The Chapter’s biannual native plant sales held on the first Saturday in April and October have become a part of the fabric of community life in Placerville. The Chapter Board is pleased to be able to bring native plants from major native plant wholesale nurseries in Elk Grove and Loomis, as well as stock from our smaller, local native plant nurseries, to an easily accessible central location in Placerville. Our plant sales are an opportunity for the public to buy plants not otherwise locally available without setting aside the better part of a day and the increasing expense of a 100 mile or more round trip to the Valley. It’s a fun, fair-like atmosphere where people shop, catch up, ask horticulture questions, look at a unique array of native plant and nature guides, and get exposed to the dangers of noxious weeds. And last but not least, the Chapter raises money to support core programs including the Clark Youth Fund grants for learning about native plants in El Dorado County schools and after-school programs alike. It’s a classic win-win situation that we’re all proud of.

I think of successful plant sales as those which provide a good experience for our customers, so that they are able to find the right plant for their site and to learn something about its establishment and maintenance. So what is required to reach this objective? First think of an iceberg, with nine-tenths of the work invisible under the surface; that is my best analogy for putting together a plant sale. Work starts six to eight weeks ahead of events for Plant Sale Chair who leads first-rate trips from the Crest to the Valley. It’s a fun, fair-like atmosphere where people shop, catch up, ask horticulture questions, look at an inspiring array of native plant and nature guides, and get exposed to the dangers of noxious weeds. And last but not least, the Chapter raises money to support core programs including the Clark Youth Fund grants for learning about native plants in El Dorado County schools and after-school programs alike. It’s a classic win-win situation that we’re all proud of.

The day of the plant sale arrives and a new round of work begins at dawn for Shellie. Facilities staff must be met and an inspection done. Volunteers must be directed to the tasks of setting up sandwich board signs pointing the way, arranging tables, taping up banners and potting tables, taping up banners and price information, carrying in plants, and pricing them. All of these set-up jobs are why we need as many Chapter members to turn out as possible. Even if you’re just beginning to get into native plants, there are jobs which require only a cheerful attitude and a willingness to pitch in. And you will meet Shellie Perry, a can-do gal who has inspired me over the past 12 years that she’s been the Plant Sale Chair. So this is my tip of the hat to her, and here’s another fact too: she’s also the Field Trips Chair. So this is my tip of the hat to her, and here’s another fact too: she’s also the Field Trips Chair who leads first-rate trips from the Valley to the Crest every spring and summer. The Chapter is truly lucky to have her doing all that she does.

Rosemary Carey
Chapter President
SPRING AND SUMMER PLANT WALKS

Please contact the trip leaders by the Wednesday prior to the hike to let them know you will be attending.

MAY 21 (SATURDAY)
OLMSTEAD LOOP, COOL

Meeting time and location: 10 am at the Olmstead Loop parking lot picnic table by the big bare cottonwood tree. From Cool (junction of Highways 49 and 193), go north on Highway 49 one block and turn left on Saint Florian Court. Parking is $10. Alternative free parking may be available at the strip mall located on the west side of Hwy. 49 between the highway intersection and Saint Florian Court. Park near the Cool Animal Clinic and the Cool Fitness Gym. Look for the fenced alley for walkers to the Olmstead Loop parking lot.

Duration: 3-5 hours

Description: This will be our first trip on the Auburn State Recreation Area’s Olmstead Loop, where we will do a loop of 5 or 6 miles through open and closed foothill oak woodland with a wide variety of spring wildflowers. This trail also crosses seasonal streams with riparian vegetation and skirts some ponds, so binoculars may come in handy for birding. Additional attractions are Native American grinding rocks and historic homestead remnants.

Level of Difficulty: Moderate, because of eroded trails, primitive water crossings, and other users (equestrians, mountain bikers, and runners.)

Bring: Hat and sunscreen, water, lunch, sturdy shoes.

