



# The Shooting Star

SIERRA FOOTHILLS CHAPTER

PUBLICATION OF THE CALIFORNIA NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY

SEPTEMBER 2011



Drummond's Anemone



Limestone Hawksbeard



Gray's Cymopterus

*September's Photographer:  
Bob Brown*

## President's Message

I'd like to start with another reminder of our upcoming Gardening with Natives Seminar that is to be held on Saturday, September 10<sup>th</sup> starting at 9:00 and running till 4:00 with a lunch included. Contact Patti Hohn (352-4312) to register and assure your place in what promises to be a great day with our featured speaker, Bart O'Brien.

Our Fall Plant Sale is scheduled for Saturday, October 15<sup>th</sup> and Carolee James (928-4886) is actively recruiting volunteers to help with all of the necessary work to make it happen. If you're interested in helping give Carolee a call and she will find a job for you.

September begins our regular meetings again after our summer hiatus. Our speaker will be Mary Anderson who will be talking about "Landscaping with Natives". For those of you who know Mary, you are aware that she is an unending

source of information and specifics on how to grow all types of native plants in our local area. Although we will all miss her plants at our plant sales because of her retiring from her nursery responsibilities, we will continue to be able to benefit from her many years of successes and sometime failures with her own horticultural experiences as she shares them with us. Bring your own landscaping and gardening questions and need to know items so that Mary can answer them and help you with your problems.

I look forward to seeing you after our "summer break" and learning what botanical ventures you've had over the last few months.

-Bob Brown, President

**FALL PLANT SALE AND SEMINAR  
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### CALENDAR

**Thursday, September 1, at 6:00 pm.**

Board Meeting 7 pm General Meeting. (all members welcome)  
Location: Tuolumne County Library on 480 Greenley Road, Sonora. Refreshments will be served.

**PROGRAM:** Mary Anderson is our speaker for this evening. Her topic will be "Landscaping with Natives" and she will incorporate an extensive question and answer period for people wanting to discuss the particulars of their own landscaping requirements.

#### Membership:

If you change your mailing or e-mail address, be sure to send a notice to these people →

**This will keep your newsletter on time!**

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#### California Native Plants Society

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**Dedicated to the Preservation of  
California Native Flora.**

# 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. Check our website and Facebook pages or [http://www.twitter.com/SIE\\_CNPS](http://www.twitter.com/SIE_CNPS) for updates.

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

The July 23<sup>rd</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup> Sweetwater Mountains field trip led by Pat Stone was fabulous. Twelve members and guests participated. Once again, we lucked out with many plants in full glorious bloom. There were fields of pink Lemmon's onion (*Allium lemmonii*) among the sagebrush (*Artemisia tridentata*). The wet areas were lit up with columbines (*Aquilegia formosa*), western bistort (*Polygonum bistortoides*) and the elegant monkshood (*Aconitum columbianum*), among others. Up near Lobdell Lake, there were buckwheats (*Eriogonum* sp.), lupines (*Lupinus* sp.) and the amazingly bright blue showy penstemon (*Penstemon speciosus*) all in full bloom. Thank you, Pat for an outstanding field trip.

The July 30<sup>th</sup> Saint Mary's Pass field trip led by Bob Brown also caught high elevation plants in full bloom. Only three members participated in this trip – a very curious thing considering it is one of our favorite places to view alpine plants. Thank you, Bob for your expert leadership.

