March General Meeting
Tuesday, March 18, 2008
7:30 pm

Hardy Californians: Dr. Lester Rowntree

Lester Rowntree, author of the native plants classic, *Hardy Californians*, was a woman. An adventurous pioneer, a botanist roaming alone in the wilds of California in the 1930’s, she studied and collected plants. As she traveled, she wrote a treasure of a book, a poetic sketch of California and its plant life. We are fortunate to have her grandson, Dr. Lester Rowntree, introduce the new edition of the book and share stories of his remarkable grandmother.

Join us for Dinner before the Meeting!
We'll gather for dinner at 6PM 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 call or e-mail Lynn Colborn at 829-9128 or clc123@comcast.net by Mar. 17th if you plan to attend.

Plant ID Hour is held at 6:30 preceding the presentation. Refreshments will be provided.

CUNNINGHAM MARSH – URGENT!!!

MARCH 9, 2008 10a.m.-1p.m.
Karen Gaffney and her Restoration class from SRJC began the planting of the 3rd hedgerow at Cunningham Marsh, with the coordination of Rob Evans from Circuit Rider. Betty Young did a fantastic introduction, and Joe Honton from the Laguna Foundation joined the planters, for a total of 18 people. Plants planted: 113 Coyote Bush, 65 Coffeeberry, 30 Toyon, 20 Hawthorn, 100 Rushes. We still have very important work to do. On March 9th, we still have remaining plants of Toyon, Coyote Bush, Hawthorn, Coffeeberry and Rushes to get in the ground before the hopefully final rains. Please come help.

Meet at 9:30 at the Sebastopol Safeway and carpool: 1460 Big Cedar Lane, Sebastopol - off of 116 to Lone Pine to Big Cedar Lane.

We'll work until 1-ish. If you would like to work later, bring a lunch. Snacks and drinks provided. Bring gloves, hand trowel, rubber boots. Heavy rain cancels.

Contact: Marcia Johnson, Cunningham Marsh Steward, owlsnest@hughes.net (707) 829-3808
President's Corner

Spring flowers and new growth are bursting out around the county in this year of above-average rainfall. The expected sunshine tease in February that occurs between Lincoln’s and Washington’s birthdays arrived to bring out the early bloomers. Milk Maids, Hound’s tongue, Indian Warrior, Iris, and Woolly Indian Biscuit Root were in the Santa Rosa hills by mid-February. This is especially nice for those of us with birthdays in winter: that short glimpse of spring flowers before more rain!

In February, the Milo Baker Board met to discuss and vote on the business of the chapter (sharing a tasty potluck meal as usual). Thanks to Jim, Pat, Liz, and Sarah for the dinner and birthday cake, too! The Board is getting ready to approve a new budget for the year, and has formed a budget committee to discuss the coming fiscal year before the March 11th board meeting. Here are some of the action items approved in February:

- A grant for Cotati Creek Critters’ Inside Outside Education Series, which involves local residents in native plant restoration and education.
- A CNPS ad in Bay Nature magazine, which split costs between the 7 bay area chapters and state CNPS funds. A similar ad appeared last fall, reaching 6,000-9,000 subscribers.
- Support for the chapter’s SR Plain Conservation Strategy’s meeting’s knowledgeable speakers (which have had great attendance), hosted by John Herrick, each last Tuesday of the month at the Environmental Center.

Funding worthwhile education, outreach, and conservation activities is possible because of your donations to the chapter and plant sales revenues. While the Milo Baker chapter is financially stable and can help fund these important programs, the volunteer effort is what makes things happen. We are fortunate to have a very dedicated and productive board and other volunteers. I hope some more of you will consider a board position or chapter activity to become more involved in.

Several positions are open in the chapter that could benefit from more participation. Conservation is a wide-ranging and continually important function of the chapter. We are so thankful for the enormous effort that our volunteers spend working to protect native plant habitat, and they need to be able to train others to expand and continue conservation work.

