Homeowners Learn about Endangered Spineflower

Debbie Bulger

CNPS has long sought to reach out to community members about the many special native plants in our area in order to promote habitat stewardship. Giving presentations to people who have special status plants on their property helps create the understanding necessary for good conservation practices. Working with attorney Bill Parkin, CNPS was able to get developers to set aside an approximately three-acre preserve for the robust spineflower (Chorizanthe robusta var. robusta) at a housing development in the City of Santa Cruz before the houses were built.

Now that the houses are occupied, CNPS is beginning a relationship with the homeowners. On September 22 Grey Hayes, accompanied by Conservation Committee members Vince Cheap, Suzanne Schettler, and Debbie Bulger, gave a program about the robust spineflower to homeowners.

California's Wild Lichens — a talk by Stephen Sharnoff

California has an amazing diversity of lichens, found in every sort of natural habitat.

Stephen Sharnoff is a botanical photographer based in Berkeley. He and his late wife Sylvia Sharnoff did the photographic fieldwork for Lichens of North America, published by Yale University Press in 2001. A Field Guide to California Lichens (2014) is published by the same press. Nearing completion is a new photographic guide to the wildflowers of the Sierra Nevada, with text by Joanna Clines, Forest Botanist with Sierra National Forest. Stephen's photographs have been used in many exhibitions, magazines and books. View his photographic work at http://www.sharnoffphotos.com/. Contact Stephen Sharnoff at at lichen@idiom.com.
**Telling Melic (Good) from Veldt Grass (Bad)**

Jackie Pascoe

Melic and Veldt grasses are similar in appearance and habit: cool season, perennial, tussocky grasses that spread by seed and prefer shade. But while melics are lovely natives, veldt grasses are nasty invasives from South Africa! Pull them out!

Here are some key differences to help you ID and yank out the baddy, and nurture the goody. Some are what I’ve observed and others are from botanist **Deanna Giuliano** and restoration team leader, **Linda Brodman**.

**Ehrharta**

Linda Brodman notes "From my observations *E. erecta* is more of a problem [than *E. calycina*] in our county." CAL-IPC web-site says: "It spreads rapidly and is known to out-compete native grasses and herbs. Erect veldtgrass causes more litter accumulation than native grasses and herbs do, which further inhibits native plant growth."

**Ehrharta erecta**, panic veldt grass, has jointed stems. The flower/seed panicle is loose. *E. erecta* seeds are like rice grains. The leaf is smoother, softer, and wider than Melic.

Linda adds, "It has small hairs sticking straight out of the auricles surrounding the ligule of the leaf blade." (See drawing.)

**Melica**

Deanna Giuliano says *Melica torreyana* and *E. erecta* are easy to confuse. *Melica torreyana* has straight stems, with grey-purplish flowers/seeds on a dense, narrow spikelet. The leaf is rough to touch and pointy, whereas Ehrharta leaves are smooth and softer. *Melica imperfecta* is very similar to *M. torreyana* but the leaves may be smoother.

Another common melic, *Melica subulata*, Alaskan onion grass, has a corm. (You may see many corms.) Ehrharta does not. Tuck onion grass back in, if you accidentally pull it!

**Volunteering Makes You Happy!**

*Jackie Pascoe*

Yes, it’s proven by science - getting out and doing worthwhile stuff in congenial company actually makes you happy! So here are some ways we hope you will want to get happy!

- We really love to find a dynamic person to help on publicity, putting listings in the press for our events. We have a list to get you started.
- Outreach is another area where a dynamic person could make a huge difference. Let’s encourage young people especially to connect with our flora, and the fauna they support. Could you staff a booth? Talk to groups?
- Hospitality is a lovely happy-making job and we’d like to find some friendly greeter for meetings. Maybe you could bring cookies or other treats even (the chapter would pay).
- We need a Secretary to keep the board organized - take minutes, keep some records. Not much time involved.
- It would be great to start a Gardening with Natives type of group, like they have Over the Hill in Santa Clara - Are you keen to get this started? Gardening is a gateway to appreciation of our flora - and the wildlife it attracts.

Contact **Deanna Giuliano** at drosegiuliano@yahoo.com or 831.278.2699 with your interest in these opportunities.

**Membership**

*Julia Fields*

We are so happy to welcome these new members! **Tai Moses**, **Diana Hobson**, **Cheryl Calleri**, **Marion Blair**, **Ava Cassidy**, **Vicki Kuhlmann**, **Susan Klebl**, and new organizational member: **Central Coast Wilds Nursery**!
Plant Sale Success

Are we all full of pent-up planting energy or what? What a surge of shoppers when the sale opened!

Santa Cruz County Chapter Events

Volunteer at the UCSC Herbarium

Thursdays 9:30 am till noon. Carpool from PetSmart parking lot at 9:15 am. Prepare plant collections. Contact Al Keuter, akeuter@gmail.com.

Keying Club

Keying club is great for people interested in learning how to use the Jepson Manual, plus a bit of plant anatomy and some botanical terms, to ID plants. It’s a fun group, lead by Deanna Giuliano. Give it a try - 5 pm on Monday November 10, and on most other general meeting days.

Habitat Restoration

We work to restore native habitat in the parks and protected lands in Santa Cruz County. Learn about the natural systems that surround us while helping to restore special and wild places. No prior experience necessary. We welcome individual volunteers from 8 to 80 years, as well as special group projects.

- Saturday, Nov. 1, 10 am - 1 pm, Baldwin Creek, Wilder Ranch State Park
- Saturday, Nov. 22, 10 am - 1 pm, Sandhill Bluff, Wilder Ranch State Park
- Saturday, Dec. 6, 10 am - 1 pm, Natural Bridges State Park

Contact program leader Linda Brodman for details: 831.462.4041, redwdrn@pacbell.net

Field Trips

NOTE: No field trips are planned right now but be sure to see cruzcnps.org for any late additions. Contact Deanna Giuliano for any questions: drosegiuliano@yahoo.com or 831.278.2699.

Monterey Chapter Events

Go to http://montereybay.cnps.org for details.

Habitat Restoration

- First Saturday in the month, 1 p.m. - 4 p.m. Broom Bash, East Side of Point Lobos State Reserve.
- Third Sunday in the month, 11 a.m. - 2 p.m. Soberanes Creek Cape Ivy Bash.

Field Trips

- Sunday, December 14, 9:30 am. Fairytale Fly Agarics of Del Monte Forest.
Join the California Native Plant Society

Mail this form or go to cnps.org and click JOIN.

Name: ____________________________
Address: ___________________________
City, State, Zip: ______________________
Phone: _____________________________
Email: ______________________________
Chapter Affiliation:
☒ Student/Limited Income $25
☒ Individual $45
☒ Family or Library $75
☒ Plant Lover $100
☒ Patron $300
☒ Benefactor $600
☒ Mariposa Lily $1500

Your contribution is tax deductible, minus $12 for the quarterly journal, Fremontia. Make your check payable to CNPS and send to:
Membership Chair, CNPS, 2707 K Street, Suite 1, Sacramento, CA 95816