## August 27 – Reynolds Creek

**Moonworts.** Leader: Jennie Haas. Hiking level: easy. Moonworts are fern allies in the genus *Botrychium*. These fascinating, diminutive plants are quite elusive. We'll see a common species, two rare species and a new-to-California species discovered in 2010 – all in the same meadow. From Sonora, meet at 8:30a.m. at the back of the parking lot between the Sonora McDonalds and the new Kohl's, on Mono Way, in the Junction Shopping Center, in East Sonora. From Groveland, meet at 8:30a.m. at the Groveland Library parking lot. Both groups will meet at about 9:30 at the intersection of Cottonwood Road and Forest Road 3N01S, just east of Reed Creek. Contact Jennie for more info: 209-962-4759, [jhaas953@gmail.com](mailto:jhaas953@gmail.com). >>>

# Flowers Blooming This Month



This month I thought I'd share with you some of the flowers that we found on our field trip to St. Mary's Pass. The trailhead is just off of SR 108 about 4 miles west of Sonora Pass at an elevation of 9000+ feet. The trail on the way up winds through several areas that when they are in bloom can only be described as wild gardens that have some very nice varieties of plants. We saw more than 70 different species in bloom on our outing.

Our first flower is Drummond's Anemone (*Anemone drummondii*) page 1 top left) a member of the buttercup family Ranunculaceae and has a white flower. This particular flower was quite a treat for me in that I had not seen it blooming before and on our visit I got to see more than a thousand in bloom. The next flower is another flower that I had not seen blooming before and was Gray's Cymopterus (*Cymopterus cinerarius*), middle picture, which is a member of the carrot family Apiaceae and has a purplish looking flowering head and was found in limited numbers. The Limestone Hawksbeard (*Crepis intermedia*), right, which is a member of the sunflower or composite family Asteraceae was found near the top of the trail and has bright yellow flowers.

Hopefully, this can be another location that you will explore at your own pace and personally find enjoyment in discovering what's blooming here when you visit!

*There are no field trips in September. Our last field trip will be the Fall Colors field trip on Saturday, October 22. Details will be in the October Shooting Star.*

## FALL PLANT SALE

**Saturday, October 15<sup>th</sup>**, the fall Native Plant Sale will be held at Rocca Park in Jamestown. As always we ask members to help with the sale by volunteering for the various tasks which help make this a great sale. We will be asking for sign-ups at the September and October meetings.

Volunteers are needed to: unload and price plants from growers, provide trucks to transport plants to and from the sale, unload plants the morning of the sale, cashiers, tag pullers, and staffing membership and book tables.

If you are unable to attend the meetings, but would like to volunteer, please contact Carolee James at 928-4886 or [cvjames@frontiernet.net](mailto:cvjames@frontiernet.net), or Stephanie Garcia at [sjgarcia@mlode.com](mailto:sjgarcia@mlode.com)

## VOLUNTEERS NEEDED SHOOTING STAR GROWING AREA

We are getting ready for the October 15th plant sale. This is your opportunity to get a sneak preview of the plants that are going to the sale. We will meet on the following Mondays at 10 am – September 26th, October 3rd, October 10th. We usually spend 1 to 2 hours per visit. Whatever time you have available will be greatly appreciated. Please call Stephanie Garcia at 586-3593.

## FALL SEMINAR

On Saturday, September 10th, the Sierra Foothills Chapter of the California Native Plant Society will be hosting their 2nd Gardening with Native Plants Seminar at the Mother Lode Fairgrounds in Sonora. This all day event will feature Bart O'Brien as Keynote Speaker. Mr. O'Brien is co-author of two great books, "California Native Plants for the Garden", and the new "Reimagining the California Lawn". Emphasis this year is on transformations of traditional lawns and landscaping to native plant replacements. Fee for non-members before September 1 is \$35.00, for members before September 1, \$30.00. After September 1, member or non-member is \$40.00. Registration includes snacks and lunch.

If you would like to attend the seminar or more information, please contact Carolee James at 928-4886 or cvjames@frontiernet.net A brochure with registration form can be picked up at Columbia Nursery, Andys garden center, and The Old Depot Nursery in Standard.



