



July-August 2005

The Bay Leaf

California Native Plant Society • East Bay Chapter • Alameda & Contra Costa Counties
www.ebcnps.org

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

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Fridays, July 1, 8, 15, 22, 29 and Aug 5, 12, 19, 26

Native Here Nursery open 9-noon

Saturdays, July 2, 9, 16, 23, 30 and Aug 6, 13, 20, 27 nursery open 10-1

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Native Here seed collecting, 9 am

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Saturday, July 9, 2005, Field Trip to **Calaveras Big Trees State Park and Environs**

Saturday July 16, 10:00 am, **field Trip to Cedar Mountain**

Sunday July 24 at 2 pm, **Pioneer Tree Trail, Samuel Taylor State Park**

Saturday August 6 10:00 am, field trip on **Blue Oak/Spengler Trail to Chaparral in Briones Regional Park**

Wednesday August 24 6:30 pm, **keying session at Native Here Nursery**

Board of Directors' Meeting

Saturday, August 13th, 10 am, Merritt College, Oakland

MOUNT DIABLO BUCKWHEAT REDISCOVERED

Eriogonum truncatum has been dubbed the "Holy Grail of the East Bay" by Barbara Ertter. For such a delicate plant, this name is somewhat deceptive. When Seth Adams of Save Mount Diablo was brought to the site, he was unable to perceive the plant though it stood less than three feet away. The plant has acquired such a reputation over the years that many, including Seth, believed it would stand out and project a strong presence. Even with a well-formed search image, I still have trouble picking it out from among the grasses it is found with. With slender, cobwebby branches easily camouflaged among grasses and dainty stature, it eluded detection for 69 years.

That all changed on May 10. On that morning I headed out to Mount Diablo to continue work on a floristic project. The study was begun as an Honors Thesis while an undergraduate student at UC Berkeley and had carried over into graduate school as a side project. Just as I arrived in the vicinity, my major professor, Bruce Baldwin called. He was curious to hear what I was doing that day and looking for an update on progress with a project studying the evolution of flower size and self-pollination in *Collinsia*. I told Bruce that

I was working on the Mount Diablo project and targeting areas favorable to unusual plants. Further, a close eye was to be kept for the diabolically elusive Mount Diablo Buckwheat that I believed was present in some difficult to reach spot on the mountain. In response to my doubts that I would find it, Bruce quipped, "It's a matter of being at the right place at the right time."

These were prophetic words indeed. Hours later, I was standing over the pink flower clusters mulling over the find of a lifetime. No easy words come to mind to describe what I was feeling. However, it is safe to say that I was overcome by the implications of the discovery. Like many intense or dramatic moments, the scene is difficult to recreate with precision. But I recall spending a few futile moments attempting to disprove the identification and finally accepted that it was indeed the famed wildflower. A flurry of nearly incompatible thoughts and feelings ran through my mind. They ranged from exhilaration to concern over the practical consequences of the find. I chose to escape and continued work pretending that nothing of significance had occurred.

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When the news was released, Barbara and I realized that we knew next to nothing about the plant. Had the plant been present all along? Or had special environmental circumstances allowed for a “once in a lifetime” bloom? How long will the flowers bloom? These were the types of questions that reporters wanted answers to. And sadly, we were only able to speculate. However, subsequent monitoring of the population has revealed that the flowers bloom from at least early May to early June. The most recent visit on June 13 revealed few flowers, and seed had already been delivered to the ground.



Eriogonum truncatum Photo by Michael Park

But now we have the unique opportunity to seek answers to some of the remaining questions. Plans to collect seed and protect the site have been implemented by a special management team created through the cooperative efforts of California State Parks, US Fish & Wildlife Service, California

Department of Fish & Game, UC Botanical Garden, and Jepson Herbarium. We hope that seed collection is the first step towards maintaining a seed bank in cultivation as an insurance policy. If propagation efforts are successful in establishing a large supply of viable seed, then we may be able to begin experiments that may yield valuable information on the life history and reproductive ecology of *Eriogonum truncatum*.

