



# SAN GABRIEL MOUNTAINS

CHAPTER OF THE CALIFORNIA NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY

NOVEMBER & DECEMBER 1996

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## DATES TO REMEMBER:

**Sat., Nov. 16:** Keying Session with R.T. Hawke at Rancho Santa Ana Botanic Garden in Claremont.

**Thurs., Nov. 21, 7:30 pm:** Wildflower Sojourns or Where to Go This Spring if the Winter Rains Come by Kathy LaShure at Eaton Canyon Nature Center.

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

*We thought it was dead. We thought that rational argument, not to mention the bankruptcy of CosmoWorld, had driven a stake through its heart. But just in time for Hallowe'en... it's ba-a-ack.*

*Yes, folks, the scheme to build an 18-hole golf course in the middle of Tujunga Wash has pushed its way up through the moldy earth and walks again. Sure, the Wash is the "last viable tract of Alluvial Scrub in the Los Angeles basin" (California Dept. of Fish & Game, review of Draft EIR), a state-designated Significant Natural Area, and one of the two remaining LA County populations of the federally listed endangered slender-horned spineflower (*Dodecahema leptoceras*); sure, the project has been opposed by U.S. Fish & Wildlife, California Fish & Game, the Army Corps of Engineers, and the CNPS; sure, the new proposal is essentially the same as the old one, entailing a complete disruption of whatever remains of the Wash's natural hydrology and a "grossly inadequate" (op.cit.) 25-foot(!) buffer between the spineflower and the golf course... what the heck, let's go for it!*

*A couple of people banged out a letter to the L.A. City Department of Planning just under the wire, expressing the strong opposition of our chapter to this truly terrifying proposal. We'll keep you posted.*

*Speaking of scary events... is it a coincidence that the election comes so soon after Hallowe'en? No, this column contains no official endorsements; Society by-laws prohibit endorsements at chapter level (though I personally support Proposition A, which will fund a Los Angeles County Regional Park and Open Space District.) But I did want to mention our chapter elections, which will take place at the November 21 meeting. In this issue you'll find the slate of candidates for 1996-97—essentially the '95-'96 board, but with a few new names in the category of "members-at-large." I'd like to encourage anyone who has an interest in the Native Plant Society to volunteer for this position. The only commitment is regular attendance at our board meetings, which are held before programs and include dinner. It's a good way to learn, share ideas, and ease into another board position if you so desire. Call me before the meeting to add your name to the slate.*

*Becky*

## FALL LEAVES

I've just returned from a few days in the Eastern Sierra where the aspens, *Populus tremuloides*, were brilliant gold and scarlet against the rich greens of the various pines. Ribbons of golden willows lined all the canyons spilling into the Owens Valley. Even some of the valley cottonwoods, *Populus fremontii*, had begun to turn. The morning air had a crispness that I'd not felt for months.

People complain that Southern California doesn't have noticeable seasons. True, they're not marked as they are further north or east, but the signs are out there.

Our San Gabriel Mountains have stands of California Black Oaks, *Quercus kelloggii*, that show fall color. To see them, try Sawmill Campground (Forest route 7N23 west of Lake Hughes) at the west end of the range or along Hwy. 2 between Vincent Gap and Wrightwood on the east end.

And of course all the front range canyons will have lots of crimson Poison Oak, *Toxicodendron diversilobum*. Fall can be just as showy as spring.

*Kathy LaShure*



## CHAPTER EVENTS

NOTE: There will be both an outing and a meeting in Nov. and then we'll take a break until 1997. Meetings are held at Eaton Canyon Nature Center (map on back cover) on the third Thursday of the month.

**Nov. 16, Sat.:** 3-hour keying session at **Rancho Santa Ana Botanic Garden**, 1500 N. College Ave., Claremont. Led by our intrepid outings organizer, R.T. Hawke, this workshop will help you sharpen your skills in identifying plants in the field. Please contact R.T. for further details (including time): 619-249-3431.

**Nov. 21, Thurs., 7:30pm:** **Wildflower Sojourns or Where to Go This Spring if the Winter Rains Come** by Kathy LaShure.

