

California Native Plant Society
Sierra Foothills Chapter
2018 Field Trips

For all field trips: bring lunch, water, sunscreen and appropriate clothing and footwear. Hiking level varies with each trip. Check the trip description for the need to RSVP. 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. 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.

Sign up for our field trip alerts e-mails. Send an e-mail with the subject line "Field Trip e-mail List" to Jennie at jhaas953@gmail.com. We'll use this mailing list and Twitter to provide timely information of field trip changes and those impromptu "emergency field trips."

March 25 – Bagby Serpentine. Leaders: Barry and Judy Breckling. Hiking Level: Easy. The belt of serpentine that snakes along Highway 49 from Coulterville south to Bagby can have spectacular flower displays in early spring. Last year's Detwiler Fire burned almost 83,000 acres in the area. Spring blooms following fires can also be spectacular and can include interesting fire-following plants that do not typically grow in an area. Signups aren't required but notification that you plan to attend would be appreciated. We'll meet at 9:30 a.m. in Coulterville along Highway 49 in front of the park on the north side of the Jefferson Hotel. For more info contact Barry and Judy, 209-878-3041 or breckling@garlic.com.

April 1 – Hunter Valley Mountain Access Road. Leader: Lynn Robertson. Hiking Level: easy-primarily car botanizing. We will be in area extensively burned by the Detwiler Fire. I will talk about the effect of fire on the vegetation including the "fire follower" plants (such as Golden Eardrops & Whispering Bells) we may see. Wildflowers usually seen include the Sierra Fawn Lily, stinkbells, and a rare Balsamroot. Hunter Valley Mountain Access Road is just a few miles west of Bear Valley in Mariposa Co. Meet at 9:30 a.m. in Bear Valley 10 minutes north of Mariposa on Hwy 49 (south end of town next to Bon Ton restaurant). For more information on the field trip, contact Lynn at billielr@sti.net, 209-966-5316.

April 14 - Merced River Trail: Briceburg to the North Fork. Leader: Lynn Robertson. Hiking Level: Easy (2.5 miles one way - easy grade but can be rocky). This is a beautiful wildflower hike in the Merced River Canyon following the river downstream. I will also be identifying common lichens and mosses on the hike. There is the option to head up the North Fork 1.25 miles (moderate grade on narrow trail on side of a slope) to the three-tiered cascade. 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, 209-966-5316.

Volunteer Opportunity #1:

April 28 – Monarch Butterfly Habitat Restoration – Cascade Falls, Yosemite National Park. Leader: David Campbell. Hiking Level: Easy. Help restore habitat for the iconic and once ubiquitous monarch butterfly, whose recent and dramatic population decline has led to its consideration for protection under the Endangered Species Act. This will be the first of two trips where volunteers will help restore historically disturbed sites in Yosemite by hand pulling invasive weeds and watering recently planted native species. We'll learn about the plants used for restoration and the weeds that threaten them. This trip will focus on a site at Cascade Falls along the Merced River. Meet at the El Portal Market to arrange carpools at 9:00am or at Cascade Falls Picnic Area at 9:30 am. El Portal Market is located on Highway 140/El Portal Road just west of the Yosemite View Lodge and the Yosemite National Park Sign. There is a gas station, bathrooms, and store at this location. Cascade Falls Picnic Area is located about 3 miles east of Arch Rock entrance station and is the first parking area with a bathroom that you'll see on your right if coming from the west/El Portal. For more info, contact David at 612-867-8700, or moonwort.campbell@gmail.com.

May 20 – Calaveras Big Trees. Leader: Bob Dean. Hiking Level: easy. Calaveras Big Trees State Park is a favorite destination for us. There are interesting habitats, soils and plants throughout the park. We haven't done this trip in a few years so it will

be nice to visit there again. Meet at 9:30am in the park, at the picnic area on the creek behind Jack Knight Hall. There is an entrance fee to enter the park. For more info, contact Bob at goldrushdean@yahoo.com, or 209-754-5887.

Volunteer Opportunity #2:

May 26th – Monarch Butterfly Habitat Restoration – Cook’s Meadow, Yosemite National Park. Leader: David Campbell. Hiking Level: Easy. This will be the second of two trips where volunteers will help restore habitat for the iconic and once ubiquitous monarch butterfly in Yosemite by hand pulling invasive weeds and watering recently planted native species. We’ll learn about the plants used for restoration and the weeds that threaten them. This trip will focus on a site near Cook’s Meadow in the heart of Yosemite Valley, where meadow and upland species mingle under the shade of black oak canopy with spectacular views of Half Dome and Yosemite Falls. Meet at 9:00am at the El Portal Market to arrange carpools or meet in front of the Yosemite National Park Visitor Center at 10:00am. See April 28 volunteer opportunity above for directions. For more info contact David at 612-867-8700, or moonwort.campbell@gmail.com.

Field Trips for the CNPS Chapter Council Weekend, June 8 and 10 – Chapter members and guests are encouraged to participate. RSVPs are required. Participant numbers are limited for the Sunday trips. Carpooling is highly encouraged as parking is limited for all trips. Yosemite entrance fee applies.

