

SAN GABRIEL MOUNTAINS CHAPTER California Native Plant Society ANNUAL REPORT 2010

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THE CHAPTER IS REQUESTING A SUBVENTION

Overview

This year, the San Gabriel Mountains Chapter decreased its membership slightly, from 255 members to 237. We believe this decrease is due to the status of the economy. However, we increased member participation on our board which has now 15 members.

Our outreach and education program consists of monthly program meetings, numerous field trips and monthly plant walks, our annual native plant sale, maintenance of our web site, and representation at local public events, generating interest and inquiries. The Chapter's newsletter *The Paintbrush* is mailed to our members and posted on our website. We created a short version of our newsletter (one page, double sided, with program information and website reference) that we make available in nature centers, native plant nurseries, outreach events, and local libraries for free.

This year, we started a new plant survey in the Lily Springs area of the San Gabriel Mountains. This new effort has significantly contributed to the success of the rare plant hunt where our chapter gained recognition as the chapter with the most rare plants found and documented.

Our weed control project in the Arroyo Seco, a major canyon in the San Gabriel Mountains and part of the Angeles National Forest, has been put on hold due to the closure of the Angeles National Forest. The closure is a consequence of the changed conditions from the Station Fire in 2009 that burned more than 160,000 acres of wildlands in our catchment area. We tried again to partner with the ANF and coordinate a Weed Survey under the guidance of an ANF botanist, focusing on the burned areas of the Station Fire.

We continue to see the need for a full time biologist who could represent our conservation interests in the area. Our chapter continues to reserve funds in support of a paid position to work of those issues together with our neighboring chapters, but we have not raised enough funds and have not heard from other chapters. We would support a biologist position at the state level that would concentrate conservation efforts in the deserts.

We continue plant surveys in the San Dimas Experimental Forest, a restricted access area in the Angeles National Forest, and participated in the Oak Woodland Strategic Alliance.

Chapter Activities

1. Board Meetings:

We held six board meetings in 2010 (January, March, May, July, September, November). On average, eight board members attended. Volunteer hours spent on planning, attending, and

writing minutes totaled at least **146 hours**. Board meetings have been held at Eaton Canyon Nature Center.

2. Field Trips:

March 13, South Hills for Chapter Council, 12
March 20, Old California Gardens: San Gabriel Mission (1776) and El Molino Viejo (1816), 13
April 24, Desert Pines, 40
May 15, Glendora Ridge Road, 39
June 5, Heaps Peak Arboretum, 11
June 19, Monrovia Canyon, 33
July 10, Manker Flat, 12
July 24, Table Mt., 14
August 7, Mt Pinos, 22
August 21, Blue Ridge, 19

Total field trips: 10

Total field trip attendance: 235

Total volunteer hours: 100

In addition to the very successful field trips listed above, most of them lead by naturalist Jane Strong, we conducted monthly **Native Plant Walks** for the public at Eaton Canyon in Pasadena. The Plant Walks are supported by the Eaton Canyon Nature Center, and are promoted through the center and chapter publicity. Attendance varies from 6 to 16. Volunteer **hours total 40**.

In addition, we partnered with the Natural Science Section of the Sierra Club who offered several botany walks in our area, as well as a weekend Nature Knowledge Workshop in June. These outings were led or assisted by CNPS chapter members Cliff and Gabi McLean, Mickey Long, and Ginny Heringer. Average attendance at the botany walks was 15 per outing. Volunteer hours for these outings amounted to approximately **40 hours**.

Total volunteer hours for field trips, outings, and plant walks: 180

3. Program Meetings:

We conducted eight program meetings at Eaton Canyon Nature Center in 2010, and one special meeting on the goldspotted oak borer. We consider those programs not only a resource for our members, but also public outreach and education. The yearly fee for the meeting place was **\$290**.

Refreshments are served and organized by our hospitality chair. Our membership chair sends out e-mail reminders one week before the program. We also have printed, personalized name tags with the CNPS logo available for anyone who attends the program more than once.

<u>Date</u>	<u>Program</u>
January 28, 2010	Untangling the taxonomic mess of California's miniature monkey flowers, with Naomi Fraga, 44.
February 25, 2010	<i>Eradicating and controlling wildland weeds</i> , with Bill Neill, 35
March 25, 2010	Pollination mechanisms, with Bob Allen, 76

April 22, 2010	The October 2007 fire storm in San Diego County, with Fred Roberts, 51
May 27, 2010	Easy natives for your garden, with Orchid Black, 46
June 24, 2010	Plant ID Workshop, with Gabi McLean and chapter experts, 40
September 23, 2010	Member Photo Show and Tell, with photos from 18 members, 47
October 19, 2010	Special meeting on the Goldspotted Oak Borer, 27
October 28, 2010	Native Plants and Horticulture, with Barbara Eisenstein, 38

In total, we had 404 attendees at our program meetings in 2010, including CNPS members and the general public, an average of 45 per program. Volunteer hours for program preparation and presentation, publicity, and hospitality amounted to **140 hours** or more. We paid **\$500** in speaker honoraria.

