



SAN GABRIEL MOUNTAINS

CHAPTER OF THE CALIFORNIA NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY

MAY AND JUNE 1995 NEWSLETTER

MEETINGS WILL BE HELD at the new temporary classroom at Eaton Canyon Nature Center, 1750 N Altadena Drive, Pasadena (entrance is just n of New York Avenue on right.) Our usual meeting date is the third Thursday of the month at 7:30, but **NOT ALL MONTHS HAVE SCHEDULED PROGRAMS**, so check your newsletters!!!

CHAPTER EVENTS

**Saturday-Sunday, May 13-14:
Mother's Day Wildflower Weekend.**

The El Dorado Nature Center is hosting a weekend of spectacular wildflowers at the Los Angeles County Outdoor School in Wrightwood. Various hikes throughout the weekend will visit different areas close to Wrightwood and cover such topics as ecology, plant ID, plant adaptations and plant uses. Fee is \$35; rustic accommodations (bunk beds, cooking facilities) are available at the camp for an additional \$35 or campgrounds and motels are located nearby. Please register by May: call 310/570-1749. For questions regarding location and accommodations call RT Hawke, 619/249-3431.

**Thursday, May 18, 7:30PM:
MONTHLY PROGRAM, EATON CYN
NATURE CENTER.**

Distinguished botanist Harlan Lewis will speak to us on Clarkia, one of California's

most spectacular wildflowers. Dr Lewis is Professor Emeritus at UCLA and author of the Jepson Manual's sections on the genera Trichostemma and Gayophytum, as well as Clarkia. On May 18 he will share with us some of his 35 years of research on this beautiful and varied California wildflower.

**Saturday, May 20, 9:30AM-12:00:
Oak Tree Preservation Workshop.**

Co-sponsored by Pasadena's Bungalow Heaven Association, Pasadena Beautiful and Pasadena Water and Power, this workshop will be led by a licensed arborist and by Rebecca Fisher. It will focus on the planting, care and preservation of oak trees in a home landscape and will include a walk through an oak-rich Pasadena neighborhood. Call Becky Fisher for details, 818/405-4630.

**Thursday, June 15, 7:30PM:
MONTHLY MEETING, EATON CYN
NATURE CENTER,**

If Jon Keeley has recovered from back injury/surgery, we hope to hear a presentation of his research on post-fire recovery in Eaton Canyon and other scorched areas of Southern California. We will also discuss post-fire recovery of the San Gabriel Mts Chapter of the CNPS, including future directions and activities.

**PLEASE ATTEND IF YOU CARE
ABOUT THIS CHAPTER!!!**

NATIVE PLANT LOVERS FIND UNLIKELY ALLIES IN FARMERS.

Historically, farmers have been destroyers of native habitat, draining and filling wetlands, clearing forests, burning native vegetation, introducing invasive alien species. To this day, many farmers consider themselves at war with environmentalists who fight to preserve biodiversity (see related article, p. 5.)

But in recent years even hard-nosed growers have had to acknowledge that "traditional" (i.e. post-WWI) agricultural practices are breaking down. Pesticides stop working as pests become resistant, or are banned as hazardous. Petroleum-based fertilizers poison water supplies. And all these chemicals are expensive: when farmers do the math, more and more decide that they can't afford to continue to do what they've been doing. And so they turn to Integrated Pest Management and a sustainable approach to agriculture.

I recently attended a Field Day for almond growers in Merced County, sponsored by UC Davis's BIOS (Biologically Integrated Orchard Systems) program and CAFF (Community Alliance with Family Farmers Foundation.) I was amazed by these growers' sophisticated knowledge of nature. They thought of their farms not merely as food factories but as complex ecosystems. They were good field entomologists -- not simply identifying the "bad bugs" and the "good bugs," but understanding their life cycles, so that they knew when to release predators or, if necessary, spray a narrow-band pesticide. They understood that a complex equilibrium exists among the inhabitants of their farms, and that genocide backfires. Pesticides kill "beneficials" too: predatory insects and birds, pollinators. Small populations of pests not only can be tolerated, but are crucial as a food source for helpful predators.

And these growers know that these all these lifeforms need habitat.

Which is where the native plants come in.

Many of these farmers plant cover crops between rows of trees, to enrich the soil and improve its texture, and to provide refugia for beneficial insects. The cover crops consist of nitrogen-fixing legumes, including native vetches and clovers; native and alien grasses; and native wildflowers (California poppies, lupines, yarrow, tidy tips) to attract pollinating insects.

Some growers are also planting native perennials, as hedges and as habitat for insects and birds. (California Fish and Game has matching funds available for growers who want to restore habitat.) During the Field Day a representative from Cornflower Farms, a Northern California native plant nursery, showed us a demonstration hedge of *Aesculus californica*, *Baccharus viminea*, *B. pilularis*, *Ceanothus "Ray Hartman"*, *Adenostoma fasciculatum*, *Rhamnus ilicifolia*, and Giant Buckwheat. On that hot afternoon the hedge was alive with happy bees and "good" ants-- the "crazy ants," or grey field ants, that these almond growers want to attract.

