



# THE PAINTBRUSH

September-December 2008

San Gabriel Mountains Chapter of  
The California Native Plant Society

Websites: <http://cnps-sgm.org>  
<http://cnps.org>

## CALENDAR

### SEPTEMBER Page

Sun., Sep. 14, 9:00 a.m.,  
Eaton Canyon Plant Walk .....7  
Thu., Sep. 25, 7:30 p.m. (Plant ID 7:00 p.m.)  
Program Meeting: *Living with Chaparral*. 1

### OCTOBER

Sun., Oct. 12, 9:00 a.m.,  
Eaton Canyon Plant Walk .....7  
Sat., Oct. 18, 9:00 a.m.-4:30 p.m.  
So. Cal. Botanists Symposium .....7  
Thu., Oct. 23, 7:30 p.m. (Plant ID 7:00 p.m.)  
Program Meeting: *Native Bulbs* ..... 1  
Sat., Oct 25, 8:00 a.m. Field Trip  
*Vegetation Mapping in the Arroyo Seco*.. 1

### NOVEMBER

Thu., Nov. 6, 7:30 p.m.,  
Chapter Board Meeting .....7  
Sun., Nov. 9, 9:00 a.m.,  
Eaton Canyon Plant Walk .....7  
Sat., Nov. 15, 9:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m.  
Under the Oaks 2008  
*Our Chapter's Annual Plant Sale* ..... 1  
Sat., Nov. 22, 3:00 p.m., Planting Workshop  
*Learn How to Plant Native Plants*..... 1

### DECEMBER

Sun., Dec. 14, 9:00 a.m.,  
Eaton Canyon Plant Walk .....7

### JANUARY (Preview)

Thu., Jan. 8, 7:30 p.m.,  
Chapter Board Meeting .....7  
Sun., Jan. 11, 9:00 a.m.,  
Eaton Canyon Plant Walk .....7  
Sat.-Mon., Jan. 17-19 & Tue.-Wed., Jan. 20-21  
CNPS Conservation Conference  
& Post-conference Workshops .....7  
Thu., Jan. 22, 7:30 p.m. (Plant ID 7:00 p.m.)  
Program Meeting: *To be announced*..... 7

## WELCOME TO OUR NEW MEMBERS

Liga Auzins	Jack Bath
Rochelle Darrow	Linda Endicott
Maya Gingery	Ginny Heringer
Lucinda McDade	Jill Miller
Shawn Overstreet	Judith Scillely

Please join us and bring a friend to these fall events at the Eaton Canyon Nature Center (ECNC) in Pasadena (see map on page 7).  
All of our events are free and open to the public.

## PROGRAM (CHAPTER) MEETINGS

**Thursdays, Program at 7:30 p.m. Come at 7:00 p.m. for informal plant identification.**  
Sep. 25 .... *Living with Chaparral A State of Change in a Changing State*, by Ronald D. Quinn, co-author of *Introduction to California Chaparral* published by University of California Press.

Chaparral is the dominant plant community in our state and a major natural resource. Listen and ask all you always wanted to know about Chaparral.

Oct. 23..... *Gardening with Native Bulbs*, by Lili Singer, horticulturist, garden consultant, lecturer, well-known writer for the L.A. Times, and now Special Projects Coordinator at the Theodore Payne Foundation.

Discover California's buried treasures: Spring-flowering bulbs in a variety of colors and forms. Autumn is the season to buy and plant them; most will naturalize in the garden – to return and flower year after year – and many are long-lasting in cut bouquets.

Jan. 22..... Topic and speaker to be announced.

## FIELD TRIP: Mapping Invasive Species in the Arroyo Seco Saturday, October 25, 8:00 a.m.

This very special field trip is a guided mapping outing in the Arroyo Seco. Equipped with maps and GPS, we'll identify and plot the four invasive target species that we are planning to remove from the canyon: Cape Ivy, English Ivy, Eupatory, and Periwinkle. Bring a lunch and hiking boots (and your own maps and GPS if available), and plan to be out for the full day.

