

CHANNEL ISLANDS CHAPTER - HIGHLIGHTS OF 1998

Programs -

Meeting Locations: Meeting locations of the Channel Island Chapter of CNPS, alternate between the *DUDLEY HOUSE, Ventura (DHVEN)* and the *Santa Barbara BOTANIC GARDENS (SBBG)*. **All membership program meetings are held on the third Wednesday of each month beginning in September through July.** Meetings are usually not held during August or December. The Dudley House, *located on the corner of Loma Vista and Ashwood*, is a restored historic building and one of the earliest homes in the Ventura area. As part of the agreement, the Chapter will assist the Dudley House with the grounds landscape design with California native plants. Both the Santa Barbara Botanic Gardens and the Dudley House provide a very friendly and pleasant atmosphere for our meetings.

The Chapter continued its yearly program with a theme. The 1997-1998 program theme was **"NATIVE CALIFORNIA PLANTS AND CULTIVARS: THEIR USE IN THE HOME GARDENING AND THE URBAN LANDSCAPE"**

Over the years, Chapter programs have been diversified. This was done so that a broad spectrum of members and persons with an interest in native plants would gain a better understanding and appreciation of native plant sensitivity or rarity, use in landscape design, home gardening, ecological restoration, and fire ecology. This year the membership and the Board have re-expressed an interest to examine the use of native plants in home gardening and landscape design. The Chapter's 1997-1998 program calendar will concentrate the entire schedule on the horticultural use of native plants that includes: hands-on plant propagation, planting techniques, soils, irrigation, and landscape/hardscape design. We have presented this program theme two previous times and it has been accepted with marvelous enthusiasm.

Gardening with native species is the venture of producing a balanced, healthy habitat for plants and animals. As home gardeners and landscapers, most of us hopefully adopt native species gardening as a part of a general and ethical environmental commitment. There are practical reasons for native plant gardening. Native plants are adapted to resist damage from climate, insect pests, and disease within their biogeographical range. As some of us know (and have experienced), it is usually easier to cultivate a vigorous garden or landscape when growing native plant species with maintenance being significantly less expensive. Furthermore, native landscapes encourage soil and water conservation as well as provide landscape refugia for native plants themselves and wildlife. The diversity of plants creates a self-sustaining environment of food, cover, and shelter for a vast assemblage of insects, butterflies, and birds. A natural garden relies on an equalized strategy to pest and disease control, avoiding the use of chemical sprays.

Using native plants in the landscape at home or business or government agencies is not only a marvelous, wonderful and exciting experience but it also assists in putting back some semblance of the natural system that humanity has degraded and destroyed. Simply put, a natural garden takes its cue from nature. Designs are informal without straight lines or

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clinging uniformity or to symmetry. Often, plants are left unpruned and allowed to develop their natural character, much as they would in their habitats with their habits. When a garden or landscape is composed of native plants, it creates its own identity. When these landscapes mature a diverse and natural environment is created. When hardscapes (the use of rock, boulders, wood material) are used in the native plant landscapes, they infuse a very dramatic sense of identity and increase the aesthetics of native plants. There is no reason why corporate businesses (small and large), as well as, federal, state, county, and city agencies can not use native plants in their landscape's surroundings. It just takes creativity and the willingness and desire to make it happen.

Participation as a gardener-caretaker is one of gentle persuasion rather than being dominated and controlled by the power tool syndrome. A native plant garden design is guided by the seasons and the will of plants to grow, flower, and set seed, rather than weekly control by the lawn mower and clippers.

PROGRAM THEME: NATIVE CALIFORNIA PLANTS AND CULTIVARS: THEIR USE IN THE URBAN LANDSCAPE AND HOME GARDENING

17 SEPTEMBER 1997 (DH VEN): *Martha Willard, M. Arch, UCLA; owner of Creation Fine Art and Design*

Title: *The Native Plant Vernacular*

Martha Willard is a designer focusing on residential and landscape projects as integrated environments. Her discussion will focus on the aesthetic use of native plants and hardscapes as a way to enhance our local identity and sense of "place" in the southern California landscape.

Martha started her business in 1986 and has worked on environmental sculpture as well as residential remodels and landscapes. Her interests include the use of sustainable environments both in construction and landscape form. She completed her M.F.A. from the University of Pennsylvania in 1988 and her M. Arch from the UCLA.

