



California Native Plant Society
Santa Clara Valley Chapter

THE BLAZING STAR

September-October 2004

GENERAL MEETING AND PROGRAM

Friday, September 17 at 7:30 pm
Los Altos Library Program Room
13 So. San Antonio Road, Los Altos

**Topic: Resource Management at the Mid-Peninsula
Regional Open Space District**

**Speakers: Cindy Roessler and Kirk Lenington,
MROSD**

Please join us for an overview of the Mid-Peninsula Regional Open Space District's resource management and plant conservation efforts. Cindy and Kirk will discuss the vegetation mapping of all 50,000 acres of Mid-Pen preserves in San Mateo and Santa Clara Counties. The project's methods are based on the CNPS Sawyer/Keeler-Wolf vegetation classification system of using aerial photos, GIS and ground surveys to gather data. Cindy and Kirk will also review Mid-Pen's work on controlling invasive plants and protecting rare and endangered species on District preserves.

Cindy Roessler has twenty years of experience in managing natural resources for governmental agencies and consulting firms. She has worked for MROSD for two years. She has previously designed and installed creek restoration projects for the Santa Clara Valley Water District, and has even worked with sea turtles in Florida.

Kirk Lenington is the new Resource Planner at MROSD, having previously worked at the City of Santa Cruz for four years as the Resource Ecologist. He attended the University of California Santa Cruz for his B.A. in Biology and Environmental Studies and San Francisco State for his Master's work in Biology.

Directions: From Foothill Expressway, travel ½ mile on San Antonio Road towards the Bay, cross Hillview and turn right into the driveway; library is on the left. From El Camino, travel towards the hills on San Antonio Road, cross Edith and turn left into the unmarked driveway just before Hillview. The sign on San Antonio Road reads

“Civic Center, Library and History Museum.” Enter through the lobby of the main entrance, which faces a driveway located off San Antonio Road between Hillview and Edith. If the library lot is full, proceed to the adjoining lot for Hillview Community Center.

CNPS general meetings are free and open to the public. For additional information, contact Chapter Vice President Judy Fenerty at judy@fenerty.com or (408)378-6272.

Our Annual Potluck and General Meeting will be **Saturday, November 13**, at the Shoup Garden House in Los Altos.

CHAPTER ACTIVITIES

Fall Native Plant Sale October 9

Our Fall Native Plant Sale will be held on **Saturday, October 9, from 10am to 4pm**, at our nursery behind the Visitor's Center at Hidden Villa in Los Altos Hills. Parking is free for the sale, and once again we will have books, seeds, bulbs, posters and note cards for sale. Please come, and tell your friends and neighbors about it too.

Directions: From 280, take the El Monte Rd/Moody Rd exit. Go west on Moody Road for 2 miles. The entrance to Hidden Villa is on the left, at 26870 Moody Road. Follow parking volunteers' instructions about where to park.

Fall Native Plant Sale Call for Volunteers

We once again will need lots of help for the Fall Sale, and there are many things to do. We welcome everyone who wants to come and help. We especially need people who will help with **parking control**. If you can volunteer a few hours of your time to help direct people to park, please contact Stephen Buckhout at (408)255-6233 or yscottie@pacbell.net.

There are many ways to help at the sale: setup will begin at **8am**; cleanup will start at **4pm**. During the sale, we need cashiers, people to help write up the sales tags, people who will help our customers select their plants, and people who

will help customers carry their purchases to their cars and bring back wagons from the parking lots. Lunch will be provided for all of our volunteers and vendors on the day of the sale.

If you'd like to help, please come to the nursery on the day of the sale, and don't forget your hats and sunscreen! If you need more information, please contact Janet Gomez, (408)978-2984 or jgomez51@sbcglobal.net, or Kevin Bryant at (408)639-0493 or mtngreen17@verizon.net.

Pre-sale Nursery Work Days will be held from **10am to 4pm** (or until it gets too hot to work!) on **Saturday, October 2; Sunday, October 3; Thursday, October 7; and Friday, October 8**. Bring your hat, garden gloves, sunscreen, water, and lunch if you'd like.

Native Plant Nursery

Our regular native plant nursery work sessions take place every **Weds.** from **12noon to 4pm**. For more information, contact Jean Struthers at (650)941-2586 or JeanStruthers@aol.com, or Ray Deutsch at (650)365-6136 or henrymarsh@yahoo.com.

Gardening With Natives

Gardening with Natives meets monthly and includes a mix of seasoned native plant gardeners as well as beginners. Newcomers are always welcome.

Our next meetings will be **Thursday, September 2 and Thursday October 7**. All meetings start at **7:30 pm**. The GWN Steering Committee meets before each meeting from **7pm to 7:30pm** to organize future topics, speakers, etc. Anyone is welcome to join the steering committee meeting. All meetings are held at the PCC building in Palo Alto unless otherwise noted.

