General Meeting

Rachel Zierdt – A Funghi Teaser

November 19, 2013 7:30 pm

Abstract: The September meeting will feature Rachel Zierdt of the Sonoma Mycological Society. Zierdt will be describing what makes mushrooms so special. She will cover what makes up the environment where certain mushrooms are found and what equipment is needed to harvest them. Zierdt’s favorite edible mushrooms will be divulged along with ways to cook and prepare them as savory delights.

From Armchair to the Woods: Rachel retired from teaching elementary school after 38 years and moved to Sonoma County from the South Bay with her husband six years ago. Her interest in mushrooms came about quite accidentally. While taking a Sebastopol Garden walking tour she toured a sustainable garden where they were growing edible plants among ornamental flowers. Behind the plants was a wall of straw inoculated by oyster mushroom spores. Mushrooms sprouting on this wall piqued her interest in how to grow mushrooms and led her to Sonoma County Mycological Association (SOMA). Rachel now sits on the SOMA board, is the chief scheduler for SOMA Wild Mushroom Camp in January where experts come and lecture on mycology, and acts as Chairperson of SOMA’s Scholarship Committee awarding about $7500 a year in scholarships to worthy young scientists.

Combining her love of hiking, hunting for mushrooms has become a fall and winter recreation. Come and learn about the variety of mushrooms there are in Sonoma County, where to find them, and how to use them in cooking.

You see the plants blooming but the names are unclear? No need to fret, Plant I.D. Hour is here! Arrive at 6:45 pm before the General Meeting, and bring specimens of plants you want to identify. At Plant I.D. Hour you can see plants up close and key them to species, while getting to know fellow Milo Baker Chapter members. Plants that you key out or learn with friends are easily remembered! Bring in some mystery plants to challenge us.

Join us for Dinner before the Meeting:
We’ll gather for dinner at 6 pm at Kirin Restaurant, 2700 Yulupa Ave. We hope our speaker will join us, but we always have an enjoyable group of fellow members and a delicious Northern Chinese meal in any case. Please contact Liz Parsons at 833-2063 or lizpar8993@aol.com by November 18th, if you plan to attend.

General Meetings are held on the 3rd Tuesday of the month at Luther Burbank Art & Garden Center, 2050 Yulupa Ave, Santa Rosa. Milo Baker Chapter Board meetings start at 7 pm, 2nd Tuesday nine months of the year, Environmental Center, 55 Ridgeway Ave, Ste A, Santa Rosa. The next Board meeting is November 12th. Anyone interested in the work of the chapter is welcome to attend!
Chapter News

Betty Guggolz, CNPS Fellow, Milo Baker Founder, Turns 90!

In 1972 Betty Lovell organized a new chapter of the California Native Plant Society. The founding members agreed to name the new Chapter after Milo Baker, who taught botany at the Santa Rosa Junior College for many years and was one of the first to do a systematic study of the north coast flora. As the founding member, the Chapter is very grateful to her. Betty married Jack Guggolz in 1984 and became Betty Guggolz. Jack and Betty were both very active in the field and in working to protect the rare plants of Sonoma County. While working on the Willits by-pass in Mendocino County near Hopland, they found a new plant -- *Harmonia guggolziorum* - Guggolz’s Harmonia. It is member of the Asteraceae and is a tarweed. *Harmonia* was segregated from the genus *Madia* in the new Jepson. They each submitted voucher specimens of the plant and are both honored in the name--iorum means that both of them found the plant. Betty celebrated her 90th birthday recently and the Chapter presented a copy of the new Jepson Manual of Vascular Plants of California to her. The book was signed by many at the state Chapter Council meeting, by local CNPS friends and Milo Baker Chapter friends. Through this we hope to send greetings to Betty and honor her many years of service to California’s native plants. Yes, *Harmonia guggolziorum* is listed in the new Jepson! HAPPY BIRTHDAY BETTY!

