“A Few of Our Favorite Things”

As has become our custom, the September meeting will focus on the Horticulture of Native plants. In preparation for our October annual Plant sale, we will discuss some of the plants that will be available. In looking over the list of plants that we sold in our sale last year… It is an impressive group of Latin words and colorful nicknames. For me a comforting accounting of old friends that conjure memories of places and fragrances and life events. But for many, it is just that, a list of difficult to pronounce words that require an interpreter and beg for descriptions and photographs to have any idea of what it looks like, much less know how it might grow. Sometimes, when looking for new ideas for your own garden, even with a good concise description and a picture, many of these plants remain a mystery and feel like a risk not worth taking. What we often need is a trusted enthusiastic friend who has grown the plant in their garden and can recommend it from their experience, to give us the confidence to give it a try.

Our September 13 General meeting will include a pair of long time CNPS members who know intimately, the joys (and agonies) of Native Plant gardening. Each will present a group of plants that they particularly like and have grown in their own gardens. Good photographs will be complimented with comments about why they like the plant, where they have grown it and extra tidbits that might include the origin, the natural history, good companions for that plant and any cautionary notes. (For example: don’t prune a Flannel bush and then rub your eyes to get the “dust” out) Our guest gardeners are Peigi Duvall and Loren Walden who have gardened in a variety of California microclimates and had a full spectrum of successes and failures that will benefit your plant selecting this fall.

General meeting September 13 7:30 PM Pacific Grove Natural History Museum
SAVE THE DATE! PLANT SALE DETAILS!
Patrick Regan

- **When:** Saturday **October 7, 2023**, 10 AM to 3 PM
- **Where:** MEarth Habitat at Carmel Middle School, 4380 Carmel Valley Road
- **What:** Our annual native plant sale. Over twelve hundred California Native Plants: as many as 250 different native species and selections, curated from many local growers, or grown on site, sourced, selected, labeled, signed with descriptive information & photos, organized and presented in this one day, pop-up, specialty nursery just in time for planting season; books and friendly advice as well.

Do something good for the future; Plant native plants!
CNPS members get 10% discount on Plant and Book purchases. Not a member? Join the day of the Sale!
Final Plant list will be posted on our website by September 30
https://chapters.cnps.org/montereybay/
President’s Message
Ken McIntire

Greetings,

Here is a preview to what is going on these days here at CNPS Monterey Bay:

FALL PLANT SALE:
As the days grow shorter and fall comes around again, it’s time to get ready for the CNPS Monterey Bay Chapter annual Native Plant Sale. Thanks to our nursery volunteers, we will provide a large variety of healthy natives. Please see the horticulture article in this newsletter.

In our warming climate, studying which plants to use where becomes ever more important. We are blessed with knowledgeable experts who can help you make those decisions at the sale, but there is no substitute for some preparing in advance. Monterey Wildflowers, by Yeager and Matthews is a good place to start. Online, https://www.calflora.org is a great resource.

CONSERVATION:
Nikki Nedeff has another update in the ongoing saga of CNPS Habitat Preserve 1 North. Things are moving along! Nikki and Brian LeNeve’s work on this project has been invaluable.

Del Rey Oaks has accepted the draft EIR for its Housing Element Update. It can be reviewed online at www.delreyoaks.org/commdev/page/housing-element. Written comment will be accepted until September 27, 2023 and should be sent to K.Minami@delreyoaks.org CNPS plans to comment. We encourage our members to as well.

HABITAT RESTORATION:
Our chapter has a rich history of habitat restoration work. Happily, we will restarting these efforts under the leadership of Kat Hardisty-Cranstone. Kat presently works as an assistant biologist with EMC Planning Group. She got started doing habitat restoration work while a student at Colorado State University, and worked on projects in the Rocky Mountains. She is excited to have a chance to work with our chapter.

COMMUNICATIONS:
Our communications team, Chris Stearns, Megan Whilden and Jeffrey Oropeza are working to update our website, maintain an active Facebook page and Instagram account, and produce our newsletter. In a world where information is increasing exponentially each year, they have a big task and can use more help.

Enjoy the turning of the season!
Ken McIntire
News From the Nursery!
Kevin Uhlinger

This Summer provided us with good growing conditions, without too much heat, so the plants at the nursery are doing well thanks to all the assistance from our volunteers. With the Plant Sale a little under two months away (Saturday, October 7th – mark it on your calendars!), the plants have been tidied up — moss, weeds, and fallen leaves have been removed. The plants are ready for potential new owners to take them home where hopefully Winter rains will help establish the plants in their new environs. So, now I want to take you through a few important tips for caring for your own potted plants awaiting the next wet season to plant and for those you already have planted.

