



# GOLD FIELD NOTES

EL DORADO CHAPTER ☼ CALIFORNIA NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY ☼ September-October 2011

## RARE PLANT TREASURE HUNT REPORT: EXCITING MOONWORT DISCOVERIES

### CALENDAR

#### September 18 (Sunday)

Workshop.  
Insect-induced Plant Galls of California. Location: Jepson Herbarium, UC Berkeley. See website for details: <http://ucjeps.berkeley.edu/workshops/2011/index.html#Sep18>

#### September 20 (Tuesday)

Program.  
Low Native Ground Covers under 2' (-3') tall for Use in Full Sun. See inside for details.

#### September 24 (Saturday)

Plant sale.  
Master Gardener's fall sale. See inside for details.

#### October 1 (Saturday)

Native plant sale.  
County Buildings A & B, Placerville.. See details inside.

#### October 4 (Tuesday)

Workshop.  
Field Techniques for Recording and Reporting Invasive Plants. Location: Tahoe City. Hosted by Cal-IPC. See website for details: <http://www.cal-ipc.org/fieldcourses/>

#### October 5-7 (Wed.- Fri.)

Symposium.  
20th Annual California Invasive Plant Council (Cal-IPC) Symposium. Granlibakken Resort, Tahoe City. See for details: <http://www.cal-ipc.org/symposia/index.php>

Evening programs are held on the third Tuesday of January, March, May, July, September, and November. Programs begin at 6:30 PM;

Setting out to do a *Botrychium* (moonwort) Rare Plant Treasure Hunt in the El Dorado National Forest this August, I was a little nervous about the success of the trip. After all, no rare moonworts had ever been seen in this part of the forest, though some were recently discovered on nearby private land. When we arrived at the meadows near Loon Lake, the potential habitat proved far from ideal – the meadows were either dry or inundated by beaver ponds. Eventually, we found a solitary rare moonwort along an ephemeral creek. It didn't match any

species described in *The Jepson Manual* so we recorded it as *Botrychium* sp., then set out on an extensive search of the area for more individuals. Our next site was beautiful, full of alpine wildflowers like *Dodecatheon alpinum*, *Lilium parvum*, and the common leathery grapefern, *Botrychium multifidum*, but it had no rare moonworts. Regardless, it was a great trip - we learned some new alpine plants, found an unknown moonwort, and even fit in some kayaking, swimming, and campfires!



Later I sent photos of the plant to *Botrychium* expert, Dr. Don Farrar. He suspected it was *Botrychium paradoxum*, paradox moonwort, which was previously known in California only from a single population in Yosemite National Park. Our discovery would be significant! After spore dispersal, the specimen was collected and sent to Dr. Farrar for genetic testing. While we're not yet sure of the results, it will be an important find for the El Dorado National Forest. Next year, we plan to explore other wet meadows and creeks around Loon Lake to find more of these elusive rare ferns!

Danny Slakey  
Rare Plant Treasure Hunt  
Coordinator

For updates between newsletters  
[www.eldoradocnps.org](http://www.eldoradocnps.org)

Unknown *Botrychium* plant, possibly *B. paradoxum*, found on our recent Rare Plant Treasure Hunt near Loon Lake. Photo: Aaron Sims.

**FALL PLANT SALE**  
**SATURDAY, OCTOBER 1**  
**BETWEEN COUNTY BUILDINGS A AND B**

*New Location*

drought tolerant plants that grow well in our area. Trees, shrubs, and perennials as well as grasses and seeds will be available. Books on gardening with native plants and natural history will also be available at the sale. If you are new to gardening with native plants, there will be several experienced gardeners at the sale to answer your questions.

The newsletter includes a list of potted plants that are likely to be at the sale so that you can plan ahead for your shopping trip. As in recent sales, we will not be

Not that there was much summer, but fall is just around the corner. With the cooler mornings and evenings just beginning, is time to start thinking about the fall planting season. With the wet weather of winter just on the horizon, fall is the best time to plant most native plants — especially here in the foothills where the spring and summer tend to be hot and dry.

