General Meeting
Sudden Oak Death
November 16th, 7:30 p.m.
Sonoma County Master Gardeners Janet Calhoon and Marsha Anderson.

Oaks are an important part of California’s natural and cultural history. They can live hundreds of years and are a critical component of the wildlife habitat. Thousands of oaks have been killed by Sudden Oak Death. In addition, many native plants play host to the pathogen, which can be spread by wind, birds and humans. Sudden Oak Death has been found not only in forests and woodlands, but also in urban areas and commercial plant nurseries.

Janet and Marsha are part of a group of Master Gardener Sudden Oak Death Specialists who have received extensive training in the biology, epidemiology, and prevention of this devastating disease of our native oaks. The presentation will highlight science-based practices for homeowners concerned about the oaks on their property in addition to guidelines for protecting our oak landscape.

Plant ID Hour
You see the plants blooming but the names are unclear? No need to fret, Plant I.D. Hour is here! Arrive at 6:45 p.m. 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. I’ll bring in the dissecting microscope and some flowering plants from the local area. Keying is worthwhile and challenging for all of us, but it’s fun to work through them together, and learn what distinguishes this plant from that one.

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 Nov. 15th if you plan to attend.

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 start at 7:00pm, 2nd Tuesday nine months of the year, Environmental Center, 55 Ridgeway Avenue, Suite A, Santa Rosa. The next Board meeting is Nov. 9th. Anyone interested in the work of the chapter is welcome to attend!
Gardening with Natives

An Untrimmed, Untidy Garden
In the autumn and winter, I leave my cottage garden untrimmed, unraked, and basically “untidy.” I allow it to remain thus until the light and warmth of Spring initiate new growth. The idea is to give spiders, butterflies, and other insects a secure hiding place from the cold and wet during their dormancy or egg stages. Further, the debris gives birds productive areas in which to forage when much of their food supply is at its most meager. It’s a rather revolutionary thought. Some people look at my yardful of collapsed brown stems, leaves, and seed heads and ask why it’s been left in such an untidy state. The principle is of interest to them, especially those who are interested in “gardening for wildlife.”
I am finding it to be a successful experiment. Flocks of sparrows, finches, and pine siskins pick away at seed heads that to my eyes look unproductive. Perhaps insects hide down inside the empty pods. Towhees and sparrows scratch and forage all day under the debris. I myself went on my own foraging excursion. Getting down on hands and knees, and wearing my strongest magnifying glasses, I discovered egg cases everywhere, some even suspended on webs between dry stems. If those stems and debris had been trimmed down and raked away, I would have unwittingly destroyed that entire productive habitat. You might ask, aren’t there non-beneficial insects hiding out as well as the beneficial ones? True, I’m sure there are, but from the abundance of birds in the garden, most of the insects are being found anyway. So if nothing else, I’ve provided native birds with a whole new landscape in which to hunt. It’s satisfying to watch this pageant on display outside my office window.

Invasives Corner

No More Trees from the State in March 2011
Trees the State grows help preserve California forests, which maintain water quality, wildlife habitat, air quality, and provide soil stability. But the last state tree nursery, Magalia Reforestation Center, which grows trees of genetic stock adapted to specific areas for reforestation after fires or logging operations, is slated to be closed in March of 2011. This short-sighted budget cut will result in serious future costs, especially since wildfire protection funds have been cut and more forest fires will have to be left to burn themselves out. Does the legislature and the governor think we won’t have any more fires or logging in California?

Smaller tree mallow, Malva pseudolavatera
Two years ago I noticed a few plants in the Malva family at Shollenberger Marsh that I didn’t recognize. (Not that that is such an unusual perception for me.) But I was curious, so I sent a scan to Peter Warner, botanist extraordinaire. He said he thought it was a Malva somethingorothera not previously found in the county. I asked if I should report it to Calflora, and he said it would be nice if I did. I was daunted by the
prospect, so I thought I'd just go out and pull them up and then there wouldn't be any in the county. (The Road to Hell.) So a couple of weeks ago I was out pulling Dittrichia in Shollenberger when I spotted the same plant only much larger, four to seven feet high, and many more. Oh dear. I couldn't remember the name Peter had told me, and I didn't want to let on that I couldn't remember what he had told me earlier, so I sent a scan on to Doreen Smith, Marin chapter's fine botanist, who identified it as *Malva pseudolavatera*, previously *Lavatera cretica*, or Smaller tree mallow. I was thinking of reporting it to Calflora now that it is so easy to do even I can do it. I thought I'd better take a specimen to Peter first, since the honcho at UC had questioned its ID, and I didn't want to look bad on a site everyone in the invasive plant world could see. Peter verified Doreen's finding. I looked it up on the California Invasive Pest Plant Council's site, and sure enough it was on the red alert list for coastal areas south of us. Yea! A new bad plant for Sonoma County!!! What am I saying? Now we have to get rid of it.