Contact: Rosemary Carey; rosemary-carey@comcast.net; (530) 620-3631

JUNE 4 (SATURDAY)
HIGHWAY 89 VERNAL POOL AND LEVIATHIN MINE ROAD AREA (ALPINE COUNTY)

Meeting time and location: 8:00 a.m. at the Perry household.

Duration: All day

Description: We will drive scenic hiway 89, and visit a high-mountain vernal pool that teems with Fairy Shrimp, Porterella, and other curiosities. We will make a plant list, and document off-road vehicle damage. Near the intersection of hiway 89 and Leviathin Mine Rd, we will find a large meadow full of fragrant and beautiful eastern Sierra natives like Prunus andersonii, Erigeron bloomerii, Cirsium canovirens, Argemone munita, and the gorgeous Balsamorhiza hookeri var. lanata. There will also be a Mystery Onion for us to identify.

Level of Difficulty: Easy roadside botany, with no long walks or big hills. This trip is dog-, kid-, and senior citizen-friendly.

Bring: Lunch, water, hat, bug juice. Bring sandals if you want to walk into the vernal pool.

Contact: Shellie Perry; 530-644-6335; seperry55@comcast.net

JUNE 25 (SATURDAY)
RED LAKE PEAK ENVIRONS (ALPINE COUNTY)

Meeting time and location: 8:00 a.m. at the Perry household.

Duration: All day

Description: From Carson Pass we will go north on the Pacific Crest Trail to a saddle with a pond and meadow, then explore Red Lake Peak, with lots of early-blooming, subalpine wildflowers. Expect Viola beckwithii, Iris missouriensis, Geum triflorum, Polemonium pulcherrimum, and some great snaxery. If I remember correctly, the parking charge is three dollars.

Level of Difficulty: Moderately difficult. Approximately 1,000 feet elevation gain.

Bring: Lunch, water, hat, bug juice, something warm. Sturdy walking shoes REQUIRED.

Contact: Shellie Perry; 530-644-6335; seperry55@comcast.net

JULY 9 (SATURDAY)
WRIGHT’S LAKE (ELDORADO COUNTY)

Meeting time and location: The walk starts at 10:00 A.M., at the gate near the northeast end of Wright’s Lake. Due to limited parking, carpooling is seriously recommended: you may contact me for carpooling arrangements.

Duration: Half- or all-day, as you wish.

Description: Eldorado CNPS members regularly lead 60-minute wildflower walks for people recreating at Wright’s Lake. It is always a lot of fun. You are invited to join us! You are also welcome to continue botanizing after the scheduled walk is completed. Some folks might even like to park at the south end of the lake, and botanize your way to the north end. Or not.

Level of Difficulty: Very, very easy.

Bring: Water, bug juice. Lunch if you like. Kids if you have any available.

Contact: Shellie Perry; 530-644-6335; seperry55@comcast.net

JULY 23 (SATURDAY)
CARSON PASS TO FROG LAKE (ALPINE COUNTY)

Meeting time and location: 9:00 A.M., at the Perry household.

Duration: All day

Description: From the Carson Pass Red Lake overlook, we will walk a short way down a dirt road, then follow a little snow-melt creek that takes us up to the “back” side of Frog Lake, from fertile Red-fir forest to rocky, alpine ridgetop. It is beautiful, and relatively isolated. There may be a charge to park.

Level of Difficulty: Moderately easy. Around 500 feet elevation gain, and a bit of a scramble at the top.

Bring: Lunch, water, hat, bug juice, something warm. Sturdy walking shoes REQUIRED.

Contact: Shellie Perry; 530-644-6335; seperry55@comcast.net

SPRING HIKES TO THE RARE PLANT PRESERVES

The Bureau of Land Management’s Mother Lode Field Office will host naturalist-led walks on Saturdays to the Pine Hill Preserve.

