General Meeting
FEBRUARY 5, 2014
Wednesday    7:30 pm
Butte County Library, Chico

Presented by
PAULA SHAPIRO
Horticulture Chair,
Mount Lassen Chapter CNPS

A Botanical Trip to Cuba

Explore the wonderous plant life of the semi-tropics. Join us for a presentation of “Cuba with a Botanical Slant”, a Pacific Horticulture trip taken by our Horticulture Chair, Paula Shapiro, last March. You will see two botanical gardens, national parks, the largest wetland preserve in the Caribbean, restoration projects, and community gardens. Ecosystems range from urban ocean front to plains to beaches and wetlands and up into the mountains where orchids grow wild.

Paula has been the Horticulture Chair for Mount Lassen Chapter for many years. As an amateur botanist, she has spent years working as a propagator in local nurseries. Her love of plants began as a child where she roamed Bidwell Park when it was wild. She is a fourth generation Chicoan and has spent most of her life exploring the plant-life of the west.
CSU, CHICO
GREENHOUSE TOUR
February 16
Sunday

Meet at CSU, Chico Health Center parking lot at the corner of Warner St and College Ave at 10 am. From there we will walk the short distance to the Biological Sciences Greenhouse. Tim Devine has collected hundreds of unusual plants from all over the world. We will see a number of species from the California deserts as well as plants from aquatic and tropical settings. Leader: Tim Devine 530-345-8444

WORKDAY
ALICE HECKER NATIVE PLANT GARDEN
CHICO CREEK NATURE CENTER
February 8, Saturday

Join MLC and Claire Meehan for a workday to help clean up the NATIVE GARDEN at the Chico Creek Nature Center on Saturday, February 8, from 9 - 11 am. Thanks

Photo by Kelsey Taylor

OLLI CLASS
GARDENING WITH CALIFORNIA NATIVES

Our own Cindy Weiner will be teaching two classes on “Gardening with California Natives” for OLLI (Osher Lifeline Learning) during the next term. The classes begin Monday, March 24 and continue for the following 4 Mondays. There will be a morning class in Oroville and an afternoon class in Chico. Topics to be covered include the benefits of planting with natives, how to choose the right plant for the space, how to plant and water and recommended plants for our area.

For more information see the OLLI website http://rce.csuchico.edu/ooli/ or email Cindy Weiner at wildflowermaven@comcast.net. If you have photos of natives in your garden, she would love to show them as part of the class presentation. You can email these to Cindy with a brief description.
YES ON YOSEMITE BOUNDARY EXPANSION

The 113th Congress has just reconvened for what will probably be an unproductive election-year session. Hopefully, the election year inertia will not preclude it from giving favorable consideration to two carryover 2013 bills of special interest to Californians. Senators Feinstein and Boxer jointly sponsored S. 781 and Representative Jim Costa (and 16 co-sponsors) sponsored companion bill H.R. 1677 to add 1,575 acres to Yosemite National Park along its southwestern boundary. This acreage was originally intended to be part of Yosemite. While not a big addition to the Park, it would provide hiking trails, views of the Central Valley and habitat for deer, bears birds and rare plants.

Similar bills failed passage in the 112th Congress, but there is now more support for the bills. Hearings have been held on H.R. 1677 by the National Parks Subcommittee of the House Committee on Energy and Natural Resources. In an editorial in its December 29 issue, the San Francisco Chronicle urged politicians to support the bills. One of the key players in dealing with these bills will be Congressman Tom McClintock. Yosemite National Park is within his Congressional District. To help move these bills forward, telephone or write your own Congressman and Representative McClintock and urge their support.

President’s Message
by Catie Bishop, President

First, I want to express my gratitude to all the board members who served last year, and to those who continue to serve. The only thing that keeps this Chapter afloat is the volunteers who give time to further the native plant cause.

Election time is always an anxious time, because we never know if we will be able to fill our Board positions. It’s a little like the game musical chairs. Only in this game the chairs are circling the too few members willing to serve. I know there are a lot of people in the Chapter who care about native plants, who care about conservation, horticulture, and education. I know because I see how many people attend the general meetings, field trips, and other events.

It is not a big step to go from attending a General Meeting one evening a month, to also attending a Board Meeting one evening a month. This is your chapter. The Board works hard to provide high-quality speakers for the General Meetings. Our Field Trip Chairs work hard to find interesting places to go. Our Rare Plants Chair leads an important (and fun) citizen science effort to relocate rare species to update their status. We have an excellent newsletter and website. We put on a wonderful Wildflower Show every 2 years, have had native plant garden tours, plant sales, horticulture and plant ID workshops, and are currently planning a Horticultural Symposium for September of this year. All done by volunteers.