We'll meet at Eaton Canyon Nature Center and arrange carpools and car shuttles between the two ends of the hike. The hike from Switzer's Campground to Altadena along the Arroyo Seco is about 9 miles, with 1,000 feet elevation loss, and is considered moderately strenuous. For questions, please contact Cliff McLean at [cliff.mclean@verizon.net](mailto:cliff.mclean@verizon.net) or (213) 925-9751.

## UNDER THE OAKS 2008: Our Chapter's Fall Plant Sale Saturday, November 15, 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

Here's your chance to select from a wide variety of hard-to-find California native plants and wildflower seeds appropriate for gardens in the L.A. Basin. This is a great opportunity to learn about and buy reasonably priced natives for your own native plant garden. Remember, CNPS members buy at a discount! Knowledgeable chapter members will be on hand to answer your questions.

Throughout the day of the sale, there will be a variety of short, informative presentations related to gardening with native plants. In addition, in recognition of Native American Heritage Month (November), we will also have activities with native plants taught by local native people.

Check our website at <http://cnps-sgm.org/PlantSources.html> for the latest information. And tell your friends!

## NATIVE PLANTS: LEARN HOW TO PLANT THEM Saturday, November 22, 3:00 p.m.

You bought native plants at the plant sale. Now learn how to plant them from Cliff and Gabi McLean. Bring work gloves and shoes and wear comfortable clothes. Tools will be provided.

## GRASSY INVADERS STROKE IMMENSE FIRES THAT ARE OBLITERATING HUGE SWATHS OF THE WEST'S SAGEBRUSH

*As part of my work with the Rivers and Mountains Conservancy, I write a weekly digest of environmental news stories that appear in a half-dozen Los Angeles area newspapers. During the week of July 27-August 3, 2008, the Los Angeles Times published a remarkable, five-part series of articles, entitled "Big Burn," that explored the growth and cost of wildfires. The digest on the right will be of special interest to those concerned with native plants. The original series of articles can be found at <http://www.latimes.com/fire>. My digest of the series can be found at <http://rmc.ca.gov/news/wildfire.html>.*

*Norman Ackerman*

### Fourth of five parts

*Saturday, Aug. 2, 2008, Los Angeles Times*

*By Bettina Boxall, Los Angeles Times Staff Writer*

ELKO, NEV. – On mountainside after mountainside here, in valley after valley, the richly textured, muted green of sage has yielded to a monotonous, dried-out sea of dirty-blond cheatgrass. The annual grass, a tough native of Eurasia, is fueling a devastating cycle of fire that is wiping sage from vast stretches of the Great Basin and, with it, an ancient ecosystem that is home to the pronghorn antelope, strutting sage grouse and other prized wildlife.

The Great Basin, which swallows most of Nevada and reaches into parts of Utah, Idaho, Oregon and California, is the epicenter of a plague of wildfire driven by the spread of nonnative plants. "If something hasn't burned yet, it's waiting to burn," said Steve Knick, a research ecologist with the U.S. Geological Survey in Idaho. "Just the rapidity with which the landscape has changed is unbelievable." In the Mojave and Sonoran deserts, where lightning fires historically stayed small and isolated because there wasn't much to burn, flames are following the spread of tassel-headed red brome.

Air pollution may be abetting the invaders. Researchers have found that high nitrogen deposits are fertilizing nonnative grasses in parts of Southern California. In southern Nevada, experiments have shown that brome thrives at elevated levels of carbon dioxide expected in the atmosphere by mid-century.

Just outside of Boise, Idaho, Mike Pellant and his colleagues at the Bureau of Land Management are waging a Sisyphean campaign against fire and cheatgrass in the Snake River Birds of Prey National Conservation Area. The program sponsors native plant research and promotes reseeding. Trying to reverse the ecological tide is maddeningly difficult. Sage reseeding "is a crapshoot," Pellant says. If there's not enough moisture or it's too hot, the tiny sage seeds — the size of specks of ground pepper — dry out and won't germinate. Freezes can kill infant plants. Another fire will wipe them out.

In the past, lightning fires probably burned through Wyoming big sage lands in cycles ranging from several decades to more than a century. But in cheatgrass country, the flames return every five to 10 years — killing whatever baby sage had managed to take hold since the previous blaze. As the sage acreage has shrunk in the Snake River raptor area, so has the black-tailed jack rabbit population, the main prey for nesting golden eagles. Their numbers are in turn dropping.