In the meantime monitoring efforts will continue until this year’s plants have given their seed to the earth around them, and only their skeletons remain to serve as a reminder of their former glory. If we are lucky, new recruits will emerge next spring to take their place. Let’s hope this was not a once in lifetime bloom.

recruits will emerge next spring to take their place. Let’s hope this was not a once in lifetime bloom.

Michael Park

ORCHIDS OF THE KLAMATH MOUNTAINS

Every year, I go with my friends Bob Ruhfel and Bruce Goodchild to hunt for orchids in the Klamaths. We typically start in Yreka and make our way west to Crescent City, with particular attention to Seiad Valley and Cook and Green Pass, and to Happy Camp. While we are happy to find any orchids, our true goal is lady’s slippers.

There are three lady’s slippers orchids found in California: the California (*Cypripedium californicum*), the mountain (*C. montanum*), and the clustered (*C. fasciculatum*), also known as the brownie. The California lady’s slipper, though not common, is easy enough to find: look for seeps in the mountains and look for *Darlingtonia* (pitcher plant) bogs. There is a seep on the Root Creek Trail in Castle Crags State Park which reliably has dozens of *C. californicum*, along with *Lilium pardalinum* and *Rhododendron occidentale*. There are numerous *Darlingtonia* bogs on Lone Mountain Road out of O’Brien Oregon, all with associated *C. californicum* (and also the green bog orchid, *Platanthera sparsiflora*).

The mountain lady’s slipper is not so easy: you have know where to look. There is a nice patch a few yards

off the trail at Cook and Green Pass that runs flat to a stream. There is another on the road cut a few miles from Happy Camp on the road that crosses the Klamath.

But the brownie is a problem: the books suggest it is found on river banks and road cuts under dogwood trees. What they do not tell you (or do not make clear enough) is how small it is compared to its sisters. The mountain lady’s slipper has a pure white lip that is one to two inches long and half as wide. You can see it 20 or 30 feet up a slope if you look hard enough. The flower of the California is smaller, but each plant is tall, two feet at least, with several flowers, lip pure white and yellow above, and in patches with many individuals (likely mostly clones). But the lip of the brownie is purplish brown, just like much of the surroundings, and often not much bigger than a kernel of corn, and the plant is lucky if it is six inches from ground to tip. If you are looking for a bigger plant, you will miss a dozen at your feet.

We had a clue though: last year we visited Happy Camp in mid-June and a Forest Service botanist had shown us a brownie location just on the edge of town. The

plants had past flowering and the fruits were gone, but the leaves were still out, so we knew where and what to look for (a brownie in leaf looks very much like a *Listera* orchid).

So we left the Bay Area on Friday, May 20, driving up I-5. We stopped at SR 20 at Williams for gas. We had seen patches of *Downingia* there before, close to the freeway, so we looked and there was a large patch of *D. insignis*, blooming surprisingly late. In the patch were several albino flowers, white instead of blue, and several intermediate between white and blue. This was a promising start.

The *C. californicum* at Castle Crags were in bud but no blooms yet. There were also ghost orchids (*Cephalanthera austini*) right by the parking lot and coralroots (*Corallorhiza* spp.) on the trail.

The next day, we started at Seiad Valley and Cook and Green Pass. Again, the lady's slippers were not out. There were lots of calypso orchids and also, on the way to the pass, fawn lilies (*Erythronium*, either *E. californicum* or *E. citrinum*). But at Happy Camp our luck changed. The brownie location was several hundred feet up a steep slope where the ground cover was poison oak, but anything for science! The *C. fasciculatum* patch was there, and some flowers were still in bloom. Not as spectacular as some reports, as there were only one or two flowers per plant, rather than the five which the books say is more common, but there nonetheless. (The slope also was covered, where there was not poison oak, with broomrape ground cones, *Boschniakia strobilacea*, which are always fun to see.)

