



THE PAINTBRUSH

FALL 2005 NEWSLETTER

SAN GABRIEL MOUNTAINS CHAPTER
CALIFORNIA NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY

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DATES TO REMEMBER

- Sun., Sept. 11, 9:00 a.m.: *Eaton Canyon Plant Walk*
led by Orchid Black
- Thurs., Sept. 22, 7:30 p.m.: *Photographic Technique Evening*
with Chapter members
- Sat., Oct. 1, 9:00 a.m.: *Native Plant Photography* field trip,
see page 3 for details
- Sun., Oct. 9, 9:00 a.m.: *Eaton Canyon Plant Walk*
led by Carol Carrierre
- Thurs., Oct. 27, 7:30 p.m.: *The Secret Lives of Natives*
with Greg Rubin
- Sun., Nov. 13, 9:00 a.m.: *Eaton Canyon Plant Walk*
led by Eva Morgan
- Sat., Nov. 19, 9:00 a.m.–2 p.m.: *Under the Oaks: Native Plant
and Wildflower Seed Sale* at Eaton Canyon Nature Center
- Sun., Dec. 11, 9:00 a.m.: *Eaton Canyon Plant Walk*
led by Gabi & Cliff McLean



UNDERSTANDING VEGETATION

By Andrea Warniment

Wandering along an unnamed trail, following a seasonal stream, I am taken aback by the surprise I still feel at the temperature gradient between

the enticing shade of a majestic oak, and the stark exposure of the trail just outside the reach of the tree canopy. The difference between the cool gentle shade and the sweltering open trail is remarkable, and a consideration all hikers must face once it is time to pick out the ideal picnic spot.

As I continue to learn about what makes the San Gabriel Mountains so unique, I enjoy reading the observations of scientists and naturalists, and understanding how they make sense of such abrupt changes in vegetation. Here are a few descriptions of the local flora that I found quite interesting and informative, and would like to share:



Vegetation – all the plant species in a region and the way they are arranged – is a part of the natural world that humans learn to recognize at an early age. It is our nature to differentiate among a grassland and a shrubland or a meadow and an adjacent forest ... Differences in such important environmental factors as moisture, soil chemistry, temperature, and time since disturbance exert powerful influences. – Sawyer and Keeler-Wolf in A Manual of California Vegetation (1995)

