The CALYPSO

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NEWSLETTER OF THE DOROTHY KING YOUNG CHAPTER
CALIFORNIA NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY

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## Annual Chapter Council Meeting in Santa Rosa: September 5-7

It is the weekend after Labor Day at Luther Burbank Art and Garden Center, 2050 Yulupa Ave, Santa Rosa. (Not the Luther Burbank Home and Gardens!)

There will be a working session on "Developing a Strategy for Fire Defensible Space". Other topics to be discussed are: How chapters can establish Land Trusts; California water issues; How to publish with CNPS press. Schedule is available at www.cnps.org.

Nearby camping is available at Spring Lake County Park, 1.5 miles from the Council meeting. For more information about the Council meeting, please contact Lori Hubbart at 882-1655 or lorih@mcn.org.

## Gardening with Natives Program: Thursday, October 9

A slide show program on Gardening with Natives is planned forThursday October 9th before the Sunday Plant Sale. It will be at the Gualala Community Center. Details not yet available.

## PLANT SALES:

### October 12 & 25

Two Locations this year!

**Gualala: Sunday, October 12, 9 AM to 3 PM at the Gualala Community Center**

**Fort Bragg: Saturday, October 25, 9 AM to 3 PM at the Mendocino Coast Botanical Gardens**

Plants can sell out quickly, so please come early for the best selection! The Fall Plant Sale is the Chapter's major fund raiser.

## NEW PLANTS THIS YEAR!

by Lori Hubbart

We are pleased to offer some very special local items at this year's plant sale. Some of these have not been available in this area, and some are offered for the first time. There are only a limited number of some of them, though we hope to have larger quantities next year.

1. Hairy manzanita, *Arctostaphylos columbiana*– shell pink. This is a selection of our local, tree-like manzanita, with pale pink-tinged flowers that bloom in late winter. Manzanitas are a vital source of nectar for hummingbirds when little else is in bloom.

2. Fort Bragg manzanita, *Arctostaphylos nummularia* 'Bear Belly'. Introduced by the U.C. Santa Cruz Arboretum, this form was originally collected on the Mendocino coast by the great plantsman, Ken Taylor. A superb foliage plant, it is grown for its rounded shiny leaves, and low, compact habit. It is more garden-tolerant than most of its kind.

3. Prostrate coyote bush, *Baccharis pilularis.* At last, a low-growing coyote bush from the Mendonoma coast! Our two selections are from near Point Arena, growing about 2' high and 4' wide. Low coyote bush is deer-resistant, makes a useful green mound in the garden, attracting multitudes of small insects and the birds to eat them.

4. California fuchsia, *Epilobium septentrionale* – Gualala River. We thank botanist, Peter Baye, for this selection, from the Gualala River near Annapolis, Sonoma County. It is low and spreading, with gray-green leaves and tubular flowers of bright vermillion. Needless to say, it's a magnet for hummingbirds.

5. Headlands poppy, *Eschscholzia californica*, 'Manchester Moon' – The coast California poppy is yellow with a bit of orange at the base of the petals. Our selection has delectable, creamy yellow flowers, sometimes with centers of pale apricot. The color goes with everything, and to see it is to want it.

6. White-flowered blue-eyed grass *Sisyrinchium bellum.* There are other white-flowered forms of blue-eyed grass or grass-iris, but ours is local, from near Point Arena. This little plant with grass-like leaves is a strong grower, festooned for several months with little star-like white flowers. It makes a fine rock garden or container plant.

# FEATURED PLANT SALE SPECIES: *Petasites frigidus* (L.) Fries var. *palmatus* (Aiton) Cronq. Western coltsfoot, butterbur, coughwort

by Julia Larke

*Petasites frigidus* var. *palmatus* leaves © 2007 Zoya Akulova. Photo taken near Albion in Mendocino County.

"Stunning" is a term used to describe this perennial herb in the Asteraceae. The large palmate-lobed leaves can reach 15 inches or more in size; they are green above and ±white woolly beneath. Whitish-pink flowers bloom in early spring, with flowering stems ~2 ft tall appearing before the leaves.

Western coltsfoot occurs in moist forest soils, along stream banks, in swamps and fens, in roadside ditches; Communities: Mixed Evergreen Forest, Redwood Forest, wetland-riparian. Elevation: sea level to 400 m (~1300 ft). Range: Northwest and Northeast US and across Canada.

The genus name, *Petasites,* is from the Greek for broad-brimmed hat…from the large palmate leaves.

**Ethnobotany:** Western coltsfoot is a Native American medicinal plant. Its leaves are used in medicinal teas and tinctures that are said to slow spasms that cause coughing, and to soothe sore throats, chest colds, and stomach cramps; poultices of roots and leaves applied topically reduce inflammation and pain. http://www.fs.fed.us/psw/publications/documents/gtr-162/gtr-162-section3.pdf

The following records are from the Univ. of Michigan Ethnobotany database http://herb.umd.umich.edu/:

Leaves and young stems used for food. (Chestnut, V. 1902. *Plants Used by the Indians of Mendocino County, California*).

