



# The Shooting Star

SIERRA FOOTHILLS CHAPTER

CALIFORNIA NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY

MARCH 2017 Page 1



Honeybee visiting waterfall buttercup at Hite Cove, February 14, 2017 (Picture 2). Photo: Douglas Krajnovich



Sara orangetip visiting popcornflower at Hite Cove, February 14, 2017 (Picture 3). Photo: D. Krajnovich

## Spring Native Plant Sale in San Andreas April 8th from 10-1

This year's Spring Native Plant Sale will be in San Andreas. We will have the same selection of rare high quality plants for sale as well as a fine selection of books and material that every gardener and native plant lover should have in their personal library. Stay tuned for more details.

If you would like to volunteer or if you have any questions, please contact Stephanie Garcia at [sjgarcia@mlode.com](mailto:sjgarcia@mlode.com) or Judy Dean at [goldrushdean@yahoo.com](mailto:goldrushdean@yahoo.com).

## CRITICAL NEED FOR A NEW TREASURER

We have a critical need for a volunteer to step forward and take on the role of Treasurer. This member of the Chapter Board of Directors manages the budget, pays the bills and reports on the account balances to the board once per month. Contact Bob Dean, (209) 754-5887, [goldrushdean@yahoo.com](mailto:goldrushdean@yahoo.com) if you are interested.

## CALENDAR

### Thursday, March 2

CNPS Sierra Foothills General Meeting at **6:00 pm**. Program: To Be Announced

Location: Tuolumne County Library, 480 Greenley Road, Sonora, CA 95370

### Sunday, March 19

Sierra Foothills Board Meeting at **12:00 pm**

Gardening with Natives Symposium Planning Meeting from **1:00 to 4:00 pm**.

Location for Both: Starbucks in the Junction Shopping Center in east Sonora

### Sunday, March 26

Field Trip to Red Hills at **9:30 am** with Barry and Judy Breckling. Location: Meet at main parking area

If you change your mailing or e-mail address, be sure to send a note to Jennie Haas. This will keep your newsletter on time!

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*Dedicated to the Preservation of California Native Flora.*

## Field Trips

The Field Trip Committee has put together an awesome field trip schedule for this year. We're anticipating a great wildflower season if the rains continue and the grasses don't swamp the native annuals. You'll find the full schedule in the April Shooting Star newsletter. In the meantime, the field trip offerings for March and early April are below. Our field trips are always fun and educational. You don't need to speak Latin to have a good time. We hope that you'll join us.

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 [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 appreciate everyone's adherence to this policy.

**March 26 – Red Hills.** Leaders: Barry and Judy Breckling. Hiking level: Moderate with some rocky terrain. Red Hills is known statewide as one of the premiere locations for spring wildflowers, and the displays can be spectacular in "good" years. We'll meet at 9:30 a.m. at the main parking lot along Red Hills Road. From the intersection of Highways 120 and 49 at Chinese Camp, take Red Hills Road about 3½ miles to the parking area. For more information, contact the Brecklings at 209-878-3041 or at [breckling@garlic.com](mailto:breckling@garlic.com).

**April 2 - North Fork of Merced River.** Leader: Lynn Robertson. Hiking Level: first 2.5 miles - easy grade but can be rocky, last 1.25 miles - moderate grade on narrow trail on slope. This is a gorgeous wildflower hike in the Merced River Canyon, initially following the river downstream for 2.5 miles. Then we will head up the North Fork 1.25 miles to the three-tiered cascade; this portion is on a slope well above the water. Meet at the Merced River Recreation Area (Briceburg) Parking Area adjacent to Hwy 140 ~14 miles north of Mariposa at 9:00 am. We will carpool from there for 5 miles of dirt road driving. Please sign up so that any updates (rain, rockslide road closure, etc.) can be sent. For more information and to sign-up, contact Lynn at [billielr@sti.net](mailto:billielr@sti.net), 209-966-5316.

-- Jennie Haas, Field Trip and Membership Coordinator

## POPPIES: OUR HARBINGER OF SPRING (Reprinted)

Poppies, golden poppies, blooming in the sun, closing in the evening when the day is done. Poppies golden poppies flower of our State, growing from the mountains to the Golden Gate. How many kids today know that the California Poppy is our state flower? At this time of year we are reminded that the California Poppy truly deserves to be the State flower of the "Golden State". They have survived all the herbicides that have been sprayed in efforts to keep the roadsides clear. They have done this because they are prolific seeders and have many advocates. They are abundant in all wildflower seed mixes because they are successful and do reseed when most other annuals in such mixes are good for one season only. Some of these mixes include poppies of other flower colors such as white, pink, and red but these rarely persist. In Calaveras County a few poppies are already blooming on the new Highway 4 bypass of Angels Camp at the end of January. A few lupines and goldfields are the only other survivors from the CalTrans seed mix. The Calaveras Garden Club has also been active with projects to "re-golden Highway 49" and other groups have done some plantings in the Valley Springs area. Individual homeowners and businesses have made an effort to plant poppies on their properties as well.

By now our roadsides should be covered with poppies. Why have the results been spotty? Of course part of the problem is the spraying of herbicides but that is not all. Poppies do best where they have little competition from tall grasses and other weeds. For that reason they do best on deep, well drained, often gravelly and rocky soils. A good display is along the old railroad bed through Valley Springs which is deep, unsprayed gravelly soil. They also are not going to show their full beauty if the grass can grow high. They need full sun. You might wonder at what appear to be California Poppies on very rocky slopes along Highway 49 south of Jackson, in the Red Hills, near Pardee, New Melones Lake, and New Hogan lake and on other shallow and often "inhospitable soils" in our foothills.

