Is it any real surprise that California native plants form the basis for our state's first and greatest Native American art form? Every Native American basket was created using a remarkable and fascinating array of native plants. California Indian baskets have a rich heritage thousands of years old and comprise the finest basketry in the world. These fascinating baskets achieve their beauty because our rich flora was combined with the artistic talents and cultural needs of the diverse First People of California.

What an unexcelled combination: the most complex Native American cultural region interacting with the flora of California. Each Indian basketry tradition reflects the plants of the region where the baskets were created. And how surprising these baskets are: there are baskets so small they can sit on the head of a pin and some so large it took four strong men to carry them when filled. Many kinds of baskets were used by both women and men throughout all aspects of their entire lives. To make these baskets required great knowledge of California native plants. No wonder California Indian people became expert ethnobotanists.

Ralph Shanks, M.A., author of *Indian Baskets of Central California*, will present a beautifully illustrated slide show on the Indian baskets of California. Ralph is president of the Miwok Archeological Preserve of Marin (MAPOM). He has a long-time interest in native plants dating from his first published article in *Fremontia*, in Vol. 1, No. 1. Lisa Woo Shanks is a USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service area resource conservationist who covers environmental projects in the Bay Area and Delta. She is an editor and photographer and will show you slides of many of the finest and rarest Indian baskets ever created, including seldom-seen very early baskets from East Coast and European museums. The Shanks will emphasize native plant uses in Indian basketry and the role both plants and baskets play in California Indian life yesterday and today. The Shanks will have copies of their beautiful book, *Indian Baskets of Central California* (see review in *Fremontia*, Summer 2007), available for sale and signing after the presentation.

East Bay CNPS membership meetings are free of charge and open to everyone. This month's meeting takes place in the Garden Room of the Orinda Public Library at 24 Orinda Way (in Orinda Village). The Garden Room is on the second floor of the building, accessible by stairs or an elevator. The Garden Room opens Continued on page 2
Support our Chapter’s activities by shopping at Native Here!

Sales Help Needed for Sunday, March 29

Native Here Nursery is scheduled to be part of the Growing Natives Symposium http://www.nativeplants.org/symposium2009, with a talk by Charli Danielsen in the “ampitheatre” and the nursery open for symposium registrants from 2:15 to 3 pm.

A minimum of two volunteers will be needed to help Margot write up sales, and there will probably be lots of questions from the visitors. Two more volunteers will be needed to help with traffic and parking. Volunteers will need to be at the nursery by 1:45 and expect to stay until 3:45. To volunteer, contact the nursery at nativehere@ebcnps.org or 510-549-0211, or sign up when you come in to shop, or volunteer during regular hours.

Tuesday afternoons at Native Here

Now that Native Here is open from noon to 3:00 pm on Tuesdays, several volunteers are coming regularly to pot up plants, weed, water, move plants, groom plants, and all the other nursery tasks. Customers are finding it a good time to call about availability and to come pick up plant orders.

There are still opportunities to shop for plants or volunteer on Friday mornings from 9 until noon, and Saturdays between 10 am and 2 pm. We now have two college students interning on Fridays, which has lowered the average age of volunteers significantly.

It’s not all work. Volunteers talk about an amazing variety of subjects, and all take time to observe what’s going on with the wildlife that surrounds us in Tilden Park.

Nature observations at the nursery

At the end of January buckeyes started leafing out and pink-flowering currant started to bloom. A red-tailed hawk was chased by two crows. The warm weather at the end of January and beginning of February made the birds sing. Chickadees flitted in the small oaks, calling to each other. Song sparrows sang in the coyote bush on the other side of the nursery fence and flew into the nursery to take baths in the pans underneath the 15-gallon pots. They and other birds landed in some 1-gallon pots in the Briones section and dug around in the soil. Not good for the plants, so we have to scare them away and put netting over the plant cages.

We accept used pots during our open hours on Tuesdays, Fridays, and Saturdays. We reuse some of them and put the rest in the bin just outside the top gate. Anyone is welcome to take pots from this bin to use for their own planting projects.