General meetings offer an outreach tool that is available to the public 10 months per year. Betsy Livingstone is willing to train a new Program Chair to invite and host our monthly speakers each third Tuesday of the month. This position is vacant in July.

Posters and T-shirts get the CNPS name out in the public’s eye. Opportunities to sell are flexible and vary by season, such as at general meetings, tabling events, and the plant sale. Donations to schools are already chapter policy and could expand with some time spent by a willing volunteer. Outreach of posters to retailers would be great.

Please contact me if you would like more information about what we are doing at the chapter (or state level) of CNPS.

I look forward to seeing you at an outing or meeting soon. Happy Flower Season!

Lynn Houser
Chapter Field Trips

March 15th field trip and restoration at Lake Soulajule
9:30 to 12 weeding, then lunch!
It's time for our annual good deed at the remote and beautiful Lake Soulajule. Milo Baker chapter members have pulled broom at Lake Soulajule with the stewardship of Marin Watershed, under the able and funny Janet Klein for three years now. I never know what we'll see, but there are a humungous number of foetid adder's tongues that bloom there in early spring. Peter Warner constructed a list of over 150 plants growing on the south side of the lake where we will be working. We really need to follow up on the dratted broom so that it won't undo our past years' good work and take out more of the wildflowers. We get a free ride to the end of the lake, and lots of snacks. Bring a lunch, and wear boots. A plastic bag might be good to sit on for lunch. It will be tick season so be prepared.

Beginner's Walk: Austin Creek
State Recreation Area, Guerneville
Saturday, March 22, 10am-2pm
This is a moderately strenuous 3-4 mile hike into the Austin Creek Backcountry. We'll pass through oak woodland, grasslands, chaparral, doug fir and bay forest, as well as a couple of serpentine outcrops. Come see what early season plants this gorgeous land has to offer. Please be aware that this hike has significant elevation gain and loss, so come prepared to climb. Please wear sturdy shoes, long pants, sunscreen and bring plenty of water. We'll have lunch on the trail. Please RSVP for meeting place to Beth Robinson, bethysmail@gmail.com, 490-4951.

Pepperwood Preserve with Steve Barnhart
Saturday, April 5, 9:30am-1:30pm
Join Steve Barnhart, retired SRJC botany instructor and now the Education Director for the Pepperwood Preserve, to examine the wildflowers and associated plant communities at the preserve. After an orientation, we will car pool and hike from several locations on the preserve. Bring a lunch and water and plan on about 4 hours of activity. Group size is limited, RSVP required. Contact: Beth Robinson, bethysmail@gmail.com, 490-4951. See the preserve website for directions and other information- www.pepperwoodpreserve.org.

Beginner's Walk: Plants of the Coastal Bluffs and Dunes with Peter Connors
April 26, 10am-1pm
We will explore the wildflowers and grasses of the coastal prairie at Bodega Head, and, if time permits, will search for some of the characteristic wildflowers of the nearby coastal dunes. Both habitats will be near their peak of flowering, with dozens of species in bloom. We will meet at 10:00am in the State Park on Bodega Head, in the outer coast parking lot. Drive up onto Bodega Head, and take the right fork when the road splits. It may be sunny and calm, but be prepared for wind.

HEADS UP:
May 31: Geysers
June 8: Cedars
bethysmail@gmail.com, 490-4951

Invasives Corner
Juvenile Delinquency and Its Effect upon Native Plants
Have you ever noticed the new teenage prank in your wanderings? Fueled with illicit substances or fertile creative juices, these rascals festoon trees and shrubs with long, complex strands of bright yellow spaghetti. Sometimes a group of several hundred of these youths cook-up so much yellow spaghetti and dump it on plants, that many plants are killed. This
is a relatively new phenomenon and we hope to nip it in the bud. There is a new state requirement that yellow food dye be removed from shelves and purchasers be fingerprinted and background checked. Spaghetti may be next. If you don’t believe that explanation, try this one: Japanese Dodder. A relative of our tamer orange varieties, the “yellow spaghetti”, *Cuscuta japonica*, can grow as much as 6 inches a day, reaching to nearby plants for more nutrients. Unfortunately, it is one of those plants that spread with fragments, so they have to be cut to the roots and the rest buried in landfill. Since the plant is a pest in orchards as well as wild lands, the state is interested in eradicating it ASAP. So, we actually have a phone number for sightings to be reported! The number is 800-491-1899, or you can email me and I’ll send it on. I hope we will have the Callpc flyer on our website, but www.dodder.org will give you the pictures. (Isn’t it something that an invasive plant has its own web page? I don’t even have one!)