Leaves placed in hot water and used for arthritic joints. (Baker, Marc A. 1981 *The Ethnobotany of the Yurok, Tolowa and Karok Indians of Northwest Calif.)*

Inner portion of leaf petioles eaten raw after removal of outer layer (Ray, Verne F. 1932. *The Sanpoil and Nespelem: Salishan Peoples of Northeastern Wash.)*

Indians living inland placed wilted leaves on a redwood burl over a slow fire of hot coals; leaves burn down to ashes of almost pure salt. (Lyons & Cooney - Lazaneo,1988. *Plants of the Coast Redwood Region*).

Tlingit indians used a compound containing coltsfoot plant for sores. (Krause, A. 1956.*The Tlingit Indians*).

Skagit Indians used a poultice of warmed leaves applied to parts afflicted with rheumatism. (Gunther, E. 1973. Ethnobotany of Western Washington).

The Tanaina peoples used the plant for diseases from rheumatism to tuberculosis. (Smith, G. W. 1973. *Arctic Pharmacognosia*).

**Jepson Horticultural notes:** Coltsfoot thrives in our climate with moderate summer watering or on continuously moist soil. Especially good for stabilizing or restoring disturbed or degraded areas. May be less suitable for general garden use. Good groundcover. Invasive; once established, tending to outcompete, displace, or overrun others.

Sources: http://www.calflora.org;http://www.efloras.org; http://ucjeps.berkeley.edu

# PLANTS FOR 2008 SALE

* = small quantities

| Scientific Name | Common Name |
|---|---|
| **Trees** | |
| *Abies grandis* | grand fir * |
| *Salix lasiolepis* | arroyo willow * |
| *Salix sitchensis* | Sitka willow * |
| *Sequoia sempervirens* | coast redwood * |
| **Shrubs** | |
| *Arctostaphylos columbiana* – shell pink form | hairy manzanita * |
| *Arctostaphylos nummularia* 'Bear Belly' | Ft. Bragg manzanita * |
| *Arctostaphylos* 'Emerald Carpet' | Emerald Carpet manzanita |
| *Arctostaphylos uva ursi* 'Digger Creek' | Point Reyes manzanita |
| *Artemisia californica* | California sagebrush |
| *Baccharis pilularis* – local low forms | coyote bush |
| *Berberis aquifolium* | Oregon grape * |
| *Corylus cornuta* | western hazelnut |

*Galvezia speciosa* showy island snapdragon
*Garrya elliptica* 'Evie' silk tassel *
*Holodiscus discolor* cream bush *
*Lonicera involucrata* twin berry *
*Oemlaria cerasiformis* oso berry *
*Rubus spectabilis* salmon berry
*Rhamnus californica* California coffeeberry *
*Ribes sanguineum* var. *glutinosum* pink currant
*Rosa nutkana* nootka rose *
*Vaccinium ovatum* California huckleberry *

**Perennials**

*Aguilegia formosa* western red columbine
*Armeria maritima* sea pink *
*Asarum caudatum* wild ginger
*Dudleya farinosa* bluff live forever
*Epilobium* sp.– various cultivars California fuchsia
*Erigeron glaucus* seaside daisy
*Eriogonum latifolium* coast buckwheat
*Eriophyllum lanatum* woolly sunflower
*Eriophyllum staechadifolium* seaside woolly sunflower
*Erysimum menziesii* ssp. *concinnum* coast wallflower
*Eschscholzia californica* – local forms California poppy
*Festuca rubra* 'Jughandle' red fescue
*Frageria vesca* woodland strawberry
*Grindelia stricta* gum plant/gummy daisy
*Helenium bolanderi* Bolander's sneeze weed
*Heuchera micrantha* alum root
*Iris douglasiana* Douglas' iris
*Lewisia cotyledon* Lewisia *
*Madia madioides* woodland madia
*Mimulus aurantiacus* – local form sticky monkey flower
*Mimulus aurantiacus* – various color forms hybrid sticky monkey flower
*Mimulus cardinalis* streamside monkey flower *
*Monardella villosa* coyote-mint *
*Penstemon heterophyllus* blue bedder penstemon
*Petasites palmatus* western coltsfoot
*Phacelia bolanderi* Bolander's phacelia
*Salvia* 'Bee's Bliss' creeping sage
*Salvia sonomensis* 'John Farmer Bowers' pale creamy yellow form of Sonoma sage
*Satureja douglassii* yerba buena
*Scutellaria californica* white scullcap
*Sedum spathulifolium* stonecrop
*Sisyrinchium bellum* blue eyed grass
*Sisyrinchium bellum* – white flowering form
*Sisyrinchium californicum* yellow eyed grass
*Tellima grandiflora* fringe cups
*Tolmiea menziesii* piggyback plant
*Vancouveria hexandra* inside-out-flower
*Viola adunca* western dog violet
*Viola sempervirens* redwood violet
*Whipplea modesta* modesty *

**Ferns**

*Blechnum spicant* deer fern *
*Polystichum munitum* sword fern
*Dryopteris arguta* coast wood fern *

# PRESIDENT'S CORNER

by Lori Hubbart

Butterflies are scarce this year in Sonoma County, according to Louise Hallberg of Hallberg Butterfly Gardens in Sebastopol. Sure enough, local coast residents are also finding that the species and quantities of butterflies are way down this summer.

