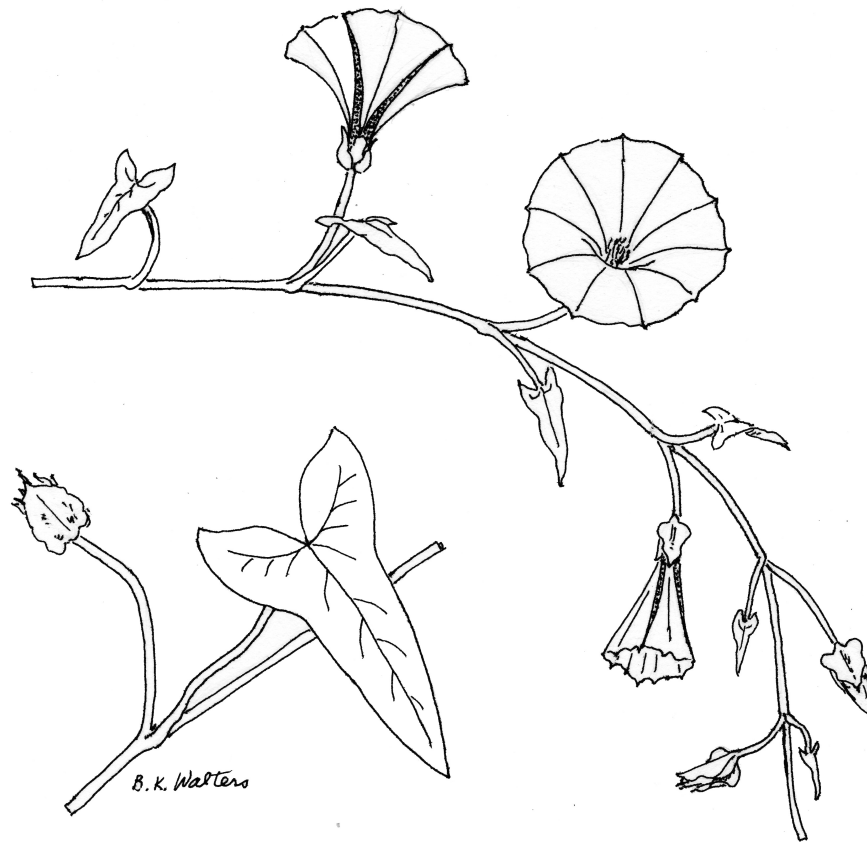

Obispoensis

Newsletter of the San Luis Obispo Chapter of the California Native Plant Society



June 2013

Calystegia macrostegia Coastal (California) Morning glory

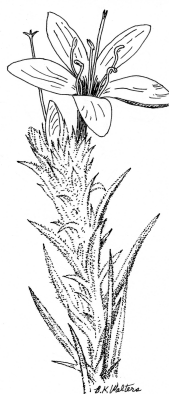
The plant featured on this cover of the *Obispoensis* was chosen because of a request. It is the California, coast, island, or wild morning glory (*Calystegia macrostegia*). The common name, false bindweed, is sometimes used instead of morning glory. Bind weed and morning glory are often used interchangeably. This species was chosen because of a request by CNPS member Yolanda Waddell who asked some time ago about the plant. Bonnie and I encourage anyone to email, write, or even call us with comments or questions about the drawings or articles or both. After doing this since the mid 1970's, we especially like to receive suggestions for native plants that others might find interesting.

Plants called morning glories generally produce large flowers with five fused petals arranged in the shape of a funnel. Bindweeds generally have smaller flowers. The morning glory common name refers to the fact that individual flowers tend to open in the morning and close by the same afternoon. Most of the time the flowers are basically white, but they may have pale pink veins. As the flowers age, they may take on a pinkish tinge. There are at least two possible explanations for color changes in flowers. First is that it is caused merely by the aging and dying of the petal's cells and has no survival value. However, there is a second possible explanation. It has been documented that some flower color change is controlled by the flower in order to signal its pollinator that this flower has been visited already so don't waste your time visiting me. Why would a plant do this? If pollinators visit only unpollinated flowers, then the pollinators will visit more flowers because they will visit only those flowers still requiring a pollinating visit. Is the color change in morning glory ecologically significant? I don't actually know, but it would be interesting to find out.

