

The Shooting Star

Publication of the

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



What's Blooming in April

I have chosen the Westside trail (just outside of Tuolumne) as this month's location because of its diversity of species (more than 200 observed) and accessibility for just about anyone. This is an old railroad grade so the trail has a very gentle slope in some areas and is nearly level for most its length. The plants are just starting to bloom in numbers in April and reach their peak in early to middle May.

Our first flower, a member of the mint family (*Lamiaceae*) is Chia (*Salvia columbariae*). An intense blue flower in whorls on a longish stem that catches your eye when walking by and you chance upon it on a hillside. The next flower is a member of the stonecrop family (*Crassulaceae*) and its common name of Live Forever (*Dudleya cymosa*). It has very thick, succulent basal leaves and a flowering stalk with yellow and orangish-red flowers. It is found on rocky hillsides in cracks and crevices and its leaves remain green year round. Our last plant is a member of the figwort family, (*Scrophulariaceae*) and its common name is Purple Owl's Clover (*Castilleja exserta*). It's interesting that in spite of the common name it is not a clover or even related to the pea family (*Fabaceae*). In some years there are locations on the trail that have dozens of these plants in one location that make a striking purple display of flowering heads. Overall this is a great location to visit almost anytime from April through the end of June to find blooming wildflowers. Hopefully, this will be a location that you will explore at your own pace.



Chia (*Salvia columbariae*)

Photos: Bob Brown



Live Forever (*Dudleya cymosa*)

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.



Purple Owl's Clover (*Castilleja exserta*)

CALENDAR

Thursday, April 7th, Board Meeting,
6:00 pm, (all members welcome)

7:00 pm General Meeting. Location: Tuolumne County Library, 480 Greenley Road, Sonora. Refreshments will be served.

PROGRAM: Jim Shevock, a world renowned expert on mosses, will be giving a presentation entitled "Moss distributions in California: Landscapes influenced by the Californian, Great Basin and Desert Floristic Provinces."

(See page 3 for more information about our speaker)

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

Carol Witham's presentation on vernal pools was simply outstanding. Those of you who have always wanted to know something about vernal pools and were not at our March meeting, missed a great chance to learn about one of the more unusual flora and fauna habitats in our area. I think everyone went away from the meeting having added to their personal knowledge about the plants and animals of these ephemeral locations.

I again encourage all of you to get out and start your active participation in our chapter events in 2011 by assisting with our Spring Native Plant Sale on April 9th. Call Stefani Reichle, 533-3181, if you would like to volunteer and she can tell you what positions she still needs filled. Remember the location is now in Rocca Park in downtown Jamestown from 9:00 AM to 1:00 PM.

I'm personally more than ready for an end to the snow at my elevation and will tolerate what remaining rain and showers we have in store so that I can get outside and start observing this year's flower blooms. I've made a couple of wildflower walks already and have observed as many as 20 or so species on the Westside trail. I'm sure those of you who live at lower elevations have already started to see some of your early bloomers. I really do hope that each of you will have an opportunity this year to sample one or more of our field trips and use that as a means to observe first hand our great displays of wildflowers.

Start planning on attending our April 7th meeting featuring Jim Shevock, a world renowned expert on mosses, who will be visiting us and giving a presentation on "Californina Mosses". Mark your calendars for our May 5th meeting when another special guest speaker, Martin Hutten, a botanist with Yosemite National Park will give us an informative talk on his work cataloging Yosemite's lichens.

--Bob Brown, President

Check our Twitter page to see what's blooming in our chapter area:

http://www.twitter.com/SIE_CNPS

SOME THINGS OLD ARE NEW AGAIN

I recently cleaned out some paper files from the days before computer files and found some interesting CNPS field trip and activity announcements from the society circa 1971-1981.

The Society began in 1965 with a successful effort to save the Regional Parks Botanical Garden in the east bay hills. In 1971 I received a "Notice of Arboretum Crisis!" The U.C. Davis budget for their campus arboretum shrank from \$50,000 in 1969-1970 to zero for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 1971. We were urged to write to the Chancellor of the U.C. system or to the President of U.C. Davis to protest this crisis.

State budget crises are nothing new! This turned out to be another successful effort and the arboretum is well worth a visit today.

The "California Native Plant Society Field Schedule" for spring 1971 listed field trips all over central California which were led, mostly by professors from area universities, colleges and state and federal agencies. You may recognize the names of some of the Leaders; John Tucker, U.C.D., Bob Sweeney, S.F.State, Robert Rodin, Cal Poly., and Dean Taylor, Dick Hartesveldt, Wayne Roderick, Peter Ruhtzof, Ken Stocking, Don Lynch and many others. A notable leader was G. Ledyard Stebbins who also led in the formation of the first CNPS chapter, Sacramento.