Usually we see lots of ringlets, which look like a smaller, paler buckeye. This year, I haven't seen any. Buckeyes, usually common in late summer, were also conspicuous in their absence. We thank Louise Hallberg for calling our attention to the fact that this is more than a local phenomenon.

It is alarming that the Hallberg Butterfly Gardens should be so bereft of butterflies, since its plantings were designed to provide nectar, larval host plants, shelter, water and other necessities for butterflies.

At least we can be thankful for Louise Hallberg herself, who has dedicated her life to sharing knowledge and the sheer magic of butterflies with the public. She is a shining example to all of us, and if the world had more people like Louise in it, maybe we would not be suffering this dearth of butterflies.

You can learn more about Louise's project at the website: www.hallbergbutterflygardens.org/ When you are down in Sonoma County, the Hallberg Butterfly Gardens are well worth a visit. And, we invite Calypso readers to send in your observations of butterflies or any other insects to Lori at lorih@mcn.org or Julia at jlarke@mcn.org.

Speaking of insects, the North American Pollinator Protection Campaign is publishing a series of guides on planting for pollinators for farmers, land managers and gardeners. Visit the website: http://www.pollinator.org/guides.htm to see the guide for California's north coastal belt.

Amazingly, this group seems to be creating these guides with no input from native plant societies. Let's hope for an expert review in Fremontia or the Bulletin to alert us to any errors or omissions. Isn't it great, though, that someone is calling attention to pollinators? We'd be literally lost without these animals, so we need to practice better pollinator stewardship.

# 2008 Field Trips Re-visited

by Peter Warner

In the last issue of *Calypso*, I recounted 2008 DKY-Sanhedrin field trips through mid-May of this year, with Lori Hubbart providing the details about the splendid May 25 trip to Haven's Neck. The following is a short synopsis of other spring and summer field trips.

17 May: Rickabaugh Glade, Cow Mountain (Bureau of Land Management)
This marshy oasis amidst serpentine chaparral and scrub oak-foothill pine woodlands continues to provide new botanical discoveries even after several years of annual visits organized by Vishnu, Kerry Heise, and other Sanhedrin Chapter botanists. In spite of the very dry spring, this inland location seemed as floriferous as ever, with an abundance of Hooker's catchfly (*Silene hookeri*), the star-tulip *Calochortus uniflorus*, the deep indigo broom-rape *Orobanche uniflora*, the vernal pool denizen *Downingia cuspidata*, and numerous native grasses, rushes, and sedges. BLM appears to have done a fairly good job of restricting off-road vehicle access into the glade and surrounding woodlands in recent years, and I highly recommend this spot for good botanizing throughout the spring.

24 May: Montgomery Woods State Natural Reserve
A tidy group of three ventured along Pruitt Creek into the Ross addition to this park unit, our goal a population of the stunning hybrid *Dichelostemma venustum* (= *D. ida-maia* X *D. congestum*). Although phenological timing or climatic conditions appeared to have reduced the size of the hybrid population this year, at least at this one site near Pruitt Creek, we saw several plants just starting to flower. As the day was wet, we returned to Orr Springs Road to botanize the rich flora along this upper fork of Big River, more of a creek at this point in the watershed. While none were in flower yet, we were amazed at the numbers of *Lilium pardalinum* ssp. *pardalinum* plants growing immediately along the creek. Numerous other delights, such as one of the largest stands of *Delphinium nudicaule* I know, *Clarkia concinna* in abundance, bird's-eye gilia (*Gilia tricolor*), and Danny's skullcap (*Scutellaria tuberosa*), reward the plant enthusiast willing to saunter the road and adjacent habitats. Perhaps the greatest surprise to me: after several years of walking miles to see the hybrid *Dichelostemma*, we found several plants right along the road!

31 May: The Geysers geothermal area, Mayacamas Mountains, Lake and Sonoma Counties
Too many people, too many cars, and too much driving are my lasting memories of this excursion. We didn't start looking at plants much at all until after lunch, and only the few moments of conversation about plants we'd seen along the road kept me on the road for the afternoon.

I only recall a few interesting occasions: Geysers panicgrass (*Panicum acuminatum* var. *acuminatum*) growing almost directly out of steaming mud (otherwise I didn't really see much to distinguish it from the *Panicum acuminatum* common in wet places in coastal prairie), beautiful displays of chaparral pea, *Pickeringia montana*, discussing the traits of a mixed manzanita population with Roger Raiche and others in an attempt to single out individuals of the CNPS List 1B.3 taxon *Arctostaphylos manzanita* ssp. *elegans*, and discovering a new species for myself (though a relatively common plant), *Rubus glaucifolius*.

