



CALIFORNIA NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY
San Diego Chapter Newsletter

MARCH 2010

CEANOTHUS IN BLOOM!

This month the hills are awash in blues and white as the mountain lilacs (*Ceanothus* spp.) bloom. These chaparral shrubs flower so early in the year because their flower buds are initially formed in the axils of new leaves in May at the end of the previous growing season, about 10 months prior to opening, and are ready to burst the next March. So, the number of flowers on the shrubs this year is not dependent on the precipitation we recently enjoyed, but on the amount of precipitation during the 2008-2009 winter/spring season.

The genus *Ceanothus* is divided into two subgenera: *Ceanothus* and *Cerastes*. The species in the *Ceanothus* subgenus have alternate leaves, hornless fruit, thin early-falling stipules, and thin leaves with stomata located on the lower surfaces; examples are woolyleaf ceanothus (*C. tomentosus*) and white bark ceanothus (*C. leucodermis*). *Cerastes* species have features that make them more drought-tolerant, including opposite leaves, horned fruits, persistent corky stipules, and stomata located in sunken pits on the underside of thick leaves. The *Cerastes* subgenus is exemplified by wart-stemmed ceanothus (*C. verrucosus*) and desert ceanothus (*C. greggii*).

SPRING PLANT SALE

MARCH 13

SEE PAGE 7

CNPS CHAPTER MEETING

TUESDAY, MARCH 16, 2010

7:00 P.M.

San Diego Thornmint: A Conservation Puzzle

by Jonathan Snapp-Cook and Jessie Vinje

In just a few weeks, the pink and white blooms of San Diego thornmint (*Acanthomintha ilicifolia*) will emerge from its green thorny foliage. When surveying for this small annual you might feel the crunch of the crumbly clay soils or smell its wintergreen-like scent before seeing the plants. San Diego thornmint is found only in San Diego County and northwestern Baja California, and is restricted to gently sloping clay lenses. The speakers will take a virtual tour of some locations where thornmint is found and give a first-hand account of management for the species on three North County preserves. This talk kicks off our chapter's drive to survey San Diego thornmint populations throughout the County (see pg. 5).

Natives for Novices - 6:30 to 7:00 p.m.

Maintaining Natives by Morgan Vondrak.

Chapter meetings are open to the public and are free. Meetings are in Casa del Prado Room 104, just west of the San Diego Natural History Museum in Balboa Park. Before and after our speaker, browse our books, get a native plant identified, enjoy refreshments, and find out how you can become more involved.

VEEP SPEAKS

When I joined CNPS in 1984, I had just moved here from Oregon during a recession that meant I had to move to where the work was – and I ended up in San Diego. After I got settled in, I wanted to find some wild places in San Diego County to get away from the urban grind.

On a tip from a co-worker, I joined CNPS. Field trips with CNPS introduced me to dozens of special places, and my curiosity about the natural environment in this region got deeper with every trip. Over this past 25 years I've had great times with CNPS members who enjoy experiencing nature. I have especially vivid memories of fascinating plants from nooks and crannies, hills and valleys, mesas and arroyos.

If you like the outdoors, come along on one of the many field trips that we're organizing this year. Or if you aren't so interested in going rambling, other committees offer a whole range of ways for you to help link up to our natural plant heritage. Fourteen committees are on the list on the back of the newsletter. I bet you'll find some members doing something that fits your interests. I hope that, like me, you find an activity in CNPS that will make you glad you joined.



Long-time member, and current Field Trip chair, Kay Stewart was elected Vice-President of the chapter in January.

BOARD NOTES

January. Bylaws amendments, updating the descriptions of the role of the Executive Board and the Board officers, our election processes, and appointments of committee chairs, were adopted largely as presented in the January newsletter, with some minor changes. The new by-laws are posted on our website, at cnpsd.org.

The following Board officers and chairs were elected: Dave Flietner, President; Kay Stewart, Vice-President; Tom Beltran, Secretary; Sandi Feiock, Treasurer; Pat Fishtein, Publicity and Connie Beck, Plant Propagation.

