

# The Shooting Star

Publication of the

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



## What's Blooming in December

Continuing my theme from last month, I want to keep increasing your desire to get out and see some of our local wildflowers that will be blooming in the coming months. All of these flowers were found growing along side the road on the drive down to the Wards Ferry bridge about the middle of March.

The first selection is Spider or Bentham's Lupine (*Lupinus benthamii*), that is fairly distinctive by its long slender palmate leaves. Our second selection is the California Saxifrage (*Saxifraga californica*), that typically has stems filled with multiple white blooms. The last flower is the Caterpillar Phacelia (*Phacelia cicutaria*), that likes the steep rocky hillside slopes of the banks of the roadway. One of the really remarkable things about our area is that you can view these same flowers blooming in other locations both higher and lower in elevation over a span of nearly two months.

The higher the elevation the later the bloom.



Bentham's Lupine (*Lupinus benthamii*)

Photos: Bob Brown



California Saxifrage (*Saxifraga californica*)

You can check out Bob's website ([TuolumneWildflowers.com](http://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.

### 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](mailto:conny@simonis.org) or (209) 588-0484



Caterpillar Phacelia (*Phacelia cicutaria*)

## Calendar

Thursday, December 2 at 6:00 pm

**Location:** Willow Springs Club House, 20522 Willow Springs Drive, Soulsbyville. **Bring:** a dish of food to share, your own place setting, (cups, plates, silverware, napkins, etc.) Coffee will be served. **Directions:** From Sonora, take H'wy 108 east approx. 10 mi., go right on Soulsbyville Road for 1/8 mi.; go left on Willows Springs Drive for 1/4 mi; (past the Post Office on your right). The "Willow Springs Ranch" Office and Club House are on the left. **Welcome! Program:** Bring 10-15 slides or flash stick of California native plants, or field trips. This is a fun evening.

## President's Message

The nominating committee's slate was voted on and approved at our November meeting. I want to send a special welcome to our new Vice President for Tuolumne County, Patti Hohne, as well as welcoming back all of our returning board members. Remember if there is a non-elected position that you would like to fill or a committee that you would like to serve on, just let me know and I'll provide you with all of the details. We can always use more volunteers.

I look forward to seeing you at our December potluck and viewing all of your favorite "discoveries" of this past year. If you bring your slides in a digital format (jpeg preferred), just bring a flash-drive or a CD. We will also have a slide film projector if you should need to use that format. Remember that our starting time for this event is 6:00 PM and we will be meeting at the Willow Springs club house. Remember, you need to bring your own silverware, plates and glass or cup for the potluck.

I want to remind you that we do not have a meeting in the month of January and that you should mark your calendar for our February meeting. Dr. Tom Hofstra will be giving a presentation on local fungi.

--Bob Brown, President

### California Invasive Plant Council - Map the Spread to Stop the Spread

In 2006-2008 Cal-IPC mapped the existing distribution of all species in the Cal-IPC Inventory by county and Jepson floristic region. In 2010-2011 we're continuing to map at a finer resolution (7.5 minute USGS quadrangles).

The keystone of this effort is to gather a group of local botanists and land managers and map their expert knowledge. We're seeking input from CNPS volunteers with strong botanical skills and a regional knowledge of invasive plant distribution. Come participate in our data gathering meetings!

Our meetings have been informative and collaborative, with palpable excitement about the final mapping products. The outcomes of this project will enable users to answer questions like: What's here, What's on the move, What's on the way, What's ripe for eradication and What's ripe for containment.

To participate, please contact the Sierra Foothills chapter treasurer and Cal-IPC Field Mapping Coordinator, Suzanne Harmon at [smharmon@cal-ipc.org](mailto:smharmon@cal-ipc.org).

## MONOCOT SUCCESS FROM SEEDLINGS TO BLOOMING.

I sow most seed in Fall to stay out in winter rains. Monocot seed germination is like that of dicots: Some kinds never seem to come up, others germinate sparsely; a few (usually Alliums) can come up thickly. Unlike Dicots, though, all monocot seedlings look like weedy little grass blades, so watch out what you weed out.