Finally, our last stop, atop Pine Flat Road, with a few fine specimens of two of my serpentine favorites – the brilliantly orange-flowered *Senecio greenei*, and the charming, intricate blooms of prostrate milkweed, *Asclepias solanoana* -- made the day botanically worthwhile.

2 July: Mendocino Coastal Terrace Prairie and other plant communities – A Wednesday gaggle of 9 cavorted across the prairie and into the Sitka spruce-grand fir forest at Jug Handle State Natural Reserve. Along the Ecological Staircase Trail, we found swamp harebell (*Campanula californica*; CNPS Inventory List 1B.2), amongst false lily-of-the-valley (*Maianthemum dilatatum*), salal (*Gaultheria shallon*), slough sedge (*Carex obnupta*), and other boggy wetland stalwarts of lower and intermediate staircase landings.

Unfortunately, we didn't get so far as the pygmy forest, where we might have found *Carex californica* (CNPS List 2.3) or the striking blue coast gentian, *Gentiana affinis* var. *ovata*. But we did see an especially tall single stem of coast lily (*Lilium maritimum*; CNPS List 1B.1), a plant I'd missed in numerous walks along this trail in the past. The Jug Handle Reserve headlands were vibrant with the lavender-bounded gold disks of seaside daisy (*Erigeron glaucus*), goldenaster (*Heterotheca sessiliflora* ssp. *bolanderi*), and the deep to fading pinks of coast buckwheat (*Eriogonum latifolium*).

The culms and flowers of native grasses, such as California barley (*Hordeum brachyantherum*), tufted

hairgrass (*Deschampsia cespitosa*), ocean-bluff bluegrass (*Poa unilateralis*), and red fescue (*Festuca rubra*), lilted in the gentle breeze, shedding fog's breath in droplets as the day warmed.

Especially stunning on rocky outcrops were the juxtaposition of colors from the grassland palette: powdery pink coast-aster (*Corethrogyne californica*), wine-magenta coast onion (*Allium dichlamydeum*), and neon blue-purple of Ithuriel's spear (*Triteleia laxa*). Even as rest and campfire, snacks and beer beckoned, I managed to lure the group to Glass Beach for a quick tour of this wonderland of botanical diversity (at least 220 species on 38 acres).

Although the years of unabated foot traffic and camping have taken their toll, especially on the soft soils of perched dunes and the coastal bluff scrub plant community, we managed to see several of this park unit's 12 rare plant species, including Howell's spineflower (*Chorizanthe howellii*; federally endangered), swamp harebell (a newly reported population thanks to the sharp eyes of botanist Virginia Moran), and a glorious stand of coast lily. Nearby, as yellow-eyed grass (*Sisyrinchium californicum*) faded, the unusual maroon-purple heads of the exquisite swamp thistle, coast variety (*Cirsium douglasii* var. *douglasii*), lorded above its deeply cut, softly graying fronds.

*Cirsium douglasii* var. *douglasii*, Glass Beach, MacKerricher State Park © 2008 Peter J. Warner

Well, beer only stays cold so long, yet we'd barely begun to delve into the delight of the summer coastal flora. Next year? Same time, new place?

25-29 July:Eastern Sierra Nevada camping trip – Even in an ordinary wildflower-blooming year, I'd be challenged to adequately recap the amazing array of the higher eastern Sierra Nevada. From all eyewitness and hearsay accounts, this was not an ordinary year, as a cool spring appears to have brought about a delayed and superb show of color across mountain slopes and valleys.

A group of eight campers from the Sanhedrin and Milo Baker Chapters descended upon the Bridgeport-Virginia Lakes area, just north of Mono Lake. We stayed two nights near the hot springs at Buckeye, taking the waters (at least a few of us), warm and cool. The Forest Service campground was pleasant under a canopy of Jeffrey pine, although the lower elevation required a long walk to stimulate significant botanical interest. We walked along Eagle Creek west of camp, where horsemint (*Agastache urticifolia*), mountain larkspur (*Delphinium glaucum*), fireweed (*Epilobium angustifolium* ssp. *circumvagum* = *Chamerion a.* ssp. *c.*), Eaton's aster (*Aster eatonii* = *Symphyotrichon eatonii*), and Bigelow's sneezeweed (*Helenium bigelovii*) kept our attention. Still, we had our sights on something more, a place closer to heaven.

As has always been my experience, the trail into Hoover Wilderness from the Virginia Lakes kept our heads turning with its diversity and color. A few of the highlights: bog kalmia (*Kalmia polifolia*) amidst sodden, black-soiled beds of its close relative, red mountain heather (*Phyllodoce breweri*), textured with dwarf willow (*Salix arctica*; "trees" under 5 cm tall!), mousetail ivesia (*Ivesia lycopodoides*), and Drummond's cinquefoil (*Potentilla drummondii*). Nearby, mountain pride (*Penstemon newberryi* var. *newberryi*) and Davidson's beardtongue (*Penstemon davidsonii*) vied for corners of granitic crevices with *Holodiscus microphyllus* and sapling whitebark pines (*Pinus albicaulis*).