Let's look at Bonnie's drawing. It shows a single twining stem. Note how thin the stem is drawn; it's less than one-eighth inch in diameter. From each leaf bud a stalked 1-3 inch flower or pair of flowers arises. This means they are widely spaced along the individual stem. But, in the field, morning glory stems are rarely found single. A given rootstock produces many stems that will start out growing side by side, and because they twine they wrap around each other forming a structure similar to a braided rope. Since each individual stem is producing flowers, a given length of "rope" produces many flowers that appear to be growing side by side. Not only that, morning glory plants may cover large areas. When this happens, the "ropes"

criss-cross to form a net. The flowers then appear to be arising from a mat. Because of this, most photos are distant shots of the mat and therefore don't show the details of the stem. Some books indicate that the stems of this species of morning glory are somewhat woody at the base. To be truthful, I've never looked for this because one is totally overwhelmed by the mat of herbaceous "ropes." Leaves in this morning glory are extremely variable in size. On new stems leaves may be only an inch or so long but at other times they can grow to be nearly six inches long. Leaves are triangular with two prominent lobes at the base.

Calystegia macrostegia is an extremely variable species. The most recent *Jepson Manual* recognizes six subspecies throughout its range which runs mostly along the coast from just north of the Bay Area to just south of the Mexican border. There are also subspecies on the Channel Islands. Therefore this morning glory is almost an endemic Californian, i.e., restricted to the state. The subspecies to be expected in our area would be *C. m. ssp. cyclostegia*. Since this subspecies is found almost exclusively on the mainland, I think the best common name for it would be California morning glory or even better California coastal morning glory. There are three genera that typically bear the morning glory common name. They are *Calystegia*, *Convolvulus*, and *Ipomoea*. *Ipomoea* is native to the old world and is the genus of garden morning glories. In older plant ID books, species now separated into *Calystegia* and *Convolvulus* were all included in the genus *Convolvulus*. Currently these two genera are separated most easily on the size and location of two bracts that are attached to the flower stalk. In *Calystegia*, the bracts are large and totally hide the calyx. [*Caly* = calyx or sepals and *stegia* = Greek meaning to hide]. *Macrostegia* refers to the fact that the hiding bracts are large (macro). In *Convolvulus*, the tiny scale-like bracts arise from near the middle of the flower stalk. ☼ Dirk Walters, illustration by Bonnie Walters



Obispoensis is published October through June except January. Items for submittal to *Obispoensis* should be sent to rhotaling@charter.net. The deadline for the October newsletter is September 10. Botanical articles, news items, illustrations, photos, and events are welcome!

Visit the websites www.cnps.org and www.cnpsso.org

President's Notes

As we wind down our activities before the 2013-2014 kickoff in October, remember that the show consists of your photographs. We had some phenomenal pictures last year, so remember to carry your camera in your travels. I would like to take this time to thank all of you who have contributed to our activities during this last year. Whenever we ask for help our membership comes through.

Spring was dry, but most field trips yielded flowers and sometimes some really pretty displays in the western part of the county. We were joined on many trips by non-CNPS members, which is wonderful, so we will continue to encourage you to spread the word and ask friends along.

Some of you might be wondering about the beautiful pictures of *Cryptantha nutlets* shown by Michael Simpson at the May meeting. They were truly spectacular, but Michael told me I need \$25,000 to get a microscope rig that would do that work. Apparently the San Diego botanists have to share this with the "spider" lab. I did see the Cal Poly contingent salivating, so maybe we can get one up here.

A number of us took part in the Sudden Oak Death "Blitz," in which the leaves of bay trees (a carrier of the disease) that showed damage were collected for analysis at U.C. Berkeley. We discovered that people in the north county's back country are having to deal with trespassing Mexican cartel marijuana growers, which is a growing threat to off-trail travel as trail cameras have shown them to be armed. If you run into PVC runs tapping into springs, get out of there and report it. The cumulative damage to native plant resources and water quality is becoming a real problem.☼

David Chipping

Chapter Meeting

Thursday, June 6, 7 p.m. , Veterans Hall, 801 Grand Avenue, San Luis Obispo

Our June speaker will be Taylor Crow. He is a master's student at Cal Poly and a previous winner of the Malcolm McLeod scholarship.

