Bear grass (Xerophyllum tenax) has been used for thousands of years and continues to be used by California Indian basketweavers. The plant is an essential element in traditional Maidu basketry art and culture. Bear grass must be burned in order to produce flexible, strong leaves. Bear grass that has not been burned is not useable for basket weaving. A century of fire suppression has reduced the amount of bear grass suitable for basketry. Fire suppression in this fuel system has also resulted in an accumulation of flammable material which complicates the process of applying prescribed fire.

The Feather River Ranger District in cooperation with local basket weavers, and the California Indian Basket Weavers Association are working together to reintroduce fire to promote bear grass regeneration. Two prescribed fires have been applied. The first fire was conducted in the fall of 2005 and the second was conducted in the spring of 2007. Chris will discuss the trials and tribulations of reintroducing fire and our attempt at adaptive management. Time will be provided for questions.

Chris Christofferson was born and raised in Oroville CA. He graduated from California State University Chico in 1997 with a B.S. in Biology, emphasis in Ecology. In 2001 he graduated from the University of California Davis with an M.S. in Integrated Pest Management. Chris has worked for the USDA Forest Service, Plumas National Forest as a Botanist since 2002. He manages the rare plant program on the Feather River Ranger District. He actively monitors rare plant responses to land management actions and promotes the use of prescribed fire as a management tool.
CSUC AND BIDWELL MANSION TREE TOURS
March 24, and April 7
Tuesdays
Meet at 10 am in front of Bidwell Mansion, free parking. Each tour will cover 20-30 different species of trees from all over the world. This is one of the finest collections north of Sacramento with some specimens dating back to the building of the mansion (1870) and others to the founding of the university (1889). Bunya bunya, dawn redwood, red horse chestnut, monkey puzzle, and more. Tours end about 11:30. Leaders: Gerry Ingco, 893-5123 and Wes Dempsey.

SPOTTED FAWN LILIES MCNAB CYPRESS IN MAGALIA
March 29
Sunday
Meet at the Chico Park & Ride (Hwy 32/99) at 9 am or at the trailhead in Magalia at parking lot across the Skyway from the old train station depot at 9:45 am. We will enjoy masses of yellow and white lily blossoms as we scramble down a rough trail and road to a head dam on the west branch of the Feather River for lunch. See many serpentine endemics, including McNab Cypress, on this soapstone slope. About 2 1/2 miles round trip. Bring lunch and water. Leader: Gerry Ingco, 893-5123

VERNAL POOL GRASSLAND VINA PLAINS PRESERVE
April 4
Saturday
California Vernal Pools are a fascinating, and threatened type of wetland ecosystem. Associated with specific geological settings and seasonal extremes of inundation and over millennia, they have come to support a highly adapted and wonderfully complex community of native plants and animals. Some of the best vernal pools are found at the Nature Conservancy’s Vina Plains Preserve in Tehema County. Wear sturdy shoes, bring lunch, water, sun screen and hat. Meet at Chico Park & Ride (Hwy 32 /99) in the west parking lot at 9:30 am. Leader: Janna Lathrop, 893-2886.

by Wes Dempsey
and Gerry Ingco, Co-chairs

Check out more Field Trips on page 6.

Snowdrop Bush (Styrax officinalis) Camp Creek Trail near Pulga.
May 7, 2008
Photo by Gerry Ingco
Executive Board Meeting

April 15, 2009  
Wednesday  7 pm
Woody Elliott’s  
287 Pinyon Hills Drive, Chico  
342-6053

President’s Message
by Janna Lathrop  
Chapter President

The Mount Lassen Chapter’s 13th biennial Wildflower Show, Plant Sale and Art Exhibit is fast approaching. The goal has always been two-fold. First as an educational tool to showcase the diversity and beauty of the native flora by highlighting over 200 species found in seven local area habitats. Second, to serve as the major fundraiser for the chapter’s operating budget for the next two years. This year our event faces the challenge of both the economic status of the nation and California’s statewide drought. This could be a factor in the success of our bottom line.