Dry sagebrush scrub was lit up with the incandescence of sulphur buckwheat (*Eriogonum umbellatum*) and paintbrush (*Castilleja linariifolia*, *C. applegatei* ssp. *pallida*), and even a sample of rock-fringe (*Epilobium obcordatum*). Meadows were strewn with lupines (*Lupinus lepidus* ssp., *L. meionanthus* ssp.), shooting-stars (*Dodecatheon alpinum*), mountain aster (*Oreostemma alpigenum* = *Aster alpigenus*), and the magenta-bracted darling, Lemmon's paintbrush (*Castilleja lemmonii*).

From wet thickets of willows (*Salix eastwoodiae*, *S. geyeriana*, *S. jepsonii*, *S. orestera*, *S. planifolia*, et al.), we were enraptured by the deep purple chanting of monkshood (*Aconitum columbianum*), flame-orange Sierra lilies (*Lilium parvum*), white-flowering bog orchids (*Platanthera leucostachys*), sunny butterweed (*Senecio triangularis*), peachy

marsh paintbrush (*Castilleja miniata*), indigo brooklimes (*Veronica americana, V. serpyllifolia, V. wormskjoldii*), white-kerneled corn lilies (*Veratrum californicum*), and the zesty, pink-flowered swamp onion (*Allium validum*).

*Dodecatheon alpinum*, near Black Mountain, Hoover Wilderness © 2008 Peter J. Warner

Past mountain columbines (*Aquilegia pubescens*), rosy stonecrop (*Sedum roseum*), mountain junipers (*Juniperus occidentalis*), and whitebark pines shrinking under the demands of elevation, we plodded towards the gateway pass to Hoover Wilderness, above Frog Lakes (east) and Summit Lake (west), and below Black Mountain. At the saddle, a few bold whitebarks hunkered, krummholtzed by wind and sleet. Crystalline twin tarns, fed by melting cornices of ice, glistened in the cool zephyrs, and only an occasional fly sullied the silence. Jagged peaks etched dark polygons into the azure sky, my vista as I lay my head down on a bed of sedge, eyeball to stamens with a shooting star.

Soon back to the hunt, the mosaic of granitic and metamorphic shards at our feet was teeming with alpine survivors: fleabanes (*Erigeron compositus, E. pygmaeus*), buckwheats (*Eriogonum ovalifolium, E. rosense*), dwarf paintbrush (*Castilleja nana*), a few very prostrate junipers (*Juniperus communis*), the sedges *Carex congdonii*, *C. helleri*, and *C. nigricans*, and stenotus (*Stenotus acaulis*), while wind-sheltered crevices sported mountain sorrel (*Oxyria digyna*) and showy polemonium (*Polemonium pulcherrimum* ssp. *pulcherrimum*).

Time in the Sierra is always too short, and as I barely stumbled down the mountain slopes to an evening of friendship and laughter, I vowed never again to let five years pass between visits to this paradise. I pondered all the fabricated constraints I use to delay and deter the peace and gladness these mountain gardens offer while from a whitebark a Clark's nutcracker clamored: "Get wings!" Smiling, I mused, "I can only keep walking." In doing so, I grant myself permission, always, to stop, to see, to smell, to savor, and not least, to sanctify the miracles of life that grace my presence on these mountain slopes, and elsewhere.

## GORSE AND MORE

by Peter Warner

Gorse haystacks at Jug Handle Reserve © 2008 J. Larke

Driving past Jug Handle State Natural Reserve lately reminds me of childhood trips past hayfields of southern New England – only that ain't hay! Once again, the contractor Great Tree Tenders has laid waste to a substantial patch of the obnoxiously spiny invader from the British Isles, gorse (aka, furze, an unlikely moniker for anything but a porcupine's coat!)

Gorse flowers laughing derisively, or...
© 2008 Peter J. Warner

Approximately another 15 acres of the lethal legume has been cut and stacked for burning at an undetermined future date – but it'll be open season on marshmallows! Now, if only State Parks will fund the equipment, treatments, and personnel needed to complete the initial work and the years of diligent follow-up necessary to keep the beast at bay -- you'd think management would get a clue after numerous failed attempts and hundreds of thousands of wasted tax dollars.


....disappearing decisively? © 2008 Peter J. Warner

Gorse, as documented oft-times before, increases wildfire hazard, decreases native plant cover and diversity (including several rare plants), alters soil nitrogen and likely soil pH, reduces access for wildlife and humans, and is generally just a pain in the grass. Tune in later for the next prickly episode of The 100-year Gorse War.

