



# Hibiscus

Nov. 2003

**Sacramento Valley Chapter Newsletter • California Native Plant Society**  
www.cnpssacvalley.org

The mission of the California Native Plant Society is to increase understanding and appreciation of California's native plants and to conserve them and their natural habitats through science, education, advocacy, horticulture and land stewardship.

**November Meeting of the California Native Plant Society's Sacramento Valley Chapter:  
"A Sand Hills Ecotype of California Poppy" by Erin Espeland, PhD  
Student in the Graduate Group in Ecology, UC Davis**

Date: **Wednesday, November 12, 2003**  
Time: **7:00 p.m.**  
Location: **Shepherd Garden and Arts Center, McKinley Park  
3330 McKinley Blvd (the eastern continuation of E Street)  
95816**

Erin Espeland will discuss her previous research on an unusual type of California poppy (*Eschscholzia californica*). These plants have purple leaves with white spots and are found in the Sand Hills of the Santa Cruz Mountains. The Sand Hills are inland marine sand deposits that support several rare endemic plants due to the island-like isolation of the deposits and the unique nature of the soils that have developed on them (see page 90 of CNPS's "California's Wild Gardens"). Erin asked the question: are the unique traits of this poppy a response to the soil or are they genetic? She did field measurements, a common garden study, and genetic analysis to arrive at the answer to that question, which she will share with us.

The Jepson Manual now recognizes ten species and two subspecies of the genus *Eschscholzia* in California, from our well-known California poppy to the very rare diamond-petaled poppy (*Eschscholzia rhombipetala*). All of these species

arose from one species. How did this happen? Erin currently studies population differentiation, the first step in speciation. She'll discuss this work, too, and will illustrate her talk with photographs showing the diversity of poppies throughout the state. (See article about Sowing Wildflowers in this issue of Hibiscus, too!)

Books, wildflower seeds, posters and cards will be available for purchase at the meeting. Refreshments will be served. The meeting is **free** and the public is welcome to attend.

For information call Diana Hickson, Programs Chair, at (916) 327-5956.



Photo © William Hewlett, courtesy Calphotos

## Mather Meeting Matters

In previous articles we've alerted you to a Sacramento County proposal to build the Sunridge-Mather Water Treatment Plant on the most pristine parcel of vernal pool grasslands at Mather Field. While the plant would be built at least 250 feet from the vernal pools, it effectively blocks a corridor needed to interconnect Mather's proposed preserves with others to the south. Impacts to the critical grassland component of this ecosystem indirectly damage the integrity of the vernal pools themselves.

The project will probably go to the Sacramento County Board of Supervisors for approval in November, although the date was unknown at the time of this article. Attending this meeting may be the most influential and lasting statement you can make to help preserve the best of the Mather Field vernal pool grasslands. The political heat will be hard to beat, unless vernal pool advocates show up at the hearing in droves. Our goal is to demonstrate overwhelming public support for the vernal pools by filling the Sacramento County Board of Supervisors chambers to over-capacity on the day of the hearing. You do not have to speak; your body alone can help achieve this goal.

If you sign up to receive the Mather Action Alerts, we will notify you as soon as the meeting is scheduled. To get your name on the Action Alert list, you can register through the [www.sacvalleycnps.org](http://www.sacvalleycnps.org) website or call the CNPS Hotline at 916-737-WILD and follow the instructions. If you are already on the list, you'll be hearing from us very soon.

### **Planting Poppy Seeds: Some Thoughts from Conservationists**



Photos: California poppy (*Eschscholzia californica*)  
Brother Alfred Brousseau, courtesy CalPhotos

One summer, as I drove to Bishop through Yosemite National Park on Tioga Pass Road, a sight just off of the side of the road made me stop. The rock crevices of an exfoliating granite outcrop were filled with the deep purples, bright reds and showy oranges of penstemon, paintbrush, columbine and other native Sierra wildflowers. It was a spectacular, natural rock garden. A woman pulled her car in behind mine and came and stood next to me. After a moment, she asked, "Isn't it wonderful that they plant these here?"