Jared Huffman, Recipient of Complimentary CNPS Membership

On September 16, Liz Parsons and Deborah Dobish met with Congressman Jared Huffman, at his office in San Rafael, and presented him with an honorary membership in CNPS. This was an opportunity for a lively, wide ranging, and informative conversation with both the Congressman and his District Director, Jenny Calloway, on a number of topics of concern to the CNPS and its members. He very much appreciated working with CNPS while in the California Assembly, ---he liked our solid, factual approach--- and related how much he enjoyed participating in hikes and other events with his local Marin Chapter. It is important to note that the district the Congressman represents, the 2nd Congressional District, covers an area that Milo Baker members know and love--- the coast, from the Golden Gate Bridge to the Oregon border. The district is very large, and thus contains many areas of botanical interest, with much Federal land. It includes the counties of Marin, Mendocino, Humboldt, Trinity and Del Norte and parts of our own Sonoma County. His website is Huffman.house.gov.

An issue of particular concern for Congressman lately is the proliferation of
illegal marijuana grows in the district and the habitat degradation that results. As this was a topic at the latest CNPS Chapter Council meeting, he and Liz, our representative to the Chapter Council, were able to share information and ideas. The Congressman has introduced the PLANT Act (HR-2735), the Protecting Lands Against Narcotics Trafficking Act of 2013. Earlier this year the House passed the first legislation that he introduced ---the California Coastal Monument Expansion Act of 2013 (HR 1411).

The Congressman sits on two committees, Budget, where he has been appointed to the Conference Committee, and Natural Resources, where he is on the Subcommittee on Energy and Resources; the Subcommittee on Public Lands and Environmental Regulation; and the Subcommittee on Water and Power. Before he was elected to Congress, he served six years in the California Assembly, authoring over 60 pieces of successful legislation and earning a reputation as an advocate for environmental causes.

Open Board Positions
Interested in Native Plants? Want to get involved. We have a couple open positions on the board. Come to the next board meeting on November 12, 7pm at the Environmental Center of Sonoma County.

Gardening with Natives

Plant a SPICEBUSH
A wonderfully aptly named shrub, Calycanthus occidentalis, or Spicebush, is in the Sweet-Shrub family, and when a leaf is crushed, releases an indescribable fragrance. Some folks liken it to a type of spice, but I know of no spice like it. Spicebush should be happy in sun or shade; however, I see them in the woods behind my house in Forestville and always in dappled shade, not in full sun. Forestville gets quite hot; perhaps in a cooler clime, such as Sebastopol, this deciduous shrub would be fine with more sun. I planted mine at the drip line of a big old native oak (Quercus kelloggii). It may be too shady to bloom well; I will find out!

Spicebush is okay with just about any soil and it likes occasional water throughout the summer. I water mine probably once a month, letting the hose drip under it for a half hour. I like spraying off the leaves, as they are so shiny and bright green.

I have planted Western bleeding heart (Dicentra formosa) and false Solomon’s Seal (Smilacina racemosa) underneath the bush and am clipping off some of the low-growing branches to allow light to reach the perennials. The bleeding hearts are spreading throughout the garden area, which is bounded by paths and they appreciate the water that drips from the leaves of the shrubs.

Spicebush flowers, which are a pretty rusty-maroon color, look like little two-inch water lilies. They appear in the spring and hang on for quite awhile, before they become unusual, woody-cupped seedpods, which last all winter. Spicebush is rather fast growing and may get eight to ten feet tall and quite lush around. When happy, it could become a thicket, so give it plenty of room to spread out if that’s what you want. Otherwise, they may be pruned to shape into hedges or trees, or just to keep it in bounds. It should have no insect problems. I often clip a leaf as I walk by, crush it, breathe deeply, and then stash it in my pocket for the day, to be removed periodically and smelled again!

Judy Brinkerhoff - joodbrink@comcast.net
Invasives Corner

Peter Warner, our local botanist extraordinaire, wrote this in response to a query by a member who wanted to know more about the broom and jubuta grass problem on Kortum Trail.

We know that pulling French broom, *Genista monspessulana*, by the roots kills the plants pulled, however, it's the long-lived seed bank that foils casual human attempts at long-term eradication, even of local patches. Some effort is better than none, I suppose, but once a population starts flowering again, it's back to square one in terms of exhausting the seed bank. Any other local populations will continually be a source of re-infestation, as well. I've also noticed that an intensive one-time removal in one location can have dramatic, somewhat lasting effect, while the same type of intensive work in another spot just seems to make the growth get more dense the next generation of plants.