Of course, we're still going to wrangle over the odd wetland or the inconveniently located endangered species. But I believe that farmers and environmentalists are natural allies, if we can all overcome knee-jerk prejudices and recognize our own true common interests.

-- *Becky Rothenberg*

[FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT BIOS, CAFF, OR SAREP (SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE RESEARCH AND EDUCATION PROGRAM) WRITE:

ROBERT BUGG
Sustainable Agriculture Research and
Education Program
UC Davis
Davis, CA 95616

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

May 12-14, Friday- Sunday: Field trip to Wishon Fork of Tule River, Southern Sierras. Joint trip with Kern County, Sequoia, and Alta Peak Chapters. Mid-elevation trip up the canyon including a moderate hike led by Joan Stewart, State CNPS VP of Administration and Springville resident. Details Becky Rothenberg, 213/257-6120.

May 12-14, Friday-Sunday: Tetracoccus Peak in the Panamint Mts. Orange County Field Trip with Nigel Hancock, who offers the following description: "This trip is intended for the fit and sure-footed (although alternative activities are available for others.) We'll camp at one of the sites in the Wildrose area and visit Tetracoccus Peak, a location known to botanists but not marked on maps. This craggy limestone peak, reached by steep climbs along ridgelines and talus slopes, has an enormous diversity of near-endemics including Holly-leaved tetracoccus, Panamint astragalus, Death Vally monkeyflower, Bear poppy and Panamint dudleya. On Sunday we might go towards Telescope Peak, or visit Darwin Falls." Details Sarah Jayne, 714/552-0691.

May 13, Saturday: Field trip to Flying Mane, Palos Verdes. Palos Verdes Peninsula Land Conservancy leads this tour of some of best coastal sage habitat left on peninsula. Also Mariposa lilies, Indian paintbrush. Details 310/373-0202.

May 13-14, Saturday-Sunday: Wrightwood Wildflower Weekend. Hike leaders will cover such topics as ecology, plant ID, plant adaptations and plant uses. Fee \$35.; rustic accomodations \$35 extra or campgrounds and motels available. Details p. 1.

May 14, Sunday, 9AM: Field trip to Coal Cyn Tecate Cypress State Preserve. So Cal Botanists lead their annual trip to Fremont, Gypsum and Coal Cyn ridgelines. Heart-leaved pitcher sage, OC beargrass, Many-stemmed Dudleya. Meet 9AM, 5th & Main in Corona (Hunny's Restaurant.) 6 hr, 30 mi round trip for high clearance vehicles with good tires and brakes. Bring lunch, water, sunscreen, windbreaker. Guide, Gordon Ruser, 714/541-0944. Ldrs Alan Schoenherr & Alan Romsper.

May 16, Tuesday, 6:45: Evening in the Arroyo. Pasadena Sierra Club leads easy hike on level trails along Arroyo Seco. Meet 6:45PM at trailhead next to San Paqual Stables on S Pasadena border.

May 18, Thursday, 7:30PM: Monthly program, Eaton Cyn Nature Center. Harlan Lewis on Clarkia. Details p. 1.

May 19-21, Friday-Sunday: Nature Knowledge Workshop. Sierra Club sponsors this annual weekend workshop. Learn wilderness awareness and tracking, bird and reptile ID, botany and edible plants. Fee \$95 Sierra Club members, \$100 non-members includes lodging for 2 nights, 6 meals. Details Phyllis Snyder, 714/890-3895.

May 20, Saturday, 9:30AM: Oak Tree Care Workshop. Details p. 1.

May 22, Saturday, 7:30AM-6:30PM: Oaks in the Landscape, Regional Conference of International Society of Arboriculture (ISA). Descanso Gardens. Speakers include Herb Spitzer, Melanie Baer-Keeley, Tom Scott. Registration \$70. Details 602/955-5315.

May 29, Monday, 10AM: Hike to Potato Mtn (3660 ft.) Pasadena Sierra Club. Easy-paced 4-mile round trip above Claremont. Meet 10AM Harwood Lodge or 11AM trailhd (from 210 fwy take Indian Hill n to Baseline, e 1 mi to Padua, n 1.9 mi to Mt Baldy Rd, r 1.7 mi to trlhd prkg.) Details Betty Snow, 213/257-7224.

June 2-4, Friday-Sunday: QUARTERLY STATE MEETING, hosted by Kern County Chapter.

June 15, Thursday, 7:30PM: Monthly program, Eaton Cyn Nature Center. Details p. 1.

June 17, Saturday, 9AM-2PM: Kern County Field Trip, Mourning Cloak Ranch and Botanical Gardens. Contact Randi McCormack, 805/589-7405.

