



California Native Plant Society
Santa Clara Valley Chapter

THE BLAZING STAR

September-October 2026

What's Inside this Issue? Highlights:

Seed & Cutting Exchange – Page 1

Fall Native Plant Sale – Page 1

Native Plant Talks – Page 3

Chapter Service Outings – Page 8

Field Trips – Page 10

A listing of all events, including date and page number, appears in the Calendar on the last page

This free event provides an opportunity to share and receive cuttings and seeds of native plants. Discover the diverse offerings, ranging from easy-to-grow varieties to rare finds, and leave with new native plant cuttings and seeds! We will supply coin envelopes for seeds but please bring your own containers for transporting cuttings home.

Article continues on page 2.



Vivian Neou

Fall 2025 Native Plant Sale at Hidden Villa

Save the Date!

Our Chapter's Fall **Potluck** will be held at Shoup Garden House in Los Altos on **Saturday, November 7.**

September Seed and Cutting Exchange at Kirk Park

**Visit the Native Pollinator Garden
Learn to Propagate Cuttings**

**Saturday, September 26
11:00 am to 1:00 pm**

**Kirk Park, 1601 Foxworthy Ave.,
San Jose**

The September Seed and Cutting Exchange will be at Kirk Park in San Jose again this year! We have reserved the park's large, shady picnic area for the event. Once again, we will offer a hands-on learning station where participants can learn to start a cutting to bring home. We will provide pots and soil for one cutting per person, while supplies last. We will have a few easy-to-root cuttings available for children to try.

Fall Plant Sale

**Our annual fall native plant sale kicks off
with two online sales: the CNPS SCV
Nursery (california-native-plant-society-santa-clara-valley-chapter.square.site)
from October 17 to 19,**

**and the Grassroots Ecology Nursery
(www.grassrootsecology.org/nursery-sales)
from October 5 to 23**

**Be sure to shop the online sales for the
best selection!**

**Then: in-person event at Hidden Villa
Saturday, October 24, 10:00 AM - 3:00 PM**

Join us in person for a lively day on **Saturday, October 24, from 10:00am – 3:00pm at Hidden Villa** in Los Altos Hills, where you can **collect your online orders** and explore a diverse selection of plants from both the CNPS SCV Nursery and the Grassroots Ecology Nursery. Be sure to bring a box if you plan to buy plants while at Hidden Villa.

Beyond plant sales, we will host a gardening talk, a planting demonstration and a seed exchange. If you have native plant seeds to share at the exchange, please bring them, but it is not necessary to bring anything if you do not have them. There should be plenty for all.

Our Chapter store will offer books, posters and T-shirts, while various vendors will showcase a variety of wildflower and nature-themed products. This is also a great chance to engage with other local environmental organizations.

Knowledgeable native plant gardeners will be on hand to address your questions about native plants and gardening. Please note that this service is intended for brief inquiries and not for comprehensive garden design requests. We provide numerous native plant resources on our website, at www.cnps-scv.org/gardening/gardening-resources, including a directory of native plant professionals who focus on native plant designs. Don't forget to check out Calscape (www.calscape.org), CNPS' searchable guide to California native plants and butterflies, which is the premier online tool for planning your native plant garden.



Vivian Neou

Gardening advice table at 2025 Fall Native Plant Sale

We are offering a special discount for new members who join in September or October: just \$30 (40% off our suggested membership fee of \$50). You can sign up at the

sale or in advance at bit.ly/NPLOWER. If you join in advance, please bring a printed copy of your receipt to the membership table to receive our Chapter's 50th Anniversary pin and a Chapter water bottle (while supplies last).

For more details about the sale, watch our weekly news emails. (To sign up for the Chapter weekly news, visit the Stay in Touch article at the end of this newsletter.)

Volunteer at the Sale!

We're asking everyone to consider lending a hand with the sale. There are numerous tasks to tackle: assisting with setup before the sale begins, parking, counting attendees, box check, answering customer questions, writing sales slips, helping customers carry out their purchases and tidying up after the sale. Most of these tasks don't require specialized knowledge of plants, and you can opt to volunteer for just one or two hours, or the entire day.

