In Search of Fire- and Climate-Resilient Reforestation for Butte County Woodlands

Wolfy Rougle

Butte County woodlands are in transition. Thanks to climate change, high-severity fires, and 20th-century land use decisions, some Butte County woodlands face a real possibility of permanent type conversion to brushland (chaparral). While chaparral is beautiful and biodiverse, it is a less socially acceptable vegetation type than pine forest or oak woodland. Our communities face a crossroads where we have to decide what kind of vegetation type we want to live in, whether our desired landscape is even achievable, and what we are willing to sacrifice to get there. “Letting nature decide” is not an option because Butte County forests have been human-maintained since time immemorial. The only question is how we will manage our woodlands.

As a response to the Camp Fire, the Butte County Resource Conservation District (BCRCD) embarked on several collaborative projects to help local communities answer that question. The Concow Resilience Project is a post-Camp Fire restoration vision based on a collaborative consensus of what a fire- and climate-resilient forest might look like. (Sneak peek: it has more oaks.) The Butte Forest Plan will be a county-scale written inventory of forest conditions that doubles as a roadmap of projects to help us get to the forests we want to live in. Finally, BCRCD is also assisting the City of Chico with the development of its “Vegetative Fuels Management Plan,” a programmatic EIR document that will help the City more efficiently manage its parks and greenways, protect its botanical resources, and return good fire to the parks where it belongs.

Wolfy Rougle is Forest Health Watershed Coordinator with the Butte County Resource Conservation District. She will speak about her work on these projects. Wolfy is a longtime botany geek and holds a master’s in public administration from CSU, Chico.
Exploring Fern Cliff and Annie Bidwell Trail

This was the third year for a field trip to the Fern Cliff, with a good sized group still interested in attending. It was delightful to have an active member of the Redbud Chapter CNPS with us who shared his extensive knowledgeable of plants and fungi. In addition to the regular sightings of polypody, gold-backed fern, two different maidenhair ferns and fragile fern, most of us added wood fern and chain fern to the list. The highlight this year were many more flowering plants, including several shrubs covered with pipevine blossoms, many checker lilies (*Fritillaria affinis*), hound’s tongue just beginning to show some color, blooming manzanita (*Arctostaphylos manzanita*) bushes, California bay laurel, California manroot, and one flower of a California buttercup. There were other attention-grabbers along the trail, the mallard and bufflehead ducks, most of whom silently paddled away as the group swelled on the shore, the many bikers and hikers along the Annie Bidwell Trail, and finally many different types of fungi.

**Fritillaria affinis** Photo by Marjorie McNairn

March Field Trips

**Yahi Trail Upper Bidwell Park**
March 7 Saturday

Meet at 9 am in Upper Bidwell Park at Parking Lot L (Diversion Dam) by driving the gravel road about 1.7 miles beyond Horseshoe Lake’s Lot E. Bring lunch, water, insect/sun protection. Wear sturdy shoes. Hike the scenic Yahi Trail in a majestic canyon with spectacular vistas. We expect to see and identify a variety of blooming flowers, including red larkspur, California poppy, purple mouse ears and the rare shield-lobed monkey-flower. The trail transects grassy flats, open oak savanna, slopes and canyon walls and crosses through shady and moist riparian woodlands. We will walk about 2 1/2 miles one way and return on the park road to lot L. Leader: Marjorie (530) 343-2397

**Spotted Fawn Lilies in Magalia Lassen National Forest**
March 29 Saturday

Meet At Chico Park & Ride west lot at 9 am with lunch, water, sturdy hiking shoes, and money for ride sharing, for a 1 ½ mile hike down a rough trail to the head dam at a charming spot on the West Branch of the Feather River. This serpentine slope offers a most spectacular display of yellow and white fawn lilies (*Erythronium multiscapulatum*) and several rare plants including Eastwood’s fritillary, dissected-leaved toothwort (which will no longer be in bloom) and many seedlings of McNab cypress, which have sprouted after the Camp Fire. Call for secondary meeting place. Leader: Marjorie (530)343-2397
# Officers & Chairs for 2020

