



SAN GABRIEL MOUNTAINS

CHAPTER OF THE CALIFORNIA NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY

MARCH-APRIL 1996

UPCOMING EVENTS

Chapter meetings are held at Eaton Canyon Nature Center on the third Thursday of the month. NOT ALL MONTHS HAVE PROGRAMS, so watch your newsletter!

Friday-Sunday, March 9-10. FIELD TRIP, Catalina Island. Field Trip Chair RT Hawke will lead a botanical tour of the island. Participants are responsible for arranging their own transportation (boat leaves for Catalina Friday 6PM; returns Sunday mid-day) and lodging, but RT will provide details. Call him at 619/249-3431.

Thursday, March 21. MONTHLY PROGRAM. 7:00PM, Plant ID -- great introduction or refresher to keying skills; **7:30, PROGRAM, Ingrid Gonzalez, Maintaining Native Plants in the Garden.** Ingrid Gonzalez has worked with native plants for over fifteen years; she and her husband own Primavera Landscaping in Los Angeles. If your natives are restless, come hear Ingrid's tips on how to restore their satisfaction through pruning, dividing, and mulching.

Friday-Sunday, March 22-24. FIELD TRIP, Death Valley. This will be a combined trip with the Orange County Chapter, led by Nigel Hancock. He writes: "the places to visit for the best wildflowers vary from year to year depending on where

the rain falls, so we have not selected a particular camping location yet. We might use a developed campground, or we may by primitive camping." Details Sarah Jayne, 714/552-0691.

Saturday, April 13. FIELD TRIP, Holy Jim Canyon, Santa Ana Mountains. Holy Jim, Batman, how can you resist? This is another Orange County trip led by Nigel Hancock. He writes: "the trail starts up a side canyon off Trabuco Canyon with riparian woodland and a nice waterfall... we have timed the trip to see the unusual *Ceanothus papillosus* in bloom as well as Flowering Ash and spring wildflowers." Details Sarah Jayne, 714/552-0691.

Thursday, April 18. MONTHLY PROGRAM. 7:00PM, Plant ID; 7:30, PROGRAM: Jan Scow, CNPS Land Management Issues. In a change of schedule, Jan Scow will speak in April rather than in March. Jan will tell us about some land use issues of special interest to local CNPS members -- in particular, the proposed mega-development along the Santa Clara River corridor.

Friday-Sunday, April 26-28. FIELD TRIP, BAJA CALIFORNIA!! The breathtakingly industrious Orange County Chapter has planned this very special trip. They will visit unique sites and see rare endemics on the privately owned Rancho La

Rinconada near Rosarita. Details as always, Sarah Jayne, 714/552-0691.

Sunday, May 5. FIELD TRIP, Conejo Mountain in Santa Monica Mts. A joint trip with Orange County and Santa Monica Chapters. This trip to the western end of the Santa Monicas is "an opportunity to see four unusual Dudleyas, including *D. abramsii ssp parva*, as well as the rare Conejo Buckwheat (*Eriogonum crocatum*) in its natural habitat." Leader Tony Bomkamp; details 714/552-0691.

THE WILDFLOWERS ARE COMING...

... and February's gutter-busting rains ought to ensure a good crop. Here are a few wildflower-centered local events:

Earthside Nature Center 25th Anniversary "Wildflower Walkabout."
Sat-Sun March 30-31, 10AM-4PM.
Blooming spring wildflowers from California's coast, mountains and desert at Earthside, a 2-acre native plant garden located at 3160 E. Del Mar Blvd, Pasadena. Drought-tolerant plants will be sold. Activities for children include face-painting, please-touch friendly reptiles. Details 818/447-2830.

A little further into spring, our chapter will host a major statewide **Wildflower Weekend at Wrightwood** on Saturday-Sunday, May 19-20. RT Hawke, Shaun Hawke, and Nigel Hancock of the Orange County Chapter will lead hikes throughout the weekend to rare plants and "best bloom." Nearby accommodations include campgrounds and motels. Enrollment is limited, so register soon with RT Hawke, 619/249-3431.

Finally, the Theodore Payne Foundation is maintaining a "**Wildflower Hotline**", available 24 hours a day (in case you get a phacelia craving at 3 AM.) The number is: 818/768-3533.

ALL POINTS BULLETIN FOR RARE PLANT SURVEYS

RT Hawke is a desperate man. The new CNPS Inventory has "upgraded (a dubious honor) a number of species from "4" -- limited distribution -- to "1B" -- rare. This means the populations have to be documented.

If you have always wanted to get involved in the CNPS's Rare Plant activities, here is a perfect opportunity, since RT knows exactly where the plants are; he simply needs extra eyes and hands to help describe and document the sites for the Inventory. Call RT at 619/249-3431.

HELP NEEDED FOR DESCANSO FESTIVAL

Another desperate man, chapter Publicity Chair Gordon Nunnally, is looking for volunteers to help staff a CNPS booth at the Descanso Gardens Festival on April 13-14 (see Calendar.) Call Gordon at 818/794-2023.

