



CALIFORNIA NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY
San Diego Chapter Newsletter

CHAPTER MEETINGS

**Casa del Prado Room 101
Balboa Park**

June 20, 2017

**Update on Current Invasive Tree
Pests: South American Palm Weevil,
Goldspotted Oak Borer and Invasive
Shot Hole Borer/Fusarium Dieback
Disease**

**By John Kabashim, Jennifer Pelham and
Jan Gonzales**

University of California Cooperative Extension

John Kabashima, MBA, Ph.D., Environmental Horticulture Advisor, Emeritus. John's research and extension programs have included the management of insects, diseases, and weeds in horticulture production systems and urban landscapes, biological control of exotic pests, water use and water use related problems of landscapes and nurseries. John is currently working on the Invasive Polyphagous and Kuroshio Shot-Hole Borers/Fusarium Dieback complex.

Jennifer Pelham has been the Horticulture Advisor with UCCE in San Diego and Orange Counties for the past 1½ years. Previously, she spent 14 years with the University of Florida Extension. She obtained her B.S. from Penn State and two master degrees from the University of Florida, including one in Pest Management. Jennifer is also a Certified Arborist.

Jan Gonzales is a Program Coordinator with the UCCE, San Diego. Beginning in 2005, Jan has provided leadership in developing new education and outreach programs to address local county and regional natural

resource challenges. Jan has a Bachelor's degree in Agricultural Business Management and a Master's in Strategic Communications.

6:30-7:00 pm – Natives for Novices. Topic TBD.

7:00 pm – refreshments, browsing, & socializing.

7:30 pm – presentation.

Chapter meetings are free and open to the public.



CALL FOR ABSTRACTS

FOR ORAL AND POSTER PRESENTATIONS

Open now through July 10, 2017

You are invited to submit an abstract to present in a themed oral or poster session at the CNPS 2018 Conservation Conference! Presenting at the conference means sharing your research, project, or new idea with 1,000 other conservationists and native plant enthusiasts who can learn from your work and put new science into action. You may find opportunities for collaboration and new projects or identify research needs directly impacting the future of native plant and natural resource conservation in California.

The conference program will focus on communicating the most recent and effective conservation science; all presentations should have a clear connection to native plants or natural vegetation conservation. Presentations are organized into themed sessions, including Current Research (dedicated to student presentations), a poster session, and Lightning Talks.

More info at: <https://conference.cnps.org>

FIELD TRIP

Lilies and Relatives in the Laguna and Cuyamaca Mountains

Sunday, June 4, 2017;

8:30 am-3:00 pm

Trip Leader: Fred Roberts

Late spring is a good time to take a look for lilies and their relatives. Join us on a trip to the Laguna and Cuyamaca Mountains and be introduced by CNPS-SD Rare Plant Botanist, **Fred Roberts**, to a number of these species. The trip will make three stops: on the Sunrise Highway and SR 79, including a stop at the meadows at the information kiosks near the southern Cleveland National Forest boundary (Sunrise Highway); Inspiration Point (SR 79); and on a rocky knoll just north of Cuyamaca Lake. Among the species we hope to see: *Allium amplexans* (paper onion), *Brodiaea terrestris* ssp. *kernensis* (dwarf brodiaea), *Calochortus albus* (white-fairylantern), *C. dunnii* (Dunn's mariposa), *C. invenustus* (shy mariposa), *C. splendens* (splendid mariposa), *C. weedii* (Weed's mariposa), and *Toxicoscordion venenosum* (meadow death camas), and perhaps a few others. Expect other pretty wildflowers as well. It should be a good year for it.

Bring **LUNCH**, a bunch of **WATER**, and **SUN PROTECTION**. **Vehicles should have an ADVENTURE PASS for our CNF stop.** Generally, this field trip will only have short, easy walks (though expect uneven terrain at Cuyamaca Lake). We will try to car pool as much as possible to reduce the number of vehicles.