Taylor will be speaking about his graduate work on the California native coyote mint (*Monardella villosa*).

Taylor Crow is a second year master's student at Cal Poly, graduating this spring under the direction of Matt Ritter. Taylor spent his graduate career working on

Swanton Ranch because of the wonderful amount of plants and surf breaks. He grew up in Exeter, California on a citrus farm and cattle ranch, and got his start as a botanist in David Keil's and Dirk Walter's plant taxonomy class. He will be moving on this summer to Laramie Wyoming, where he will be studying *Cercocarpus* (Mountain Mahogany) for a PhD.

❖ ❖ ❖

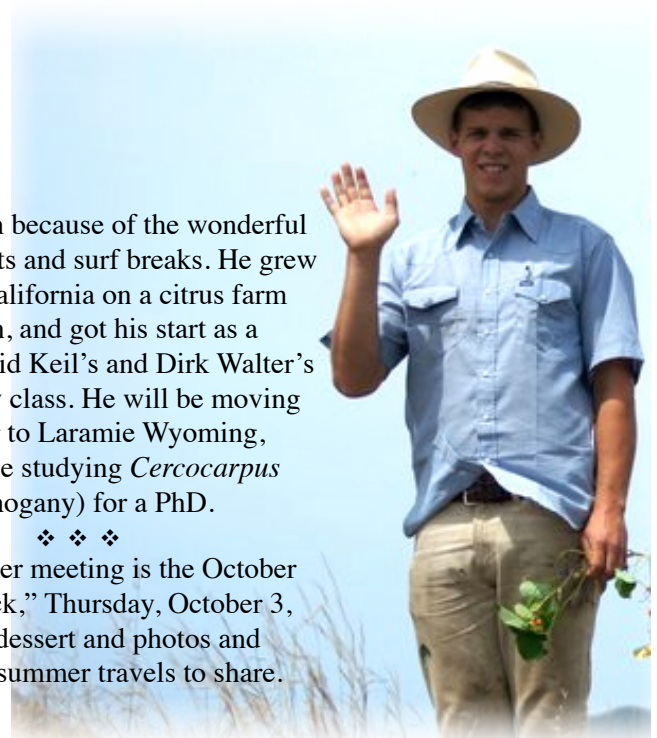
The next Chapter meeting is the October "Dessert Potluck," Thursday, October 3, 2013. Bring a dessert and photos and videos of your summer travels to share.

Conservation

The big issue of the month is the Oster-Las Pilitas quarry east of Santa Margarita. CNPS is especially concerned about the cumulative effect with the existing quarry and the potential blocking effect along the Salinas riparian corridor. We are also questioning the manner in which conservation spaces have been allocated, and the impacts to certain species. As far as the general public is concerned, the vast amount of truck traffic and water use appear to be the main themes for comment and protest. One real problem is that the state has declared the area a Mineral Resource Zone, and the County zoning and land use maps echo this designation. As granite suitable for road base is an uncommon commodity in the Coast Range, it is considered a protected resource and may provide the developer some leverage in damaging other natural resources.

If Sudden Oak Death coming south from Monterey County wasn't enough of a problem, we have a massive new threat coming up from the south. A beetle, Goldspotted Oak Borer, is attacking coast live oak, canyon live oak and black oak, has expanding out of Arizona, and at the moment is raging through San Diego County. Apparently thousands of oaks are dead, and as the pest can be spread with firewood, all those dead oaks are going to be a temptation to campers coming here with campfires in mind. There is apparently no known control other than covering dead oak wood with clear plastic or chipping it into tiny pieces.☼

David Chipping



EDUCATION

A beautiful blue oak woodland adorned with lace lichen, more California peonies than you can shake a stick at, and a handful of young children who eagerly call out the names of native plants along the trail. What more could one ask for?

