



# The Shooting Star

SIERRA FOOTHILLS CHAPTER

CALIFORNIA NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY

DECEMBER 2015

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Correction: The November monthly meeting date was misprinted as Nov. 6 but should have been printed as Nov. 5. My sincere apology to those affected by this error. -- Quinn Young

**REMINDER: NO NEWSLETTER IN JANUARY**

**CNPS FALL PLANT SALE at Rocca Park**, Photos: Quinn Young

## DECEMBER POTLUCK MEMBER'S SLIDESHOW

The December 3rd monthly meeting is our annual potluck dinner held at the Sonora Senior Center which is next to the Tuolumne County Library on Greenley Road in Sonora. We will meet at our usual potluck time of 6 pm; please bring a dish to share. For our program, we ask those attending to bring photos of native plants to show, such as pictures taken on field trips, from local gardens, or just some of your favorite native plants. Bring them in JPEG format on a flash drive, external hard drive or CD. We will provide a digital projector, screen and computer for the showing. If you have traditional analog slides, you need to let Jennie Haas know by December 2nd, [jhaas953@gmail.com](mailto:jhaas953@gmail.com) so we can also have a slide projector available. Hope to see you there.

## NATIVES "HOMEWARD BOUND"

Over 800 plants found a home in local foothill gardens, making our fall plant sale a resounding success. We sold California fuchsia, Penstemon, Salvia, Matilija Poppy, Lupine, Manzanita, Ceanothus, Buckwheat, and more! Imagine all those native plants equates to less water usage for our garden foothills, and more nectar for our native pollinators. How exciting!

Very special thanks to over 35 volunteers that helped. Without all of you, our plant sale would not have happened. Starting with the deliveries, thank you to Margaret, Debbie, Patricia, Suzanne, Barbara, Pat Gogas and Pat Reh who helped unload the trucks and price the plants. Next, the stalwarts that provide the vehicles and help load and unload the plants. Think about it, no vehicles, no plants, NO sale. It took 7 trucks, and 1 hatchback to haul plants, tables, wagons, and signs to the sale. Thanks to Dan, Vera, Nancy, Val, Martha, Todd, Heather, Wendy, Nikki,

John, Carol, Peggy, Nancy, Pat and Barbara. And, after the sale, thanks to Katy, Lynda, Erick, Heather, Jennie, and Dan Strader for hauling plants, tables, signs and unloading all our "stuff" back at the growing area.

A special shout out to the cashiers, tag pullers, knowledgeable people, book sellers and those who helped unload plants – Ron, Sheila, Cathy, Anne, Jeanie, Becky, Francesca, Jennie, Stefani, Quinn, Rebecca, Deana, Val, Bob and Judy. And a big THANK YOU to our hospitality leader Margaret who provided the hot drinks and treats to get us through the chilly morning. A special thanks to Heather Crotty and Pat Gogas who helped organize the plants as we unloaded them and took care of the many, many details that make our plant sale happen.

Yes, it takes a village to pull off a successful plant sale. If I have forgotten anyone, please know that your help was really appreciated. Thanks again and hope to see you all at the next plant sale in April 2016.

-- Stephanie Garcia, Plant Sale Chairperson

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.*

# NATIVE PLANT DONATIONS BY OUR CNPS SIERRA FOOTHILLS CHAPTER

Photos: Rebecca Andrade



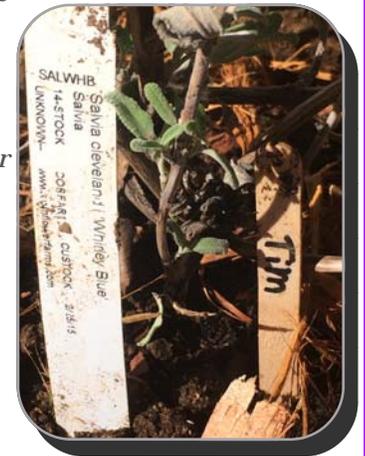
## Chinese Camp School Native Plant Garden

In the Sierra Foothills, local residents are looking for new ways to conserve water, due to the severe drought. Our CNPS Sierra Foothills Chapter strives to provide opportunities to conserve water for the local community. Each Fall and Spring, native plant sales are held to assist those who are ready to switch to native drought tolerant plant species for gardens, to conserve water and improve habitat.