Additionally many local areas are currently recovering from last summer’s devastating fires. To address this issue, we can offer suggestions for drought-tolerant plants and the importance of natives for post-fire recovery at our plant sale.

Our plant identification table will be ably staffed by enthusiastic plant experts. They will be happy to answer questions or identify mystery plants brought in by attendees.

Plan to join in on one of the nature walks or stop by the microscope table to be captivated by the wonders of plant structures under magnification. The sales table will tempt you with titles that you must add to your native plant library or perhaps a new tee shirt to spruce up the spring wardrobe. Stop by the native tea table and don’t forget to try one of the home-baked cookies as you enjoy the exhibits and floral displays.

An exciting new component this year will be the art exhibit featuring local artists and photographers and their interpretations of California native plants and landscapes.

We look forward to a well-attended, educational and florally bountiful day. See you on April 19.

Legislative Notes
by David Anderson

Obama Restores ENDANGERED SPECIES ACT CONSULTATIONS

On March 3, 2009 President Obama issued a memorandum to Federal Agencies directing them to consult with the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service or the National Marine Fisheries Service, as appropriate, before taking or approving actions that might threaten endangered species or adversely affect their habitats. The practical effect of Obama’s memorandum is to nullify the hasty, last minute Bush Administration rulemaking that gave Federal Agencies the discretion to resolve for themselves doubts whether endangered species or habitats would be harmed. The memorandum assures that the scientific expertise of the Services will be brought into play in resolving doubts, as they were prior to the Bush rule.

The President also directed the Secretaries of the Interior (parent of USF&WS) and Commerce (parent of NMFS) to review the Bush Administration ESA rules issued December 16, 2008 to determine whether new rulemaking proceedings should be undertaken.

The reason new rulemaking proceedings are being considered is that the President has no power to overturn Federal Agency rules adopted after formal rulemaking proceedings. Congress can change the rules by new laws or by invoking (within 60 days after issuance of a rule) the Congressional Review Act. Since Congress has been preoccupied, the President took action. The explanation of the Obama Administration to the media has been that, technically, the memorandum does not overturn the Bush rules giving Federal Agencies discretion as to consultations. It merely instructs Agencies to exercise the option in favor of consultation in every case. This seems suspiciously like a distinction without a difference. We should keep in mind, however, that the last minute Bush rules probably were invalid because they violated the consultation requirements of Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act. Agencies rules are valid only if they fall within the statutory authority of the Agency. Thus, the Obama memorandum merely tells Federal Agencies to follow the prior consultation rule and not the probably invalid Bush rule pending further consideration.

P.S. Yesterday (March 10) Congress passed (and the President is expected to sign today) the $410 billion cabinet funding bill. In addition to many earmarks it contains a provision authorizing the President to withdraw the Bush Endangered Species regulations of December 16, 2008. This legislation validates and removes any question about the Presidential memorandum issued March 3.
EDUCATION CHAIR
NOW OPEN

April Grossberger will soon take a position with the California Conservation Corps as a crew supervisor and has stepped down as Education Chair for our Chapter. Even though her tenure has been short we thank April for her time and effort she contributed to Mount Lassen Chapter, especially the truly wonderful poster that highlights our conservation activities. She will be a valuable asset in her future endeavors.

This does open yet another Chair position. The Education Chair does not need to be an educator or instructor to hold the position. As chair (or perhaps co-chair?) you can tailor the program in any way you feel is most important to you. Please give some thought to filling this vital part of our Chapter. If interested or if you desire additional information contact any MLC board member.

PS. the Legislation and Rare Plants Chairs continue to remain vacant.

REMINDER

Stop by our display table at the Soroptimist’s Home and Garden Show on March 21 and 22. We will be in the Horticulture Building at the Silver Dollar Fair Grounds.

Upcoming WILDFLOWER SHOW
Can Still Use Help

The 2009 Wildflower Show, Plant Sale and Art Exhibit on Sunday April 19th is fast approaching. We still need the help of Chapter members in several areas, including poster and flyer distribution prior to the show. We can use additional help with the membership table, plant sales, table sales and tea table.

If anyone is willing to take charge of the children’s activity area, we need assistance there as well.