SHY TULIP HOLDS PARTY

On May 5 from 3:30-5:30 at Book'Em Mysteries, there will be a book-signing and party to celebrate the publication of **THE SHY TULIP MURDERS** by Rebecca Rothenberg. **BOOK'EM** is at 1118 Mission St. in South Pasadena; phone 818/794-9600.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

March 3, Sun 9 am: HARDING CANYON HIKE IN THE SANTA ANA MTNS. Spring wildflowers, riparian woodland, sage scrub, chaparral, waterfalls. Leader Nigel Hancock. For details call Sarah Jayne, 714/552-0691.

March 6, Wed 8 pm: UNRAVELING THE MYSTERIES OF FLOWER DEVELOPMENT. Free Watson Lecture at Caltech by professor of biology Elliot Meyerowitz. The Watson Lectures are guaranteed "layperson-friendly," so we'll see. Beckman Auditorium; details 818/395-4652.

March 10, Sun, 9 am: WEED WAR!! Malibu Creek State Park - roadways into park. LA/Santa Monica Mtns Chapter CNPS. Bring water, food, gloves. For details call Jo Kitz at 818/348-5910.

March 12, Tues, 7:30 pm: REGENERATION AFTER PRESCRIBED BURNS IN SANTA MONICA MTNS, speaker Marg Stassforth. LA/Santa Monica Mtns Chapter CNPS. Kenter Canyon Elementary School, 645 Kenter Ave., 1 Mile north of Sunset, west of I-405.

March 16, Sat, 9 am: WILDFLOWER WALK IN THE SANTA MONICA MOUNTAINS. Santa Monica Mtns Chapter CNPS. Meet at 9 am at Taft High School parking lot (Winnetka & Ventura) or 8:45 am at the Federal Bldg. parking lot (Sepulveda & Wilshire in Westwood).

March 19-22, Tues-Fri: SYMPOSIUM ON OAK WOODLANDS: ECOLOGY, MANAGEMENT & URBAN INTERFACE ISSUES. At Cal Poly San Luis Obispo. Fee \$95 before 2-20-96. For details call 805/756-2702.

March 21, Thurs, 7 pm: PLANT ID; 7:30: OUR MONTHLY PROGRAM, Maintaining Native Plant Landscapes, see pg 1.

March 22-24 Fri night-Sun: DEATH VALLEY. Orange County Chapter camping trip led by Nigel Hancock. See p. 1. For details call Sarah Jayne, 714/552-0691.

March 30-31, Sat-Sun, 10am-4pm: WILDFLOWER WALKABOUTS AT EARTHSIDE NATURE CENTER. Donation of \$5 adults, \$3 students & seniors, children under 16 with adult free. See p. 2. For details call 818/447-2830.

Apr 6, Sat, 9:30 am: EASY WILDFLOWER HIKE AT CARRIZO PLAIN. See splendid wildflower displays. For more information call 805/475-2360.

Apr 13, Sat.: HOLY JIM CANYON HIKE IN THE SANTA ANA MTNS. See p.1. Leader Nigel Hancock. For details call Sarah Jayne, 714/552-0691.

Apr 13-14, Sat-Sun: DESCANSO GARDENS SPRING FESTIVAL. Plant sales, displays, CNPS booth (see p.2), entertainment, miniature RR for kids. 9 am- 5pm on lawn area. Details Steven Williams, 818/952-7787.

Apr. 18, Thurs, 7 pm: PLANT ID; OUR MONTHLY PROGRAM, Jan Scow, Status Report on the Santa Clara River. See pg 1.

Apr 19-21, Fri night-Sun: BIG MORONGO-JOSHUA TREE WORK/PLAY WEEKEND. Santa Monica Mtns Chapter car camping field trip with bird watching & wildflower walks. For details call 818/881-3706.

Apr 26-28, Fri night-Sun: BAJA CALIFORNIA. Discover rare, endemic plants at Rancho la Rinconda. For details call Sarah Jayne, 714/552-0691.

Apr 27-28, Sat-Sun: **KERN VALLEY FESTIVAL: A CELEBRATION OF THE BIOREGIONS.**
Tour, bird banding demonstrations, activities for children, river rafting trips. For details call 619/378-2531.

The Newsletter of the San Gabriel Mountains Chapter of the California Native Plant Society is published bi-monthly and is free to Chapter members. Non-member subscription is \$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.

NATURALIST'S NOTEBOOK

By Mickey Long

HIKING THE PAPER TRAIL, Part II: *Aster greataea*, Eaton Canyon, and Louis Greata

When we left off, we (or at least I, since I don't know how many of you I've carried along on this fascinating story) were seeking out information on Greata's Aster (*Aster greataea*): its Eaton Canyon type locality, and the origin of its name. We knew Samuel Parish had named the plant in 1902 after Louis A. Greata. I continued my search through at least four institutions of higher learning and have made some headway in answering the questions.

