February General Meeting: Unusual Treasures of our Local Flora
Tuesday, February 20th, 7:30pm

After 17 years of artistry in photographing California wildflowers, in 2006 Reny Parker sought out and photographed 200 additional species of flowering plants in our region that were new to her. She will present a special slide show of these more unusual and difficult to find beauties. Past president of our chapter, Reny has been away in Iowa for the past 6 months and returns to show us what she has been preparing for her new book. She will share an advanced printing of her photographic guide, *Wildflowers of Northern California’s Wine Country & North Coast Ranges*, containing 358 species of wildflowers with 542 of her fabulous color photos, due out in March. For more information, call Betsy Livingstone, 887-8873 or email her at betsl@sonic.net.

Join us for Dinner before the meeting! Let’s gather with our speaker at the Kirin Restaurant before the February General Meeting. Our own wildflower photographer/presenter, Reny Parker, will join our convivial group for a good Northern Chinese dinner. We meet at 6 pm. Please call or e-mail Lynn Colborn at 829-9128 or lcolborn@earthlink.net by the day before the meeting.

Come to Plant I.D. Hour in winter and see the early blooms! Many evergreen shrubs and trees are blooming, plus Milk Maids and ferns are out, and seedlings everywhere. Arrive at 6:30, an hour before the February 20th General Meeting, and bring specimens of plants you want to identify. At Plant ID Hour we feature plants of interest from the local area, see them through a dissecting microscope, and discover the differences between our many native species. I bring field guides and hefty taxonomic publications! I really enjoy helping you work through the keys in *The Jepson Manual* and *A Sonoma County Flora* or just answering questions. Keying can be fun, even if you get stuck! The best-learned plants are those learned with friends. You can bring your dinner if you want to, a hand lens and a copy of *Jepson* or *Sonoma Co. Flora* if you have them. A copy of each will be available. I also have L.H. Bailey’s *Manual of Cultivated plants* (my first manual used to key plants) for your latest garden mystery or escape.

Chapter Representative Needed for Water Coalition

At its October 2006 meeting, the MB Board of Directors voted to join the Sonoma County Water Coalition (SCWC) as a supporting member. The Board agreed that our chapter should be represented in this 33-member coalition, especially given the increasing importance of water issues in the county, and the critical connection between water and the health of native plants and plant communities.

SCWC provides a mechanism for sharing information, developing positions on issues, establishing strategies, and taking action to gain acceptance of approved positions. As a supporting member of SCWC, we are seeking a motivated individual (or two individuals working as a team) to serve as our chapter’s representative(s) to the Coalition. Your job would be to keep the MB Board apprised of decisions taken by SCWC, solicit Board input when appropriate, and attend meetings when possible. For more information or to volunteer, please contact Bob at 938-8868; bob_cnpmsmb@comcast.net.

February 2007

Milo Baker Chapter
California Native Plant Society

**Calendar**

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<td>Chapter Board Meeting, Environmental Center**</td>
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<td>Plant Sale Workshop, Kenwood</td>
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<td>2/20</td>
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<td>3/20</td>
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<td>4/28</td>
<td>Bodega Marine Reserve Coastal Prairie Walk with Peter Connors, Bodega Bay</td>
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<td>Fairfield Osborn Preserve Wildflower Walk with Peggy Rockwood, Penngrove</td>
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*General meetings are held on the 3rd Tuesday of each month at Luther Burbank Art & Garden Center, 2050 Yulupa Avenue, Santa Rosa

**Milo Baker Chapter Board meetings 7:00pm, 2nd Tuesday nine months of the year, Environmental Center, 55 Ridgeway Avenue, Suite A, Santa Rosa. Next meeting is February 13th. Anyone interested in the work of the chapter is welcome to attend!**
President's Corner

Flora: The winter has been cold and rather dry so far, and the native plants are adjusting again, as they did with last year’s rain and cold weather. The Manzanita Workshop participants found flowers but not much fruit, yet the scientific knowledge was abundant and the weekend a great success, featuring Tom Parker and Mike Vasey and organized by John Herrick. We hope it is just the first of many scientific workshops to come; thanks John!

Board of Directors: We welcome Pat Sesser as Secretary, and Katy Redmon as Legislative chair, to the Milo Baker Board. We are still actively seeking Conservation Coordinators and a Poster and T-shirt sales Chair. Training is available. Please contact Lynn or Liz if you can help out in any way.

The year ahead: The Milo Baker Chapter needs advocacy and continuity with the important project review and general conservation work, as outlined last fall. John Herrick can provide you with more information. The state Vegetation program plans on coming back to Sonoma County for more surveys in the spring. A vegetation surveying coordinator is sought to help schedule outings. A number of chapter members are already trained to do Rapid Assessments and now we have the CNPS staff in the field with us! Plans in spring are to continue the vegetation surveys in the Southern Mayacamas and around Rincon Ridge. Field trips and programs offer a fun way to participate in CNPS. Check the calendar and website, www.cnpsmb.org for more details about upcoming speakers and trips, or the newly updated statewide site www.cnps.org for all you need to know about CNPS activities and policies.

