September 2005

The Bay Leaf

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

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Tuesdays, Sept 6, 13, 20, 27 Native Here seed collecting, 9 am

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October 1 & 2
Saturday 9 am-3 pm, Sunday 9 am-1 pm

MEMBERSHIP MEETING

Chaparral
Speaker: **Ron Russo**

Wednesday, September 28, 2005, 7:30 pm
Conference Center, University of California Botanical Garden at Berkeley (directions below)

There are over 12 million acres of chaparral in California. This plant community is characterized by extreme heat, well-drained soils of low nutritive value, and periodic raging wildfires. While such conditions might appear to discourage plant and animal life from establishing themselves, the chaparral community is actually composed of a diverse array of organisms uniquely adapted to the harsh conditions. Within the chaparral community, different plant species exhibit an amazing number of design features and relationships with other organisms—all keyed to basic survival.

Ron Russo, our speaker this month, will present a detailed look at the chaparral ecosystem. Ron recently retired after more than 35 years as Chief Naturalist for the East Bay Regional Park District. He has published six field guides, including *Plant Galls of the California Region*, and numerous papers and articles in journals and magazines. He has lectured and taught extensively throughout California and beyond, and received awards in recognition of his skill as an instructor and interpreter of the natural world. His specialties include mushrooms, plant galls, nudibranchs, sharks, mammals, and humpback whales.

East Bay Chapter CNPS membership meetings are free of charge and open to everyone. This month's meeting will take place in the Conference Center of the University of California Botanical Garden on Centennial Drive, east of Memorial Stadium and west of the Lawrence Hall of Science, above the main campus of the University of California in Berkeley. The Garden gate will open at 7:00 pm; the meeting begins at 7:30 pm. Refreshments will be served after the meeting. Please contact Sue Rosenthal, 510-496-6016 or rosacalifornica@earthlink.net, if you have questions.

NATIVE PLANT SALE

Annual Sale of Native Plants
October 1 & 2
Saturday 9 am-3 pm, Sunday 9 am-1 pm
Merritt College, 12500 Campus Drive, Oakland

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Annual Plant Sale

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Directions: Take Highway 13 south to the Redwood Road exit. Drive east (uphill) to the signal lights at Campus Drive and turn right. Park free on campus and follow signs to Landscape Horticulture area at the north end of the campus. (From the south on Highway 13, take the Carson exit to Redwood Road.)

Come early Saturday morning for best selection. A plant list will be available at the gate. You may want to check the list posted on the chapter website about a week prior to the sale. Or be surprised—some plants few in number may not make the list.

Many *native bulbs* are available to tempt you this year: *Calochortus*, *Brodiaea*, *Erythronium*, *Camassia*, *Allium*. Alan Bade, an experienced *Calochortus* grower, will be on hand to demonstrate potting bulbs in containers and answer questions.

The book sales table offers current publications on identifying native plants, horticultural information, and much more.

Be prepared:

- Bring a friend to help you collect, move, and load your plants.
- A wagon or small cart will be handy; sturdy boxes will work.
- Plan on using the loading zone at the curb after retrieving your car unless you have brought a wagon with you.
- Bring cash or personal check (we can't process credit cards)

Help set up for the Sale!

September is a very busy month as we move plants, check labels, groom and price plants, arrange the furniture, etc. We'd appreciate whatever skills and time you can offer, and you will get a thorough preview of what plants are available. People who drop in to help for just half a day make a big difference in keeping us on schedule.

Our **work days** at the nursery in September: 9 am to 1 pm

All Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Saturdays and Friday 9/30

Volunteer at the Sale, Saturday and Sunday, morning or afternoon!

If you have helped us in recent years you should receive a reply postcard soon.

Please respond, even if only to let us know you aren't available this year but would like to stay on the mailing list.

If you don't hear from us, or would like to volunteer for the first time, please call 925-376-4095.

Shirley McPheeters

FIELD TRIPS

Saturday, September 10, 10 am Chris Thayer goes back east (of Livermore) to lead this field trip to view and smell several tarweed species in bloom. This driving trip with several stops and short walks will likely encounter Livermore tarplant, Congdon's tarplant, and big tarplant (*Deinandra bacigalupi*,*Centromadia parryi* ssp. *congdonii*, and *Blepharizonia plumosa*). Take this opportunity to see some of what our chapter wants to save in the inland portions of the East Bay. If time allows, we will also look for several other rare species, including the bird's beak species of *Cordylanthus palmatus* and *C. mollis* ssp. *hispidus*, and perhaps *Atriplex*.