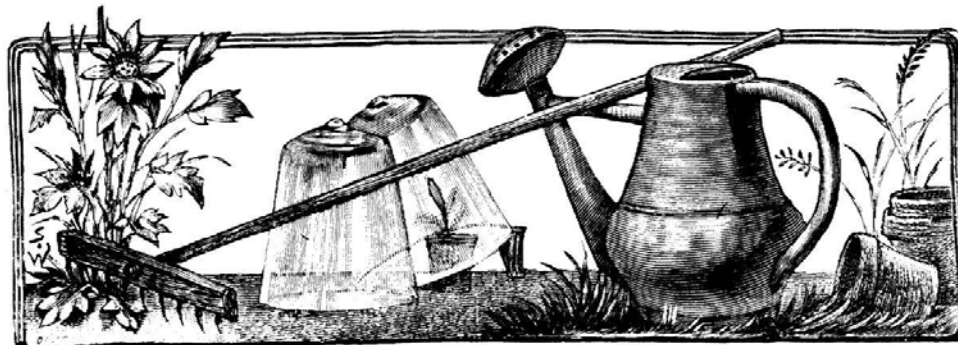
If you are new to gardening with native plants, there will be many experienced gardeners at the sale to answer your questions.

Our fall sale will include native and

taking orders for plants prior to the sale, so make certain you come down when we first open at 9 AM for the best selection. We accept checks or cash only.

**COUNTY BUILDINGS A & B**

The sale will be held at the El Dorado County Government Center between Buildings A and B (330 Fair Lane, Placerville). We will be located on the walkway between the two buildings. Signs will be posted to help you find us.



\*\*\*\*\*  
**PLANT SALE VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!**  
 \* We need help setting up in the morning and assisting throughout the day on \*  
 \* Saturday. If you are interested in helping out, Please contact Shellie Perry \*  
 \* (530) 644-6335. \*  
 \*\*\*\*\*

**CHAPTER PROPAGATION GROUP: PLEASE JOIN US**

Our loose-knit propagation group is coming together again. We welcome anyone that would like to join this effort. Since we are no longer using the facilities at Institute of Forest Genetics, we will meet once a month at someone's house to work on seeding, transplanting, potting, or getting stem cuttings from various native plants. We hope to accomplish 3 things: learn from each other on propagation techniques and what works, provide plants that are not readily available through nurseries, try some plants in gardens that have not been used or available before. I have supplies available: all sizes and shapes of pots,

plant tubes, tree pots, trays, potting/seedling mix, and some irrigation stuff.

We will meet briefly (15-20 minutes) at 6:30 PM before our regular chapter meeting (next one is September 20th), to get a list of interested folks as well as discuss days/times that you are available. For September, we will meet at Ben Parks house to transplant some of his fallen but rooting Dutchman's pipe. The exact date and time (it will be after Sept. 20th) will be determined and posted on our website or sent out to folks via email or phone calls. Please contact Cindy Podsiadlo if interested at (530) 642-0648 or email [clpodsiadlo@yahoo.com](mailto:clpodsiadlo@yahoo.com).

**MASTER GARDENER'S FALL PLANT SALE**

The Master Gardeners of El Dorado County are putting on their third annual fall plant sale. The sale will be held on September 24, 8 am to 3 pm, in the parking lot of the Veterans Memorial Building, located at 130 Placerville Dr, Placerville.

Featured will be rare and unusual perennials, succulent garden bowls, cool season vegetables and herbs, garden art, plants from Master Gardeners and generous local nurseries.

The Master Gardeners are an all volunteer organization under the auspices of the University of California Cooperative Extensions. Proceeds of the sale will be used to help build the Demonstration Garden as well as other outreach activities.

## GROUNDCOVERS: SHRUBS FOR FULL SUN

Ground covers are the workhorses of landscaping, particularly on large country lots. This article highlights several shrubs that work well for use in full sun, the most challenging landscaping situation in the foothills, where summer temperatures frequently exceed 100° degrees F. Extreme dryness is also inevitably associated with these high temperatures during the summer and fall, and can even be worsened by wind and reflected light from rocks and structures. These native shrubs are dense and evergreen, making them suitable as ground covers even in these rough conditions. Selection increases dramatically if one is willing to add drip irrigation, at least until the plants are well established, that is, at least three times the size that they were when planted. **Note: all watering recommendations are for established plants.**

Several of these shrubs are highly attractive, while others are more utilitarian but still pleasing in a less showy way: their appearance is neat, with leaf colors ranging from silver to blue to true green. These latter plants can be especially useful feathering off into wildland vistas or under oak trees, which cannot tolerate frequent summer watering and will eventually die if inter-planted with conventional exotic lawn grasses which require frequent summer watering.

**'Pigeon Point' dwarf coyote brush (*Baccharis pilularis* 'Pigeon Point')** is my favorite no-fuss, ideal ground cover. It is fast growing in a reliably even habit less than 2' tall, and 10' wide. The leaves are bright, light green. Very tough and drought-tolerant, it can be grown without drip irrigation: plant in the early Fall and then deep water at least once a month (2x/month is better) during the dry season for the first three years until its roots have gone deep. It's an excellent slope holder. Another selection of dwarf coyote brush is 'Twin Peaks': it grows higher in the center, up to 3' tall and 8' wide. Its smaller leaves are held tightly along the stems. They are bright green in spring, becoming gray-green in summer. Both selections can be sheared or even mowed. They are dense enough to discourage weeds, and are deer resistant.

