President’s Message

Welcome to the new year. And in the spirit of the new year, I have taken over as our webmaster. I am very thankful for the contribution of Greg Lockett, the initial Shasta Chapter CNPS website designer and webmaster, who first launched our chapter into cyberspace.

In collaboration with the state CNPS webmaster, we have patterned the site’s new look after the state CNPS website. It should be fairly easy to navigate as all the information is accessible from the homepage via a series of drop-down menus from the main menu bar, with links to other information.

Check out the following in the main body of the homepage: the left side has links to articles on local endemics, and links to Shasta Chapter CNPS articles that our members have written for the Redding Record Searchlight, including archived articles. In the center of the page is a slide show of photos by Jay Thesken of common northern Sacramento valley and foothill plants. Below the slide show is a link to the Shasta Chapter newsletter, The Firecracker. Below that, in the center, is a link to the state CNPS e-newsletter. On the right of the page is a list of upcoming events.

At the top of the page is a banner with a photo of Mt. Shasta and rabbitbrush taken by Margaret Widdowson, and a firecracker flower. Above the banner, there are links to state CNPS services: “CNPS State Home,” “JOIN CNPS,” “Local Chapters,” and “Publications.”

Below the banner is a line of drop-down menus: “Home,” “Newsletter” (with links to archived Firecracker issues since the January-February 2009 issue—note that these files are in color), “Events” (with subsets of “Calendar” and “Plant Sales”), “Local Plant Lists” (includes those for Sacramento River Trail, Swasey Recreation Area, Salt Creek Trail, and Swift Creek Trail), “Applications” (includes those for Acorn Grant, Oak Tree Grant, Shasta Chapter Scholarship, and Northern California Botanist Scholarship), “Links” (to other websites, categorized as either Local Public Land and Trail Information, or Plant Related Information), “Contacts” (lists all of the elected officers and committee chairs) and “JOIN CNPS” (which is a link to the state CNPS membership page).

Under “Events,” “Plants Sales” is further broken down into “Scheduled Sales” and “Plants Grown, Information, Availability.” The latter provides a list of all the plants that we have grown for previous plant sales, and links to plant information (plant signs produced by Amanda Blank, a Shasta College Horticulture student). In March, we will include a notation here as to which plants will be available for our April 2013 plant sale.

I hope the restructuring of our www.shastacnps.org webpage will be useful to our members, and also help us to recruit new members. If you have any contributions to the website or links to useful plant-related sites, please contact me at ken.kilborn@gmail.com.

-Ken Kilborn,
President, Shasta Chapter California Native Plant Society
2013 Election Results
Congratulations are in order for our newly re-elected officers! They are:

President: Ken Kilborn  
Vice-President: Robin Fallscheer  
Secretary: Margaret Widdowson  
Treasurer: Terri Thesken

Thanks for voting! If you are interested in serving on the CNPS Board, or chairing a committee, please let any Board member know.

Propagation Update!
Not only do our propagators and plant sale helpers work hard in Redding’s summer heat, but now they are toiling away with our new season underway… in the rain, snow, and wind (in addition to some nice sunshine)! Kudos to those who are already helping out with our new propagation season, and for having the vision of what it takes to make a successful plant sale four months from now. At the end of October, we only had 523 plants left in our inventory; at mid-December, we were up to a whopping 1,488 plants, nearly tripling our inventory in only two months! If you would like to participate in propagation sessions, where we pot up rooted plants, make cuttings, plant seeds, transplant plants, or divide and weed our existing stock, be sure to check out our Shasta Chapter Events calendar in this newsletter for both weekday and weekend sessions in January and February. Experienced propagators are more than happy to teach newcomers, so everyone is welcome. Mark your calendars for our first plant sale of 2013: April 11-13 (Thursday-Saturday), as part of the Shasta College Spring Plant Sale.

Please Note
If you have any exemplary California native plants on your property that would add to our plant sale selection and can be propagated as rooted plants or cuttings, please feel free to bring them to any propagation session. Many of our members are “suppliers,” with extra plants and cuttings coming from their own yards to become part of our successful spring and fall plant sales. The proceeds from these plant sales go to fund our Scholarship and Grant programs. Many thanks to all who participate or contribute plants.

Bloomin’ Iris!
For several years, native irises have been popular at our spring plant sale. They have all come from the limited colors in my garden. When the Shasta Iris Society had its show at the mall, I asked if any members were interested in California native iris and was directed to Sandy Olson. Sandy offered to let CNPS take divisions this year from her garden. Sandy’s garden is extensively planted with bulbs, shrubs, and native and nonnative irises. Her Pacific Coast native irises are almost all named cultivars that won awards when they were first introduced.