Driving out of town up the hill across the Klamath, we also found the mountain lady's slippers (we had wor-



Cypripedium fasciculatum Photo by David Margolies

ried they would not be out, as we saw them in flower in June last year): two perfect blooming specimens on the slope almost right at eye level.

Two down, and only *C. californicum* to go. We drove the O'Brien, Oregon (north of Happy Camp) and out Lone Mountain Road. The bogs starts soon after the road becomes unpaved and this pattern is repeated wherever it is wet next the road: *Darlingtonia californica*, *Cypripedium californicum*, *Platanthera sparsiflora*, *Rhododendron occidentale*, and sometimes *Ledum glandulosa*. In a big bog, we also saw the rare *Viola primulifolia* var. *occidentalis*, almost pure white. Later, but not this early, there will be *Lilium bolanderi* (last year in June, we saw dozens).

We left O'Brien and drove to Crescent City. Soon after the town of Gasquet, there is a Botanical Turnoff maintained by the Forest Service, preserving another *Darlingtonia* bog. We stopped there, to see the patches of *C. californicum* growing with the pitcher plants. They were in bloom and we were back in California. We had seen the three lady's slippers of California in bloom in California all on the same day!

The last orchid we saw is *Listera cordata* (heart-leafed twayblade), which is rare in California, though not elsewhere. There were dozens on the James Irvine Trail on the rim of fern canyon in Prairie Creek Redwoods State Park, mixed in with hundreds of *Moneses uniflora* (woodnymph) (a funny *Pyrola* relative, with a single nodding white flower, low to the ground). This was our most successful orchid hunting trip ever.

David Margolies



Cypripedium californicum Photo by David Margolies



Cyripedium montanum Photo by David Margolies

GRANTS

2005 Scholarship Awards

The East Bay Chapter's Grants Committee has decided on the recipients of the 2005 scholarships. These scholarships are funded by the hard work of the Plant Sale volunteers and represent one of many reasons to purchase plants at the East Bay Chapter's Plant Sale. The scholarships are given annually to graduate and undergraduate students working in botany, horticulture, conservation, and related fields whose studies include some aspect of the native flora of California, with a preference given to applicants with a connection to the East Bay.

This year, scholarships of \$1,200 each have been awarded to:

Ryan Briscoe, a graduate student at UC Davis in the Population Biology Graduate Group. He is currently working on the ecological and evolutionary consequences of the pollination of *Sidalcea diploscypha* by honeybees instead of the native bees.

Megan Keever, in the Conservation Biology Program at San Francisco State University. Her current projects involve plant pollinators in one of the most endangered habitats in our area, vernal pools.

Brett Stevenson, an undergraduate at UC Berkeley majoring in Conservation and Natural Resources, has done a tremendous amount of grassland restoration and is planning an internship at the Native Here Nursery.

Elizabeth Zacharias, a graduate student at UC Berkeley in the Department of Integrative Biology. Her area of interest is *Atriplex* (saltbush) and its taxonomy, genetics, and morphology.

Alexandra Gennet, a graduate student in the Range Management Program at UC Berkeley studying the effects of livestock grazing on the plant communities of the grasslands of the East Bay Regional Parks. In the past she has done extensive work in native plant restoration, both in the wetlands of Sonoma County and at Point Reyes. Alexandra was also selected for special honor of the \$750 Myrtle Wolf Scholarship.

In 2005, we received 11 well-qualified applications, and choosing among the bright, accomplished, and committed applicants was not easy. The Grants Committee hopes to receive more applications next year from horticulture students and students in the community college and State University systems. The chair of the Committee would like to recognize the diligence and sustained interest of the Committee's members.

Money to Support Projects is Available!