In Provo, Utah, federal research ecologist Susan Meyer is pursuing another tack in the cheatgrass wars. For the last decade, she has searched for the perfect biological weapon. Meyer is now on her third candidate, a naturally occurring fungal disease. She is not very hopeful. Meyer just discovered it can infect not just the hated cheatgrass but desirable plants as well. Even if she develops the ultimate cheatgrass killer, Meyer doubts society will want to invest the hundreds of millions of dollars it would take to restore the sage country of cowboy lore. "From the Rockies to the Sierra Nevada, it's going to be one giant weed patch."

### QUESTIONS?

### ASK A BOARD MEMBER

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# AKAPE AHOOTS

## *Isomeris arborea* and year round blossoms

By  
Mark Frank Acuña



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So now begins that rush toward the end of summer. It is “Lalavaaich” or “Grey Goose” month when the geese come flying through on their yearly migration. It is a good time for hunting and trapping the fine birds for late summer meals. The Tongva, the indigenous people of the Los Angeles Basin, are gathering the last of the wild berries and currants for use in cooking the grey geese, known as “Tose,éh,ha,saht.” September brings not only the grey geese but also the turning point in the year, the autumnal equinox, the awesome night when the equinox song of autumn “Hayahmoh Pahkoh Ohchocheveh Yowkeh Mahreh Horoorah Tahrahmeh Cheayeesh” would be chanted by the shamans. Summer would turn to autumn, “Awroreve” would become “Hayahmoh Pahkoh Ohchocheveh.” It is a magical moment of balance; night and day equal each other. And soon the nights lengthen toward winter.



*Isomeris arborea* Bladderpod  
© 1995 Br. Alfred Brousseau Saint Mary's College of California

And the women fan out along the coastal sage scrub and the dry washes looking for a burst of “Takape Ahots.” The plant we call Bladder Pod and the botanist calls *Isomeris arborea* blossoms year round, but now it is particularly sought. The pods will be a tasty addition to the goose stew. Wild onions and dried mushrooms, “Tepish” and “Sesomaka,” would also be added, but the marvelous dark flavor of *Isomeris* leaves and pods would be that extra bite of late summer.



*Isomeris arborea* Bladderpod  
© 2006 Heath McAllister.



*Isomeris arborea* Bladder Pod  
© 1995 Br. Alfred Brousseau, Saint Mary's College of California

The medicine people also gather “Takape Ahots.” To clear the throat of dryness, a decoction would be made from the crushed pod seeds. For fevers and stomach disorders, an infusion was made from the leaves, and the pods were brewed into a tea for sore throats and stomach troubles.

The basket weavers would carefully gather and store the roots, for they could be made into a greenish dye, much prized in good basket work.



*Isomeris arborea* Coastal Bladderpod  
Photo by Charles Webber  
© 1998 California Academy of Sciences

So while the last days of summer slowly lead to autumn, the Tongva would be busy gathering the leaves, pods, and seeds of this aromatic herbal plant. Little children might turn up their noses at the scent. Some find it difficult; others love the smell. In our contemporary gardens it is loved by bees and humming birds, who don't seem to mind the odd smell at all.

# PLANT IDENTIFICATION WORKSHOP

By Norman Ackerman







More than fifty people showed up for the plant ID workshop on June 26. The workshop was conceived by Gabi McLean and carried out with the invaluable help of many other members.

Gabi created a PowerPoint slideshow that provided a brief introduction to plant identification. A few of the slides are shown below. Many of our known local native plants are contained in the list of twelve major plant families. The focus of the workshop was the six bold-faced families: Sunflower, Pea, Figwort, Mustard, Evening Primrose, and Lily.



The entire slideshow, which contains slides for all six bold-faced families can be viewed on our website, <http://www.cnps-sgm.org>.