I was speechless, and, later, saddened at the thought that she might believe that only humans could create something so beautiful. Had she not hiked enough to know that this was part of the beauty of the Sierra, even away from roads? Sowing wildflowers along roadsides has long been encouraged by civic organizations. Former First Lady and longtime conservationist Lady Bird Johnson has promoted the use of wildflowers along the highways of the nation for over 30 years. She helped enact legislation to

require the use of native wildflowers in highway landscaping and to encourage acceptance of native wildflower seeds donated by civic organizations and individuals for this purpose. The Sacramento Bee had an article earlier this year about a man known as "Johnny Poppyseed," whose goal is to spread our state flower, California poppy (*Eschscholzia californica*) throughout California by giving away 250,000 packets of seed. He has promoted his goal to service organizations and encourages them to plant the seeds along roadways. Many of us who have grown up in California have received a packet of poppy seeds sometime in our life from such an organization.

But why does the Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center now caution against indiscriminate sowing of wildflower seeds along roadsides and in natural areas? And why did the California Native Plant Society and 17 science professors and researchers at the University of California, Davis write letters of concern to the Bee's editor in response to the article about "Johnny Poppyseed"? They all agree that planting wildflower seeds in a home garden or landscape is fine, but introducing these seeds to wild areas can hurt native species and ecosystems. California poppy provides a good example.

California poppy occurs naturally throughout most of the state, and it appears in myriad forms. In the early 1900s, a California botanist described over 100 different species of California poppy. While most of these species are no longer recognized as such, the variation remains: yellow flowers, orange flowers, or red flowers; red-tipped leaves, purple leaves, white-spotted leaves, or hairy leaves; bushy plants, small plants, or low-growing plants; annuals that reproduce and then die back, perennials that flower many years before dying. Even though they are all California poppies, they do not all look alike! When we look at California poppies in gardens or from plantings, we mostly see the familiar orange-petaled, full-foliaged, green-leaved plant and, in fact, most horticulturally available seed is this single type of California poppy. If this single poppy type is planted everywhere throughout the state, it will replace the variety in forms that we see in natural areas today. The diversity of California poppy types is a reflection of California's natural history. Flower color, leaf color and growth form all respond to factors such as local rainfall pattern and soil type. Our California poppies mirror the wonder and variety that make California such a beautiful and fascinating state.

In addition to potentially damaging the natural diversity of the state, roadside plantings can affect the aesthetic experience of wildness. This brings us back to that day on Tioga Pass Road. Knowing that the showy seasonal wildflower displays all over California—in the Sierra Nevada, on the hillsides of the Grapevine on Highway 5, on the Carrizo Plain, in Bear Valley in Colusa County—are natural, and were not planted by humans, makes them more precious and valuable. They are part of California’s amazing natural heritage.

Rather than spreading wildflower seeds into areas in which they could cause ecological harm, there are better ways to help conserve California’s wildflowers. Volunteer for work days at your local preserves to pull invasive weeds and restore natural habitats. Support groups, such as your local land trusts, The Nature Conservancy, or the California Native Plant Society, that are working to protect natural areas. Plant and enjoy California poppies in your garden, and then enjoy their natural diversity in the wild! For more information about the affects of introducing seeds into wild areas, read “The Importance of Genetics” on the Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center website:

[http://www.wildflower.org/?nd=suppliers\\_database](http://www.wildflower.org/?nd=suppliers_database)

Diana Hickson, California Native Plant Society, and Erin Espeland, Ecology Graduate Group, UC Davis

## **CNPS Policies for Use in Conservation**

Many of you may not know that the California Native Plant Society has some very strong policies that can be used when you write comment letters or speak at meetings to encourage protection for native plants and their habitats. The complete text of the approximately 25 policies is on the CNPS State website at <http://www.cnps.org/archives/archives.htm>

The policies cover topics such as vernal pool mitigation, oak hardwood conservation, invasive species, and conducting rare plant surveys. If you are commenting on a proposed development project’s environmental document, CNPS probably has a policy that you can quote to lend your argument more credence. Many of the more recent policies also provide extensive scientific background and citations.

CNPS’s administrative policies are also at the website given above. These range from Guidelines on Lobbying, Legislation, Elections, Etc. to Litigation Procedures and a new, draft Contract Policy, for cases in which chapters enter into contracts with outside businesses or organizations.

