



# The Shooting Star

SIERRA FOOTHILLS CHAPTER

CALIFORNIA NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY

DECEMBER 2019

## ***DECEMBER POTLUCK MEMBER'S PLANT PICTURE SHOW***

**Thursday, December 5, 6:00 p.m.**

**Sonora Senior Center**

**540 Greenley Rd., Sonora**

- The December monthly meeting is our annual potluck dinner and member's slide show held at the Sonora Senior Center which is next to the Sonora Library at 540 Greenley Road. We will meet at our usual time of 6 p.m. Please bring a dish to share. *It is requested that a card listing ingredients be included for those with food sensitivities.*
- For our program, you are encouraged to bring digital photos featuring native plants, such as from field trips, your travels in California, from a local garden, or just some of your favorite native plants. Bring them on a flash drive or external hard drive in either a PowerPoint presentation, a PDF or WORD document or as separate photos in JPEG format. 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 November 30<sup>th</sup> [jhaas953@gmail.com](mailto:jhaas953@gmail.com) so we can also have a slide projector available.
- This is a fun, relaxing evening with good food and good photos to enjoy. Hope to see you there.

### ***In absentia contribution to the picture show (from your editor)***

Due to the effects of age on my nighttime vision, I strenuously avoid driving on two-lane roads at night. The distance from Merced to Sonora is too great for me to attend the potluck and picture show. If I were able to attend, I would share pictures of three favorite flowers from one of my favorite families – the Bellflower family (Campanulaceae):

1. Flatface Downingia (*D. pulchella*). This one grows outside our chapter area. I find it each year at one vernal pool in Grasslands State Park. Of the Downingias that I have met so far, this is my favorite.
2. Sierra Threadplant (*Nemacladus interior*). I saw one scraggly specimen of this plant at Red Hills in 2016, and fell in love with the flower. The intricate zig-zag markings reminded me of Native American weaving. I never saw it again until this year, but this year I got to see it twice in large numbers: at Lookout Point near Hetch Hetchy, and on the south-facing side of Pinoche Ridge above Hite Cove.
3. Few-flowered Heterocodon (*H. rariflorum*). This plant is aptly named. I never saw the “*rari florum*” until this year. This year, miraculously, I got to see it blooming in three different places: at Hetch Hetchy (in June); near the Wawona Tunnel (in July); near Bishop Creek, west of Wawona (in early November).

[Cf. Photos at top of p. 2.]

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.*

*Downingia pulchella*



*Nemacladus interior*



*Heterocodon rariflorum*



More pictures from the Fall Colors field trips (© Jennie Haas). Top left: Frank R. and Doug K. standing next to a specimen of Antelope Bitterbrush (*Purshia tridentata*), which blooms in June, with Rabbitbrush at peak bloom in foreground. Top right: Close-up of Rabbitbrush. Bottom left: Aspen groves. Bottom right: hips of *Rosa woodsii*.



## *November Wildflowers on the Bishop Creek trail*

The Merced South Fork Trailblazers, led by Bill King, continue to tackle the south fork from both ends. The trail from Savage's Trading Post on Hwy. 140 to Hite Cove is in excellent condition, but the Forest Service still has that trail closed due to rockfall concerns. At the other end of the south fork, the Trailblazers have been focusing on a 3-mile section of trail between Hwy. 41 and Bishop Creek. This trail is in worse shape than the Hite Cove trail, but at least it is OPEN to hikers, and it is in the Ferguson burn scar.

I joined a volunteer work crew on November 12-14. I was surprised at how many wildflowers were blooming so late in the year. I counted roughly 30x species – all in small numbers, but looking very respectable. Interestingly, the late-blooming wildflowers that I expected to see were missing: – no California Fuchsia, no Common Sandaster, no Buckwheats. Instead, I saw many early-blooming flowers: four Monkeyflowers; three Clarkias; the Heterocodon mentioned on p. 1; even a Miner's Lettuce and a Wintercress. It appears, to my amateur brain, that wildflowers lose track of time after a major fire. If it is warm, and they have water, they go ahead and bloom – no matter what the Calflora bloom circle says. A common name for *Clarkia dudleyana* is Farewell-to-Spring. After seeing it this November, I will think of it as Hello-to-Thanksgiving!



LEFT: Red circle denotes Bishop Creek trailhead on the west side of Wawona Rd./ Hwy. 41. (It lies slightly north of the Alder Creek trailhead.) Red x marks the Yosemite Park boundary. Dashed line indicates continuation of trail to Bishop Camp.

BELOW: Thumbnails of four flowers that "shouldn't oughta be here" in November: *Clarkia dudleyana*, *williamsonii*, *rhomboidea* & *Erythranthe moschata*.



**There will be no Member Meeting or Newsletter in January.  
HAPPY THANKSGIVING  
See you again in February!**

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