June 17, Saturday: Baldwin Lake in the San Bernardino Mts. Another Orange County field trip led by Nigel Hancock, who writes, "we'll head out the Nature Conservancy property at the eastern end of the San Bernardino Mts. and look at the pebble plains and alkali meadow habitats at close to 7000' on the north shore of Baldwin Lake. Over 300 species have been recorded here. Some of the rare ones include Bird-footed Checkerbloom, Ash-grey paintbrush, and Southern Mountain buckwheat." Details Sarah Jayne, 714/552-0691.

July 14-16, Friday-Sunday: Western Sierra Nevada. Orange County field trip with Nigel Hancock, who writes "we shall be visiting areas of Sequoia National Forest along the Western Divide above Porterville and up to Sherman Pass at 9200'. This area includes a variety of forest and moist meadow habitats... flowers include Coralroot and Rein Orchids, Shooting Stars and the tiny Lesser Star Tulip." [also see May 12 and July 21 for field trips in this general area.] Details Sarah Jayne, 714/552-0691.

July 21-23, Friday-Sunday: 4th annual Sequoia Carcamp. Pasadena Sierra Club leads this weekend of hiking/conservation activities in Southern Sierra -- Sequoia National Forest. Demonstration of effects of logging practices, wildflower walks, hikes through pristine giant Sequoia groves. Details Bonnie Strand, 818/247-6398.

The Newsletter of the San Gabriel Mountains Chapter of the California Native Society is published bi-monthly and is free to Chapter members. Non-member subscription \$5.00. To join the California Native Plant Society, write to CNPS, 909 12th St. Suite 116, Sacramento, CA 95814; specify San Gabriel Mountains Chapter. Enclose check payable to CNPS. Membership: Individual/library -- \$35; Student/retired/limited income -- \$20; family/group -- \$45; supporting -- \$75 [PLEASE NOTE NEW RATES.]

ENDANGERED SPECIES ACT, FORESTS BESIEGED

[*editor's note: this article is adapted from the Pasadena Sierra Club's newsletter ARROYO VIEW.*]

Twenty-five years after the first Earth Day, the health and beauty of our living planet depends on our dedicated action now more than ever. We are seeing a backlash, largely spearheaded, unfortunately, by Western legislators, who seem to have forgotten what the Clean Air, Clean Water, and Endangered Species Acts have accomplished for all Americans in the last twenty years.

On the national front, the Republican-controlled Congress is poised to undo many of our most important laws, despite recent polls showing support from a substantial majority of Americans for strong environmental safeguards.

The Endangered Species Act (ESA), the keystone of environmental protection in the US, is under heavy fire; the House of Representatives has voted for a two-year moratorium on listing any new plants or animals for ESA protection. In addition, attempts are underway to cut funds needed for implementation of the ESA.

California Congressman Richard Pombo heads a Task Force on the ESA that has been touring the country, conducting public hearings for the purpose of gathering anecdotal "public opinion." Two hearings were held recently in Southern California: one in Bakersfield – home of an endangered Kangaroo Rat and the recently de-listed Mohave Ground Squirrel – and one in Riverside, home of the Stevens Kangaroo Rat. If these hearings were typical, the Task Force is stacking the deck against environmentalists; in Bakersfield, out of twelve chosen testifiers only two were proponents of renewing and strengthening the ESA (including a member of the Kern County CNPS.) The Riverside testimony was similarly skewed.

ACTION: the Task Force is still accepting written testimony; write to the Honorable Richard Pombo, Chairman, ESA Taskforce, Longworth Office Bldg, Washington DC 20515.

The ESA and other environmental laws are also threatened by the "Job Creation and Wage Enhancement Act," H.R. 9, which recently passed the House and is awaiting action by the Senate. State CNPS staff is particularly concerned about this legislation, which it sees as a thinly veiled attempt to gut environmental regulation. First, the act would bog government down in time-consuming, imprecise exercise of having to quantify such benefits as the dollar value of human life and health, and weigh them against easily measured costs of environmental regulation.

Also included in H.R. 9 is a "takings" provision which could force taxpayers to compensate businesses or individuals who claim that government regulations like the ESA have diminished the value of their property. Sorting out such claims, especially the grossly inflated ones of speculators, would be costly and contentious. But more significantly, the public should not have to compensate individuals **not** to destroy the global gene pool (as an example) any more than we should pay manufacturers not to pollute.

ACTION: *letters and calls are urgently needed to Senator Feinstein calling for defeat of this proposal. (US Senate, Washington DC 20510; Capitol switchboard 202/234-3121.*

The forests are also under assault in the House by the recently passed Taylor-Dicks rider to the Rescissions Bill. This rider calls for increased "salvage" logging of dead or dying trees, and both contain "sufficiency" language which allows logging to proceed regardless of conflict with the nation's environmental laws.

ACTION: *phone or fax President Clinton and tell him that he must veto the Taylor-Dicks rider to the Rescissions Bill if it reaches his desk. (PHONE: 202/ 456-1111; FAX: 202/456-2461.*

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