At the September Chapter Council Meeting, representatives agreed that many of the policies need to be updated or can be combined, and that they all need to be put into a consistent format. This process will take a few years.

Please let the state know if your thoughts about which policies should be updated first and any specific comments about the policies. Please email your comments to [policies@cnps.org](mailto:policies@cnps.org). In the meantime, please use these policies when they will help your case!

### **Conservation Policies**

Policy for Hot Desert Grazing

Guidelines For Landscaping To Protect Native Vegetation From Genetic Degradation

Mitigation Guidelines (and Policy) Regarding Impacts to Rare, Threatened and Endangered Plants

Policy on Introduction of Ryegrass

Policy on Feral Pigs

Policy on Sowing of Wildflowers

Policy Statement Opposing Transplanting as Mitigation

Policy Oak Hardwoods

Statement of Policy—Wetlands

Policy That CNPS Focuses on Plants

Statement of Policy—Nonvascular Plants

Policy on Appropriate Application of Ex Situ Conservation Techniques

Policy with Regard to Plant Collecting for Educational Purposes

Policy and Guidelines on Environmental Impact Documents

Guidelines for Chapters to Reduce Impacts to Native Plants

Policy on Shrubland Management

Policy Statement on Tree Planting

Policy and Guidelines on Vernal Pool Mitigation

Monterey Pine Forest Policy  
Collecting Guidelines and Documentation  
Techniques  
Policy on Invasive Exotic Plants  
Statement of Policy—Seeding After Wildfire  
Intentional Introduction of Non-Native Species

#### **Administrative Policies**

Policy on Business Endorsements  
Fiscal Policy  
Litigation Procedures  
Statement of Policy—Distribution of Information  
Draft Contract Policy  
Policy for the CNPS Web Page

Diana Hickson  
Chapter Council Delegate

### **Notes from the September 2003 Chapter Council Meeting and Conservation Conference, Monterey**

Conservation Summit Results: The Chapter Council needs a conservation policy chair; Greg Jirak has stepped down from this position.

David Chipping is seeking to establish better communication between the Conservation Program and the Chapter Council and Chapter conservation volunteers. He suggested forming a committee of willing Chapter conservation chairs and some number of Chapter Council delegates. His program would then have an email discussion/alert system. He also suggested having regional conservation meetings, suggesting that the central valley chapters may want to do this soon.

He has heard, loudly and clearly, the request for regional botanists.

Emily Roberson reported that she has made a page on the state CNPS website that highlights the numerous attacks on environmental protection that have been proposed by the Bush Administration. See “Eye on the Bush Administration” at [www.cnps.org](http://www.cnps.org).

Just Plants Policy: David Chipping will also formally propose changes at the next meeting to the current policy that states that CNPS deals only with plant issues. The Council agreed this should be explicitly expanded to include issues for which we can make clear the nexus to plants.

Vegetation Program: Julie Evens reported that approximately 75% of the expected vegetation alliances in the state have been described and will be covered in the next edition of the Manual of California Vegetation (MCV). CNPS will be requesting photos of the vegetation types soon by sending out a list of alliances known from each chapter’s area. CNPS will also put the descriptions on a web site so that members can review it. The Vegetation Program wants input as to what types haven’t been described yet.

The Vegetation Program will be working on defining “rare” vegetation types in the future. Currently, the only system in use is the Heritage rankings of Department of Fish and Game’s list of natural communities. Communities that are ranked S1 (with less than 100 occurrences in the state) are considered high priority communities by the California Natural Diversity Data Base.

Business License? Steve Hartman said that each chapter needs to determine if they need a business license from the counties in which they hold plant sales, etc.

Executive Director’s Report: Pam has written job descriptions for the Rare Plant Program Chair and the Plant Science Chair, and is still seeking people for these positions. These state-level job descriptions might be useful models for chapter positions.

Jim Bishop discussed the quarterly meeting host schedule. We now have “Chapter Host Groups” that support the June and September “moving” meetings. We are in the North Valley group, with the Lassen and Redbud chapters, and our group’s next responsibility would be June of 2005.

