Our Annual Wreath Making Workshop

Tuesday, December 16th, 7:00 p.m.

It’s our annual wreath-making event. Grab your pruning shears, or something with which to cut greenery, and try your hand at creating a lovely, festive wreath to decorate your home or to give as a gift. You’ll get the few simple instructions needed to discover your hidden creative talents and watch others discover theirs. Hoops, wire and greenery will be provided. To add special touches, please bring anything you have on hand for your own wreath or to share: berries, pine cones, acorns, lichen, eucalyptus pods, dried flowers, holly, pomegranates, ribbon, raffia, etc. Drop cloths, tarps, or old sheets to make cleanup easier will be greatly appreciated. We’ll have hot cider and Christmas cookies – bring some of your own favorites to share if you like. Come join the festivities and share some holiday cheer with CNPS friends.

Lynn Colborn, who has hosted dinner with the speaker for the last few years, puts a wreath together at the Wreath-making Workshop. We are currently seeking a new dinner host for before the meetings and would like to thank Lynn for all her help with the chapter.

Sustainable Landscape Maintenance

January 20th, 2009

“Healthy and vibrant landscapes inspire healthy and vibrant lifestyles”. Allen Land Design's philosophy of enhancing the lives of present and future generations through our work is grounded in the concepts of sustainability.”  (Continued on page 2.)  Plant I.D. Hour begins at 6:45

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 contact, Liz Parsons, 833-2063, lizpar8993@aol.com by January 20th if you plan to attend.
President's Report

It has been a lovely fall, with some rain and a mix of warm and cool temperatures. I hope you put your new native plants in the ground and have been able to provide them with a bit of water to get started. Fall planting is the California way! I have had good success with (divided) Deerggrass (*Muhlenbergia rigens*), and have also put “Eve Case” Coffeeberry, various Salvias, valley oak acorns, and quite a few bulbs in already. The problem now is the weeds! After living in Santa Rosa for 11 years, I am beginning to know the weeds at seedling stage. Filaree, bindweed, bur clover, and ryegrass: ugh! It calls for lots of mulching and hoeing. My biggest problem is Bermuda grass. I would like to offer a prize to anyone who can come up with a 5 year solution to Bermuda grass invasion. You will be given ample newsletter space and help many people! I hear there is a special herbicide designed just for Bermuda grass; has anyone used it?

It is a time of changes in America and here in California. With the economy slowing down, it is rewarding to spend hours outside doing things that get our homes ready for winter without breaking the bank, such as mulching with compost and planting native seeds. It is a good time to take kids hiking, since it isn’t too hot and there aren’t too many wildflowers to be distracted by! Remember how important those early experiences are in shaping our identities. I got an early start backpacking and camping before kindergarten and I will never forget those Sierra meadows, piney forests, and “Planet Granite” (thanks Dad!)

We are embarking on the largest CNPS Conference in over 20 years. Although early registration is closed, there is still time to register for the January 17-19 Strategies and Solutions Conference in Sacramento. Our chapter sponsored three CNPS members to attend the conference with awards or $250 each. Check out www.cnps.org for details and read more on p. 5.

Our Milo Baker Board is newly elected, staffed with volunteers that care about our members and the native plants we all cherish. I would like to thank Leia Giambastiani for stepping up to do Publicity for the Chapter. Advertising our programs and plant sale is a small task that makes a huge difference! Thank you Stephanie and Michael Lennox, outgoing Publicity co-chairs.

In 2009, we have new legislators, a new President-elect, Barack Obama, and new local government officials. I hope you will get to know their policies and work with Katy Redmon, Legislative Chair, on the native plant issues that you are familiar with. This is a great time to join Vern Goehring, Legislative Advocate (yes we have a lobbyist in Sacramento) to get good legislation passed. We hope that science can be in the forefront and education about plants will become more widespread. The economy is tight, but this can be an opportunity for conservation of water and other resources. Your membership dollars, donations and volunteer time keep our chapter and our Society strong. I thank you all for your support and volunteer time on behalf of CNPS!