4. Newsletter:

The Paintbrush, SGM Chapter's newsletter, was published four times in 2010, and each covered six to eight pages. We have a two-person newsletter team: one member is serving as editor and layout person, the other is responsible for assembly and distribution. This year, the editor Norm Ackerman resigned and the task was taken up Jane Strong, our field trip coordinator. The production of the newsletter - assembling material, research, layout, editing, proof reading, printing, folding, addressing, mailing - took about 40 hours per issue on average, for a total of **200 hours**.

Various members contribute articles. Volunteer hours for writing articles were estimated at 35 per issue, total of **175 hours**.

The membership database serves as the distribution database and is maintained by our membership chair; maintaining this database took **12 volunteer hours** in 2010.

The cost of printing and mailing was **\$1,361**. We print extra copies per issue to distribute at Eaton Canyon Nature Center and Rancho Santa Ana Botanic Garden (RSABG) as public outreach. Total volunteer hours were **400 hours**.

5. and 6. Public Outreach and Education Efforts:

The SGM chapter conducts monthly **Native Plant Walks** for the public at Eaton Canyon in Pasadena (included in field trips above).

The chapter also provided outreach at the RSABG native plant sales in Claremont, in April and November 2010. Chapter members staffed a table, brought display material, handed out informational and membership brochures, offered sign-ups for programs, and answered questions from the public.

Board member Andrea Edwards and other chapter members represented CNPS and our chapter at the Monrovia Environmental Fair in March 2010. This event provided opportunity to reach out mainly to students and teachers in our area.

Volunteer hours for these events were approximately **32**.

We couple our program meetings also with education: For 30 minutes before the program, we offer informal plant identification: we have some plant cuttings available – from the field, the

park, or native plant gardens - and members bring in plants or photographs and they are discussed and identified by knowledgeable members. We identify native and non-native, invasive plants, and occasionally uncommon plants. This part of our program is very much appreciated by people who are new to native plants. The volunteer hours are included in the reported hours for programs. In addition, one of our regular monthly programs was a **plant ID workshop** representing five plant families. This was the third such workshop (with another five plant families) and it was again well attended with more than 40 participants.

7. Conservation:

Our chapter had joined the stakeholders for a **San Gabriel River Discovery Center** in the previous year, and continued its involvement in this project, which is the construction of a large building and native re-vegetation of the surrounding area along the San Gabriel River. Our representative(s) attended four board meetings and one Stakeholders Advisory Board meeting. We had been advocating for a smaller impact design for the building and parking lot at two public comment meetings, and one CNPS DEIR preparatory comment meeting. The chapter also submitted written comments to the draft. Due to the obvious disregard of feedback from the community and our chapter, and upon the request of various CNPS members, our board decided to withdraw from the stakeholder agreement. Volunteer hours: **40**.

At the end of the year, a broad base of members participated in conservation efforts for 13 acres of **oak woodland** that was to be destroyed to make space for sediment placement of various debris basins and the Santa Anita dam in **Arcadia, CA**. There was a public meeting, a planning meeting, observation field trip to the woodland. Several members wrote individual letters to L.A. County Supervisor M. Antonovich, and the chapter also sent a letter and analysis to the supervisor's office. Unfortunately, we were not successful. However, this effort brought together several environmental organizations and we are in contact to build a process where we communicate significant projects and environmental threats so that we can be more successful in preserving native habitat. Estimated volunteer hours: **200**

At least one member participated regularly in the local Weed Management Area meetings to keep up with current events and make connections to aid in our conservation and weed control efforts. Total volunteer hours: **9**

The chapter continues to hold in **reserve \$3000 for a botanist position** to work on conservation issues in southern California, together with other southern California chapters.

San Dimas Experimental Forest (SDEF) Plant Survey:

The chapter renewed its agreement with SDEF, a unit of the Angeles National Forest, to obtain access to and conduct field surveys on the premises of SDEF. Several field visits were conducted and documented and Terry Keller delivered a written report on the survey results to SDEF. Further study of observed species will be necessary. There were four survey visits during the year: This is an ongoing project. **Total volunteer hours for 2010: 20.**

Oak Woodland Strategic Alliance:

A delegate of our chapter, Orchid Black, and at least two other chapter members continue to attend the meetings of the Oak Woodland Strategic Alliance which is creating the Oak Conservation Plan for LA County. There were six meetings and a 1-day workshop. Together with related research and activism, the volunteer hours for this project amounted to about **90 hours**.

