you can view an immersive panorama of a portion of the day by going on-line and looking up this link: http://www.360cities.net/image/wildflower-hike-on-table-mountain-california
Calendar of Events

May Field Trips

The flowers have been amazing even though this is considered a dry year. Our trips have been well attended. We have been having a lot of fun sharing the outdoors together. We have more outings planned and are hoping to keep trips going into summer. Please take advantage of these opportunities. Contact the leaders if you plan to attend. They need to know the number of participants. We will also take sign-ups at Chapter meetings. Since we do not have the dates set in stone for some of our trips, be sure to visit the CNPS Sacramento Valley website and access the “Field Trips” tab for detailed information on each trip and driving directions. The website is updated regularly. (You can also see what activities we have offered already this year.)

UC Davis Stebbins Cold Canyon Reserve (8 miles west of Winters) Saturday, May 4, 10 a.m. – 2 p.m. Join Harry Spanglet to look at the patterns of vegetation of the Inner Coastal Range and look for spring wildflowers on a leisurely three-mile walk (with a few hills) along a seasonal creek in a nice wooded valley. We will go through some typical riparian, woodland and chaparral vegetation and discuss plant ecology and why different species grow where they do, while looking for spring-blooming wildflowers and all other natural things. The trail has a few hills with steps, but is generally an easy walk suitable for almost everyone, in almost any kind of footwear. A longer, more strenuous loop trail goes onward if you are looking for a longer walk. There is no entrance fee, but a $2 donation per person is suggested (deposited in a box at entrance). Bring water, food/snacks, hat and sunscreen. Be aware that there are ticks and poison oak there, like everywhere in that area, but we should not have contact with either. Trip will be cancelled in the event of substantial rain. Contact: Harry Spanglet, hspanglet@gmail.com, 530-902-3935, or visit the website for specific driving and meeting instructions.

Pine Hill Preserve Saturday, May 11, 10 a.m. – 2 p.m. Walk with Pam Kirkbride to find all eight species of rare plants that inhabit the rare Gabbro soils of this area: Pine Hill Ceanothus, Bisbee Peak rush-rose, Stebbins’ morning-glory, El Dorado mule-ears, El Dorado bedstraw, Pine Hill flannelbush, Red Hills soaproot, and Layne’s butterweed. We will also enjoy grassland species as we walk, including white fairy lantern, twining brodiaea, milkweed, yellow calochortus, checkerbloom, flax and paintbrush. Learn what areas have been set aside as preserves. The walk is only a mile, but it is uphill all the way on paved/gravel road. (We will walk back down the hill on our return). Bring plenty of water and a lunch. We will eat lunch at the top of the hill. Contact Pam Kirkbride – pamk7@frontier.com or 916-687-8134. For meeting place and driving directions, please contact Pam or see the website.

Lava Cap Wildflowers on Peavine Ridge off of Ice House Road Saturday, May 18, All day Meeting Place and Time: Pollock Pines Safeway at 9:00 AM. Carpooling is advised. A high clearance vehicle will be handy to have. (If you’d like to carpool from Sacramento, call Pam Kirkbride).

This Field Trip is being hosted by the El Dorado Chapter of CNPS. We will be visiting spring annuals peculiar to the Miocene mudflows. This extremely diverse plant community is formed on very rocky and volcanic soils eroded from the Mehrten formation mudflow. These are herb and grass dominated openings within the Upper Montane Chaparral. These habitats support small, low growing herb species, which are adapted to high soil temps, full sunlight, and drought conditions. The openings are often completely isolated within dense manzanita. Snowpack melts quickly in spring because of sunny slopes, and a lack of canopy. Seeps are common in upper swales and slow gradually during the late spring and summer. The sequence of flowering is from March to August. Two species are ‘sensitive’ and endemic to ENF. Possible special plant species to see are Yellow Bur Navarretia, Pleasant Valley Mariposa Lily and True’s Manzanita. A plant list is available on the website. Level of Difficulty: Easy to moderate. Bring: Water, lunch, sunscreen, hat and sturdy shoes or boots. Long sleeves are useful for barging into the manzanita. Contact: Annie Walker; (530) 626-3678; agastache@att.net. Call by Friday if you plan to come on the trip.

Upcoming Trips!

Butterfly Valley Botanical Area Saturday, June 22. All day.

Carson Pass Wildflowers and Butterflies.

Date to be determined (Late June, early July). All day trip.
Ongoing
2nd Wed. of the month, 7 p.m. (Jan.–June; Sept.–Nov.)
Chapter Meeting & Guest Speaker
Shepard Garden & Arts Center, McKinley Park, Sacramento See page 1. Contact Carol Witham, cwitham@ncal.net for more information.

4th Wed. of the month, 7 p.m. (Jan.–June; Sept.–Nov.)
Chapter Board Meetings
SMUD, 6301 S Street, Sacramento, CA 95817
Contact: Carol Witham, cwitham@ncal.net.

