



California Native Plant Society
Santa Clara Valley Chapter

THE BLAZING STAR

January-February 2022

NATIVE PLANT LECTURE SERIES

The talks in the CNPS SCV Native Plant Lecture Series cover a broad range of topics with a native plant theme. Whether you're curious about native plants, an experienced or aspiring native plant gardener or a professional botanist, you will find something to interest and educate you in our offerings. From gardening to plant science to conservation to tours of botanical hot spots, if you're interested in California's native plants, there's something here for you.

Most of our lectures take place on **Wednesday evenings at 7:30pm** and are live-streamed simultaneously to Zoom and YouTube. View talks on our YouTube channel at www.youtube.com/c/CNPSSantaClaraValley (**no registration needed**) or **join on Zoom** by registering with the Zoom link provided in each lecture's description.

Recordings of past talks may be viewed on our YouTube channel.



Henry Morales

California native plant garden in Martial Cottle park

**Profile of a Garden: Martial Cottle Native Plant Garden, a talk by Stephanie Morris
Wednesday, January 12 7:30 - 9:00 PM**

Zoom registration: www.cnps-scv.org/npls-20220112

Community gardens can serve as native habitat havens, connecting people with plants and soil, and connecting wildlife with the spaces needed to flourish. Join us for a virtual tour of the UC Master Gardeners Native Plant Demonstration Garden at Martial Cottle Park and learn about one of the dedicated volunteers who tends this garden, Ann Finney. We hope this talk will become one of a series that profiles volunteers and community gardens.

Learn when this garden was established in San Jose and enjoy captivating photos by Hank Morales showing the plants in the garden, seasonal highlights, and wildlife. What is most rewarding for Ann as she volunteers at the garden? What are the challenges to be learned from? What are her primary maintenance activities and what aspects of the garden fuel her continued volunteering?

The garden includes a pollinator garden that is 100% California native, an area dedicated for large California native shrubs and trees, and some spaces that are combinations of native and Mediterranean plants. This talk was inspired by an in-person tour of this garden last year. It's a place worth exploring again with our virtual audience as we also ponder: what makes a volunteer?

Stephanie Morris is a Landscape Architect with a focus on Native Plant Design. Ann Finney is a Master Gardener who volunteers at UC Master Gardeners Native Plant Demonstration Garden at Martial Cottle Park.

**Treasure Hunting after the 2020 Fires
a talk by Amy Patten
Wednesday, January 19 7:30 - 9:00 PM**

Zoom registration: www.cnps-scv.org/npls-20220119

In 2021, CNPS staff and collaborators visited the burn area of the CZU Complex and SCU Complex Fires to conduct post-fire rare plant and vegetation surveys. CNPS Rare Plant Treasure Hunt Manager Amy Patten will share photos, stories, and rare plant discoveries from field work

in the burn zones of the Santa Cruz Mountains and Diablo Range.



Amy Patten is a staff member at the CNPS state office in the Rare Plant Program. Amy manages the Rare Plant Treasure Hunt, a community science effort which collects up-to-date information on rare plant populations to improve conservation and management and provides botany skills

training to volunteers. Amy is a longtime resident of Santa Cruz County and is passionate about our local natural history and conservation. Amy earned a B.S. in Ecology and Evolutionary Biology from U.C. Santa Cruz in 2009.

**Picking the Perfect Plants for your Garden with Calscape, a talk by Vivian Neou
Wednesday, February 2 7:30 - 9:00 PM**

Zoom registration: www.cnps-scv.org/npls-20220202

Finding the right native plants for your garden can be challenging. Calscape can make it easy. From showing you a list of plants that grow naturally at your site to picking the plants that will attract and support the most butterflies, Calscape provides a wealth of resources to help you choose and find the best plants. In this talk, Vivian Neou will introduce you to Calscape – including how to create a customized plant list, how to choose the right tree, shrub or perennial, and where you can purchase the plants you want.

Visit Calscape, a project of state CNPS created with the help of many sources, at www.calscape.org.

Vivian Neou is a retired software executive. She became interested in native plants after she retired and started hiking. That led her to the CNPS SCV Nursery, where she became an active volunteer and eventually Nursery Manager. Not wanting to leave her technology background unused, she also became our CNPS Chapter's Technology Coordinator. Vivian is a huge fan of Calscape and is on the Calscape advisory committee.

**Favorite Native Plant Books and Resources,
Panel Presentation and Interactive Discussion
Wednesday, February 9 7:30 - 9:00 PM**

Zoom registration: www.cnps-scv.org/npls-20220209

Just getting started with native plant gardening or trying to find solutions in your existing garden? In this talk, experienced gardeners will discuss the books they find most helpful. The talk will be interactive: there will be ample time for the audience to ask questions, comment on books, and suggest more helpful books or other resources. Come to learn or to share your knowledge!

Madeline Morrow will moderate the panel and discussion. Madeline is a past President of our CNPS Chapter and current board member. Her garden was featured in *Bay Nature* magazine in March 2013 and has been on the Growing Natives Garden Tour for many years.

Please see www.cnps-scv.org/native-plant-lecture-series for more information and additional talks.



Stephanie Morris

Volunteer Ann Finney. Learn more about Ann and the garden she maintains by attending our January 12 lecture described on page 1.

Help Shape Native Plant Lecture Series

The horticulture talks in the Native Plant Lecture Series are organized by the Garden Programs Committee. The next committee meeting will be held via Zoom on **Monday, January 31 at 7:30pm**. If you have ideas for talks please join us. Committee meetings are open to all who are interested in helping with the lecture series. For more info, please contact Vivian Neou at techchair@cnps-scv.org.