These are beautiful displays of the large, orange form of another species, *Eschscholzia caespitosa*, the Tufted Poppy. It lacks the platform rim at the flower base which is so conspicuous in the California Poppy. Both have very dissected leaves, something like those of the unrelated carrot. But poppies, unlike carrots are certainly not edible. Many members of the poppy family have poisonous alkaloids as does their relative the opium poppy. These chemicals are also very bitter. This protects them from grazing animals and from voles and gophers which do not eat their roots. Native Americans took the juice as an emetic to make them vomit when they had a stomach ache and they boiled and concentrated juice to rub in their hair to kill lice. It is definitely not edible. One of our best natives for gardens our state flower has been planted far and wide.

--Steve Stocking, Education Chair

## 2017 Gardening with Natives Symposium

The symposium planning committee met for the second time on January 22<sup>nd</sup>. Once again, we had a productive meeting. So far, we have received commitments from three speakers and one tentative commitment. These are all professionals who will give us excellent presentations on their subjects. We intend to release the formal announcement of the symposium and speakers and begin taking reservations with the June Shooting Star newsletter.

Our planning committee is composed of Jennie Haas, Bob Dean, Diane Williams, Stephanie Garcia, Val Myrick, Margaret Klein, Nancy Piekarczyk and Debbie Jacobson. If you have suggestions or would like to lend us a hand with the planning, contact any of the committee members or come to our next meeting. We have a lot of tasks to complete between now and September 9<sup>th</sup> so additional committee members are welcome.

Our next planning meeting will be February 19<sup>th</sup> and the March meeting will be on March 19<sup>th</sup>. Both meetings will be from 1:00 to 4:00 at the Starbucks in the Junction Shopping Center in East Sonora. For more information, contact Jennie at [jhaas953@gmail.com](mailto:jhaas953@gmail.com), [209-962-4759](tel:209-962-4759).

--Jennie Haas, Field Trip and Membership Coordinator



**Anna's Hummingbird visiting a manzanita at Red Hills, January 29, 2017 (Picture 1). Photo: Douglas Krajnovich**

### What's Blooming?

(Thank you for the update from CNPS Member!)

I visited Red Hills and Hite Cove on January 29 and February 14, respectively. The only species blooming at Red Hills were Manzanita and Chaparral Currant. At one manzanita bush I heard the gentle buzz of bees and the louder buzz of a Hummingbird, so I sat down and waited for a bird to come within camera range. After a few minutes I got to witness a Hummingbird (probably a female Anna's) feeding on manzanita bells (see Picture 1). The bird's bill barely fit into the flower opening!

The Hite Cove trail has survived the winter storms with no major damage (so far). The worst obstacle was a small slide that came down on top of the trail that I had to clamber over. The South Fork is louder than I have ever heard it before. Deposits of sand and driftwood reveal the high-water mark of the January floods — much like a lateral moraine. Since my Hite Cove visit was two weeks later than Red Hills, the wildflowers were much further along. I counted 22x species in bloom, including: Western Rue Anemone, Waterfall Buttercups, Henderson Shooting Stars, Baby Blue Eyes, Foothill Poppies, California Saxifrage, Varied-leaf Nemophila, Fringepod, Popcornflower, Red Maids, Fiddleneck. I saw one early patch of Goldfields, and a single bloom of *Pseudobahia*. Picture 2 shows a honeybee visiting a Waterfall Buttercup. Picture 3 shows a Sara Orangetip on a Popcornflower.

I have walked the Hite Cove trail at least twenty times, but Feb. 14 was the first time that I had the trail *entirely to myself* — despite the fact that it was a warm sunny day with an unusually deep blue sky. Perhaps other regulars suspected what I also feared: namely, that the trail had suffered washouts during the storms. So far it is OK, but if you visit, pay extra-close attention to the condition of the trail.

-- Doug Krajnovich, CNPS Sierra Foothills Member

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**RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED**

| Chapter Officers and Chairpersons                               |                                |                      |  | JOIN NOW  |
|---|--------------------------------|----------------------|--|---|
| All phone numbers are 209 area code unless otherwise specified. |                                |                      |  | <p><b>PLEASE INCLUDE ME AS A CNPS MEMBER!</b></p> <p>Student/Retired/Limited income ...\$25<br/>           Individual ..... \$45<br/>           Family or Group ..... \$75<br/>           Library..... \$75<br/>           Plant Lover ..... \$100<br/>           Patron.....\$300<br/>           Benefactor ..... \$600<br/>           Mariposa Lily..... \$1,500</p> <p>As always, donations above the membership level chosen will be greatly appreciated.</p> <p>Name _____<br/>           Address _____<br/>           City _____ State _____ Zip _____<br/>           Telephone _____ E-mail _____<br/>           (Dues and gifts to CNPS are tax deductible)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> I Wish to affiliate with the <b>Sierra Foothills</b> Chapter.</p> <p>Please make your check payable to “CNPS” and send it to: 2707 “K” street, Suite 1, Sacramento, CA 95816 Tel. (916) 447-2677.</p> <p>Join or renew on-line at <a href="http://www.cnps.org">www.cnps.org</a>.</p> <p><b>Membership includes the journal Fremontia, CNPS Bulletin and the Sierra Foothills monthly newsletter, The Shooting Star.</b></p> <p style="border: 2px solid blue; padding: 5px; display: inline-block;"><b>Email: <a href="mailto:sierrafoothillscnps@gmail.com">sierrafoothillscnps@gmail.com</a></b></p> |
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