Meeting Spot: Los Coches Park and Ride, 13516 Camino Canada, El Cajon, CA 92021.

RSVP for field trips at: <https://www.meetup.com/San-Diego-County-Native-Plant-Discoverers-Meetup/>

Questions: fieldtrips@cnpsd.org

BOARD MEETING

Wednesday, June 7, 6:30 – 9:00 p.m. 4010 Morena Blvd, Suite 100, San Diego (Thomas Guide 1248 C4). CNPS-SD Executive Board meetings are always the first Wednesday

of the month, except when the 1st Wednesday falls on a holiday. Members are welcome to attend as observers. To add an issue to the agenda, please email president@cnpsd.org.

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

Andria Califf	Margaret Meyncke
Terry & Jack Chamberlin	Brad Milnes
Jane Davies	Jenny Moore
Emily Effner	Robin Morris
Ryan Fitch	Colleen Ralph
Alex Griffith	K.J. Rayner
Art & Jan Grimes	Roberta Revetta
Heather Hayashi	John Riedel
Jennie Hollis	Paul Ruiz-Lopez
Melissa Hunsicker	Barbara Tagami
Lauren & Reginald Jonker	Joseph Thompson
Sarah Kennington	Suzanne Till

NATIVE GARDENING

Garden Native Meeting

June 14. Garden Native is the Chapter's native gardening committee, which meets the 2nd Wednesday of each month at various locations. For info: **Mike Gonzales** at gardening@cnpsd.org.

CONSERVATION

Conservation Committee

June 6. First Tuesday evening of each month. Contact **Frank Landis** at conservation@cnpsd.org for details about time and location.

Who Knew It Was So Complicated?

We seem to be hearing that in all sorts of unexpected contexts right now (I'm writing this on May 1st), but I'm going to focus on climate change and policy again. The issue I'm struggling with is the North County Multiple Species Conservation Program (NCMSP, because you need more acronyms). (continued on p.3)

The Elizabeth C. Schwartz Fund

Help Extend the Conservation Mission of an Incredible Woman

Elizabeth Schwartz was a Southern California native plant legend. After practicing law for 15 years, she fell in love with native plants and became a certified horticulturist. In this second career, she engaged thousands of plant lovers as executive director of the Theodore Payne Foundation, board president of the Southern California Horticultural Society, staff of the Botanical Garden at UCLA, and via numerous lectures and articles on native plants. Liz died suddenly on August 12, 2015 while hiking in Arizona. She was 66.

Today, the California Native Plant Society is seeking your help to extend her work and passion through the Elizabeth C. Schwartz fund. Liz had named CNPS as a beneficiary of her IRA retirement account. After talking with her husband, UCLA astronomer Ben Schwartz, it was decided to apply a portion of Liz's gift to create a fund that would honor her memory and dramatically increase CNPS Conservation work in Southern California. This "Elizabeth C. Schwartz Fund" will support a new staff position focused on Southern California conservation work. There is a tremendous need for this position, which will increase with pending changes in federal policy. Now, we are working to match this initial seed money, with donations from Schwartz family and friends, an event hosted by G2 Gallery's Susan Gottlieb, and support from others committed to native plant conservation in Southern California.

To donate or learn more please go to www.cnps.org/schwartz-fund).

(continued from p. 2)

I'm on the steering committee, and the documents (hopefully) will be out this fall. We'll be dealing with it for a while, and I wanted to air the issues so that we can all start thinking about it, because it really is complicated.

Problem one is climate change. According to a recent National Geographic article, half of 4,000 species surveyed are moving towards the poles, about one mile per year on land on average (<http://news.nationalgeographic.com/2017/04/climate-change-species-migration-disease/>). We'll argue endlessly about whether this is true for all land species, but the point is that the climate is changing, it will continue to change, species are responding to it, and what we're fighting right now is massive societal

inertia to determine how fast and how far the climate swings from 20th Century normal. The nasty part of even extreme climate change isn't the quasi-stable end state (basically like the Miocene), it's how extreme the peak heat is between now and then (a few centuries of something possibly like the end Permian Great Dying, or more likely, the end Paleocene). That peak heat is the extinction-maker we want to avoid if at all possible. That aside, the point is that the world is already changing, it will continue to change, and we're talking about what will suffer, not how to stop the change.