Featured Plant for March 2009

Our featured plant this month is Ranunculus californicus (pictured below, photo by Janice Bray). We have an abundant supply of these perennials in 4” and 1-gallon size pots. Imagine your garden in spring with beautiful yellow buttercups! Come to the nursery and make your garden dreams come true.
All of the previously featured plants: *Cornus sericea*, *Oemleria cerasiformis* (October, 2008); *Quercus agrifolia* (November, 2008); *Physocarpus capitatus*, *Ceanothus gloriosus exaltatus*, *Arctostaphylos bakeri* ‘Louis Edmonds’ (December, 2008); *Aesculus californica* and *Cupressus sargentii* (January, 2009) remain available.

We still have a dollar special on vine maples and now offer the same special on the rest of our All California plants. Buy one plant for the regular price and get the second (same species) plant for $1.

In addition to the *Ceanothus*, *Arctostaphylos* and *Acer* species mentioned above, we have other plants in our All California section, including *Eriogonum arborescens* and a species of *Mahonia*.

Charli Danielsen and Margot Cunningham

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MEMBERSHIP NOTES

In 1991 I was appointed to a task force to develop a master plan for restoring the creeks in downtown Walnut Creek. After the City Council adopted the plan, the task force evolved into Friends of the Creeks [http://www.friendsofthecreeks.org/](http://www.friendsofthecreeks.org/). This organization does the annual creek cleanup; habitat restoration, principally arundo removal and maintenance in the Civic Park butterfly habitat; and various political work to advocate for creeks when development is proposed.

Ralph Kraetsch soon began to experiment with growing native grass in addition to planting acorns, and I followed along with him. I learned about the concept of “native here” from Charli Danielsen of Native Here Nursery. It fit with my own inclinations and I have used it in all the restoration work I’ve done.

After about ten years, Bill started a project to create a nature area in Heather Farm Park. That meant we had to figure out how to grow a large volume of grass and get them planted. One year we had 18,600 grass seedlings in our back yard . . . and not much else. After that we dialed it back to what we and an army of volunteers could comfortably plant in a winter.

Shortly before I retired, I started my own grass project in Shell Ridge Open Space using the techniques we had developed for Bill’s project.

Now we both needed flowers to go with the grass, but I couldn’t grow them successfully. What to do? I had read about Native Here Nursery in the *Bay Leaf* over the years and I had retired recently, so the solution was obvious – volunteer and get an education. People were generous with their knowledge, and I got far more than I could ever have expected. Besides planting and potting up, I was soon going on seed collecting trips and working on another aspect of my education – how, when, and where to collect the seeds I needed to do restoration. I knew about the most common ones, but there’s a lot more to a habitat than that.

A year or so ago, six of us coalesced into a group that works in the Walnut Creek Open Space every week doing various aspects of habitat restoration – everything from seed collecting to weed removal, site preparation, and planting. We also propagate the seeds we collect, so now my back yard is full of flowers and shrubs. In addition to propagating for our own projects, we also support the Heather Farm project with flowers and shrubs, and to some extent the quail habitat group although they plant mostly from seed.

Continued on page 4

Leslie Hunt (pictured above, photo by Brad Heckman), a resident of Walnut Creek and East Bay Chapter member, tells about her involvement with native plants:

Inspired by an article I had read about prairie restorations around Chicago my husband Bill and I started doing habitat restoration with the Nature Conservancy at their Cosumnes River Preserve in Galt, California in 1989 or ’90 [http://www.cosumnes.org/](http://www.cosumnes.org/). At that time that was the closest place for us to be able to take an active part. We were thrilled when we heard about Ralph Kraetsch starting the WC Open Space Foundation’s Oak Habitat Restoration Project in 1991. Commuting to Galt was a bit much, and now we could volunteer in our own back yard, Walnut Creek. We then found out about Charli Danielsen’s Mitchell Canyon bunchgrass project and thought this would be a great place to help out as well as learn more about restoration.
Planning Meeting for 2009 Plant Fair

Plans are under way for another Plant Fair at Native Here this fall. An initial meeting was held in February, and another is planned for Saturday, April 4th at 9:00 am.

