If you change your mailing or e-mail address, be sure to send a note to Jennie Haas. This will keep your newsletter on time!

**Gardening with Natives**

**Helping our Foothill Gardens Survive the Drought**

**Saturday, September 12, 2015**
9:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.
Creekside Building, Mother Lode Fairgrounds, Stockton Street, Sonora, CA

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**There will be no General Meeting in September.**

**Please join us for the Gardening with Natives, Native Plant Symposium.**

**24th Annual Cal-IPC Symposium**
San Diego Convention Center
October 28-31, 2015

*plus a special conference on:*
Habitat Conservation Planning and Invasive Plant Management
October 29, 2015

Register now! Early-bird rates through Sept. 28
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**Iris missouriensis, Warren Canyon**
Photo: John Little

**Pinus albicaulis, Saddlebag Lake Field trip**
Photo: Anna Puchkoff

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**Sierra Foothills Chapter**
www.sierrafoothillscnps.org

*Dedicated to the Preservation of California Native Flora.*
Tom Reyes reports on the field trip he led in July: “Despite having only a few hours between a snow storm and a thunder storm, the July 11 field trip to Saddlebag Lake was filled with sunny skies and beautiful alpine blooms. We started off the trip by walking along the talus slope around Saddlebag Lake where we saw alpine columbine (*Aquilegia pubescens*) along with its hybrid with crimson columbine (*Aquilegia formosa*), alpine gold (*Hulsea algida*), and Sierra beardtongue (*Penstemon heterodoxus*). Once we got into 20 Lakes Basin, we moved into alpine meadow habitat, where we observed a different suite of species including, white-bark pine (*Pinus albicaulis*), two species of elephant's head (*Pedicularis groenlandica* and *P. attollens*), primrose monkeyflower (*Mimulus primuloides*), and alpine goldenrod (*Solidago multiradiata*). After a satisfying hike, observing over 30 flowering species, we were able to take the boat back across Saddlebag Lake just as the thunderstorm was rolling in. Thanks again to everybody who helped make the day a success!”

Two members and a guest accompanied John Little on his field trip to Warren Canyon on July 25th. Warren Canyon is located a short distance east of Tioga Pass, off of Highway 120. John reports of the trip “It was pretty late in the season for peak flowers but we saw a lot of species anyway, especially in the first mile or so along Warren Creek. If you’ve never been there you would enjoy it! It’s worth a side trip when you’re in the high country. The weather was great.”

Thank you to Tom and John for leading these great field trips!

There will be no field trips in September. The route for the Fall Colors field trip on October 17th is yet to be determined. Have a suggestion? Send it to me at jhaas953@gmail.com.

If you would like to be on our field trip alerts e-mail list, send an e-mail to Jennie at jhaas953@gmail.com.

--Jennie Haas, Field Trip Coordinator
Join us at one of our favorite events of the year, our fall plant sale. This drought year has many of us thinking about including drought tolerant plants in our garden. As you look for plants that need less summer water, don’t forget to include California natives. For many of our natives, summer is their dormant season. So, once established, they need less summer water; some require little to no summer water at all!

Our sale is on Saturday, October 24, from 9 am until Noon. We will be at the same location: Rocca Park, Main Street, Jamestown. We will have many different species of shrubs and perennials that need minimal water, once established, during our hot summer months. At the sale, there are always many knowledgeable people to answer your questions and help you choose the appropriate plant for your location.

Remember to come early for the best selection. Better yet, volunteer to help at the plant sale. Volunteers get to select plants before the sale is open to the public. We need volunteers with trucks or a SUV to load plants the night before and deliver them the morning of the sale. We also need cashiers and tag pullers. So email Stephanie at sjgarcia@mlode.com to volunteer.

- - Stephanie Garcia, Secretary and Plant Sales Chair

Traditional Uses of Holly-leaved Cherry

Holly-Leaved Cherry (Prunus ilicifolia), also known as Islay or "slay" by Native Californians, is a member of the Rosaceae family. It is found on slopes or canyons of woodlands or chaparral shrublands, up to 5000 feet in elevation. It grows in the Coastal ranges from Napa County, down thru San Francisco Bay Area, and into Baja. It can tolerate desert and seacoast, likes good drainage and temperatures above 10 degrees Fahrenheit.

This evergreen shrub grows to 30 feet high and almost as broad. Its densely branching twigs are reddish brown to gray. The alternating leaves are ovate and from 1 to 4 inches long. They are dark green on top and yellowish green underneath. They have serrated edges that resemble holly (hence the name) and smell of almonds when crushed. Small white flowers grow in clusters and the small (less than an inch) fruit ripens from red to deep purple in late summer and early Autumn.

Native Americans had several uses for Islay. They ate the fresh fruit pulp and pressed it into liquid for a fermented drink. However, it was the kernel inside the large stone pit that was most valued by many Natives. The pits were dried and cracked and the kernels removed. They were then leached many times to extract the bitter hydrocyanic acid. The ground meal was used as a soup base, or molded into shapes like tortillas, tamales, or cakes. These were eaten with meat or dipped in pinole.

Medicinally, tea was made from the bark or roots as a cold remedy. In the Spring when the sap was running, they used the bark and in the winter, they used the roots. Also, the leaves were boiled to make a wash to treat headaches.

Finally, the Costanoans used the tightly grained wood for bows. Others boiled the fruit to make a green dye.

Sources:
Maryruth Casebeer, Discover California Shrubs
USDA NRCS Plant Guides

- - Stefani Reichle
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