CHAPTER ACTIVITIES

CNPS SCV Nursery at Hidden Villa

The nursery continues to propagate plants for sale and raise funds for the Chapter through sales from its online store at california-native-plant-society-santa-clara-valley-

chapter.square.site. Starting in January, the online store will be open for sales during the first two weeks of each month. The rest of the month, it will be possible to browse the store to get an idea of what's available, but purchasing will be unavailable.

In addition to plants, the nursery's online store includes T-shirts, books, labels and plant signs. Orders can be scheduled for pick-up at the nursery in Los Altos or delivered between Belmont and San Jose.

At this time we are unable to accept new volunteers at the nursery. We are hoping to accommodate more volunteers in the spring. Information will be available on our Chapter web site when the sessions are scheduled.

Proceeds from plant sales are the major source of funding for Chapter activities and scholarships.

November 6 Election Report

By Radhika Thekkath, incoming Chapter President

On our Chapter's election night, November 6, a new slate of Chapter officers was elected: Priya Pharate returning as Vice President, Brett Tucker as Treasurer, Vivian Neou as Past President and myself as President and Chapter Council Delegate. Stephen Buckhout conducted the election and thanked our outgoing officers, chairs, committee members, and nursery volunteers. I would like to shine a brief light on these volunteers to make their valuable contribution visible to our membership.

First, I would like to thank **Vivian Neou**, our outgoing President of three years, who has kept the Chapter alive and active on Zoom for the past year and a half. She helped bring a wonderful lineup of speakers and garden tours online, while keeping our native plant nursery running smoothly and moving the store online. She also continued in her role as coordinator of our technology committee. As she steps down as the Chapter President, she is taking on a role on the State CNPS Board. Thank you again Vivian!

Janet Hoffmann, our treasurer for three years, streamlined our accounting and reporting processes and deserves credit for a smooth transition to Brett Tucker, our incoming Treasurer and Joseph Vo, our new bookkeeper. Thank you, Janet!

I would also like to thank our other outgoing officers and committee members: **Madeline Morrow**, Past President; **Laurie Moody**, Recording Secretary; **Karen Cotter**, Rare Plants; **Ann Dwan**, Book Sales; **Joerg Lohse**, Field Trip Chair; **Johanna Kwan**, Board member; and **Stephen**

Rosenthal, Chair – Rare Plants & Invasive Plants, Santa Clara County.

And, last but not least, on behalf of the entire Chapter, I applaud the nursery volunteers who continued to show up through the pandemic, working alone at the nursery to keep everyone safe, doing propagation, potting, getting plants ready to sell and delivering online sales. Learn more about these volunteers in the next article.



Vivian Neou

Since the pandemic, volunteers have been mostly working one at a time at the CNPS-SCV nursery. Here's a rare "group shot" consisting of **two** volunteers. December 2021

Nursery Volunteers Receive the Chapter Volunteer Spotlight Award

The Spotlight award is intended to honor volunteers who have made significant contributions to the Chapter. At this time, we would like to cast a bright spotlight on **Melanie Cross, Elaine Erikson, Pam Gage, Linda Hsi, Barbara Hunt, John Jenkins, Renate Kempf, Anderson Lee, Tara Lee, Penny Pollock, and Vivian Neou**. This group of people put in heroic work to keep our nursery running smoothly during these trying times and has raised more money than ever before.

Plants don't stop growing or needing care just because a global pandemic makes it difficult for their caregivers to attend to their needs. While there were a few weeks at the start of the pandemic when the shutdown prevented anyone from going to the nursery, many in the core volunteer group returned as soon as health regulations allowed – putting in time at least once a week.

Because the regulations made it impossible to have multiple volunteers at the nursery at the same time, the nursery's traditional group workdays were not an option after the

pandemic started. Instead, a small core group of experienced volunteers took on the work that was formerly handled by a much larger set of people.

The group set up a schedule so that necessary work could be covered with only one volunteer at the nursery at a time. With the exception of Tara Lee, who was joined by her son Anderson, there was a single volunteer at the nursery almost every day of the week. With such a small crew, it was critical for each volunteer to show up on their designated day – and everyone stepped up. If anyone had to miss their usual workday, they would often find another time to come in to make up the time. The group had an extraordinary level of shared responsibility for the plants' welfare and support for each other.

Here are some examples of the dedication of this group. Pam Gage, the lead propagator, often came in twice a week because she was worried that there were not enough plants in the pipeline to meet demand. Elaine Erikson showed up on short notice when infrastructure malfunctioned and single-handedly fixed the problems – including searching out hard-to-find-parts and coming up with creative solutions to keep wildlife from destroying the nursery's irrigation controller wiring. John Jenkins never hesitated to make the trip up to Hidden Villa from Morgan Hill when things were broken and his help was needed. The group made sure the nursery was well stocked, a big challenge when COVID greatly increased the demand for alcohol to sterilize materials and supply chain problems caused shortages of many other things.

The importance of the work done at the nursery and the funds provided by the plant sales made possible by that work cannot be overemphasized. This income supports all other work done by the Chapter: scholarships, conservation work, science and garden talks, the garden tour, the wildflower show and more. For example, in 2022 the Chapter will award scholarships to students totaling \$8,750, a new high, an achievement that makes us happy and proud.