M.L. Carle

**Plant I.D. Hour**

**Discover new plants with CNPS as they bloom.** Arrive at 6:30, an hour before the March 18th General Meeting, and bring specimens of plants you want to identify. I’ll bring in some plants in bloom and sort them by plant community. At Plant I.D. Hour, 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 some picture books and new floras to try out, plus L.H. Bailey’s *Manual of Cultivated Plants* for your latest garden mystery or escape. Keying is worthwhile and challenging for all of us! Looking through a dissecting scope at flowers is always a treat, and for some plants, is essential for identification (like popcorn flowers, keyed by seed pattern).

If anyone wants to help label plants, I could use a volunteer and can bring materials and a plant list. Come see local plants from chaparral communities, vernal pools, and oak woodlands. The rainfall has been good this winter and there is a lot to see! You can share what is growing in your area and talk plants with plant people. The best-learned plants are those learned with friends!

Lynn Houser

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**Rincon Ridge Park News**

Next Work Party is Monday, March 17th: 10:00-noon.

Where there are chaparral plants, there are chaparral birds. At the February work party while we were clearing coyote brush, Sandy Martensen spotted a California Thrasher, a 12” long mockingbird relative, singing from the top of a dead Douglas fir tree. Though I don’t know much about birds, the thrasher was clearly looking for his or her mate, with a varied call that caught our attention. It was a surprise for Sandy, who has not seen a CA thrasher in this part of Sonoma County in 26 years. They are chaparral ground feeders who have a very systematic way of foraging in the duff under the shrub canopy, but go up to the tree tops to sing for their mates. We also saw a Spotted Towhee and California Towhee among the blooming manzanitas and buzzing hummingbirds. I am delighted to have some bird expertise at the park, since I don’t know much beyond scrub jays and vultures, but hear a lot of interesting calls while out there. I’ll continue to bring my binoculars! Thanks to Sandy and Gary Hundt for helping out at the work party; we made visible progress.

Coyote Brush maintenance needed: About 3-4 years ago, coyote brush had a banner year, and it is growing fast within the rare shrub stands. It comes up in areas that were purely manzanita and ceanothus when the park was developed. We have managed to control the shading from the Douglas firs, but the coyote brush (*Baccharis pilularis*),

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[Image of Toxostoma redivivum]
which is one of my favorite plants, is in need of downsizing next. We are small-scale land managers here, and cannot risk losing the incredible biodiversity in the sensitive plant area. So we are stepping up our efforts.

Third Monday of each month: 10:00-noon:
Rincon Ridge Park work parties will focus on coyote brush (and Harding grass) removal this year. I will be there each third Monday of the month (confirming in the newsletter) from 10:00-12:00 to clear coyote brush and weeds. After some lopping, sawing, and piling brush, we can botanize a little, eat lunch, or go home. The point is to make a dedicated, routine effort to control the aggressive plants and encourage the rare shrubs. Call or email me for directions to the park, a plant list, or any other questions: 568-3230 or housers@sonic.net

Lynn Houser

Plant Sale News

The schedule for the next two potting workshop has been determined.

Sunday, May 18, 10 AM
Cal Flora Nursery in Fulton

Saturday, August 9, 10 AM
Casa Grande High School, Petaluma

Please enter these important dates in your calendar. We need many members to attend the workshops. At the May workshop we will be potting up rooted cuttings of Manzanitas, Ceanothus, wax myrtle, and other liners that are supplied to us from Shooting Star Nursery. We need members to take these plants home to care for until the plant sale on October 11.