Directions: Go on 580 east and exit north at Vasco Road. Go north from the exit about 1 mile, and then turn left on Dalton. Broadmoor is in a residential area on the left about 1/2 mile west of Vasco Road. Be prepared for punishing heat by bringing adequate water and dressing appropriately. The trip will last a few hours, and we will eat and drink on the fly. If you have any questions, please contact Chris Thayer at 925-279-0265 or christhayer@sycllc.com.

Janet Gawthrop

Field Trip Report

Two of the summer field trips were to **Calaveras Big Trees State Park** in the Sierra above Angel's Camp on July 9 and to **Samuel Taylor State Park** in Marin County on July 24. Here I will describe some of what we saw.

There was a small group (six total) at Calaveras Big Trees. Everyone else missed out! Because of the wet

spring, many species of wildflowers were out in large numbers. We meant to visit the park and its environs but ended up spending the whole day in the park itself.

There are two big tree groves: the North Grove and the larger South Grove. We visited both. At the North Grove, we took my recommended route: the Overlook Trail running up the slope from the main loop, and then half the main loop. (The main loop is quite crowded on a good day, while the Overlook Trail has only a few other hikers.) At the South Grove we took the normal loop. We also visited the stream at the end of the park road and stopped at several locations on the park road connecting the north and south groves.

The most impressive displays were of prince's pine (*Chimaphila umbellata*), a *Pyrola* relative—there were thousands in bloom in the South Grove; a rein orchid (*Piperia unalascensis*), with dozens of fine specimens; Washington lily *(Lilium washingtonianum*), a large patch on the road between the groves; fringed pinesap (*Pleuricospora fimbriolata*), a non-green *Pyrola* relative with dozens of patches; and phantom orchid (*Cephalanthera austiniae*), with hundreds of specimens. There was also harlequin and bigleaf lupine (*Lupinus stiversii* and *L. latifolius*), alpine lily (*Lilium parvum*), California scullcap (*Scutellaria californica*), pine drops (*Pterospora andromedea*), snow plant (*Sarcodes sanguinea*, going to fruit), false bugbane (*Trautvetteria caroliniensis*), several monkey flowers including seep monkey flower (*Mimulus guttatus*), two-colored monkey flower (*M. bicolor*), and musk monkey flower (*M. moschatus*), heartleaf milkweed (*Asclepius cordifolia*), and a big patch of ide's bonnet (*Clintonia uniflora*) on the South Trail—it is common in the Park but all the rest were past fruiting. That is a just a sampling. If you visit the Park, be sure to go to both groves, and down to the stream (where you can wade) and the many interesting locations along the Park Roads. Note there are many dogwoods, so there is a beautiful fall show as the dogwood leaves turn pink.

There was a bigger crowd at Samuel Taylor State Park (14 total), but the flowers were not so spectacular, mostly summer blooming composites like hawkweed (*Hieracium* sp.— note this is a native and not at all weedy), and tarweeds (such as *Madia* spp.) but also elk clover (*Aralia californica*) in large numbers. There was a little enchanter's nightshade (*Circaea alpina*) and a few faded leopard lilies (*Lilium pardalinum*) by the entrance kiosk. We concentrated instead on trees. On the Pioneer Tree Trail, there are excellent old redwoods (*Sequoia sempervirens*) and Douglas firs (*Pseudotsuga menziesii*) as the dominant trees, and bays (*Umbellularia californica*), tanoaks (*Lithocarpus densiflorus*), and occasional California nutmegs (*Torreya californica*) as understory. The *Torreya* are fascinating to anyone not familiar with them because the needles are amazingly sharp (they will easily draw blood). There are also many shrubs, with the ocean spray (*Holodiscus discolor*) in full bloom, and many ferns.

David Margolies

NATIVE HERE

Fridays, Sept 2, 9, 16, 23, 30 Native Here Nursery open 9-noon
Saturdays, Sept 3, 10, 17, 24 nursery open 10-1
Tuesdays, Sept 6, 13, 20, 27 Native Here seed collecting, 9 am

Many plants are dormant, looking brown and dry and leafless, but the time is drawing near when they will drink up moisture from the rains in preparation for new growth the following spring.