## Officers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Role</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Phone</th>
<th>Email</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>President</td>
<td>NANCY PRAIZLER</td>
<td>(530) 592-8078</td>
<td><a href="mailto:praizlermom@gmail.com">praizlermom@gmail.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vice President</td>
<td>DEB HALFPENNY</td>
<td>(831) 595-7615</td>
<td><a href="mailto:debhalfcent@yahoo.com">debhalfcent@yahoo.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secretary</td>
<td>KAREN SMITH</td>
<td>(404) 242-8575</td>
<td>birds4 <a href="mailto:ks@gmail.com">ks@gmail.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Treasurer</td>
<td>ANNE FERRY</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Past President</td>
<td>PAUL MOORE</td>
<td>(530) 343-4287</td>
<td><a href="mailto:pmoore@csuchico.edu">pmoore@csuchico.edu</a></td>
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## Members at Large

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<tr>
<th>Name</th>
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<tr>
<td>HESH KAPLAN</td>
<td>(530) 892-9938</td>
<td><a href="mailto:heshlak@gmail.com">heshlak@gmail.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MARJORIE MCNAIRN</td>
<td>(530) 343-2397</td>
<td><a href="mailto:mlnmcnairn@aol.com">mlnmcnairn@aol.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DAVID POPP</td>
<td>(530) 990-3703</td>
<td><a href="mailto:davidpopppp@gmail.com">davidpopppp@gmail.com</a></td>
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## Chairs

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<tr>
<td>Alice Hecker Native Plant Garden</td>
<td>Deb Halfpenny</td>
<td>(831) 595-7615</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Chapter Council Delegate Pro Tem</td>
<td>Woody Elliott</td>
<td>588-2555</td>
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<tr>
<td>Conservation</td>
<td>OPEN</td>
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<td>Education</td>
<td>Justine Devoe</td>
<td>(530) 917-7891</td>
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<tr>
<td>Events</td>
<td>Nancy Groshong</td>
<td>(530) 228-4670</td>
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<tr>
<td>Field Trips</td>
<td>Marjorie McNairn</td>
<td>(530) 343-2397</td>
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<tr>
<td>Horticulture</td>
<td>Deb Halfpenny</td>
<td>(831) 595-7615</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hospitality</td>
<td>Roxane Canfield</td>
<td>(530) 891-0427</td>
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<td>Invasive Plants</td>
<td>OPEN</td>
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<td>Membership / Mailing</td>
<td>Chris Mueller</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Newsletter Editor</td>
<td>John Whittlesey</td>
<td>(530) 774-4955</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Publicity</td>
<td>Cindy Weiner</td>
<td>(530) 588-1906</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Volunteer Recognition</td>
<td>Marjorie McNairn</td>
<td>(530) 343-2397</td>
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<tr>
<td>Website Administrator</td>
<td>OPEN</td>
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## Next Executive Board Meeting

**March 18**
At our February General Meeting Ed Caldwell and Ann Elliott were recognized for their generous contributions to the Mt. Lassen Chapter.

Ed has been printing the Pipevine newsletter for our Chapter for decades. When we think about the people who make the running of the Chapter possible, we often think of the volunteers on the Board, the Committee Chairs, or those who staff tables. There is another person who deserves recognition for going the extra mile to keep the Chapter alive, just as important to the Chapter as the ones whose names you see in the Pipevine, Ed Caldwell, the man who prints the Pipevine.

Ed is part of the support system behind the scenes who quietly and diligently take on a task that is indispensable. Not only has he done an excellent job in printing the Pipevine, he has done so at a reduced rate to make it affordable for us. When we started the Chapter, and for many years thereafter, we were struggling financially, as most local conservation organizations do. Without the help we received from Ed, we likely would not have been able to consistently produce a monthly newsletter. And the newsletter is such a vital part of an organization, bringing far-flung chapter people the information they need to participate.