To volunteer, please visit our Chapter website's Plant Sale page (www.cnps-scv.org/fall-plant-sale-2026) for a **link to our Plant Sale Volunteer Signup**. The plant sales are always a blast to be a part of and we provide lunch for our volunteers. If you have any questions, please contact Radhika Thekkath at cnpsradhika@gmail.com.

Directions: Hidden Villa is located at 26870 Moody Rd., just west of Foothill College. From I-280 in Los Altos Hills, take the Moody Rd. exit and head west. About two miles west of Foothill College, keep an eye out for the Hidden Villa sign and driveway on your left. There will be volunteers to help you find a parking spot. A short walk from the Hidden Villa driveway entrance will take you to the sale, which is happening on the lawn next to the Dana Center. Parking is free while you attend or volunteer at the event.

September Seed and Cutting Exchange at Kirk Park

Continued from page 1

If you have native plant material from your garden that you would like to share, please bring it along. Be sure to label your contributions for easy browsing – helpful growing tips and photos of the plants in bloom are appreciated. You may find it useful to use Calscape.org for this purpose; there is a link on the plant's information page that allows you to create a printable sign for most native species and cultivars. If you bring cuttings, please ensure they remain cool and moist in a bucket of water. It is not necessary to

bring anything if you do not have native material to share, as there is typically an abundance for everyone.

Our Wildflower Ambassadors will also distribute free seed packets and information.



Kathy Kleinsteiber

Seed and Cutting Exchange at Kirk Park, September 2025

To review, **the event takes place on Saturday, September 26, from 11:00am - 1:00pm.** The street address is 1601 Foxworthy Ave. in San Jose. Park along Briarwood Drive near the playground. The picnic area is just to the east of the playground. Please feel free to explore the native garden along the north and west edges of the park.

MORE CHAPTER ACTIVITIES

Native Plant Talks

Join us for our native plant talks, in-person at local libraries and online via Zoom and YouTube. Whether you're curious about native plants, an experienced or aspiring native plant gardener, a professional botanist or beginning naturalist, you will find something to interest and educate yourself in our offerings. From gardening to plant science to climate change to tours of botanical hot spots, there's something here for you.

Recordings of our virtual talks and some of our library talks may be viewed on our YouTube channel, at www.youtube.com/@CNPSSantaClaraValley. We occasionally schedule additional talks. You can learn about these talks by subscribing to our Chapter News email list. To subscribe, see "Stay in Touch" on page 10.

The organizing committee has periodic meetings on Zoom and welcomes new volunteers. If you have ideas for future talks or are interested in helping set up upcoming talks,

please send a message to Priya Pharate at priya4cnps@gmail.com to receive notifications of upcoming meetings. The next quarterly program meeting will be **Monday, October 12, at 7:00 to 8:30pm** on Zoom.

CANCELLED

Life on the Rocks: The Many Wonders of Serpentine Soils, a talk by Nishanta "Nishi" Rajakaruna, Ph.D.

Wednesday, September 30 7:00 - 8:30 PM, Los Altos Library Orchard Room, 13 S. San Antonio Rd., Los Altos (This talk has been CANCELLED)

Serpentine soils are often described as harsh, toxic and nutrient-poor, yet they harbor extraordinary concentrations of rare and endemic plants found nowhere else on Earth. In this presentation, we will journey through the serpentine landscapes in California and beyond to discover how these unusual soils shape evolution, biodiversity and ecological specialization. Along the way, Nishi will share recent discoveries about serpentine plants and other organisms and explore the remarkable adaptations that allow them to flourish where few others can survive.



Prof. Rajakaruna discussing plant adaptations to harsh soils on a serpentine outcrop at Irish Hills Open Space Reserve in San Luis Obispo

Nishi will also discuss the growing challenges these species face from climate change, atmospheric nitrogen deposition, mining and urban development. Finally, we will examine the emerging promise of agromining, a technology that uses

metal-accumulating plants to recover valuable metals such as nickel, showing how these botanical specialists may contribute to a more sustainable future.

Nishi Rajakaruna is a professor of biology at Cal Poly, San Luis Obispo and has spent more than two decades exploring the remarkable plants and ecosystems associated with serpentine soils in California and around the world. His research focuses on how plants adapt to challenging soil environments, the origins of rare and endemic species and the conservation of rock outcrop biota.