The Board allocated \$200 to the equipment fund for sprayers and tools. In addition, \$2,500 was allocated from the Legal Fund for legal services on behalf of CNPS-SD.

February. The January 23, 2010, the Chapter Strategic Planning Session was discussed. The Board elected Bobbie Stephenson as the Newsletter Chair. A quarterly committee summary report system for coordinating committees was discussed.

A memorandum of understanding for the creation and use of a Jupiter Canyon site for a native plant garden was approved. The board agreed to support the revised CNPS policy on Native Plants and Fire Safety. A \$500 mini-grant was approved to collect data on the leafing and flowering of local plant species.

The next Board meeting is **Wednesday, March 3, 6 p.m. to 8 p.m.** at the Scripps Miramar Ranch Library, 10301 Scripps Lake Drive (Thomas Guide 1189 G-4). All members are welcome.

Tom Beltran, Secretary

MEMBER FIELD TRIPS

Members and their guests can enjoy two great field trips this month. Please RSVP to fieldtrips@cnpsd.org, leave your cell phone number, and where you plan to meet (for Indian Gorge Trip). As always, come prepared with sun protection, comfortable shoes, and water.

March 14: Indian Gorge and Elephant Trees, 10 a.m. - 4 p.m. Explore Mountain Palm Springs and Torote Canyon in the foothills of the Laguna Mountains in Anza Borrego Desert State Park. **Larry Hendrickson**, botanist and State Park Aide, will lead us to see stands of the very rare Torote or Elephant Tree (*Bursera microphylla*) and palm oases. We expect shrubs, perennials, and annuals to be in full bloom.

Meet: 8 a.m. (7:30 if raining) at the Park&Ride at the I-8 Fuerte exit, just past the SR 125 overpass - watch signs closely (turn right at the signal at the top of the off-ramp). OR: 10 a.m. at Indian Gorge Road turnoff from S-2, 30 miles south of the SR 78/S-2 junction, or 18 miles north on S-2 from I-8 exit. If you have a high-clearance vehicle, please drive it, as it will enable us to explore more areas.

The walking will be moderate, with some inclines and rocky areas. Bring lunch and your favorite weeding tool; we will dig up any of the invasive Saharan Mustard (*Brassica tournefortii*) that we find.

Sunday March 21: San Elijo Ecological Reserve, 9 a.m. - 12 noon. Explore our coastal flora that is richly represented in the 1,000+ acre San Elijo Ecological Reserve on the central San Diego County coastline. The preserve includes the saline estuary on the east side of I-5 and the brackish estuary that skirts Mira Costa College in east Cardiff. **Margaret Filius**, author of "Native Plants of Torrey Pines" will lead; her book will be available for purchase at the field trip.

Meet: North end of N. Rios Avenue in Solana Beach (Thomas Guide 1147 E-6). We will walk from one end of the preserve to the other, and back again; about four miles round trip.

PUBLIC PLANT WALKS

A great team of new and veteran leaders will be conducting our public plant hikes from North County to Chula Vista this spring. These hikes inform the public about CNPS and are fun and informative for members as well. The recent heavy rains ensure that we'll have some fine greenery and plenty of flowers for these outings.

If you are interested in leading future hikes or have any questions, please call **Paul Hormick** at 619-297-2957.

All walks start at **10 a.m.** and last about 90 minutes. The terrain is easy to moderate; as always bring sturdy shoes, water, and sunscreen.

March 6 – Switzer Canyon (North Park): **Betsy Cory** and **Elizabeth Wilkinson** lead. Meet at the corner of 28th and Maple (park on street). From University Ave, following 28th south to the end (at Maple). From the south, take 30th St. to Redwood; left to 28th, to the end. Park on street (TG 1269 D-7).

March 13 – Rueda Canyon (Tierrasanta): **Adrienne Heinzelman** and **Dave Flietner** lead. Exit I-15 east at Clairemont Mesa Blvd; right at Promesa Ct.; right on Promesa Dr., go to end of street. (TG 1249-J1).