At the end of March, Bill Waycott and I led a group of 4-8th grade students, a couple accompanying moms, and resource teacher Paula Warnes of the Paso Robles Public School Home School Program on a two mile loop walk on the Jim Green Trail in Atascadero. This trail was new to both Bill and me, but we were tasked to find a child-friendly wildflower walk in the North County and a web search led us to this lucky find. Located on the northern end of the Heilmann Regional Park, the Jim Green Trail is a very satisfying walk with a variety of blooming spring flowers amidst remnant needlegrass patches and in the woodland understory. In addition to a preponderance of peonies, we saw a nice display of California buttercup, Johnny jump-up, blue dick, fiddleneck, sanicles, lupines, owl's clover, Chinese houses, and the leaves of many clarkia that will bloom later this spring. The blooming ceanothus were also at optimal fragrance-sniffing level for the height of our group. Before we head out on the trail, we reviewed photo handouts of 16 plants commonly growing along the trail, and then we had the kids point out the plants during our walk. The most satisfying part of it all was at the end of our walk (after we collected the handouts)



Jim Green Trail in Atascadero

when the children were asked what plant communities and plants they had just observed - we got an enthusiastic response of correct answers from all! A couple of the kids, including one sporting poison oak blisters on his neck, were genuinely excited about identifying the plants, even inquiring about species that we had not specifically called out. We may do another walk with this home school program again in the fall. If any of you are equally interested in winning over children in this manner, please let me know. ☼

Susi Bernstein

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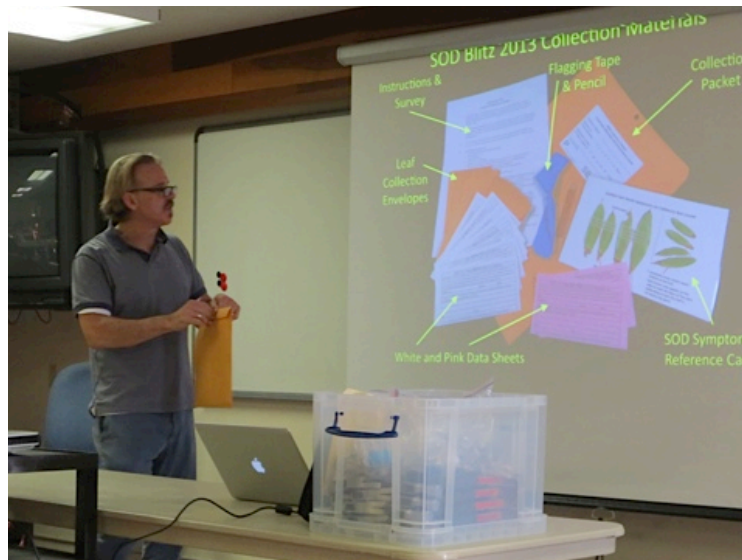
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Sudden Oak Death (SOD) Blitz Update

There was a great turn-out for the first San Luis Obispo SOD Blitz training. We had 17 volunteers investigate areas with bay laurel trees, inspecting leaves and collecting samples, from Arroyo Grande to the northern SLO County boundary. I want to thank everyone that helped organize this event and of course all the volunteers. Everyone who collected said it was difficult to find leaves that matched the SOD symptom description. This may indicate the SOD has not yet made it to SLO County, or it may be a result of this being a very dry year. The samples must be tested within a few days of collecting and all the volunteers turned in their samples by Sunday evening so they could be mailed by Monday morning. The samples were sent to the UC Berkeley Forest Pathology and Mycology Laboratory for analysis and the results will be included in the SODMAP research project. Dr. Matteo Garbelotto will be visiting SLO County in the fall to present the results of our collections and additional information on SOD and the SOD Blitz project. Please check the newsletter and the CNPS website for the date of this meeting. We need to continue monitoring for this devastating disease and hope to participate in the SOD Blitz again in the future. I again thank those that helped organize and all the volunteers.

