



The Shooting Star

SIERRA FOOTHILLS CHAPTER

CALIFORNIA NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY

JULY 2018

Wildflower Progression

The wildflower bloom is moving up in elevation. The mid-elevations were nice in May and June with Hartweg's iris making spectacular displays throughout their habitat areas. Hunter Valley Mountain Access Road made a surprising splash of fire-following wildflowers in May.

We had an opportunity to show representatives of the state-wide CNPS organization and Chapter Council members some of the things that make our chapter area special on June 8th and 10th, in conjunction to the June 9th Chapter Council meeting. We offered two trips on Friday June 8th: Rim Fire Recovery, and Merced Grove of Giant Sequoias. We also offered two trips on June 10th: Ackerson Meadow Area and The Tuolumne Grove of Giant Sequoias. And there was a trip to Calaveras Big Trees SP that occurred just after the June Newsletter deadline. See pp. 2 & 3 for some highlights from those trips.

Upcoming Field Trips

While summer has arrived and the day-time temperatures are in the hot zone, we still have a few field trips to come. We'll move up in elevation to where spring is still underway, regardless of what the calendar says.

June 30 – Bell Meadow. Leader: Jennie Haas. Hiking level: moderate. Bell Meadow, near Dodge Ridge ski area, was set aside by the Forest Service as a Research Natural Area for the aspens that grow there. The aspen stands are protected from other uses so that they can be preserved for future study. There is a large diversity of wildflowers in and around the meadow. The geology of the area is interesting and a diversity of plant communities awaits our exploration. Meet at 9:30 a.m. at the parking lot between the KFC and Kohl's in the Junction Shopping Center in east Sonora. Sign up in advance to ensure you get the latest information on the trip. To sign up or for more information, contact Jennie at jhaas953@gmail.com, 209-962-4759.

Update: The road to Bell Meadow is reported to be impassable by the Forest Service. There will be a hike of at least ¼ mile to the meadow, possibly longer, depending on where we're able to park. I'll send out an update after doing a little recon. this weekend.

July 19 (tentative date) – Carson Pass Area. Leader: Bob Dean. Hiking Level: strenuous due to the very high elevation. The destination of this Thursday hike will be a small meadow with a lot of native plants. The hike starts at about 8,000 feet elevation and rises to about 9,000 feet, with a lot to stop and see along the way including ancient junipers, beautiful scenery and plenty of wildflowers in the snowmelt-fed runnels. RSVPs are necessary in case the date needs to be changed due to a lingering snow pack and to coordinate meeting place and time. To RSVP or for more information, contact Bob at goldrushdean@yahoo.com, or 209-754-5887.
– Jennie Haas

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!

Jennie Haas
19287 James Circle
Groveland, CA 95321
jhaas953@gmail.com

California Native Plant Society
2707 K. St. Suite 1
Sacramento, CA 95816
www.cnps.org

Sierra Foothills Chapter
www.sierrafoothillscnps.org

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California Native Flora.*

Jennie Haas reports on the **Rim Fire Recovery** field trip:

“We had a group of 18 members turn out on this Friday morning trip to the Evergreen Road and Bear Mountain area to talk about the conditions leading to the largest fire in the Sierra Nevada to date. We also talked about how the area is recovering and the challenges posed by dense brush, bear clover, and non-native annual grasses. We were lucky to find littleleaf Ceanothus (*Ceanothus parvifolius*) in full bloom with the very fragrant deer brush (*C. integerrimus*) blooming nearby. Other blooming plants included pretty faces (*Triteleia ixioides*), lupines, and the rare species slender-stemmed monkeyflower (*Mimulus filicaulis*).”

Right: photo of *C. parvifolius* © Editor



Peggy Moore reports on the **Merced Grove** field trip:

“We had a group of 12 for our mile-and-a-half walk down into the Merced Grove of giant sequoias in Yosemite. The grove has not had a fire for many years so flowers were not showy, but we saw a great variety (at least 65 species), including three species of Ceanothus (littleleaf, mountain whitethorn, Fresno mat), mountain dogwood, and Scouler's willow. Giant sequoias were the highlight, of course, but other distinctive species of the Sierra mixed coniferous forest included both spotted and striped coralroot, white-veined wintergreen, rattlesnake-plantain, nodding arnica, Hartweg's iris, and purple fritillary. Our seven Chapter Council members from across the state also had the chance to see the diminutive Sierra mariposa lily and Sierra starwort. Also present were Hooker's fairy bells with their unassuming green flowers, and Alaska rein orchid, one of our few orchids to grow on dry forest floors.”