25 OCTOBER 1997 (SBBG): *Carolyn Cooper, Plant Propagator, Santa Barbara Botanic Gardens, Santa Barbara*

Title: *Native Plant Seed and Plant Propagation*

It is very important for those interested in using native plants in the landscape to have a clear understanding how the plant material is obtained and grown. For those home gardeners who are interested in obtaining native plant material from seed and grown through the variety of propagation techniques, here is an outstanding opportunity to learn from one of the regions most experienced and knowledgeable persons. Carolyn Cooper will lead a discussion with hands-on experience on a Saturday lecture at the Santa Barbara Botanic Garden's Plant Propagation nursery. You will need to pay the entrance fee to the garden, which is a couple of dollars.

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Carolyn has been the plant propagator at the botanic garden for over 11 years. She has a wealth of knowledge and experience with native plant propagation. She grows plants for the Living Collection and for research and revegetation projects.

19 NOVEMBER 1997 (DH VEN): David S. Verity, Curator Emeitrus, Millard Mathias Botanic Gardens, University of California, Los Angeles, CA

Title: *The Genus *Diplacus*: Breeding Hybrid Monkeyflowers*

Dave will discuss his years of experience of cross breeding the various hybrid species of monkeyflowers. Several new species and cultivars are currently being used in the native plant landscape garden. Because of Dave's propagation work, he has been able to have cultivars of monkeyflowers that have large flowers or striking flower colors.

David Verity is a native Californian, born in Los Angeles, where he lived his early years, then later lived in Laguna Beach during his high school and college years. Dave graduated from UCLA with a Bachelor of Science degree in ornamental horticulture supplemented with a strong botany curriculum. Dave was employed at the UCLA Botanical Gardens, now the Mildred E. Mathias Botanical Gardens for 35 years most of the time as Garden Director until his retirement in 1992. Dave has been on the southern California Horticultural Society's Board of Directors for nearly 30 years.

21 JANUARY 1998 (SBBG): Bart O'Brien, Director of Horticulture, Rancho Santa Botanic Gardens, Claremont, CA

Title: *The Genus *Arctostaphylos**

18 FEBRUARY 1998 (DH VEN): David Fross, Grower, Native Sons Nursery, Arroyo Grande, CA and Lecturer, California Polytechnic San Luis Obispo, CA

Title: *A Horticultural Look at Genus *Ceanothus**

David Fross is the president and owner of Native Sons Wholesale Nursery, Inc. located in Arroyo Grande, California. Dave received a B.S. degree from Calif. State University Long Beach and pursued graduate studies from Cal Poly University San Luis Obispo. Receiving an M.S. degree in Agriculture. His interest in botany and horticulture formed the basis for his successful native plant business. His company, Native Sons Wholesale Nursery is active in native plant cultivar development, restoration, site-specific seed collection, and plant salvage. Native Sons has contributed to the success of many restoration projects in California. Dave's publication "**Finding Home, The Evolving Native Garden**" is a wonderful, marvelous, and thought provoking essay on native plant use in the home, business, and highway landscape.

14 MARCH 1998 (DH VEN): Bob Sussman, owner Matillija Nursery, Moorpark

Title: *A Hands On Workshop*

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LOCATION: VENTURA COMMUNITY COLLEGE, Headhouse TIME: 9:00 am - 12:00 pm

NOTE: THIS PROGRAM IS SLATED TO BE A HANDS-ON EXPERIENCE. FOR THIS PROGRAM ONLY, THE DATE HAS BEEN CHANGED TO SATURDAY, 14 MARCH 1998

Several horticulturists and nursery owners often make declarations that native plants cannot be grown in containers. All one has to do is observe that native plants are grown and sold in containers, they are usually moved to bigger containers as they get progressively bigger, and many or at least most will bloom in containers. Growing native plants in containers has been brought to Bob Sussman's attention by a number of Matilija nursery's customers. Many of these "home gardeners" do not have yards and still want to be close to the outdoors and simply enjoy gardening. If selected properly, native plants in containers can provide a patio or garden with as much color, fragrance, and longevity as the more common equivalents. Native plants have deeper root systems, are adapted to seemingly seasonal factors, and in many circumstances do much better in the ground. However, with proper care, native plants do not "know" they are in a container - at least for a few years! Bob will cover watering, soil mixtures, and plant selections.