Subvention Funds: The Chapter Support Committee asked the Chapter Council if they would like to recommend to the Board of Directors that the Subvention amount be raised from \$500 to \$750 (the Board needs to make such a decision), but tied to the chapter getting their annual report information to the state office. The vote was 11-9 in favor of recommending the increase.

Plant Sales/Events Insurance: Pat McDaniel, CNPS’s insurance agent, reported that coverage has changed recently so that events at which we expect over 300 people are no longer covered. We need a separate rider, and for now, the state office will pay for it. Pat needs as much lead time as possible to arrange for the rider. Call her at (805) 646-9948/ [mcins@west.net](mailto:mcins@west.net)

Carpools: Just a reminder that CNPS cannot arrange carpools. You can suggest a meeting place and carpooling, but you cannot assign people to cars.

Personal car use for CNPS business: CNPS does not authorize personal car use for CNPS business unless the owner carries the minimum insurance required by law.

Change in Eligibility for Chapter Council Officers (Chair and Vice-Chair): The Chapter Council voted to change the bylaws to read that “any CNPS member who is current in paying dues and interested in serving in [the Chair or Vice Chair] positions may be nominated by a chapter board by submitting a written nomination petition signed by the candidate and an officer representing that chapter’s decision, to the chair of the Leadership Development Committee.” This opens up the eligibility for these positions greatly; they had been restricted to members of the Chapter Council. The Council believes it is too difficult to find candidates who are able to be chapter president (as are most delegates), Council Chair or Vice Chair AND serve on the Board of Directors as ex officio members.

California Oak Foundation: Janet Cobb, ED of the California Oak Foundation, spoke to the Council about collaborating on an effort to get better protection for oaks in the state. The Foundation is contemplating an initiative requiring 2:1 conservation of oak habitat, because, according to Janet, the Legislature is unlikely to act on this issue (SB 711 proved this) and the Board of Forestry has tried to ignore its responsibilities in regulating oak woodland activities.

Attorney General Office’s Pro-Environmental Work: Tara Mueller, an environmental attorney with the AG’s office, spoke about the pro-environmental work the office under Attorney General Bill Lockyear has taken on in the past few years, such as commenting to the federal agencies about: Sierra grazing allotments, Los Padres National Forest oil and gas leases, the Sierra Framework Agreement, the Healthy Forest Initiative, environmental effects of NAFTA, Sequoia National Monument (they intervened to defend designation), critical habitat designations, and SWANCC (they filed an amicus brief in the Supreme Court decision).

Miscellaneous: The Grass Poster is almost ready; I saw proofs and it’ll be beautiful.

Diana Hickson  
Chapter Council Delegate

## **Congratulations...**

To our chapter members now on the CNPS State Board of Directors:

Carol Witham, President  
Diana Hickson, Director  
Vern Goehring, Director

## **Another Successful Plant Sale!**

Our chapter had our fall plant sale on Saturday, September 27th, and it was a huge success. The sale is the #1 fundraiser of the year, and we couldn't have done it without an amazing crew of over 40 hard-working CNPS volunteers. The work began at 1 Friday afternoon and didn't end until 4 p.m. on Saturday. We had members moving plants, sorting plants, pricing plants, selling plants, filling pre-orders, selling birdhouses and seeds, cashiering, selling books, note cards, t-shirts, entertainment books, serving breakfast and lunch to the volunteers and nursery employees, and of course the ever-popular clean-up shift. It was very heartening to see so many enthusiastic people working hard to make the sale so successful. We also had a record-number nine nurseries participating, plus a wide variety of member-grown plants, and somehow we were able to fit all the plants outside at the Garden & Art Center.

Thanks to our nurseries for bringing all your beautiful plants, selling them to us at your wholesale prices, and for taking back the unsold plants, and a huge THANK YOU to our small army of volunteers, who once again made it happen. You are the best!

Melinda Rivasplata  
and Steve Woodward

### Office Help Needed!

- ☺ Help do copying in office
- ☺ Create databases
- ☺ Information distribution

Any or all, contact Chris (916) 875-8910

### Plant Sale Coordinator Needed

Friday, as I was walking across the parking lot at my office, I heard the sound of autumn coming from above—a flock of sandhill cranes were circling overhead and calling to one another. They were probably discussing the coming migration: who will be in charge this season? As the group split in two, one crane broke off as if undecided which way to go, then joined the smaller group, and they circled on higher looking for the rising thermals.