September is a good time to buy plants in preparation for planting in October and later. We will start putting out irises in late September. We have a lot of ninebark from seed collected in Tilden, nice bunches of California fescue from Point Richmond in 1 gallon and 3 gallon cans, hop trees (small, deciduous chaparral tree) from Mt. Diablo, many 1 gallon containers of sedges from Palomares Creek, sticky monkeyflowers from Berkeley, and several small coffeeberries from Wildcat Creek and Oakland.

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.

We have expanded the nursery thanks to the hard work of John Danielsen and have more plants than ever. Janice Bray, one of our very dedicated volunteers, and Charli have put together beautiful display signs with color pictures and descriptions of some of our plants.

We plan on having a week-long special sale in November to make room for our many plants that will be available in the spring. Details will be in the October *Bay Leaf*.

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NATIVE HERE

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Volunteers are welcome to help transplant, weed, water, and sow seeds. 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, Native Here Nursery

CONSERVATION

Conservation Committee Meeting, Thursday, September 15th, 7 PM, 10 Kerr Ave, Kensington

Among other items for report and discussion, the committee will do some strategizing about Richmond planning issues such as Point Molate development proposals. CNPS members living in or near Richmond are strongly urged to attend this meeting. Since we're starting at 7, there will be some food to munch on as we talk and listen.

For further information, or to schedule time for a report, e-mail charlid@pacbell.net or jjolson@ebcnps.org.

The conservation program continued to cover issues affecting areas of botanical importance in the East Bay throughout the summer, even though Charli, Laura and I were away for some of the time. The following is a summary of our activities this summer:

Conservation Committee Meeting
On June 15th Laura Baker hosted a conservation committee meeting. Attendees included Laura, Elaine Jackson, Robin Sandstad, Carol Castro, Gregg Weber, MaryAnn Hannon, and me. Each attendee gave a summary of activities and discussed future action items. See above for the next Conservation Committee meeting.

East Contra Costa HCP/NCCP
After months of anticipation, the draft Habitat Conservation Plan/Natural Communities Conservation Plan for Eastern Contra Costa County was released in mid July. I'll be working with the plant scientists and conservation committee to review the draft and provide comments over the next couple of months.

Livermore/Springtown Issues
Research and analysis of how the proposed projects in North Livermore may affect the ecologically significant Springtown area continue, using data collected through the plant scientists. Throughout the summer, I have stayed in contact with the Sierra Club, the Greenbelt Alliance, and the Friends of Livermore regarding the Livermore Trails Initiative, while also informing the Audubon Society, the Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS), the Department of Fish and Game, and Pardee Homes of our concerns. I attended a FWS meeting in mid June where I was able to express my concern about the Livermore Trails Initiative with staff from FWS. CNPS and the Livermore Trails project were also highlighted in the June issue of *Bay Nature* in Christine Sculati's "Ear to the Ground" column.

Richmond Sea Cliff Marina
Another project in Richmond threatens a remaining undeveloped piece of San Francisco Bay shoreline. Toll Brothers, Inc. plans for the partially submerged 25.3 acre bay front site include a 300 residential condominium unit, lawn and, walkways. Gregg Weber conducted a site visit in mid June and attended the public scoping session on June 23rd. I submitted scoping comments for Notice of Preparation for a draft EIR on June 28th with input from Gregg and with data from our plant scientists.

Canyon Oaks II Subdivision
Near Wildcat Regional Park in El Sobrante, a 36-unit development covering 22 acres has moved forward with the issuance of a Notice of Preparation for a draft EIR. Gregg Weber and I visited the site on July 13th with the consultants from Zeitner and Zeitner and other interested parties, including Elizabeth O'Shea from Spawners. Gregg also attended the scoping meeting on June 27th. Comments were submitted with help from Gregg, plant scientists, and conservation committee members.

PG&E
Alerted to the power line relocation project in Orinda by Peter Rauch, I received background information from Amelia Wilson from Save Lamorinda Openspace. With the help of Amelia, Peter, plant scientists, and conservation committee members, I commented on the power line relocation sites in regard to our botanical interests and concerns.

Concord Naval Weapons Station (CNWS)
We are currently working with the East Bay Regional Park District, the Sierra Club, the Greenbelt Alliance and other environmental groups on developing policy to be used in planning how CNWS will be used. While I missed the June Union/Environmental meeting where this was discussed, meetings with Congressman Miller (Barbara Johnson) and Congresswoman Tauscher (Jennifer Barton) are planned for the future on an ongoing basis to discuss CNWS policy.

