Alert!
May 1st General Meeting:

TIME CHANGE: General Meeting is at 6pm. May Board meeting is canceled.

LOCATION CHANGE: CNPS Demonstration Garden, 12865 Covey Circle, Sonora (at Sonora Sunrise Rotary Dog Park) – see directions below.

Note: In case of rain, we will have our talk at the Sonora Library, 6pm, in our regular meeting room.

Program:

“Who needs a lawn? We have native plants!” Stephanie will give her talk at the newly planted CNPS Native Plant Demonstration Garden. The demo garden is a perfect example of planting an area with drought tolerant natives and NO lawn. Her talk will include information on the plants currently growing in the demo garden. She will also have a handout of plants from past CNPS plant sales that will include general information, sun, and water needs; along with the natural habitat for each plant. -- Stephanie Garcia at sjgarcia@mlode.com

Reminder for June: June Board meeting will be Tuesday, June 10th at 6:00 pm, at Starbucks (1376 Mono Way, Junction Shopping Center, Sonora).

CNPS PLANT SALE APRIL 26TH
NEW LOCATION
Our sale is this Saturday, April 26th from 10 am to 1 pm. The site of our sale will be at the Calaveras County Water District building in San Andreas. The new location is at 120 Toma Court. To get there take HWY 49 to San Andreas. Turn onto Pool Station Road, and go approximately 2 miles; turn left on George Reed Road. Toma Court will be a short distance on your left. The water district building is on the corner of George Reed and Toma Court.

During this time of restricted water usage, drought tolerant native plants can be an excellent choice for your garden. We will have plenty of knowledgeable people to answer your landscaping questions. Hope to see you there! -- Stephanie Garcia at sjgarcia@mlode.com

Check in often for updates to our new website: www.sierrafoothills.cnps.org

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

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California Native Plant Society
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www.cnps.org

Dedicated to the Preservation of California Native Flora.
THE TWAIN MET AT THE HOGAN DAM OVERLOOK

Twenty two enthusiastic bloomers and birders met on a beautiful spring day to transect through western Calaveras County. The poppies had no problem with the dry year, the Foothill Poppies were abundant on many rocky slopes including just below Hogan Dam. This species, Foothill Poppies (Eschscholzia caespitosa) is in its tall form here and so many confuse it with the true California Poppy (E. californica). When we got near the end of our trip we also saw displays of Frying Pans (Eschscholzia lobbii), which was abundant on the old mine dumps around Copperopolis. In between there were many of the typical spring wildflowers of the lower foothills including the showy Royal Larkspur (Delphinium variegatum).

Our last stop was a large foothill ranch west of Copperopolis where we visited the vernal pools which had been revived by the recent rains. We saw many grassland flowers and around the edge of the pools the Meadow Foam (Limnanthes douglasii) and Goldfields (Lasthenia californica) were abundant. A few of the smaller, drying pools were completely covered by Goldfields. In the larger pool we visited there were many obligate vernal pool species including two small Popcorn Flowers, Plagiobothrys stipitatus and P. greenei, Dwarf Woolly Marbles (Psilocarpus brevissimus), Coyote Thistle (Eryngium vaseyi) and Water Starwort (Callitriche sp.). On the nearby very shallow soil there were the beautiful Blue Stars (Brodiaea minor). We did not stop to visit the Bitter Root (Lewisia rediviva), the Appendage Brodiaea (Brodiaea appendiculata), and their associates as they are on residential lot surrounded by the Rancho Calaveras Estates development. When we weren’t watching plants we also watched 38 bird species including a majestic Bald Eagle and some Tricolored Blackbirds.

-- Steve Stocking, Education Chair

What’s Blooming This Month?

What’s Blooming?

Our location for this month will be the Italian Bar road area. This is a nice area that is accessible by car with an interesting selection of flowers and because of it elevation tends to have some of the earlier blooms in our area. These photos were taken during the month of May in a fairly average rainfall year.

My first flower is the Varileaf Phacelia (Phacelia heterophylla), a member of the Borage family, Boraginaceae, as changed in TJM2. It is one of more than 18 species and sub-species of Phacelia recognized in Tuolumne county. Its white bloom is very similar to its more commonly seen cousin the Caterpillar Phacelia, (Phaelia cicataria). Our next bloom is the Longleaf Paintbrush, (Castilleja subinclusa), which is a member of the Broomrape family, Orobanchaceae, also as changed in TJM2. The bright red color of the Paintbrushes is very distinct along the roadside and there are more than 30 varieties in our area. Our last bloom is that of the Western Hound’s Tongue, (Cynoglossum occidentale), which is member of the Borage family, Boraginaceae. Its bright blue flowers are always a treat along the roadside.

I do hope that these pictures will encourage you to get out and explore the many native wildflowers in our area that bloom throughout the year in their many and varied habitats.

