Volunteers Needed for Symposium

We'll need some help with set up the afternoon before the Gardening with Natives Symposium. Set up will involve placing tables and chairs in the Sierra building at the Mother Lode Fair Grounds in Sonora on September 13th.

We'll also need some help with registering attendees at the door the morning of September 14th.

Helping with these chores will allow volunteers to buy their entrance to the symposium for the volunteer price of $15.00 (normal member cost is $35.00 in advance).

Contact Stephanie Garcia if you would like to volunteer: sigarcia@mlode.com, 209-586-3593.

See Gardening with Natives Symposium brochure for more details about the event.
-- Stephanie Garcia, Secretary

Reminder: Our monthly meetings and programs are on summer hiatus. We will reconvene in September.

Desert fleabane (Erigeron linearis) discovered on Gaylor Lakes field trip, Photo: Jennie Haas.
FIELD TRIPS

If you would like to be on our field trip alerts e-mail list, send an e-mail with the subject line “Field Trip e-mail List” to Jennie at jhaas953@gmail.com.

We had a great turnout for the June 29th Rare Plant Treasure Hunt on our search for Boechera evadens at Ebbetts Pass. Thirteen people spread out across the granite outcrops on both sides of the pass and also up into the volcanics on the west side of the pass. Each Boechera species encountered was keyed out or compared to our target’s description. However, the hidden rockcress, a rare alpine member of the mustard family, remained elusive. We had few clues to go by: the plant’s description, a photo of a plant in fruit, a general description of habitat preferred by the species and the location description by the original collector from the area of “Ebbetts Pass.” We’ll try expanding our search next year to try to find the plants at this most northerly occurrence of the species. Thank you to U.S. Forest Service, Calaveras Ranger District, who assisted in the planning and coordination of the trip.

Our July 13th Gaylor Lakes field trip was excellent. We caught the wildflowers at peak bloom including alpine aster (Aster alpigenus), western wallflower (Erysimum capitatum), dwarf lupine (Lupinus lepidus). These were just a few of the many species in bloom. The highlight of the trip was finding one of only two occurrences of the desert fleabane (Erigeron linearis) in Yosemite in full glorious bloom. Yosemite is at the southern extent of this species’ range. There are only three collections on record for Tuolumne County including the two in Yosemite. Thank you to Alison Colwell for her expert leadership on this awesome trip. Thanks also to Peggy Moore who was not able to attend but assisted in the planning and coordination of the trip. We don’t have any field trips planned for August. Our next outing will be the Rare Plant Treasure Hunt: Yosemite’s Lost Pacific Yews. Details will be in the September Shooting Star.

-- Jennie Haas, Field Trip Coordinator

What’s Blooming This Month?

This month’s blooming location is Mount Dana on the north eastern edge of Yosemite National Park located just off the Tioga Pass road. The trail goes to the summit of over 13000 ft and is an arduous hike. By selecting the right time of the year you can expect to observe more than 70+ blooming species with some especially nice “hanging gardens” along the upper half of the trail.

My first flower is the Alpine Gold, (Hulsea algida), and is a member of the Sunflower family, Asteraceae, and has a spectacular yellow bloom that is visible at quite a distance. You know for certain that you are in the high country when you find this flower as its growing range in the Sierras is from 9,500 to 14,000 feet. The next bloom is that of the Red or Purple Mountain Heather (Phylloodoce breueri), which is a member of the Heath family, Ericaceae, and can grow in masses. It has reddish purple colored blooms. The last bloom is that of the Cut Leaved Daisy (Erigeron compositus), that is another member of the Sunflower family, Asteraceae, and has a large white flower with deeply cut leaves. It is another flower of high elevation with its range of 8000 to 13000 feet in the Sierras.

This is not a hiking location for everyone and should be explored only by those in excellent physical health as even the starting elevation is nearly 10000 feet. I hope these pictures tempt you to get out and explore the great variety of wildflowers in our area that bloom throughout the year in their native environments and remember to bring your camera.

-- Bob Brown, Program Coordinator

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-- Bob Brown, Program Coordinator
Sign Up for E-Shooting Star

We’ve come quite a ways in converting members to the electronic version of The Shooting Star. We would like to sign up all members who have the ability to receive the newsletter by e-mail. Please help us reduce costs and production time by sending your e-mail address to Jennie Haas at jhaas953@gmail.com.

Welcome to New Shooting Star Editor

We are happy to announce that an editor for the Shooting Star has been found. Quinn Young has volunteered to take on this job and joins the chapter Board of Directors. Welcome Quinn!

-- Board of Directors

THE ‘SELF-GUIDED’ FIELD TRIP FOR NEXT SPRING

Sometimes our work, vacation or other schedules just don’t coincide with our Chapter’s scheduled spring field trips. So clip this article and then in the spring get out your native plant field guide and schedule your own trips. If you can arrange it, schedule a weekday trip to avoid the heavier weekend traffic. Make sure that you can pull all of the way off the road when you stop to view the beauty of spring.

The following 2 trips in Tuolumne County have been modified from trips suggested in our Chapter Newsletter of March 1991. Both of these can easily be combined with a visit to the popular Red Hills area near Chinese Camp.

Trip #1 Cooperstown Road. (early season, March to early April depending on the length of winter). Start at the old Keystone Mill on J59 just south of Highway 108/120. Go southwest on Green Springs Road, to Rock River Road. Make a short jog onto Wilms Road, then southeast on Cooperstown Road. This eventually connects with LaGrange Road (J59). Turn to the left, north. There are few places to stop on J59 so continue to Red Hills Road and take that to Chinese Camp.

Trip #2 Ward’s Ferry Road (later season, April to early May). From Sonora, go east on Highway 108 and turn south on Tuolumne Road. Turn right again on Ward’s Ferry Road. Follow Ward’s Ferry to Groveland. Go slow (the only real option) on Ward’s Ferry in the trip down into and back out of the Tuolumne River Canyon. Use the turn-outs to observe the outstanding wildflower display. Return by Highway 108 through Chinese Camp where you can take the short detour to see what is blooming in the Red Hills.

Amador County Trip. The grade up the north side of the Mokelumne River on Highway 49 is often ablaze with Foothill Poppies. You can continue north through Jackson and take Highway 88 east to Pine Grove. From Pine Grove follow the Signs to Indian Grinding Rock State Park where you can have a picnic. Then follow the signs through Volcano and on past Daffodil Hill on Horn Grade to Shake Ridge Road. Continue right on Shake Ridge and return to Highway 88. If you have time, take Red Corral Road from Highway 88 to West Point and then Highway 26 back to Mokelumne Hill at Highway 49.

Calaveras County Trip. One of the best spring trips in Calaveras County starts (or ends) at the New Hogan Dam access area on the Calaveras River just below the dam. This area can be reached from Highway 26 south of Valley Springs where you turn left on Silver Rapids Road. When you leave the river area take Baldwin St through Rancho Calaveras Estates or J14 south from Highway 26 to Jenny Lind and on to Milton. Look around the old Odd Fellows building and then turn on Hunt Road past the Calaveras County landfill. Part way across the beautiful Salt Springs Valley turn right on Salt Springs Valley Road, jog right, then left on Rock Creek Road and continue to Copperopolis.

Remember to respect private property. If you can find the AAA "Gold Country Region" map...that is a good one for all of these trips. Mine is all marked up with good routes and good stops. Or you can use your "I something" which may know the way?

-- Steve Stocking, Education Chair
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Mariposa Lily ................................. $1,500

As always, donations above the membership level chosen will be greatly appreciated.

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