Lauren Brown,
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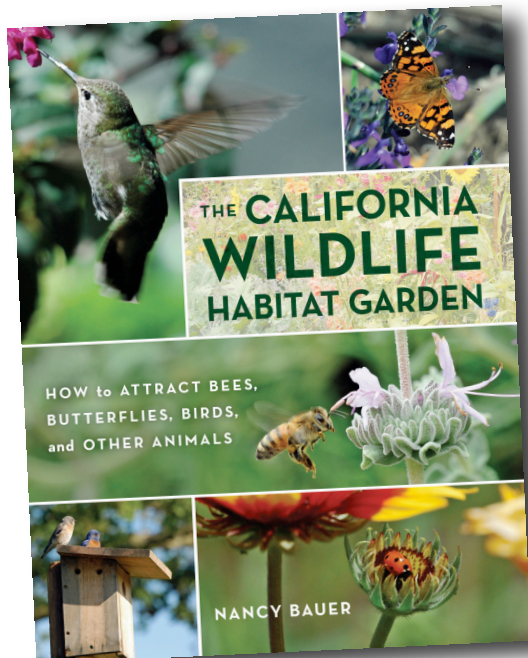
For additional information on the SOD Blitz project, visit: <http://www.sodblitz.org>



Dr Matteo Garbelotto presents the collecting materials and sampling protocols for the Sudden Oak Death (SOD Blitz) held on May 3, 4, and 5. The training took place on Friday evening and volunteers collected samples in numerous areas in northwest San Luis Obispo County on Saturday and/or Sunday.



Susie Bernstein, Suzette Girouard and Anthony Mienhold collecting bay laurel leaves



BOOK NEWS

Nancy Bauer has won an award from the American Horticultural Society for her book, *The California Wildlife Habitat Garden*. The book just came out a few months ago and it is such a pleasure to read. It fills a niche in garden writing and is particularly aimed at California native gardens. I dip into portions of my copy every few days. The thing about being a native plant enthusiast is that you are drawn into worlds of birds and butterflies and pollinators. You begin to notice them, learn about them and then you begin doing more and more things to entice them into your garden. This lovely book has been an excellent guide and motivator. I spend hours in my garden just watching all the different visitors. The award committee said her book is, "well-produced, practical and thorough. This book is a significant contribution to habitat gardening literature." I couldn't agree more.

-Heather Johnson

Central Coast Rare Plant Treasure Hunt



CALIFORNIA
NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY

Dear Rare Plant Treasure Hunters,

This year the RPTH is taking on the California Central Coast as a new geographic focus. We will be leading many trips in Monterey County's Ventana Wilderness as well as in California State Parks and other public lands. On the Ventana trips, we'll also begin to document the noxious weeds we encounter to help the USFS manage the wilderness and reduce the impact of biological invasions. We are also pleased to announce that Deanna Giuliano, the Santa Cruz Chapter President, will be helping us out this season! So, please consider coming out to join us for some of these trips - whether you prefer an easy to moderate day hike or a strenuous 3-day backpacking trip, there is something for you! If you can make it out to one of our camping trips for just a day or 2, let us know; we will likely be able to accommodate. Check out the photos below for a sample of the rare plants we'll see this season!

Happy Rare Plant Hunting,

Danny Slakey

North Coast Ridge Road Car Camping w/ optional overnight backpack (Monterey County) May 20 - 22

On this trip, we'll be camping with members of the Ventana Wilderness Alliance near Big Sur along North Coast Ridge Road, which is not normally open to vehicles. This will give us a chance to quickly get to many remote sites in the Wilderness! We'll hike many of the nearby trails and also search along the road corridor for rare plants and noxious weeds. On the target species list we have *Clarkia jolonensis*, *Malacothamnus palmeri* var. *lucianus* and *Abies bracteata*, but we'll search for many others as well. Depending on the interest and size of the group, some of us may backpack for one night to botanize some of the more remote trails. Hikes will be anywhere from easy-moderate to moderately-strenuous, depending on the participants' interest.

There are restrictions on the number of vehicles we can bring to this site, so please let us know in advance if you would like to join this trip. Email dslakey@cnps.org for details and to RSVP.

