



# SAN GABRIEL MOUNTAINS

CHAPTER OF THE CALIFORNIA NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY

NOVEMBER & DECEMBER 1998

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## DATES TO REMEMBER

- Nov. 8, Sun., 9:00 am:** *Eaton Canyon Plant Walk* with Eva Morgan
- Nov. 19, Thurs, 7:30 pm:** *Rare and Beautiful Desert Plants: How Can We Conserve Them* by Steve Hartman
- Nov. 21, Sat, 11:00 am:** *Dedication Day at Eaton Canyon Nature Center*
- Dec. 13, Sun., 9:00 am:** *Eaton Canyon Plant Walk* with Rick Fisher



## WELCOME!

- New members**  
 Rose Ann Cobos  
 Loretta Bata & David French  
 R. Native Schneider

## NEW BEGINNINGS & OLD FRIENDS

### New Nature Center Taking Shape

As we near the grand opening of the new and improved Eaton Canyon Nature Center on November 21<sup>st</sup>, the interpretive exhibits and garden are taking shape. The interior exhibits feature local natural history and urban/wildlands interface biology (including examples of native and exotic plants, and the Oak forest)...live animal exhibits, geology and....bats!

The new and improved landscape of the nature center has three primary zones. The first zone near the building features moisture-loving/low-growing native plants for fire safety. The main garden at the front of the building is comprised of plant community gardens, including Oak Woodland, Coastal Sage Scrub, Riparian Woodland, and Alluvial Scrub habitat examples. Behind the building is an enclosed semi-secluded garden devoted to bird and insect habitat plantings.

### Becky Rothenberg Memorial

Another new area in the nature center landscape will be a native wildflower garden dedicated to the memory Becky Rothenberg. It will be planted this fall shortly after the grand opening (separate notice will be provided to those who wish to attend). In addition to the wildflower garden, we will be dedicating a special collection to Becky in the new nature center library. The collection will feature great natural history writers of both fiction and non-fiction, while the main library will be devoted to technical reference material. We welcome suggestions and book donations for this collection, and will start to assemble it soon.

By our January meeting, we should be enjoying our first gathering beside the fireplace in the new meeting room, and seeing both the wildflower garden and memorial book collection in place and growing.



## OUT & ABOUT

This has been quite a year. Last fall El Niño rains were predicted but they hadn't really started as 1998 began. I can remember hiking at Pt. Mugu State Park in early January with balmy weather. But the rains did come. And we had a glorious spring, full of the floral bounty that only California can provide. I was fortunate to spend a March week without rain in Anza-Borrego and made two shorter trips to Joshua Tree and daytrips to the Death Valley back country. Summer brought our first trip to Cuyamaca Rancho and our first ascent of San Jacinto Peak (slogging through deep snow for the last ¼ mile). Then there were hikes in the Eastern Sierra, later than usual because of the heavy snowpack. And finally trips to see the golden leaves of fall—aspens at Rock Creek and black oaks on Palomar Mountain. It was definitely a year to be out and about if you're hooked on California flora.

Next year is unlikely to be so spectacular. We'll probably have below average rains. But with the cooler temperatures lately, I'm already looking forward to camping in the desert again. Even if the flowers do not put on mass displays, there will be treasures to be discovered.

When my mother used to ask why I wasn't very interested in travelling abroad, I'd say, "I still haven't done California." Frankly, I doubt that I'll ever be able to say that I'm tired of this state, its mountain meadows, rolling oak woodlands, desert arroyos, rocky shoreline. There's more than enough exploring for a lifetime.

## CHAPTER EVENTS

*Meetings are held at Eaton Canyon Nature Center (map on back cover) on the third Thursday of the month. No meeting in December.*

## PROGRAMS

**Nov. 19, Thurs, 7:30 pm: Rare and Beautiful Desert Plants: How Can We Conserve Them** by Steve Hartman, CNPS Desert Conservation Chair. This will be a slide talk featuring rare plants found last spring during and after the El Nino rains on the Algodones Dunes, along the Bradshaw Trail, and elsewhere in the southern deserts. A full spectrum of issues will be discussed in the context of native plant conservation. Special maps and topical EIR documentation will be made available for review before and after the presentation. Steve served on the Bureau of Land Management's California Desert District Advisory Council from 1992-1997.