On one of your trips around town, while you are picking up garden supplies or groceries, or going to a medical appointment, you should stop by the Monterey Peninsula Water Management District office at 5 Harris Court, Bldg. G in Ryan Ranch. It offers information on all sorts of water saving approaches as well as free water saving devices (yes, some have said that the “best things in life are free” – in this case, at least two are most useful!). If you don’t have a moisture meter and/or a hose nozzle with multiple spray patterns, pick them up — again they are FREE and are essential.

Now to the overview of what we’re doing to at the nursery at this mid-Summer stage:

Since plants have been mostly potted up in 4-inch or 1-gallon pots since Spring, they’ve been watered at our nursery when they’ve needed it, up to twice weekly. This is where one of the devices I’ve mentioned has been essential. The moisture meter is your and your plants’ friend. One sure way of killing most native plants is to overwater them, keeping their roots constantly wet. With the various soil mixtures these plants are planted in, you must be able to determine accurately how wet the soil is at the roots level. The moisture meter quickly enables you to do just that. The meter’s probe allows you penetrate and measure the relative moisture at the root level. Its simple scale allows you to immediately determine whether to water each plant or not (you may want to probe at least one additional place in the soil so you are sure you just haven’t initially found a small dry spot). I’ve used these moisture meters for years in watering thousands of plants — trust me when I say that you can’t accurately judge a plant’s water needs by lifting its pot or by inserting your fingertip an inch into the soil’s surface.
As to watering, here’s where the second free device comes in handy. I know there is this urge to replicate “Nature” by top watering your plants as though it is raining. DON’T! During this time of year, when the sun is the most intense, you’ll end up burning the leaves, especially when watering during the daylight hours. Water droplets accumulating on the surface of leaves of your plants act as magnifiers focusing sunlight onto the leaf surface burning them (hold a magnifying glass over the skin on your arm out in the sun and feel/see what happens). Plants take in most of their water through roots in the soil. The plant parts above the soil have a cuticle that prevents desiccation/water loss and doesn’t really allow much, if any, moisture to be absorbed. So, water the soil not the plant. Use the hose nozzle with its variable spray patterns to control the water pressure and direct the water to the soil surface causing the least amount of splash up into the plants.

Since we’ve been growing plants in a nursery setting, each in a very limited volume of soil, you may be noticing as light yellowing of the foliage. With the continued watering these plants have received, nutrients like nitrogen have been depleted through the plants’ growth requirements and the leaching actions of watering. We’ve just boosted our plants with a dose of Miracle Grow (1.5 tbsp to 1.5 gal of water dilution) – applied with watering cans – to help each plant “green up” and add growth over the next few months prior to Winter.

With the sale coming up in two months, we are concentrating on encouraging the plants to fill out a bit more. We’ve “topped” those plants that have become a bit rangy to encourage lateral growth to fill in and add more shape. We’ve also removed current/spent blossoms, yellowed leaves and seed pods/capsules so plants put their energies toward stem/branch and leaf development in time to harden off before Winter (there will be sufficient time for all current flower primordia to continue to form blooms for the remainder of the season).

While “cleaning up” each plant we also have taken the time and effort to address any additional issues. Even with careful watering, some plants are susceptible to pests and fungal pathogens. Keep your eyes out for aphids – those striking yellow-orange Oleander aphids on the different species of Asclepias, and the other species of aphids on some of the species and varieties of Ceanothus and Lonicera. Look for scale insects on your Clematis and Eschscholzia as well (checking the soil at the base of the plants and even under the rims outside the pots). Most of these pests can be carefully removed from your plants using cotton swabs dipped in rubbing alcohol. I would only recommend using a forceful water stream on a large specimen of a plant that has a significant infestation of aphids and although it may be tedious, carefully wiping down the plant stems and leaves is still more effective in removing these darn insects.
In addition to insect pests, be on the lookout for fungal pathogens. By giving your plants sufficient space between pots to allow for good air circulation and by avoiding water contact on the plants, you can minimize these problems. Even with these precautions, beware of a few plant species that seem to have a propensity for powdery mildew [Achillea, Eschscholzia, and some of the species/varieties of Salvia ("Bee’s Bliss", “Desperado")]. Watch out for rusts, which may start to show up as orange to reddish/black spots visible on the upper surfaces of older leaves and when you lift a potted plant and look on the undersides of its leaves you’ll find orange powdery pustules and spores located in/around the stomatal openings. Some varieties of Heuchera (‘Old La Rochette’ and ‘Rosada’) and species of Ribes (R. aureum, R. californicum, R. speciosum, and R. viburnifolium) tend to be most prone to rust, especially later in the season. By carefully removing older “infected leaves from the plants along with any that have dropped to the soil surface, in addition to keeping the foliage dry during your waterings, you can significantly reduce these problems. Also, following a general rule of wiping down your pruning shears and other hand tools between plants with rubbing alcohol will help minimize many of these problems (I always carry a small spray bottle of it along with some clean paper towels when I’m working around my yard or in the shade house).