Memorial Day Cone Peak Car Camping (Monterey County) May 25 - 27

What better way to spend your Memorial Day than camping, and looking for rare plants while you're doing it?! With special permission for the USFS, we'll drive to near the top of Cone Peak, near Big Sur for a weekend campout. On the peak itself, we'll search for a number of rare species: we'll test out our plant ID skills by surveying for two rare species of bedstraw, *Galium clementis* and *Galium hardhamiae*. We'll also look for some showier plants, such as the most beautiful jewelflower (*Streptanthus albidus* ssp. *peramoenus*). In addition to the peak itself, we'll plan on hiking some of the nearby trails in search of these species, other rare plants, and noxious weeds. Hikes will be easy-moderate to strenuous, depending on the interest of the group. There may also be an option for an overnight backpack with part of the group. For details and to RSVP send an email to dslakey@cnps.org.

Pine Ridge Trail / Sykes Hot Springs Backpacking (Monterey County) June 5-7

This is the most popular trail in the Ventana Wilderness, but unfortunately it is also the most heavily impacted one. We are doing this trip on weekdays to avoid the big crowds. Because of the heavy impacts along the trail, documenting the rare plants and noxious weeds here is especially important for helping the USFS to improve management of the trail and surrounding land. Several occurrences of Dudley's lousewort (*Pedicularis dudleyi*) have been found nearby, so we'll search for new occurrences of it, as well as many other rare plants.

We'll hike 11 miles from Big Sur to Sykes Hot Springs in the first day of the trip. On the second day, we'll do an easier day hike with botanizing on nearby trails without our packs. On Day 3, we'll hike back along the Pine Ridge Trail. For details and to RSVP send an email to dslakey@cnps.org.

Andrew Molera State Park (Monterey County) June 8, 10 a.m. - 4 p.m.

This State Park on the coast is host to a number of showy rare plants, such as the Little Sur Manzanita (*Arctostaphylos edmundsii*), adobe sanicle (*Sanicula maritima*), Hutchinson's larkspur (*Delphinium hutchinsoniae*), and Dudley's lousewort (*Pedicularis dudleyi*). However, we only have a small amount of data on the distribution of these rare plants in the park, so we'll search the park for new occurrences of these and other rare plants.

Meet at 10 a.m. at the pullout on the east side of Hwy 1, at the intersection with Coast Rd. The spot is about 20 south of Carmel, and across Hwy 1 from Andrew Molera State Park. We may be able get the \$10 entrance fee to the park waived. To RSVP and get more details, send an email to dslakey@cnps.org.

Alder Creek Botanical Area Car Camp / Optional Mountain Bike (Monterey Co.) June 14 - 16

The Alder Creek Botanical Area is in the Silver Peak Wilderness, just north of the Monterey / San Luis Obispo County border.

(continued on page 7)

Field Trips

Sunday, June 9, 9 a.m. Johnson Ranch Open Space and Irish Hills Natural Reserve Hike. Come explore the new trail connecting Johnson Ranch and the Irish Hills Reserves. Total distance of the hike is 6 miles, with a 700 ft. gain, taking about 3 hours. This trail offers a new perspective on the SLO area as seen from the southern hills. The trail winds through different habitats displaying a diverse ecosystem. Meet at the Johnson Ranch Open Space trail head, located at the turn out to the intersection of South Higuera Street and Ontario Road, adjacent to Hwy 101, south of San Luis Obispo. From there we will shuttle in a few cars to the Irish Hills Reserve trail head located at the southern end of Madonna Road in San Luis Obispo (ten minutes by car). At the end of the hike, we will shuttle the drivers back to their cars at the Irish Hills. Bring

water, snacks, and dress in layers for changing weather. A hat and sturdy shoes are advised. The plants, animals, and geology of the area will be discussed. Bill Waycott, (805) 459-2103 or bill.waycott@gmail.com

Saturday, June 15, 10 a.m., Cal Poly Tree Walk. A two hour stroll around the center Cal Poly campus enjoying the best landscaped trees SLO County has to offer. These trees are from all over the world and we will focus on deciduous trees which have full foliage now, many full with beautiful large flowers. Meet in front of the Kennedy Library, located at North Perimeter Road and University Drive. Parking is always free on weekends. Leader: Al Normandin (805) 534-0462