May 21 Pine Hill
June 4 Salmon Falls

Trips start at 9 a.m. and are limited to 25 participants. Participants must pre-register with the Pine Hill Preserve. For more information or to sign up for a tour, contact Graciela Hinson, preserve manager, at (916) 941-3134 (ghinshaw@blm.gov) or Wynia at (916) 941-3135 (JWynia@blm.gov).
Hello Treasure Hunters! Here is the latest list of treasure hunts to join this spring and they are taking place all over California. If these don’t fit your schedule let us know and we can work on putting you in touch with a group in your area that would like to go on a hunt. Also, if you have some experience with plant surveys we can send you out on your own. There is so much to see this year and it’s time to start exploring—every hike can be a treasure hunt!

Learn more about the CNPS sponsored the Treasure Hunt program at http://www.cnps.org/cnps/rareplants/treasurehunt/. Contact treasurehunt@cnps.org for more details.

MOJAVE DESERT HUNTS

May 13-15 (Friday-Sunday): Silurian Hills, Valjean Hills and Avawatz Mountains—North of the Mojave National Preserve. We’ll look for Desert Bear Poppy (Arctomecon merriamii), Androstephium breviflorum, Mojave Milkweed (Asclepias nectaraginifolia), Camissonia boothii and Purplenerve springparsley (Cymopterus multinervatus). Join us Friday afternoon/Friday night or even Saturday morning on this car camping trip.

May 21-22 (Saturday-Sunday): Trip led by Duncan Bell, 2010 Grand Prize winner of the Rare Plant Treasure Hunt into the unexplored areas.

May 27-29 (Friday-Sunday): Trip to Kingston and Clark Mtns and the Ivanpah Valley. We’ll look for Mojave milkweed (Asclepias nectaraginifolia) and many others. Overnight camping trip. come Friday afternoon or Saturday morning.

STATEWIDE HUNTS

May 14 (Saturday): Pine Hill Preserve, near Cameron Park, CA. Help us re-locate some historic populations of Packera layneae (Layne’s ragwort) and Helianthum suffrutescens (Bisbee Peak rush-rose), as well as search for new populations in this botanical preserve.

Mid-May: (follow-up email will give a firm date) Lynch Canyon, Solano County.

Join the Solano Land Trust and help them perform an initial survey of their Lynch Canyon site for rare species. We’ll be on the lookout for Calochortus pulchellus (Mt. Diablo fairy-lantern), Balsamorhiza macrolepis var. macrolepis (big-scale balsamroot), Sidalcea hickmani ssp. viridis (Marin checkerbloom) and others.

Mid-May: (follow-up email will give a firm date) Sonoma Land Trust, Sonoma County. Join the Sonoma Land Trust and help search for rare plants on one of their properties just north of Sonoma.

May 22 (Sunday): Join the Mt. Lassen Chapter of the CNPS to visit a part of the Mendocino National Forest called Salt Creek Saddle and nearby China Gulch, where we’ll be looking for 8 different rare species.

June 11-12 (Saturday-Sunday): Walker Ridge, Lake-Colusa County boundary. About 30 rare plants occur on this site proposed for a wind-power generation facility. CNPS and other organizations have petitioned the BLM to designate this site as an Area of Critical Environmental Concern. Help us protect it by gathering more accurate information about the rare species found in this area.

The photo below is the vernal pool plant Downingia pulchella. Check out the electronic version of the newsletter at www.eldoradocnps.org for a glorious color version of this image. Photo: Carol Witham.
FREE WESTERN REDBUD SEEDLINGS

Chapter member Susan Levitsky lives in the Cameron Park Airpark Estates and has lots of volunteer western redbud seedlings on her property which are available for digging. They are this year’s seedlings, so are not deeply rooted yet. But the sooner they are dug, the better, as they are growing and lengthening their root systems, so every day counts. As Susan says, if you’d like to put some magenta in your spring with this beautiful foothill native, contact her at slevitsky@sbcglobal.net; (530) 676-0781; (916) 501-6008.

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