We are so fortunate that John Shribbs, a teacher at Casa Grande High School, has volunteered growing space at a nursery at the high school. At this workshop we will be potting up Zauschneria, salvias, Monkeyflower, and other fast growing plants. There will be directions to the nursery in a future newsletter. We have had two potting workshops. In December, we potted up over 100 Pacific Coast Native Iris ready for the sale.

On February 16, members gathered at my house and we divided wild ginger, bleeding hearts, stream orchid, wood fern, and goldenrod. We are well on our way to a successful plant sale! We still need your help; call me to volunteer: Liz at 833-2063.

Liz Parsons

State CNPS News-
January 17-19, 2009
Sacramento Convention Center & Sheraton Hotel

Goal and Objectives:

The main goal of this conference is to identify and promote science- and policy-based strategies and solutions to improve the conservation of California’s native flora and natural landscapes. The principal objectives of the conference are to:

- Convene a broad spectrum of public policy makers, scientists, land stewards, and conservationists to discuss and disseminate strategies and solutions for native plant conservation in California and western North America.
- Communicate the most recent and effective conservation science, land management, and public policy tools to the widest audience.
- Foment a greater understanding and appreciation of California’s unique flora.
- Promote the flow of information and ideas within and among people of diverse disciplines in the private and public sectors.
- Provide professional training opportunities to enhance and update the skills of the conservation and botanical communities.
- Inspire a new generation of researchers, conservationists, and environmental advocates who will be confronted with unprecedented environmental challenges.
- Publish the results of the conference in bound proceedings.
- Maintain conservation momentum by planning future conferences, symposia, and other educational and professional development opportunities.
If you are interested in helping out with the 2009 conference, please find the contact info at the state website, at http://www.cnps.org/cnps/conservation/conference/2009/contact.php to get in touch with the right committee person.

After the North Bay Chapters host the Chapter Council meeting in September we will have the ‘Superconference’ to look forward to and continue the momentum! Lynn Houser

Events and Items of Interest

"Adopt a Vernal Pool" Volunteer Training
Sat, March 8, 9:30 am-12:30 pm:

The Laguna Foundation's research department has received the necessary funding to start a skilled volunteer-based, long-term vernal pool assessment program to respond to the urgent need for early assessments of the current status of surviving vernal pool endangered plant populations on the Santa Rosa Plain.

Each specially trained botanist volunteer will "adopt" one or more sites for yearly surveys using standardized methods. Our Laguna Ecosystem Database will then serve as the repository of all monitoring data each year, and our short and long-term findings will serve to inform adaptive management decisions aimed at plant recovery.

Contact: If you are a trained botanist or a skilled botany enthusiast: Christine Fontaine: 527-9277 x102 or christine@lagunafoundation.org
www.lagunafoundation.org

Riverkeeper Stewardship Park Volunteer Days

What: Enjoy time at the Park working with other volunteers. Be part of the team. Help restore riverbank habitat. No experience necessary. Everyone and all ages are welcome. Activities include: planting and caring for native plants, weeding, erosion control, restoration education and Park cleanup. Students can receive volunteer credit for participating. Visit the park to see the transformation or be part of the transformation taking place. Light refreshments provided.

When: Every Wednesday. Event cancelled when there is enough rain to need a raincoat.
Time: 8:30 am – 11:30 am, please join us for all or part
Bring: water and gloves - wear sturdy shoes
Where: 16153 Main St., Guerneville, located on the north bank of the Russian River directly upstream of the pedestrian bridge. Access is down a driveway in front of Sonoma Nesting Co. At the bottom of the driveway look for the blue and white sign that says, “Russian Riverkeeper Demonstration Riparian Restoration Project Future Community Park.” Parking is available near the sign.

For more information contact Victoria Wikle at 865-2474 or VictoriaWikle@usa.net. See the website at http://www.russianriverkeeper.org or call Don McEnhill at 217-4762, or e-mail him at rrkeeper@sonic.net.