Then we have the NCMSCP itself. This document, if approved, will be in force for the next 50 years of that change. The general problem the NCMSCP is intended to solve is that piecemeal conservation an EIR at a time, a project at a time, doesn't yield very good or consistent results. Rather than trying to maintain a patchwork of little preserves, little islands of native habitat in a sea of development, as we have along the coast, the aim is to identify land parcels with high conservation value, acquire them if possible (and I'll get back to that in a moment), and thereby cobble together a set of preserves with wildlife corridors between them, so plant and animals (well, mostly animals) can move and adapt. Little habitat islands have the nasty habit of losing all the species that can't maintain a breeding population in whatever little parcel is there, so bigger is better. Land can be set aside for conservation within a developed parcel, or offsite habitat destruction can be mitigated on the MSCP lands, or preserves can be bought outright, with funds that come from...somewhere.

The MSCP is supposed to cover listed and special species, as well as sensitive vegetation types. The idea is to preserve them for the 50-year length of the program, but this comes with some caveats. The covered species will be preserved within some high value areas, but they will be allowed to be "taken" (e.g. killed) in other areas. Moreover, there is a "no surprises" clause, so that if a big new population of a covered species shows up in a development where it was not known before, the developer can take that population if they so choose (and truth be told, not all of them do).

The 20 year-old South County MSCP covered 85 species, but citing lessons learned, the people writing the North County MSCP currently plan to cover only 24, with 15 more on a non-covered watch list. It turned out that 85 species was simply too much for any San

Diego jurisdiction to monitor successfully. Worse, some of species were questionable: they turned out to not be rare, or they may not live in the county at all. There's some argument right now about whether the NCMSCP should cover more species or not, and I'll get back to that, because it is a bit complicated.

The third issue is the shape of the NCMSCP lands. It doesn't cover all of North County, just some of the undeveloped lands that aren't used for something else, like agriculture. The challenge is that there isn't that much of the land left. To put it whimsically, if I'd gotten here 100 years ago, knowing what I know now, and had the power to lay out all the cities in the County, I would not have put San Marcos, Escondido, or Highway 78 where they are right now, simply because they block some otherwise really nice wildlife north-south corridors. As a result, the NCMSCP north-south wildlife corridors have to go around San Marcos and Escondido, and they are rather long and stringy, simply because that's where the undeveloped lands are.

The relative width and size of the corridors becomes important when we think about climate change, because species will need to move to find suitable habitat during droughts and floods, as well as when flowering and fruiting times change for their food—and that's just the animals. The plants will have to move too, somehow.

The shape of the wildlife corridors also becomes important when we think about what "no surprises" means in the context of a changing climate. Is it okay for covered species to migrate, or are they unprotected if they show up on the wrong parcel? That's potentially a big problem, because "no surprises" would seem to work best in an unchanging environment, and we don't have even the illusion of that anymore. What do we do about migrants?

Ultimately, the NCMSCP is conservation on a reservation system: species are considered safe when they are on "their" park land, and not when they show up on an area designated for someone's profit. Anyone who knows what happens in parks knows that life isn't this simple. There are constant issues with weeds, pests, and disturbance. Worse, mountain bikers and other people cause a fair amount of damage in parks, all the while insisting that they need more space for recreation. Still, it's the best we can do at the moment.