From the 2015 Fall Plant Sale, a large donation of drought tolerant native plant species was given to the Chinese Camp Science Academy, Chinese Camp, CA. The need for water conservation had turned the Chinese Camp Science Academy garden into a barren landscape. The teachers of Chinese Camp Science Academy and UC Extension Master Gardeners had planned to create a new garden for the children. The Sierra Foothills Chapter was happy to help with a large donation of native plants for the new garden. Each plant was hand selected by the local experts of the UC Extension Master Gardeners Program. The Master Gardeners also,

provided assistance with soil improvement, plant placement for sun and shade, mulching, and joined in the fun for a day of planting with the children, teachers, and parents. Each student selected a plant to plant and take care of. The plants were labeled with the species name and the name of the child from which it was planted. The children planted, watered, mulched, and labeled species for the entire perimeter of the schoolhouse. At the end of the day the new garden was complete.

-- Rebecca Andrade, Education Chair



## Sonora High School Wildcat Ranch

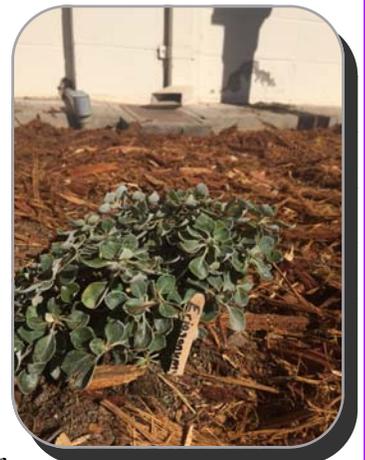
### Native Plant Propagation

Frank Garcia, a teacher at Sonora High School, leads students in developing gardening and agricultural skills in the Sonora High School Garden Club at Wildcat Ranch. Students put their skills to work by propagating and nurturing plants for distribution to the greater Sonora community, such as the Sonora Farmers Market. Check out a great video created by Frank Garcia that demonstrates the amazing work accomplished at Wildcat Ranch: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KpGb96SPITw>.

This year, our Sierra Foothills Chapter partnered with Wildcat Ranch to expand the plant propagation program to include California native plants. Wildcat Ranch now hosts several species of plants native to California. Students will be exposed to the beauty and the ecological necessity of growing native plants and sharing this knowledge with their community.



Photo: Quinn Young



-- Quinn Young, Newsletter Editor

# Rebuilding a Green Landscape After Wildfire: Tips for Landowners

Jan Bray, CA Registered Professional Forester #2360, & Anne Heissenbittel, RPF #1894 & Amador Co. UCCE Master Gardener

We live in the Sierra Nevada foothills; the native tree and plant species of Amador and Calaveras counties are adapted to survive in a climate that has long, dry periods from June through October. Some of the native trees and plants to use for replanting the area burned by the **Butte Fire** are suggested below. Late fall and early winter is the ideal time to plant perennials so they will benefit from the seasonal rains when they finally return.

Cost-share assistance in revegetating your property may be available through the Natural Resources Conservation Service (209/223-6535) or through CAL FIRE in Amador (530/644-2345) and Calaveras (209/754-2708) counties. A list of useful publications, websites, and sources for native plants is provided at the end of this paper.

**Erosion Control:** Preventing or minimizing erosion after wildfires is one of the most important steps a landowner can take to help restore their property. Start by first protecting any existing plant cover and establish vegetative cover on bare or disturbed soil and slopes on your property before the winter rains. Plant materials and different types of mulches can be used to protect soil and slopes from the impact of falling rain and storm water runoff. Seeding by itself is often not an effective erosion control strategy. Seeding can be used to help establish cover or to improve plant biodiversity, habitat, or improve feed for livestock and wildlife, but often will not prevent soil erosion during the first heavy rains. Specific seeding recommendations can be found below. In low intensity fire areas, often pine needles and oak leaves will fall and provide some cover. Additional cover can be accomplished by spreading weed free straw, mulch, or wood chips. Other erosion control techniques might be used including log terraces, waddles, hydro seeding, and the use of jute netting. Some of these techniques can create more of an erosion problem if not done correctly. See the resources below for proper installation.