I found several volunteers who wanted to share the fun. Jay & Terri Thesken and I took divisions from ten new colors. Barbara Peck and I cleaned, trimmed, and planted those into 72 gallon-pots. Later, Susan Gallaugher, Margaret Widdowson, Karen Little, and I collected another eight new colors. Margaret Widdowson, Susan & Nicki Gallaugher, and I potted these into another 100 pots. I want to thank those iris helpers who made it such a pleasant chore this year.

Come spring, we will be offering a spectacular collection of wonderfully robust irises that should thrive for anyone. Members should come early to choose from many that are in limited supply. Many will be blooming; almost all will have good photos showing their colors. Ken Kilborn has promised to have labels printed.

-David Fritchle,  
Plant Propagation Assistant

Fruit Tree Pruning Classes
I am going to teach classes again this year on fruit tree pruning. The classes will be held at Wyntour Nursery on the last two Saturdays in January (January 19 and 26). Times are 10 AM and 1 PM on both days, and the nursery would like you to pre-register, if possible, at 365-2256.

Additionally, as I do every year, I will be offering a tree restoration workshop at Whiskeytown’s Camden House on the first Saturday in February (February 2). Although the information is applicable to all types of trees, especially fruit trees, the emphasis will be on the restoration of the old 100- to 150-year old apple trees at the site. Please bring your own tools and be prepared to have some hands-on experience at the site. This is a wonderful way to learn about tree care, and also to give back to the community by helping with the restoration of these historic old trees. Please contact me for more information or to RSVP.

-Rico Montenegro,  
365-1920; ricosplants@hotmail.com

A Warm Welcome to Our Newest Chapter Members!
Marilyn McEvoy, Weaverville  
Linda McMahon, Palo Cedro  
David Rowney & Wilhelmina White, Redding
Fieldtrip Follow-ups

Lacking Lichens

Rain cancelled the November 17 fieldtrip. However, plenty of lichens were noted on the following fieldtrip, on November 24.

Upper Salt Creek Saunter

Sunny skies brought out 19 participants to the November 24 upper Salt Creek walk; some were new to CNPS walks. The walk traversed a gray pine-blue oak woodland with ephemeral upper Salt Creek running through it. This area was severely impacted by mining during the Gold Rush, but is recovering nicely. A plant list of common trees and shrubs along the trail, including a description of the habitat, was given to participants. We identified each plant on the list and identified many as to family and importance in the ecosystem.

- David Ledger

Middle Creek Meander

On a blustery early-winter December 1, two CNPS members (the leaders of the hike) showed up for a vigorous late-fall colors walk on the Middle Creek Trail in west Redding. Middle Creek was full and rushing with cascades and waterfalls, through the narrow canyon adjacent to the Middle Creek Trail as we walked downhill from Highway 299 to Iron Mountain Road and back. We saw five of our local oaks, including black oak, blue oak, interior live oak, canyon live oak, and oracle oak. The toyon were beautiful, with clusters of red berries, living up to their common name of Christmas-berry. Fall colors included the black oak, willow, and grape turning yellow. The recent rain made everything fresh and turned the trunks and branches of the redberry and whiteleaf manzanita to a striking deep red. We also saw snowdrop bush with seedpods, gray pine, knobcone pine, ponderosa pine, honeysuckle, and cudweed. An added attraction to this very-close-to-town hike were the historic artifacts such as old foundations, rock walls, and cribbing along the historic 1880s Redding-to-Shasta road.

-Terri Thesken

Fieldtrip leader David Ledger (second from left) providing instruction on the November 24 upper Salt Creek hike. David has become a favorite amongst fieldtrip takers for his ability to make the local botany accessible to everyone, including newcomers. Photo by Susan Gallaugher.

Toyon berries (above) and several lichens and mosses (three photos to the right) seen on the November 24 fieldtrip to upper Salt Creek. Photos by Susan Gallaugher.

Terri Thesken on the Middle Creek Trail in Redding, on the December 1 late-fall colors hike. Photo by Jay Thesken.
On fieldtrips in the Redding area, we frequently see witches’ brooms on ponderosa pines. They are a congested mass of pine needles and stems on one or more areas of a tree and are most often caused by dwarf mistletoe (although some witches’ brooms can be caused by rust fungi).

Dwarf mistletoe, *Arceuthobium campylopodum*, is a wholly parasitic plant: it gets all of its water, minerals, and food from the host conifer by inserting its “roots” (haustoria) into the cambium and xylem tissues. It belongs to the family Viscaceae. (There are two other species of dwarf mistletoe in California).