**Jan. 21, Thurs., 7:30 pm:** Dick Vogl, Ecologist and Emeritus Professor, Cal State LA. Topic to be announced in next newsletter. This will be our first meeting in the new Nature Center.

## OUTINGS

**Nov. 8, Sun., 9:00 am:** *Eaton Canyon Plant Walk* with Eva Morgan. Explore the signs of fall in Southern California: turning leaves, interesting seeds, cooler temperatures.

**Dec. 13, Sun., 9:00 am:** *Eaton Canyon Plant Walk* with . Winter rains may have arrived, bringing the hope for a colorful Spring.

## SPECIAL EVENTS

All around the country people will be voting. So will our Chapter at our November meeting. Here's the slate:

**PRESIDENT:** Rick Fisher

**VICE-PRESIDENT:** Kathy LaShure

**TREASURER:** Virginia Iser

**PROGRAMS:**

**NEWSLETTER:** Kathy LaShure

**MEMBERSHIP:** Sharon Green

**CONSERVATION:** Rick Fisher

**FIELD TRIPS:**

**RARE PLANTS:** R.T. Hawke & Mickey Long

**POSTER SALES:** Harry Spilman

**MEMBERS-AT-LARGE:** Gabi McLean, Eva Morgan

As you can see, our Board membership is shrinking. There's an immediate need for a program chair and a field trip leader. Can you help?

## THE NATIVE BOOKSHELF

*The Life of an Oak: An Intimate Portrait*  
Glenn Keator with artwork by Susan Bazell  
Heyday Books, 1998, \$17.95

*A Trail Through Leaves*  
Hannah Hinchman  
W. W. Norton, 1997, \$24.95



I've always been in awe of people who paint with watercolors—there's no erasing or painting over allowed. One must work with assurance and a firm grasp of technique. And yet the finished product always seems to have an evanescent quality. Both of these books feature illustrations that are breathtaking.

Many of you will be familiar with Glenn Keator's previous books on gardening with California native perennials and shrubs—they've become classics. This latest volume, published in association with the California Oak Foundation, is wider ranging, dealing with the genus *Quercus* world-wide in fine detail. Keator starts with chapters on oak architecture, from the cellular to the tree as an ecosystem supporting many other organisms. Then there are five chapters on the oak life cycle, seven on oak diversity, relationships, and evolution, and finally a visit to oak habitats around the world. Throughout are excellent photographs and wonderful detail drawings and watercolors of the various aspects of oak anatomy, including the fascinating variety of leaves, acorns and galls.

Whether you're interested in writing or drawing and painting, Hannah Hinchman's handsome book offers plenty of inspiration and practical tips for keeping an illustrated journal. Such an endeavor will increase your awareness of both the outer world of nature and the inner world of your own life, as writing and drawing in a journal keeps you living in the richness of the present. She shows you how to look at the world to find the essence that speaks most fervently to you and how to capture that essence on paper. Sometimes that means paying attention to small details such as the structure of a flower. Other times you might be looking for the "big picture" in order to draw a map of a particular location with its natural features, both geological and biological. Or you might observe weather patterns over a series of days or weeks. All are ways to better understand the natural world. The book's inspiring artwork has been drawn from 25 years of her illuminated journals. It would make an excellent holiday gift for any naturalist, writer or artist.

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*The Newsletter of the San Gabriel Mountains Chapter  
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and is free to Chapter members. Non-member subscription is \$5.00.*

*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; Plant Lover - \$100; Patron - \$250.00; Life - \$1000.*

## NATIVE.NET

[www.bio-organics.com/](http://www.bio-organics.com/)

Mycorrhizae—that microbial buzzword that's hard to spell and sort of hard to comprehend. If you've been to any of our Chapter's recent programs on growing native plants you've heard this word frequently. So, if you still don't quite get what these beneficial and mysterious fungi are up to, here's a website that explains it all. The site is the home of Power Organics, a supplier of organic gardening supplements that are not available at your local nursery or home center. That means you can learn a lot about creating an ecologically sound landscape that benefits local fauna as well as your ornamental plants. And mycorrhizae are at the root of it all, so to speak, working to improve plant health by allowing increased nutrient uptake. An excellent example of mutualism—happy plants, happy fungi!

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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 news & announcements of Society activities & conservation issues, & the chapter newsletter.*



**CALIFORNIA NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY**  
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