Bob Sussman is the owner of Matilija Nursery located in Moorpark. The nursery was started in April 1992 and grows primarily plants that are native to California. There are over 200 different varieties of plants grown and sold in containers ranging from 1 gallon to 15-gallon stock. The plants are grown in Moorpark and sold to retail nurseries, parks, landscape architects and designers, and individuals.

This program will also cover how to select and plant native plants for your yard with actually planting a native plant in the ground. Additionally it will discuss and explain how to grow native plants from seed. Each participant will actually pot a seed to take with them. The program will discuss soils and water relationships, as well as climatic growing zones.

There will be several experienced native plant growers to discuss problems and assist with individual concerns.

15 APRIL 1998 (SBBG): Carol Bornstein, Director of Horticulture, Santa Barbara Botanic Gardens, Santa Barbara

Title: The Family of Lamiaceae [Labiata] (sages/mints): An Early Evening Walk through the Garden

This lecture on the use of native plants in the garden will be unique. Carol Bornstein will discuss the use of native plants of the Mint Family in the garden by leading a late afternoon, early evening walk through the Santa Barbara Botanic Gardens.

Native plants in the Mint Family, such as sages (Salvia), are a large and complex group of annuals, perennial, subshrubs, and shrubs. There is a wide array of sage species native to California and Baja California in which many types are cultivated for their ornamental,

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culinary, and medicinal values. Leaves are often wrinkled and aromatic; flowers are bright and range in color. Several species provide flower value during the summer and fall months. Plants of the Mint Family are adapted to various climatic regions and growing conditions. In natural environments, mints survive drought stress by shedding some of their leaves and becoming dormant. Soil drainage, climatic aspects, water relationships, propagation, landscaping, planting, pruning, and general caring will be discussed during the informal walk.

Carol has been at the Santa Barbara Botanic Gardens for 16 years where she started as the plant propagator. Carol is currently the Director of Horticulture. She holds a BS degree in Botany from the University of Michigan and an MS in Horticulture from Michigan State University.

20 MAY 1998 (SBBG): *Susan Jett, Nursery Manager, Rancho Santa Ana Botanic Gardens, Claremont, CA*

17 JUNE 1998 (DH VEN): *Dillon Hannon, Plant Propagator, Rancho Santa Ana Botanic Gardens, Claremont, CA*

Title: Plants of Otay Mesa: Horticultural Uses

Dillon Hannon has been the plant propagator at Rancho Santa Ana Botanic Gardens in Claremont for nearly 3 years. Dillon's discussion will center on the various horticultural uses of the native flora found on Otay Mesa in San Diego County. Dillon is an author of the Flora of San Diego County and has extensive experience with wholesale cactus nursery.

15 JULY 1998 (SBBG): **CNPS Channel Islands Chapter**

Title: **A Kaleidoscope of Southern California Native Plant Gardens: The Practice**

For the entire year, we have concentrated on **NATIVE CALIFORNIA PLANTS AND CULTIVARS: THEIR USE IN THE HOME GARDENING AND THE URBAN LANDSCAPE.**

Several members of the California Native Plant Society's Channel Islands will present a unique opportunity to view an array of home gardens accomplished by a variety of home gardeners.

As home gardeners and landscapers, most of us hopefully adopt native species gardening as a part of a general and ethical environmental commitment. Using native plants in the landscape at home or business is not only a marvelous, wonderful and exciting experience but it also assists in putting back some semblance of the natural system that humanity has degraded and destroyed. Simply put, a natural garden takes its cue from nature. Designs are informal without straight lines or clinging uniformity or to symmetry. Often, plants are left unpruned and allowed to develop their natural character, much as they would in their habitats with their habits. When a garden or landscape is composed of native plants, it creates its own identity. When these landscapes mature a diverse and natural environment is created. When hardscapes (the use of rock, boulders, wood material) are used in the native plant landscapes, they infuse a very dramatic sense of identity and increase the aesthetics of native plants.

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Field Trips -

May: Santa Monica Mts. with Tim Thomas

May: Cuesta Ridges (LPNF) with Karen Danielsen

June: Dry Canyon (LPNF) with Robert Tuttle

July: Lake Cachuma with Liz Mason

August: Mt. Pinos with Dave Magney

Sept: Ormond Beach with Jackie Bowland

Oct: Propagation workshop with Carolyn Cooper

Nov: Cisar Canyon with Rick Burgess and Avis Keedy

Native Plant Sale -

Spring and Fall plant sales were accomplished. Our new location at the Plaza Park in downtown Ventura has been very good. Our Fall plant sale was excellent. We sold almost all of the plants ordered from Matillija Nursery, as well as, a lot of our new "T" shirts, posters and books.

