



# The Shooting Star

SIERRA FOOTHILLS CHAPTER

PUBLICATION OF THE CALIFORNIA NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY

MARCH 2012



California Saxifrage



Henderson's Shooting Star



Wild Hyacinth or Blue Dicks

*March Photographer:  
Bob Brown*

## President's Message

Greetings to all.

I'm sure most of you are hoping that we haven't seen the last of our precipitation for this rain year. It should be a very interesting spring and summer for the plants if our current weather pattern continues. I want to make a little "pitch" for one of our March field trips to the Dragon Gulch trail system in Sonora. This will be one of those unusual opportunities to experience a very accessible location that has more than 180 species identified and a place where strollers and wheelchairs can be used on portions of the trail. I really think that this location is a hidden "gem" that a lot of people are not aware of and probably haven't visited. Hopefully we'll have a nice weather day and we should see more than 30 blooming wildflowers.

Our March meeting program will feature John Buckley, the executive director of the Central Sierra Environmental Resource Center

(CSERC), and his staff speaking on the subject of high meadow restorations and the work that his organization does. Looking ahead, our program for April will feature Bob Case who will be speaking on the threat that non-native exotics pose to our native habitats and plants.

Again, remember to mark your calendars for the Spring Plant Sale to be held on Saturday April 21 from 9:00 AM to 1:00 PM in Rocca Park in downtown Jamestown which will coincide with CNPS' Native Plant week in the state.

I look forward to seeing you at our March meeting!

*-Bob Brown, President*

### CALENDAR

**Thursday, March, 1st, 6:00 pm**

Board Meeting (all members welcome)

7:00 pm General Meeting. Location:

Tuolumne County Library, 480 Greenley Road, Sonora.

Refreshments will be served.

**PROGRAM:** John Buckley, executive director of the Central Sierra Environmental Resource Center (CSERC), is speaking on the subject of high meadow restorations and the work that his organization does.

**SPRING PLANT SALE**

**APRIL 21**

**MARK YOUR  
CALENDAR!**

#### Membership:

If you **change** your mailing or e-mail address, be sure to send a notice to these people →

**This will keep your newsletter on time!**

#### Jennie Haas

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#### California Native Plant Society

2702 K. St, Ste 1

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**Dedicated to the Preservation of  
California Native Flora.**

## FIELDTRIPS

**For all field trips:** bring lunch, water, sunscreen and appropriate clothing and footwear. Hiking level varies with each trip. Your trip will be enhanced by bringing field guides and magnifying lenses, although these are optional. Carpooling is encouraged. Call ahead if the weather looks iffy. Check [http://www.twitter.com/SIE\\_CNPS](http://www.twitter.com/SIE_CNPS) for updates. Our field trips are open to everyone. Bring a friend or two. It is Chapter policy that pets are not allowed on our field trips. We would appreciate everyone's adherence to this policy.

We do our best to plan our trips for peak bloom. However, when the weather is uncooperative, our trips can be postponed like many were in 2011. Additionally, we might want to throw in an "emergency field trip" or two when the opportunities arise. It's impractical to try to call everyone we think might be interested in going on the trips when we need to reschedule. However, it's relatively easy to send an e-mail update to those interested. So, we're going to try something new. If you would like to be on our field trip alerts e-mail list, please send an e-mail with the subject line "Field Trip e-mail List" to Jennie at [jhaas953@gmail.com](mailto:jhaas953@gmail.com). We'll use this mailing list, plus Twitter and, when time allows, Facebook and our webpage to provide timely information of field trip changes and those impromptu "emergency field trips."

**March 24 – Hunter Valley Mountain Access Road.** Leader: Peggy Moore. Hiking Level: easy. Join us for a wide variety of wildflowers and flowering shrubs from a ridgetop view along Hunter Valley Mountain Access Road just a few miles west of Bear Valley, Mariposa Co. We will make periodic car stops along the road and seek out the rare California balsamroot along the way. Meet at 9:30a.m. at the parking lot of the 49er Center in Mariposa (intersection of Hwy 140 and Hwy 49 North). Or meet at Bear Valley 10 minutes south of Mariposa on Hwy 49 (south end of town next to closed restaurant) at 10:00 a.m. For travelers from the north, contact Jennie Haas to find out if there will be a meeting place in Jamestown: 209-962-4759, [jhaas953@gmail.com](mailto:jhaas953@gmail.com). For more information on the field trip, contact Peggy: 209-966-5728, [peggles@yosemite.net](mailto:peggles@yosemite.net).

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## Flowers Blooming This Month

This month I'm going to highlight common early blooming plants that we are likely to see at Dragoon Gulch on March 31 on our planned field trip. When I first visited this trail system I was a little surprised to find an area within the city limits of Sonora where you could find more than 180 species of wildflowers.

The first flower is the California Saxifrage (*Micranthes californica*) – JM2) a member of the Saxifrage family (Saxifragaceae) and has white flowers on 6-12 inch stems. With the release of the second Jepson Manual (JM2) the genus has changed from *Saxifraga* to *Micranthes*.

The next bloom is Henderson's Shooting Star (*Dodecatheon hendersonii*) a member of the Primrose family (Primulaceae) with a pink or lavender flower. This is probably the most common of the lower elevation shooting stars. Our last flower is commonly called a Wild Hyacinth or Blue Dicks (*Dichelostemma capitatum*) and has been moved in JM2 from the Lily family to the Brodiaea family (Themidaceae). This blue headed flower can be seen throughout the foothills in the early spring.