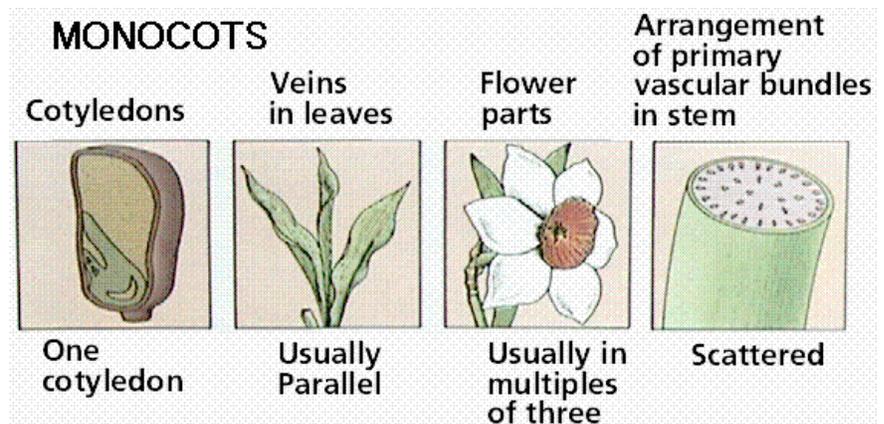
Because of their verticality, monocots can stay crowded in a pot their first year or two from seed, and be pulled apart later, preferably while dormant. But because of their deep roots, their container should be deep not shallow so that the seedling roots can feed the bulbs up to a size to endure their first summer dormancy.

Our dry heat from May to October is an impediment to first-year seedling monocot survival. Many are not seen returning to life in next fall's rains. These things I've found, may help:

- 1) Containerized baby monocots need to spend summer dormancy under shrubs or building overhangs, not in full July sun exposure at 2000'.
- 2) In between the worst heat spells, preferably on overcast days, I do water the dormancy pots lightly, once a week or two. We get very few summer showers, and flea-size to pea-size bulblets can lose their core moisture if held in pots throughout summer bone dry.
- 3) If, once or twice in a summer, we dump out the pots and inspect the dormant geophytes of any sort, we can see for ourselves whether they got too dry, too wet and rotten, or are staying just right and remaining alive with dry outer coats but moist interiors. Repot and water lightly.
- 4) NEVER leave any kind of geophyte, even if dormant and even if placed in all-day shade, in a bucket naked of soil protection, in late spring through summer. Our hot dry air bakes any exposed bulbs through-and-through amazingly quickly, while those remaining held in even dry ground can live on.
- 5) Referring especially to our common large Soaproot, but probably applying to other native monocots as well: tiny first year seedlings transplanted to open ground haven't survived well for me. Much better luck is had by growing-on Soaproot to finger sized bulbs then putting them in the ground in their gallon plugs odd soil between rains.

Note: All findings here written were at 2000', East Sonora.

-- Patricia Reh



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Membership: If you change your mailing or e-mail address, be sure to send a notice to: Jennie Haas, <[jhaas953@gmail.com](mailto:jhaas953@gmail.com)> 19287 James Circle, Groveland, 95321, (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*

## FALL PLANT SALE

Whether it was our seminar in September on Gardening with Natives, or handing out the sale plant list or more people just 'getting it', the fall plant sale was a tremendous success! With over 1200 plants to choose from, the buyers came prepared with lists and notes; and within a few hours there were noticeably fewer plants in all areas. By the end of the sale less than 190 plants remained of the 1200 plus that had been brought to start the day.

From the flowering Zauschnerias to ferns, shrubs, grasses and trees, the buyers zeroed in and walked away with great buys. Liners, seeds and bulbs were also favorites of many buyers. With the help of Stephanie, Patti, Bob, Pat Stone, Vera, Val and Jennie, buyers were given the best advice as to what to plant where and snatched up the plants with gay abandon! What a sight!!