**Fire on the Mountain**

Whether you remember the Marshall Tucker Band song, or prefer the one by the Grateful Dead, "fire on the mountain" became the theme for a blazing start to summer. (If you're really as old as the hills, like me, you might remember these words from the Lou Christie song of the 1960's – "…lightning striking again and again and again and again…" For a good laugh and a shocking reminder of just how old hills are aim your browser at http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_BAepxjMxh0!). I'm sure I wasn't the only one humming these songs recently. On this year's summer solstice, northern California residents got a reality check about our climate, in the form of thousands of lightning strikes that turned northern counties' forests and woodlands into a weeks-long Roman candle display.

In respectful and sober acknowledgement that some people suffered real losses from these fires, dry lightning strikes are part of California's climate, and the long-evolved responses of native plants to burning are ample proof that fire has been here a lot longer than humans. We'd best take heed of this relatively mild lesson, because we don't know whether climate change will reduce or exacerbate the potential hazards of lightning to human lives and property.

I interviewed Renée Pasquinelli, senior environmental scientist with State Parks in the Mendocino District, about the Montgomery Woods (aka Orr Springs) fire. This fire eventually covered about 900 acres south of Orr Springs Road, over the ridge south of the hot springs resort, in the main redwood groves at the Woods and up the canyons and slopes to the east, south, and west. As with many of the Mendocino Lightning Complex fires, it burned in a patchwork created by differential fuel types, fuel moisture, topography, wind speed and direction, and temperature.

This one likely ignited from multiple strikes on trees in the area. Based on Renée's observations, this fire consumed mostly litter (plant debris) on the forest and woodland floor, burning hotter on slopes through tanoak and black huckleberry shrubs, thinning small firs and brush in the process. Occasionally igniting larger stems, notably in fire scars on the old-growth trees, the fire did little damage in the redwood groves, with the loss of but a few big trees that had survived earlier fires for many years on mere shreds of vital cambium. In places, foot-trail soil compaction or patches of relatively moist vegetation forced the cool ground fire to detour its oxidizing ways.

Firefighters at the recent Montgomery Woods fire.
© 2008 Renée Pasquinelli

The fire also burned in grassland along the Reserve's eastern and southern edge and beyond, outside the park unit, where hand-cut fire lines were augmented with bulldozer clearances of fuels. Local erosion could be a forthcoming problem, especially just west of the park unit along Big River, where the fire burned on steep slopes immediately along the riparian zone. Like the fire itself, its long-term ecological effects are likely to be diverse. Fire, as ecosystem disturbance, fosters change and with human influences thrown into

the mix this could be beneficial (e.g., reduction in fuel, enhanced nutrient cycling) or detrimental (stand over-stocking, increased plant invasions) to forest health.

This fire and others will afford opportunities to study the impacts of burning on the various ecosystems and vegetation types involved. Save-the-Redwoods League and the University of California Cooperative Extension have initiated, along with property owners and land managers, an effort to develop a study and monitoring program in recently burned areas. Tara Athan, coordinator for the Mendocino Coast and Inland weed management areas, is also submitting a proposal for funding to conduct weed assessment surveys along fire breaks in the county.

Despite the dry spring and likely low fuel moisture, this fire, and probably most of the others in the area, was not a destructive monster, but a cleansing removal of debris and fuel – lower temperature fires typical over many thousands of years in the outer North Coast Ranges. Such fires not only reduce fuel loads, they promote new growth, recycle nutrients, and likely reduce plant pathogens in litter and soil.

Effective study and monitoring will capture and assess an array of fire impacts and provide greater insight into the role of fire in ecosystem management. Wildfires are a manifestation of long-term ecological and climatic patterns, and from my perspective, relatively low-impact fires are preferable to the conflagrations that have yet to occur if we continue management practices that suppress fire. To remain sustainable, North Coast forests need more relatively gentle fires, and so do the humans who live in and depend on our forests.

**Summer's Beauty Fading? Not So Fast….**

Among the many benefits of living on the northern California coast, the allure of the extended wildflower season is not to be underestimated. A couple of recent jaunts corroborated my observations that the variable phenology (the timing of plant reproductive or growth phases such as flower and fruit production, bud break, or leaf senescence) of coastal California's native plants provides a wealth of blossom-watching to be treasured year-round. Late summer is no time to rest on one's laurels – a little exploration can be as good as gold.

Thanks to Angela Liebenberg of State Parks, who alerted me to a population of *Abronia umbellata* ssp. *breviflora* in the Ten Mile Dunes, I spent a day there traipsing sandy slopes, hollows, and marsh in mid-August. Not only did I find in bloom the pink sand-verbena, a CNPS List 1B.1 species that typically grows in the coastal strand plant community, but also its yellow-flowering cohort, *A. latifolia*, a more common species of strand and coastal dunes, both sharing sand with the delicately flaring pink trumpets of coast morning-glory (*Calystegia soldanella*). Nearby, another List 1B.1 plant, Wolf's evening-primrose (*Oenothera wolfii*), whispered in soft yellow from amidst a riparian thicket of Hooker willow (*Salix hookeriana*), weedy non-natives such as yellow glandweed (*Parentucellia viscosa*) and bird's-foot trefoil *(Lotus corniculatus*), the native lavender-flowering mint *Mentha arvensis*, the pink willow-herb *Epilobium ciliatum*, and violet marsh speedwell, *Veronica scutellata*, a kaleidoscope of colors against the bleaching gray of an errant stack of timber clogging the outlet of Fen Creek.