I’d like to focus on how we can bring to the membership and the public new programs, plant sales, and educational opportunities. But to do that we all need to take ownership of this Chapter. I want to find out what people want this Chapter to be. How can we serve our members and the community better. So I need to hear from you. If there are things we should be doing better or differently, let the Board know. If there are things you like, let the Board know. Be proactive, get involved a little bit. If you have an idea, we’d love to hear about it. It is the only way to make this Chapter not only good, but sustainable.

This is my first time as president of anything. I have a steep learning curve ahead. But I have great help from wonderful, dedicated people, so I’m off to a good start.
I met with Nicole Bateman, Exec Director of Habitat for Humanity, and Dan Braz at the home of Dijana Fazlic to assess how Habitat can help her through a new program called Brush with Kindness. It helps established Habitat recipients do outside maintenance around their home and cleaning up the yard. She has quite a few natives already, but more could be suggested. I was there as a representative of CNPS and hoping to engage the other garden clubs to help Dijana tame her yard, so that she can manage it by herself. Our long term plan is to encourage the use of native plants for new Habitat homes and established ones that need help.

On November 23, a group of workers met for a day of cleaning and pruning. Thanks, especially to the CNPS crew that turned out and worked so hard on Dijanna’s yard, and for making this a successful event.

This article is from the Habitat for Humanity December 2013 Newsletter.

The Mount Lassen Chapter of the California Native Plant Society (CNPS) provided the expertise and the labor to help the Fazlic family renovate their yard, thus making it easier for the family to maintain the landscaping themselves. CNPS assisted with pruning trees, cutting back shrubs and roses, getting rid of invasive plants and preparing the yard for winter. This family was chosen based on level of need and willingness to partner with Habitat.

From left to right, the volunteer labor included: Adrienne Edwards, Dan Braz, Ann Elliott, Suellen Rowlison, Woody Elliott and Susan Mason. These kinds of partnerships and projects ensure that families can continue to live in safe and well maintained homes. Habitat for Humanity would also like to thank Recology for donating a 30 yard green waste dumpster. Habitat sincerely appreciates our long-term partnership with Recology. We also want to thank the host family, Dijana Fazlic for providing morning snacks and a wonderful lunch.

What a crew today . . .
The CNPS Horticulture Program has begun running a series of articles in the CNPS Bulletin on native plant gardens of CNPS members. The first one appeared in the Oct - Dec 2013 issue on page 7. Depending on the response, this series could become a regular feature in the state newsletter. The purpose of the series is to inspire others to create their own native plant gardens, or to add natives to an already existing garden.

If you have a native plant garden you feel is special and beautiful, and if you would like to share it with others in CNPS, send us an inspiring article draft of 575–600 words. We hope you’ll include your experiences with the garden, as well as just describing what’s there. Also include two high-quality photos (in jpg format, not close-ups) that show off your garden, and one-sentence captions for each. Send your submission to Susan Krzywicki, CNPS Horticulture Program Director, atskrzywicki@cnps.org. If we feel your article can be published, we will work with you through the editing process until it’s in a final form. We look forward to hearing from a number of CNPS members!

RARE PLANT TREASURE HUNT

2013 AWARDS

PHOTO AWARD 3rd Place

Eriogonum umbellatum var. ahartii
by Ron Coley, Mount Lassen Chapter Rare Plant Chair

Kim Clark and Danny Slakey, CNPS Rare Plant Treasure Hunts Team commented to Ron, “Your Eriogonum umbellatum var. ahartii photo was stunning, a really awesome field photo. The composition, color contrast and background were especially appealing. Nice focus and detail!”


CNPS 2015 CONSERVATION CONFERENCE OFFERS REGISTRATION REBATES TO VOLUNTEERS

by Josie Crawford, CNPS Education Program

The CNPS 2015 Conservation Conference: 50 YEARS OF PROGRESS AND PROMISE will be at the DoubleTree by Hilton, San Jose, January 13-17, 2015. We have lots of opportunities for participation in this high energy event. Help make this an event to remember by lending your talents. Hundreds of volunteers make this a great party. If you join a planning committee and put in 32 hours over the year, you may ask for a full rebate; smaller commitments yield partial rebates. Committees open include: Outreach, Volunteer Coordinators, Arts, Silent Auction Committees. Contact Josie Crawford for more information at jcrawford@cnps.org or (916) 447-2677x205.