He is also interested in metal-accumulating plants and their potential use in emerging technologies such as agromining. Nishi enjoys sharing the stories of serpentine plants and other biota with both scientific and public audiences and helping connect people with the natural history of the landscapes around them.

plants are native to California and this talk will focus on selecting native plants for color and interest through all seasons of the year. Enjoy blooms, butterflies, bees, and birds year round! Both new and experienced gardeners are welcome.

Stephanie Morris is a landscape architect, based in Campbell. She has been designing California native plant gardens since 1999 in the Bay Area. Her goal is to design creative, beautiful landscapes that are ecologically oriented and practical. Areas of particular focus include suggesting plants for pollinators, converting lawns to drought tolerant plants, incorporating California native plants within existing gardens, and combining edible plants with native plant gardens.



Stephanie Morris

Manzanita, woolly blue-curls and saffron buckwheat in spring

Native Plant Gardening for Year-round Interest, a talk by Stephanie Morris

Wednesday, October 28 7:00 - 8:30 PM, Campbell Library Community Room, 77 Harrison Ave., Campbell



One person can make a difference! Come learn how you can incorporate California native plants in your garden to bring back much needed pollinators to our urban habitat and provide beauty in your yard. Thousands of



Divy Shenoy

Map lichen, *Rhizocarpon geographicum*, amongst other lichens on granite just south of the Cathedral Lakes Trailhead in Yosemite. Lichens are a symbiotic partnership of two separate organisms, a fungus and an alga. July 2026

Photography Group

Our Photography Group is a great place to meet other native plant enthusiasts, improve photographic skills and learn more about our native plants and best places to view them. Discussions range from photography tips to

organizational ideas to plant hotspots. The group is open to all and has an active email list.

The group has an ongoing **#MyPhotoOfTheWeek** activity on the email list for group members to share their favorite shots with the group on a weekly basis. Photo Group member Divy Shenoy sent us the above photo of a map lichen that she photographed on a family camping trip to Tuolumne Meadows.

The photo group's meetings usually take place over Zoom on the fourth Friday of the month. Our next meetings will be on **Fridays, September 25 and October 23 at 7:00pm**. You can learn more and join the email group at: www.groups.io/g/cnps-scv-photography.

Native Plant ID

Our next Native Plant ID meeting will take place **Tuesday, October 27 at 7:00pm** at the Peninsula Conservation Center. Bruce Homer-Smith will give us a presentation about *Nine Trees of the Santa Cruz Mountains*, the subject and title of his latest book, free for all to read here: pubs.plantid.net/9Trees.pdf.



Wilde Legard

Turn to page 34 of Bruce Homer-Smith's latest book, to learn that each flower of a bigleaf maple starts with both male and female structures, but hormones direct only one set to develop fully

Editor's note: I found Bruce's book to be full of beautiful nature and plant scenes, some annotated, that piqued my curiosity. Indeed, Bruce writes that he strives to draw the reader in with an interesting photo, and then describes the photo with something the reader will want to know.

The Peninsula Conservation Center is located at 3921 E. Bayshore Rd, Palo Alto. We meet in the Raptor Room, downstairs near the rear entrance. Join other native plant enthusiasts in a fun and educational atmosphere, as we hone our skills at plant identification (aka "keying"). Feel free to bring samples of plants that you are trying to identify and any identification resources that you like to use. For more information, contact Janet Hoffmann at janet@cnps-scv.org.

Janet thanks all of you who sent suggestions in response to her requests for help with Plant ID in July. Unfortunately, her email was linked to the CNPS-Santa Clara Valley Chapter website which had to be taken down and rebuilt during that time frame. As a result, any messages that were sent to her are gone. If you were one of those people who sent ideas, Janet would greatly appreciate it if you could send them again now that her email is up and working again: janet@cnps-scv.org.

We won't have a Native Plant ID meeting in September.

GNGT 2027 Call for Gardens Garden Submittal Deadline Sunday, Oct. 4, 2026

The 2026 Growing Natives Garden Tour (GNGT) is looking for new gardens as well as returning gardens for the 2027 Tour. The 2027 tour dates are **Saturday, April 3** for northern gardens and **Sunday, April 4** for gardens in the southern part of our area. The tour area is Santa Clara County and southern San Mateo County.