According to Harvey Monroe Hall's major paper "Compositae of Southern California" (1907), Greata collected the Eaton Canyon specimen on September 30, 1900, apparently alone. But where in Eaton Canyon? Hall included Greata in his acknowledgment of a number of "resident botanists and collectors who have given much assistance by supplying specimens ..." Parish's 1902 description of the new aster lists it from "Acton" and several collections in "Canyons of the San Gabriel Mts. near Pasadena," and adds "The recognition of it is due to Mr. Greata's notes and excellent specimens, and it fittingly may connect his name with the flora of which he is so earnest a student." The Rancho Santa Ana Botanic Garden herbarium has two folders of specimens from at least 19 San Gabriel Mountain localities, including one close to Eaton Canyon: "Rubio Canyon, 2400 fr., Oct 16, 1918, Frank Pierson"; "Clear Creek" and "Clear Creek Trail" (where many of us have seen the plant growing); and "Santa Anita Canyon". The literature shows that Greata

joined Parish on at least one collecting trip through the San Bernardino Mountains, in May 1901. But as to where in Eaton Canyon Greata collected the aster, the trail ends -- at least until I find out where the type specimen is located and whether Greata left his field notes with the specimen. Louis Greata died in Los Angeles on May 1, 1911.

Incidentally, the original spelling of the plant, *Aster greatai*, was corrected to *greataea* by Tim Ross of Rancho Santa Ana, to properly match gender endings. Many thanks to Steve Boyd of Rancho Santa Ana, Joan DeFato, Arboretum Librarian, and Roy Van de Hoek, for steering me to specimens and references.



Illus. of *Aster greataea* from Bulletin of the So. Calif Acad. Sci. 1902

BOOK REVIEW

John Sawyer and Todd Keeler-Wolf,
A MANUAL OF CALIFORNIA
VEGETATION

I've never been good at BIG SCIENCE (as my husband the physics major calls it). So when I finally received my copy of *A Manual of California Vegetation* (California Native Plant Society, 1995, 471 pages) in mid-January and found the Introduction to be full of technical language, I was a bit daunted. But I understand that John O. Sawyer and Todd Keeler-Wolf aimed the book at plant professionals. So, after lingering over the color photo section and wishing it had exact locations, I vowed to re-read the introduction later and plunged into the main body of the work. Of course one doesn't read straight through descriptions of over 200 vegetation series (the new term for plant communities). But it was fascinating browsing!

This book is the result four years of work by the CNPS Plant Communities Committee which was made up of 32 dedicated individuals from academia, conservation organizations, consulting firms, and state and federal agencies. Their goal was to define a uniform vegetation classification system that would give biologists a common way of describing the complexity of California's flora. Now that

conservation efforts are centering around ecosystems rather than individual species, it is of utmost importance that all concerned parties share a common language.

For us non-professionals the *Manual* can be a useful tool also. Although Munz's 29 communities are easy to remember and a good starting point, his system is pretty limited when you actually start exploring our diverse flora. And what I anticipate using the book for is planning native landscaping projects. Now it's easy to find out what kind of plants naturally grow together and therefore might complement each other in your garden (both in terms of looks and needs). Each of the entries includes a description of its dominant and characteristic species, its structure, locations and endangerment status. Many have a color photograph. And it's easy to cross-reference series that have some overlap of species or that are contiguous.

So while I can't exactly say this book is a "good read"; it is a well designed volume with great reference potential for both scientists and plant lovers.

P.S. I promise to bring my copy to the March 21 meeting so any one who's interested can take a look.

--Kathy LaShure

AT LONG LAST -- IT'S HERE!

A Manual of California Vegetation

John Sawyer and Todd Keeler-Wolf

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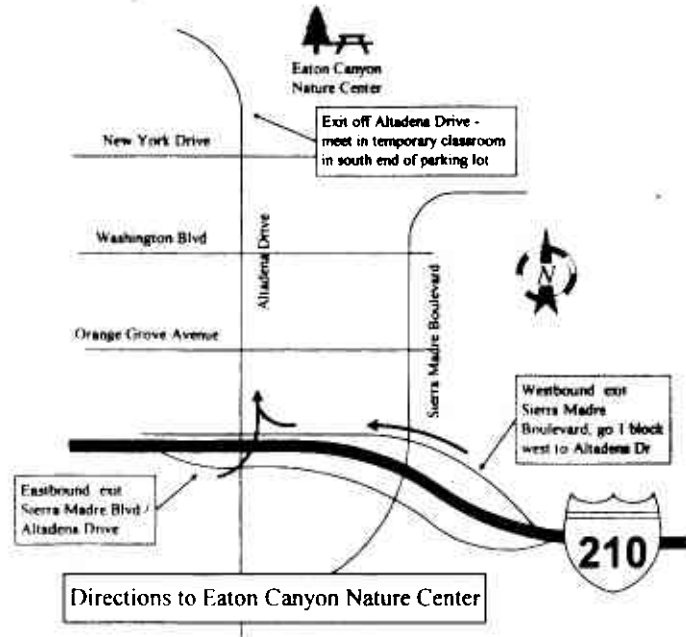
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