3rd Place: Mount Lassen Chapter

MOST OCCURRENCES SUBMITTED BY A CHAPTER

Documented 6 rare plant occurrences on 5 separate trips.
Ron Coley, the chapter’s rare plant chair, has successfully led this chapter effort for 3 years now!
The award for the most occurrences receives $50

The award winners have been announced on the RPTH website, were recognized at the Chapter Council Meeting, as well as the education e-newsletter. Congratulations on your award, and thanks for all the effort you’ve put into the conservation of California’s rarest plants!

Checkout the other winners at: cnps.org/cnps/rareplants/treasurehunt/award_winners.php
In mid winter plants in the garden are fairly quiet – many have
lost their leaves and are dormant, while the evergreens are....
well... just that - evergreen, maintaining their consistent appear-
ance month after month. In my garden though, the one evergreen
shrub that has enough subtle changes in its appearance to cap-
ture my attention as I drive up the gravel drive is Berberis ‘Golden
Abundance’.

The lustrous, rich green leaves, some suffused with shades of red,
maroon and burgundy, glisten in the light filtering through the stand
of blue oaks. The play of light reflecting off the varying colors in the
foliage gives the plant depth and interest this time of year when all
else seems fairly static. The shiny leaves are large, and pinnately
divided into holly-like leaflets with the scalloped edges armed with
sharp points. While the focus is directed toward the glossy foliage,
in early January the flower buds are slowly developing in the apex
of the stems. In February/March these will open into dense clusters
of showy, rich yellow flowers. The cultivar ‘Golden Abundance’ is
aptly named because of the prolific quantities of flowers produced.
It is a stunning plant in full bloom.

Not only is it a beautiful plant in the landscape but it is a highly
desirable plant for pollinators. Blooming early in the season when
there is often little else in bloom, a variety of native bees, including
bumblebees, along with a variety of flies and butterflies are found
in the company of its flowers. When the sun is shining, a grouping
of these plants in a garden in Stonyford is extremely active with
numerous pollinators obtaining nectar and pollen.

The fruits resulting from pollination are also attractive. The size of
grapes they are deep blue purple with a lightly applied powdery
sheen. The fruits reportedly are eaten by birds, though in my experi-
ence I’ve never seen a bird eating them.
'Golden Abundance’ is a chance seedling that was selected by Rancho Santa Ana Botanic Garden in the early 70’s, with at least one of the parents being the most commonly grown berberis in gardens, the Oregon grape, *Berberis aquifolium*. ‘Golden Abundance’ is a robust plant which can grow to 8’ tall and wide, but in situations with lean soils and grown on the dry side, 5’-6’ is a reasonable size to expect. In our climate with long hot summers, it is best grown in light shade under tall trees such as oaks or positioned where it has relief from the late afternoon sun.

The *Berberis* (once classified as *Mahonias*) are rugged, adaptable shrubs in the garden. While they thrive best in partial shade they can grow in fairly sunny positions. The water regime can vary from regular garden irrigation to very little water. The berberis planted in my garden under large blue oaks, received no water during what was a fairly hot summer in 2013 and looked perfectly fine through the year. If grown in a sunnier position some watering would have been needed to maintain an attractive appearance.

They tend to be colonizers, with new woody stems growing from the base. To keep plants tidy and less woody, remove the oldest stems down to the ground as needed. Their colonizing habit makes them suitable for large informal and impenetrable hedges.

The larger growing berberis such as *B. aquifolium* and ‘Golden Abundance’ are natural companions to any native or non native shrub border. They are easily combined with manzanitas, toyon, ceanothus, tassel bush, redbud and ribes. And for those of us who garden in fire prone landscapes, the berberis are good choices, the thick leathery leaves do not burn readily.
I noticed clumps of tumbleweeds all along the highway between Oroville and Marysville, some still stuck to the soil while others had broken away to tumble up against the roadside fences. The stickery lifeless-looking clumps reminded me of the classic cowboy song “Tumbling Tumbleweeds.” (“See them tumbling down, pledging their love to the ground...”) However, there are about 130 species of ‘tumbling’ plants, and five common to California. The bushel-basket-sized tumblers along the highway are likely the Russian Thistle, *Salsola tragus*, not a true thistle but rather is in the pigweed family. The plant was introduced 140 years ago as seeds in flax seeds sent to South Dakota. It has tumbled across most of western America spreading its seeds and thriving most abundantly in the Great Plains.

