



The Shooting Star

SIERRA FOOTHILLS CHAPTER

CALIFORNIA NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY

NOVEMBER 2019

November Meeting

We're lining up a speaker for our next member meeting, scheduled for **Thursday, November 7th, 6 p.m.** at the Tuolumne County Library, 480 Greenley Rd., Sonora. Watch your e-mail for an announcement.

2019 Field Trip Summary / Looking Ahead to Next Year

We had a great year where we saw flowers late into the year, saw flowers in places where we don't always get to see them, saw some of our old favorites, and didn't need to cancel any trips due to weather or other unforeseen issues. We'll get together next January or February to plan the 2020 field trip schedule. If you have suggestions, want to lead a field trip or want to help us plan the schedule contact Jennie Haas at jhaas953@gmail.com or 209-962-4759. – Jennie Haas

Fall Plant Sale

- Dodie Harte kindly shared these pictures from the Fall Plant Sale that was held in Jamestown on October 19.
- The plant sale was a success, thanks to the planning and hard work of Stephanie Garcia and many volunteers.
- Some of the “leftovers” were donated to school gardens in our chapter area.

(Photos © Dodie Hart)



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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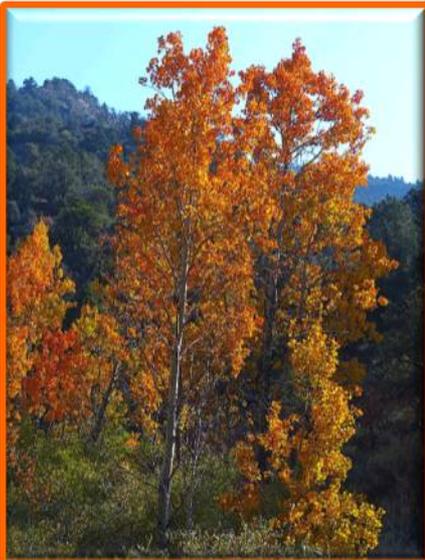
Dedicated to the Preservation of California Native Flora.

Field Trip Report

Jennie Haas reports on the Fall Colors excursions which took place on October 12 & 13:

We wrapped up the field trip season in fine style with two days of fall colors, bagging 4 mountain passes in the process. On Saturday, October 12 we ventured over Ebbetts Pass, lunched in Markleeville then continued up Highway 89 over Monitor Pass, took Highway 395 south through Walker, then came back over Sonora Pass on Highway 108. Many of the aspen stands along this route were afflicted with aspen leaf blight which causes black spots to cover the leaves, much like black spot fungus on garden roses. The amount of yellow, orange and red colors showing in these stands depended partially on the amount of blight in the leaves. We did see a couple of nicely colored stands along Highway 89 where we stopped to admire them and found wild roses with colorful rose hips as a bonus.

On Sunday, October 13 we traveled through Yosemite National Park and over Tioga Pass taking lunch in Lee Vining at the Mobil Station's Whoa Nellie Deli, then traveled south on Highway 395 to the June Lake Loop where we found really nice stands of aspen in various phases of fall color. As reported on the California Fall Colors website, the colors were developing unevenly but the lighting was excellent, causing the leaves to appear to sparkle as they trembled in the light wind. We stopped at several pullouts along the way to admire the colors and take pictures then turned around and drove the loop again in the opposite direction, taking in the stands with diffuse lighting from clouds that had moved in. We debated the identification of deciduous shrubs which had dropped most of their leaves at one stop, finally settling on it probably being bitter cherry (*Prunus emarginata*).



UPPER LEFT: Aspens near Markleeville; LOWER LEFT: Flagpole at Dardanelle on Hwy. 108 – Dardanelle got hit hard by the 2018 Donnell Fire; RIGHT: Aspen stands on June Lake Loop. (Photos © Editor)

“The blessed fellow must be living hereabouts...”

[This is the second of two excerpts from John Muir's Tribute to Linnaeus. The first excerpt appeared on page 3 of the October Shooting Star Newsletter. -Ed.]

“A hundred years after Linnaeus died, our own Asa Gray, Sir Joseph Hooker, and I were botanizing together on Mount Shasta, the northernmost of the great mountains of California; and when night came we camped in a flowery opening in a grand forest of silver firs. After supper I built a big fire, and the flowers and the trees, wondrously illumined, seemed to come forward and look on and listen as we talked. Gray told many a story of his life and work on the Atlantic Alleghanies and in Harvard University; and Hooker told of his travels in the Himalayas, and of his work with Tyndall and Huxley and grand old Darwin. And of course we talked of trees, argued the relationship of varying species, etc. ... But it was not what was said in praise of our majestic sequoias and cedars, firs and pines, that was most memorable that night. No: it was what was said of the lowly fragrant namesake of Linnaeus - *Linnaea borealis*.

“After a pause in the flow of our botanic conversation that great night, the like of which was never to be enjoyed by us again (for we soon separated and Gray died), as if speaking suddenly out of another country Gray said, "Muir, why have you not found Linnaea in California? It must be here or hereabouts on the northern boundary of the Sierra. I have heard of it, and have specimens from Washington and Oregon all through these northern woods, and you should have found it here." In reply, I said I had not forgotten Linnaea. “That fragrant little plant, making carpets beneath the cool woods of Canada and around the great lakes, has been a favorite of mine ever since I began to wander. I have found many of its relations and neighbors, high up in the mountain woods and around the glacier meadows, but Linnaea itself I have not yet found.”

“Well, nevertheless,” said Gray, “the blessed fellow must be living hereabouts no great distance off.” Then we let the camp fire die down to a heap of ruby coals, wrapped our blankets about us, and with Linnaea in our minds, fell asleep. Next morning Gray continued his work on the Shasta flanks, while Hooker and I made an excursion to the westward over one of the upper valleys of the Sacramento. About noon we came to one of the icy-cold branches of the river, paved with cobblestones; and after we forded it we noticed a green carpet on the bank, made of something we did not at first recognize, for it was not in bloom. Hooker, bestowing a keen botanic look on it, said, “What is that?” then stooped and plucked a specimen and said, “Isn't that Linnaea? It's awfully like it.” Then finding some of the withered flowers, he exclaimed, “It is Linnaea.” this was the first time the blessed plant was recognized within the bounds of California; and it would seem that Gray had felt its presence the night before, on the mountain ten miles away.



(© 2011 Barry Breckling)

“It is a little slender, creeping, trailing evergreen, with oval crenate leaves, tiny thread-like peduncles standing straight up and dividing into two pedicels at the top, on each of which is hung a delicate, fragrant white and purple flower. It was at the age of twenty-five that Linnaeus made the most notable of his many long, lonely botanical excursions. He set out from Upsala and wandered afoot or on horseback northward through endless pine and birch woods, tundras, and meadows, and along the shores of countless lakes into Lapland, beyond the Arctic Circle; now wading in spongy bogs, now crossing broad glacier pavements and moraines and smooth ice-burnished bosses of rock, fringed with heathworts and birch; a wonderful journey of forty-six hundred miles, full of exciting experiences and charming plants. He brought back hundreds of specimens new to science, among which was a little fragrant evergreen that he liked the best of all. Soon after his return he handed a specimen of it to his friend Gronovius, pointed out its characters, and requested him to describe it and name it for him; saying that somehow he felt that this little plant was related to him and like him. So it was called *Linnaea borealis*, and keeps his memory green and flowery and fragrant all round the cool woods of the world.”

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