March 20 – Buchanan Canyon: Deborah Benson and **Paul Hormick** lead. From SR 163 exit Washington Street east; left onto Lincoln Ave (2nd light); right onto Johnson and park 100 feet north (TG 1269-B5).

March 27. Penasquitos Canyon: Frank Landis and **Michael Murphy** lead. Meet at the western parking lot past the ball fields, next to the bulletin board at the canyon preserve along Black Mountain Road (TG 1189- D7).

SAVE THE DATES... APRIL FIELD TRIPS

April 11: Grasslands of Lake Henshaw, Lower Santa Ysabel Preserve: **Kirsten Winter**

April 25: Ancient Chaparral: **Rick Halsey**
Kay Stewart, Field Trip Chair

NEW! NORTH COAST MEMBERS' MEETING

Has the snarl of rush-hour traffic in the Golden Triangle kept you from joining your friends at our chapter meetings in Balboa Park? If you live between Del Mar and Oceanside, the proverbial mountain will soon be coming to you. We are starting quarterly 'Satellite Meetings' at the Agua Hedionda Lagoon Discovery Center, 1580 Cannon Road, Carlsbad. Please join us for our inaugural meeting:

Wednesday, March 31, 7 p.m. "Landscaping Secrets for the Native Garden" by **Greg Rubin**, of California's Own Native Landscape Design. Greg will share basic design principles you can use to create year-round interest, minimize maintenance, enhance fire resistance, and enjoy a successful garden. As at our regular meetings, we will offer tasty finger food, a selection of books, and the latest info on chapter activities. Thanks to **Michelle Balk** and her crew for springing into action to make this a reality.

Directions to Agua Hedionda Lagoon Discovery Center: Exit I-5 east @ Cannon Road, turn left at Faraday Ave. signal into driveway (Thomas Guide 1126 J-1).

INVASIVE PLANTS

Saturday, March 6, 9 a.m. to noon. The rains are here and so are the herbaceous weeds. We will practice hands-on control of annual weeds. All members are welcome; the only requirement is that you want to become involved with our native open spaces. Regular meetings are the first Saturday of each month - other times can be arranged. Boots, long pants and long sleeves are required. Meet at 17269 Silver Gum Way (TG 1169-D2). Call for directions and the gate code.

Arne Johanson, Invasive Plant Chair

CONSERVATION UPDATE

A coalition of groups, including the state CNPS, concerned with protection of desert resources and the effects of renewable energy projects have developed a map that identifies areas where projects could be located with minimal impact to the desert. For a copy of the map, contact conservation@cnpsd.org.

The chapter will prepare a comment letter on the EIS for the Solar II project proposed for Imperial County because this project will damage high quality desert habitat.

The final version of the City of San Diego's Master Storm Water Maintenance Plan and a plan to change Wetlands Deviations process will be released early this year. The conservation committee will review them and let members know what action should be taken.

We are concerned that the Pala/Pauma Planning Group has formed a subcommittee to develop Rancho Guejito, 36-square miles of superb wildlands stretching from the Wild Animal Park to Pine Mountain. We need members who can attend these meetings, keep track of what is being proposed, and speak up for the value of native habitat. For more information, see <http://www.californiachaparral.com/ranchoguejito.html>.

Frank Landis, Rare Plant Survey Chair

CNPS WORKSHOPS

Registration is now open for CNPS 2010 workshops, including Rare Plants of Eastern San Luis Obispo County (3/25-27), Vegetation Rapid Assessment, Carrizo Plain (3/29 - 31). To see the complete list of workshop and to register, please visit:

<http://cnps.org/cnps/education/workshops/>

If you have further questions, contact Josie Crawford at (916) 447-2677 ext 205 or jcrawford@cnps.org.