A few days later, I sought a more familiar population of the pink sand-verbena near the outlet of Virgin Creek – alas, I've not seen any plants there now for 3 years. Nevertheless, I intended to make the most of my short walk, so I caroused the low dunes and spring outlets along the coastal bluffs in search of solace. Much resounding joy! Sand, stones, and seeps were abundant with color and texture: Bolander's goldenaster (*Heterotheca sessiliflora* ssp. *bolanderi*) vying for gaudiest golden composite with gumplant (*Grindelia stricta* ssp. *platyphylla*), while their more demure cousin *Erigeron glaucus* appealed with its pink persistence.

*Eriogonum latifolium*, Virgin Creek headlands, MacKerricher State Park. © 2008 Peter J. Warner

Nearby, coast buckwheat (*Eriogonum latifolium*) sprawled luxuriantly atop dunes and bluffs, perhaps luring me in to meet its steadfast sibling, dune knotweed (*Polygonum paronychia*), the foundation of the local dune scrub plant community. The sight of water (albeit a trickle) soon set my heart racing, as I've long been attracted to the small coastal seeps

that form verdant oases amidst the otherwise parched landscape. I was not to be disappointed, as I soon spied a few of the most boisterously blooming common monkeyflower (*Mimulus guttatus*) plants alive. Not to be outdone, a couple of *Angelica hendersonii* sirens just about fell off the bluff beckoning to me with sweet, lilac-tinted domes of white towering sturdily above ruffles of leathery green.

Back in the soggy, sandy, stony seep, the coastal bluff- and prairie-wetland stalwart cow clover (*Trifolium wormskioldii*) sat astraddle perfect pincushions of the diminutive bulrush *Isolepis cernua* (= *Scirpus cernuus*), punctuating a mat of lemon-yellow flowering silverweed cinquefoil, *Potentilla anserina*.

"Wow, lots of gold on these thar hills," I mused, almost startled as yet two more shimmering dune graces smiled up at me from their sandy digs: beach evening-primrose (*Camissonia cheiranthifolia*) and the gleaming gold-orange north-coastal California poppy (*Eschscholzia californica*). Wending my way across the brown prairie, past native lavender-rayed daisies with little to care about what humans call them (*Symphyotrichum chilense* = *Aster chilensis*, and *Corethrogyne filaginifolia* = *Lessingia filaginifolia* ssp. *californica* = *Corethrogyne californica* = yikes!! Taxonomists be gone!!), I spied yet one more gladdening glimmer in the grassland, coast goldenrod (*Solidago spathulata* ssp. *spatulata*). How fitting a finale was this for my summer stroll -- yet one more gift of gold, reflecting late summer sunlight along the California coast.

## CONSERVATION NOTES

by Lori Hubbart

Here is a heartfelt THANK YOU to those who made extra donations to our chapter for conservation work. It really makes our dedicated volunteers feel good when people let us know that our work is appreciated. When members are able pitch in to help out, it makes our jobs easier.

**State budget woes** – While many of our beloved public programs avoided, for now, the threatened extreme budget cuts, state agencies are still struggling with reduced operating budgets. The Coastal Commission, hardly the powerful, monolithic agency portrayed by hysterical media elements, was already hobbled by lack of funding. State Parks has been forced to cut back on its seasonal/intermittent employees, including resource ecologists. One suspects there are other areas of the overall state budget that could be cut, but they are probably supported by powerful lobbying groups, so their funding stays intact.

**Gualala retaining wall** – This project is now in the hands of the Coastal Commission, since CNPS and several individuals appealed Mendocino County's decision to the Commission. The Commission will evaluate the project from the standpoint of the California Coastal Act, including the county's Local Coastal Plan.

No one knows when the project will come before a Commission meeting, given the lack of staff to work on it. We will keep our members informed when we know more.

**Weed News:** Sale of Noxious weeds – According to Doug Johnson, Director of the California Invasive Plant Council, the state's regulations have been clarified to confirm that any plant listed on the state's noxious weed list, regardless of rating (A, B, C...), cannot be legally sold in the state. Doug got this news from Steve Brown of California Dept. of Food and Agriculture (CDFA), the agency that oversees state noxious weed regulations. To view the list: go to http://ccr.oal.ca.gov/linkedslice/default.asp?SP=CCR-1000&Action=Welcome, click the link: "Search for a Specific Regulatory Section", then put a "3" in the Title box and "4500" in the Section box and click search.