The other common mistletoe in our area is American mistletoe, *Phoradendron serotinum*, which is a hemiparasite, which means it gets its water and minerals from the tree but produces its own food through photosynthesis. It is commonly found on valley oaks, and is one of the common “Christmas” mistletoes. There is another genus of “true” mistletoe in California, *Viscum*, which is an invasive plant from Europe, and usually grows on flowering trees. It is also used as a Christmas mistletoe.

Dwarf mistletoe grows in clumps on conifer branches and is usually yellow, olive-green, or brown. The plant is dioecious with inconspicuous male and female flowers on separate plants often growing in clumps near each other on the same conifer stem. The branches of the mistletoe are usually two to four inches long but can reach eight inches. It is most visible on gray pines as it usually does not form witches’ broom on this tree so it easily stands out, and younger gray pines are often infected on branches near ground level. On ponderosa pines, you have to look harder for a clump on or near the witches’ broom, often by using binoculars.

In late summer and fall, you may see a mass of translucent light to dark blue berries about 3/8” long on the plant. Each berry has one seed in it that is dispersed by a hydrostatic explosive release, when conditions are right, that propels the seed at speeds up to 60 mph and to distances up to 50 ft. If you wrap your hand around a fruiting plant, you can feel the explosion of the berries in your hand, leaving you with a sticky mess to wipe off.

The seeds are propelled to other conifer branches where they wait for the right conditions to germinate in the spring. They adhere to the needles or bark by the sticky substance coating the seeds. By summer, the germinated seed will send haustoria into the host, but it will take another two years before shoots will develop. It will take up to five years for the plant to be fertile and another year for ripe fruit to mature. Pollination is primarily by insects.

*A. campylopodum* was formerly divided into 11 separate species that grew on different conifers, but has since been determined to be one species. It can cause different growth patterns on different conifers, which is one reason it was mistakenly divided into 11 different species. In addition to ponderosa pine, dwarf mistletoe also grows on other pines (except lodgepole), fir, hemlock, and occasionally spruce.

For those wanting to see the plant up close, it grows along many trees on the BLM’s Mule Mountain trail complex. We will see some up close on the February 9 Stoney Gulch and Princes Ditch Trail fieldtrip. (See Calendar, page 6.)

-David Ledger,
Fieldtrip Chair

**Sources:**


Northern California Botanists 2013 Symposium

From the Redwoods to the Sagebrush:
Botany Ranging Far and Wide

Join us January 14-15 for the 5th botanical symposium hosted by Northern California Botanists, to be held in the Bell Memorial Union on the campus of California State University in Chico. Optional botanical workshops will be held on January 16. A 2-day schedule of presentations by working botanists will include sessions on biogeography, restoration and recovery, redwood and North Coast botany and ecology, non-seed plants, seed and propagule biology of northern California plants, Great Basin ecology, and new discoveries. Registration is still open. Please see www.norcalbotanists.org for further information.

Jepson Herbarium Weekend Workshops

The Friends of the Jepson Herbarium is offering the following winter 2013 workshops. They require pre-registration and fees, and take place at UC Berkeley, unless otherwise noted. Details on these workshops (as well as other wait-listed workshops) can be found at http://ucjeps.berkeley.edu/workshops/ For further information, contact jepsonworkshops@berkeley.edu or 510/643-7008.

- **January 25-27.** *Arctostaphylos.* Tom Parker and Michael Vasey. (Location: UC Hastings Reserve, Carmel Valley.)
- **March 16.** *Seaweeds: Details and Data.* Kathy Ann Miller.
- **March 30-31.** *Introduction to Plant Morphology.* Anna Larsen.

Chico Herbarium Workshops

The following 2013 Saturday workshops are being offered by CSU, Chico, Friends of the Herbarium and will be conducted on the CSU, Chico, campus. For details about these workshops and registration information, please go to www.csuchico.edu/biol/Herb/Events.html

- **January 19.** *Introduction into Mushroom Foraging and Identification.* Phil Carpenter.
- **February 9.** *The Wild Dessert: Preparing Food from Native Plants.* Alicia Funk.
- **March 9.** *Introduction to Lichen Identification.* Tom Carlberg.

**Events of Others**

**January 1, Tuesday.** Banana Belt, Upper Bidwell Park Hike. Meet at Horseshoe Lake in Upper Bidwell Park (Parking Area E) at 10 AM. Mt. Lassen Chapter CNPS. Wes Dempsey: 342-2293; Gerry Ingo: 893-5123.