The garden selection team will be starting our visits in November. We ask that California natives be the focal point of the garden, with at least 70% of the garden being native plants, and no invasive plants. We use the list of invasive plants of the Bay Area developed by the California Invasive Plant Council (CAL-IPC), which you can reference here: www.cal-ipc.org/solutions/prevention/landscaping/dpp/?region=bayarea.

The boundary between north and south will depend on the number of gardens submitted across our Chapter area. If

your garden is in the central area of the tour (Sunnyvale, Santa Clara or Cupertino), indicate in your submission whether you are available on either day, to give us flexibility to move the boundary to balance garden distribution between Saturday and Sunday. We will determine the boundary after we complete our garden selection process.



Stephanie Morris

Penstemon, saffron buckwheat, golden yarrow and woolly bluecurls at the Campbell Cottage Garden on the 2026 Growing Natives Garden Tour

We encourage gardens that demonstrate sustainable gardening practices and show water conservation and habitat value for wildlife. Aesthetically pleasing design is another quality we look for, whether your garden is do-it-yourself or professionally designed. We are interested in having native plant gardens of all sizes, even container gardens.

Garden owners, designers or managers from southern San Mateo County and Santa Clara County are encouraged to apply. To do that, visit [GNGT.org](https://www.gngt.org), scroll down a bit, then tap/click on “**Submit Your Garden for the 2027 Tour.**”

Celebrating Stephen Buckhout and Stella Yang: Recipients of the 2025 Outstanding Volunteer Award

Our Chapter is thrilled to announce that Stephen Buckhout and Stella Yang were each honored with the Outstanding Volunteer Award at the potluck held in November 2025. This is a long-overdue article honoring two stalwarts of our Chapter.

For decades, Stephen has been a cornerstone of our community, lending his tireless energy, wisdom and leadership to nearly every facet of our Chapter’s work. Steve’s incredible legacy of service spans an astonishing array of projects, committees and events.

Stephen has been a pillar of the Wildflower Show and of the plant sales. He served as Co-Chair from 2002 to 2005 and has generously assisted with nearly every single show – even when not officially coordinating. He also served as a dedicated collector for many years. A fixture at our sales, Stephen played a major role over the years and skillfully organized traffic control volunteers as Parking Coordinator for several years. He shared his knowledge and enthusiasm as a docent for the Growing Natives Garden Tour for many years.

Stephen has always been a reliable source of solid advice for Chapter Officers regarding Chapter operations and personnel issues, while making himself available to all members for listening and guidance. He provided vital support for the Chapter Councils we hosted in 2001, 2009 and 2015.



Stella Yang

Stephen Buckhout posing with his Chapter Outstanding Volunteer Award certificate, April 2026

Stephen served on the Nominating Committee from 2005 through 2008 and continued this essential work until the Leadership Development Committee (LDC) was formed. He then served as the Founder and Chair of the LDC from its inception in 2015 until 2025.

Stephen worked tirelessly on all aspects of our nursery renovation and spearheaded the formation of the Nursery Advisory Committee.

Stephen's dedication to preservation goes back decades. In 1992-1993, he was among the volunteers gathering signatures to protect Edgewood Park.

Carolyn Curtis reminisces about him, "I'll never forget Stephen among the volunteers getting signatures on our petition to make Edgewood Park into Edgewood Preserve in 1992-93. Many weekend two-hour shifts down at the parking lot talking to strangers/park users about Edgewood – part of the effort that got 10,000 signatures. Steve also contributed greatly to the committee that met regularly and built the winning coalition of 41 organizations and 12 businesses."



Stephen Buckhout

Stella Yang posing with her Chapter Outstanding Volunteer Award certificate, June 2026

Stella has been a key volunteer for our Wildflower Shows for decades. Her impact on our annual Wildflower Shows is legendary. Alongside her husband Stephen, Stella served as Co-Chair of the Wildflower Show from 2002 through 2005, while Stephen managed the organizational side.

Reflecting back to the Foothill College shows in the 1990s, Carolyn Curtis recalls, "Stella would come in with

specimens from Uvas Canyon, which she knows backward and forward. She was always one of the keenest keyers for the show as well."

Whether identifying specimens from all over the Chapter area or tackling the most difficult genera of wildflowers during keying sessions, Stella's botanical skills made these events an incredible experience for everyone involved.