We will not turn away additional batches of cookies, likewise persons who can be floaters or ‘gofers’ during the afternoon.

We begin to arrive at 7 am to set up tables, unload plants, identify and label wildflowers in a state of “floristic controlled chaos”. We transform the CARD Center into this wildflower and native plant extravaganza that magically gets completed at the stroke of noon when the doors open to the public. The magic is actually you, the members of Mount Lassen Chapter. Please contact Ellen Copedland at 345-1826, or Janna Lathrop, jlathrop4mlc@comcast.net to help and become part of the show.

Wanted!
Native Plants for PLANT SALE
Contact DEB FAU at 530-514-8578
nativespringsnursery@yahoo.com

LAST CALL FOR ARTISTS AND PHOTOGRAPHERS

We have over a dozen people signed up to display photographs or illustrations at our upcoming Wildflower Show, on April 19. But we still have room for more. We are encouraging everyone, amateur or professional to share pictures and images of your favorite plants and places.

GUIDELINES FOR SUBMISSION

The subject of the work is California native plants and landscapes.
Each submission should be small, maximum 8” X 10”, minimum 5” X 7”.
Mounted on foam board or other stiffener.
Wrapped in plastic to protect the image or damage to the back from the sticky tape.
An individual can submit up to 5 pieces of work each.
Each piece should have 3” X 5” card with artist’s name, title of work, name of plant if possible, location where a photo was taken.

We encourage a short description about why the subject was chosen. Share your thoughts about a favorite place or plant, and viewers will enjoy it more for that personal observation.

Art can be dropped off at the CARD Center between 7 - 11:30 am the day of the show.

Art can be picked up after the show ends at 5 pm on the day of the show. Unclaimed items will be collected and made available at the next general meeting.

Any questions or problems please contact one of us.
Susan Bazell, bazell@maxinet.com
Catie Bishop, cbishop1991@sbcglobal.net (message phone 530 518-8968)
Over 200 Species of California Native Plants on display

Art Exhibit
Native Plant Sale

Books, Posters, and more for sale
Displays, Nature Walks, and Children’s Activities

APRIL 19, 2009
CARD CENTER 545 Vallombrosa, Chico

Donation: Adults $5.00 Seniors/Students $4.00 Under 12 Free

Proceeds support the work of Mount Lassen Chapter
CALIFORNIA NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY
A Non-profit Organization
Dedicated to the Preservation of California’s Native Plants
TABLE MOUNTAIN
OROVILLE WILDFLOWER FESTIVAL
April 4
Saturday
Tours at 1 and 2 pm. Members of Mount Lassen Chapter will lead short hikes on Table Mountain for the Oroville Wildflower and Nature Festival. Join us at one of the premiere and favorite wildflower areas in Butte County as we introduce the public to wildflowers of Table Mountain. Located on Cherokee Road outside the small enclave of Cherokee above Oroville. Call 893-2886 for driving directions or more information. We will also have a display table set up at Riverbend Park along the Feather River in Oroville from 10 am - 4 pm.

U.C. DAVIS ARBORETUM
April 5
Sunday
The Arboretum specializes in plants adapted to a Mediterranean climate, 100 acres along the banks of Putah Creek. Plants are arranged in gardens from different geographical areas of California. We will first visit the Garden of California Natives where many spring wildflowers should be at peak bloom. As time permits we will see the North Coast Garden under tall Redwoods, and in the Foothill, and Desert Gardens. Have lunch on the Green under magnificent oaks. Meet at the Chico Park & Ride (Hwy 32/99) at 8 am. Bring lunch, water, and a pad for sitting on the ground, and money for ride sharing. Call for alternate meeting place. Leader: Gerry Ingco, (530) 893-5123.

BEAR VALLEY
April 26
Sunday
Meet at the Chico Park & Ride (Hwy 32/99) at 9 am for roadside botanizing in Bear Valley. It is located west of the farming town of Williams in Colusa County. Deep in the Coast Range that separates the Sacramento Valley from the narrow inland valleys, this remote valley boasts one of the most dazzling wildflower displays. We will ride share from Chico. Be prepared for rough, curvy, paved and gravel roads. Nature can be fickle, so keep your fingers crossed for perfect floral timing. Bring, sun protection, lunch and water. Call for secondary meeting point. Marjorie McNairn 343-2397 and Gerry Ingco 893-5123.