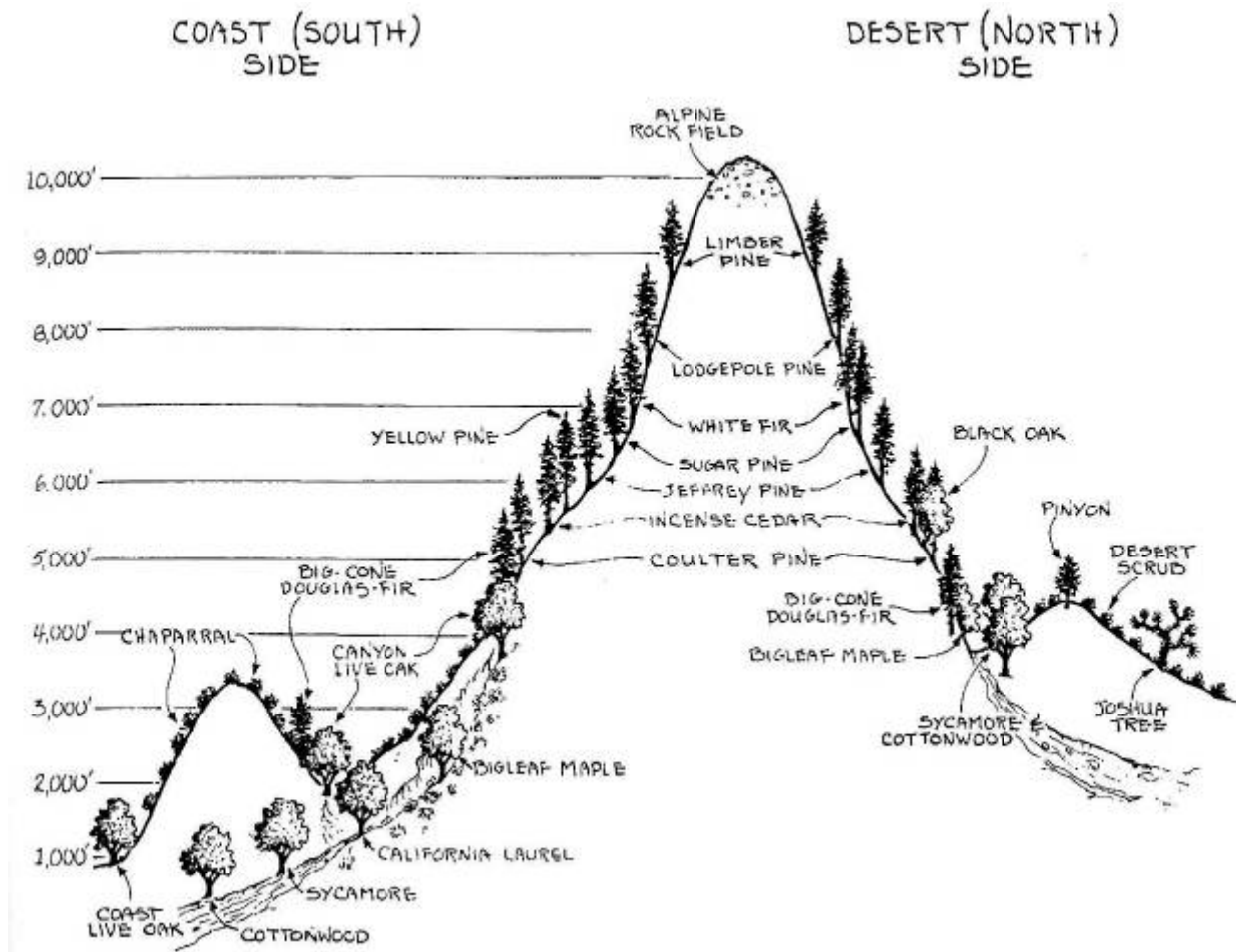
Within the Angeles National Forest, a variety of climatic zones, substrates and topographies combine to foster a highly diverse flora. For example, at least 1400 species, subspecies and varieties of vascular plants have been documented within the forest, a number of which are found nowhere else. Further, these plants are distributed throughout many diverse plant communities: alluvial fan scrub and coastal sage scrub on the slopes bordering the coast-side valleys; chaparral, mixed evergreen, conifer and riparian associations on both the northern and southern mid- to high-elevation slopes; and creosote scrub, Joshua tree woodland, pinyon-juniper woodland and sagebrush scrub along the northern foothills bordering the Mohave Desert. – USDA Forest Service in A Field Guide to the Rare Plants of the Angeles National Forest (1995)



Temperatures drop as altitude increases. Cold air is less able than warm air to hold moisture in vapor form. When the air is chilled sufficiently its vapor condenses, forming raindrops. Thus the cooler, higher ridges enjoy more precipitation than the foot of the range, and

in winter it falls as snow. Most of this precipitation, however, is squeezed out of winter storms crossing over the mountains from the seaward side to the interior, and little moisture is left for the Mojave Desert to the north. This rainshadow effect, as it is called, has played an important role in creating the deserts of the Southwest. — Roy Murphy in Angeles National Forest (1991)

Multitudes of educational and interpretive books exist describing our local flora. My favorites combine this information with detailed sketches and breathtaking photographs. And in my opinion, there is no better place to read textbooks and trail guides alike than underneath the shade of a quiet oak tree ...



Plant Life of Angeles National Forest (Illustration by Pat Brame in *Angeles National Forest* by Roy Murphy)

<http://cnps-sgm.org>

Check your Chapter's web site frequently for up-to-date information on Chapter events and for links to other organizations' field trips and classes. It's one-stop browsing!

CHAPTER EVENTS

Meetings are held at Eaton Canyon Nature Center (map on back cover) on the fourth Thursday of the month with the exception of July, August, November, and December.

Informal plant identification and social time 7:00 to 7:30 p.m.; programs start promptly at 7:30 p.m.

Board Meeting

Any members interested in helping with Chapter activities are welcome Thursday, Sept. 8, 7:30 p.m., at the *Chapter Board Meeting*, Eaton Canyon Nature Center classroom.

Chapter Elections Due in September

Our chapter will elect officers by a show of hands at the September 22 meeting. This occurs every other year, the last time being in 2003. Here is the slate of nominations:
 President: Gabi McLean Vice-president: Cliff McLean
 Secretary: Carol Carriere Treasurer: Bob Mateer

Other board members are appointed rather than elected. Volunteer help is always needed, so if you'd like to assist, please contact Vice-president Cliff McLean and join the fun.