Over the years, Stella has stepped into a wide variety of vital board and leadership roles, including: Chapter Membership Chair, Chapter Field Trips Chair and Wildflower Show Co-Chair. As Field Trips Chair and a leader of countless excursions over many years, Stella has introduced many people to the wonders of native plants.

Dee Himes shares her experience meeting Stella on field trips starting in 2009: "She was always happy to talk to you and make you feel at ease and welcomed. She also mentored me when I started leading and co-leading field trips in my earlier years with the chapter, and when I took on the Chapter Field Trip Chair in 2015."

Ken Himes adds that Stella welcomed his wife Dee, by sharing plant lists and botanical knowledge of difficult genera like *Trifolium*, which eventually led to Dee co-leading field trips at Santa Teresa County Park with Stella.

Beyond her formal roles, Stella is renowned for being endlessly enthusiastic, knowledgeable and always available to answer questions or help track down answers.

Carolyn Curtis shares a daily reminder of Stella's helpfulness: "As a native plant gardener, I was unendingly grateful when Stella showed me a surefire way to tell *Triteleia laxa* (Ithuriel's spear) from that invasive pest plant *Nothoscordum gracile* (slender false garlic) so you can catch it early: the weed has two bracts around the bud, *T. laxa* has four. I'm grateful to Stella for this every spring!"

Stephen and Stella's unwavering commitment, historical knowledge and gentle guidance have shaped our Chapter into what it is today. We simply couldn't have done it without them. Please join us in offering our deepest gratitude to Stephen Buckhout and Stella Yang for their profound contributions, generous mentorship and unwavering passion for our community and native flora!

CONSERVATION CORNER

Conservation Committee

Our Chapter's next Conservation Committee meetings will be held over Zoom on third **Mondays, September 21 and October 19**, from **7:00 to 8:30pm**.

This committee covers many issues affecting native plants: conservation, advocacy, legislation, habitat restoration and rare plants. The committee meets once a month to provide information and support for these conservation issues and efforts. Members of our committee work on projects throughout the Chapter area, coordinating with our state CNPS program staff and other conservation organizations.

Please join us in our important work! For questions, comments or concerns, contact Committee Chair Carolyn Dorsch at cdorsch@cnps-scv.org or (650) 804-6162, or Conservation Chair Judy Fenerty at judy@fenerty.com. If you are interested in joining our committee meetings on Zoom, please email Carolyn for the link.

CHAPTER SERVICE OUTINGS

Alum Rock Park Restoration

Come help us weed non-native, 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 at 8:30am**, and on the **second Saturday morning at 8:45am** of each month. No experience is necessary. All tools and instruction will be provided. Please bring a filled water bottle, snacks, sunscreen, sunhat and insect repellent if you need it; wear trail/off-trail footwear, long pants and a long-sleeved shirt.

Forms and reservations are required to volunteer. Start by filling out the "Volunteer Service Agreement Form" linked from the following web page: www.sanjoseca.gov/your-government/departments-offices/parks-recreation-neighborhood-services/get-involved/volunteer-with-us. Bring your completed form with you at the meeting spot at the beginning of each workday. The workdays **end at noon**.

To reserve your spot to volunteer, **for the Saturday workdays sign up** with the City of San Jose at the Eventbrite link for the 2nd Saturday on which you are interested in attending. **The link for the September 12 workday is here**. The link provides event details including

where to park. To find sign-up links for future 2nd Saturday events, visit www.eventbrite.com and search for "alum rock park" in "San Jose."

If you have trouble finding the form or signing up at the City's website, please contact Todd Hayes at the email address below. The City's Adopt-a-Park program is understaffed and a Saturday event may be cancelled.

For the Monday and Wednesday workdays, the crew is typically made up of long-term volunteers for this project. The meeting spot varies, so to join the crew on one of their workdays, please **contact Todd Hayes at ultratoddh@gmail.com for more information, to register and instructions on where to park**. Note on rare occasions we may cancel due to weather or dangerous conditions. Don't forget to bring your filled out Volunteer Service Agreement Form for the City of San Jose.

Lake Cunningham Native Garden

The California Native Garden project in Lake Cunningham Regional Park controls invasive plants in a 2-acre area and beautifies it with California native wildflowers, perennials, shrubs and trees.