As always there are so many Chapter members to thank for making this such a successful sale including the above mentioned members. One member who deserves a great big thank you and special recognition is Pat Gogas. Pat went above and beyond in helping with the sale by seeing that a delivery from one of our wholesalers made it to the growing area one very early morning, helped in tagging and unloading plants from two other deliveries, supplied two vehicles for transport to the sale site, worked as a cashier during the sale and then helped with bringing unsold plants back to the growing area. So, THANK YOU PAT!

And to Korena, Margaret, Sherrin, Stefani, Tobie, Sheila, Eileen, Marian, Angie, Pat Reh, Conny, Sharon, Billy, Heather, Steve, Dan, Walter and Nancy we send our heartfelt thanks. Without you this sale could not happen. From loading and unloading plants, to furnishing trucks, cashiering, tag pulling, selling bulbs, seeds, and books, they did it all! And did it well!

As always we want to thank our gracious 'hostess with the moistest,' Beckwith, who supplies the tea, coffee and goodies that everyone looks forward to at each sale. And this year we would like to say thank you to Herb, Beckwith's husband, who helps tote all of her gear and supplies in and out of the car and up into the gazebo. Both workers and buyers greatly appreciate their efforts.

Now it's time to look forward to 2011 and even bigger sales as we educate more and more foothill residents to the wonders of growing natives. Enjoy the holidays and we'll see you next year.

*Carolee James, Plant Sale Chair  
Stephanie Garcia, Growing Area Manager*

### John Muir Television Program

A new program on PBS, Channel 6 On Sunday the 19th of December at noon Channel 6 will present a new program entitled "Lee Stetson the Voice of John Muir". "In Lee Stetson, the voice of John Muir", you'll not only learn about Stetson's remarkable career, you'll also witness how Muir's eloquent words written a century ago, continue to influence beliefs and attitudes. You'll journey with Stetson as he traces Muir's roots through the Wisconsin farm fields, be inspired by excerpts from his five stage plays, and be captivated by both the majesty of Yosemite and the spirit of John Muir." Lee Stetson is the voice of John Muir in "The National Parks-America's Best Idea". The presentation also includes the bonus feature of Muir's thrilling account of being trapped on a glacier with a wee dog named "STICKEEN". John Muir will also be featured on Nov.-25 and Nov 27 on Channel 6, "California Gold".

## FIELD TRIPS

In spite of a light drizzly rain, seven chapter members decided to proceed with the October 23<sup>rd</sup> Fall Colors Field Trip. The black oaks (*Quercus kelloggii*) were several shades of yellow and orange from Groveland to the Yosemite boundary along Highway 120. The big leaf maples (*Acer macrophyllum*) were a stunning chartreuse from Buck Meadows on into the Park. The dogwoods (*Cornus nuttallii*) were spectacular between the Yosemite National Park's Big Oak Flat entrance station and the Crane Flat turnoff. There were many postcard views of the dogwoods among the conifers along this stretch. We stopped a couple of times along the Tioga Road (Highway 120) to take in the views and stretch our legs. The drizzle added a color dimension, boosting the contrast between the darks of the tree barks and the lights of the turning fall leaves.

We were turned back at the east end of Tuolumne Meadows not long after CalTrans closed the pass due to ice on the East Side. But, not to be deterred from enjoying the day, we detoured back to Buck Meadows for lunch then struck off north along Cherry Lake Road to enjoy the colors in the National Forest. We found our way to Cottonwood Road and stopped to gaze into the Clavey River where we talked about the various wonders that can be found there. Thank you, Pat Stone for enthusiastically guiding us on this truly enjoyable day.

Our chapter's ad hoc field trip committee will be meeting in late January or early February to plan our 2011 field trips. If you have any destinations to suggest or would like to lead a trip, contact Jennie Haas at [jhaas953@gmail.com](mailto:jhaas953@gmail.com) or (209) 962-4759.

*--Jennie Haas*



*Black Oaks (Quercus kelloggii)  
Calphoto © 1995 Saint Mary's College of California*

**Note from the Editor: A happy Holiday season to all.  
The Shooting Star will return in February 2011.**



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 I Wish to affiliate with the Sierra Foothills Chapter.  
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