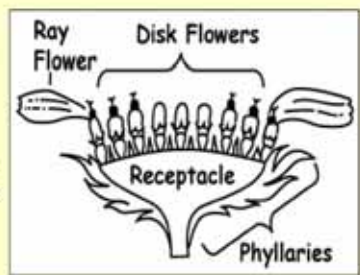
## Twelve Major Plant Families

<b>Sunflower</b> (159 species)	<b>Asteraceae</b> 
Grasses (85)	<i>Poaceae</i>
<b>Pea</b> (47)	<b>Fabaceae</b> 
<b>Figwort</b> (33)	<b>Scrophulariaceae</b> 
<b>Mustard</b> (30)	<b>Brassicaceae</b> 
<b>Evening Primrose</b> (24)	<b>Onagraceae</b> 
<b>Lily</b> , Carrot, Phlox, Waterleaf (22 each)	<b>Liliaceae</b>  , <i>Apiaceae</i> , <i>Polemoniaceae</i> , <i>Hydrophyllaceae</i>
Buckwheat (21)	<i>Polygonaceae</i>
Mint (19)	<i>Lamiaceae</i>

## Sunflower Family

- Each tiny flower has reproductive parts and most can produce seeds.
- Often, fruits are fluffy.
- For identification, note the phyllaries and count the ray flowers



Drawing by Bob Muns

## Sunflower Family

Some of the major local genera are:

- *Artemisia* - **Sagebrush** (disk flowers only)
- *Baccharis* e.g. **Mule Fat**, **Coyote Brush** (disk flowers only)
- *Cirsium* - **Thistle** (disk flowers only)
- *Ericameria* - **Goldenbush** (disk flowers or both)
- *Erigeron* - **Fleabane Daisy** (disk and ray flowers)
- *Gnaphalium* - **Everlasting** (disk flowers only)
- *Helianthus* - **Sunflower** (disk and ray flowers)
- *Heterotheca* - **Goldenaster** (disk and ray flowers)
- *Senecio* - **Butterweed** (mostly disk and ray flowers)

## Sunflower Family

- Many tiny flowers held together like a bouquet
- May have disk flowers in the center, surrounded by ray flowers
- May have only disk flowers
- May have only ray flowers




Following the slide show, it was time for members who were more experienced at plant identification to help others.



Earlier that day, a large number of fresh plant specimens were gathered from the wild and from gardens. Attendees selected a few to identify.



Many kinds of printed reference material were provided to aid in identifying plants.



Six tables were set up, one for each of the six families that were the focus of workshop. Each table was equipped with a microscope, hand lens, tweezers and reference material.



Some people tried identification without help.



Experienced members were available to anyone who wanted help.



Many thanks to all who helped at the workshop: Orchid Black, Graham Bothwell, Terry Keller, Mickey Long, Shelly Magier, Cliff McLean, Eva Morgan, and Helen Wong.

## NATIVE PLANT GARDENING CORNER

By Barbara Eisenstein, Horticulture Outreach Coordinator, RSABG

As Horticulture Outreach Coordinator at Rancho Santa Ana Botanic Garden, I receive many interesting questions about garden care for California native plants. In this continuing series I share a few of these questions and answers with you. If you have a question of your own, please email at [rsabg.hortinfo@cgu.edu](mailto:rsabg.hortinfo@cgu.edu) or phone me at 909-624-0838.

Q: Can you tell me what watering schedule will work for my native plant garden?

A: The short answer to this is no. The “Green Industry” has spent time and money developing plants that will accept a wide range of growing conditions. Many require frequent irrigation throughout their growing season, and in Southern California, this often means all year. Native plants from our region, in contrast, are well-adapted to our dry, hot summers and wet, mild winters. Some dislike summer water, some are adapted to a range of conditions, and some are very particular about when and how much water they want. Keeping this in mind, the following principles will help you understand your plants’ water needs.



This picture was taken at RSABG. It is of a simple, low-water use garden featuring deer grass (*Muhlenbergia rigens*), white sage (*Salvia apiana*), Pigeon Point coyote brush (*Baccharis pilularis* ‘Pigeon Point’), and Russian River grape (*Vitis californica* ‘Russian River’) on the trellis.

© Barbara Eisenstein, April 2008

### 1. Know where your plants grow in the wild.

Use this information to determine when and how to water. For chaparral and scrub plants, water during the winter, if rains are scarce. Once established, many scrub plants will look better in your garden with an occasional summer soaking. Others are fine with no summer water at all. Desert plants are adapted to an occasional summer deluge, so give them a good soaking every now and again during the summer. You are likely to be rewarded with a flush of new growth and flowers. Avoid watering desert plants during cold weather, especially if you have poorly drained soil.