Education news: A revised Merit Scholarship will soon be available to SRJC or SSU students; stay tuned for details. Thanks to Joan Schwan and Sarah Gordon for putting together the proposal. Applications will be reviewed by committee and awards given each semester.

Your role: CNPS members are unique because they value and understand native flora issues. Your donations, volunteer hours, ability to educate your friends and neighbors, and letters of advocacy are all important to our mission. Thank you for supporting CNPS, and cheers to an exciting new year!

- Lynn Houser

New Legacy and Donor Circles created.

Brochures are available for CNPS Planned Giving.

Please consider naming CNPS in your will or estate plan.

CNPS has a new Planned Giving Program that can help you plan a Legacy gift that will benefit California’s native flora for future generations.

You can contact Amanda Jorgenson, Executive Director, at the CNPS office for more information, at (916)-447-2677. Legacy Circle members receive special acknowledgements and invitations to an annual dinner and special field trip. These benefits are also available to our new Donor Circle, made up of members who have donated $25,000 or more to CNPS. Your gift today can help CNPS be a strong advocate for science and conservation in the years to come.

- Lynn Houser

Chapter Field Trips

**Armstrong Woods/Austin Creek Walk, Guerneville**

**Saturday, February 24, 9-12**

We’ll take a 3-4 mile loop hike along part of the East Ridge Trail through grasslands and oak woodlands, stopping by Bullfrog Pond and several stunning vistas. We’ll see what’s starting to come up in these different ecosystems. Bring your rain gear because this one goes rain or shine! There will be some strenuous sections on this hike. We’ll meet at the parking lot at the front of Armstrong Woods, before you pass through the kiosk, and carpool up to the trailhead from there. There may be a $6 parking fee per car that drives up, but more details on that next month. Bring sturdy shoes, water, and snacks or lunch. Contact Beth Robinson.

**Jacob’s Ranch Walk**

**Saturday, March, date TBA**

Sorry, folks. We had a last minute date change on this one at submission time. I’m hoping for it to be an edible plant walk with Autumn Summers with some time spent drafting a plant list of the property for the District. It will most likely be mid/late March. If you’re interested in this walk, please contact me at the end of Feb/beginning of March for an update. It should be a fantastic walk, so don’t let the lack of information now discourage you! Contact Beth Robinson.

**Bodega Marine Reserve, Coastal Prairie with Peter Connors, Bodega Bay**

**Saturday, April 28, 9-12**

We’ll join botanist Peter Connors for a tour of the Marine Reserve’s gorgeous coastal prairie habitat, hopefully in full bloom. This should be a real treat!

**Fairfield Osborn Preserve Wildflower Walk with Peggy Rockwood, Penngrove**

**Saturday, May 5, 9-12**

We’ll join botanist Peggy Rockwood for a tour of FOP on Sonoma Mountain. More details next month.

- Beth Robinson, 490-4950, bethysmail@gmail.com.

Chapter Activities

**Cunningham Marsh Workday, Dec 17, 2006**

Nine volunteers had a wonderful time planting in sunny, warm, dry weather; 48 Black Oaks (grown by Betty Young) and 10 Azaleas (grown by Wendy Born), all propagated from Cunningham acorns & seeds in Cunningham Marsh. Much thanks is given to: Betty Young, M.L. Carle, Pat Chan, Mike & Stephanie Lennox, John & Ruby Herrick & always camera in hand, Gary Hundt. What absolute fun to say we are finally planting in Cunningham!

- Marcia Johnson, Steward, Cunningham Marsh
Invasive Plant Corner

This month’s criminal plant: Pennisetum setaceum or ruppelli - Crimson or Purple fountain grass

Here’s a plant with a tarnished reputation. I see in many nurseries. It is also sold as cultivars: Rubrum, Cupreum and Atrosanguineum.

This member of the Poaceae is listed on the California Invasive Plant Council Invasive Plant Inventory. Cal-IPC describes it as ". . . a coarse perennial grass densely clumped form and erect stems usually one and a half to three feet tall. The flowerheads are prominent, nodding and feathery.....with many, small pink to purple flowers.”

While it does not have an A rating (most invasive) at this time, its performance in Hawaii where it is a major threat to several native plant and animal species and communities because of both its invasive nature, and its contribution to fire danger, this plant may well race to top billing in the future. Add to that its widespread availability in nurseries here in the Bay Area. Introduced as a landscape plant from Africa and the Middle East, it spreads by wind, water, animals and vehicles, and the seed can lie dormant in the soil for six years. It is very adaptable, able to change its growth, reproduction and photosynthetic rates in response to differing environments. It seeds are apomictic - that is it can produce viable seeds from female cells without fertilization - in addition to its fertilized seeds.