PULGA TO MAYARO
May 3
Sunday
Meet at the Chico Park & Ride (Hwy 32/99) at 9 am with lunch and water for a drive/hike along the PG&E poleline road above the Feather River. The road is rough and mostly 1-lane. At Pulga, we start in the serpentine and then finish in the granite above Mayaro. Skullcap, monkeyflowers, fritillarias, and many other great flowers. Phone for secondary meeting place if needed. Leaders: Gerry Ingco 893-5123 and Wes Dempsey 342-2293.

Check out Field Trips on page 2.
Volunteers in BIDWELL PARK
CITY OF CHICO

City of Chico volunteers are planting
Santa Barbara sedge in the
Sycamore Restoration site,
One Mile Recreation Area in Bidwell Park,
on Martin Luther King, Jr. Day

Come join the fun working in various Bidwell Park locations. Tools, water, gloves and instructions provided. For more information contact Park Division Volunteer Coordinator Lise Smith-Peters at 530 896-7831 or lspeters@ci.chico.ca.us

April 16, 23, 30
VOLUNTEER THURSDAYS IN THE PARK
Sycamore Restoration Site at One Mile, 2 - 4:30 pm
Volunteers will remove invasive Himalayan blackberry and help plant native plants. Meet at the north end of Caper Acres - walk past the Caper Acres entrance gate toward the paved path. If you arrive late, worksite is near the Council Ring.

April 25
EARTH DAY IN BIDWELL PARK
Keep California Beautiful event!
10 am - 1 pm
Upper Park trail work - creek cleanup, paint projects, invasive plant removal. Sign in at One Mile Recreation Area near the group picnic site or at Parking Lot B in Upper Park for trail workday. Volunteers under 18 need to have a parent/guardian release form signed prior to work. Download: Declaration of Assumption and Release of liability. Call the Volunteer Coordinator at 896-7831 for more information.

NEW MEMBERS
Steve Weston Chico
Lauren Johnson, Willows
Janice Kinney, Paradise
Kyle Merriam, Meadow Valley
Terri D. Rust Meadow Valley

For information about becoming a member of MOUNT LASSEN CHAPTER CALIFORNIA NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY contact Membership Chair Phyllis Lindley 530-899-1514, lindley84@att.net

RENEW ONLINE
Renew your CNPS membership online using a credit card. As an option, set it up to renew automatically year after year. It is quick, easy, convenient, and reduces renewal mailing costs.

www.cnps.org
Click on the JOIN button
At a March time when the new crop of wildflowers is ready for the grand annual outburst in Butte County, the evergreen conifers tower above their lesser neighbors. They endured the rigors of winter, even into the high reaches of the mountains, with living green vigor, while the herbaceous seeds and roots slumbered in the soil. Trees occupy a more constant part of the environment, even though some become deciduous-bare.

In the new book about John Muir by Donald Worster, “A Passion For Nature; the Life of John Muir,” the author tells of Muir’s passion for nature that included plants and trees. Muir journeyed far to see special plants and tree species, including the Deodar Cedar (Cedrus deodara) in its Himalaya natural habitat in Northern India.

In those rugged mountains, Deodars are found up to the 4000-foot elevation, and grow up to 250-feet tall. I was struck by the fact someone gathered seeds and introduced the cedars all around the world, including Oroville, CA. They have been planted not only in neighborhoods, but the row of conifers along the Oroville levee are all Deodars.

Lacking noticeable flowers to enhance their appearance, it is curious how they were selected to be spread to other lands, although Deodars are worthy, graceful conifers with drooping tops that seem to be bowing to one another. The short needles are soft, and the cones sit on top of the branch, dispersing scales and seeds until only the top remains, sometimes popping off to become a “wood rose,” attractive for decorations. The corner of Clemo Avenue and Hammon in Oroville has a ponderous specimen, and the owner doesn’t mind if you pick up a few wood roses, as the fallout drives him frantic. Most conifers stand upright with a straight stiff top, but not the Deodar.