I will be sharing some of the great places to see wildflowers more or less locally. These will be day trips or overnights, some as hikes, some as car tours. Besides slides of locations & flora, I'll also bring handouts with locations, directions, phone numbers. Southern California can be a very blooming place. Let's hope the rains come when and where they should to make us want to be out and about next spring!

## SPECIAL EVENTS

November is Election Month and we will be voting on the following slate for Board of Directors at our Chapter meeting on Nov. 21.

PRESIDENT: Becky Rothenberg  
VICE-PRESIDENT: Melanie Baer-Keeley  
TREASURER: Virginia Iser  
PROGRAMS: Melanie Baer-Keeley  
FIELD TRIPS: R.T. Hawke  
NEWSLETTER: Kathy LaShure  
MEMBERSHIP: Sharon Green  
RARE PLANTS: Mickey Long, R.T. Hawke  
CONSERVATION: Rick Fisher  
POSTER SALES: Harry Spilman  
MEMBERS-AT-LARGE: Jon Keeley, Eva Morgan,  
Gabby McLean

## SPECIAL OFFER

On page 5 of this issue you'll find an interesting article, *What Happened to California?* by Louise Lacey which she offers as an introduction to the *Growing Native* newsletter which she edits. A form for ordering this publication is on page 6. Louise has generously offered to donate \$5.00 to our CNPS Chapter for each membership she receives using this form. It's a ready-made Holiday gift for any native plant lover!

## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

*Now thru Nov. 15: 6th Annual Photography Exhibition* by Pasadena Group of the Sierra Club, Pasadena Public Library, 285 E. Walnut St., Pasadena.

*Nov. 2-3, Sat-Sun: Fall Plant Sale* at Rancho Santa Ana Botanic Garden, 1500 N. College Ave., Claremont. Members only: Sat. 8am - 11am; general public Sat. 11am - 4pm & Sun. 9am - 1pm.

*Nov. 2, 16, 30 & Dec. 14, 9:00am: Team Stream Work Days* at Santa Rosa Plateau Ecological Reserve. Meet at main gate. Bring gloves, hand tools, lunch & water. For info call 909-677-6951.

*Nov. 6, Sun, 6:00pm: Public Hearing* before the LA County Regional Planning Dept. regarding the Newhall Ranch development. Location: Valencia High School, 27801 Dickasen, Santa Clarita. See page 4 for additional information.

*Nov. 10, Sun, 1-4pm: California Oak Day* with Grandmother Oak. Topanga State Park Nature Center, 20825 Entrada Rd. Booksigning, crafts, storytelling & more.

*Nov. 12, Tues, 7:30pm: Native Plants in Our Landscapt Projects*, Lisa Gimmy, speaker. LA/Santa Monica Mtns. Chapter. Kenter Elementary School, 645 Kenter Ave. (1 mile north of Sunset, west of I-405).

*Nov. 16, Sat.: Our last outing of 1996, a Keying Session at RSABG* with R.T. Hawke. See page 2 for details.

*Nov. 21, Thurs, 6:00pm: Our Chapter Board Meeting* at Eaton Canyon Nature Center. Food provided. Please RSVP to Becky at 818-797-2494.

*Nov. 21, Thurs, 7:30pm: Our bi-monthly program, Wildflower Sojourns* by Kathy LaShure. See page 2 for details.

*Dec. 20, Sat: Deadline for Jan-Feb newsletter.* Call Kathy at 818-355-7064.



The Newsletter of the San Gabriel Mountains Chapter of the California Native Plant Society is published bi-monthly and is free to Chapter members. Non-member subscription is \$5.00.

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To join the California Native Plant Society, write to:  
CNPS, 909 Twelfth St., Suite 116, Sacramento, CA 95814;  
please specify San Gabriel Mountains Chapter.  
Enclose check payable to CNPS. Membership categories:  
Individual/Library - \$35; Student/Retired/Limited Income - \$20;  
Family/Group - \$45; Supporting - \$75.

## PLANTING TIME

Fall is gardening time and our Sept. program by Melanie Baer, "Understory Landscaping with California Native Plants", provided both basic rules for gardening under our magnificent native oaks, as well as 40+ suggestions for particular plants to try.