M.L. Carle

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Plant Sale News

The 2010 plant sale is history! It was another very successful sale. Our treasurer, Jim Piercy, tells us that we took in $13,700.00 and, after we pay sales tax and other expenses, we will net around $8,700.00. Our President, Lynn Houser, was at the membership table and she signed up 16 new or returning members! Each of them received $5.00 off of their plant purchases. The success is attributable to the good looking plants that we had and the many members who worked so hard to grow those plants and then sell them to our customers.

I want to especially thank Kathi Dowdakin and Rob Fox for their work with our signs. They created new signs that indicated where the manzanitas, ceanothus, zauschneria, and salvias were located. This made it easy for the people who put the plants on the tables on Friday night and for the customers on Saturday. The new signs really helped people navigate the hall.

Rob also re-painted the exterior signs. The new white paint made them more visible. This year we used plant labels in various colors to indicate the price of the plant. This took a lot of preparation. Kathi Dowdakin prepared the signs that were on the tables to alert the customers to the new system of pricing as well as the signs for the cashiers. Cindy Tancreto ordered the new labels. Cindy has worked as a cashier and knew that colored labels would be easy for the cashiers and for the customers. She was right--thanks for taking on the task of converting our system. We had a great team of people helping us price the plants on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday--this is a huge job but with Penny Dalton, Mary Aldrich, Becky Montgomery, Ellen VanAllen, Cindy Tancreto, Deb
The founder of the Milo Baker Chapter, Betty Lovell Guggolz attended our sale. She founded the chapter in 1972. Betty is 87 and lives in Cloverdale so we do not get to see her very often. The last time we saw her was when she and Betty Burridge (Audubon Society) were named the Environmentalists of the Year at the SCCC’s 2008 Awards Dinner. Betty was our first president, 1972-1975. Our second president, Nancy Harrison, also attended our sale. It was a great homecoming to see these two seminal figures at the 39th sale—both were at the first plant sale which was held in Courthouse Square in downtown Santa Rosa. The third president was Betty’s husband, Jack Guggolz.

The sale was well attended and the hall was full all day. We had many plants leftover and we are happy to say that they all went all over the county to various projects that we are happy to support. Adele Harrison middle school in Sonoma Valley has a grant to grow gardens and they will add a native plant garden. Willowside elementary school will add California natives to their growing ground. At Sonoma State, a Butterfly Garden that has been planted and maintained by the Santa

Rosa Garden Club for twenty years, will increase the number of California native plants in the garden.

This garden is near the Ken Stocking Botanical Garden on the east side of the campus. The native plant garden at the Environmental building at SSU will increase the number of California natives. The project in Santa Rosa’s Julliard Park to replace the ivy near the rose garden with native plants got a big boost. Wendy Krupnick is planting at Cielo Azul and, finally, Land Path’s riparian revegetation project received lots of creek dogwood (Cornus sericea).

We had two special features this year. M.L. Carle had a display that brought attention to the many invasive plants that threaten our native habitats. Frederique Lavoipierre from the Entomology Department at Sonoma State University had a display devoted to insects and the important relationships they have with plants. She had a microscope and several trays of insect specimens to invite people to the second annual Insecta-Palooza on October 30 at SSU.
Thank you to Rosemary McCreary for her wonderful full length article in the October 2 Press Democrat. Rosemary really told the story of our sale and of our chapter. We thank her for her thorough research. It was a wonderful article. If you didn’t see it, look on the newspaper’s website.

We also must thank our nursery benefactors: CalFlora Nursery, owned by Phil Van Soelen and Sherrie Althouse (both past presidents of the Milo Baker Chapter) and Walter Earle (past President) and his wife Margaret of Mostly Natives. Thanks to Nancy Hargeaves and Dan Jennison of Shooting Star Wholesale Nursery who provide so many of the plants that we grow. Thanks to John Schribbs of Casa Grande High School and his great growing grounds where we grew 800 plants from August to sale time. Those beautiful, blooming salvias, monkeyflowers, and zauschnerias all came from there.

We must also acknowledge the loss of one of the mainstays of our sale, Phyllis Schmitt, who died on September 25. Phyllis has been a cashier for as long as I can remember. When Phyllis was teaching at Harmony School in Occidental, she started a California native plant garden at the school with our leftover plants. She enlarged the garden yearly until she retired. She enjoyed a very active retirement, and always returned to help us with our sale. She will be missed by the Milo Baker Chapter and by all of the other groups in which she took a leading role. (Obituary in the Press Democrat on October 13, 2010.)

On October 8, 2011, we will hold our 40th Annual Sale! What a landmark. We have really come a long way. We have been at the Veterans Memorial Hall since 1981. It is still the right size for us and we are happy there.