Vern Oswald, author of “Vascular Plants of Butte County,” listed *S. tragus* as abundant in Butte County, and also the Prostrate Pigweed tumbleweed, *Amaranthus albus*, introduced from Central America. Both species thrive on arid, barren ground and are well naturalized. He listed eight Amaranthus in Butte County, including the native California Amaranth, *Amaranthus californicus*, but *A. albus* is one of the most proficient tumbleweeds of the Amaranth’s. You can tell it by the whitish stems while most of the others have reddish stems.

Tumbling is a special way of seed dispersal. Other plant species depend on sticker-seeds to hitchhike, or have parachute styles for wind dispersal. The allurement of fruits and berries help spread seeds via defecation. But tumbleweeds have a method that allows the seeds to be scattered over the ground while they go tumbling in the wind as seeds shatter to the soil. One tumbleweed may have as many as 250,000 seeds.

It is interesting that many Amaranth species, other than tumbleweeds, are used as food around the world. Notably, the Incas and Aztecs used the grain-producing *Amaranthus cruentus* extensively in their diet. The tiny black seeds are actually a pseudograin, but are highly nutritious, non-glutenous, and are readily available. The foodstuffs are united at the stalk’s top like wheat.

The tumbleweed has been described as an aimless wanderer that starts out as a tender blue-green plant and ends up as a prickly wiry weed blowing in the wind...or ending up piled against a fence or obstruction. Incidentally, the taproot that digs deep for water, remains to grow again after the bush breaks away.

When I lived in Missouri, I had never seen a tumbleweed, which surprised our cousins visiting from Oregon. They described the tumbleweeds tumbling across open desert along with dust and sand, and it stirred my imagination. Ruth and Betty must have looked at my nature collection and saw the longing in my eyes wondering about the west, because when they got back home, they boxed an entire tumbleweed and sent it to me. I don’t know if any seeds were scattered, but I didn’t see any new plants growing on the farm!

Just as some other invasive plants bring unwanted baggage and crowd out the natives, accelerating a loud cry from outdoor enthusiasts and farmers, usually there is some offhand benefit from occupants of the web of life. Just as small animals will eat the seed of Russian thistle, so the mourning doves thrive on the dreaded, detested, star thistle seeds. If anything is international, certain trade-offs and cooperation help narrow the gap of adversity.

What would the world be, once bereft
Of wet and of wilderness? Let them be left,
O let them be left, wildness and wet;
Long live the weeds and the wilderness yet.

- Gerald Hopkins (1844-1889)
IDENTIFYING LICHENS TO GENUS
March 1, 2014, by Tom Carlberg

Lichens are an overlooked but present link in most ecosystems. There are reported to be slightly less than 5000 species in 646 genera in North America and more than 1600 species in California, yet few people are able to place names on even the most common lichens. This one-day workshop will focus on the lichens of the lower Sierra Nevada foothills to genus. The morning will be spent covering lichen anatomy, morphology, and reproduction. Lunch will be in the field with some hands-on collecting. Afternoon will be back in the lab for guided exploration, using dissecting scopes, reference materials, chemical spot tests, and vouchers and a key provided by the instructor.

BOTANICAL ILLUSTRATION
April 26, 2014, by Judy McCrary

Want to draw plants and flowers? Local illustrator and teacher, Judy McCrary, will lead this one day workshop and will concentrate on pencil and ink techniques, although other media may be explored depending on the interests of the participants.

For more information about registration please contact the CSU, Chico Biology office 530 898-5356 or jbraden@csuchico.edu

Detailed workshop descriptions and sign up forms are available on the Chico State Herbarium website: www.csuchico.edu/biol/Herb/Events.html

Keep up with MLC Activities on our website and Facebook

California Native Plant Society, Mount Lassen Chapter and LIKE US mountlassen.cnps.org
MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

CALIFORNIA NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY

I wish to affiliate with the Mount Lassen Chapter

Name ________________________________________________
Address ________________________________________________
City ________________________________________________
State _______ Zip ___________ Phone _____________________________
Email ________________________________________________

Send Membership Application to:

CNPS
2707 K STREET, SUITE 1
SACRAMENTO, CA 95816-5113

mountlassen.cnps.org

Phyllis would say

Join Today!

Calendar 2014

February
5 - General Meeting
8 - CCNC Workday
16 - CSUC Greenhouse Tour
19 - Ex Board Meeting

March
5 - General Meeting
19 - Ex Board Meeting

April
3 - General Meeting
16 - Ex Board Meeting