VEGETATION SURVEYS

Saturday, March 27 at 10 a.m. Survey at San Miguel Mountain. The Vegetation Committee got off to a great start this year with our first survey in a gabbro soil vegetation alliance at South Crestridge on January 30. Julie Evens from the State CNPS trained 25 volunteers in the rapid assessment survey methods.

The next survey will take place at San Miguel Mountain. The group size is limited to nine people. We will meet at Edwards Cinema (2951 Jamacha Rd) at 10 a.m. From west of SR 125, take 94 east to Jamacha Rd. Edwards Cinema is in the shopping center southeast of Campo Rd.

Light snacks and beverages are provided for volunteers. If you are interested, we could use your help, regardless of your experience. Please RSVP by March 26th.

Anna Bennett, Vegetation Chair

SAVE A TREE!

Members can receive this chapter newsletter digitally. Not only do you save a tree, you save the chapter the cost of printing and mailing. Just email the information on your mailing label to: enewsletter@cnpsd.org.

PUBLIC OUTREACH

We are participating in several events in March, including Green Week (Oceanside) and a sustainable landscaping conference at Cuyamaca College. As more and more people convert their landscapes to include drought-tolerant plants, it's time to introduce them to native plants. As you know, conserving native plants is fundamental to protecting the places we love. This is your chance to tell others about the benefits of native plants and CNPS, and we need volunteers to staff our tables! If you are enthusiastic about CNPS, why not help represent our chapter at these and other events?

David Varner, Outreach Chair

RARE PLANT SURVEYS

As Vince Scheidt noted in the February 2010 newsletter, in April our chapter will survey for the endangered San Diego thornmint (*Acanthomintha ilicifolia*), a rare species found from Oceanside to Baja California. Our chapter is organizing the April surveys to find out how the San Diego thornmint is doing, and we are using this survey as a means of training volunteers to survey for rare plants.

The fun part is that San Diego thornmint only blooms in mid-April, so our surveys are scheduled for three weekends that month: **April 10-11, April 17-18, and April 24-25**. That's it for this year!

If you do want to join us, there is a required, short training session on **April 3**, 9-11 a.m. at the Manchester Reserve in Encinitas. Please contact me for further information.

Frank Landis, Rare Plant Survey Chair

MINI-GRANT AWARD

Our chapter will donate \$500 to provide a stipend for a botanist to collect field data for the County Phenology Project, under the auspices of the SD Natural History Museum and Fleet Science Center. This is part of 'Project Budburst' a nationwide program of citizens gathering data on the effects of climate change on plant growth and flowering (www.windows.ucar.edu/citizen_science/budburst/).

The botanist will collect phenology data on ten native species at four natural sites in the County. The data collected will provide accurate baseline information that will be used as a reference for data from participating citizen scientists. Thanks to members **Mary Ann Hawke** and **Anne Fege** for spearheading our involvement with this project.

To get involved in this project, email hawkema@gmail.com

GARDENING MEETING

Members interested in getting involved with the Native Gardening committee are welcome to attend our next meeting at **7 pm, Wednesday, March 10**, at 17269 Silver Gum Way, in the Rancho Bernardo area (TG 1169-D2). North County members in particular are encouraged to attend, as we will be discussing the upcoming events in the area (see below) and possible chapter meetings in the Escondido area. Other topics include school gardens, the North Park community garden, and more. Just show up, or call me for more information. Contact Arne Johanson at (858) 759-4769 for directions and gate access information.

Dave Flietner, Gardening Chair

SIKES ADOBE GARDEN PARTY

Sunday, March 14, 10 a.m. The North County gardening team began to rehabilitate the neglected native plant garden at the historic Sikes Adobe on January 23. Four volunteers showed up for the kick-off event to remove excess undergrowth and overgrown plants from about a third of the garden.

The garden was originally established by the Lake Hodges Plant Club. We are working to restore the garden so it will serve as an attractive demonstration garden for the hundreds of trail users who walk by the site each month.

You're welcome to just show up: exit I-15 at Via Rancho Parkway, turn right on Sunset Drive and park at to end. Or contact **Don Miller** (858) 755-5143 for more information. Bring water and gloves (and pruners if you have them).