This isn't to say that rare species shouldn't be monitored or managed for, but as everyone found out

with the South County MSCP, there aren't enough resources to do that for 85 species. It would be nice to have those resources, but that means either more taxes if you want to pay for the biologists' time, or you have to find a lot of qualified volunteers (you, perhaps?) and get them to do a lot of work for free. Still, the lack of resources is only one reason why we might not want the NCMSCP to over many more species. The other is that "no surprises" clauses. The NCMSCP is a take permit that gives developers the ability to kill sensitive plants and animals. Do we want to give them that blanket, "no surprises" permission for the next 50 years? I know the wildlife agencies are really struggling with that question, and I hope their counterparts in the County are as well.

What about just scrapping the MSCP, not covering any species? This might seem advantageous, because it would theoretically force all developers to do the studies, find out what sensitive species are on their pieces of land, report them, and mitigate any impacts, just as they will have to do for all species not covered by the NCMSCP. The problem is that this is a piecemeal effort, and it's hard to assemble a wildlife corridor out of multiple parcels when each parcel is an independent project, and there's no overarching plan to help them work together to assemble a corridor. That's assuming that the developers do a complete and honest biology report on each project, a questionable assumption.

So, I'm afraid, it's another complicated project, with no obvious, easy answers. To compound it, the steering committee has people representing developers, agriculture, and trail users as well, each of whom have their own interests.

What we do know is that, if there are no corridors, we're going to lose some populations, if not some species, as species are unable to migrate and find suitable habitat. We can help—a little—by giving plants and animals space in our yards, but unless you own a lot of land, your backyard plot can't house anything large for very long. Still, if we all do our part, perhaps we can find some sort of solution eventually. I do know it's going to take a while, because if there was a simple solution, they would have found it decades ago.

~ **Frank Landis**, Conservation Chair

RESTORATION

GREAT CHALLENGES, GREATER ACCOMPLISHMENTS

There is an old saying: 'The difficult we do immediately; the impossible takes a little longer.' I was reminded of this as I described our current work area to a new volunteer. From where we were standing (surrounded by eucalyptus, Arundo and palms) I explained how our project area extends two miles downstream and another mile upstream. Then I pointed east and added that our project extends three miles along that side creek. Out loud it just seems impossibly large.

Additionally, it also seems that the more we get done the more there is left to do. This happens in multiple ways. First, our success with one project acts as a snowball rolling downhill. So we added two new pieces to our project area this season. While more work, this allows us to manage the watershed cohesively. It also adds to our ability to stay flexible and respond to circumstances. But it just seems like so much more and there is also work which begets more work.

This winter we concentrated our activities on one mile of the San Dieguito River. This is a joint project with USFW, the San Dieguito River Conservancy, many private property owners, and us, in conjunction with the local fire department. Through our joint efforts we have been able to bring in additional resources in the form of ACE (American Conservation Experience) to help with biomass removal, which lessens fire risk – a huge plus.



College crew working downstream.
Heidi Acosta took the pictures.

With their help we have mowed most of the Arundo in about a half mile. Of course, that leaves our group with the follow-up. We treat Arundo as it grows back to about 2-3 feet in order to kill the roots. In addition, we exposed many other weeds (acacia, palms, pampas grass, eucalyptus) as the Arundo was removed. All pluses to be dealt with in due course.

The grant that provided for the ACE workers also mandated that we plant. So we planted 850 native riparian plants in spaces created by weeding. Planting alone is enough added work. Deciding which species and actually finding appropriate plants amounts to another project. Fortunately we have many knowledgeable resources within CNPS and with our partners, 'We get by with a little help from our friends.'

Nature gives us more to do as well. In February we were literally inundated. Access to our top priority target areas was flooded. So we adjusted and worked where we could. The torrents did also open things up exposing more mature weeds and stimulated seeds to germinate. There were only about a bazillion eucalyptus seedlings that came up. Yet these are more positives taking us nearer to our ultimate goals.