Destinations of trips included, Salt Point Sonoma Co., Mt. San Benito, Chew's Ridge in the Santa Lucias, San Carlos burn, Montgomery Meadows-Sword Lake (familiar?), Backbone Creek Research Natural Area for *Carpenteria californica*, Whittaker Forest.

In Kings Canyon National Park, and Duncan Mills Marsh in Sonoma County. These were society field trips for members from all over the state. It was not long before these trips drew too many participants and trips were taken over by the newly forming chapters.

By 1981 many of the present day chapters had been formed and the trips became more regional, planned by the chapters and led by chapter members. Field trips have always been a major activity of CNPS. The study of plants and their natural habitats leads to understanding and supports efforts to protect the flora. Field trips have also been one of the major ways we attract new members and sustain the interest of continuing members. Carol Witham, our March speaker and past CNPS President wrote an interesting article "The California Native Plant Society: Its Mission, History and Heart" in the January 2005 issue of our journal *Fremontia*. This 40th year issue gives a good overview of our society and its chapters as do the other 3 anniversary issues. Our chapter has a great schedule of field trips this season. Get out and enjoy in the tradition of CNPS!

-- Steve Stocking, Education Chair

**Spring Plant Sale, April 9th
in Jamestown, Rocca Park (off Main Street)
Hours are from 9:00am to 1:00pm.**

(See page 3 for more information)



One of the plants available at our Spring Plant Sale is the California Fuchsia (*Epilobium canum*)
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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> 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

VOLUNTEERING!

This message is for members of the Sierra Foothills Chapter of CNPS and any other native plant enthusiast. As you have read in the previous newsletter and in this issue, the Spring Plant Sale is about to happen (Saturday, April 9th). Stefani Reichle, who coordinates this sale, is in need of many volunteers to make the sale a success. As the Plant Sales Chairperson, I too, am asking YOU, our members and friends, to step up and work a few hours either before sale day or on sale day to show our community that native plant folks do indeed “walk the talk”!

As members of CNPS you stand out as someone who cares about our native plants and the community you live in. Please put that care and concern into action by working a few hours to insure that the Spring sale will be fully staffed. Without members willing to volunteer their time next year there may not be a Spring sale.

--Carolee James, Plant Sale Chair

2011 Spring Plant Sale, April 9th in Jamestown, Rocca Park (off Main Street) Hours are from 9:00am to 1:00pm.

The Spring Sale is approaching and there are still many open spots on the volunteer list. We could use two more vehicles to take plants home from the growing area (our Chapter's Shooting Star Nursery) at 5pm the Friday night before and bring them to Rocca Park in the morning for the Sale. The plant deliveries from the outside nurseries will be Monday, April 4th and Tuesday, April 5th, times still unknown. It is very helpful to have people there to help unload as well as place price tags in the plants. There are still open spots for tag pullers and cashiers, both in the 9am to 11am slot, as well as the 11am to 1pm. Someone to help direct people unloading plants to the correct areas in Rocca Park would be wonderful. Experts to help shoppers make their selections are very valuable, as are people to help set-up, tear-down, and general offering to help.

As crazy as it sometimes feels, it is actually quite fun. And don't forget volunteers get first dibs at the plants (before 8am only please). There will be Redbuds again, as well as those wonderful Pacific Coast Iris, several varieties of California Fuchsia, as well as the lovely Fuchsia-Flowered Gooseberry, although this last is best planted in the Fall after it's summer dormancy.

The Plant Sales are a group effort that brings in a little revenue, but more importantly spreads the awareness and joy of planting with natives. Bring cardboard boxes if you have some for shoppers to carry their plants to their cars. Please call me: Stefani Reichle 533-3181.

SHOOTING STAR GROWING AREA

We are in need of helpers in the growing area. After the April plant sale, we will be potting up plants for future sales. We will be meeting on the following Mondays at 10 am - May 2, May 9, and May 23. We usually spend 1 to 2 hours at a time. Whatever time you have available will be greatly appreciated. Please call Stephanie Garcia at 586-3593.