**Prostrate black sage (*Salvia mellifera* 'Terra Seca')** is also very drought-tolerant and can be grown without drip irrigation, following the same dry season procedure as in the above paragraph. It grows roughly 2' tall by 8' (or more) wide. It is fragrant, and an important bee plant in the wild, but its' very pale blue, almost white, flowers are not showy. It is deer proof.

**Creeping sage hybrid (*Salvia* 'Bee's Bliss')** has light gray leaves with periwinkle blue flowers on a 1' tall stalk. It reaches 1-2' tall and spreads quickly to 8' wide. As with the preceding two, it can be grown without drip irrigation if the dry season procedure is followed. It attracts hummingbirds and butterflies, and is deer resistant. Creeping sage (*Salvia sonomensis*) is more prostrate and mat forming. It has flowers that range from blue-violet to pale lavender on flower stems that may be nearly 1' above the mats, and is locally native. It is deer resistant.

**'John Dourley' manzanita *Arctostaphylos* 'John Dourley')** is a vigorous, easily grown, sturdy, little shrub, spreading up to 6' wide and eventually, but very slowly, up to 3' tall. It has coppery new growth which becomes small, broad, blue-green leaves. It has a long blooming season. As with the preceding three, it can be grown without drip irrigation if the dry season procedure is followed.

**Creeping Mahonia (*Berberis aquifolium* var. *repens*)** spreads by creeping rhizomes to form small drifts 1-2' tall. Leaflets of the pinnately compound leaves are duller than most mahonias, and often bluish green with lighter undersides. In winter they are often painted plum-purple throughout. S-l-o-w growing, it will grow faster with at least a little dappled afternoon shade. This is drought-tolerant subshrub which can be grown without drip irrigation if the dry season procedure is followed. Drip irrigation and early pinching of the growing tips will form a thicker ground cover much faster than less generous treatment. It is deer resistant.

**Mt. Vision wild lilac (*Ceanothus glori-osus* var. *porrectus*)** forms a very low mat usually under 2' in height and spreading 5 or 6'. It has lavender blue flowers in mid-spring, and is very attractive on slopes. It has tiny holly-like leaves which

## SEPTEMBER PROGRAM LOW NATIVE GROUND COVERS UNDER 2' (-3') TALL FOR USE IN FULL SUN

Join Rosemary Carey for an informative presentation on ground covers (less than 2 feet tall) to use in landscaping in our county. Ground covers are the workhorses of landscaping, particularly on large country lots. Rosemary will offer a survey of perennials and shrubs and container specimens will be on hand for examination.

See the article on this page for a preview of shrubs to be discussed in her talk. Several of the plants mentioned in this talk are likely to be available at the plant sale on October 1.

This event will be held at 6:30 pm, September 20 at the Eldorado National Forest, Supervisor's Office, 100 Forni Road (south of Highway 50), Placerville.

## NOVEMBER PROGRAM CRYSTAL BASIN MEADOW BEES AND THEIR FLOWERS

Patrick Foley, a graduate student at California State University, Sacramento, will give a presentation on bees and the meadow flowers they pollinate.

This event will be held at 6:30 pm, November 15 at the Eldorado National Forest, Supervisor's Office, 100 Forni Road (south of Highway 50), Placerville.

are deer resistant. It will grow better with at least a little dappled afternoon shade. It should be watered at least twice/month, but can also tolerate garden watering if it is on a timer with other plants, as long as the site is well-draining and the water doesn't stand on it. It will grow faster with at least a little dappled afternoon shade.

Check out the chapter website for additional shrubs to consider in your landscaping project.

Rosemary Carey



El Dorado Chapter  
 California Native Plant Society  
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September-October 2011

**New Location**

**FALL PLANT SALE**  
**SATURDAY, OCTOBER 1**  
**9 am to 1 pm**  
**COUNTY BUILDINGS**  
**A AND B**



CALIFORNIA  
 NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY

**DEDICATED TO THE  
 PRESERVATION OF  
 CALIFORNIA'S NATIVE FLORA**

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

Membership includes the quarterly journal, *Fremontia*, the quarterly *Bulletin*, which gives statewide news and announcements of Society activities and conservation issues, and the chapter newsletter *Gold Field Notes*. To join, call our main office in Sacramento, (916) 447-2677, or visit [www.cnps.org](http://www.cnps.org) to join online.

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