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

Sundays, 10 a.m.–noon
Native Plant Demonstration Garden, Sacramento Historic City Cemetery 1000 Broadway, Sacramento
Wear hat, long-sleeved shirt, boots and bring water, gardening tools, gloves, and knee pads. To volunteer during the week contact Cassandra Musto, cnpsgarden@gmail.com

Ceanothus—Collaborative Plant Identification Workshops
3rd Sat. of month, 9 a.m.
UC Davis Herbarium (Center for Plant Diversity).
Michael Bower, (530) 902-8721

Elderberry Farms
Native Plant Nursery
Located at Soil Born Farms
2140 Chase Drive, Rancho Cordova

Wednesday Workdays 9 a.m.–1 p.m.
We pot up seedlings and learn plant propagation techniques. Peanut butter & jelly sandwiches provided. RSVP to Chris, lewisc916@yahoo.com.

Friday Walks 9 a.m.–noon.
Plant identification, photography, art and fun! Go to SacValley.CNPS.org, find Friday Walks under Events & Field Trips.

Other items of interest

Effie Yeaw Nature Center
The Center offers free nature-related activities Saturdays and Sundays. For specifics, check out www.sacnaturecenter.net (under “Happening Now…”) or call (916) 489-4918.

The Sacramento Valley Conservancy (SVC) 2013 Outings at Deer Creek Hills
The SVC calendar includes birding outings, service days, history hikes, and many special events. Registration required. See website for more info: www.sacramento-valley-conservancy.org Or contact Gina Silvernale, (916) 612-3719, outreach@sacramento-valley-conservancy.org

Guided Hikes
$10 per outing; Season Pass $40.
Every Saturday: Free, Self-Guided Hikes
Free Sunday Sunsets 2013
Every Sunday, February–June 4:30 p.m.–dusk

Soil Born Farms
Basic Organic Gardening
Wed. May 8, 5:30 p.m.–7:30 p.m.
Learn the basics of organic vegetable gardening, including seasonality, soil care, irrigation basics, weed and pest management, and harvesting. See website for more info, registration, and cost: http://www.soilborn.org

A Day on the Farm
Sun., May 19, 2013, 10 a.m.–3:00 p.m.
American River Ranch, 2140 Chase Drive, Rancho Cordova
Learn, Eat, Celebrate
The Day’s Events Include: Farm Stand - purchase fresh, local, organic fruits and vegetables, Organic Plant Sale Cooking Classes Kid’s Garden Activities Community Education Tables Morning Food, Snacks & Lunch And Much More!

New Sacramento County Field Guide
by Chris Wassermann and Jan Fetler
Sacramento County Wildflowers by Chris Wassermann and Jan Fetler was published in 2012. The collection of more than 100 plants was a 4-year labor of love for Chris and Jan.

Chris, a watercolor artist, painted the close-up flower detail and wrote the text. Jan took the habitat photos. Habitat photos really help the reader find the sometimes-elusive plants. Lovely paintings of the plant detail make identification easy.

Signed copies of the book are available for $20 from the CNPS Sacramento book table. The book is also available through Amazon.

Get Your eNews Here!

The Sacramento Valley Chapter CNPS emails announcements about upcoming events (talks, hikes, sales, nursery, and events). What is it? The eNewsletter is another way to get your information about what’s happening in our Chapter. Does it replace my Hibiscus? No. Signing up for the eNewsletter does not interrupt your Hibiscus newsletter service. We now have over 800 people receiving our bi-weekly eNewsletter with its timely notices. How often will I get notices? Depending on the amount of news, we send 3 to 10 announcements per month. Where do I signup? Go to our home page: SacValley.CNPS.org/ or contact Chris at LewisC916@yahoo.com.
Belated Thanks to Our Members

by Hazel Gordon

We don’t often thank our new and renewing members, so it seems fitting to do so in this season of renewal (and spring cleaning). Our loyal members who have renewed in the past year are too numerous to thank personally, but we are continually grateful for your support and generosity. Don’t forget to email us if you change your home address or email so that your Hibiscus will be sent to the right place, either electronically or by post office. Your renewal date is usually printed on your Hibiscus mailing label as well as the “tray” number that the post office requires for mailing.


Please communicate with us (email is best for some of us) if you have some questions, suggestions, complaints or (especially) would like to get involved in some of our activities; our contact information is printed in each Hibiscus issue. Your joining our chapter helps to sustain us and keeps us excited about our volunteer work with preserving native plants in their natural habitats and in our gardens and parks. Thanks so much and enjoy the spring blossoms!

Visit the Stockton subchapter’s website for latest news: eepurl.com/u8mNj. Use this link to subscribe to the Stockton sub-chapter e-mail list: eepurl.com/u8iTB

CNPS members living in Stockton who would like to find others in the area to carpool to chapter activities in Sacramento should contact Nadia Zane, 209.931.5151.

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Native Plant Gardening
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CONTACT INFORMATION

May 2013
SacValley.CNPS.org
Welcome our new Hibiscus Team!

May 2013

Sacramento Valley chapter newsletter, Hibiscus, is published monthly, except for July, August, and December. Deadline for Hibiscus contributions is midnight of the Friday before the monthly meeting for possible inclusion in the next month's newsletter. Please send your submittals to EditorHibiscus@gmail.com.

In this issue:

May PreSENTATION:
Raymond Prothero, Jr.
California Orchids
The Native Orchids of California

PUBLIC!

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Our chapter:
lower Truckee and northern San Joaquin County areas
serving the Sacramento, Yolo, Colusa, Sutter, Yuba, Placer, Nevada, Butte, and Plumas counties.

Sacramento Valley Chapter Newsletter
California Native Plant Society
SacValley.CNPS.org