All California native plants have been taken off the list, so it is truly just exotic noxious weeds. Many of the plants on the list are not in the landscape trade, so the no-sell regulation would not matter. You may wonder how this "clarified" rule will be enforced.

Enforcement would come from CDFA and the local agricultural commissioners, but this is such a new development, there hasn't yet been any direction from CDFA. There isn't likely to be any enforcement at the local level unless a group of people raise a fuss and demand it.

One listed plant that is a pest locally is capeweed, *Arctotheca calendula*. This is a ground cover with gray leaves and bright yellow daisies that smothers all in its path. Both vegetative (infertile) and fertile types of capeweed are used as groundcover and both can escape cultivation but it is the fertile type that is listed because it spreads so quickly. Fertile capeweed is a major agricultural weed in Australia.

Activists have learned that smaller retail nurseries will often comply when asked to remove noxious weeds from their stock. Large, big-box garden centers will capitulate to public pressure, seeking to avoid a bad public image. Now, what about the wholesalers who are actually growing the noxious weeds?

## SUDDEN OAK DEATH: California Oak Mortality Task Force – August 2008 Report

http://www.suddenoakdeath.org/html/current_newsletter.html

***Phytophthora ramorum*** has been confirmed in the Little River at Van Damme State Park in Mendocino County near the town of Mendocino. Taken from March water baiting samples, the positive cultures represent the northern most detection of the pathogen that causes Sudden Oak Death in the county. Plans are under way to conduct ground surveys of the watershed for terrestrial symptoms.

**OFFICERS 2008**

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| President: | Lori Hubbart | 882-1655 fax 882-1645 |
| Vice President: | Mario Abreu | 937-3155 |
| Secretary: | Nancy Morin | 882-2528 |
| Treasurer: | Mary Hunter | 785-1150 |

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| CAMPING | Diane Wickstrom | 884-4556 |
| CONSERVATION | Lori Hubbart | 882-1655 |
| EDUCATION | OPEN | |
| FIELD TRIPS | Peter Warner | 964-8242 |
| HISTORIAN | Ramona Crooks | 884-3585 |
| HOSPITALITY: | North Coast - OPEN | |
| South Coast | Roberta Ram | 884-4847 |
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| NEWSLETTER | Julia Larke | 964-2845 |
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| PLANT WATCH | OPEN | |
| POSTERS | Lynn Tuft | 785-3392 |
| PROGRAMS | Lori Hubbart (pro tem) | |
| PUBLICITY | OPEN | |
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| Inland | Clare Wheeler-Sias | 895-3131 |
| Sea Ranch | Elaine Mahaffey | 785-2279 |
| Sonoma Co. | Dorothy Scherer | 882-2850 |
| South Coast | Mary Rhyne | 884-3043 |
| VEGETATION | North & South | OPEN |
| WEBMASTER | Norm Jensen: webmaster@dkycnps.org | |

All phone numbers area code: 707

**CHAPTER WEBPAGE: www.dkycnps.org**. Send in photos and articles to Norm Jensen.

**NEXT BOARD MEETING**: The next Board is meeting is Thursday October 16th 10:00 am at the Point Arena Library. All are welcome to attend. Contact Lori Hubbart for more information 882-1655.

**CALYPSO DEADLINE**: Send newsletter items by October 19th to Julia Larke @ jlarke@mcn.org, 964-2845.

**MEMBERSHIP:** Renewal - your renewal date is listed on the address label of your CNPS Bulletin. Give a friend or neighbor a gift membership! Questions? contact Bob Rutemoeller at 884-4426 or brutem@mcn.org.

New Members:

| | |
|---|---|
| Amitabha Bolton | Fort Bragg |
| Alice Chouteau | Fort Bragg |
| Susan Rudy | Jenner |

**CNPS MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION**
**DOROTHY KING YOUNG CHAPTER**

Membership in the California Native Plant Society is open to all. The task and mission of the Society is to increase awareness, understanding, and appreciation of California native plants. The challenge is to preserve their natural habitat through scientific, educational, and conservation activities. Membership includes subscription to the quarterly *Fremontia*, as well as our local chapter newsletter, the *Calypso*.

Name_____
Address_____
City _____ Zip _____
Tel. _____ E-mail_____

I wish to affiliate with the DKY Chapter_____
or, other chapter _____
(Please check, or name a chapter; CNPS will make assignment if none is specified by applicant.)

| MEMBERSHIP CATEGORY | |
|---|---|
| Student/Retired/Limited Income | $25 |
| Individual | $45 |
| Family/Group/Library | $75 |
| Plant Lover | $100 |
| Patron | $300 |
| Benefactor | $600 |
| Mariposa Lily | $1,500 |

Make check out to the California Native Plant Society; mail check and application to:

Bob Rutemoeller, Membership Committee
DKY Chapter, CNPS PO Box 577
Gualala, CA 95445

*Petasites frigidus var. palmatus* © 2008 Peter J. Warner