The nursery will be open for business at 10 on that day, so the more formal part of the gathering needs to be done by then. Participants are welcome to stay and work on things in the nursery afterwards.

Tuesday afternoons at Native Here are also good times to catch the Plant Fair co-chairs, Gudrun Kleist and Charli Danielsen.

There is need for a variety of skills and talents to fill committee assignments. Although some of the categories have been filled, skills in communicating with vendors and the public are always welcome.

For more information, e-mail volunteer@ecnps.org with ‘Plant Fair Committee’ in the subject line.

Charli Danielsen
FIELD TRIPS

Saturday March 14 9:30 am, Las Trampas Regional Park
Pete Veilleux will lead this trip to a relatively unknown and underused park with its transitional flora that includes both interior East Bay species as well as plants that do not venture far inland from the Bay. Meet at Pete’s nursery, East Bay Wilds, so that we can carpool to the trailhead and not overwhelm the ranch where we start. We’ll hike up through the ranch for about 1/2 mile, and then we’ll enter Las Trampas and hike up into the canyon until we reach some cliffs and a cave or two. We will head back around 2:00 or 3:00 pm, depending on how the group feels.

Directions: From points west and north, take 580 east to Castro Valley, and take the Castro Valley Blvd./Crow Canyon exit. Go left at the end of the ramp and turn right at East Castro Valley Blvd. Take another right at Crow Canyon Road, and then turn left at Cull Canyon Road. Drive to mile marker 2.45 (number of miles from turn onto Cull Canyon Road). As you approach the milemarker, look for a big green water tank up on the hill at the right. There is a large chain-link gate to the right immediately past the milemarker. Head up through the gate and park to the left, where the road forks to the right.

From points east, go west on 580 to Castro Valley and take exit 37. Turn left at East Castro Valley Blvd, and then turn right at Crow Canyon Road. Drive to mile marker 2.45, and as you approach the mile marker you should see the big green water tank on the hill. There is a large chain-link gate near the mile marker. Head up through the gate and park to the left, where the road forks to the right.

Sunday, March 22, 2:00 pm, Bird Trail (Chabot Regional Park)
This short (about 1/2 mile, with insignificant elevation gain) trail is a botanically interesting transition zone between redwood forest and mixed evergreen (mostly oak/bay) forest. At this relatively early in the season date, there will be Osoberry, Flowering Currant, Gooseberries, and lots of Western Leatherwood in bloom, along with early wildflowers such as *Trillium chloropetalum*.

The trail starts close to the MacDonald Staging Area in Chabot Regional Park off Redwood Road in Oakland.

SAN FRANCISCO FLOWER AND GARDEN SHOW

The San Francisco Flower and Garden Show (www.gardenshow.com) has been a major horticultural event in the Bay Area for years. CNPS will have a booth this year to promote the use of California native plants in gardens and to publicize CNPS. Five local chapters are sharing the cost of the booth. We will need volunteers to staff the booth for a couple of hours. Volunteers get free entrance and can stay the whole day.

The five-day show will be held March 18-22, 2009 at the San Mateo County Event Center. (Note this is a new location. It was previously held at the Cow Palace.) Show hours are: 10 am to 8 pm Wednesday through Saturday and 10am to 6 pm on Sunday.

Directions: To get there from the northern east bay, get on 13 South (Go east on Ashby Avenue in Berkeley, for example) and take the Redwood Road exit. From Oakland, go east on 35th Avenue (which turns into Redwood Road). From the southern east bay, take 580 west to 13 north, and exit at Redwood Road (immediately after the junction). From San Francisco, take the Bay Bridge, staying to the right (but do not go to San Jose). Take 580 East, and then 24 East (towards Walnut Creek). Take the 13 South exit from 24 and take the Redwood Road exit.

Once on Redwood Road, go east (uphill). At the top of the hill you will cross Skyline Boulevard and pass various equestrian facilities. Go down into the valley. About two miles from Skyline Boulevard, turn right into the MacDonald Staging Area parking lot. (It is a large lot and you cross a bridge over a creek; there is a small lot about 1/4 mile to the north which is not the correct place; if coming from the north you reach the entrance to Redwood Regional Park on the left, you have gone about 1/4 mile too far.)