Workdays take place on **Saturdays from 8:00 to 10:00am**. New volunteers are welcome; City-issued guidelines are followed. The work depends on the season, mainly weeding and mulching year-round, but some planting in winter. For **details, directions, a waiver for first-timers and to RSVP**, see our Chapter's Meetup page at www.meetup.com/California-Native-Plant-Society-Santa-Clara-Valley-Chapter.

Edgewood Restoration

Help restore habitat at Edgewood Park and Natural Preserve, near Redwood City, known for fabulous wildflowers and amazing diversity. Weeders see far more than weeds: they get to be up close to the native plants, some of which are seen **only** by weeders.

Sturdy gloves are recommended; you might also want to bring sunscreen, water, a hat, layered clothing and wear long sleeves/pants. We weed **every Friday at 9:00am and every Wednesday at 5:30pm**. For an overview, please visit www.cnps-scv.org/restoration/edgewood-park.

To participate, join the email list and sign the electronic volunteer agreement, by sending an email to weed-warriors-coord@friendsofedgewood.org. Please check the email list for each weeding session's meeting place. For questions about **Friday** sessions, contact Paul Heiple at

pheiple@gmail.com or (650) 854-7125. For questions about **Wednesday** sessions, contact Alf Fengler at afengler@pacbell.net.

Cataldi Park Native Garden

Join us to restore habitat in San Jose's Cataldi Park. This project aims to remove invasive plants and restore California native plants in a 1/2-acre area on the western end of Cataldi Park in San Jose.

Volunteer workdays take place on **Saturdays from 9:00 to 11:00am**. New volunteers are welcome; City-issued guidelines are followed. Wear a hat and garden shoes and bring water to stay hydrated. Work gloves will be provided.

For details, directions, a waiver for first-timers and to RSVP, visit our Chapter's Meetup page at www.meetup.com/California-Native-Plant-Society-Santa-Clara-Valley-Chapter.

Activities depend on the season. We start planting in late fall after the first rain and continue into the winter months as needed. Spring is the time for controlling weeds and taking care of the young saplings. During the summer and early fall, we irrigate/water the plants, prune established plants and sheet mulch adjacent areas in preparation for planting.



Tilak

Monarch butterfly on narrowleaf milkweed at Cataldi Park Native Garden, July 2026

The native garden highlight for the month of July was seeing monarch butterflies in the garden on almost every workday! Providing habitat for monarchs was one of the Cataldi garden project's primary goals. After three years of effort, we have finally reached an important milestone in realizing this goal.



Kathy Kleinsteiber

Common checkered skipper on Great Valley gumplant, at Kirk Park Native Pollinator Garden, July 2026

Kirk Park Native Plant Pollinator Garden

Come join us as we maintain and enhance this thriving ecosystem in the heart of suburban San Jose. While you work, discover surprising pollinators and learn about the plants that attract them to the garden. This is a learning garden and we strive to provide opportunities for all participants to learn.

We meet near the corner of Briarwood Drive and Wawona Drive in San Jose on **Saturdays from 9:00 to 11:00am**, weather permitting. Please see our [CNPS SCV Meetup page](#) to RSVP and to find a waiver form for first-time volunteers.

A good time to visit the garden may be during our CNPS Chapter's **Seed and Cutting Exchange**, which will take place at Kirk Park on **Saturday, September 26, from 11:00am to 1:00pm**. Learn more by reading the article that begins on page 1 of this newsletter.

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.

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 and cancellations, as well as information about newly added field trips.

Sun Sep 20 9:00am - Noon Bird and Plant ID Walk at Lake Cunningham Park (San Jose)

With the onset of fall, join us for a beginner's bird and plant identification walk through Lake Cunningham Park. This lake is a major destination for waterfowl and migratory birds and its native garden draws many birds due to its habitat value. On this walk, Vicki Silvas-Young will show you how to identify the common birds of this area, while Arvind Kumar will identify the native plants that they depend on for food and shelter.



Ashok Jethanandani

Lake Cunningham Bird and Plant ID Walk, June 2026

The distance is 2 miles round-trip on a level path. Bring a hat, water, your bird and plant lists and binoculars. Wear comfortable walking shoes. The parking fee is \$6; a credit card is preferred by the machine.