This is an amazing group of volunteers who have generously contributed many, many hours to support the Chapter over the last couple years and we are proud to present the Volunteer Spotlight Award to them.

Carol Mattsson is the 2021 Outstanding Volunteer

If you were present at our Chapter's annual meeting night on November 6, then you would know that Carol Mattsson, the editor of this *Blazing Star* newsletter, was the recipient of the Chapter's 2021 Outstanding Volunteer Award. This

is the third year of this annual award recognizing a volunteer who has put in at least a decade of service to CNPS, and who has gone above and beyond in their contributions to the Chapter. We consider the Outstanding Volunteer Award to be our Chapter equivalent of becoming a CNPS Fellow.

Jean Struthers recruited Carol Mattsson in 2001 when the Chapter found itself without a newsletter editor, a critical position that had been vacated some months prior. Jean connected Carol with Georgia Stigall in Georgia's then-role as Chapter Vice President. After a memorable meeting at a coffee shop on a very welcome rainy day, Carol agreed to try out the Editor position. This quickly revealed that Carol was a great fit for the role, as she immediately hit the ground running, producing her first *Blazing Star* issue for November-December 2001. And in all the years since, she has made each and every newsletter – a whopping 120 issues – engaging, informative and enjoyable.

For 20 years Carol has done a consistently great job of “herding cats” in coaxing our various chairs, officers and others to submit content. She tracks recurring events, critical topics, member memorials and more. She politely and firmly reminds us what is missing and to submit articles and photographs. Carol ensures that reviewers are available and that they get back to her in time to meet her deadlines. Carol's attention to detail, her tenacity, her cheerfulness and her diplomacy, combine to ensure that the content is complete and accurate. Carol also brings her superb photography skills, including her eye for others with those skills, to enrich and balance our newsletter content.

Many editors understandably don't want to be involved in additional tasks once an edition is ready for publication, because they've already worked hard to compile and arrange the content. And this is yet another area in which



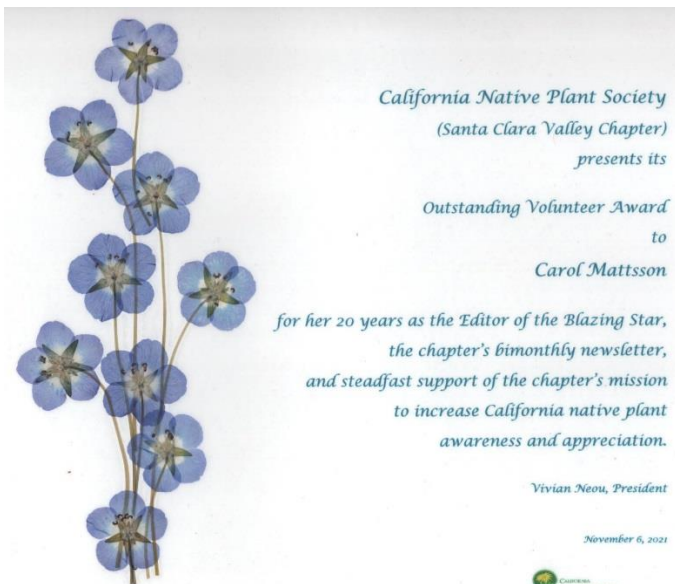
Hilary Hug
Chapter newsletter editor Carol Mattsson at Magic's Stanford Dish Deer Creek planting, January 2016

Carol goes above and beyond. She not only produces a finished newsletter but ensures that it is uploaded to our website and notifies the Chapter members via email that it's available. In the many years that we did postal mailings for each edition, more often than not Carol would participate in the mailing parties, bringing her skills and good spirit to that critical function as well. Our Chapter has transitioned to a once-yearly postal mailing, and in August this past year, Carol did indeed volunteer for that work.

And there's more! Year after year for the past two decades, Carol has also volunteered enthusiastically at other Chapter events like our plant sales, the Wildflower shows, the nursery, habitat restoration projects, and more. She was a Board member for many years and was a consistently-positive contributor. She is also an avid and inquisitive participant on many of our field trips.

On behalf of the Santa Clara Valley Chapter of the California Native Plant Society, we are very proud of and grateful to Carol Mattsson for her 20 years volunteering as our *Blazing Star* Editor and her many other volunteer accomplishments; we congratulate her for this very richly deserved honor!

Editor's note: I feel honored and proud to receive this award. Thank you. In turn, I thank all the people who have provided over the years, the articles and photos that keep our newsletter informative and relevant. The submittal deadline date and contact info are provided at the end of each issue of the *Blazing Star*.



Three Cheers! A Tribute to Vivian Neou

By Judy Fenerty, Chapter Board Member

This is a thank you note to Vivian Neou, who was our Chapter President for the last three years, and who really demonstrated her leadership during the last two years of pandemic shutdown and virtual life. 2020 started out promising, with our Chapter making plans for spring field trips, the Wildflower Show, and our Growing Natives Garden Tour. But by early March we realized that all our in-person events would have to be canceled. In other circumstances, our Chapter might have drifted apart and had a long, lonely hiatus. However, Vivian Neou was our Chapter President – so we didn't miss a beat! Thanks to Vivian's foresight, our Chapter was an early adopter of Zoom, and quickly our regular meetings were entirely virtual.