The East Bay Chapter of CNPS supports scholarly, scientific, and conservation projects involving native plants. Grants in the recent past have been between \$500 and \$2,000. Preference is given to projects in Alameda and Contra Costa Counties, although other applications will be considered. Send your application, preferably by e-mail (please put "EBCNPS Project Support" in the subject line) by October 1, 2005 to:

East Bay Chapter CNPS Grants Committee
c/o Sandy McCoy
1311 Bay View Place
Berkeley, CA 94708
sandymccoy@mindspring.com
fax 510-848-1789

Time-sensitive projects will be considered on an ad hoc basis.

Proposals should be concise but should contain basic technical information (perhaps five pages, but not 25 pages). Letters of support and auxiliary materials of limited length may also be helpful. Also, please provide a budget for the whole project. Applicants may find it useful to indicate to the Committee a particular portion of the project for which they seek funding. Please be aware that there are no other guidelines in addition to this announcement.

Sandy McCoy

FIELD TRIPS

Field Trip to **Calaveras Big Trees State Park and Environs**

Meet at the North Grove (main) parking lot at the park at 11:00 am, Saturday, July 9, 2005.

Drive to Calaveras Big Trees State Park near Arnold on Highway 4. From the Bay Area, take 24 to I-680 North, exit on 242 connector to 4 (if you miss the 242 connector, I-680 crosses 4 several miles later). Stay on 4 through Stockton (at 99 intersection, you briefly get on 99) to Highway 49, south to Angel's Camp, to where 4 goes east in the middle of Angel's Camp. East on 4 to the park, soon after the town of Arnold. Park in the main lot for the North trail. The park has an entrance fee. We will meet at 11:00 am. It is about 2.5 hours from the Bay Area.

We will hike the North and South groves, and make other stops in the park, then drive east a bit and back, taking Avery Sheep Ranch Road to San Andreas. Back around 6:00 pm.

We should see snowplant, Hartweg's ginger, *Clintonia uniflora*, harlequin lupine, *Collomia*, *Calochortus venustus*, pussy paws, prickly flox, various monkey flowers, much else.

Please contact David Margolies (510-654-0283, divaricatum@aol.com) to reserve a place on this trip.

Saturday July 16, 10:00 am, **field Trip to Cedar Mountain**. Gregg Weber will lead this trip to Cedar Mountain mostly as a driving trip to allow for summer weather, but with many short, somewhat steep walks to a variety of plants in southeast Alameda County, uncommon in cooler parts of the East Bay. Be sure to bring at least 2 liters (1/2 gal.) of water per person, and lunch. We will meet at the Starbucks in the shopping center at 2040 Portola Avenue at 10:00 am, and we encourage casual carpooling from this site.

Directions: Take 580 east, and exit at North Livermore

Avenue. Turn right (south) from the exit ramp. The shopping center with Starbucks comes up shortly after on the right. We will return to the meeting site about 4:00 pm.

Sunday July 24 at 2 pm, **Pioneer Tree Trail, Samuel Taylor State Park**

The Pioneer Tree Trail is about two miles, with several hundred feet of elevation change. There are old growth redwoods and logged redwood groves, and there are summer flowers such as enchanter's nightshade, hawkweeds, and tarweeds.

Directions: From the East Bay, cross the Richmond Bridge and take the Sir Francis Drake exit (second exit from 580 after the bridge). From San Francisco, take the Golden Gate Bridge; continue north on 101, and then exit at the San Anselmo/Richmond Bridge exit (well past Sausalito). Stay to the left at the exit ramp, and turn onto Sir Francis Drake Boulevard. Once you reach Sir Francis Drake Boulevard, you follow it straight across nearly all of Marin County. However, you need to follow the bend to the left to stay on Sir Francis Drake where it intersects Red Hill Road. After passing the town of Lagunitas, you enter Samuel Taylor State Park, soon after you enter redwood groves. After a mile or two, look for the park headquarters and main picnic area on the left.