Getting rid of it is difficult. Hand removal of small infestations may have to be done several times a year. Eradication with fire is not an option. Because of its heavy contribution to the fuel load, fires are hotter - and its seeds can tolerate higher temperatures than the natives not so adapted. Large infestations may only be economically removable with herbicides. We hope it won’t get to that point in our county, where it is just getting established. Please let us know if you spot this one in open space, or wildlands, and if you see it in a nursery, please let the nursery know about the plant, and let us know, too. And thanks for reading this far! Contact Kate Symonds, kate@gerraserve.net or ML Carle mlml@svn.net (preferably) or 792-1823. Information came from Cal-IPC Database and the Alien Plant Working Group websites.

M.L. Carle  mlml@svn.net

Items of Interest

6th California Oak Symposium

From 9-12 October I was among over 150 attendees from around the state who gathered at the Doubletree Hotel in Rohnert Park for the 6th California Oak Symposium. First held in 1979, these symposia have occurred approximately every 5 years and they bring together a wide variety of people with an interest in oak woodlands and hardwood forests. This year’s symposium was coordinated by Berkeley’s Integrated Hardwood Range Management Program.

The first day was spent on three different day-long field tours in Sonoma County: Woodland Open Spaces; Urban/Vineyard Landscapes; and Sudden Oak Death. I opted for the first of these which took us to the Pepperwood Preserve for some short walks and informative talks led by Stephen Barnhart who recently became the Educational Director of the Preserve. Following lunch we drove to Healdsburg Ridge Open Space Preserve where our hike was led by Kim Batchelder and Jake Newell of the SCAPOSD. Very different in scale and setting, these two preserves demonstrate the challenges of first preserving and then managing oak woodlands in our county.

The following two and a half days were devoted to the presentation of formal conference papers, posters and panel discussions, book-ended by opening and closing plenary sessions. There was also an excellent array of publications available for sale. More than 60 papers and two dozen posters were complemented by 7 panels. Sessions ran concurrently, and I chose to learn about the following topics: “Stewardship and Land Management;” “Range Ecology;” “Land Management;” “Planning;” “Birds;” “Restoration;” and “Policy.” I did so with an eye toward gathering information for our chapter’s Conservation Committee submissions and lobbying for oak woodland preservation as part of the new GP-2020 currently being developed. Had I other interests I could have focused on such things as “Below Ground Processes;” California Indian Interactions with Woodlands;” “Sudden Oak Death;” “Disturbance;” and “Restoration and Regeneration.”

Here are several important items gleaned from my conference participation: (1) Although half of all land in California is publicly owned, 80% of oak woodlands are in private hands; (2) Over especially the past 15 years there has been a rapid decline in oak woodlands state-wide due to development; (3) It makes both environmental and economic sense to combine forces with landowners to manage and preserve healthy oak habitat via such things as voluntary conservation agreements and safe harbor agreements. I gained much other useful information that my fellow committee members and I will endeavor to bring to bear as we work on the GP-2020 here in Sonoma County.

Mac Marshall, CNPS SMB Conservation Committee Member

 Cotati Creek Critters

Help plant 2,000 native trees and shrubs along the Laguna de Santa Rosa in Cotati! Community planting days on second Saturdays, February 10 and March 10, 9 a.m.- noon; and last Sundays, February 25 and March 25, 10 a.m.- 1 p.m. Also Inside/Outside Nature Education series: “Is There Any Such Thing as Wastewater?” presentation by Denise Cadman, on Monday, February 5; “Local Native American Relationships with the Land” with the Federated Indians of Graton Rancheria on Monday, March 5, 7 p.m. at Cotati Community Center. See www.CotatiCreekCritters.info for Planting Day information, directions, and details or contact jenny@creeks.cotati.info or 792-4422.

Jenny Blaker

Russian Riverkeeper Park Volunteer Days

Wednesday , 8:30 am – 11:30 am, join us for all or part. Heavy rain cancels. The park is at 16153 Main St., Guerneville, located on the north bank of the Russian River directly upstream of the pedestrian bridge. See the website at http://www.russianriverkeeper.org or call Don McEmhill at 217-4762, or e-mail him at rkepper@sonic.net.

Victoria Wikle

Laguna Foundation Docent Opportunity

Have you been considering becoming a Laguna Docent? Please come to the docent training orientation evening on Monday, February 12, 7 - 9 pm at the Santa Rosa Library Downtown Branch, at the corner of 3rd and E Streets. Training begins Monday, March 12. Applications, available by mail or on the Laguna Foundation Website www.lagunafoundation.org are due by March 1. For further information, or to request a brochure, please contact Mary Abbott, 527-9277 x2 or mary@lagunafoundation.org.

Maggie Hart
Lilium pardalinum ssp. pitkinense
Pitkin lily

Newsletter & Web Site Info
Send newsletter submissions to:
Heide Keeble: nemorphila@yahoo.com
Deadline for inclusion in the March newsletter is February 15.
For newsletter/membership issues contact:
Wendy Born, spores@excite.com

The chapter web site www.cnpsmb.org contains a wealth of information plus current and archived newsletters.
To receive notification of the online newsletter, sign up at http://groups.yahoo.com/group/cnps