Melanie reminded us that the tree's needs should always come first: no watering 10 feet from the trunk; no watering (i.e. sprinklers) on the trunk; leave oak leaves as mulch; when pruning never remove more than 20% of the tree.

Companion plants should be drought and shade tolerant and low maintenance. For best success, use local species, planted in the fall in small holes.

Here are a few of Melanie's recommendations:

*Achillea millefolium*  
*Arctostaphylos* 'Emerald Carpet'  
*Baccharis pilularis* 'Twin Peaks'  
*Ceanothus griseus horizontalis*  
    'Yankee Point'  
*Collinsia heterophylla*  
*Dudleya farinosa*  
*Fragaria chiloensis*  
*Iris douglasiana*;  
*Keckiella cordifolia*  
*Lupinus latifolius parishii*  
*Mahonia repens*  
*Melica imperfecta*  
*Mimulus aurantiacus* hybrids  
*Rhamnus californica*  
*Ribes aureum*  
*Ribes viburnifolium*  
*Symphoricarpos mollis*  
*Thalictrum polycarpum*

Happy Planting!



## CNPS REGIONAL NEWS

### POST-FIRE POLICIES

Chapter Conservation Chair Rick Fisher has informed our Board that the U.S. Forest Service has come around on the subject of post-fire seeding. After the San Gabriel Canyon, San Luis Obispo and Castaic fires this season, they have elected to not re-seed on the lands under their jurisdiction. In the past, this questionable practice has introduced alien grasses and has not provided the promised erosion control. The Forest Service now uses Jon Keeley's research to support a natural recovery approach to post-fire management.

CONGRATULATIONS! If only other public agencies, particularly the Los Angeles County Fire Department, would follow their lead.

On a related matter, U.S. Forest Service will make a presentation, "How to Manage Sediment after Fire", at the monthly meeting of the L.A./San Gabriel River Watershed Council. The Forest Service's basic approach is to increase prescribed burns.

In Dec., Jan Scow, Land Management Analyst for the CNPS in Southern California, will address the same group. He will be presenting the CNPS position on two issues: re-seeding after fire; and the periodicity of prescribed burns (not as regular as the USFS plans call for). More on this in the next newsletter.

### NEWHALL RANCH DEVELOPMENT

The comment period for the Newhall Ranch Development EIR has been extended for 30 days (until early Dec.). So if you have not yet written a letter in opposition to this massive 24,000-home project along the Santa Clara River west of I-5, you may still do so.

Write to:

Lee Stark, Project #94-087  
LA County Regional Planning Dept.  
320 W. Temple St.  
Los Angeles, CA 90012

For more information call 805-498-4323.

### CALIFORNIA BIODIVERSITY COUNCIL

On Sept. 19, Jan Scow addressed this august group. He proposed that good watershed planning is about good compromise. Jan went on to list three areas of concern where compromise is possible and desirable:

- We're not going to have perfect air, but we must have air good enough to sustain us and not injure our health;
- We can't save all of the habitat in a watershed, but we must be able to save enough to maintain healthy, viable ecosystems;
- We can't put houses on every square inch of land, but we must build enough homes to shelter the population.

Those are goals worth working toward!

## THE NATIVE BOOKSHELF

How many times have you focused your camera's macro lens on a particularly lovely California wildflower only to discover an insect crawling over the petals, throwing everything off. Or maybe you've tried to capture the beauty of a monarch butterfly visiting a bloom.

Or perhaps you (or your red backpack) have been buzzed by a rufous hummingbird as you hiked by its patch of high mountain *Penstemon rostriflorus*. Each of these cases offers an example of the relationship between plant and pollinator.

This vital but little-appreciated link is explored in *The Forgotten Pollinators* (Island Press, 1996) by Stephen L. Buchmann, a leading authority on bees and pollination, and Gary Paul Nabhan, director of science at the Arizona-Sonora Desert Museum and renowned ethno-botanist. Through a combination of anecdotes from the authors' field work around the world and discussions of ecology, botany and crop science, the book gives us a context for understanding just how vital these relationships are for the health of the planet. The intimate connections between plants and the animals they depend on for reproduction give us clear examples of the ties between endangered species and threatened habitats.