Lynn Houser

Chapter Guest Speakers

(Continued from front page.) Creative Director Sierra Hart of Allen Land Design will wrap up our series of gardening with natives lectures with an informative talk on their companies transition from typical landscaping to creating sustainable landscapes. Sierra will present how they promotes this ethic with climate-appropriate plant palettes-including wildlife habitat plants and edible landscapes, landscape designs to enhance passive solar heating and cooling, recycled and sustainable material choices, green living roofs and living walls, efficient irrigation systems, and finally organic and bio-dynamic soil and plant-system management. We
will all leave with a better understanding of ways to use these principles in our home gardens.

**Spring Series:**
**California’s Plant Communities**
**Part one: Desert Plants**
**February 17, 2009 7:30 p.m.**
We hope that this series will interest even the seasoned California native plant enthusiast while we explore the plant communities that make California so incredibly biodiverse. The February lecturer is still to be confirmed but we promise a wonderful presentation on Desert plants and their habitat. Glenn Keator’s book Designing California Native Gardens: The Plant Community Approach to Artful, Ecological Gardens describes Desert landscapes this way: “Too many deserts are vast wastelands of barren habitat with no redeeming value. But deserts are deceptive. Look closely, and you will see an amazing array of shrubs, cacti, and small trees, which erupt into riotous color in spring, while in years of generous rains magic carpets of annual wildflowers delight the eye with all the hues of the rainbow.”

**April Owens**

**Plant Sale News**

**Saturday, December 13, 11 AM:**
**Pacific Coast Iris Workshop**
We’ll meet at Mary Aldrich’s house, 4775 Newanga, SR (539-9005). We will be dividing Pacific Coast Iris and taking them home to grow on for the sale (October 11, 2009). The PCN Iris are always very popular at our sale. We sold 130 of them this year. The only time that they can be divided is in the winter. This is a very important part of our plant sale preparation, so please come and help us. It takes less that two hours to prepare and divide the iris—we’re that good! Please join us. If you have any species iris like *Iris douglasiana* or *Iris macrosiphon*, bring them or call me and I’ll pick them up, many of our customers ask for them.

**Plant sale Committee meeting:** We will meet at Liz Parsons’ home in Kenwood on Saturday, January 17th, 11 AM. Anyone who is interested in helping with the sale is encouraged to come to this meeting. WE NEED YOU. Our sale is one of the best in the state, because we all work so well together. Also we have such a good selection of well grown plants. We will be making decisions for the coming year.

**Liz Parsons**

**Plant I.D. Hour**

**There will be no Plant I.D. Hour before the Wreath-making Workshop,**
**Although the room will be filled With fresh plant material!**
**Plant I.D. Hour will return in January**

Arrive at 6:45, before the January 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. In addition to some fresh plant material, I’ll bring field guides and botany books. I can help you work through the keys in *The Jepson Manual* and *A Sonoma County Flora* or answer your questions. Come talk plants with plant people. The best-learned plants are those learned with friends!

**Lynn Houser**

**Invasives Corner**

**Browsing and a Yellow Alert**
December ‘08
Web surfing the other day, I lucked onto a very informative well-structured invasive plant site, PIER, provided by American botanists working in American Samoa. (Samoa is American? Yep.) The regions represented were tropical for the most part - yet some of their worst invasives are ours, too: cotoneaster, Cape ivy, velvet grass, *Arundo*, ice plant sp., tamarisk. Pampas grass, *Sesbania*, etc.
One plant startled me, "California pepper tree - poivrier a’ Amerique" in French. I thought: Could that be our lovely bay tree? But the Latin name didn't ring a bell and, sure enough, it is a Peruvian native, *Schinus molle*. California is unfairly blamed again!!

On another site, "100 Worst Invasives," which is a worldwide list, I found a few California native plants on their list: Monterey pine and cypress, and mesquite.