As for jubata grass, *Cortaderia jubata*, I don't really have much encouraging news. The section of Kortum Trail you are referring to is a location that State Parks has been diligent about treating with herbicide for several years (about 10) -- and even then, there are many plants each year that seem to emerge from treated areas. Brendan O'Neil also told me just yesterday that State Parks will not be able to continue to carry on this type of effort at the scale at which has happened in recent years. Cutting/breaking flowering heads reduces reproduction for one year, proportional to the number of heads in the local population. Although the seed germination rate for jubata is supposed very low, each flowering head produces thousands of seeds, and some plants likely produce millions of seeds. The seeds are wind-dispersed, primarily, so even at a low germination rate, a few fertile seeds cast into the wind can start new patches or replenish removed patches in short order.

Local reduction in populations can be achieved -- Jenner Headlands is in the midst of such a campaign now -- but some plants will be left behind, and wind-sourced seeds from afar will continue to establish new plants. Generally, jubata infests areas of open, disturbed soil, gravel, rock, stream beds, so fortunately, most "intact" habitats are not severely infested. Nevertheless, this plant will not be eradicated, and even local control demands a perpetual, diligent commitment. On top of all this, many populations are established in places without any means of safe access, and these continue to cast seeds to the wind for places near and far.

Both plants are part of our flora now and will be indefinitely without dramatic changes in climate, or long-term alterations in population genetics and inter-specific competitive dynamics, such as disease, herbivory, shifts in resource use or extraction capabilities (such as forests shading out jubata grass), and other factors in the long-term survival of populations. That's how life works, and we humans have initiated so many such irretrievable ecological trajectories that it's truly mind-boggling. I can't look into the future, but our ecological and evolutionary impacts will likely long out-live us as a species.

Peter Warner
Switch to an electronic newsletter
The Milo Baker Chapter is pleased to offer its members the option of going to an electronic version of the newsletter. This saves the chapter money on printing and shipping costs as well as reduces the carbon footprint from producing paper and driving via post to your home address. We do not share your email address with anyone. If you are interested in receiving an electronic newsletter please send an email to cnpsmbmembership@gmail.com.

Plant Sale News

42nd Annual Plant Sale: A Big Success
On October 12th, we held our 42nd annual plant sale. The plant sale raises money for the chapter’s expenditures each year including management of four preserves, website support, newsletter printing and mailing, native plant scholarships, facility rentals, speaker stipends, conservation, plant science and much more.

Plant sale proceeds dropped during the recession but we are now on the mend. This was the second year in a row that our revenues increased; we took in 15% more than last year and 23% more than 2011.

Our plant sale would not be so successful without the extraordinary efforts of Vice President Liz Parsons, and Kathi Dowdakin. A big thanks to all of the volunteers that raised beautiful plants for the past year, that helped set up the plant sale, did bookkeeping, cashiered, assisted patrons at the sale and much more. During the sale, we were delighted by a visit from Dan Glusencamp, Executive Director of the California Native Plant Society.

Read below for details about the sale!

Leia Giambastiani

The 42nd annual plant sale is history. I have been involved with the sale since 1980. In that time the members of the Milo Baker Chapter have learned so much. As the quality of the plants has improved, so have the logistics of the sale. This year the quality of our plants was outstanding and everyone worked extremely well together—there were no glitches. The same people come back to help with the sale year after year so that there is a great deal of camaraderie. It all begins with Judy Hartwig calling the volunteers. She does such a good job making sure that we have enough cashiers (12), everyone has a name tag and that all of the signs are set up and then taken down at the end.

This year Kathi Dowdakin was a big help with all aspects of the sale. She was the keeper of the plant lists and now after the sale she has given us the following calculations...we had 1629 plants at the sale. Most of them were produced at our 4 workshops. At the end of the sale there were 215 unsold plants. The Laguna Foundation, the Thomas Page Academy in Cotati, and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife, and the School Garden Network all received plants for their habitat gardens.