Radhika Thekkath
Vivian Neou, in Edgewood Preserve November 2021

Then the Chapter rapidly started to tackle the more difficult tasks – the Growing Natives Garden Tour and our Chapter programs. Vivian figured out how to stream our programs simultaneously on Zoom and YouTube, and quickly assembled a team to present a “native plant lecture series.” Since its start in early 2020, our new Chapter YouTube channel now includes 12 virtual garden tours, 19 Gardening with Natives talks, and 26 general Chapter programs, including our 2020 Annual Meeting featuring Dr. Doug Tallamy. These talks have generated thousands of views, provide an enduring resource for native plant knowledge, and would not have been available without Vivian's vision, technical expertise, and countless hours of work.

In addition to taking us into the virtual age with our meetings and programs, Vivian was leading us in the tangible world as well. In her capacity as Nursery Manager, she created an online store; arranged plant deliveries, pickups, and public sales; supervised nursery volunteers; and promoted the nursery to the public. Thanks to Vivian and the dedication of the core nursery volunteers, we are setting records for plant sales! Without her hard work and technical capabilities, we would not have

continued to generate income for the Chapter or native plants for our landscapes.

These are just two of the many, many ways Vivian has enriched our Chapter since she joined us. And she was also our Chapter Council Delegate and contributed her expertise to a number of state-level CNPS committees and initiatives. And, as she often reminds us, her real interest is the technology side of things! We have been so lucky to have had her as our President (and Nursery Manager, Technology Coordinator, Chapter Council Delegate, Wildflower Show Coordinator, etc., etc.). We wish her all the best as she begins her new role as Vice President of the CNPS State Board.

Outgoing President's Retrospective

By Vivian Neou, Chapter Outgoing President

It's been a pleasure and privilege to serve as the Chapter's president for the past three years. When I took on the role, I was not expecting a pandemic to upend the world. While it has been a different kind of challenge than I expected, I'm proud of our CNPS Chapter's accomplishments in the face of adversity.

When the pandemic made it impossible to continue our science programs and Gardening with Natives talks at local libraries, or hold our Growing Natives Garden Tour (formerly Going Native Garden Tour), we quickly moved them into the virtual world.

We plunged into Zoom and held our first virtual garden tour on May 2, 2020. Since then, we've held 12 live virtual tour sessions and expanded our GNGT website to include videos and more pictures of each garden. We combined our science and gardening talks into our virtual Native Plant Lecture Series, which is not only popular with our Chapter members, but also reaches native plant enthusiasts all over California and beyond. There have been 57 talks in the Native Plant Lecture Series since its inception last year.

Our nursery continued to operate with a dedicated group of experienced volunteers while we moved our plant sales online. We had a record-breaking sales year in 2021, selling over 4,000 plants. It was exciting to have an in-person fall plant sale with our favorite vendors even though the limited space in our nursery forced all of the day's purchases to be made online in advance.

Even though we had a dip in Chapter membership last year, we've recovered and are now have more members in our Chapter than ever before. I've enjoyed meeting and

working with many of you over the past three years. You will still be able to find me at the nursery and dealing with our Chapter's technology.

I am grateful and happy to turn the reins over to Radhika Thekkath, our incoming president. I look forward to all the wonderful things she will be doing as our new leader. Welcome Radhika!



Carol Mattsson

Vivian Neou at CNPS-SCV Nursery, November 2016

Incoming President's Message

By Radhika Thekkath

I am looking forward to my tenure as the incoming President of the Chapter for 2022, especially as we start considering a staged return to in-person events. This would be revitalizing to the Chapter and our members as we all miss the camaraderie and the energy that comes from meeting each other in person at the garden tour, the wildflower show, field trips, and other Chapter events.

I would like to introduce myself: I am now a retired computer scientist. I have been involved with the Chapter since 2009 when I started on the Gardening with Natives (GWN) Steering Committee and also volunteered as the Recording Secretary on the board for six years. Over the years I have given native plant talks and volunteered at various events like the plant sale, the garden tour, and the wildflower show.

I am now learning about earth-friendly building methods and have started working on a cob building. I am convinced that regenerative living is the only sustainable

way to manage the earth's remaining resources and also keep people fed and housed in a safe environment. I hope to incorporate these regenerative principles into aspects of my work on the CNPS mission of promoting and conserving California native plants and habitats in our beautiful state.

I would love to connect and hear directly from our members on what matters to you and how we can be more effective as a Chapter, so please feel to email me directly at radhika@cnps-scv.org. I hope to meet you all during one of our events this coming year. Wishing you all a wonderful and safe Holiday season and a Happy New Year!

Keying with Natives – Two Special Sessions

The KWN group is where we learn plant keying by practicing on plant samples. To help keep our keying skills sharp during the pandemic, Dee Himes of the KWN group will teach two special online classes in January and February.

We will go over the **basics of Plant Morphology** on **Friday January 21** and the **basics of Plant Taxonomy** on **Friday February 18**, from **6:30 – 8:30pm on Zoom**.



Plant Morphology session at the PCC, January 2018

These classes will cover the basic principles of **morphology**, which is the study of the form, external structure and development of plants; and the basic principles of **taxonomy**, which is to learn and look at different plant families. These two classes will form a great crash course for beginners who are enthusiastic about learning how and why some plants are named – and for others they'll form a refresher.

By knowing the basic morphological characteristics of plants, a plant's name will become obvious. Once the plant has been identified, it can be placed within categories, a plant family, a classification system that is part of plant taxonomy.

Although these meetings will be virtual, as you attend you may want to have ready: a copy of *Plant Identification Terminology, An Illustrated Glossary*, by James G. Harris and Melinda Woolf Harris, 2nd Edition; some cuttings of your favorite native plants from your garden to show as samples; and a hand lens.