Our **September meeting** will be an opportunity for the group to participate in the selection of native plants for the back of the PCC building. We have been given the opportunity to replace the agapanthus, which currently fill the two planter beds in this area. It's a great way for GWN and CNPS to promote natives!

Our **October meeting** will be our annual seed, plant, and cutting exchange. Start saving your seeds now for this fun event! The meeting will take place at Stephanie's home in Campbell, and directions will be sent out via the GWN email list.

In **November**, we have a very special topic, "Butterfly Gardening." The speaker is lepidopterist John Steiner. He is the author of the pamphlet, "Butterflies of the San Francisco Bay Region," and leads the butterfly count in the

South Bay each June. He teaches a class in California Native Plant Identification each spring at Cañada College, and in Biology at College of Alameda. The meeting date and location will be announced via the GWN email list.

Contact Stephanie Morris at StephLMorris@hotmail.com or (408)371-9376, to be added to the GWN newsletter email list, provide input, or receive more information.

Directions to the PCC: The PCC (Peninsula Conservation Center) is located at 3921 E. Bayshore Road in Palo Alto. From Highway 101, take the "San Antonio North" exit, get immediately into the left-hand turn lane, and turn onto East Bayshore. This will curve around to the left, then right. Turn right on Corporation Way. Then turn into the first driveway on your left, which leads to the PCC parking lot.

Keying with Natives

Join us on the last **Friday** evening of every month, from **6:30pm - 8:30pm** to learn about keying out local plants. We meet at the PCC building in Palo Alto. The next meetings will be on **September 24 and October 29**.

Please bring a locally collected plant with flower or fruit if available, and an interest in learning how to key out or identify local plants. Often we are joined by local experts such as Sally Casey! Microscopes, lamps and keying books are supplied but if you have your own you're encouraged to bring them.

Contact David "Tex" Houston for more details, (650)962-9876 x347 or tex@acterra.org.

Photography Group

Please join us for the monthly meeting of the Chapter Photography Group. The next meetings will be **Mondays, September 13 and October 11, from 7-9pm** in the Peregrine Room at the PCC in Palo Alto.

If you have slides, digital images, or prints you would like to share, please bring them. If you would like to be added to the email or phone lists, contact Jerry Welch at (408)353-8352 or jdwelch@yahoo.com.

Native Hill News

The garden maintained by our Chapter at Foothill College is still fairly free of weeds since the big county assisted day last spring. There are a few summer weeds that should be removed and also there's a lot of pruning to do. We can also plant a few poppies and possibly gather some seeds.

Classes at Foothill will begin in late September so it would be nice to have it tidy for the opening of the fall quarter.

Come and help if you can. Bring gloves, pruning shears and loppers or saws if you have them. The next work days are:

Sunday, August 29, 9am to Noon
Saturday, September 11, 9am to Noon
Sunday, September 19, 9am to Noon

Call Ellie Gioumousis if you have questions or need directions, at (650)494-6276 or elliegms@uf.znet.com.

Habitat Restoration: Edgewood Park

Join Ken Himes to help remove invasive exotic plants and protect Edgewood's sensitive habitats. **Friday sessions, at 8:30 am**, occur year-round. **Wednesday evening sessions begin at 5:30 pm**. We will no longer meet on Wednesdays after daylight savings time ends. The **last Wednesday evening session** will be **October 27**.

For more information, call Ken at (650)591-8560. For the Friday sessions call Ken or contact John Allen at jackwa@earthlink.net.

Weed Removal at Foothills Park

By Jean and Franklin Olmsted, weed eradicators

In 1996 a group of CNPS volunteers started manually removing French Broom from the hillsides above Los Trancos Creek in western Foothills Park. They were joined in 1997 by Foothills Park volunteers, and Italian thistle was added. Yellow star-thistle was added as the third major target plant in 1999, and since June of that year, records have been kept of areas worked on and time spent in each area on each invasive plant.

What have we accomplished and what have we learned? Since June 1999, the volunteers have spent an average of about 1,000 hours per year net time (time actually at the site) in invasive-plant removal. Areas worked on now total about 5-6 acres each of yellow star-thistle, Italian thistle, and French broom. In recent years, the volunteer group has averaged six to seven workers every Sunday morning.

At one time yellow star-thistle was considered the major threat because there was so much of it in every sunny area of the park. Now we find that areas we have cleared for four or five years can now be cleared in only 1 to 2 percent of the time required the first year. The weather, the weevils that were brought in, and other unknown factors may deserve part credit for this, but the manual removal by volunteers obviously has had an important effect.

French broom proves to be more difficult. The problem, as is generally known, is the very persistent seed bank. When old plants are removed, a lawn of small green plants

appears the following year. We have tried leaving old dead broom plants in place since they seem to stop new plants from growing. Cutting plants at ground level is a mistake, since they regrow and then are difficult to remove with a weed wrench. We have not used the cut-and-paint-with-Roundup approach, because park policy is to limit chemical use.