Community Planting Days with Cotati Creek Critters
Join us in planting native trees, shrubs, grasses and sedges along the Laguna de Santa Rosa in Cotati. Second Saturdays, 9 a.m. - 12 noon (Mar. 8), last Sundays, 10 a.m. - 1 p.m. (Feb. 24, Mar. 30). Meet at Cotati City well lot # 2, Lakewood Ave. Information: www.CotatiCreekCritters.info
Contact: jenny@creeks.cotati.info or 792 4422.
Sonoma Land Trust
Little Black Mountain
French Broom Removal Workday
Friday March 14th, 10:00 – 2:00
Join Sonoma Land Trust staff for a volunteer workday at the Little Black Mountain Nature Preserve near Cazadero in west Sonoma County, Friday March 14th, 10:00 – 2:00. Adventurous volunteers are needed to assist with removal in invasive French broom from a hillside on the property. This volunteer outing involves a short hike to the French broom site. For more information or to RSVP, please call (707) 544-5614 ext. 2 or email: volunteer@sonomalandtrust.org.

Baylands Wildflower Hike
Saturday and Sunday March 29th and 30th, 10:00 am – 1:00 pm
Sonoma Land Trust invites you to experience a day at the San Pablo Baylands (near Hwy 37 and Lakeville Hwy) for wildflower exploration, bird watching and spectacular views of the North Bay, either Saturday or Sunday March 29th or 30th, 10am - 1pm. Land Trust staff will lead you on a rigorous hike across the open ranch and along the west side of Cougar Mountain, where they’ll share with you the restoration plans for the property. Directions and further information will be provided with your RSVP. To sign up for this free public outing, please call (707) 544-5614 ext. 2 or email: volunteer@sonomalandtrust.org.

French Broom Removal Workday
Saturday April 5th, 10:00 – 2:00

Glen Oaks Ranch
Stewardship Workday
Friday April 18th, 10am – 1pm

Estero Americano Volunteer Workparty
Saturday May 17th, 10am – 1pm

Little Black Mountain
Thistle Stomp Hike
Saturday May 31st, 10:00 – 2:00

Glen Oaks Ranch Trail Maintenance Hike
Friday June 13th, 10am – 1pm

Bringing Back the Natives Garden Tour Kathy Kramer, Coordinator
(510) 236-9558
kathy@kathykramerconsulting.net
www.bringingbackthenatives.net

Sunday, May 4 2008 Bringing Back the Natives Garden Tour
Registration is now open for this free, award-winning tour featuring 60 pesticide-free gardens located throughout Alameda and Contra Costa counties that conserve water, provide habitat for wildlife, and contain 50% or more native plants. In addition, private, guided tours of signature native plant gardens are offered on April 12, 13, 26, 27, and May 3, 18, and 25, 2008. Register early, as the Select Tours are expected to fill early.

Coming Next Month:
April General Meeting:

Tuesday, March 15, 7:30 p.m.
Insects of the Pacific Northwest
Featuring living examples!
With Peter and Judy Haggard

Submissions, Thoughts, Ideas, Art
We welcome your interest in our newsletter. If you have photos, art, or other ideas for submissions, feel free to send them to the editor, Katy Redmon. The email is cnpsmbnewsletter@yahoo.com.
Newsletter & Web Site Info:
Send newsletter submissions to:
Katy Redmon, cnpsmbnewsletter@yahoo.com
Deadline for inclusion in the April
Newsletter is March 15.
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/cnp
For newsletter mailing/membership issues contact:
Gary Hundt, ghundt@gmail.com

Lilium pardalinum ssp. pitkinense
Pitkin lily

We invite you to join CNPS

Name______________________________
Address______________________________
City/Zip______________________________
Phone______________________________
Email______________________________

Chapter affiliation:
☐ Milo Baker (Sonoma County)
☐ Other county ______________________

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

Make check payable to CNPS and mail to:
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To pay by credit card or for more info call
916.447.2677 or visit www.cnps.org