Right: photo of *Corallorhiza striata* © Editor



The editor reports on the May 20 field trip to **Calaveras Big Trees SP**:

“Trip leader **Bob Dean** led a group of 9 through the North Grove. Bob and Doug continued to Beaver Creek after the official part of the field trip ended. Many species were at or near peak bloom, including Mountain Dogwood; Giant Trillium; Red Baneberry; Hartweg's Wild Ginger; two kinds of Solomon's Seal (*Maianthemum racemosum* & *stellatum*); Yellow and White Monkeyflower (*Mimulus bicolor*). We were too early for Western Azalea, Rattlesnake Plantain, and White-veined Wintergreen.”

Below: Bob Dean admiring a cluster of eight Giant Trillium plants. Photo © Editor.



Barry & Judy Breckling report on the Ackerson Meadow field trip:

“A group of 20 enjoyed a beautiful day finding flowering plants in the fields and forests of the Ackerson Meadow area. A side trip to Carlon added two special treats to the day, Mountain Lady's Slippers and Phantom Orchids. Another highlight was finding Yosemite park staff leading a large group of Boy Scouts in the removal of the invasive Medusahead grass from Ackerson Meadow. The group had lunch along the Middle Fork of the Tuolumne River, where we found more flowering plants to photograph.”



Top: Field trip participants meandering through Ackerson Meadow.
Bottom: CNPS members hard at work; lunch along Middle Fork of Tuolumne River; *Cephalanthera austiniiae* at Carlon, photographed one week after field trip. (Shoots were visible on the day of the trip.)
Photos © Barry Breckling.

June Chapter Council Meeting

Our support to the June 9th CNPS Chapter Council meeting weekend came off without a hitch as a result of detailed advance planning and a great crew of volunteers who helped set up the room, set out the breakfasts and lunch and supported the social hour and dinner. Our planning committee worked hard for months to cover all of the requirements of the state organization. The March 22nd flood of downtown Groveland put a wrinkle in our plans forcing us to arrange a backup plan which, in the end, wasn't needed as the Groveland Community Hall was made available literally 2 days before we needed it. The committee was made up of Margaret Klein, Val Myrick, Nancy Piekarczyk, Diane Williams, Pat Gogas and Jennie Haas. Additional volunteers who helped make the weekend the success that it was were Jack Myrick, Eileen Carlen, Carol Rosalind, Linda Reavley, Ken Fowkes and Lucy Morris-Tyndall. We thank all of these volunteers. We could not have done it without you!

– Jennie Haas

CNPS Sierra Foothills Chapter
 19287 James Circle
 Groveland, CA 95321

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VP AMADOR CO.	OPEN			
VP CALAVERAS CO.	Judy Dean	754-5887	No E-Mail	
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SECRETARY	Stephanie Garcia	586-3593	sjgarcia@mlode.com	
TREASURER	Pat Gogas	586-9043	pfgogas@yahoo.com	
CONSERVATION CHAIR	Bob Dean	754-5887	goldrushdean@yahoo.com	
EDUCATION CHAIR	Margaret Klein	532-4792	kleinpeg@gmail.com	
FIELD TRIP COORDINATOR	Jennie Haas	962-4759	jhaas953@gmail.com	
GROWING AREA MGR.	Stephanie Garcia	586-3593	sjgarcia@mlode.com	
HOSPITALITY COORD.	OPEN			
INVASIVE EXOTICS	Rebecca Andrade	591-7996	r.andrade218@gmail.com	
MERCH./SALES COORD.	Diane Williams	586-1557	dianewilliams3664@gmail.com	
MEMBERSHIP COORD.	Jennie Haas	962-4759	jhaas953@gmail.com	
NEWSLETTER EDITOR	Doug Krajnovich	580-4595	djkran@comcast.net	
PLANT SALES CHAIR	Stephanie Garcia	586-3593	sjgarcia@mlode.com	
SPRING PLANT SALES COORD.	Judy Dean	754-5887	No E-Mail	
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