

The Shooting Star

Publication of the



CALIFORNIA NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY- SIERRA FOOTHILLS CHAPTER
INCLUDING AMADOR, CALAVERAS, TUOLUMNE AND MARIPOSA COUNTIES

Flowers Blooming in August



Alpine Columbine, (*Aquilegia pubescens*)

Photos: Bob Brown

This month's location is going to be a sub-alpine and alpine area called Mt. Dana that is on the eastern boundary of Yosemite National Park. All of these flowers can be found on the trail to the top of the mountain; and even if the flowers weren't in bloom, this is a really nice trek with absolutely great vistas. I've selected some of the flowers that really let you know that you are in the high altitude regions of the sierras. The first wildflower is the Alpine Columbine, (*Aquilegia pubescens*), a high altitude cousin of our much more common red version that is a delightful creamy white with occasional variations that even include some pink shades. Our next flower is Bruce's Cinquefoil (*Potentilla drummondii*), and is a member of the rose family with yellow flowers and leaves shaped to tell us it is definitely a cinquefoil. The last plant is also a member of the composite family and is called Alpine Gold (*Hulsea algida*), and likes elevations up to 14,000 feet. This beautiful flower treats us to bright yellow splotches of color at our highest elevations.



Bruce's Cinquefoil (*Potentilla drummondii*)

You can check out Bob's website (TuolumneWildflowers.com) and the Locations/Blooms tab with maps, location descriptions and lists of what plants you may find at what times of the year.



Alpine Gold (*Hulsea algida*)

Contents:

- Farewell to Spring
-page 2
- President's Message
-page 2
- Field trips -page 3
- Chapter Officers & Chair Persons
-page 4

Editor's Note

The deadline for newsletter contributions or corrections is the 10th of each month prior to publishing.
Contact Conny Simonis at conny@simonis.org or (209) 588-0484

President's Message

Greeting to all!

I hope everyone's summer is going well and that you're enjoying our recent warm up. With this warmer weather and the opening of most access points into the Stanislaus National Forest comes the opportunity to observe our subalpine and alpine blooming seasons. For those wanting a simple car outing, any drive over one of our nearby passes will delight in roadside glimpses of reds, yellows and blues of beautiful blooming wildflower displays.

I would like to remind everyone to mark your calendar for September 11th so that you can attend our Growing with Natives Symposium. This is a new event for the chapter and will feature a very well known speaker, Glenn Keator, and events to participate in hands on question and answer sessions with local experts regarding your issues about growing native plants in your home environments.

We will be having our last Plant ID workshop of the summer on Thursday, August 5th starting at 7:00 PM in the county library on Greenley road. Anyone who has a question about plant identification is invited to attend. A reminder to everyone that attends is that you should bring either a jpeg photo file of bloom and leaf or printed pictures of the plant in question.

It's still not too late to participate in one of our future field trips and enjoy a refreshing outing along with an opportunity to learn about some of our nearby wildflowers in their natural habitats. I look forward to seeing you on one of these outings or meeting you at one of our scheduled events.

--Bob Brown, President



Suzanne & Jeff Harmon, and Frank Rauschwalbe work on the identification of a yampah (*Perideridia sp.*) near Heenan Lake. Photo J. Haas

FAREWELL TO SPRING

It has been a glorious spring here between 1,000 and 3,000 feet in the Sierra foothills. Farewell to spring has been widespread and abundant but is not the only wildflower to give us notice that summer has begun. By the 4th of July weekend most of us are thinking about field trips to the high Sierra. This year with the late snow and cool spring some native plant enthusiasts are staying down low longer while others are finding wildflowers between melting snow banks. Some of us who remain at the lower elevations are appreciating the flowers still blooming as the hills turn brown.

Why do some plants wait until summer to flower? At least some of these are what are called "long day plants". These initiate flower when the nights are 10 hours long or shorter. They flower before the short day plants which flower during the July-September period. It is the dark period length which is critical. There are lots of other "day neutral plants" which flower not in response to day length but to temperature, stage of maturity or a combination of factors. Got that? You could check a "Plant Biology" text to learn more about photoperiodism. One long day plant flowering along roadsides in early summer is manyflower tobacco (*Nicotiana acuminata*). All species of tobacco plants contain several quite harmful toxins and should not be eaten nor smoked.

Another of the roadside plants flowering in early summer is moth mullein (*Verbascum blattaria*). This native of Eurasia has been used medicinally and as a garden ornamental. The flower color, genetically controlled, is most commonly yellow but some populations are white or purple flowered. White flowered wild carrot (*Daucus carota*) is often called "Queen Ann's Lace" and is closely related to the cultivated carrot. It came here from Eurasia as a garden vegetable. Fennel (*Foeniculum vulgare*) is also found in roadside areas and its foliage is used as a vegetable and its seeds for flavoring. Some people call this plant anise. Mexican whorled milkweed (*Asclepias fascicularium*) found in similar areas. It is one of the food plants for Monarch butterfly larvae. The chemicals that the larvae get from the plant protect them from predators. All milkweeds are highly toxic to many animals including humans, horses and chickens.