Admittedly, things seem daunting at times. That is when it is time to take a breath and assess priorities. There will still be just as much to do, but instead of looking at everything, each day we choose from a few top priorities. By staying focused and organized we keep moving forward. Each contribution gets us closer to the finish and by partnering with others we multiply our efforts and accomplishments – truly positive.



Bob Byrnes (in the blue shirt) worked upstream. Yes, it is really that tall and dense but only for a couple miles. Over two seasons half is gone.

By the time you read this we will be back at Lusardi Creek carrying out another seemingly impossible task. We are removing millions of artichoke plants from hundreds of acres while also weeding three miles of riparian corridor. Yes impossible, but only until we start.

~ Arne Johansen, invasiveplants@cnpssd.org

IN THE FIELD

Desert Wildflowers



For those of you who were not able to make it out to Borrego Valley this March, I am sorry.

I must admit, growing up, I was not especially fond of desert. I had only been through deserts on family road trips to elsewhere in the southwest. We always had to leave at 1 am to get through the desert before it was too hot. I grew up favoring mountains with forests over deserts. However, during an ecology class at SDSU, we had a project in the desert in the spring and I became more interested. I began to really appreciate the deserts, the starkness of the terrain, the pockets of unique habitats and the wildflowers. During the late 1970s and early 1980s, I was a naturalist on SDNHM ecology trips to the desert each spring.

There were some exceptional rainfall seasons at that time with exceptional wildflowers. They were 1978, 1979, 1980, 1983 and 1993. In 1995 and even 2005, the third wettest season in San Diego history, wildflower displays in Borrego were exceptional. I remember one spring driving out each weekend for a month to enjoy all of the phases.

This spring, talk came early about a good wildflower season in our desert, even though the rains began a bit later than was optimal. That was until we had that San

Diego specialist storm on the Monday of February 27 when most of coastal San Diego County received 2-4 inches of rain while Los Angeles had less than a half an inch and Palomar Mountain had 9 inches. But what was more important was that Borrego received up to an inch and a half of rain taking the total to 7.29 inches. Then, the talk began to describe a "superbloom."

It is always difficult to determine when flowers will peak but there were estimates that they would peak in mid-March. Various websites provide updates on the flowers: Desert USA and the Anza Borrego Natural History Association. It all looked good. However, I only had one potential day to go, a Monday in the middle of the month. Unfortunately, the temperatures began to climb, reaching successive days of over 90 degrees. That does not bode well for wildflowers. I was getting worried that they would be all cooked. In 1995, I spend one afternoon in Henderson Canyon Road with beautiful wildflowers. Coming back a week later when I went having convinced my wife to take off the afternoon, they were all toasted.

I began driving on March 13 at 6:15 am through heavy fog. I went east then north on I-15 then east through Poway. The fog lifted or more accurate, I drove above it, and went up Scripps Poway Parkway, through Ramona, through Santa Ysabel and north to the turnoff for San Felipe Valley and Montezuma Grade. The vegetation all seemed very healthy in the Coastal sage scrub with its gray green color and the dark chaparral accented by green grassy slopes and lowlands.

I had read about the traffic looking like I-405 on Friday so I really wanted to get there before most people, plus it was the first week day after the time change so I hoped for lower numbers.

Near Lake Henshaw, there are usually wildflower displays but this year, the grass and vegetation seemed very closely cropped without a hint of wildflower poppies and goldfields.

The countryside looked quite green in Ranchita. However, down the grade, there were hints of what was to come. I was not able to see any yellow in the valley from the highway, but shrubs along the road were in flower. Along the road, a number of different flowers were visible.

In the valley, I drove directly to Henderson Canyon road and drove east to the large, flat open area. The desert sunflowers (*Geraea canescens*) were clearly near their peak, nearly a meter tall and with most of

the buds open. The flowers are a yellow orange in color and when in mass, they create a significant patch of color. The air was very still in the morning light, but they swayed gently in the breeze later.