For more information and to RSVP for the classes, please register for them on our Zoom: **for January 21** visit www.cnps-scv.org/kwn-20220121 and **for February 18** visit www.cnps-scv.org/kwn-20220218. For more info, please contact Dee Himes at dee4cnps@gmail.com.

Photography Group

Members' Night & Photo Group Meeting: Plant Adventures in a Pandemic (Part II)

**Friday, January 28
6pm Social Hour, 7 - 9pm Program**

Members' Night is an annual tradition in our Chapter in which members share pictures of notable plant excursions they made that year. Pandemic-related restrictions have made our wildflower forays more limited and more precious. Last year's event was conducted over Zoom, and this year's event will **double up with the Photo Group Zoom meeting on Friday, January 28**. All are invited to join this meeting for a midwinter celebration of the beauty and tenacity of native plants and their habitats as captured by you, our members.

Pre-registration is required to attend the meeting, at cnps-scv.org/members-night-2022. After registering, you will receive a Zoom link to attend the meeting.

Chapter members are invited to share photos of notable plants and places they have visited in 2021. Whether you captured wildflower display in spring or photographed native plants later on in the year, consider sharing your images and commentary with others at this fun event.

To share your photos, sign up for a slot in advance at the following link by **Friday, January 21**:

tinyurl.com/2022MN. Slots are 15 minutes each – plan

your picture count and commentary accordingly. (Presenters will receive a “one minute remaining” alert.)

CNPS General Meetings are free and open to the public. For more information, contact Judy Fenerty at judy@fenerty.com or the Chapter phone at (650) 260-3450.

The Photography Group’s monthly meetings – open to all – are a great place to meet other native plant enthusiasts while improving your photographic skills and learning more about our native plants. Discussions can range from photography tips to organizational ideas to plant hot spots.

The group has an active email list with an ongoing **#MyPhotoOfTheWeek** activity for members to share their favorite shots with others. The meetings take place over Zoom. Learn more by joining the email group at: www.groups.io/g/cnps-scv-photography and visiting the Chapter Meetup page at www.meetup.com/California-Native-Plant-Society-Santa-Clara-Valley-Chapter.



Charley Pow

#MyPhotoOfTheWeek: A bumblebee gathers pollen from a Sunset manzanita (*Arctostaphylos* ‘Sunset’) after an overnight rain. The downward-pointing bells of manzanita blossoms protect the pollen from being washed away by rain, so the plant can bloom during our rainy season, attract native pollinators and be pollinated successfully.

The Photo Group’s meetings are usually held on the last Friday of the month. The next meeting after the special **Member’s Night on January 28 will be Friday,**

February 25 at 7:00pm. You can learn more and join the email group at: www.groups.io/g/cnps-scv-photography.

SCHOLARSHIPS

New Chapter Horticulture Scholarship

The Chapter is excited to start a new scholarship for students enrolled in a horticulture program, as we believe that an understanding of native plants is a key tool essential to their horticulture skills and career, which will allow them to excel. Not only do native plants play a key role in ongoing climate change issues, but having an understanding of the ecological importance of California native plants, the available variety, color and seasonal beauty would go a long way towards the commonplace use of native plants in everyday horticulture and landscape designs.

These students may go on to become horticulturists, landscape managers, plant nursery professionals or landscape designers. As horticulture professionals who understand the use and benefits of native plants, they will play an important ambassador role for our California native plants.

We will award this scholarship to one student this year and the application window is now **open until Monday, January 31, 2022**. The scholarship amount is \$750 and we hope that will help defray the cost of tuition, books, or wherever the scholastic needs are the greatest for the student. We require that applicants be enrolled in an accredited college in our Chapter area, or live in our Chapter area and be enrolled in an accredited college horticulture program anywhere, and have taken or are about to take a California native plant class.

To put an emphasis on our desire to help the student’s education and future horticulture career, the scholarship awardee will be connected with a mentor from the Chapter who can help introduce them to our Chapter and committee members. The mentor will also guide the student towards Chapter activities that can benefit their future career with valuable experience.

We are excited to kick off this new program this year as we try out both the Horticulture Scholarship Award as well as the student mentoring process. The new Horticulture Scholarship Selection Committee Coordinator is Dee Himes, who will be ably supported by Patricia Evans and Patricia Campbell. More detailed information can be found on our Chapter website at www.cnps-scv.org/hort-scholarship.

CONSERVATION CORNER

Conservation Committee

Our Chapter's next conservation committee meetings will be held via Zoom on **Tuesdays, January 11 and February 8**, from **7:00 to 9:00pm**.

Please join us in our important work! Meeting details will be sent to committee members. If you are not on the committee but are interested in attending the Zoom meeting, email cdorsch@cnps-scv.org for the meeting link. For questions, comments or concerns, contact Conservation Committee Chair Carolyn Dorsch at cdorsch@cnps-scv.org or (650) 804-6162.

A Celebration—Coyote Valley is Saved!

Thanks to everyone who responded to our Action Alert sent on November 10 before the San Jose City Council vote, and for speaking up at the City Council meeting. The vote was unanimous to change the land designation to "Agriculture and Open Space." This was the culmination of years of advocacy work on the part of our Chapter's Conservation Chair Linda Ruthruff, and other local organizations. We cannot do this without the support of our members, so thank you again for making your voices heard.