Italian thistle is becoming a major worry. It is spreading in the park. Its seeds seem to persist longer in the soil and are dispersed farther than those of yellow star-thistle, and it also grows in a wider range of habitats. The first year or two of removal does not seem to accomplish much, but the third-year results have been somewhat encouraging.

We have also worked on some invasives that are not well established in the park in hopes of keeping them from becoming major problems. Examples of these are teasel and purple star thistle. These plants were obviously brought in to the parks by trucks and other vehicles that were doing construction work. The city tells us they will try to make sure in the future that workers' trucks are clean.

At this point we are beginning to ask what happens when we remove invasive plants. We don't want to remove yellow star-thistle and find it replaced by Italian thistle or some other problem plant. Also we would like to make sure that the areas we have worked on are maintained in the future. Otherwise the invasives could easily take over again.

Editor's note: Everyone is welcome to help weeding! Jean's group meets at **9am every Sunday** morning in the Orchard Glen parking area of Foothills Park. That is the parking area at the head of the main picnic and grass area of the park. Non-Palo-Alto-residents enter as our guests. Call Jean Olmsted (650)493-3468 or send an email message to jwo@svpal.org to get on the notice list.

Chapter Website Redesign

Our chapter is now in the process of redesigning the www.cnps-scv.org website. The process has been a lot of fun so far, and we welcome anyone who's interested to join the website committee (no experience necessary). We also hope to send out an email survey soon to find out what our members would like to see on a new website. If you have any comments or suggestions, or would like to join in, please contact Judy Fenerty at (408)378-6272 or judy@fenerty.com.

In Memoriam

Long-time Chapter member and husband of former Chapter Historian Jean Sorenson, Ralph Sorenson passed away in June 2004. Ralph and Jean were active in a variety of Chapter activities. Ralph was very conscientious about

getting Jean to as many general meetings as possible because he knew how much those meetings meant to her. He always had a smile and a good word for everyone he encountered. The Chapter extends our sympathy to Jean and their extended family.

COMMITTEE NEWS & REPORTS

Little Progress Toward Protection of Rare Coyote Ridge Habitat

Readers of the Blazing Star are familiar with the treasures of Coyote Ridge, the serpentine habitat with many rare plants and the Bay checkerspot butterfly, in southern Santa Clara County. Our CNPS chapter has been working, along with several other local environmental organizations, to obtain some measure of protection for this remarkable area through land acquisition by public agencies. The Committee for Green Foothills has been particularly active in working to protect the Ridge. Below is an excerpt from an article in their Newsletter, by Brian Schmidt, their legislative advocate for Santa Clara County, which details some of the problems that we are facing.

"Waste Management Incorporated (WMI), the company that owns the Kirby Canyon Landfill on the southern edge of Coyote Ridge, recently purchased a significant portion of land on Coyote Ridge-- the same land that government agencies, particularly the Valley Transportation Authority, have been seeking to purchase and protect.

"The logical reason for Waste Management's purchase is to expand Kirby Landfill. Fortunately, this doesn't necessitate environmental destruction: if WMI permanently protects the most sensitive areas, it can limit the environmental damage.

"Of course, the Committee for Green Foothills and others are already asking whether a major landfill expansion is appropriate on Coyote Ridge.

"Meanwhile, government agencies required to mitigate harm to serpentine habitat may have to protect other parts of Coyote Ridge. The biggest remaining question concerns the City of San Jose's stalling on the Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP) for Coyote Valley below.

"By contrast, the Committee for Green Foothills is seeking to ensure that the unwise plan for destroying Coyote Valley farmland does not drag down Coyote Ridge's wildlife habitat along with it."

You can read the full article in the summer 2004 issue of Green Footnotes. You can find it on the web at www.greenfoothill.org.

Chapter Leadership and Elections

By Georgia Stigall

Serving as a Chapter Officer is a very rewarding way to participate in, benefit from and contribute to our collective CNPS effort on behalf of native plant conservation and appreciation.

Officers are helped significantly by other members, thanks to an extremely high level of camaraderie, teamwork and "spreading around" of various tasks and responsibilities in our Chapter. You may have noticed at times that various Officers over the years are involved in many of the Chapter's activities issues. This is more often than not, a function of their interest as a Chapter volunteer, rather than as their specific duties as an Officer.

In other words, there is great flexibility in how much time each individual actually spends on their specific officer duties. So if you have any interest at all, for now or the future, please do let us know!

Our Chapter election for 2005 officer positions will be held at our November 2004 potluck, as is historically done. All Officer positions (President, Vice President, Recording Secretary and Treasurer) are open to current Chapter Members.