The common sunflower (*Helianthus annuus*) also flowers in summer. It is a native wild type of the cultivated sunflower. The seeds are excellent food for small birds. Other members of the sunflower family flowering in summer are telegraph plant (*Heterotheca grandiflora*), common madia (*Madia elegans*) and virgate tarweed (*Holocarpha virgata*). The tarweed turns some fields yellow when the grass dries. It makes some areas of rangeland unpalatable to livestock but it does produce edible seed for wildlife and its pollen is an important food for bees. St. Johnswort or Klamathweed (*Hypericum perforatum*) is the "poster plant" for biological control. Several introduced beetles have greatly reduced this troublesome plant. But what remains is toxic to livestock, particularly those with light colored skin. Other plants still flowering at these lower elevations include toyon (*Heteromeles arbutifolia*), bush monkey flower (*Mimulus aurantiacus*), and buckeye (*Aesculus californica*). As the hills turn brown, the temperatures rise and the streams and rivers drop we still have these flowering plants to remind us that much of the vegetation is not dead but "resting" and waiting for another glorious spring.

Steve Stocking, Education Chair

Membership: If you change your mailing or e-mail address, be sure to send a notice to: Jennie Haas, 19287 James Circle, Groveland, 95321 jhaas@sonnet.com. (209-962-4759); and California Native Plant Society, 2702 K. St., Ste 1, Sacramento, CA 95816.

This will keep your Newsletter on time and save postage.

Non-member subscription: \$6.50/year.

Dedicated to the Preservation of California native flora

WORKSHOP IN SOUTH LAKE TAHOE

Vegetation Rapid Assessment/Relevé Workshop
South Lake Tahoe, Aug 11-13, 2010
Instructors: Julie Evens and Deborah Stout

TARGET AUDIENCE: Professional and student botanists, ecologists, resource managers, and conservationists. Participants should have an initial understanding of the subject matter and basic plant identification skills. This course focuses on sampling plant communities using the CNPS combined vegetation rapid assessment/relevé method. **LOCATION:** Emerald Bay Conference room, Lake Tahoe Basin Management, College Drive, South Lake Tahoe and nearby field locations (fens). **COURSE DESCRIPTION:** This course will be a combination of lecture and field exercises in vegetation sampling, with a focus on collecting data using the CNPS combined vegetation rapid assessment/relevé method. We will discuss applications of fine-scale vegetation sampling, classification and mapping, how to document rare natural communities, and how vegetation information fits into planning documents. **COST:** CNPS Members: \$310, Non-members: \$335. For details and registration go to <http://cnps.org/cnps/education/workshops/index.php>. Reduced or waived fees may still be available for students and under-employed people. Go to http://cnps.org/cnps/education/work_exchange.php to apply. For questions needing a human response, call or email Josie Crawford at (916) 447-2677 or jcrawford@cnps.org to apply.

FIELD TRIPS

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. Our field trips are open to everyone. Bring a friend or two. It is Chapter policy, enacted March 2010, that pets are not allowed on our field trips. We would appreciate everyone's adherence to this policy.



Mountain pride, penstemon (*Penstemon newberryi*)
Hammill Canyon field trip
Photo: J. Haas

Steve Stocking reports that he had a good group on Saturday June 26 at Grant Grove in Kings Canyon National Park. Only one attendee was from our Chapter area (Sonora). One resident of San Diego read about the field trip in our newsletter on the State CNPS website. There were also two people from Reedley, two of Steve's friends from Stockton and a National Park volunteer who had taken Steve's seminar in the past. Steve said that there were "too many flowers to name, but in a Lodgepole Forest where the snow was just melting the decomposed granite areas held the following: purple mountain-parsley) *Oreonana purpurascens* (purple mountain-

parsley, (*Cymopterus terebinthinus*) Terebinth spring-parsley, *Mimulus whitneyi* and *Dicentra nevadensis* (Tulare County bleeding heart)."

Also on June 26th, the Monitor Pass field trip with leader Pat Stone was a great treat of high mountain wildflowers and incredible views. A small group of seven wandered among the masses of aspen onion (*Allium bisceptrum* var. *bisceptrum*) and Antelope bush (*Purshia tridentata*) in full bloom near Heenan Lake. We saw other blooming plants such as checker bloom (*Sidalcea* sp.), Anderson's larkspur (*Delphinium andersonii*), meadow penstemon (*Penstemon rydbergii* var. *oreocharis*), and mountain mule ears (*Wyethia mollis*). Back toward Markleeville, we stopped to see desert peach (*Prunus andersonii*) and prickly poppy (*Argemone munita*) in bloom. The ride home was capped off by a quick visit with the most exquisite Drummond's anemone (*Anemone drummondii*) on top of Sonora Pass.