Rare Plant Treasure Hunt continued

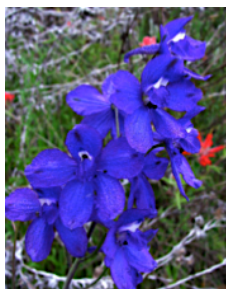
The area has a lot of serpentine soils and is at the northern extent of many southern plant species, so it has a very unique flora. We'll hike in the botanical area and along nearby trails in search of rare plants and noxious weeds, and we may even be able to find some range extensions for serpentine-endemics that are not currently known from Monterey County! We'll search for two rare bedstraws (*Galium clementis* and *Galium hardhamiae*), late-flowering mariposa lily (*Calochortus fimbriatus*), and Palmer's monardella (*Monardella palmeri*), as well as many other species.

Since we are car camping, this trip has options for folks with a lots different hiking abilities, from easy-moderate to strenuous. In addition to hiking, a small group could do a survey that requires mountain bikes. The Lottie Potrero Camp is a botanically interesting site, but it is about 5 miles from the point when the road becomes impassible to larger vehicles, making mountain bikes the best method to reach the site. We'll have room for at least 2 mountain bikes on a rack, so please let us know if you are interested in bringing a bike out. We'll camp at an unofficial campsite along South Coast Ridge Road near the Alder Creek Botanical Area. For more details and to RSVP, send an email to dslakey@cnps.org. Remember to bring any botany supplies you have, including a hand lens, GPS, camera, field notebook, and floras.

Lion's Den Botanical Area and Cruickshank Trail Backpacking / Optional Car Camp Rendezvous June 28 - 30

On this trip, we'll backpack along a loop that covers some spectacular botanical sites in the Silver Peak Wilderness, right by the Monterey / San Luis Obispo County border. We'll start at the Salmon Creek Guard Station and hike through the Southern Redwood Botanical Area – where the coast redwoods reach their southern extent! We'll continue along the trail to camp at an established wilderness campsite. On Day 2, we'll hike the Cruickshank Trail to the Lion's Den Botanical Area, which is host to many rare plants, such as late-flowering Mariposa Lily (*Calochortus fimbriatus*), Bishop manzanita (*Arctostaphylos obispoensis*), and Hardham's bedstraw (*Galium hardhamiae*). We may also be able to find some range extensions for plants like Santa Lucia mint (*Pogogyne clareana*) or yellow-flowered eriastrum (*Eriastrum luteum*). On Day 3, we'll hike back to the Salmon Creek Guard Station via the Salmon Creek Trail.

On this trip, we won't hike more than about 5 miles per day, so there will be plenty of time for botanizing. However, the trail climbs about 3000 ft. to Lion's Den, so hiking will be moderately strenuous. Since Lion's Den is accessible via South Coast Ridge Road, car campers can rendezvous with us at Lion's Den Camp on June 29. For more details and to RSVP, send a message to dslakey@cnps.org. Remember to bring any botany supplies you have, including a hand lens, GPS, camera, field notebook, and floras.



Dedicated to the Preservation of the California Native Flora

The California Native Plant Society is a statewide non-profit organization of amateurs and professionals with a common interest in California's 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 journal, *Fremontia*, the quarterly *Bulletin*, which gives statewide news and announcements of the activities and conservation issues, and the chapter newsletter, *Obispoensis*.



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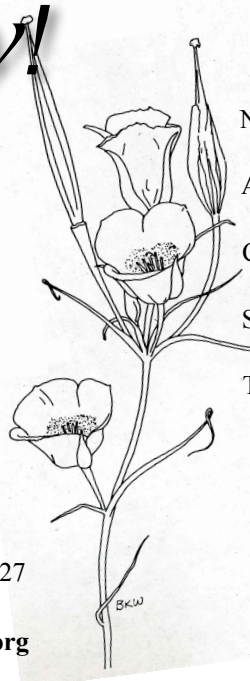
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