The US is the source of a worldwide bad actor - *Oenothera biennis*, common evening primrose.* It has the standard yellow four-petaled flower that most primroses in our wildlands have. It has lanceolate leaves and flowers on a spike that can be quite six feet or more. Jepson says it is native to the central and eastern US. I thought it was a California native and planted it near my steps where it reproduced faster than cockroaches. Later I saw it growing in a culvert near where I live. It isn't noted in *Marin Flora, Sonoma Flora or the California Invasive Plant Inventory*. I looked it up at Calflora Database, and it has been seen in the Mohave region, Plumas, Alameda, Sacramento and San Mateo counties, but not here. I am planning to apply lethal force. Please let me know if you see this one because it might be a big problem later.

mlml@sonic.net

Preserve Stewardship

**Vine Hill Preserve**

**Research Award given to Sonoma State University Student Tanya Robertson**

The Milo Baker Board of Directors approved and awarded a $2000 research award for a graduate student of Richard Whitkus at Sonoma State who is interested in knowing why our Vine Hill Manzanita (*Arctostaphylos densiflora*) is not regenerating by seed at the Vine Hill Preserve in Sebastopol (owned by CNPS). Tanya Robertson presented her project with Dr. Whitkus at the October Board meeting. I would like to thank Sarah Gordon for her help with Vine Hill and Tanya’s project details. The Board will be monitoring the progress of this important research award. These funds were raised at the 2007 Manzanita Workshop organized by John Herrick which featured manzanita experts Tom Parker and Mike Vasey with lab and field lessons on identifying manzanitas (see photo, top right).

**Rincon Ridge Park**

**Fir Party at the Park:**

Monday, Dec. 15th, 10:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

Gather materials for the Wreath-Making Workshop while improving rare plant habitat and fire safety. Douglas firs, with their rapid growth, need to be periodically removed where they grow with the Rincon Manzanitas and Ceanothus, to maintain the chaparral habitat. Each year we have a work party or two to cut firs from the sensitive plant area and, if the dates coordinate, use the branches for our wreath-making workshop (the following evening, this year). The rare plant habitat has benefited from recent coyote brush cutting, as it has been filling in lately. You’ll want gloves, loppers, and/or hand saws. We’ll need some tarps and rope for hauling and some pick up trucks to load. Come get a quick nature fix and help out. The hummingbirds are out at the park, buzzing the tall manzanitas that started blooming in November. Located on Park Gardens Drive off Fountaingrove Parkway (at Rincon Ridge Dr), in NE Santa Rosa. Heavy rain cancels; please contact Lynn Houser for more details at housers@sonic.net or 568-3230

**Opportunities for Students, Scouts, and anyone who wants to learn more about our natives and how to grow or manage them:** In addition to our Merit Scholarships which are awarded to students twice a year, there are other educational resources available to students and the public by the Milo Baker Chapter, and we welcome your participation. Anyone interested in plant identification, ecology, vegetation surveys, and hands on field experience can contact any of our preserve stewards or come to
a general meeting to ask about opportunities to join in. It was great to meet new students at Glenn Keator’s talk in November.

We are beginning a project with SRJC students where they can grow needed plants for our 2009 sale, and will be reaching out more to the JC to recruit a SRJC Representative on the Board.

Lynn Houser

State News

SAVE THE DATE!
MARCH 28, 2009
Lafayette Community Center, Lafayette
MARCH 29, 2009
Regional Parks Botanic Garden, Berkeley

GROWING NATIVES:
CELEBRATING CALIFORNIA’S BEAUTY IN DRY TIMES, a two day symposium on NATIVE PLANT GARDENING
TALKS WORKSHOPS GARDEN TOURS BOOK SALES SEED SALES & MORE!
Creating beautiful water-wise gardens with California native plants is the theme of this two-day symposium. The Saturday program includes presentations on the flora of California by botanist and author Glenn Keator, garden design by author Carol Bornstein, the structure of the garden by Phil van Soelen, from Cal Flora Nursery, herbaceous perennials and bulbs by plantsman Roger Raiche, creating a native meadow by David Amme, and connecting with the garden by Mike Evans from Tree of Life Nursery. The program includes a continental breakfast, lunch, and wine reception. A selection of books will be available for purchase. The Sunday program at the Regional Parks Botanic Garden begins with an inspiring talk by Director Steve Edwards, followed by a choice of guided garden walks and workshops on plants for dry gardens, aesthetic pruning, principles of irrigation, and gardening practices. After lunch in the garden, the program continues at Native Here Nursery with a presentation by Charli Danielsen and an opportunity to purchase plants. The day concludes with an invitation to visit two spectacular private native gardens: the Fleming garden in Berkeley and the Greenberg garden in Lafayette.