SD BOTANICAL GARDEN

Garden-Worthy Natives Class: Thursdays, March 4, 11, & 18, 7:00 – 9:00 pm and Saturday, March 13, 9:00 am – 12:00. Nathan Smith, former curator of the California native plant area at the UC Berkeley Botanical Garden, will teach which native plants do well in the garden,

and how to best care for them, with the final session dedicated to solutions for your garden. Class includes a Saturday session in the Garden. Special emphasis will be placed on natives for difficult situations including shade, poor soil, and hot, dry conditions. Cost: \$80 for SDBG members; \$100 for non-members. Pre-registration required.

Work Party: Saturday, March 27, 9:30 – noon. CNPS members will help maintain and beautify the California native plant section of the San Diego Botanic Garden in Encinitas. Meet in Gardenscapes, in the far northeast area of the Garden, 230 Quail Gardens Drive, Encinitas. Just let the admissions person at the kiosk know that you are a volunteer.

Bring tools, gloves, water, sunscreen etc. Soft drinks, water and ice will be provided. Bring a finger-food snack to share if you'd like. First-time volunteers will need to complete a short application form. For more information contact Sharon Clay Rose (858-350-0474) or sharoncr@roadrunner.com.

CONTINUING WORK PARTIES

Old Town State Park Native Garden:

Saturday, March 13, 1:00 to 3:00 p.m.: Rain cancels. The native plants will benefit from our weeding unwanted exotics, so please bring your favorite weeding tools, hand pruners, loppers and gloves. A drinking fountain is on site. The garden is located at the western edge of Old Town State Park, across from the trolley station at Taylor and Congress Streets. Park at the west end of the free State Park parking lot, between the garden and Calhoun Street.

Point Loma Native Plant Garden:

March 6 and 21, 9:00 – 11:00 a.m. Rain cancels. Bring water. All tools and supplies are provided. No facilities are on site. Contact Richard Dhu at Richard@sandiegoriver.org.

MEET A MEMBER

Pat Fishtein, Publicity Committee Chair

Originally from New Jersey, Pat has been in San Diego since 2005 and “hasn’t had a good tomato since!” A spade of energy, she is a mother, a



cook, a seamstress, a theater patron, a former lingerie designer, and a kayaker. An avid birder, Pat learned to recognize trees and flowers as she took photos and built a bird

life list of over 500 species. Her love of flora extended to her won home where “when deciding to hire a nanny or a gardener, the gardener always won.”

Coming from such a green state, she discovered that native species were crucial to a successful San Diego garden and joined CNPS to learn how to garden in this new climate. Her home garden has lost its sod and is now filled with succulents and Matilija poppies. Finding beauty in all of nature, Pat’s favorite San Diego nature walk is the riparian marshes of Los Peñasquitos Canyon for the nostalgic sense they give her of home.

Today, not only is Pat involved with CNPS, she volunteers in children’s programs with San Diego Canyonlands and Ocean Discovery Institute. CNPS is pleased to have her chair the Publicity Committee. Pat is excited about the potential to get the word out about the great things the chapter is doing. Anyone with a computer and facility with the English language can help develop contacts, notify people and places that could publish CNPS activity notices, or compile a publicity database.—Juliana Morse

SPRING NATIVE PLANT SALE TREE OF LIFE NURSERY MARCH 13, 9 a.m. - 4 p.m.

Our spring plant sale will be held on March 13, at the Tree of Life Nursery, 33201 Ortega Highway, 7 miles east of San Juan Capistrano. The nursery is the southern California pioneer in growing California native plants, and a long-time supporter of our chapter.

Connie Beck will give a presentation on designing a garden to attract birds and butterflies at 10 am.

Some proceeds from the sale will be donated to the San Diego Chapter of CNPS. Chapter members will be working at the sale to provide assistance and information. If you are interested in volunteering for this sale please contact **Deb Evans**, debevans@treeoflifenuresry.com or (949) 728-0685.