Saint Mary's Pass, Photo: Barry Breckling



### Editor's Note

The deadline for contributions or corrections is the **10th of each month** prior to publishing. Contact [conny@simonis.org](mailto:conny@simonis.org) or (209) 588-0484

-Conny Simonis, Editor

# BIG LEAF MAPLE

## *The Big Golden Leaves of Fall*

**When the flora of California changes into its autumn robes, it does so with subtlety that might disappoint an Easterner.**

The predominant shift is into a freshening of the greens, echoed in the tender newness of the sprouting grass. In the high country, we see the vibrant yellows of the aspen. The warm pink dogwoods a little lower are spectacular. But in the moist regions of the foothills, our flashiest fall show is put on by the Big-leaf Maples, shining brilliantly against the dark cedar and fir.

*Acer macrophyllum* (actually, broad leaf maple) is the largest maple of the Pacific region. It can grow to 80 feet tall with an age of up to 200 years. By comparison, the Vine Maple (*Acer circinatum*) is a slender tree up to 25 feet tall, and the Dwarf Maple (*Acer glabrum*) grows as a thin-stemmed shrub or slender tree to 12 feet in height. Grown in the open, Big-leaf Maple trees will have shorter trunks and a broad, full, rounded crown of leaves. But when growing among conifers in the shade of a dense forest, the trees will form long, straight trunks clear of branches and a more narrow crown. Their most prominent characteristic is the huge leaf, up to 14 inches long and a foot wide. They have the distinctive maple "signature" of being palmately divided into five lobes.

In the spring, the new leaves have a wine-red cast, turning a pale pink as they unfold. When mature, they are dark green, smooth and some-what shiny on top, with a paler green underside. But in the fall, especially if frost nipped early, they turn a bright clear yellow that seems luminous in the late afternoon sunlight.

Yellowish-green "flowers" appear in the spring in small drooping clusters 4 to 6 inches long and have a light fragrance. The maple fruits mature into the distinctive twin wings, or samaras, and are covered with prickly bristle-like hairs -- uncomfortable, but not enough to deter children from breaking them in half and watching them "helicopter" down when thrown.

Big-leaf Maples prefer streamside, or riparian, conditions in the mid-foothill elevations. They do best in rich humous soils and tolerate shade. Their range extends from Alaska down through the

Sierras into Southern California and the San Bernardino Mountains.

With partial shade and supplemental water, *Acer macrophyllum* is a fine cultivated tree, fast-growing and with good seasonal interest. If you are interested in growing it, remember its preferred habitat, and try to duplicate the rich soil and even the shade of its streamside environment.

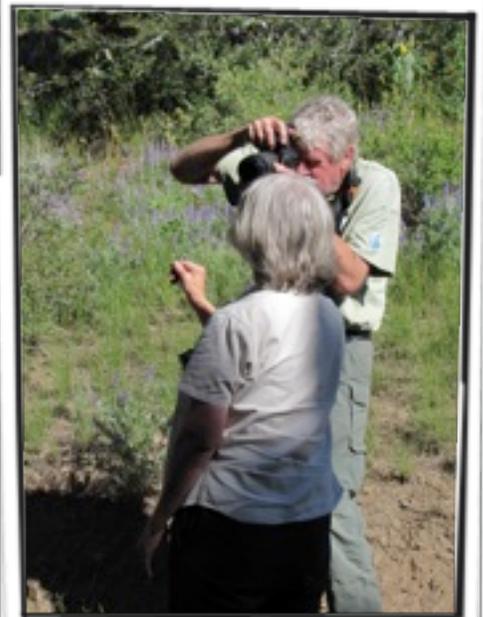
—Mary Anderson

**Note:** Big Leaf Maple trees will be available at our Fall Plant Sale!



Big-leaf Maple (*Acer macrophyllum*)

Photo: Barry Breckling



Barry and Judy Breckling photographing meadow rue (*Thalictrum fendleri*) Sweetwater Mtns. Field Trip. Pictured left are monkshood at the Sweet-water Mountains (Photos: J. Haas., & Shuteye Peak with Joanna Clines (Photo Barry Breckling)



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**Membership includes Fremontia magazine, printed 3 times per year, the CNPS Bulletin and the monthly newsletter The Shooting Star.**