GROWING NATIVES GARDEN TOUR

**GNGT Shares Some Great
News and Good Times**

Celebrating 20 years of Native Garden Tours in Our Chapter Area!

In 2022, GNGT will once again offer **in-person tours** on **Saturday, April 2** and **Sunday, April 3** in addition to keeping photo and video tours available online from the past decade or so. There are also some new gardens added in the past two years that will remain online-only due to small size or limited parking.

A New Name

In September 2021 we announced our new name, **Growing Natives Garden Tour**. Our website is still at **gngt.org** and our goals remain the same: to showcase native gardens, to share native plant gardening knowledge and best practices, and to encourage everyone to grow more native plants for beauty, for habitat, for water conservation, and for the environment. Low maintenance and reduced costs are a bonus. **Our vision is for native plant gardens to become ubiquitous and commonplace.** We believe that gardening

with native plants is for everyone, and we invite you to participate in GNGT in-person or online.

Expanding our Reach

The last couple of years has been challenging for the GNGT Steering Committee, as we shifted from in-person tours one weekend a year to online-only tours in real time at various times throughout the year. But by the end of 2020 we had 75 gardens active on www.gngt.org with hundreds of new photos and seven hours of video tours ranging in length from less than a minute to 30+ minutes. That meant more work for our garden owners who provided more photos of their gardens throughout the year, and all of the garden owners, designers, and volunteers who created video tours.

By increasing our content and taking it all online, we expanded our audience to include anyone anytime, a win/win scenario for those previously unable to attend our tours due to limited mobility, lack of transportation or for other reasons.

Besides adding more tours of public native gardens, we also added **new videos** at www.gngt.org to promote our Chapter's native nursery and demonstration garden at Hidden Villa.

Tour of the CNPS-SCV Native Nursery is at

www.gngt.org/GNGT/GardenHTV.php?year=2020&gid=cnpsscvc&vtour=1

Tour of the CNPS-SCV Native Demonstration Garden

is at www.gngt.org/GNGT/GardenHTV.php?year=2020&gid=cnpsscvc&vtour=2

Demonstration of Krzysztof Koszminski's Method for Planting Natives in Mud is at www.gngt.org/GNGT/GardenHTV.php?year=2020&gid=cnpsscvc&vtour=3

More information, including how to ATTEND the tour and show YOUR garden on the tour, may be found at the Growing Natives Garden Tour website: www.gngt.org.

Volunteer for GNGT's 20th Anniversary Tour

The 2022 Growing Natives Garden Tour is seeking volunteers who are willing to spend a few hours greeting



tour participants and answering questions. This year, our 20th Anniversary, the tour will take place on **Saturday, April 2** (Northern Gardens) and **Sunday, April 3** (Southern Gardens). The tour hours are **10am to 4pm** both days.



Cynthia Gingerich
Growing Natives Garden Tour
garden preview in San Jose,
March 2019

As a volunteer you will help to educate garden visitors about the pleasures and benefits of gardening with California native plants. Volunteers also receive a custom designed T-shirt featuring a California native plant and are invited to attend GNGT garden previews throughout the

year. We ask volunteers to select a minimum of one half-day shift. Knowledge of native plants is not required as we have **shifts for Greeters and Docents**. There will be a pre-tour orientation in late March with more details. There will be 30+ gardens to select from.

To volunteer for the 2022 Tour please complete the Volunteer Sign-up form at:
www.gngt.org/volunteerForm.php.

CHAPTER SERVICE OUTINGS

Alum Rock Park Restoration

Come help us weed out invasive plants at this natural gem of San Jose. Our habitat restoration efforts allow the native plants to “come to light.”

Our workdays take place every **Monday and Wednesday, from 8:30am to about noon**. Sometimes we have some special extra workdays. For now our workdays are for experienced volunteers only, as we aren’t quite ready to open up to new or drop-in volunteers yet.

All volunteers must wear masks at all times and social distance, except within families/households. For more information contact Stephen Rosenthal at sailinsteve@sbcglobal.net or (650) 260-3450.

Lake Cunningham Native Garden

The California Native Garden project in Lake Cunningham Regional Park controls invasive plants in a 1.5-acre area and beautifies it with California native wildflowers, perennials, shrubs and trees.

Workdays continue on **Saturdays from 8:00 to 10:00am**. New volunteers are welcome; City-issued guidelines and COVID-19 best practices are followed. The work is mainly weeding and mulching. For complete details and directions and to RSVP, see our Chapter’s Meetup page at www.meetup.com/California-Native-Plant-Society-Santa-Clara-Valley-Chapter.

Volunteer workdays were held on three Saturdays in October. The focus was on removing non-native perennial pepperweed (*Lepidium latifolium*) and some California rose (*Rosa californica*) away from the water mains. With the arrival of the rains, new plants were put into the ground. Litter pickup has become a routine chore.

Workdays are sometimes rescheduled or canceled. Always **RSVP to confirm** and check the latest updates Friday night. If you can’t make it, please change your RSVP so we know.



Arvind Kumar
Volunteers planting at Lake Cunningham,
October 30, 2021 workday

Edgewood Restoration

Our long-term habitat restoration work at Edgewood Park and Natural Preserve continues in person even during the pandemic. As with our other projects, we follow government guidelines and COVID-19 best practices. For now, the project is not looking for new volunteers; only experienced “regulars” are attending workdays.

Check the project emails for the latest news or contact project leader Paul Heiple at pheiple@gmail.com or (650) 854-7125.