The *Oenothera deltoidea* (Evening primrose) were also in flower in low numbers mixed with the *Geraea*, but in white clumps in open and sandy areas. I always thought that they look like tissue paper along the road where they seem to do well in the disturbed soils. The pink purple *Abronia villosa* (Sand verbena) was also scattered through the area in patches, not very dense, at least in the first place I stopped. However, just moving a few hundred yards down the road, brought a different mix where the *Oenothera* was more numerous. Also, while 90% of the people went to the north side of the road, the south side showed much less effect of footprints. There, the big 4-petaled *Oenothera* flowers floated on their green stems and leaves that sometimes lie prostrate on the sand. Even though 7.29 inches is a lot of rain for the desert in this location, it is still a real wonder that the plants can grow so large in such a short amount of time. Coastal areas receive more rain to generate smaller flowers. While I was hunched down photographing, a large swarm of honey bees passed over me. I sat perfectly still as they streamed past.



People wonder how such delicate plants can grow with such profusion in the harsh desert. In fact, the annuals avoid the harsh conditions by only growing when there has been adequate rainfall. When it gets too hot, they are already done for the year. They are wonders of the desert community but they actually avoid the desert conditions.

I am also fully aware that if it was not for the local community purposefully removing *Brassica tournefortii* (Sahara mustard) plants, there would not be any wildflower locations in the area or they would be much less, small patches fighting for control of some land.

I noticed a number of cars parked at the Peg Leg Mine area, so I drove up there. The mix of flowers was quite diverse. The *Abronia* was more present in addition to the flowering *Geraea canescens*, many more *Chalissia claviformes* (Brown-eyed evening primrose), and other wildflowers, and especially *Hesperocallis undulata* (Desert lily). Desert lilies are an anomaly to me. I understand that they too avoid the harsh desert conditions. They are geophytic plants with bulbs beneath the soil. They are perennial plants that produce Easter lily-like flowers in the middle of harsh, sandy soil. They collect water and incorporate it into their bulb. They can put up a leaf if they receive enough rainfall and they will flower if they receive more. During dry years, you may not see them at all.

The numbers of people were increasing but it was still not unbearable. On DiGiorgio Road, I noticed a number of cars pulled over. A vacant field to the west was covered with *Malacothrix glabrata* (Desert dandelion). Its sweet scent was strong. It was an abandoned field where the drip irrigation lines were still present. Farther down, another dense patch of *Malacothrix* occurred but it was set back from the road in an area that apparently had not been cultivated and had a more native appearance.

I decided to drive out to Coyote Canyon. So did a number of other people in their SUVs and pick-up trucks, even a few smaller motor homes. Passing became an issue since the road is not very wide and the edges are sandy. I observed one person who was stuck within 2 feet of the edge of the road. I drove out for a while passing a diverse designation of flowers: *Camissoniopsis* sp., *Dytheria* sp. (spectacle pod), *Malacothrix glabrata* (desert dandelion) and off in the distance, entire slopes were pale yellow. Closer up, I could see similar coloration caused by *Eschscholzia parishii* (desert poppy). They were large plants, each one about 2 feet or more in diameter with numerous

flowers. They were a clear yellow color without any orange. I walked over to a slope and looked up where the vegetation grew in clusters a long distance up hill on rocky talus and larger rocks. *Opuntia basilaris* (Beavertail cactus) was in flower on the large slopes. The *Fouquieria splendens* (Ocotillo) had leaves but only buds. I drove back through the outskirts of town to the south.

Over Yaqui Pass, past Bow Willow Campground, and over to what is now called Shelter Valley (it was called Earthquake Valley when I was younger). There weren't any large patches of color but the area near Vallecitos was green. I went farther and drove up to Mountain Palm Springs. There were numerous plants in flower including the *Chalissia claviformes* (Pinnate leaved primrose) and *Eschscholzia minutiflora* (Pygmy poppy). Water was oozing out in spots along the trail to the closest palms. By now, it was quite hot, probably in mid-90's, but because it was dry and there was a breeze now, after noon, it was not too bad. *Encelia farinosa* (Brittlebush) was also in flower here and there but I came across an entire slope of them in flower, beautiful yellow bushes on a rock hilltop. Here, there were only 2 other cars in the entire area. While all the species were not here, the density of flowering plants, especially annuals, was very high. I even found an *Eschscholzia minutiflora* growing and flowering in a crack in the asphalt on the edge of the road. You know it is a good year when that happens.