June 8 – Rim Fire Recovery. Leaders: Jennie Haas and Kim Williams. Hiking Level: Easy. Between August 17 and September 21, 2013, the Rim Fire burned more than 257,000 acres, much of it at a moderate to high burn intensity. Tens of thousands of acres of mature forests were reduced to charred snags and habitat for native plants was converted from a mix of seral stages to vast acres of early seral, near monocultures of brush, grass or bear clover. Recovery of the forest is a slow process, impacted by natural return of brush species from seed banked in the soil, invasive plant species such as non-native annual grasses, and noxious weeds like yellow star-thistle. We’ll tour some of the burned area viewing the various stages of recovery and the challenges of helping nature speed up the process. Meet at 10:00am at the parking lot near the library and museum at Mary Lavaroni Park in Groveland, on Highway 120. We’ll carpool from there and we’ll be sure to guide participants to Yosemite National Park in time for the Merced Grove of Giant Sequoias field trip at 1:00pm. For more information or to RSVP, contact Jennie at 209-962-4759, jhaas953@gmail.com, at least one day in advance.

June 8 – Merced Grove of Giant Sequoias. Leader: **Peggy Moore.** Hiking Level: Moderate - We will walk 1.5 miles on an unpaved road to get to the grove, dropping about 500 feet in elevation and returning the same way. The Merced Grove of giant sequoias is the smallest of Yosemite’s three groves of giant sequoias, with about two dozen mature trees. In addition to these majestic trees and their mesic habitat, we may see two or three interesting CNPS Rank 4 (uncommon) species (e.g., short-leaved hulsea, Coleman’s rein orchid). Carpooling to Yosemite is encouraged. Regular park entrance fee of \$30 per vehicle applies. Meet Peggy at 1:00pm at the parking lot just inside the park at the Big Oak Flat Entrance Station to Yosemite National Park on Hwy 120 (restrooms available). Trailhead parking is very limited so we’ll carpool to the Merced Grove trailhead, 1.3 miles east of the entrance station. We’ll be back at the trailhead by 5:00pm. For more information or to RSVP, contact Peggy Moore, 209-617-7775, pemoore4@gmail.com.

June 10 – Ackerson Meadow Area. Leaders: Barry and Judy Breckling. Hiking Level: Easy. Four hundred acres of Ackerson Meadow, an area of critical wetlands and meadow habitat, were recently added to Yosemite National Park. We’ll wander through the meadow itself and visit nearby areas that have interesting plants. Signups are required as participation is limited to 30 people. Meet at 9:15 a.m. at the library parking lot in Groveland, just east of Mary Lavaroni Park on Main Street, Highway 120. For more info contact Barry and Judy, 209-878-3041, breckling@garlic.com.

June 10th – The Tuolumne Grove of Giant Sequoias, Yosemite National Park. Leader: David Campbell. Hiking Level: Moderate. Tour one of the three giant Sequoia Groves that reside within Yosemite National Park. We’ll see the giants and the flowers that bloom at their feet. The trail is a gentle, 400 foot descent into the grove and is 2.5 miles roundtrip. Parking space at the trailhead is limited so **carpooling is essential**. If coming from the south, meet to carpool at the El Portal Market at 9:00am. If coming from the north or the chapter council meeting in Groveland, meet to carpool at 9:00am at the parking lot at the library/museum in Groveland, Mary Lavaroni Park, Highway 120. Carpool to the meeting place by 10:00am at the Tuolumne Grove parking lot just east of Crane Flat on Tioga Road (Highway 120), in Yosemite National Park. Park entrance fees apply. To RSVP or for more information, contact David at 612-867-8700, or moonwort.campbell@gmail.com.

June 23 - Rare plant treasure hunt for *Eriogonum luteolum* var. *saltuarium*. Leader: Frank Rauchschalbe. Hiking Level: Moderate. The search areas are short distances from Hwy 108 but will require walking around in rocky/boulder areas at several stops. Little is known about this plant. Historically, this variety is only known along Hwy 108 between Dardanelle and Kennedy Meadow. Two populations, one of them a new find, were confirmed in 2017 and will be checked prior to June 23 for trip timing. RSVP to Frank. Meet at 8:30a.m., at the east end of the Twain Harte shopping center parking lot near CSERC. From Sonora east about 10 miles on Rt. 108, left on Twain Harte Dr. lower loop entrance for about 1 mile past T.H. Hardware and the elementary school. Take the next left for one block to the grocery store parking lot. Turn right into the parking lot past the front of the grocery store. For more info contact Frank Rauchschalbe, frauchs@gmail.com, 209-532-3562.

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 9:30a.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.

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.

August 4th – Gaylor Lakes, Yosemite National Park. Leader: David Campbell. Hiking Level: Arduous due to elevation. We got rained out last year, so we'll try again this year. Departing from the Tioga Pass entrance station in Yosemite National Park, this hike is a 3.6 miles round trip with about 800' of elevation gain and descent. The hike begins at around 10,000' elevation, so be prepared to be winded. Acclimating to elevation before the field trip is recommended. Crossing through lodgepole pine forest the trail leads to Gaylor Lakes and lovely meadows filled with many blooms to enjoy throughout. Space is limited, so RSVP is required. Meet at 8:00a.m. at the Gaylor Lakes trailhead next to the Tioga Pass entrance station on Highway 120. If arriving from the east, no entrance fee is required if you park outside the gate and walk in. If coming from the west, a \$30 entrance fee is required. Carpooling is encouraged. Let David know if you're interested in carpooling when signing up. To RSVP or for more info, contact David at 612-867-8700, or moonwort.campbell@gmail.com.

October 14 – Fall Colors. Leader: Jennie Haas. Hiking level: easy (car tour with a bit of hiking). We'll go in search of local fall colors in our chapter area. The actual route will firm up as the time gets closer but it will likely include areas such as Bell Meadow, Road 3N01 out of Long Barn and perhaps Cottonwood Meadow, providing road conditions allow access. Meet at 9:30a.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 209-962-4759, jhaas953@gmail.com.