Enter the park headquarters area and pay the entrance fee, whether or not the booth is staffed. Park in the main picnic area, and walk over the footbridge toward the campground and group picnic area. Meet David in the group picnic parking lot to the left, over the bridge, at the start of the Pioneer Tree Trail.

Please contact David Margolies (510-654-0283, divaricatum@aol.com) if you need further information.

Saturday August 6 10:00 am, field trip on **Blue Oak/Spengler Trail to Chaparral in Briones Regional Park**

On this hike with Gregg Weber, see an unusual cross of Oregon oak with blue oak, wax myrtle, California Dutchman's pipe with fruit, *Pickeringia montana* (*chaparral pea*), and a great variety of common plants. There will be a 700 ft. elevation gain going out (bring plenty of water), but all downhill on the return trip, for a round trip of about 5 miles. Meet at the Reliez Valley Staging Area in Briones Park at 10 am.

Directions: Take 24 east and exit at Pleasant Hill Road north in Lafayette. Go about one mile on Pleasant Hill Road, and turn left on Reliez Valley Road. Stay on Reliez Valley Road about 3 miles to the parking lot on the left, shortly after Withers Avenue.

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Wednesday August 24 6:30 pm, **keying session at Native Here Nursery**

This is not a hike, but it is a great way to identify the mystery plants that have cropped up in hikes or in your back yard. Charli Danielsen will host this session with the dissecting scope to get a greatly magnified look at small plant parts. Charli will provide several plant keys for reference, but feel free to bring your own keys, such as *The Flora of Mount Diablo* or *The Jepson Manual*, and of course, any plant samples you wish to examine more closely.

Janet Gawthrop and David Margolies

PLANT SALE ACTIVITIES



Tuesdays
July 5, 12, 19, 26
9 am to 2 pm
Merritt College, Oakland
Landscape Horticulture Department
Parking fee: 50 cents

Our potting sessions continue through July. In August we begin preparing our plant sales area and the plants for our big annual plant sale.

Come up to the growing grounds and help out for a couple of hours—it will make a difference. Tuesdays aren't convenient for many members, so in September there will work sessions on Saturday mornings too.

Plan on getting involved in this Plant Sale, our last one on the Merritt College campus after 25+ years. They need our space and have asked us to leave.

If you would like directions to the campus or other information call me at 925-376-4095.

Shirley McPheeters

NATIVE HERE NURSERY

Calendar:

Fridays, July 1, 8, 15, 22, 29 and Aug 5, 12, 19, 26
Native Here Nursery open 9-noon

Saturdays, July 2, 9, 16, 23, 30 and Aug 6, 13, 20,
27 nursery open 10-1

Tuesdays, July 5, 12, 19, 26 and Aug 2, 9, 16, 23, 30
Native Here seed collecting, 9 am

The grasses have seeded, most plants have flowered, and many plants have entered their summer dormancy. The leaves of the buckeyes, currants, gooseberries, ninebarks, and snowberries are shriveling up or have already fallen. We have put all the bulbs and irises in storage. You won't see them for sale again until fall for the irises and late winter or early spring for the bulbs.

Fog blows over the nursery quite frequently in July, and you have to keep moving to stay warm. Many customers are surprised when they arrive at our fog-enshrouded nursery. It was sunny and warm at their houses and they aren't dressed for the cold air.

July and August aren't good times to plant, but you can plan for your planting projects in the fall. Come see our selection and take a peek at what we'll have available in the fall. We are potting up many shrubs and trees in bigger pots—2 gallon, 5 gallon, and 15 gallon sizes.

Seed collecting forays continue every Tuesday. If you would like to help us collect seed for propagating at the nursery, meet at 9 am at the bottom gate of the nursery to carpool. We go to different locations each week and usually return around 1 pm, except when we go to far-away destinations, in which case we return later in the afternoon.