RSVP is required to join us for the walk. No drop-ins please and space is limited. We'll meet at the **Marina parking lot at 9:00am**. The park's main entrance is located at 2305 S. White Road, San Jose. See instructions at the beginning of this Field Trips section to **RSVP on Meetup**.

Driving directions are provided on Meetup. This event is co-sponsored by CNPS and Santa Clara Valley Bird Alliance.

NEWSLETTER, ETC.

Stay in Touch!

Some late-breaking events don't make it into the newsletter and are announced electronically. Stay informed by making sure that your contact information is correct. Please visit www.cnps-scv.org/stay-in-touch for information on how you can continue to receive email to stay informed.

Note that our Chapter website www.cnps-scv.org was down for a couple of months and has only recently come back online. We are still making updates and appreciate feedback to webmaster@cnps-scv.org if you find problems.

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

CHAPTER LEADERSHIP FOR 2026-2027

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

Title	Name	Email
Co-President	Priya Pharate	priya4cnps@gmail.com
Co-President	Vivian Neou	techchair@cnps-scv.org
Vice President	Kim Vrijen	Kim_vrijen@yahoo.com
Recording Secretary	Janet Hoffmann	janet@cnps-scv.org
Interim Treasurer	Brett Tucker	treasurer@cnps-scv.org
Chapter Council Delegate	Vivian Neou	techchair@cnps-scv.org
Past President	Madeline Morrow	madeline@cnps-scv.org

DEADLINE FOR THE NEXT *BLAZING STAR*

Wednesday, October 7

Note earlier deadline, just for this issue

carol.mattsson@gmail.com or (408) 309-8314

Santa Clara Valley Chapter California Native Plant Society
3921 East Bayshore Road, Suite #205
Palo Alto, CA 94303-4326



Join CNPS Today!

Members receive the *Artemisia* and *Flora* magazines, the Chapter newsletter and other benefits listed at www.cnps.org/membership.

I wish to affiliate with the Santa Clara Valley Chapter

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Email _____

Phone _____ ☐ New ☐ Renew

Suggested Membership Amounts

☐ \$50 ☐ \$75 ☐ \$120 ☐ \$500 ☐ \$1,000 ☐ Other (\$25 min.)

Send Membership Application to:

California Native Plant Society

Attn: Membership

2702 K Street, Suite 1, Sacramento, CA 95816-5130

For memberships for organizations or to become a Perennial monthly sustainer, contact www.cnps.org.

First-Class Mail

CALENDAR OF EVENTS (page # in parentheses)

Sep 20 Sun Lake Cunningham walk (10)
Sep 21 Mon Conservation Committee meeting (8)
Sep 25 Fri Photo Group photo sharing (4)
Sep 26 Sat Seed & Cutting Exchange (1)
Sep 30 Wed Serpentine soils talk – CANCELLED (3)
Oct 4 Sun GNGT garden submittal deadline (5)
Oct 5 Mon Grassroots online plant sale starts (1)
Oct 7 Wed **Newsletter submittal deadline**
Oct 17 Sat Online native plant sale starts (1)
Oct 19 Mon Conservation Committee meeting (8)

Oct 23 Fri Photo Group photo sharing (4)
Oct 24 Sat **Fall native plant sale Hidden Villa** (1)
Oct 27 Tue Native Plant ID meeting (5)
Oct 28 Wed Native plant gardening talk – Morris (4)
Mon & Wed, 2nd Sat Alum Rock Park workdays (8)
Saturdays Lake Cunningham Garden workdays (8)
Wed & Fri Edgewood restoration workdays (8)
Saturdays Cataldi Park Garden workdays (9)
Saturdays Kirk Pollinator Garden workdays (9)

The next Chapter board meetings will be held on **Thursdays, September 17 and October 15 at 7:00pm** over Zoom.

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

For more information contact Priya Pharate at priya4cnps@gmail.com or Vivian Neou at techchair@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 start at \$50.00 per year. If you have questions about your newsletter subscription, please contact info@cnps-scv.org. Address changes may be submitted to membership@cnps.org. Please put "address change" in the subject line.

The *Blazing Star* web address: www.cnps-scv.org. Please print on recycled paper.