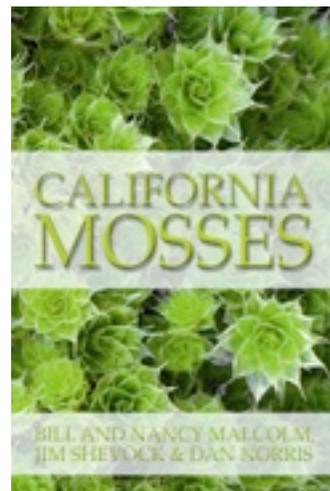
APRIL SPEAKER

Jim Shevock, retired in 2009 from public service with a botanical career spanning more than 30 years between the USDA Forest Service and the National Park Service. He is currently a research associate and fellow at the California Academy of Sciences, Department of Botany and a research associate at the University Herbarium, UC Berkeley. Initially a vascular plant taxonomist by training with a focus on the flora of the southern Sierra Nevada, Jim migrated to the study of bryophytes (primarily mosses) in the late 1990s. He has collaborated with Dan Norris on the study of California mosses culminating in the 2004 publication titled *Contributions toward a bryoflora of California part 1: A specimen-based catalogue of mosses, and part 2: A key to the mosses* published in Madroño 51: 1-269.

A recent book titled 'California mosses' by Bill & Nancy Malcolm, Shevock, and Norris was published in the fall of 2009. This picture book with nearly 2,200 color images provides a portal into the wonderful diversity of California mosses. His plant collections, currently at over 37,000 specimens, are housed at the herbarium of the California Academy of Sciences (CAS) with selected duplicates provided to major bryophyte herbaria around the world.

Jim has 7 flowering plants and 5 mosses named in his honor included the moss genus *Shevockia*, endemic to Yunnan Province, China.

A limited number of the *California Mosses* book will be available for sale at the April meeting. Jim has offered to autograph copies bought at or brought to the meeting. Copies of the book can also be ordered from the CNPS office in Sacramento, 916-447-2677, or on-line at www.CNPS.org.



California Mosses

EAST BAY COUNTIES ACTIVITY BRINGING BACK NATIVES GARDEN TOUR.

SUNDAY, May 1, 2011

A variety of bird- and butterfly-friendly, pesticide-free, water conserving, low maintenance gardens that contain 50% or more native plants will be open on Sunday, May 1, 2011, from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. at various locations throughout Alameda and Contra Costa counties. More than 40 garden talks will be scheduled throughout the day. Native plants will be sold at numerous locations over the course of the week-end in the Tour's Native Plant Sale Extravaganza; details will be added soon at <http://bringingbackthenatives.net/native-plant-sale-extravaganza>.

Register now at <http://bringingbackthenatives.net/> to receive your garden guide in the first mailing. This event is expected to fill; registering at this time will reserve your place on the tour. Visit "Preview the Gardens" <http://bringingbackthenatives.net/preview-2011-gardens> to read garden descriptions, view garden photos, and download plant lists.

For more information, <mailto:Kathy@KathyKramerConsulting.net> or call (510) 236-9558 between 9 am and 9 pm.



CNPS Sierra Foothills Chapter
 19287 James Circle
 Groveland, CA 95321

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Chapter Officers and Chairpersons

PRESIDENT	Bob Brown	928-9281	rbrown4674@aol.com
VP AMADOR CO.	OPEN		
VP CALAVERAS CO.	Robert & Judy	754-5887	dean@goldrush.com
VP MARIPOSA CO.	Ann Mendershausen	742-7734	ralphr@sierratel.com
VP TUOLUMNE CO.	Patty Hohne,	532-5847	phohne@gmail.com
SECRETARY	Stephanie Garcia	586-3593	sgarcia@mlode.com
TREASURER	Suzanne Harmon	728-8472	soozanne_h@yahoo.com
CONSERVATION CHAIR	Pat Stone	984-0304	patmstone@gmail.com >
FIELD TRIP COMMITTEE	Jennie Haas	962-4759	jhaas953@gmail.com
EDUCATION CHAIR	Steve Stocking	754-9020	snlsox@earthlink.net
MEMBERSHIP COORD.	Jennie Haas	962-4759	jhaas953@gmail.com
GROWING AREA MGR.	Stephanie Garcia	586-3593	sgarcia@mlode.com
PLANT SALES CHAIR	Carolee James	928-4886	cjames@frontiernet.net
SPRING PLANT SALES COORD	Stefani Reichle	533-3181	carpecircus@gmail.com
SALES COORD.	Pat Reh	536-0871	
PROGRAM CHAIR	Bob Brown	928-9281	rbrown4674@aol.com
NEWSLETTER EDITOR	Conny Simonis	588-0484	conny@simonis.org
HOSPITALITY COORD.	OPEN		
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INVASIVE EXOTICS	VACANT		

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 As always, donations above the membership level chosen will be greatly appreciated.
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 (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 Fremontia magazine (three times a year), CNPS Bulletin and the monthly Shooting Star newsletter.

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