Volunteers are always welcome to transplant, weed, and water. We'll start sowing some seeds in August and volunteers are welcome to help with that job. Call ahead to see which days we will be seed sowing. We are located in Tilden Park at 101 Golf Course Drive (across the street from the entrance to the Tilden Golf Course), 510-549-0211.

Margot Cunningham

*Away, away, from men and towns,
To the wild wood and the downs, --
To the silent wilderness,
Where the soul need not repress
Its music.*

Percy Bysshe Shelley, (1792-1822), "To Jane, The Invitation," c.1820

*Nature, even when she is scant and thin outwardly,
satisfies us still by the assurance of a certain generosity
at the roots.*

Henry David Thoreau (1817-1862) *A Week on the Concord and Merrimack Rivers*, 1849

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California Native Plant Society
East Bay Chapter
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Berkeley CA 94705

Chapter web site
www.ebcnps.org

Recorded Chapter Information
510-464-4977

State CNPS web site
www.cnps.org

Membership Application

Name _____

Address _____

Zip _____ Telephone _____

I wish to affiliate with:

East Bay Chapter (Alameda and Contra Costa Counties)

Other _____

E-mail _____

(optional)

Membership category:

Student, Retired, Limited income, \$20

Individual, Library, \$35

Household, Family, or Group, \$45

Supporting, \$75

Plant lover, \$100

Patron, \$250

Benefactor, \$500

Mariposa Lily, \$1000

Mail application and check to: California Native Plant Society, 2707 K Street, Suite 1, Sacramento CA 95816

CONSERVATION

Jessica Olson, East Bay Conservation Analyst, and I (as Conservation Committee chair) alternate months submitting conservation reports for the *Bay Leaf*. Jessica's efforts on our behalf have raised awareness of the chapter's conservation presence throughout Alameda and Contra Costa Counties. Contributions to support this work are always welcome, and allow chapter board members to concentrate on tasks other than fund raising. Please be sure to indicate on the check that the contribution is for East Bay Conservation Analyst Fund. Contributions are payable to CNPS. Send to 2707 K St., Suite 1, Sacramento, CA 95816.

Jessica is also working part time on the state CNPS's "dime" assisting with conservation work. She designed a state program of volunteer interns working with chapter conservation committees that our chapter will pilot this summer. As you read this, there may be student interns building their resumes while making contact with our members regarding local issues. Development in the Livermore area, and Urban Limit Line issues throughout both counties are requiring a lot of study and action.

Members of the Conservation Committee are not just sitting back letting Jessica do all the work. Laura Baker continues to track vegetation management issues and East Bay Regional Park planning. The committee approved the chapter joining around 60 other organizations in signing a letter to the City of San Francisco requesting restoration actions for Alameda Creek, part of their watershed system. Members work closely with state CNPS board members to assess whether projects require legal action or assistance. Members continue to represent our chapter interests at public meetings, often with briefing from the Conservation Analyst.

If you would like to become more active in conservation of native plants and plant communities in the East Bay, now is the time that your hours may yield the most results. Contact Jessica, jjolson@ebcnps.org, or me, charlid@pacbell.net, to join the conservation committee in its work.

Charli Danielsen

ACTIVITIES OF OTHERS

Gardens Sought for Bringing Back the Natives Garden Tour

Gardens are now being sought to participate in the spring 2005 Bringing Back the Natives Garden Tour, which will showcase attractive gardens that require a minimum of water, don't need pesticides or fertilizers, and provide habitat for wildlife. The gardens featured in this tour will demonstrate that, from postage stamp sized yards to large lots, beautiful California native plant gardens are possible for anyone.

To receive a Host Application or to be added to the mailing list e-mail Kathy@KathyKramerConsulting.net or call 510-236-9558 between 9 am and 9 pm.

**California Native Plant Society
East Bay Chapter
P.O. Box 5597, Elmwood Station
Berkeley CA 94705**

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**Time Value
July-August 2005 issue**