### 2. Roots grow where the water is.

If you water for 10 minutes every day, your plants — including turf grass — are likely to develop shallow root systems since only the top inch or less of the soil will get wet. If you are using drip emitters, make sure they apply water evenly throughout the root zone. You will need to move the emitters out and add more as the plants grow. Remember to apply water deeply where you want the roots to grow.

### 3. Watch and get to know your plants and garden.

This is probably the most important principle. Gardening is a process, and plants are living organisms. Get to know your plants, and they will tell you when they need water. Wilting, for example, is a sign of water stress. Still the story is more complicated than just water when they wilt. For some plants wilting is a sign of extreme drought stress, and they may not recover. Others wilt during the heat of the day and perk up in the evening and morning. These probably do not need water. Others wilt when they have been kept too wet because their roots have rotted and are unable to take up water. Your only hope in this case is to stop watering — let the soil dry out and wait to see if the plant recovers. Only experience with your plants will allow you to understand what they need to be most healthy.

Watering will become less of a mystery when you get to know your plants as individuals and as part of a whole system. Although this is not a simple or satisfying answer, especially to garden novices, it is the real answer. There is no one watering schedule that will work for every garden. It depends on the type and age of plant, soil type, winds, rain, buildings, topography and the whole community of plants in your garden — just to name a few of the many considerations. Not only will you be more successful by getting to know your plants and garden, but you will benefit from the added tranquility and balance that are the primary purpose of gardens in the first place.

## CNPS CONSERVATION CONFERENCE

Sacramento Convention Center and  
Sheraton Grand Hotel, Sacramento

**Conference:** *Strategies and Solutions*

**Saturday-Monday, January 17-19, 2009**

- Plenary sessions and keynote speakers including environmental justice and clean energy advocate Jerome Ringo; Professor Steven Hopper, Director of the Royal Botanic Garden; and naturalist, educator, artist, and author John (Jack) Muir Laws
- Over 200 presenters featured in 13 session topics including: mitigation, habitat fragmentation, environmental policy, conservation genetics, and much more.
- Sessions devoted to challenges and successes in specific California bioregions and poster displays of successful CNPS chapter conservation projects

### Post Conference Workshops

**Tuesday-Wednesday, January 20-21, 2009**

1. The Art of Field Sketching: Drawing Plants
2. The Art of Field Sketching: Drawing Wildlife
3. Basics of Native Grass Seed Collection and Storage
4. Basic Wilderness First Aid
5. California Natural Diversity Database Tools Workshop
6. Fifty Plant Families and Introduction to the 2nd Edition of the Jepson Manual
7. Invasive Plant Management Workshop
8. Introduction to NEPA/CEQA for Botanists
9. Introduction to the 2nd Edition of A Manual of California Vegetation
10. Measuring and Monitoring Plant Populations and Vegetation
11. Rare Plant Surveys
12. Mutual Gains Negotiations
13. Vernal Pool Invertebrates

Detailed information can be found at  
<http://cnps.org/cnps/conservation/conference/2009>

## CHAPTER BOARD MEETINGS

- Thursday, Nov. 6, 7:30 p.m.
- Thursday, Jan. 8, 7:30 p.m.

We meet at the Eaton Canyon Nature Center on the first Thursday of January, March, May, September, and November. Even if you're not a board member, come and participate. We can always use new points of view.

## EATON CANYON PLANT WALKS

- Sun. Sep. 14, 9:00 a.m. Leader, Eva Morgan
- Sun. Oct. 12, 9:00 a.m. L'd'rs, Kat High, Richard Bugbee
- Sun. Nov. 9, 9:00 a.m. Leader, Clem Padick
- Sun. Dec. 14, 9:00 a.m. Leaders, Gabi & Cliff McLean
- Sun. Jan. 11, 9:00 a.m. Leader, Orchid Black

Meet at the flag pole in front of the Eaton Canyon Nature Center. Then go on a leisurely walk (about 2 hours) through the native plant garden that surrounds the Center and into the nearby wild areas. The walk is different each time — what's leafing out, flowering, in seed, etc. determines what your leader will talk about — and different leaders bring different points of view.