Hopefully I have created enough curiosity through these pictures so that you will be motivated to get out and explore the great variety of wildflowers in our area on your own. Maybe you will even decide to join us on our field trip to explore the Dragoon Gulch trail system or another one of our field trips this year.



*Henderson's Shooting Star*

--Bob Brown

### FIELDTRIPS (cont.)

**March 31 – Dragoon Gulch, Sonora.** Leader: Bob Brown. Hiking level: easy. This will be a loop walk of about 2 miles and we should see more than 30 species of early, low elevation flowers. Meet at 1:00 PM off of Stockton Road by turning onto Woods Creek Drive (just opposite the turnoff into the fairgrounds) to the Woods Creek Park and then to the parking lot behind the ball field. For more information, contact Bob at 209-928-9281 or [rbrown4674@aol.com](mailto:rbrown4674@aol.com).

### 2012 SPRING PLANT SALE IS APRIL 21.

Thanks to a generous offer from Barbara Strother to coordinate volunteers, the Spring Plant Sale will be on **Saturday, April 21st**, from **9am to 1pm. at Rocca Park on Main Street in Jamestown** and many volunteers are needed.

Beginning **Friday evening**, we need volunteers to help unload plants from the wholesale nursery trucks, tag them and reload them into members vehicles who will take them home for the night.

**Saturday morning**, we will need a few hands to help unload everything, set it up and help with cashiering during the sale.

At the end of the sale, whatever is not sold needs to be loaded up and brought to the growing area off Tuolumne Road.

It sounds like work, but many hands make this a fun and satisfying effort. Don't forget that volunteers get first pick of plants before the Sale opens to the general public.

Please help with the effort and make Barbara's job easy. Her telephone number is 532-7500, or email: [Bjss37@msn.com](mailto:Bjss37@msn.com)

Thanks!

--Stefani Reichle, Plant Sale Chair

## RARE PLANT TREASURE HUNT TRAINING

**Saturday, April 7, 9:30 – 11:30 AM**  
UCCE Office, 2 Green Street, Downtown  
Sonora.

The CNPS Rare Plant Treasure Hunt is a volunteer program designed to get Chapter members and other volunteers out in the field and collecting rare plant data. In the first two years of the program, volunteers have made some amazing rare plant finds throughout the state, while exploring some beautiful areas that few people visit.

Rare Plant Treasure Hunt Coordinator Danny Slakey will be putting on a training for Rare Plant Treasure Hunters with the Sierra Foothills Chapter on April 7, 9:30-11:30 AM at the 2 So. Green Street in downtown Sonora in the UC Cooperative Extension office. Participants will learn about the CNPS Rare Plant Program, how to plan a Rare Plant Treasure Hunt, and how to survey for rare plants in the field.

After a lunch break, we'll head out to the field to Italian Bar road to search for populations of Tuolumne Fawn Lily, *Erythronium tuolumnense*, CNPS Rank 1B.2.

Dress appropriately for the weather, and be sure to bring the usual botanizing supplies if you already have them (lunch, handlens, flora/guide, camera, GPS unit, etc.). RSVP to Bob Brown, (209) 928-9281 or email [rbrown4674@aol.com](mailto:rbrown4674@aol.com) to sign up for the training.



*Tuolumne Fawn Lily*

## WATERING CALIFORNIA NATIVES

We live in an area with late fall and winter rains with dry summer and early fall. One advantage of many natives is that they seldom need to be watered once they are established.

There are exceptions.

1. All native seedlings and cuttings need constant moisture while they are getting established.
2. Most natives need some summer water during their first few years until they develop a deep root system.
3. Occasional summer water may improve appearance
4. Natives of wet areas need summer water as will natives from the high mountains
5. Natives of Redwood & other coastal forests also need some Summer water when planted here.
6. Natives planted in sandy soil may require summer water. Some natives can be killed by summer water. Soil fungi grow rapidly when conditions are wet and warm. Many chaparral shrubs and native oaks are sensitive to summer water.

### The following are a few “rules of watering”.

1. Water in the early morning. Evening watering may encourage mildew. Much water is lost during midday watering.
2. Water thoroughly and deeply. You want roots to grow deeply so the plants can survive dry periods. Dig a hole to see how deep the water has penetrated.
3. How frequently you water will depend on the soil type and the type of environment the plant comes from, the slope of the area, the amount of organic matter and the season. Wind can also cause the loss of water. A layer of mulch at least an inch deep can help retain water & restrict weed growth.
4. Drip systems are often best for establishing shrubs and trees. Sprinkling systems often encourage weeds and weedy grasses. Systems with computerized timers simplify watering but are expensive and need upkeep.
5. Plantings in the shade and on the damper north-east slope of hills and mountains do not need as much water as those in full sun and on the dryer south-west slopes of hills and mountains.

--Steve Stocking, Education Chair

### *Editor's Note*

*The deadline for contributions or corrections is the **10th of each month** prior to publishing. Contact Tel. 588-0484 or [conny@simonis.org](mailto:conny@simonis.org)*

*--Conny Simonis, Editor*



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**RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED**

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 I Wish to affiliate with the Sierra Foothills Chapter.  
 Please make your check payable to "CNPS" and send  
 it to: 2707 "K" street, Suite 1, Sacramento, CA 95816  
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**Membership includes the journal Fremontia,  
 CNPS Bulletin and the Sierra Foothills  
 monthly newsletter The Shooting Star.**