The July 10th Hammill Canyon field trip, led by Pat Stone was also full of excellent wildflowers. The trip, attended by six enthusiasts, was perfectly timed, catching mountain mule ears, the fragrant mountain whitethorn (*Ceanothus cordulatus*) and many other higher elevation plants in bloom. We saw California geranium (*Geranium californicum*), mountain pride penstemon (*Penstemon newberryi*), dwarf lousewort (*Pedicularis semibarbata*) and a wonderful display of shooting stars (*Dodecatheon* sp.) among the many species viewed. It was a great day in the high country.

Many thanks to Steve Stocking and Pat Stone for leading these excellent field trips!

July 24 - Sonora Pass. Leader: Scott Brush. Hiking level: moderate (high elevation). Sonora Pass is widely recognized for its fantastic show of wildflowers. Timed to catch the flowers at peak bloom, we'll wander the area taking in the best. Meet at 9:00 a.m. at the Sonora McDonalds parking lot next to the new Kohl's, on Mono Way, in the Junction Shopping Center, in East Sonora. For more information, contact Jennie Haas at (209) 962-4759, jhaas@sonnet.com.

August 21 - Bennettville and Fantail Lake. Leaders: Judy and Barry Breckling. Hiking level: easy (4-mile round trip with less than 250 feet of elevation gain). We're likely to find lots of high-country wildflowers on the way to Fantail Lake, which sits at almost 10,000 feet. Along the way we'll visit the historic mining community of Bennettville. We'll meet at the Forest Service pullout overlooking the west end of Tioga Lake, about three quarters of a mile east of Tioga Pass, at 10:00 a.m. From there we'll carpool to the day-use parking area just outside of Junction Campground. Travel time from Groveland is about 2 hours. If you'd like to hook up with carpoolers outside Yosemite, meet at 8:00 a.m. at the library parking lot in Groveland (next to Mary Lavaroni Park on Main Street, Highway 120). For more information, contact Barry/Judy at (209) 878-3041 or at barryb@coepark.org.



CNPS Sierra Foothills Chapter
 19287 James Circle
 Groveland, CA 95321

Non-Profit Organization
 U. S. Postage Paid
 Permit No. 83
 Sonora CA 95370

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Chapter Officers and Chairpersons

PRESIDENT	Bob Brown	928-9281	rbrown4674@aol.com
VP AMADOR CO.	OPEN		
VP CALAVERAS CO.	Robert & Judy Dean	754-5887	dean@goldrush.com
VP MARIPOSA CO.	Ann Mendershausen	742-7734	ralphr@sierratel.com
VP TUOLUMNE CO.	Tom Hofstra	586-7440	hofstra@biology.ucsc.edu
SECRETARY	Stephanie Garcia	586-3593	sgarcia@mlode.com
TREASURER	Suzanne Harmon	728-8472	soozanne_h@yahoo.com
CONSERVATION CO-CHAIR	Pat Stone	984-0304	patmstone@gmail.com >
CONSERVATION CO-CHAIR	Tom Hofstra	586-7440	hofstra@biology.ucsc.edu
EDUCATION CHAIR	Steve Stocking	754-9020	snlsox@earthlink.net
FIELD TRIP COMMITTEE	Jennie Haas	962-4759	jhaas@sonnet.com
GROWING AREA MGR.	Stephanie Garcia	586-3593	sgarcia@mlode.com
HOSPITALITY COORD.	Winifred Stone	984-3638	
INVASIVE EXOTICS	Veda Scherer	728-8921	scherwoodforest@sbcglobal.net
SALES COORD.	Pat Reh	536-0871	
MEMBERSHIP COORD.	Jennie Haas	962-4759	jhaas@sonnet.com
NEWSLETTER EDITOR	Conny Simonis	588-0484	conny@simonis.org
PLANT SALES CHAIR	Carolee James	928-4886	cvjames@frontiernet.net
SPRING PLANT SALES COORD.	Stefani Reichle	533-3181	carpecircus@yahoo.com
PROGRAM CHAIR	Bob Brown	928-9281	rbrown4674@aol.com
PUBLICITY COORD.	Conny Simonis	588-0484	conny@simonis.org

JOIN NOW!

Please include me as a CNPS member.
 Student/Retired/Limited income .. \$25
 Individual or Library \$45
 Family or Group \$75
 Supporting..... \$75
 Plant Lover \$100
 Patron..... \$250
 Benefactor \$500
 Bristlecone \$1000
 As always, donations above the membership level chosen will be greatly appreciated.

Name _____
 Address _____
 City _____
 State _____ Zipcode _____
 Telephone _____

(Dues and gifts to CNPS are tax deductible)

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 Tel. (916) 447-2677 - Fax (916) 447-2727 Membership includes the quarterly Fremontia magazine, CNPS Bulletin and the monthly Shooting Star newsletter.

www.cnps.org
[www.Twitter.com/SIE_CNPS](https://www.twitter.com/SIE_CNPS)