Walk takes place rain or shine. Please contact David Margolies, 510-654-0283, 510-393-1858 (cell), divaricatum@gmail.com if you need further information.

Saturday, March 28, 10 am-approx 4 pm (not including driving time to & from Napa Co)
This is a driving tour of a beautiful northeastern portion of Napa Co known for its wildflower displays. We hope to see such special plants as the endemic St Helena fawn lily, fritillaries, *Lewisia rediviva* (deep pink variety), etc. Carpooling is a must because parking will be limited at most stops (4-5 car minimum). Sign up at pogogyne1@yahoo.com before Saturday, March 21, and we will put you in touch with other participants so you can organize your carpools. This will be an all-day driving trip with a number of stops along the way, and a few short walks. Bring lunch, snacks, liquids, and appropriate attire (layers for cold or heat, raingear if it looks threatening). Heavy rain cancels. Leaders: Celia Zavatsky (East Bay CNPS) and Jake Rugyt (Napa County CNPS).

The Chapter would like to have two people at the booth throughout the show. There are four 2 ½ hour shifts Wednesday through Saturday and four 2-hour shifts on Sunday. Couples and friends are encouraged to sign up for a shift together.

Transportation: There is great public access via Cal Train, a shuttle from BART, and parking is only $8/day.

Please contact Ellen Edelson, who is organizing the booth, if you would like to help staff the booth or if you have some good ideas for the booth. She is from the Yerba Buena chapter of CNPS. She can be reached at 415-531-2140 or at e.edelson@sbcglobal.net.

THE BAY LEAF March 2009

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2009 CNPS CONSERVATION CONFERENCE REPORT

Three Cheers for the 2009 CNPS Conservation Conference! After about eighteen months of tireless work by volunteers and staff throughout the state, CNPS can rest easy that the 2009 Conservation Conference was nothing short of a great success. About 900 attendees participated in the conference that featured opportunities to convey the importance of conservation through many different communication media; oral presentations, posters, letters to the President, poetry, field trips, photography and art. The conference was organized into sessions that included climate change, planning tools, land management, equal protection for plants, rare plants, restoring rare plants, assessing and mitigating impacts, and a regional session on the Central Coast and Valley that I had the pleasure of chairing.

Our chapter alone had some two or three dozen attendees including Delia Taylor, Heath Bartosh, Sue Bainbridge, Charli Danielsen, Bob Case, Lee McCaffree, Bruce Pavlik, Laura Baker, Sandy McCoy, Barbara Leitner, Charli Danielsen, David Amme, Sue Rosenthal, Holly Forbes, Erin McDermott, Diana Benner, Lynn Talkovsky, Barbara Ertert, Susan Spiller, Sally and Elsa de Becker, Roy West, Roy Buck, Doug Johnson, Bertha McKinley, Elaine Jackson, Mike Perlmutter, Carol Baird, Alan Harper, Alison Green, Todd Keeler-Wolf, Dean Kelch, Malcolm Margolin, Staci Marcos, Alan Harper.

BRINGING BACK THE NATIVES GARDEN TOUR

Registration for the Fifth Annual Bringing Back the Natives Garden Tour, which will take place on Sunday, May 3, 2009, is now open at www.bringingbackthenatives.net. This free, award-winning tour features 50 pesticide-free gardens that conserve water, provide habitat for wildlife, and contain 50% or more native plants.

The Native Plant Sale Extravaganza will take place throughout the weekend of May 2 and 3. Please go here for details: http://www.bringingbackthenatives.net/plantsale.html.