**January 24-27, Thursday-Sunday.** 14th Annual Snow Goose Festival in Butte County. Events include birding and wildlife fieldtrips, presentations, activities and workshops. Visit www.snowgoosefestival.org or call 345-1865 for registration and further information.

**January 26, Saturday.** Walk with the Horticulture Manager. 10:30 AM to noon. Fee. McConnell Arboretum and Botanical Gardens. 242-3178.


**February 23, Saturday.** Walk with the Horticulture Manager. 10:30 AM to noon. Fee. McConnell Arboretum and Botanical Gardens. 242-3178.

**CNPS Workshops and Professional Training**

The following winter 2013 workshops are being offered by CNPS. Discounted registration fees are available to CNPS members. See http://cnps.org/cnps/education/workshops/ for full descriptions and registration information. Please contact Josie Crawford at jcrawford@cnps.org or 916/447-2677 ext. 205 for further information.

**January 16-18.** *Vegetation Mapping.* (Location: UC Berkeley Geospatial Innovation Facility and Marin Municipal Water District, Mt Tamalpais.) Dr. Todd Keeler-Wolf, Julie Evens, and John Menke.

**March 20-21.** *Conducting Rare Plant Surveys.* (Location: TBD.) Heath Bartosh and Aaron Sims.

**Shasta Chapter CNPS Directory**

**ADDRESS:** PO BOX 990194, REDDING, CA 96099-0194

**WEB SITE:** www.shastacnps.org

**2013 OFFICERS**

- **PRESIDENT** – Ken Kilborn (221-2339; ken.kilborn@gmail.com)
- **VICE PRESIDENT** – Robin Fallscheer (225-2311)
- **TREASURER** – Terri Thesken (221-0906)
- **SECRETARY** – Margaret Widdowson (223-4732)
- **FIELDTRIP CHAIR** – David Ledger (355-8542)
- **GRANTS COMMITTEE CHAIR** – Donal Jonio (221-4280)
- **MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE CHAIR** – Laurie Burk (347-0849)
- **NEWSLETTER EDITOR** – Laurie Burk (347-0849)
- **PLANT PROPAGATION MANAGER** – Terri Thesken (221-0906)
- **SCHOLARSHIP COMMITTEE CHAIR** – Jay Thesken (221-0906)
- **WEB MASTER** – Ken Kilborn (221-2339; ken.kilborn@gmail.com)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event Description</th>
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<tr>
<td>Jan. 1</td>
<td><strong>Fieldtrip.</strong> Start the New Year off right with an easy to moderate 4-mile walk starting at Mary Lake and proceeding up the Westside Trail through chaparral and oak woodland. We should see manzanita, coyote brush, Indian warrior, and hound’s tongue starting to bloom. We will identify many different plants typical of chaparral and oak woodlands. There are great views of Redding and surrounding areas at the top of the trail. Meet at 10 AM at Mary Lake and Lakeshore drives. No dogs, please. Rain date: January 5. For more information, call <strong>David Ledger</strong> at 355-8542.</td>
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<td>Jan. 4</td>
<td><strong>Weekday Plant Propagation Session.</strong> Join us for a 2-hour weekday work session starting at 10 AM at the Shasta College greenhouses. The greenhouses are located toward the back of Shasta College, near the livestock barns. We will be weeding, dividing existing plants, making cuttings, and planting any other new materials you may bring! Bring rooted divisions, seedlings, and cuttings of native plants if you have them, and clippers or any other tools you might need. Please call <strong>Jay &amp; Terri Thesken</strong> at 221-0906 for further information.</td>
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<td>Jan. 17</td>
<td><strong>Chapter Meeting.</strong> Welcome back to the first meeting of the New Year! Join us for a program by <strong>Gregg Werner,</strong> Senior Project Director for the California Central Valley and Mountains sector of The Nature Conservancy. Gregg is also Chairman of the Board for our local Shasta Land Trust. Gregg will tell us about The Nature Conservancy’s many projects in northern California, especially those involving the Shasta River and Klamath River systems in Siskiyou County. Meet at 7 PM at the Shasta College Health Science &amp; University Programs building in downtown Redding, 1400 Market Street, Community Room 8220 (clock tower building at the north end of the Market Street Promenade; enter on south side of building). A Board meeting will be held before the regular meeting, at 5:30 PM at Angelo’s Pizza Parlour in the Foundry Square, 1774 California Street, Redding.</td>
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<td>Jan. 19</td>
<td><strong>Fieldtrip.</strong> Join <strong>Jay &amp; Terri Thesken</strong> for a 3- to 4-mile hike on a trail in the Redding area (Swasey, Mule Mountain, or Cloverdale Loop trails) to identify our local native plants in their winter, dormant forms. We may even see some very early bloomers such as milkmaids, manzanita, Indian warrior, or shooting stars. Bring lunch, water, and adequate hiking footwear. Meet in Redding at 9 AM at the south side of City Hall (Parkview Avenue side), 777 Cypress Avenue. Heavy rain or snow cancels. No dogs, please. Call Jay &amp; Terri at 221-0906 for details.</td>