In accordance with our by-laws, I have selected a 2005 Nominating Committee: Stephen Buckhout, Judy Fenerty, David Chapman, Janet Gomez and Paul Heiple.

Please contact any of us if you would like to know more about running for Chapter Office, or to suggest a nominee. A slate of nominees will be provided in the November/December Blazing Star. Chapter Members may also be nominated from the floor, at the potluck.

2005 Chapter Election Nominating Committee

Name	Phone	Email
Georgia Stigall	(650)941-1068	gstigall@aol.com
Stephen Buckhout	(408)255-6233	yscottie@pacbell.net
Judy Fenerty	(408)378-6272	judy@fenerty.com
David Chapman	(408)323-1913	dcchapman@earthlink.net
Paul Heiple	(650)854-7125	LogH3O@aol.com

CHAPTER FIELD TRIPS

Chapter field trips are free and open to the public. They are oriented to conservation, protection and enjoyment of California native plants and wildlife, and we adhere to all rules and guidelines for the lands on which we are visiting.

In our region it is very important to be prepared for hiking on rugged & steep terrain, wide temperature ranges and rapidly changing conditions at any time of year. All participants should wear sturdy footwear and carry sufficient water, sun protection, food, layers, personal first aid and other supplies you may need. If you have any questions about your ability to participate in a particular field trip, please contact the trip leader in advance.

New Field Trip Chair Kevin Bryant

Many thanks to our outgoing Field Trip Chair Stella Yang! Her terrific enthusiasm and sense of adventure have been a great contribution to our chapter field trips.

Please welcome Kevin Bryant as our new Field Trip Chair. He too brings enthusiasm and camaraderie to this activity.

Sep. 18 Sat 10am Oaks of Edgewood

Paul Heiple and Ken Himes will lead a field trip in Edgewood Park to look at the oaks of Edgewood. This park contains a good representation of the species of this genus and some very interesting and rare hybrids. This year appears to be one with both leaves and acorns on the trees; our last walk happened after an infestation of oak moths removed most of the leaves. Expect a moderate climb and about a three hour hike. Bring water and lunch.

Edgewood Park is located at Fwy 280 and Edgewood Road. Meet at the Day Camp Parking Lot. If you have questions, contact Paul at (650)854-7125 or LogH3o@aol.com.

Sep. 21 Tue. 7pm Field Trip Planning Meeting

Our chapter has a rich history of exploring the California flora through the first hand experience of field trips. Be a part of this tradition by participating in a brainstorming session dedicated to future field trips locations. Do you have a favorite place that you'd like to share, or an area you'd like to visit with our chapter? Bring ideas and a sense of adventure to the PCC in Palo Alto., or if unable to attend, email Kevin Bryant (mtngreen17@verizon.net) with your ideas prior to the meeting.

Sep. 26 Sun. 10:30am Bonny Doon

Join Kevin Bryant on this first autumn weekend for a visit to Bonny Doon Ecological Reserve, as we explore the trails

and encounter the botanical surprises that grow within this magnificent Reserve. We should see Mock Heather (*Ericameria ericoides*) in bloom, as well as other late-flowering genera such as *Solidago* and *Heterotheca*. The rare Santa Cruz Cypress (*Cupressus abramsiana*) and uncommon Coast Range occurrence of Ponderosa Pine are among the distributional puzzles that are characteristic of this area's sandy soils.

The anticipated distance is 4 miles, with 400' elevation gain/loss. Contact Kevin Bryant at (408)353-8824, or mtngreen17@verizon.net for directions/reservations. Attendance is limited to 15.

Oct. 16 Sat. 10:30am S.F.B. Morse Reserve

We will explore this unique area on the Monterey Peninsula, and view several conifers of restricted distribution which grow here. This is part of the largest indigenous grove of Monterey Pine (*Pinus radiata*), a species planted worldwide for timber production. This is the only place in the world where Monterey Pine and Bishop Pine (*Pinus muricata*) occur together naturally. We will also find the close cousin of our Santa Cruz Cypress, the Gowen Cypress (*Cupressus goveniana*), which grows only on the Monterey peninsula.

Anticipated distance will be less than 4 miles with at most a 400' elevation loss/gain. Contact Kevin Bryant, at (408)353-8824, or mtngreen17@verizon.net, for directions/information.

CHAPTER OFFICERS FOR 2004

Title	Name	Phone	Email
President	Georgia Stigall	(650) 941-1068	gstigall@aol.com
Vice President	Judy Fenerty	(408) 378-6272	judy@fenerty.com
Recording Secretary	David Chapman	(408) 323-1913	dcchapman@earthlink.net
Treasurer	Paul Heiple	(650) 854-7125	LogH3O@aol.com

DEADLINE FOR THE NEXT *BLAZING STAR*

Saturday, Oct 9, 2004

**Email: mattsson@sbcglobal.net
Phone: (408)255-3767**