☺ SPECIAL EVENT ☺

Under the Oaks Plant & Wildflower Seed Sale

Our Chapter's Annual Fundraiser

Sat., Nov. 19, 2005, 9:00 a.m.—2:00 p.m. at Eaton Canyon Nature Center, 1750 N. Altadena Dr., Pasadena: We will be selling a good variety of reasonably priced California native plants and wildflower seeds appropriate for gardens in the Los Angeles Basin. Knowledgeable Chapter members will be on hand to answer your questions. This is a great opportunity to purchase natives for seasonally appropriate planting. Tell your friends!

While at the plant sale, please join us at 11:00 a.m. in the Eaton Canyon Nature Center Auditorium for *Wildscaping Your Garden* — Chris and Trish Meyer, of www.Wildscaping.com, describe their presentation as follows: “Learn how to use California’s native plants . . . to achieve a beautiful garden that’s a magnet for birds while also being water conserving and low-maintenance.” They will discuss many of the plants for sale at Under the Oaks.

☛ Cash or personal checks only, please ☚

PROGRAMS & OUTINGS

Thurs., Sept. 22, 7:30 p.m.: *Photographic Technique Evening* with Chapter members

Regular attendees at Chapter meetings will be familiar with the considerable photographic accomplishments of our own Chapter members. Have you ever wondered how to take your own photographs of native plants? Come and hear how fellow members go about their photography. And please bring and share your own experiences about equipment, taking pictures, and picture processing. The emphasis will be on digital photography, but we’ll hopefully hear from at least one member who continues to use film. You don’t need to be a professional to produce excellent photos.

Thurs., Oct. 27, 7:30 p.m.: *The Secret Lives of Natives* with Greg Rubin

Owner of California’s Own Native Landscape Design, Greg will give a presentation on “The Secret Lives of Natives”, about landscaping with native plants. His company has designed over 400 native landscapes in San Diego County, including many public parks and restoration projects, notably a firewise garden for the L.A. Fire Dept. Greg will be appearing in Animal Planet’s “Backyard Habitat”, a new show on the Discovery Channel. Greg has been featured in a number of publications, most notably Sunset Magazine, as well as on TV and radio, and has a tireless lecture schedule.

Sat., Oct. 1, 9 a.m.: *Native Plant Photography* field trip. Time and location will be sent to our email list. To be added to the list, please contact Cliff McLean (Cliff.McLean@att.net).

Sun., Sept. 11, Oct. 9, Nov. 13, Dec. 11, 9 a.m.: *Eaton Canyon Plant Walk*. Meet at Eaton Canyon Nature Center.

KUDOS — A Salute to Volunteers!

By Lyn McAfee

I assumed the office of chapter president shortly after we greeted the new millennium. At that time, the chapter was in crisis, facing the prospect of dissolving if volunteers could not be found to fill leadership roles. Some of us met and took the crisis to heart, stepping up to the plate to keep the chapter running, and building on the good work of prior leadership.

After four+ years on the job I am retiring as president this September, though I will continue to be involved. Comparing the state of the chapter from the time of that “crisis meeting” back in 2000 to now, I am amazed at just how much progress we’ve made. “Many hands make light work” as my grandmother used to say, and without the many hands volunteering to work for the chapter, the work would be heavy indeed.

KUDOS to New Volunteers

In the past few months we have had a real influx of chapter leadership, and I’d like to thank each of the “new kids on the block” on behalf of our entire membership. **Tom Hood** and **Andrea Warniment** have enthusiastically agreed to take on the recurring job of editing and publishing the newsletter. Without their skill and tenacity, and the able assistance of **Graham Bothwell**, you would not be reading this. **Orchid Black** volunteered to tackle the task of coordinating program speakers, and she’s doing a bang-up job. **Carmen Wolf** appeared at our May board meeting, and out of the blue offered to take on the management of the chapter’s annual native plant sale, *Under the Oaks*. Already her management expertise has wowed us all. Newest volunteer **Jason Suppes** will be an at-large board member until he finds his niche, which should be very soon.

KUDOS to Long-time Volunteers

The “old kids on the block” deserve recognition and thanks too. **Mickey Long** has been a stalwart since he helped found our chapter. He continues to find program speakers and is our rare plant coordinator. **Eva Morgan** has been around since the beginning. Without her leadership we would not have Sunday plant walks at Eaton Canyon. **Gary Wallace** not only helps find speakers for our meetings, but is president of the Southern California Botanists. **Rick Fisher**,

former chapter president, keeps us all informed on conservation issues. **Jane Strong**, webmaster, does a great job keeping our web site up to date (cnps-sgm.org). **Cliff McLean** as VP and **Gabi McLean** as member services coordinator are always ready to pitch in and lend their skills and support to all tasks at hand. Chapter secretary **Carol Carriere** writes wonderful minutes that provide an excellent record. **Graham Bothwell** as membership chair keeps track of you all and coordinates with the state office. **Bob Mateer** is now treasurer, doing a great job keeping our financial records. And whatever would we do without **Bernie Mateer**, who keeps those refreshments coming at our meetings!