FIELD TRIPS

Chapter field trips are free and generally open to the public. They are oriented to conservation, protection and enjoyment of California native plants and wildlife, and we adhere to all rules and guidelines for the lands on which we are visiting. **Please bring a face mask in case wearing one is required for COVID-19 safety.**

In our region it is very important to be prepared for hiking on rugged and steep terrain, wide temperature ranges and rapidly changing conditions at any time of year. All participants should wear sturdy footwear and carry sufficient water, sun protection, food, clothing layers, personal first aid and other supplies you may need. If you have any questions about your ability to participate in a particular field trip, please contact the trip leader in advance.

Cell service is mainly restricted to cities and major highways. To find your way to an outing, please do not rely solely on your phone.

Check our field trips page www.cnps-scv.org/activities/field-trips for changes, cancellations, COVID rules and additional field trips.



Dee Himes

Ocean view behind tafoni rock formation at Franklin Point, as seen on Chapter's 2020 New Year's Day field trip

Sat Jan 1 10am - 2pm New Year's walk to Franklin Point, part of Año Nuevo State Preserve (Hwy 1 coast – southern San Mateo County)

Join other CNPS members as we celebrate a Chapter tradition of welcoming the New Year with a walk to and picnic at Franklin Point, which is part of the Año Nuevo State Preserve on the San Mateo County coast. We will be exploring as we casually walk towards Franklin Point, which is the most botanically interesting area of the park.



Dee Himes

Lunch break during Franklin Point New Year's Day field trip 2020

We will be starting from the [North Whitehouse Creek Trailhead](#) which is located south of Pescadero on Highway 1, just north of the Santa Cruz County line.

We'll enjoy **ocean views, coastal prairie** including silver bur ragweed (*Ambrosia chamissonis*), California goldenbush (*Ericameria ericoides*), coastal sagewort (*Artemisia pycnocephala*) and Argentina anserina (*Potentilla anserina*); **dune** including yellow sand verbena (*Abronia latifolia*), pink sand verbena (*Abronia umbellata*), seaside heliotrope (*Heliotropium curassavicum*) and American dunegrass (*Elymus mollis*); sea cliff bluff lettuce (*Dudleya farinosa*), fleshy jaumea (*Jaumea carnosa*), **raptors, songbirds** and maybe **marine mammals**.

As this is a day to have fun at the beach with fellow Chapter members, the ending time and depth of botanical discussion may be extended depending on participants.

Bring binoculars and layers of clothing for variable coastal conditions including wind, sun, precipitation and fog. We will be walking on sand dunes. Bring a lunch or snacks and fluids. Extreme bad weather cancels.

No drop-ins please. To complete the **required RSVP**, please visit our Chapter's Meetup page at www.meetup.com/California-Native-Plant-Society-Santa-Clara-Valley-Chapter. Driving directions and parking tips are provided on the Meetup page.

Before signing up, please read the Año Nuevo State Park restrictions at www.parks.ca.gov/?page_id=523. Note that there are no bathrooms at Franklin Point. Flush toilets are located at the main entrance of Año Nuevo State Park, which may require payment to enter. For more information or questions, contact Dee Himes at dee4cnps@gmail.com.

Mon Jan 3 7 - 9pm Field Trip Planning Meeting (Zoom)

Join us to help schedule the remainder of our spring and summer field trips, plus any field trips we may want to have for the rest of the year. With more knowledge of the winter weather patterns, we may also make plans for away trips.

All are welcome to join in the discussion. For further information and to RSVP, please sign up on our Zoom at www.cnps-scvc.org/field-trip-20220103.

Sat Jan 8 10am - 1pm Dirca Walk at Foothills Nature Preserve (Palo Alto)

Join Don Thomas to see the endemic western leatherwood (*Dirca occidentalis*) at Foothills Nature Preserve. Dirca flowered early this season, starting in November. We will look for late-flowering dirca along the Los Trancos Trail.

The preserve, until recently only open to Palo Alto residents, is now open to the general public. The preserve entrance is off Page Mill Road. We will meet at the Orchard Glen Picnic Area **at 10am**. To get to the Orchard Glen parking lot, bear left at the first intersection after passing the entrance kiosk.

Bring water and snacks for an optional lunch in the picnic area following the walk. For more information, contact Don at don_e_thomas@yahoo.com.

RSVP is required to join us for the walk. Space is limited. No drop-ins please. To register, please visit our Chapter's Meetup page at www.meetup.com/California-Native-Plant-Society-Santa-Clara-Valley-Chapter. Driving directions are provided on the Meetup page. There's a \$6 entrance fee, exact change required.

For more information on Foothills Nature Preserve, see: www.cityofpaloalto.org/Departments/Community-Services/Open-Space-Parks/Neighborhood-Parks/Foothills-

[Nature-Preserve](#). For a trail map, see: www.cityofpaloalto.org/files/assets/public/community-services/parks-and-open-space/open-space-maps/foothill-park-trails-map.pdf.



Dee Himes

Western leatherwood (*Dirca occidentalis*) blossoms in early display, December 2021 San Francisco Bay Area

Sat Jan 15 10am - 2pm Moss Hike, Skyline Ridge Open Space Preserve (La Honda)

Join Ben Carter, botany professor at San Jose State, for a 1-2 mile walk to learn about bryophytes (mosses, liverworts and hornworts) of the Bay Area. This is an entry-level walk that will emphasize seeing different bryophyte species in nature and learning about their morphology, ecology and natural history.