## 33rd Annual

### Southern California Botanists Symposium

*Problem Plant Groups:*

*Difficult to understand and identify*

Saturday, October 18, 2008

Ruby Gerontology Center,

California State University, Fullerton

Early registration .....\$35.00 (due by October 3.)

Registration at the door ...\$45.00

The symposium fee includes a one-year membership to the SCB. With that you will receive 6 issues of *Leaflets* and 2 issues of *Crossosoma*.

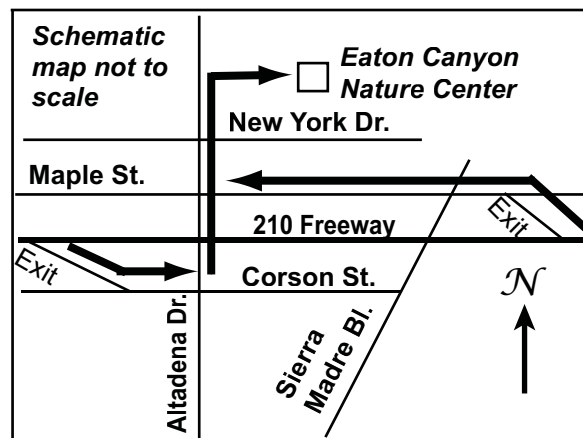
More details at <http://www.socalbot.org>. For more information, contact Kerry Myers, *Leaflets* Editor, at [kmeyers@ecorpc consulting.com](mailto:kmeyers@ecorpc consulting.com).

## DIRECTIONS TO EATON CANYON NATURE CENTER

1750 N. ALTADENA DR., PASADENA, CA 91107

### DRIVING EAST ON THE 210 FREEWAY

Take Exit 28 toward Sierra Madre Bl./Altadena Dr., continue onto Corson St., turn left at Altadena Dr., go north 1.6 miles., cross New York Dr., and turn right to Eaton Canyon Nature Center.



### DRIVING WEST ON THE 210 FREEWAY

Take the exit toward Sierra Madre Bl./San Marino, cross Sierra Madre Bl., continue on Maple St., turn right at Altadena Dr., go north 1.6 miles., cross New York Dr., and turn right to Eaton Canyon Nature Center.

## JOIN CNPS NOW!

Join or renew your membership online at <http://cnps.org/cnps/join/>, or phone 916-447-2677, or complete the form below and mail it to

California Native Plant Society  
2707 K Street, Suite 1  
Sacramento, CA 95816-5113

The California Native Plant Society (CNPS) is a statewide nonprofit organization of amateurs and professionals with a common interest in California's native plants. The mission

of the Society is to increase understanding and appreciation of California's native plants and to conserve them and their natural habitats through education, science, horticulture and advocacy.

Membership is open to all. Membership includes the quarterly journal, *Fremontia*; the quarterly *Bulletin*, which gives statewide news and announcements of Society activities and conservation issues; and our Chapter newsletter, *The Paintbrush*. Dues are tax deductible.

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

<p>* Name _____</p> <p>* Address _____ _____</p> <p>* City _____</p> <p>* State _____</p> <p>* Zip _____</p> <p>Telephone (work) _____</p> <p>Telephone (home) _____</p> <p>Email _____</p> <p>* Indicates required information.</p>	<p>____ New Membership                      ____ Renewal</p> <p>____ Yes, I'd like to affiliate with San Gabriel Mountains Chapter</p> <p><b>Membership Category</b></p> <p>____ Individual: \$45                      ____ Benefactor: \$600</p> <p>____ Family, Group, or Library: \$75      ____ Mariposa Lily: \$1500</p> <p>____ Plant Lover: \$100                      ____ Student, Retired,</p> <p>____ Patron: \$300                              Limited Income \$25</p> <p><b>Payment Information</b></p> <p>____ Check enclosed in the amount of \$ _____</p> <p>____ Please charge my credit card for \$ _____</p> <p>____ VISA    ____ Master Card    Expires: Month ____ Year ____</p> <p>Card Number _____</p> <p>Signature _____</p>
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