KUDOS & OPPORTUNITIES for Members and Donors

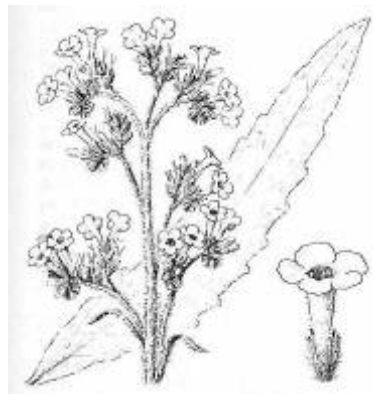
Without the continuing support of you, our members, the chapter would not exist. Thank you, thank you, thank you for caring about the preservation, protection, and horticulture of native plants!!!

You, too, have the opportunity to join the chapter board volunteers mentioned above and be involved on a more direct level. Come to our board meetings to say howdy and get acquainted! We meet quarterly – the next meeting is Thursday, September 8, in the Eaton Canyon Nature Center classroom, at 7:30 p.m. Hope to see YOU there!

PLANT PROFILE: A RASH ACT *Turricula parryi* Poodle-Dog Bush

By Jane Strong

Illustration from Munz's A Flora of Southern California



Picture this classic California scene: a foggy background, charred blackened branches reaching upward, tall spires of purple-flowered plants in the foreground. Here you have poodle-dog bush at its finest aspect.

The ill-scented poodle-dog bush is covered with stinging hairs. Walking amongst the plants and handling the flowers produces a skin rash, caused by chemicals emitted by the hairs, which is similar to that caused by poison oak.

Poodle-dog bush is abundant on dry ridges of burns along Barrett-Stoddard Road, around Spring Hill and Hog Back in San Antonio Canyon, Glendora Ridge Road and Sunset Ridge Trail, almost anywhere in lower reaches of the Curve-

Williams complex and Padua-Grand Prix-Old complex burn areas.

A remarkable report: In 1941, in the San Gabriel Mountains northeast of Glendora, Los Angeles County, three persons were affected after exposure to old flowering stems of the previous year. This was the third year following a fire, and plants had become abundant. When plants were in flower the previous year, no one was affected. Hairs on the old flowering stalks, easily broken from the stems, were the cause of a rash with edema [swelling], intense itching and burning. — Poisonous Plants of California, p. 179

Certain species of scorpionweed or *Phacelia*, a member of the same plant family, *Hydrophyllaceae*, as poodle-dog bush, also produce skin rash in sensitive individuals.



All of these are fire followers as well. They are yellow-throated *Phacelia*, *P. brachyloba*, Large-flowered *Phacelia*, *P. grandiflora*, and wild Canterbury Bells, *P. minor*. People have been hospitalized after touching Large-flowered *Phacelia* while hiking in post-burn Marshall Canyon. It also grows along Glendora Ridge Road near San Dimas Experimental Forest.

REMINISCENCES

In the Words of John Muir:

In the mountains of San Gabriel, overlooking the lowland vines and fruit groves, Mother Nature is most ruggedly, thornily savage. Not even in the Sierra have I ever made the acquaintance of mountains more rigidly inaccessible. The slopes are exceptionally steep and insecure to the foot of the explorer, however great his strength or skill may be, but thorny chaparral constitutes their chief defense. With the exception of little park and garden spots not visible in comprehensive views, the entire surface is covered with it, from the highest peaks to the plain. It swoops into every hollow and swells over every ridge, gracefully complying with the varied topography, in shaggy, ungovernable exuberance, fairly dwarfing the utmost efforts of human culture out of sight and mind.

But in the very heart of this thorny wilderness, down in the dells, you may find gardens filled with the fairest flowers, that any child would love, and unapproachable linns lined with lilies and ferns, where the ousel builds its mossy hut and sings in chorus with the white falling water. Bears also, and panthers, wolves, wildcats, wood rats, squirrels, foxes, snakes, and innumerable birds, all find grateful homes here, adding wildness to wildness in glorious profusion and variety.

