November 1983

Next Meeting

5 December, Monday, 7:30 p.m.

The Plants of Pine Hill by Jim Wilson

El Dorado County, California, is the home of a special area called Pine Hill where seven rare and endangered plants are known to occur. Pine Hill ranges from oak woodland and chaparral in its lower elevations to Ponderosa pine forest, and is characterized by gabbro rock and some serpentine. Jim Wilson, an expert on the area, will present a slide talk on the plants and ecology of Pine Hill (8:00).

Enloe Hospital Conference Hall, Fifth and Magnolia Avenue, Chico.

Fieldtrips

Leader: Wes Dempsey (342-2293 or 895-6362)

11 December, Sunday. Centerville Flume Hike. About six miles of level going to look at winter-blooming plants and hybrid oaks. Bring lunch and water. Meet at Butte Environmental Council (BEC), 7th and Cherry Streets at 10:00 a.m.

28 January, Saturday. Bike Hike. Five mile ride in Lower Bidwell Park to look at edible plants; slow and easy with lots of discussions. Bring bike to One-Mile Dam in Bidwell Park at 10:00 a.m.

5 February, Sunday. Upper Bidwell Park Hike. Two-mile hike along Chico Creek and up to north ridge to look at Pennyroyal, Buckeye, and 30 other edible plants. Bring lunch and water. Meet at BEC, 7th and Cherry Streets, at 10:00 a.m. or at rifle range parking lot at 10:30 a.m.

18 February, Saturday. North Ridge Hike. About four miles along north ridge in Upper Bidwell Park, looking at plants of the "Banana Belt": wear boots --- poison oak and scrambling! Bring lunch and water. Meet at BEC, 7th and Cherry Streets, at 10:00 a.m.
Coming Events

MTL Board Meeting

The Mt. Lassen Chapter Board of Directors will meet Monday, 29 November, at the home of Jay Fuller, 3477 Hackamore Lane, Chico, from 7:00 to 9:00 p.m. All members are cordially invited to attend and give input on the various issues facing us at the local level. (FJF)

State Board Meeting

The next CNPS State Board of Directors meeting will be on Saturday, 3 December, in the Faculty Club on the campus of U. C. Berkeley. This is an opportunity to find out first hand how your state organization operates, and to meet fellow plant enthusiasts from all over California. The meeting will begin at 10:00 a.m. and last until approximately 6:00 p.m., followed by dinner in the Great Hall. If you are interested in attending, contact Jay Fuller, phone number 343-6875. (FJF)

General News

Election Results

Elected officers taking over in January, 1984, are: Mike Foster, Vice President; Ruth Cunningham, Secretary; and Dana Von Bargen, Treasurer, with Jay Fuller continuing as President.

Interested members are encouraged to volunteer as Chairpersons for Conservation and Education Committees. Staying informed on conservation issues and disseminating this information to members of CNPS and the community at large are vital functions of our chapter. You can help!

Publications

Some Special Publications are available by ordering through CNPS at the mailing office in Berkeley, or as noted.

No. 1 Inventory of Rare and Endangered Vascular Plants of California, 2nd edition (April 1980). $7.50 plus CA tax.

First Supplement (April 1981); Second Supplement (February 1982). $3.00, including tax, each.

Order from CNPS, 2380 Ellsworth Street, Suite D, Berkeley, CA, zip code 94704-1595.

No. 2 Plant Communities of Southern California, Symposium Proceedings (1976). $7.00 plus CA tax plus $1.50 postage/handling.

Order from CNPS (address above).


Order and more information from San Luis Obispo Chapter CNPS, P.O. Box 784, San Luis Obispos, CA 93406.

No. 4 The Geographic and Edaphic Distribution of Vernal Pools in the Great Central Valley, California (1978), by Robert F. Holland. $5.00 plus CA tax. Order from CNPS (address above).
Editor's Note. Thanks to last year's contributors to Featured Flora: writers Dorte Rasmussen, Rob Schilsing, and Jay Fuller; illustrators Denise Devine and Nancy Prouty. Subsequent articles will carry an authors' by-line.

**Featured Flora**

**Vinegar Weed (Trichostema lanceolatum)**

Less commonly called Turpentine Weed, this native, strongly-smelling annual mint is a characteristic plant of the dry period in late summer and early fall (August-October) when the grasslands and open foothills are whitened by the dead annual vegetation of the previous rainy season. When this plant is present, it is abundant and frequently associated with dove weed (*Fremocarpus setigerus*), another fall-flowering native. Vinegar Weed occurs throughout cis-montane California and ranges north to Washington. It is closely related to woolly blue curls, or the famous "Romero", *T. lanatum*, a native of the dry sunny slopes of the Coast Ranges that is familiar to native plant gardeners.

Generally, the plants are 1-6 dm (4-24") high, with viscid stems and branches, and with lanceolate leaves. Volatile oils are present in the foliage, especially when the plant is rubbed, there is a characteristic, often offensive, smell of vinegar; hence the common name, Vinegar Weed. The corollas are light blue and are in part responsible for attracting many insect visitors. Tim Spira studied ten species of *Trichostema* throughout California and found *T. lanceolatum* to offer the largest nectar volume per flower. Large nectar rewards, the long flowering period, and a flowering period when many other flowers are not available give this species a competitive edge in attracting insect visitors which may act as pollinators. Although the main visitors are bees, butterflies and flies also visit the plant for nectar and pollen.

The plant has an interesting advanced pollination mechanism called nototriby which is typical within the mint family. (The term is derived from Greek: noto="the back", trib="rub"). Nototribic pollination involves rubbing and depositing pollen on the back (dorsal) surface of the flower visitor. As a result, the insects act as pollinators, transferring pollen from flower to flower and from plant to plant. The highly exserted anthers and stigma of Vinegar Weed are an adaptation which facilitates this type of pollination. Of the 35 species of flower visitors observed by Spira, 7 species, or 20%, were nototribic bees.

Vinegar Weed is a common plant which is known to spread rapidly with disturbance (i.e. grazing). Sue Taylor summarized Indian uses of the plant: for repelling fleas in bedding, for medicinally treating typhoid fever, and for stupefying fish. (Diane Ikeda. Drawing by Denise Devine.)
The Mount Lassen Chapter of the California Native Plant Society

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