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<td>Jan. 20</td>
<td><strong>Plant Propagation Session.</strong> Two-hour work session starting at 10 AM at the Shasta College greenhouses. The greenhouses are located toward the back of Shasta College, near the livestock barns. We will be potting up new materials, dividing existing stock, and weeding. Bring any rooted divisions and seedlings of native plants that you have, and clippers or any other tools you might need. Please call <strong>Jay &amp; Terri Thesken</strong> at 221-0906 for further information.</td>
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<td>Jan. 26</td>
<td><strong>Fieldtrip: Meiner’s Gulch Loop Trail.</strong> This is a fairly easy 3-mile hike in the BLM Swasey Recreation area west of Redding. The trail runs through blue oak-gray pine woodland, chaparral, and along an ephemeral stream with a variety of native plants. A plant list will be given to participants. Meet at the Meiner’s Gulch Trailhead at 9 AM. Take Swasey Drive to the BLM Swasey Recreation Area, drive west on the main gravel road for one mile to the trailhead at the end of the road. No dogs, please. For more information, call <strong>David Ledger</strong> at 355-8542.</td>
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<td>Feb. 9</td>
<td><strong>Fieldtrip: Stoney Gulch and Princess Ditch Trail.</strong> This trail is on the new BLM Mule Mountain trail complex. The trail starts near the site of the old mining town of Muletown and meanders along an old water ditch in blue oak-gray pine woodland and chaparral and then goes up a fairly steep slope to a ridge overlooking Swasey Drive. Many of the gray pines in this area are infected with dwarf mistletoe, and it will be fairly easy to identify the male and female plants. This 4- to 5-mile trail, of moderate difficulty, passes through a beautiful, fairly secluded area. Meet at Redding City Hall’s south parking lot on Parkview Avenue at 9 AM. No dogs please. For more information, please call <strong>David Ledger</strong> at 355-8542.</td>
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<td>Feb. 14</td>
<td><strong>Valentine’s Day Weekday Plant Propagation Session.</strong> We will likely have loads of plants and cuttings that need to be propagated, and weeding to do, so we will have another February weekday 2-hour work session starting at 11 AM (instead of our usual 10 AM) at the Shasta College greenhouses. Bring clippers and any other tools you might need. Please call <strong>Jay &amp; Terri Thesken</strong> at 221-0906 for further information.</td>
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<td>Feb. 16</td>
<td><strong>Fieldtrip: Hornbeck Trail.</strong> This 4-mile loop in north Redding follows part of the route of the historic Quartz Railroad. The first half of the walk is level and winds through mixed chaparral and oak woodland; the return trip drops down near Keswick Lake and its riparian-influenced plants. Meet at Redding City Hall’s south parking lot on Parkview Avenue at 9 AM to carpool to the trailhead. No dogs, please. For more information, please call <strong>David Ledger</strong> at 355-8542.</td>
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<td>Feb. 21</td>
<td><strong>Chapter Meeting.</strong> Join us for a photo presentation of Rocky Mountain and Montana wildflowers by <strong>Jay &amp; Terri Thesken,</strong> Shasta Chapter members, from their July 2012 trip to points north. This will also include wildflowers and wildlife at Glacier National Park. Meet at 7 PM at the Shasta College Health Science &amp; University Programs building in downtown Redding, 1400 Market Street, Community Room 8220 (clock tower building at the north end of the Market Street Promenade; enter on south side of building). A Board meeting will be held before the regular meeting, at 5:30 PM at Angelo’s Pizza Parlour in the Foundry Square, 1774 California Street, Redding.</td>
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<td>Feb. 24</td>
<td><strong>Plant Propagation Session.</strong> Join us for our regular 2-hour work session starting at 10 AM at the Shasta College greenhouses. The greenhouses are located toward the back of Shasta College, near the livestock barns. We will be potting up new rooted materials from our December-January cuttings. Bring clippers and any other tools you might need. Please call <strong>Jay &amp; Terri Thesken</strong> at 221-0906 for further information.</td>
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