-- Bob Brown, Field Trip Coordinator

May Field Trip

May 10 – Anderson Flat: Leaders – Barry and Judy Breckling.

Hiking Level: Easy. This will be a discovery trip to see what plants we can find in the beautiful Anderson Flat area. Access is on a decent dirt road, but high-clearance vehicles are suggested. We’ll meet at 9:00 AM at the Greeley Hill Market in Greeley Hill, seven miles east of Coulterville on Hwy 132. For more information, contact Barry/Judy at breckling@garlic.com or call them at 209-878-3041.

A reminder that rain will cancel this field trip.

-- Bob Brown, Field Trip Coordinator

e-Shooting Star Addresses Needed

Please send your e-mail address to Jennie Haas: jhaas953@gmail.com to be added to the e-Shooting Star mailing list.
**CNPS NATIVE DEMONSTRATION GARDEN**

The demo garden is a must see as the wildflowers are “busting out all over.” Everyone who came to our March general meeting really enjoyed the show! The garden is located at the Sonora Dog Park and is open to the public.

Easy to get to: on Greenley take Cabezut Road. Take 2nd left onto Covey Circle. Sonora Sunrise Rotary Dog Park is on your right just past the Quail Hollow Storage Unit.

**Photo: Sheila Deeg**

Come by anytime, there is a nice table and bench under the oak trees. Enjoy!

**Photo: Val Myrick**

--- Stephanie Garcia, Growing Area Manager

**California Naturalist Certification Courses:** The course, which leads to Certification as a California Naturalist through the UC Ag and Natural Resources Program, introduces citizens to ecology and the unique ecosystems of California. One of its goals is to train a corps of knowledgeable volunteers capable of leading projects for organizations such as CNPS throughout California. One of the requirements of certification is for participants to perform 40 hours of volunteer service for the organization of their choice, which could be through the Shooting Star chapter of CNPS. Programs start in June!

For more information about the program call 530-277-4910 or go to: [http://sagehen.ucnrs.org/events.htm#calnat](http://sagehen.ucnrs.org/events.htm#calnat)

For more information about the California Naturalist Program in general, go to: [http://calnat.ucanr.edu](http://calnat.ucanr.edu)

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**WATERING CALIFORNIA NATIVE PLANTS**

We live in an area with late fall and winter rains in a "typical" year. But our summers and early falls are usually quite dry with little or no summer rain. This means that most native plants are adapted to dry summers with little or no watering or irrigation. One advantage of using many of our native plants in our gardens is that they seldom need to be watered once they are established.

The following are a few "rules of watering." But remember that each native plant has its own set of requirements.

1. It is best to water in the early morning or evening. Much water is lost by evaporation during midday watering. Evening watering may encourage mildew.
2. Water thoroughly and deeply. You want the plant roots to grow deep enough so that the plants can survive dry periods. Dig a hole or use a probe to see how deep the water has penetrated. Lawn roots are shallow so lawns should be on different watering schedules than your native plants.
3. How frequently you will need to water will depend on the soil type, the type of environment the plant comes from, the slope of the area, the season of the year, the amount of wind, and the amount of organic matter in the soil. A layer of mulch at least an inch deep can help retain water as well as deter weed growth.
4. Drip systems can often be best for establishing shrubs and trees. Sprinkling systems with computerized timers simplify watering but must be used with care.
5. Plantings in the shade and on the damper north-east facing slopes of hills and mountains do not need as much water as those in full sun on the dryer south-west facing slopes of hills and mountains.
6. Water a lot after planting and for the first year. After this you can gradually cut back on water, particularly summer water. BUT check the soil and the plants to make sure that they are getting adequate water.

The following are suggestions but remember that there are exceptions which must be learned from others or through experience.

1. All native seedlings and cuttings need regular moisture when they are getting established. For this reason it is best to plant after the first fall rains.
2. Most natives need some summer water during their first few years until they develop a deep root system.
3. Occasional watering of established plants in summer may improve their appearance. Some though do not tolerate water on their leaves when it is hot.
4. Plants native to wet areas need some summer water as will natives from the high mountains.
5. Natives of the Redwood and other coastal forests also need some summer water when planted in inland areas.
6. Natives planted in sandy soil may require more summer water. BUT some native plants can be killed by summer water after they are established. Soil fungi grow rapidly when conditions are wet and warm. Many chaparral shrubs and native oaks are sensitive to summer water. Heavy clay soils do not drain well and are not tolerated by many native plants.

There are many good books in the library where you can learn more about your native plants and their requirements. Another good source of information is found in arboreta and other areas with established plantings of native plants. Native plant sales are also a fine source of expertise and native plants which do well in our area gardens. -- Revised in 2014 by Education Chair Steve Stocking
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