The male flower on the monoecious Deodar produces prodigious amounts of pollen in the spring that coats the puddles and plants on the Oroville levee with a yellowish dust of some artistic merits. Deodars were introduced to Europe in 1822 and to America in 1831. Taking the tree out of its lofty habitat doesn’t stop it from growing well in the lowlands, although they rise to only about 70 feet.

Although Muir had an interest in all trees, especially in their native locations (he traveled to Argentina to see the “Monkey-Puzzle Tree, (Araucaria araucana), he had a special infinity for the native conifer pines and firs of the Sierra Mountains, including the Redwood (Sequoia gigantea). He led the conservation movement to preserve those trees in National Parks. Fittingly, the grove of Coast Redwoods (Sequoia sempervirens) in the National Monument north of San Francisco was dedicated as “Muir Woods.”

Muir realized that in a more mobile world, changes would come in animal and plant distribution, and was not above appreciating transplanted trees of other lands, even though he had a special fondness for native plants in natural habitats. Already Australia’s Eucalyptus were being spread far and wide with many species in San Francisco. There were even some on Muir’s Martinez ranch, although he traveled to Australia to see their natural habitats.

Many conifer species from other lands have been introduced to California, including the tall, column-like, Italian Cypress, often planted around graveyards. But the handsome Incense-cedar, Sugar Pine and Ponderosa Pine of the Sierras compare favorably with any tree in the world.

“I never saw a discontented tree. They grip the ground as though they liked it, and though fast rooted they travel about as far as we do, traveling with us around the sun two million miles a day, and through space heaven knows how fast and far.” —John Muir

by Rex Burress
The CSU Chico Herbarium offers a variety of interesting and informative botanical, natural history, environmental, biological, and even botanical art workshops throughout the year. These one-day, Saturday events, held on the Chico State University Campus, vary from technical taxonomy identification classes to broad general public interest topics. All of our workshops are very reasonably priced and taught by truly top-notch professionals.

March 21
INTRODUCTION TO THE SECRETS OF THE SOIL

March 28
NAME THAT WILDFLOWER (non-technical)

April 18
IDENTIFICATION OF PLANTS
FROM VERNAL POOLS
& OTHER SEASONAL WETLANDS

April 25
INTRODUCTION TO RARE PLANT MONITORING

May 16
BOTANICAL ILLUSTRATION

April 18
HOW TO LEAD A SUCCESSFUL
NATURAL HISTORY FIELD TRIP

May 9
HEALTH AND SAFETY IN THE FIELD

May 30
PLANT PHOTOGRAPHY

June 13
INTRODUCTION TO THE WILLOWS OF CALIFORNIA
(SALICACEAE)

For more information about these workshops and registration
www.csuchico.edu/biol/Herb/Events.html.
Join Today!

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

CALIFORNIA NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY
I wish to affiliate with the Mount Lassen Chapter

Name __________________________________________________________
Address _________________________________________________________
City ____________________________________________________________
State _______ Zip ____________email ______________________________
Phone________________________

Send Membership Applications to:
CNPS
2707 K Street Suite 1
Sacramento, CA 95816-5113

www.cnps.org.

Student / Retired / Limited Income... $25
Individual / Library........................................ $45
Family / Group........................................... $75
Plant Lover.............................................. $100
Patron..................................................... $300
Benefactor............................................... $600

APRIL 2
BEAR GRASS

APRIL 19
Wildflower Show

Pipevine

Calendar 2009

March
24 - CSUC Tree Tour
29 - Lilies in Magalia

April
2 - General Meeting
4 - Vina Plains
4 - Table Mount / Oro Fest
5 - Davis Arboretum
7 - CSUC Tree Tour
15 - Pipevine Deadline
15 - Board Meeting
19 - WILDFLOWER SHOW
26 - Bear Valley

May
3 - Pulga
7 - General Meeting
13 - Pipevine Deadline
20 - Board Meeting

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Time Value
APRIL 2009 issue