Co-sponsored by:

The California Native Plant Society
Regional Parks Botanic Garden
Pacific Horticulture

Additional sponsorship provided by:
East Bay Municipal Utilities District

Arvind Kumar, CNPS Board Member

CNPS 2009 Conservation Conference:
Strategies and Solutions
JANUARY 17-19: Register Now: CNPS members and students receive special discounts.
The CNPS long- overdue statewide plant conservation conference is near.

The CNPS 2009 Conservation Conference: Strategies and Solutions will provide you with an excellent opportunity to advance your understanding of plant science, conservation planning, and environmental policy. Participate and help us increase public awareness of the importance of identifying science-based solutions and strategies to conserve California’s natural habitats and key ecosystems.

The Conference program includes over 300 presentations by notable scientists and conservation leaders such as: Michael Barbour, Tom Griggs, Richard Halsey, Linnea Hanson, Susan Harrison, Robert Holland, Todd Keeler-Wolf, Jon Keeley, Scott Loarie, Connie Millar, Richard L. Moe, Bart O’Brien, Tom Parker, Bruce Pavlik, John Randall, Jon Rebman, John Sawyer, Dieter Wilken, Carol Witham, and many others.

Meet our plenary speakers: Jerome Ringo, Stephen Hopper, and John Muir Laws

Check our web site for more details about the program, special events, and trainings:
Reserve by December 19th: Stay at Sheraton Grand Hotel and take advantage of the special conference rate!
You could help us green the conference, meet other conference attendees and save money by using Spaceshare to find traveling companions from your region: share hotel rooms, cars, cab rides from the airport, a room/couch in your home, and interests, etc. Bring your own coffee cup or travel mug to reduce waste! Find out more by visiting the conference site at http://www.spaceshare.com/cnps.
CNPS Conservation Conference 2009 is on Facebook; become a friend! http://www.facebook.com/group.php?gid=38417209275 Invite your friends and colleagues to this important event.
Josie Crawford

Field Trips

Two Fern Forays with Liz Parsons and Wendy Born

January 10th, 10:30-1pm
Milt’s Fern Canyon, Kenwood
Join us for a tranquil hike to a ferny dell with a possible hike to a chaparral at the top of the canyon. The canyon is home to acres of wood ferns, sword ferns, occasional CA shield fern, northern maidenhair, coffee ferns and giant chain ferns. This hike is on private property near Hood Mtn Regional Park and Sugarloaf State Park. The hike is strenuous on rudimentary trails. Meet at Liz Parsons’ house on Adobe Canyon Rd for carpool to the site. Call Liz Parsons for directions 833-2063, LizPar8993@aol.com. Bring water, lunch and wear sturdy shoes. Heavy rain cancels. RSVP Natasha Granoff, 542-9670, njgranoff@comcast.net

January 24th, 10:30-1pm
Shultz Canyon, Annadel State Park
Hardy hike up the canyon with option to continue to Ledson Marsh and possible waterfall. Meet at Lawndale parking lot to carpool to trailhead. Bring water, lunch. Heavy rain cancels. RSVP Natasha Granoff, 542-9670, njgranoff@comcast.net

February 15th, 10:00-1:00
Join Lynn Houser for a trip to Rincon Ridge Park and explore the Fountain Grove open space. Meet at Rincon Ridge park picnic area (see Feb. issue for details).

Events and Items of Interest

MAYACAMAS SPRING FIELD TRIPS

MANY THANKS for the interest in the spring MMAS field trips. The date for the photography field trip has been set for Sat. April 25. I’ll have a description of the field trip early in the New Year and dates for several more.
Reservations for the field trips are NOT requested. For further information, it is greatly preferred that people refer to the Madrone website: http://audubon.sonoma.net instead of calling me. I do not include my phone number in the publicity. I hope this doesn’t cause too much inconvenience to those who wish to participate.