Station Fire Invasive Plant Survey project:

At the request of the Angeles National Forest botanist, the chapter organized a team of volunteers to help survey the burned areas for invasive weeds and pull them if possible. We organized a planning meeting and a weed identification workshop, including the creation of a photographic weed ID guide. We participated in two field sessions to pull weeds. Unfortunately, the botanist was overcommitted and was not able to continue the project. **64 volunteer hours.**

Total estimated volunteer hours for conservation: 423

8. Work Parties:

The chapter maintains the Becky Rothenberg Memorial Wildflower Garden at Eaton Canyon Nature Center in Pasadena. Throughout the year, members continue weeding the Wildflower garden to control the mustard, alyssum, and grass seedlings. More active participation would be appreciated. (10 hrs)

Following our plant sale in November, we conducted a planting workshop where participants learn and gain experience planting and maintaining native plants. Since it was raining, we only had 3 participants and were still able to put 18 plants in the Becky Rothenberg Memorial Garden, and do some maintenance work. (4 hrs)

Total volunteer hours: 14

9. Legislative Activity:

See Oak Woodland Strategic Alliance under Conservation.

10. Plant Sales/Wildflower Shows:

“Under the Oaks 2010: Plant and Wildflower Seed Sale” was held on November 13 at Eaton Canyon Nature Center. We ordered more plants than in the previous year, but still sold over 1000 plants and had good fundraising success, with a net income of almost \$4,000. We had plenty of volunteers, and, as in the year before, we coupled the plant sale with a very successful **membership drive**. The weather was excellent and we increased our outreach for the eighth year in a row. We offered **membership incentives** by giving a 10% discount to all CNPS members for all purchases: the plants, seeds, Care and Maintenance books, chapter T-shirts, and two interpretive plant CDs of the San Gabriel Mountains, produced by chapter members. **We recruited 13 new members at the plant sale.**

On the day of the event, 30 volunteers contributed expert advice, assisted sales, carried plants, conducted the membership drive, manned the cash register, and handled overall organization. Planning, plant selection and delivery, publicity, and other preparations also took considerable time by the plant sale team, for a total of more than **300 volunteer hours**.

Public attendance was about 250 people, and 159 people bought plants. All plants were purchased from local native plant nurseries. We continue to receive positive feedback about the plant sale, as this is seen as a convenience to acquire native plants locally and receive free expert information. We also advertised our free planting workshop that we conducted on the following weekend (see above under work party).

11. Other Activities:

Rare Plants: Our Rare Plant chair advised the State CNPS botanist on several rare plant listing decisions, attended the Rare Plant chair meeting, provided information to the public, and maintained the rare plant list for Los Angeles County. **Volunteer hours: 12**

Plant Science: This year, our chapter began a new project called the Lily Spring Area Survey. The purpose of the survey was to check on the phenology of about 100 plant species documented in Wayne Sawyers paper published in Crossosoma, February 1987 13(1):5-10, entitled A List of High Elevation Angiosperms and Their Phenology in the San Gabriel Mountains, Los Angeles County, California. The project accumulated over 800 hours of volunteer time and numerous reports of rare plants. This resulted in our chapter winning the Chapter Grand Prize in the Rare Plant Treasure Hunt. **Volunteer hours: 800**

Chapter Council Meetings: Our chapter co-hosted the chapter council meeting in March at RSABG, providing refreshments and volunteers, as well as a field trip. Our chapter council representative attended three chapter council meetings. Due to scheduling and distance challenges, we were not able to attend the other meeting. **Volunteer hours: 95**

Chapter Web Site, cnps-sgm.org: The chapter web site has been very successful in generating interest in CNPS; we get many inquiries from the public about native plants and our programs from people who visit the site. All chapter newsletters, since the inception of the chapter, are available on line. **Total volunteer hours 40.**

Volunteer hours for financial reports and accounting: 34

Volunteer hours for other activities, e.g. responding to inquiries the public: 30

Volunteer hours for maintenance of membership database: 40

Summary of Volunteer Hours:

1) Board meetings:	146	7) Conservation:	423
2) Field trips:	180	8) Work parties:	14
3) Program meetings:	140	9) Legislative:	see cons.
4) Newsletter:	400	10) Plant sale:	300
5 & 6) Public Outreach & Education:	32	11) Other:	
		Rare plants:	12
		Plant Science	800
		Chapter Council mtg	105
		Website	40
		Other	104

Total volunteer hours: 2696