Field Trip
Laura Hanson led a field trip to Concord Naval Weapons Station in early June. It was well attended and successful. The highlight of the trip was when Laura found *Cordylanthus mollis* spp. *mollis* in a location where she had not seen it before. See the pictures

below and on page 8.

Jessica Olson, Conservation Analyst

The Conservation Analyst's position is funded by a grant from the San Francisco Foundation, contributions from chapter members and anonymous donations.

Laura Hanson pointing out *Cordylanthus mollis* spp. *mollis* to planners from Concord Photo by Jessica Olson

ACTIVITIES OF OTHERS

Celebration by the Bay with the Watershed Project

Sunday, September 25, noon-3:00 pm. Join us at our first annual open house for fun activities—grow a new native plant to take home, "rain" on a watershed, and check out some critters that live in a marsh or creek. We'll have tours of our marsh restoration project along the Bay Trail. Learn about our new fall workshops and programs for educators, students, home gardeners, and the general public. Free refreshments. Raffle prizes.

For more information, email bayshorestewards@thewatershedproject.org, call 510-665-3689, or visit www.thewatershedproject.org. The Watershed Project is an environmental education non-profit organization located on the University of California's Richmond Field Station, 1327 South 46th St., Richmond 94804.

Martha Berthelsen, Public Programs Coordinator
510-665-3546, FAX 510-665-3642

Gardens and Volunteers Sought for Bringing Back the Natives Garden Tour

Gardens and volunteers are being sought to participate in, and help coordinate, the Sunday, May 7, 2006 Bringing Back the Natives Garden Tour, which will showcase bird- and butterfly-friendly, pesticide-free, water conserving gardens that contain 30% or more California native plants. Host gardens must be located in Alameda or Contra Costa counties. Volunteers are sought to help with the myriad of tasks involved in putting the tour together. To receive an application, find out how you can help, or to be added to the mailing list, visit the website at www.BringingBackTheNatives.net, email Kathy@KathyKramerConsulting.net or call 510-236-9558 between 9 am and 9 pm.

Participants on the free Bringing Back the Natives Garden Tour will learn how to attract butterflies, birds and bees, garden without using pesticides, lower their water bills, design a low-maintenance garden, and select and care for California native plants. Nearly 60 showcase gardens will be open for viewing. Native plants will be given away at some gardens, and available for purchase at others. More than 40 talks will be scheduled throughout the day.

The array of gardens on the Bringing Back the Natives Garden Tour will range from established collectors' gardens to those that are newly installed, and from five-acre lots to small front gardens in the flats. A few gardens will contain mostly local native plants, others use the horticulturally available suite of natives from throughout California, and the rest mix natives with plants from other Mediterranean climate regions. About half of the gardens will be designed and installed by owners; the rest will be designed and installed by professionals.

Visitors to www.BringingBackTheNatives.net can see photographs of each garden on last year's tour, read extensive garden descriptions, and download plant lists. Landscapers familiar with designing with natives can be located on the website, as can resources for gardening with natives, such as nurseries that sell natives and lists of excellent reference books. Registration will open early in 2006. Visit the website now to be added to the e-mail notification list.

We have descended into the garden and caught three hundred slugs. How I love the mixture of the beautiful and the squalid in gardening. It makes it so lifelike. Evelyn Underhill, Letters

Last night, there came a frost, which has done great damage to my garden . . . It is sad that Nature will play such tricks on us poor mortals, inviting us with sunny smiles to confide in her, and then, when we are entirely within her power, striking us to the heart. Nathaniel Hawthorne, The American Notebooks

I never had any other desire so strong, and so like to covetousness, as that one which I have had always, that I might be master at last of a small house and a large Garden. Abraham Cowley, The Garden*, 1666*

Let no one think that real gardening is a bucolic and meditative occupation. It is an insatiable passion, like everything else to which a man gives his heart. Karel Capek, The Gardener's Year*, translated by M. and R. Weatherall, 1931*

I appreciate the misunderstanding I have had with Nature over my perennial border. I think it is a flower garden; she thinks it is a meadow lacking grass, and tries to correct the error. Sara Stein, My Weeds*, 1988*

It takes a while to grasp that not all failures are self-imposed, the result of ignorance, carelessness or inexperience. It takes a while to grasp that a garden isn't a testing ground for character and to stop asking, what did I do wrong? Maybe nothing. Eleanor Perényi, Green Thoughts*, 1981*

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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

Cordylanthus mollis spp. *mollis* Photo by Jessica Olson

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