ACTIVITIES OF OTHERS

Regional Parks Botanic Garden’s Native Plant Sale
Saturday, April 18, 2009, 10 am to 3 pm. The Botanic Garden is located at the intersection of Wildcat Canyon Rd. & South Park Drive near the Brazil Building in Tilden Regional Park in Berkeley (admission is free). California shrubs, trees, perennials. Find many plants that are not available in a nursery. Horticultural advice gladly given! Please bring boxes to carry home your treasures and an umbrella if it rains. Refreshments available. Proceeds directly benefit the Garden. www.nativeplants.org 510-841-8732 or 1-888-327-2757 press option #3 ext. 4507

California Academy of Sciences
Come join us every 3rd Saturday of the month in the Botany Department at the California Academy of Sciences. Volunteers will help prepare plant specimens for botanical research and have fun interacting with others interested in botany. We will train plant mounters in the techniques used here at CAS. To sign up contact Rosalind Henning; 415-379-5111, rhenning@calacademy.org.

For questions contact Rebecca Peters: 415-379-5392, rpeters@calacademy.org or Susan D’Alcamo: 415-379-5354, sdalcamo@calacademy.org.

Dates: March 21, April 18, May 16, June 20, 2009, 9 am to Noon, and/or 1pm to 4pm Be sure to let us know you’re coming. www.calacademy.org.

Workshops at the Jepson Herbarium (ucjeps.berkeley.edu/workshops/2009/index.html)
Fifty Plant Families in the Field, March 28–29 and April 4–5, 2009
Please join the California Native Plant Society (CNPS) for a Vegetation Sampling Field Trip in Mt. Diablo State Park, Contra Costa County.

This 1-day trip will focus on fine-scale vegetation sampling in maritime chaparral plant communities.

Who should attend? Professional botanists, ecologists, resource managers, and conservationists. Participants should have basic plant identification skills.

Trip leaders:
Erin McDermott, East Bay Chapter Vegetation Chair
Julie Evens, CNPS Lead Vegetation Ecologist
Jennifer Buck, CNPS Vegetation Ecologist

Location:
Mt. Diablo State Park is located east of Walnut Creek in the San Francisco Bay Region. There is a parking fee for any car entering Mt. Diablo State Park. You may want to carpool. General: $7.00 per car. Senior (62+): $6.00 per car.

Meeting place:
Curry Point Trailhead parking lot at 10 am.

To get there from Interstate 680 take exit 40 for El Cerro Boulevard in Danville and head east. Take a slight left onto Diablo Boulevard. Travel 2.2 miles and turn left onto Mt. Diablo Boulevard. Mt. Diablo Boulevard will turn into South Gate Road as you climb up the mountain and pass the ranger’s kiosk. Curry Point Trailhead is on the right side of the road on a hairpin curve to the left. The trailhead is 5.4 miles from the left turn onto Mt. Diablo Boulevard at the bottom of the hill.

Equipment list

Please bring the following equipment/supplies:
- Clipboard
- Notebook and pencils
- Sturdy boots and field clothes appropriate for conditions
- Water
- Bag lunch
- Snacks

Optional items
- Compass and/with clinometer
- Binoculars
- Digital camera
- GPS unit

rsvp/questions/carpool information:
Contact Erin McDermott at 510-701-2890 or email at emcdermott@nomadecology.com
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Book & Poster Sales
Joanne Orego
greentheglobe@juno.com

Grant Awards
Sandy McCoy
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sandymccoy@mindspring.com

Native Here Nursery
Manager—Charli Danielsen
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Sales—Margo Cunningham
bunchgrassmarg@gmail.com
Seed Collection—Gregg Weber
510-223-3310

Plant Fair
Gudrun Kleist
510-486-5088
gkleist@sbcglobal.net
and Charli Danielsen Coordinators

Restoration Projects
Leaders:
Huckleberry—Janet Gawthrop
Point Isabel—Tom and Jane Kelly
Strawberry Creek—Tom and Jane Kelly

Officers and Committee Chairs serve on the Board. Others who are serving on the Board are indicated with *

Committees are formed based on chapter needs and the interests of volunteers. Proposals for committees and projects are welcome and will be considered by the Board.

Membership Application

Name _______________________________________________________

Address ______________________________________________________

Zip ______________ Telephone ______________________

I wish to affiliate with:
___ East Bay Chapter (Alameda and Contra Costa Counties) E-mail ______________ (optional)
___ Other _________________________

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

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