Readers familiar with Nabhan's previous ethno-botanical books, *The Desert Smells Like Rain* and *Gathering the Desert*, will again find themselves immersed in cultures and environments far from their normal experience but fascinating nevertheless. I was amazed to learn how rich in plant and bee species the desert of southern Arizona and northern Mexico is. The Arizona-Sonora Desert Museum and the neighboring Tucson Mountains are home to over 580 species of plants and these may harbor almost 1,000 species of native bees—"the richest known parcel of bee real estate anywhere in the world."














And speaking of bees, specifically honeybees, who thinks of them as suitable material for an *X-Files* episode. Yet they are the most successful alien species that has been introduced to this continent. They are important pollinators for agricultural crops but they are not the most efficient and, as their numbers continue to be reduced by pesticide-poisoning, mites, and diseases, native pollinators (other bees, beetles, birds, bats, etc.) will increase in their economic value. So it is good for us to learn about these creatures and do what we can to protect their habitats.

This book is just one part of the *Forgotten Pollinators Campaign* at the Desert Museum. Through volunteer field work, Internet activity and other publications they seek to enhance public awareness of "the wonder and natural beauty and grace of pollinators worldwide."

*Kathy LaShure*



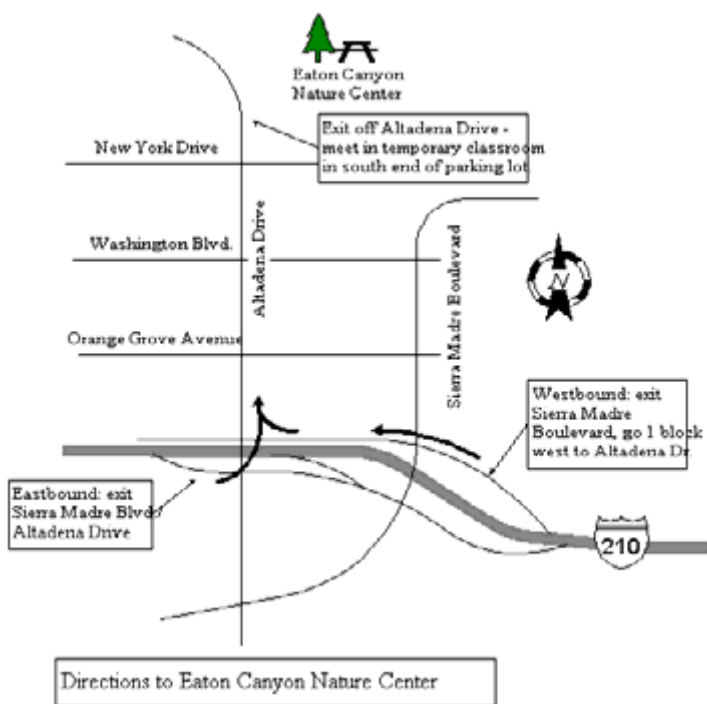
## HOLIDAY GIFT IDEAS

-  A CNPS Membership.
-  A CNPS Wildflower poster.
-  Wildflower seeds from the Theodore Payne Fdn.
-  *The Jepson Manual*, James C. Hickman, editor, University of Calif. Press.
-  A good pair of wool hiking socks.
-  A pair of lightweight binoculars.
-  *California's Changing Landscapes: Diversity & Conservation of Calif. Vegetation*, Barbour, et. al., CNPS Press.
-  A donation to Eaton Canyon Nature Center.
-  *Trails of the Angeles: 100 Hikes in the San Gabriels*, John W. Robinson, Wilderness Press.
-  A hiking water bottle.
-  Film for wildflower photos.
-  *Wildflowers of California*, Larry Ulrich & Susan Lamb, Companion Press.
-  A spring-time trip to see California wildflowers.

Best wishes for the holidays!

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*Dedicated to the Preservation of the California Native Flora*

The California Native Plant Society is a statewide nonprofit organization of amateurs & professionals with a common interest in California's native plants. The mission of the Society is to increase understanding & appreciation of California's native plants & to preserve them in their natural habitat through scientific activities, education, & conservation. Membership is open to all.

Membership includes the quarterly journal *Fremontia*, the quarterly *Bulletin* which gives statewide



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