**Conifer Trees:** Ponderosa pine, Sugar pine, Incense Cedar, White fir, Douglas-fir and even Giant Sequoia. The pines grow best in full sunlight with lots of growing space (no more than 100 stems per acre when fully grown). The firs and Sequoia prefer to be on cooler sites, shaded by other trees, and can grow in denser conditions. Remember that surviving trees have been stressed by over 4 years of drought and are extremely vulnerable to insect and disease attack. If trees have not been killed outright by the fire, they now have added stress (needles likely suffered heat damage and can't feed the roots through photosynthesis). Conifer trees that have been significantly burned will need to be removed or felled and may be replaced by planting new seedlings.

**Hardwood Trees:** Black Oak, Madrone, Dogwood, Big Leaf Maple. These trees will generally sprout back from the stump after a fire, unless the root structure has been completely consumed by burning. These trees, like conifers, can be replanted.

**Brush:** Manzanita, Ceanothus (Deer Brush, Coyote Brush, Whitethorn) and Live (Scrub) Oak. These brush species will readily occupy the landscape following a fire. One benefit of the fire is that the brush is reduced or eliminated from your property, and now the challenge will be to keep it at a manageable level! The brush component is important to have in the landscape as it creates habitat for birds and is an important food source for deer and other wildlife. However, it is best to have islands of brush across the landscape and to prevent dense stands. Dense stands ultimately create barriers for deer and other wildlife and prevent them from migrating. Brush is a huge contributor to fuel loading as it carries a fire from the ground into the tree canopy. Although brush seeds can remain viable in the soil for over 20 years, the brush can be controlled by manual grubbing (hand pulling), piling and burning with heavy equipment, intensive grazing using goats or other livestock, or using herbicides. For most landowners, the easiest method is the herbicide treatment, using products designed for the type of vegetation you wish to control. Check with your local University of California Cooperative Extension Farm Advisor to assist you with the proper product and application rate. In Amador County call 209/223-6482; in Calaveras County call 209/754-6477.

**Understory Plants:** There are a number of ground covers and smaller shrubs that are appropriate for landscaping around homes in a fire prone area. Use only plants appropriate for your elevation and site, considering slope, aspect (ex. south facing slopes) and nearby tree cover. While *all* plants can burn under the right conditions, low growing, open structured and less resinous plants are best. Maintain your yard through pruning, irrigation and removing dry or dead material to reduce flammability of individual plants, as well. Avoid planting seeds or seedlings of non-native, invasive plants or grasses, which can outcompete desirable species and aggressively spread into the broader landscape. Consult your local USDA Natural Resource Conservation Service (209/223-6535) or University of California Cooperative Extension Master Gardener office (Amador: 209/223-6838 or Calaveras: 209/754-2880) for lists of desirable plants, as well as those to avoid in your area.

**Maintenance:** As the landscape recovers and plants grow, it will be necessary to keep the area fire safe. Follow the guidelines in the ANR Publication "Home Landscaping for Fire" (see references below) to control weeds, maintain ground covers, prune shrubs and trees as needed, and clean up leaves and other dry materials, particularly in proximity to your home.

## **Seedling and Seed Sources**

The California Native Plant Society maintains a list of Native Plant Nurseries in California. <http://www.cnps.org/cnps/grownative/nurseries.php>.

## **Useful Publications & Websites**

NRCS Fact Sheets: <http://amadorrccd.org> follow link to 'After Fire' Resources. Subjects include: 'Preparing for winter following a fire'; 'Prevent soil erosion on your property'; 'Reseeding burned areas for Homeowners'; and more.

UCCE Central Sierra Butte Fire Recovery Information <http://ucanr.edu/Buttefire>

*Recovering from Wildfire; Home Landscaping for Fire; Taking Care of Residential Trees after Wildfire; Burned Oaks: Which Ones Will Survive?; Erosion Control after Wildfire; Using Mulch to Control Erosion; Seeding Recommendations After Fire*

Calaveras County Public Works: *Soil Erosion Control After Wildfire* <http://publicworks.calaverasgov.us/portals/publicworks/Docs/Grading/Soil%20Erosion%20Control%20After%20Wildfire.pdf>

*Planting a Tree* – Tree Owner Information from the International Society of Arboriculture: <http://www.treesaregood.com/treeowner/plantingatree.aspx>



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**Membership includes the journal Fremontia, CNPS Bulletin and the Sierra Foothills monthly newsletter, The Shooting Star.**