From a letter written in September 1877, published in *Steep Trails* (1918)

A true conservationist is a man who knows that the world is not given by his fathers but borrowed from his children — Audubon

WELCOME! New members:

Nate Benesi Jennifer Leung
Carolyn Summers Jason Suppes

And thank you to our renewing members! Please consider renewing at a higher level! Your support of our native flora is much appreciated!

Have you forgotten to renew your membership?

Please renew so Chapter numbers are maintained. There continues to be a noticeable number of members who have not renewed, especially over the summer months. Please check that your membership is current. We need you all!

MEMBER PROFILE

Tom Hood, Newsletter Editor

Tom Hood has been in the textile industry for his entire career, and has a bachelor's degree in zoology. He has a great love of the outdoors, and especially for California's native plants. Tom has been a member of the California Native Plant Society for the past 4 years, and has also been a docent at the Eaton Canyon Nature Center for the same amount of time. A devoted writer, and committed to environmental causes, he has been a contributing author for articles in "Paw Prints," the monthly publication of Eaton Canyon Nature Center Associates.

Andrea Warniment, Newsletter Asst-Editor

Andrea Warniment is a consulting botanist with five years of experience in biological resources assessment. She specializes in the identification of Southern California native vegetation and monitoring of habitat restoration activities. She spent several years working for nonprofit organizations, analyzing regional habitat linkages for wildlife movement and dispersal of species, and managing grant-funded land preservation and restoration projects. Her hobbies include reading, movie-going, kayaking, and nature photography.

NEW FORMAT

We hope you like our new newsletter format. We're in transition, without the benefit of the desktop publishing software so well mastered by our previous editor, Kathy LaShure. The format for this issue has been produced with the assistance of Graham Bothwell, with Kathy advising from her new home in Inyokern.

The Newsletter of the San Gabriel Mountains Chapter of the California Native Plant Society is published four times per year, and is free to Chapter members. Non-member subscription is \$5.00.

A special note of appreciation to BONTERRA CONSULTING for volunteering to print, label and fold each issue of our newsletter, which is a tremendous help. BonTerra Consulting provides environmental planning, biological surveys, natural resources management, and city and regional planning services to public and private sector clients. **We welcome BonTerra to the CNPS San Gabriel Mountains team!**

<http://www.bonterraconsulting.com>

JOIN CNPS NOW!!

Learn to understand California's unique flora and help to preserve this rich heritage for future generations.

Dues are tax deductible. You will receive this newsletter, the informative quarterly journal *Fremontia*, and the statewide news *Bulletin*. If you would like to receive only this newsletter, the price of a subscription is \$5 per year.

- Yes, I'd like to affiliate with San Gabriel Mountains Chapter
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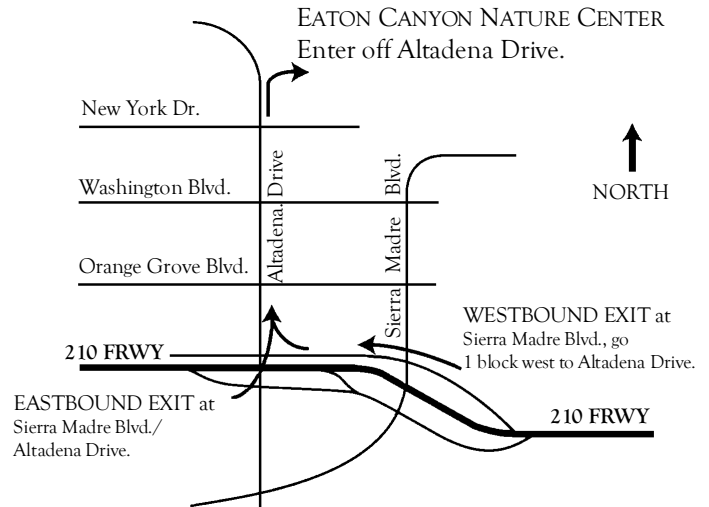
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Directions to Eaton Canyon Nature Center
1750 N. Altadena Drive, Pasadena

Web site: <http://cnps-sgm.org>

Dedicated to the Preservation of the California Native Flora

The California Native Plant Society is a statewide nonprofit organization of amateurs & professionals with a common interest in California's native plants. The mission of the Society is to increase understanding & appreciation of California's native plants & to conserve them and their natural habitats, through education, science, horticulture & advocacy. Membership is open to all.

Membership includes the quarterly journal Fremontia, the quarterly Bulletin which gives statewide news & announcements of Society activities & conservation issues, & the chapter newsletter.



CALIFORNIA NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY

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