The plants that we sold were uniformly good looking. Our backyard growers—Deb Dobish, Penny Dalton, Cindy Tancreto, Patty Mohar, Becky Montgomery, Alan Brubaker, Pat Sesser, Kathi Dowdakin, Mary Aldrich, Wendy Born and Steve Long—did a spectacular job. The 625 plants that were potted up and grown at Casa Grande in August were spectacular. The blooming *Mimulus*, *Zauschneria*, and *Salvia* sold very well. Thanks to teacher and nursery manager, John Shribbs, for giving us the space for our plants.

The plants that we pot up at the May and August workshops are provided by Shooting Star Propagation Nursery in Graton. Dan Jennison and Nancy Hargeaves are our long
time benefactors and our plant sale depends on them for our low expenses. California Flora Nursery (Phil Van Soelen and Sherrie Althouse) and Mostly Natives Nursery (Walter Earle and Margaret Graham) are also very generous with their donations to the sale. Publicity is essential to the success of the sale. Our members are important customers, however, getting the word out to the general public is equally important. Wendy Born is doing publicity for the chapter and we thank her for her efforts.

New t-shirts are always a welcome addition to the sale. This year we had a beautiful new shirt with a line drawing of 7 favorite wildflowers by Pam Glasscock. We totally sold out the black v-neck style. We were so lucky to have an artist of Pam’s stature design a shirt for us as a generous donation. We cannot thank her enough for her contribution. Books and posters sold well. Thanks to Leah Davis, Cindy Tancreto and her granddaughter, Emma. Our artist Louisa Carter sold her beautiful cards illustrated with wildflowers.

Rob Fox contributes so much to our success. I especially want to thank him for the signs that he makes. Every year it seems that we need more signs and Rob is ever ready with great ideas. This year we refreshed some of the signs and we added many signs telling our customers that we could now accept credit cards! Accepting credit cards was accomplished thanks to the state CNPS office. They arranged a system that all of the Chapters can use. We have to pay a small percentage to the company. Our treasurer, Jim Piercy, had a little bit of extra work but it was worth it. I’m sure that the ability the charge plants increased our sales.

Pat Sesser was at the membership table and we got 12 new members and that is huge! Our membership is now almost 400. Thank you, Pat. John Herrick and Wendy Smit did a great job at refreshments. Rachel Spaeth (our Milo Baker grant recipient and graduate student at SSU) brought a display of pollinator insects. President, Leia Giambastiani, was a great help representing the Chapter and sharing her knowledge.

We are so lucky to have Nancy Bauer and Louise Hallberg at the habitat table. They bring great credibility to our sale--both ladies have a long history of habitat gardening. Nancy’s new book, The California Wildlife Habitat Garden is published by UC Press, a Phyllis M. Faber Book, and it is a truly beautiful book with a northern California slant. It has lots of good information and fabulous photos.

As I write this and remember the sale, so many people worked so hard to make it a success. I am sorry that I am not able to thank you all individually, but everyone contributed to making the Milo Baker Chapter’s main fundraiser a success.

Our follow-up program on the advantages of fall planting presented by Curtis Short was an inspiration and just what I needed to get me out planting all of the plants that I bought at the sale.

Book Review


Here is a wonderful read about our own local (Santa Rosa, CA) hero, Luther Burbank. This part biography, part history of plant breeding tale is told by a savvy teacher and doctor of English literature.

What fun to discover what I was planting in my garden or placing on my table was due to his efforts. The Shasta daisy I just recently placed in my garden, the white agapanthus I’m now dividing and the Santa Rosa Plums I picked for 15 years from a tree now gone. The book starts with an annual list of his main plant breeding accomplishments. It includes pictures of his famous catalogs, advertisements of his varieties and family photos. From there a life well lived unfolds as an example of the late 19th century success story -the classic American dream including entrepreneurship, science,
love, marriages and fame. Luther was a practical man, close with his mother and sister. He was endowed with a sharp mind and a great love of nature. Through his own marketing ability he achieved world fame. With this fame he took advantage of meeting the world’s best and accomplished minds in many different areas of science and the arts. We learn of his philosophy and success in breeding “richer grains, better fruits and fairer flowers”. The history of the breeding of plants is covered from its beginning commercial use to the battle that rages today for the American farmer to use their own seed acquired from their own crop. Luther stands in the middle of it all.