Here and there, patches of *Abronia* popped up near the road. I thought I saw a *Mimulus bigelovii* near the border check station so I headed out the dirt road near there, but did not see any. What I did see were more desert lilies in the driest, most bare coarse sand material. How does such a pretty plant grow in such a stark environment?

I drove on south on S-2 and connected with I-8. Driving back west, *Encelia* was in flower along the highway. The climb back up past Mountain Springs always provides something new. I finally noticed the palm stand there that I had heard about. At the top of the grade, the weather changed. I was clearly passing into an area with coastal influence and haze, and moist air replaced the hot dry conditions below in the desert. The landscape was very green.

Even though the weather every day was in the mid-90s, I continued to see reports that the wildflowers were going strong. On the Desert USA site, Anza-Borrego was rated as a 9 and a half of ten on their bar charts. I decided that I had to go see it again.

It was another early Monday morning through the fog, but this time the fog was in the mountains. When I arrived to Montezuma Grade, an eerie patch of cirrus clouds lay overhead, creating a definite diffused light. I drove to Henderson Canyon Road with the windows open and the scent of the flowers wafted through the air. A strong breeze blew down Coyote Canyon moving the flowers. The flowers in the *Geraea* site were still looking fresh, maybe just past the peak. However, south of the road in the dune hillocks, flowers were blossoming heavily. I was amazed that they would all still be in flower with the hot temperatures. In the lower lines, between the dunes, *Oenothera* was the dominant with white flowers. On the dune slopes, the magenta *Abronia* dominated. In between, they were equal with the *Geraea* in a dense mass. I could have spent hours there. My dark colored pants were covered with yellow and orange splotches of pollen from the flowers.

In Coyote Canyon, a few of the Ocotillo were commencing to flower even with leaves. Though they are in a leafless state most of the year, they flower after the leaves begin to dry. Ocotillo have two kinds of leaves. There are those that form with new growth that eventually dry and leave the dried petiole as a thorn, and those that grow each time there is adequate rain. I have seen them put out leaves and dry more than once in a year.

The flower display wasn't just monocultures there either. *Chaenactis stevioides* (Desert pincushion), *Malacothrix glabrata*, some *Lupinus arizonicus* (Arizona lupine), *Rafinesquia californica* (California chicory), the sweet smoky scented *Larrea tridentata* (creosote bush), *Encelia farinosa*, *Opuntia basilaris* with flowers that were of a color that does not look real but brilliant magenta, and *Loeseliastrum schottii* (calicoflower) are just a few. There were numerous more. Large Eleodes beetles (big black stink bugs) cruised along the sand. White-lined sphinx moth caterpillars were becoming more numerous but not exceedingly so.

I sadly left the valley back up Montezuma Grade. In the bright light, a smear of orange was visible in the area of Henderson Canyon area where the *Geraea* was in flower. On the grade, *Encelia farinosa* was in full flower. Black-throated sparrows were flying and producing their trill call. I have come to equate these strikingly patterned sparrows with wildflowers, and *Encelia farinosa* in particular, because the only time I see them is when the shrubs are in flower.

During normal years, the *Encelia* right next to the road flowers because it receives moisture augmentation from the asphalt runoff. During wetter years, some of the *Encelia* on the adjacent slopes will flower. This year, every one, all the way up the mountain was in full bloom.