CALENDAR

- 3/3:** CNPS-SD Board Meeting (pg 2)
- 3/6:** Switzer Cyn Plant Walk (pg 3)
- 3/6:** Invasive Weed Removal (pg 4)
- 3/6:** Point Loma Garden Party (pg 6)
- 3/10:** Gardening committee (pg 6)
- 3/13: Spring Plant Sale (pg 7)**
- 3/13:** Rueda Cyn Plant Walk (pg 3)
- 3/13:** Old Town SP Garden Party (pg 6)
- 3/14:** Indian Gorge Field Trip (pg 3)
- 3/14:** Sikes Adobe Garden Party (pg 6)
- 3/16: Chapter Meeting (pg 1)**
- 3/ 20:** Buchanan Cyn Plant Walk (pg 3)
- 3/ 21:** San Elijo Field Trip (pg 3)
- 3/ 21:** Point Loma Garden Party (pg 7)
- 3/ 27:** San Miguel Mtn Veg Survey (pg 5)
- 3/ 27:** Penasquitos Cyn Plant Walk (pg 3)
- 3/27:** SD Botanical Gardening (p 6)
- 3/ 31: North Coastal Meeting (p 4)**

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

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

Name(s): _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____ e-mail: _____

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

CALIFORNIA NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY

SAN DIEGO CHAPTER
C/o San Diego Natural History Museum
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CALIFORNIA NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY – SAN DIEGO

www.cnpssd.org

info@cnpssd.org

BOARD OFFICERS

PRESIDENT: Dave Flietner.....(858) 268-3789
president@cnpssd.org

VICE PRESIDENT: Kay Stewart.....(619) 234-2668
vicepresident@cnpssd.org

SECRETARY: Tom Beltransecretary@cnpssd.org

TREASURER: Sandra Feock.....(760) 735-8845
treasurer@cnpssd.org

BOARD MEMBERS

BOOK & POSTER SALES: Cindy Burrascano.....(858) 578-8040
booksales@cnpssd.org

CONSERVATION: Carrie Schneider..... (858) 352-4413
conservation@cnpssd.org

FIELD TRIPS: Kay Stewart.....(619)234-2668
fieldtrips@cnpssd.org

RARE PLANT SURVEY: Frank Landis.....(310)883-8569
franklandis03@yahoo.com

PLANT SALE: Carolyn Martus.....plantsale@cnpssd.org

PROGRAMS: Hank Kraus.....(760) 751-1929
programs@cnpssd.org

Wes Hudson.....(619) 846-0585
weshudson@cox.net

CHAPTER COUNCIL DELEGATE

MartyFoltyn.....(858) 259-0283
chaptercouncil@cnpssd.org

APPOINTED COMMITTEE CHAIRPERSONS

HOSPITALITY: Betsy Cory(619) 656-8669
hospitality@cnpssd.org

INVASIVE PLANTS: Arne Johanson.....(858) 759-4769
invasiveplants@cnpssd.org

MEMBERSHIP: Adrienne Heinzelman..... (858) 761-7007
membership@cnpssd.org

NATIVE GARDENING: Dave Flietner.....gardening@cnpssd.org

NEWSLETTER: Bobbie Stephenson.....(619) 263-0055
newsletter@cnpssd.org

PLANT PROPAGATION:Connie Beck..... (619) 749- 4059
propagation@cnpssd.org

PUBLICITY: Pat Fishtein(619) 280-8234
publicity@cnpssd.org

PUBLIC OUTREACH: Dave Varner(619) 630-4591
outreach@cnpssd.org

SEED COLLECTION: Jason Sundberg..... (906) 251- 0392
seeds@cnpssd.org

VEGETATION: Anna Bennett..... (559) 443-9233
vegetation@cnpssd.org

WEBSITE: Mary Alice Kessler.....webmaster@cnpssd.org

RARE PLANT BOTANIST

Fred Roberts..... (760) 439-6244
rarebotanist@cnpssd.org