There may be some moderate uphill climbs, but we'll be moving very slowly. Bring a hand lens if you have one. Bring lunch, snacks and liquids. We'll head out in any conditions except for heavy rain.

We will meet at the main parking lot for the preserve, off Skyline Boulevard (SR 35), one mile south of Page Mill Road. For more about the preserve, including a trail map and driving directions, visit www.openspace.org/preserves/skyline-ridge. For more information, contact Ben Carter at benjamin.carter@sjsu.edu or (805) 704-0616.

RSVP is required to join us for the walk. Space is limited. No drop-ins please. To register, please visit our Chapter's Meetup page at www.meetup.com/California-Native-Plant-Society-Santa-Clara-Valley-Chapter. Driving directions are also provided on the Meetup page.

Sun Feb 13 10am - 4pm Montara Mountain San Pedro Valley County Park (Pacifica)

Join co-leaders Ken and Dee Himes on an early spring outing to San Pedro Valley County Park. We expect to see some early blooms: Montara manzanita (*Arctostaphylos montaraensis*), pink-flowering currant (*Ribes sanguineum* var. *glutinsum*), Indian paintbrush (*Castilleja affinis*) and others.

The trip will be a moderate 4-5-mile loop hike on the Hazelnut Trail, through coastal scrub and chaparral plus some riparian woodland. It will include an elevation gain and loss of about 600 feet and is expected to **last until 4pm**.



Dee Himes

Ken Himes talking about *Arctostaphylos* sp. on 2018 field trip on Hazelnut Trail.

We'll **meet at 10am** in front of the park's Visitor Center. Bring warm and wet weather layers for coastal conditions. Trails may be slippery. Bring water and a lunch or snacks, and fluids. Heavy rain cancels. For more information contact at Dee Himes at dee4CNPS@gmail.com.

Space is limited. No drop-ins please. To complete the **required RSVP**, please visit our Chapter's Meetup page at [www.meetup.com/California-Native-Plant-Society-Santa-](http://www.meetup.com/California-Native-Plant-Society-Santa-Clara-Valley-Chapter)

[Clara-Valley-Chapter](#). The Park is located at 600 Oddstad Blvd. in Pacifica. Driving directions are provided on the Meetup page.

Stay in Touch!

Due to COVID-19, the Chapter remains virtual for **many** of our events. Please visit www.cnps-scvc.org/stay-in-touch for information on how you can continue to receive email to stay informed.

This *Blazing Star* newsletter is published **mostly** online only, at: www.cnps-scvc.org/blazing-star-newsletter.

CHAPTER LEADERSHIP FOR 2022

Title	Name	Email	Phone
President	Radhika Thekkath	president@cnps-scvc.org	(650) 260-3450
Vice President	Priya Pharate	priya@cnps-scvc.org	
Recording Secretary	Patricia Lang	secretary@cnps-scvc.org	
Treasurer	Brett Tucker	Coming soon	
Past President	Vivian Neou	pastpresident@cnps-scvc.org	
Chapter Council Delegate	Radhika Thekkath	radhika@cnps-scvc.org	

To see the full list of Chapter officers and chairs, please visit www.cnps-scvc.org/leadership.

<p>DEADLINE FOR THE NEXT <i>BLAZING STAR</i></p> <p>Saturday, February 12</p> <p>carol.mattsson@gmail.com or (408) 255-3767</p>
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Santa Clara Valley Chapter California Native Plant Society
3921 East Bayshore Road, Suite #205
Palo Alto, CA 94303-4326



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FIRST-CLASS

CALENDAR OF EVENTS (page # in parentheses)

Jan 1 Sat Franklin Point New Year field trip (11)
Jan 3 Mon Field trip planning meeting (12)
Jan 8 Sat Dirca walk at Foothills Preserve (12)
Jan 11 Tue Conservation Committee meeting (9)
Jan 12 Wed Martial Cottle Garden talk – Morris (1)
Jan 15 Sat Moss hike Skyline Ridge – Carter (12)
Jan 19 Wed Burn Zone Treasures talk – Patten (1)
Jan 21 Fri KWN Plant Morphology class (7)
Jan 28 Fri Photo Group CNPS Member's Night (7)
Jan 31 Mon Garden Programs Committee (2)

Jan 31 Mon Hort Scholarship applications due (8)
Feb 2 Wed Calscape Talk – Neou (2)
Feb 8 Tue Conservation Committee meeting (9)
Feb 9 Wed Favorite plant books talk – Panel (2)
Feb 12 Sat **Newsletter submittal deadline**
Feb 13 Sun Montara Mountain field trip – Himes (9)
Feb 18 Fri KWN Plant Taxonomy class (7)
Feb 25 Fri Photo Group photo sharing (8)
Mons & Weds Alum Rock workdays (10)
Saturdays Lake Cunningham workdays (10)

The next Chapter board meetings will be **Thursdays, January 20 and February 17** at **7:00pm** over Zoom.

Board meetings are open to all Chapter members and their guests.

For more information contact Radhika Thekkath at president@cnps-scv.org.

The California Native Plant Society is a statewide non-profit organization of amateurs and professionals with a common interest in California's native plants. The Society, working with its local chapters, seeks to increase understanding and to preserve the rich heritage of the native flora for future generations. Membership is open to all. Individual memberships are \$50.00 per year. If you have questions about your newsletter subscription, please contact membership@cnps-scv.org. Address changes may be submitted to membership@cnps.org. Please put "address change" in the subject line.

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