Conservation -

Camarillo Regional Park Lawsuit

CNPS and the Environmental Defense Center (EDC) filed a lawsuit against the Ventura County Board of Supervisors and other interested parties over inadequate documentation and evaluation of the proposed 18-hole golf course and a 16,000-seat amphitheater proposed at Camarillo Regional Park. The park is located south of Camarillo at and within the western edge of the Conejo Mountains, and contains a rich assemblage of plants and animals, including the listed *Dudleya verityi*. CNPS wants the courts to force the County to properly conduct an inventory and analysis of the botanical resources of the site and then determine if the project would have significant adverse effects on those, or some, of the resources. CNPS contends that the County's consultants did not properly survey the park or adequately describe or evaluate the native plants, or the communities they create, in the EIR. CNPS simply wants the County to comply with the intent and law of the California Environmental Quality Act and fairly analyze the resources, then avoid or fully mitigate and significant adverse impacts that project may have.

Pentachaeta lyonii

A developer in Moorpark, the Carlsberg project along Tierra Rejada, recently sent the California Department of Fish and Game (CDFG) a notice that CDFG had 10 days in which to salvage any and all individuals of the largest population of *Lyon Pentachaeta* (a state and

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federally listed endangered plant found only in the Moorpark/Thousand Oaks/Agoura Hills area), because the developer will start the bulldozers. The Lyon Pentachaeta population to be destroyed represents the largest and best population of any of the few that exist. CNPS became concerned that CDFG might allow the developer to inappropriately, and illegally, destroy these plants, so EDC wrote a letter on behalf of CNPS telling CDFG that it needed to fully comply with the letter and intent of the California Endangered Species Act of 1984 (CESA) and either forbid the developer to destroy this endangered plant population, or require the developer to apply for the appropriate permit under CESA. While CNPS has not yet received a response from CDFG, we understand that CDFG will indeed require the developer to obtain the necessary permits before any plants may be destroyed. Of course, CNPS wants all existing populations of the Lyon Pentachaeta, as well as all rare plants, to be protected. Remember, extinction is forever!

Hill Canyon Golf Course

The City of Thousand Oaks is proposing to build an exclusive 18-hole golf course in the relatively pristine Hill Canyon, located at the northwestern edge of the city. The golf course development and maintenance would require permanent loss of several rare vegetation types and species, including Coastal Sage Scrub, Coast Live Oak Woodland, Southern Coastal Needlegrass Grassland, Sycamore-Willow Riparian Wetland, Mulefat Scrub wetland, and rare plants such as the Conejo Buckwheat (*Eriogonum crocatum*). Hill Canyon is very narrow and quite picturesque that CNPS does not believe is the best place for a golf course. Currently there are 24 golf courses in Ventura County, with another 12 being proposed. Do we really need 36 golf courses in Ventura County? And if we do, do we really need or want one in this beautiful canyon that is home and habitat to many species of plants and wildlife?

Ventura Marsh Milkvetch

CNPS members are currently working on a petition to the California Fish and Game Commission to list the recently rediscovered Ventura Marsh Milkvetch (*Astragalus pycnostachyus* var. *lanosissimus*) as an endangered species. It was discovered last June at a proposed development site near the corner of 5th Street and Harbor Blvd. in Oxnard (actually outside the city limits). This is the only place in the world this taxon lives, and it is currently proposed to be destroyed. And it probably can't be successfully transplanted to another site. In nearly every case when someone tried to transplant a rare plant as mitigation for a project has utterly failed. The problem is simply that humans can't even begin to know what is exactly required for a rare species to survive, much less thrive, so what makes anyone think that we can positively relocate a species to another site and expect it to survive in perpetuity. By getting the Ventura Marsh Milkvetch listed as an endangered species will at least give it some level of protection from extinction, we hope.

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Rare Lichens

Presently, CNPS and the California Lichen Society is researching and developing a list of lichens that are rare in the state. Eventually, we will have a published list of rare and endangered lichen species, similar to the CNPS Inventory of Rare and Endangered Vascular Plants of California. The CNPS Inventory has been a very important tool in conserving California's rare plants, and hopefully we can also conserve our rare lichen flora as well.

Plant Watch Program -

The Plant Watch Program continued under the knowledgeable and expertise tutelage of Steve Junak and Rick Burgess.