GENERAL INFORMATION FOR ALL EVENTS: The field trips are free, open to the public and suitable for all levels of interest. Bring your lunch and refreshments for the day; wear layered clothing, hats, and sun protection. Sturdy walking shoes or hiking boots are recommended. Be prepared for rain showers, but heavy rain cancels the hikes unless otherwise indicated. No dogs, no smoking and the preserve is not wheelchair accessible. Also be aware that spring is the season for the emergence of poison oak, ticks and rattlesnakes. Meet on Pine Flat Road between Red Winery Road and the Sausal Creek Bridge. Pine Flat Road begins ¼ mile past the Jimtown Store on Highway 128 East at the first sharp right hand turn. IMPORTANT: Reservations for the field trips are NOT required this year.
Phyllis Schmitt
Laguna de Santa Rosa
Docent Positions
Expand and share your knowledge and love of nature; become a Laguna de Santa Rosa docent! All it takes to get started is curiosity, enthusiasm and a desire to foster children’s understanding of and connection to nature. During the training course, the Laguna Foundation teaches the natural and cultural history of the Laguna during dynamic, in-class presentations and field trips. Trainees also learn how to run the engaging Learning Laguna activity stations and develop practical skills for working with 2nd-4th grade students both in the classroom and in the field. Informational meetings are scheduled for:
Tuesday, February 10 at the Sebastopol Library from 6:30-8:00 p.m.
Monday, February 23 at the Central Santa Rosa Library from 6:30-8:00 p.m.
Training begins Monday, March 9 and runs for ten consecutive Mondays from 9:30-2:30 with spring break on Monday, April 13.
Contact Christine Fontaine: 527-9277 x102 or christine@lagunafoundation.org
www.lagunafoundation.org

Riverkeeper Stewardship Park
Volunteer Days
What: Enjoy time on the Russian River working with other volunteers to restore healthy riverbank habitat. No experience necessary
When: Every Wednesday. Event cancelled when there is enough rain to need a raincoat.
Time: 8:30 - 11:30 am, please join us for all or part of the time.
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. 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.

Fairfield Osborn Preserve
Saturday Dec 13 8:30-10:30AM $35
Winter birds of Sonoma County
by Peter Leveque  Bring your binoculars on this excursion to get to know our winter migrant and other local birds with this recognized ornithologist and naturalist.

Sunday Dec 14 10:30AM-2:30PM $35
Wild Mushrooms
by Charmoon Richardson
Learn about the natural history, identification, preparation, and uses of mushrooms with this experienced mushroom naturalist. Download registration form at http://www.sonoma.edu/org/preserve/documents/FOP_field_workshopsF08.pdf

NEW! Hiking and Plant Lists in Sonoma, Napa Solano and Marin Counties with photographs. www.westernwildflower.com is a website that features weekly hikes and photographs. Mimi Fleige contacted Lynn Houser about their hikes and plant documentation. Let’s make use of this opportunity to connect with our neighbor chapters!

An Observation
Sitting in my backyard, I watched a Harvestman climb on a log. It stopped next to a leaf. If I hadn’t seen it moving, I would never have known it was there. Some ants were traveling in random circles. One would bump into the spider’s leg, the spider would lift its leg and the ant would pass. If an ant hit the spider’s body, it lifted its body and the ant would pass. One ant ran very fast into its body and the spider moved on top of the leaf. This continued until the spider moved to another side of the leaf. It ended-up on the side where it had started; at which point, the ants had moved to another part of the log. Really!

Happy Holidays to All and Thanks to Sean at Clone Printing on 5th Street in Santa Rosa. Clone does a great job printing our chapter newsletters, and each month there is a packet of extra issues that I pick up for the general meeting. Sean takes a few minutes each month to illustrate (on the bag) our most enthusiastic members: the CA Native Plants! We hope to feature more of his great plant characters in future issues (he said it was ok).

Lynn Houser
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:
CNPS, 2707 K Street, Sacramento, CA 95816

To pay by credit card or for more info call 916.447.2677 or visit www.cnps.org