Liz Parsons
Merit Scholarship Recipients

We are pleased to announce the recipients of the Milo Baker chapter’s merit scholarship for students of native plants: Meghan Parish and Kandis Gilmore. Both Meghan and Kandis are Masters students in Biology at Sonoma State University, and both also received their Bachelor’s degrees from SSU as well. Meghan plans to use the scholarship funds to support her research into management strategies for invasive nonnative Harding grass (*Phalaris aquatica*). While much research has been done on management techniques to reduce the abundance of nonnative annual grasses, less is known about how to cope with nonnative perennials like Harding grass. Meghan will also be investigating how the management techniques affect native plant populations, including native perennial grasses. She plans to test mowing and herbicide use as methods of Harding grass control. Her work will be conducted on Sonoma Mountain at SSU’s Fairfield Osborn Preserve.

Kandis will be using the scholarship to support her research on the pollination systems of three of Sonoma County’s imperiled vernal pool species: Sonoma sunshine (*Blennosperma bakeri*), Sebastopol meadowfoam (*Limnanthes vinculans*), and Burke’s goldfields (*Lasthenia burkei*). Each of these species is known to have specialist pollinators, native solitary bee species that rely on their respective plant species for pollen. From preliminary field work on the Santa Rosa Plain in spring 2010, she has already identified 28 bee species that visit our vernal pools—and counting! However, little is known about how important these specialist bees are to the reproductive success of the plants. We also don’t know whether the specialist bees occur at vernal pools that have been created for mitigation purposes. Kandis will be investigating these important questions.

Congratulations, Meghan and Kandis, and best wishes with your work!

The Chapter awards these scholarships to support students of native plant conservation, restoration, or other native plant sciences. Scholarships are available each semester to students at Sonoma State or Santa Rosa Junior College. The funds may be used for educational or research-related expenses. Applications for the spring 2011 scholarship will be accepted this winter. For details, please contact Joan Schwan 707-823-0446 or jschwan@sonic.net.
Local land trusts oppose breaching of conservation easement for Roblar quarry

From the Sonoma Land Trust October Newsletter

Troubled about "the integrity of the overall system of conservation easements and land protection in Sonoma County and beyond," Sonoma Land Trust executive director Ralph Benson and Marin Agricultural Land Trust executive director Bob Berner sent letters urging the Sonoma County Board of Supervisors not to permit a modification of the conservation easement on an adjacent property to accommodate a haul road for the proposed Roblar Road quarry. While SLT did not take a position on the proposed gravel quarry, we were "very concerned" about the alternative calling for running the access road through a property protected with a conservation easement. Benson wrote: "The promise of conservation easements — a promise to the taxpayers who fund the purchases and to donors who gift easements — is that they are permanent … We believe that approval [of the road] would do incalculable harm to the integrity of the Sonoma County Agricultural Preservation and Open Space District and SLT's efforts to protect land with conservation easements." The supervisors chose not to modify the easement.

Update from ML Carle and Gerald Moore: The Press Democrat reported that the company is willing to switch the operation to Roblar Rd with some upgrades to the road as needed.

Join the Sonoma County Trails Council for their Annual Membership Dinner Tuesday, Nov. 2 6:00 to 8:00 pm

Enjoy an evening with fellow hikers, cyclists and equestrians. Learn about new Sonoma County trail projects. Support SCTC by renewing or joining at the door - free t-shirt with your membership contribution

Food – beer – wine – trail talk – prizes
At Sonoma County Driving & Riding Club at the Sonoma County Fairgrounds, just inside the south gate (on Aston Avenue)
For more information contact
Ken Wells, SCTC Executive Director at jfish@sonomatrails.org

Riverkeeper Stewardship Park Volunteer Days

On the entire 110 miles of the Russian River this is the place to see and participate in riverbank stewardship. All ages welcome to visit or volunteer. No experience necessary. Enjoy time on the Russian River every Wednesday except when there is enough rain to need a raincoat. Please join us from 8:30 - 11:30 am, for all or part of the time. We suggest that you bring your own drinking water and wear sturdy footwear. The Park is located at 16153 Main St., Guerneville on the north bank of the Russian River directly upstream of the pedestrian bridge. Go down the driveway in front of Sonoma Nesting Co. At the bottom of the driveway look for the blue and white sign: "Russian Riverkeeper Demonstration Riparian Restoration Project Future Community Park." Park near the sign. For more information contact Victoria Wikle at 865-2474 or VictoriaWikle@usa.net. See http://www.russianriverkeeper.org

Membership
Did you join CNPS prior to 1990? We’d like to hear from you! Stacey Flowerdew at CNPS is updating our membership database. We’re using a M/D/YYYY format, so please let us know the date as closely as possible. If you’ve been a member for a long time and don’t know your exact membership date, try thinking of any significant event that happened around that time, or, if you’ve saved every Fremontia, look at your first issue. Send your name and date to Editor, cnpsmbnewsletter@yahoo.com
We invite you to join CNPS

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Newsletter & Web Site Info:
Send newsletter submissions to: Editor, cnpsmbsnewsletter@yahoo.com
Deadline for inclusion in the Dec.
Newsletter is Nov. 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,
or for newsletter mailing/membership issues,
contact: Gary Hundt, ghundt@gmail.com

CALIFORNIA NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY
Milo Baker Chapter  www.cnpsmb.org
P.O. Box 892
Santa Rosa, CA 95402

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