Like the crane that broke off, I am ready to change my position in the flock. I have been coordinator for the plant sale for the past eight years, and feel it is time to step aside and let a new person or persons step into the role. I have honestly enjoyed the job; CNPS people are the best folks in the world to be with and work with. It has been great to get to know and talk to a lot of the members, nursery folks, and interested members of the community in the course of organizing the sale over the years.

I highly recommend the position, especially if you enjoy event planning, because in a way it is like planning a big party. And it is wonderful how people always contribute their time to help out at the sale. One of the best parts of doing this job is you know you are supporting all of the great activities in which our Chapter is involved. You don't need to have any great knowledge of plant identification or gardening to fill the position, but I learned a lot about native plant gardening from being involved in the sale. I will be around to mentor the next Plant Sale Coordinator (I am not migrating out of the country). That new person could be you! Thank you to everyone who contributes to making our plant sales wonderful and successful events.

Melinda Rivasplata  
Your Retiring Plant Sale Coordinator

### And Another Plant Sale Coordinator Needed

Steve Woodward kindly agreed to have this email printed in the newsletter.

AJB

Dear Friends:

While I can't be as eloquent as Melinda, I'm afraid I have the same message. As much as I'd love to ride the plant sale into the sunset, it's time for me to step down, also. I love all the people and while the work is physically tiring, it's mentally fun, not work. I will be starting a new job in a couple of weeks that promises to take up even more of my time, so please don't count on me to help put the plant sales together. If there is a new chairperson and committee I am very much willing to mentor them and guide them through what I know for the next sale or so, but I really can't keep doing what I have been. Ideally, I'll grow plants and bring them to the sale and actively sell them, and more importantly try to "grow" new member-growers so that our own plants are a bigger part of the production.

I have only positive feelings and memories for these past 8+ years at the sales, and I am confident that with new leadership they will continue to be an integral part of our chapter. Thanks to each one of you for helping make the sales such a phenomenal success year after year.

All the best,

Steve



**Celebrate the Season by giving a California Native Plant Society Gift Membership to your loved ones**

Please enter gift memberships to CNPS for the people I've named below. Each 1 year membership will cost me just \$35.00 and entitle the recipients to *Fremontia* (the society's professional journal), the *Bulletin* (statewide newsletter), and their local Chapter newsletter.

Please send gift memberships to:

Recipient's Name	Recipient's Name
Address                      Apt #	Address                      Apt #
City/State/Zip	City/State/Zip
Phone / Email	Phone / Email

This gift is from:

My name	My address	City/ State/Zip
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Please enclose form and check  OR credit card information.

Total number of Gift Memberships: \_\_\_\_ @ \$35 = Total order: \_\_\_\_

Mail to: CNPS State Office, Membership 2707 K Street Suite 1, Sacramento, CA95816

## **Wildflower Identification Class at American River College**

Enroll in "Wildflowers of the Sacramento Region" and learn to identify wildflowers and other native plants in the region, and become familiar with the plant communities that they occur in.

The lecture portion of the class and some hands-on work is conducted Friday evenings from 6:00–8:50. There will be approximately 7 field trips on weekends that will last approximately 4–8 hours depending on the location. Besides plant identification, the lectures will address a variety of related topics, such as the ecology of plant communities in the Sacramento Valley and the Sierra Nevada foothills, conservation of rare plant species, ethnobotany, invasive weeds, and horticulture.

The class is being taught during the spring semester (January 20–May 26) at American River College, which is part of the Los Rios Community College District. The course number is: Natural Resources 332 (formerly Natural Resources 8). It is a 4-unit class, transferable to UC or CSU. For more information, please visit the Los Rios website at [www.losrios.edu](http://www.losrios.edu), or contact Julie Horenstein at [horensj@arc.losrios.edu](mailto:horensj@arc.losrios.edu) or telephone (916) 568-3100 and leave a message in voice mailbox number 12527.