I don’t personally know Ed, but have heard his name so many times, I feel as if I do. In researching his background a bit I have found out that he has helped, and is helping, many local non-profit, conservation, or other organizations surrounding the social good including Altacal Audubon, Butte Environmental Council, and ARC of Butte County. He is a true supporter of community, and someone who has a big heart, putting his time and money where his heart leads. We are proud and grateful that he has included our Chapter in his many generous activities.

Ann Elliott has been active with Mount Lassen Chapter since at least 2010. During that time she has worn many hats and served in various Chapter Board positions. She was secretary in 2013 and 2014, and still pinch-hits during a meeting without a secretary.

Ann is interested in native plant gardening, adding many natives to her and her husband Woody’s own yard. She writes articles for the Pipevine about native plant gardening and how to replace a lawn with mostly natives. She took on the running of the Alice Hecker Native Plant Garden in 2015. In that time she and her occasional helpers, have transformed an overgrown, weedy area into a respectable native plant education garden with new all-important name tags. She recently turned running the garden over to Deb Halfpenny. She is involved in the organization and implementation of our Native Plant Garden Tours, convincing local homeowners to allow public access in order to show the range of possibilities in using natives in the landscape. She not only organizes, but actively participates on the day of the tour.
Ann has led field trips, and written field trip articles for the Pipevine. She is involved in the planning and execution of our Wildflower Show, often making and sharing herbal teas made with native plants. She has volunteered during the National Public Radio fund drive answering phones on behalf of CNPS and has helped with planning and preparation of State Chapter Council meetings.

Ann is multitalented, capable, hardworking, and always has a positive attitude. What stands out is her willingness to take on any task. When no one else has raised their hand to volunteer for a given job, she will. She is undaunted when it comes to trying new things. Mount Lassen Chapter is lucky to have Ann Elliott as one of the mainstays of the Chapter. We give her a hearty thank-you.

**Alice Hecker Native Plant Garden** at the Chico Creek Nature Center in Bidwell Park

**Next volunteer workday March 19, 1:00pm**

After bringing order from chaos, Ann Elliott handed the management responsibilities of the garden over to Deborah Halfpenny in January. Because of the steady, hard work Ann and her crew of volunteers have done for the last five years, the garden is in excellent shape and is ready for enhancements and possible expansion. **Volunteer workdays will continue to be held the 3rd Thursday of each month**, with weekend workdays to be scheduled for interested people who cannot participate on weekdays. Come out, meet some like-minded people, and learn how to garden with native plants!

If you are planning to attend the UC Naturalist Certification Course this spring, or are already a certified naturalist, any volunteer time you put in at the garden can be counted towards your yearly certification hours.

**The garden also needs some specialized help.** If you are a botanist, we could use your eye to confirm the identity of a suspicious young tree in the garden. (It should be in full bloom now.) You can drive by the garden at your leisure to do this. For specifics, please contact Deb Halfpenny at debhalfcent@yahoo.com or (831) 595-7615.

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**2020 Water-Wise and Habitat-Friendly Garden Tour** - Sunday May 3

**Volunteers Needed**

This year's garden tour is in the planning stages. Currently, 8 gardens are slated with perhaps more to come. We are looking for people to volunteer as co-hosts at each site, helping the garden owners with breaks and answering questions. Shifts are 3 hours long, in either the morning or the afternoon. Volunteers are able to visit their assigned garden(s) before the event to meet the owners and familiarize themselves with the site. Help is available for anyone who may feel uncertain about his/her ability to answer questions but would like to participate. To volunteer, please contact Ann Elliott at annonfire@gmail.com.
Gateway Science Museum presents

**Wildflowers, Watercolor & Wonder:**

*The Edward Stuhl Collection February through May, 2020.* This exhibit showcases the botanical art of Edward Stuhl (1887–1984), a Hungarian-born hiker and painter who settled in the Mount Shasta region in the early 20th century. He spent much of his life documenting the flora of Northern California and surrounding regions through watercolor paintings. Many of these paintings are housed today by "California State University’s Meriam Library’s Special Collections.” Exhibition of a selection of his botanical watercolors in combination with plant specimens from the Chico State Herbarium will invite visitors to explore themes of botanical art and local and regional natural history.