An engrossing journey with notes and a selected bibliography leading you to more - a great gift for the plant person in your life.

L. Davis

Preserves Update

Cunningham Marsh Set for the Season

On October 6, 2013, 9 volunteers enjoyed a pleasant day with light cloud cover. The exclosures housing the endangered Pitkin Lily were weeded and covered with pine shavings, and trails were opened. In the field, all previous milk cartons protecting the Valley Oak (Quercus lobata hybrid?) were checked for viability, hardware was removed as needed and appropriate caging was placed around for the largest growers. Twenty-five new milk cartons with 2 acorns each were planted, now extending the large field towards the south.

What a great bunch to work with. Many thanks go to Betty Young, Rob Fox, Kathi Dowdakin, Wendy Krupnick, Christina and Michael Ogden, M.L. Carle with granddaughter May. 

Marcia Johnson, Cunningham Marsh

Events

Rincon Ridge Park General Maintenance Work Parties

Sunday November 3rd 10:00 am to 12:00 pm
Monday November 4th 10:00 am to 12:00 pm

The Rincon Ridge Park Sensitive Plant Area is an adopted greenspace with the City of Santa Rosa, established in 2002 for conservation purposes. The Rincon Ridge Ceanothus (Ceanothus confusus) and the Rincon Manzanita (Arctostaphylos stanfordiana ssp. decumbens) grow together in a low-growing chaparral and associate with many beautiful wildflowers on Rincon Ridge’s red rhyolite soil in northeast Santa Rosa. The preserve is a showcase for these rare plants. Coyote Brush grows fast among these rare plants of manzanita and ceanothus in this small preserve. With volunteer help we have been able to control the growth of Coyote Brush and also Douglas fir to keep the existing plants healthy.

Please bring loppers, gloves, pruners, saws and rakes. Wear long sleeves and pants.

The park is located off of Fountainaigrove Parkway. At the stoplight go east on Rincon Ridge Drive then right on Park Gardens Dr. and park. Contact: patriciasesser@comcast.net or 528-9197 Cell 695-4063 Rain Cancels

A plant list and other information about the preserve can be found on our website at milobaker.cnps.org

Pat Sesser, Preserve Manager

Herbarium Workshop

Saturday, November 9, 10 am to 2:30 pm
Darwin Hall, Sonoma State University, Rohnert Park

Join Dr. Richard Whitkus, Professor of Biology and curator of the North Coast of California Herbarium, and Peter Warner, botanist, for a few hours of fun and education about local biodiversity. Learn how to turn flattened plants into works of art, boost your understanding of California ecology and biogeography, and find your niche alongside the likes of Milo Baker and John Thomas Howell. They like having us around!

Meet in Darwin Hall 1st floor lobby; bring snacks and lunch. RSVP to Peter Warner at phytopagan@sonic.net or 666-9071.
Lilium pardalinum ssp. pitkinense
Pitkin lily

Newsletter & Web Site Info:
Send newsletter submissions to:
Editor, cnpsmbnewsletter@yahoo.com
Deadline for inclusion in the December Newsletter is November 15.
The chapter web site milobaker.cnps.org contains a wealth of information plus current and archived newsletters.
For newsletter mailing/membership issues, contact: Suzanne Harmon at cnpsmbmembership@gmail.com

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SRJC Representative: Lea Davis, 538-1499
SSU Rep.: Kerry Wininger, 888-5616, kerrywininger@gmail.com
Web Site: Sarah Gordon, 833-1243, sarahpgordon@gmail.com
Vine Hill Preserve: Sarah Gordon, 833-1243, sarahpgordon@gmail.com

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Chapter affiliation:
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Membership category:
☐ Student or Limited Income ........... $25
☐ Individual ................................ $45
☐ Family, Group or Library ............. $75
☐ Plant Lover ................................ $100
☐ Patron ................................... $300
☐ Benefactor ................................. $600
☐ Mariposa Lily .............................. $1500
☐ New Member  ☐ Renewal

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