## **Welcome New Chapter Members**

Thanks to all new and renewing chapter members for their support of CNPS. Thirty-three members renewed their CNPS memberships in September. The following are new members to the chapter:

Anne Bowlus	Sacramento
Lis Fleming	Davis
Patricia B. Halliday	Sacramento
Lynda McCanahan	Fair Oaks
Philip Schulman & Pat McKinnon	Sacramento
Christy Owens	Davis
Kathy Skelly	Sacramento
Chris Wilkinson	

## **Sacramento Weed Warriors Wanted**

SWW, defenders of the American River Parkway from plant invaders, have now passed the 11,000 volunteer hour mark—and hope to generate more than 5000 volunteer hours over the next 9 months.

Join Frank Wallace at the American River to help eradicate invasive non-native plants!

Sat. November 1, 9:00 AM–noon

Sat. December.6, 9:00 AM–noon.

For meeting place,, call Frank Wallace (916) 427-5694 or send an email to [frankw2@pacbell.net](mailto:frankw2@pacbell.net).

## **Nature Walks with Jack Hiehle**

See plants, trees, and shrubs along with any wildlife that might be present. Bring binoculars. Contact Jack if you want more information on location: (916) 967-0777.

### **November**

#### *Nature Walks*

Thurs. Nov. 6, at William Pond Park, 8:00–noon. Meet at the end of Arden Way just outside of the park.

Wed. Nov. 19, Fair Oaks Bridge, 8:00–11:00 AM

Meet at the north end of the bridge via Bridge St.

#### *Habitat Improvement*

Sun. Nov. 16, 8 AM. Call Jack for location if you plan to help.

### **December**

#### *Nature walks*

Wed. Dec. 3, Effie Yeaw Nature Area, 8:00–noon

Meet at Effie Yeaw Nature Area parking lot.

Tue Dec. 9 Sailor Bar 8:00–noon

Meet at the end of Emperor Street via Fair Oaks Blvd. and Kenneth to Emperor.

#### *Habitat Improvement*

Sun. Dec. 14, 8:00 AM. Call Jack for location if you plan to help.



CNPS Newsletter  
 Chris Wilkinson  
 P.O. Box 160585  
 Sacramento, CA 95816-0585

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November 2003 Hibiscus

Hibiscus Newsletter The Sacramento Valley chapter newsletter, Hibiscus, is published every month, except for December, July and August. Subscriptions are \$10.00 for one year. If you wish to subscribe solely to the newsletter, send your check for \$10, made out to: CNPS Chris Wilkinson PO Box 160585, Sacramento, CA 95816-0585. Articles for Hibiscus must be to the newsletter editor by the 5th of the month for the next month's issue.

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Mather Vernal Pools	Eva Butler, 443-6282, riverside1@worldnet.att.net
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Natural Communities	Hazel Gordon, (530)297-7204
Newsletter	Amy Boyer, (530) 753-6323 ajboyer@cal.net
Plant Sale	OPEN
Plant Seeds/Bird House	Bill Jenkins, 961-7772, wjenk6314@cs.com
Poster Sales	OPEN
Programs Chair	Diana Hickson, DianaHickson@aol.com
Rare Plants	Heidi West, 457-4899, corydoras2@msn.com, and Russell Huddleston, 456-1988, rhuddle1@CH2M.com
Stockton Sub-Chapter	Martha Mallery, (209) 477-3966
Web site	OPEN

**MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION**

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_

Zipcode \_\_\_\_\_

I wish to affiliate with

\_\_\_ Sacramento Valley Chapter of CNPS

\_\_\_ Other chapter \_\_\_\_\_

**Membership category**

\_\_\_ Student, Retired, or Limited Income: \$20

\_\_\_ Individual, or Library: \$35

\_\_\_ Household, Family, or Group: \$45

\_\_\_ Supporting: \$75

\_\_\_ Plant Lover: \$100

\_\_\_ Benefactor: \$500

\_\_\_ Bristlecone Pine : \$1,000

\_\_\_ Redwood: \$2500

\_\_\_ Valley Oak: \$5000

\_\_\_ Giant Sequoia: \$10,000

Please complete form and mail with a check payable to

California Native Plant Society

2707 K Street, Suite 1 • Sacramento, CA 95816-5113.

Tel. (916) 447-2677 • Fax (916) 447-2727