**Friends of the Herbarium**

**California Plant Uses: People, Plants & Culture,**

*Saturday March 28, 2020.*

Join us for a fun introduction to plant uses by tracing the beginnings of the discipline, exploring key principles and practices, and discussing the many relationships between plants and peoples in past and present cultures. Our emphasis will be on California plants, both native and naturalized, that may be used for food, medicine, cultural and spiritual purposes. The workshop will be led by Jenny Marr and Linnea Hanson who are both retired California botanists who have studied, managed and enjoyed California habitats and plants for decades. Workshop participants will have opportunities for hands-on experience with some techniques and methods that may be used today. Please bring a sack lunch and beverage and a couple small water-tight containers to take home products we’ll make in the workshop. This workshop will meet from 9 am to 3:30 pm with a half hour sack lunch break in 129 Holt Hall, CSU Chico. Cost is $45.00. Please register in advance.

For more information about these and other upcoming workshops please contact: www.friendsofthechicostateherbarium.com/eventsviewcalendar/  For more information about registration please contact the Biology office at (530)898-5356 or sscholten@csuchico.edu

**Patrick Ranch Lecture Series**

**April 2 and 9**

Patrick Ranch is hosting 2 lectures on the importance of pollinators and how gardeners can make their gardens more attractive to them. On April 2nd John Whittlesey will present an overview of why pollinators are critical, and the relationship between flowers and flower visitors, along with ways to improve our gardens to be more wildlife friendly. On April 9th Rob Schlising will continue the discussion with a focus on native bees, their importance and how to encourage more bees into our gardens These lectures are to support the Patrick Ranch vision of building a bee/pollinator museum. Contact Patrick Ranch or Butte County Master Gardeners for more information.
The Peregrine Point Disc Golf Course is in disrepair. Mitigation measures required to open the redeveloped disc golf course in 2010 have languished. The Big Four (blue oak, Butte County checkerbloom, Bidwell’s knotweed, and wildflower fields) are not adequately protected and soil erosion continues particular on the back (north) 12 fairways.

The Stoney Fire of July 2018, which burned nearly 1,000 acres of Upper Bidwell Park and the course, was an opportunity to reestablish and improve environmental protections required by CEQA (California Environmental Quality Act). The City of Chico made a partial effort.

This June, the Operating Agreement for the course comes up for renewal of a third 5-year contract. In 2010, this agreement tasked the operators of the course, Outside Recreation Advocacy Inc. (ORAI) aka Chico Outsiders, with maintaining the course at no cost to the City.

The Bidwell Park & Playground Commission (BPPC) has the Power and Duty to insure the proper management of the course. Other groups that have facility management agreements with the City seem in compliance, e.g. Bidwell Park Golf Course, CARD, Chico Equestrian Assoc., Chico (Astronomical) Observatory, and Chico Rod & Gun Club. Why should ORAI be any different? At the BPPC’s meeting on Monday Feb. 24, the Commission must direct dear City funds, staff time, and / or their partner ORAI to stop the degradation.
Membership Form

CALIFORNIA NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY

I wish to affiliate with the Mount Lassen Chapter

new ____

renew ____

Name ____________________________________________

Address __________________________________________

City ______________________________________________

State ______ Zip ___________ Phone _________________

Email _____________________________________________

Send Membership Application to:

California Native Plant Society

Attn: Membership

2707 K Street, Suite 1

Sacramento, CA 95816-5130

For memberships for organizations or to become a __Perennial monthly sustainer contact CNPS.org

Calendar for March 2020

4th  General Meeting

7th  Hike - - Yahi Trail

18th  Executive Board Meeting

19th  Native Plant Garden

Volunteer Work Day

28th  Friends of the Herbarium

California Plant Uses

29th  Hike - - Magalia

Garden Tour May 3, 2020