Being as obsessed as I am with wildflowers and ephemeral natural phenomena, I was able to talk someone else into going with me one more time to the desert, but this time to see the cascade in Palm Canyon and look for *Mimulus*. We arrived early and hiked up the canyon. Water cascaded loudly down a forked fall on two sides of a large rock landing in a level pool of glistening water. It is hard to believe that this happens in the dry, hot Anza-Borrego desert. The palm grove provided a delightful patch of shade while a canyon wren sang its descending whistle song. Later, we hiked into Hell Hole Canyon where the nearly continuous cover of *Encelia* shrubs were flowering on the north facing slopes, glowing yellow with the back light. Numerous small annuals grew on the sand including the brilliant white and diminutive *Monoptilon bellioides* (Desert star), the tiny yellow *Eriophyllum wallacei* (Wallace's woolly daisy), the small flowered *Nama demissa* (Desert purplemat), and of course the *Mimulus bigelovii* (Desert monkey flower), which grew in profusion over a wide area.



I had seen a report of the Anza-Borrego “Superbloom” on national news when it began. I also read about a bus load of people who flew here from Hong Kong to see the flowers. As I reentered traffic of urban San Diego County, I was not sure how the term “superbloom” is defined. There certainly was a great expansion of wildflowers. It is too bad it was so hot to cook the annuals, but overall, I think the displays of wildflowers met or exceeded my expectations. I wish I had more time to explore more. It has been a while since it was this good and may not be like this again for

who knows how long. Again, if you were not able to go to the Anza-Borrego Desert yourself this March, I am truly sorry.

~ Tom Oberbauer, Vice President

RELATED ACTIVITIES

Mt. Helix Park Adopt-A-Plot Program

Join a team of plant enthusiasts and California native plant experts committed to restoring Mt. Helix Park’s landscape to a California native habitat. More than 20 committed volunteers signed on in 2016 for the Park’s Adopt-A-Plot program and have already made a huge difference in both reducing the number of invasive weeds and restoring native plants throughout this historic hilltop. With many plots still available, this program offers volunteers the chance to learn, not just about habitat restoration, but best practices for growing and cultivating California native plants for use in their own gardens. Park certification is required prior to joining the Adopt-A-Plot team and is provided by Mt. Helix Park. To volunteer for this or any of the Park workdays and projects, contact Peggy Junker at pjunker@mthelixpark.org or by calling the Park office at (619) 741-4363 Monday, Wednesday or Friday from 9 am until noon.

The CNPS-SD Newsletter is generally published 12 times a year. The newsletter is not peer reviewed and any opinions expressed are those of the author identified at the end of each notice or article. The newsletter editor may edit the submittal to improve accuracy, improve readability, shorten articles to fit the space, and reduce the potential for legal challenges against CNPS. If an article, as edited, is not satisfactory to the author, the author can appeal to the board. The author has the final say on whether the article, as edited, is printed in the newsletter. Submissions are due by the 10th of the month preceding the newsletter; that is, May 10 for the Jun newsletter, etc. Please submit items to newsletter@cnpsd.org

CNPS-SD Activities Calendar June 2017

- 6/4: Field Trip to Laguna & Cuyamaca Mtns, p. 2
- 6/6: Conservation Committee Mtg, p.5
- 6/7: **Board Meeting**, p.2
- 6/14: Garden Native Mtg, p. 2
- 6/20: **Chapter Meeting**, p.1

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

___ Student or Limited Income \$25; ___ Individual \$45; ___ Family \$75
___ Plant Lover \$100; ___ Patron \$300; ___ Benefactor \$600; ___ Mariposa Lily \$1,500

Name(s): _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____ e-mail: _____

Mail check payable to "CNPS" and send to: CNPS, 2707 K Street, Ste 1, Sacramento, CA 95816-5113.

CALIFORNIA NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY

San Diego Chapter
C/o San Diego Natural History Museum
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June 2017 Newsletter

Dedicated to the preservation of the California native flora
CALIFORNIA NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY – SAN DIEGO

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