Well, I’ve “bent your ear” enough for this edition. I wish you continued success in all your gardening and hope to see you at the chapter’s Plant Sale on October 7th.
Conservation Update: Del Rey Oaks Habitat Reserve
Nikki Nedeff

The Chapter’s efforts to ensure the permanent protection of CNPS Plant Reserve 1 North are one step closer after the DRO City Council meeting August 22, 2023. The Council adopted a Resolution formally accepting ownership of the 4.6-acre parcel, which is now referred to as the Del Rey Oaks Habitat Reserve. Seaside, acting as the successor agency for the defunct Fort Ord Reuse Authority, forwarded a Quit Claim to transfer the property to DRO. For some reason, the official transfer of the property was never recorded decades ago. Now that DRO officially owns the parcel, the Settlement Agreement with CNPS can be recorded. DRO Mayor Scott Donaldson noted that the City plans to accelerate the realignment of South Boundary Road around the Habitat Reserve to facilitate development of more than 200 acres received when Fort Ord was decommissioned.

CALIFORNIA NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY

Find Us On Facebook
Megan Whilden

Did you know the Monterey Bay CNPS chapter has a Facebook page with over 1,200 followers? If you use Facebook, you can find us at facebook.com/MontereyBayCNPS. Like and follow the page to stay up-to-date on the latest news. Got something fun for us to share? Send it to our new volunteer social media coordinator Megan Whiden at megan.whilden@gmail.com. See you online!
Plant of the month: Hooker’s Evening Primrose

*Oenothera elata ssp californica*

Patrick Regan

They showed up seemingly out of nowhere, dropping in to where we were standing, from the twilight sky and coming to a jolting standstill, hovering in front of just opened pastel yellow flowers. (Like Kramer bursting through Jerry’s apartment door in the Old Seinfeld show) Three White lined sphinx moths then began frenetically buzzing from flower to flower, unfolding long tongue-like proboscises between the 4 petals, past the pollen covered stamens into the middle of the flower tube to gather the abundant nectar, as yet untapped by any other nectar seeker.

The flowers we were all here to see were the Hooker’s evening primrose, a biennial (or perennial) primrose found throughout much of California in seasonally moist and disturbed habitat. This one was planted intentionally in my eclectic native test garden in Carmel Valley. This summer bloomer truly lives up to the name “Evening primrose” and I had lured my wife and daughter out of the house at about 8:00 that evening with a promise of a “show” as each new bud swelled and popped out of its sepals and rapidly unfolded its petals to the world for the first time. Blooms that would not live to see the next evening were now open for business and the immediate beneficiaries were the sphinx moths. They had arrived within moments of the first bud unfurling as if responding to a scheduled meeting. We had been standing quietly watching. I wanted to show them something wondrous that they could only see if they were willing to stand outside in the waning light with me, watching the animation of what was usually inanimate. It is no small thing, being able to watch a flower open in real time as if you are watching a time lapse video, sped up for the impatient. It happens every night for several months each summer, in school gardens, wetlands, waste places or roadsides or wherever the abundant seed may land. It is a phenomenon that can be expected no matter where the plants grow and all you must do is go look for it at the right time. If it happened only once a week or once a year, I might be able to sell tickets to this Evening primrose show. But because it is so common a wonder, for most, it will be a wonder they never see. It is unfortunate that this plant is easily dismissed as a garden plant or even a native garden plant. “it is too weedy’ we say or “once you have one plant you will have dozens more” “It can become almost invasive and the gnarled stems covered with woody seedpods at the end of the summer are not attractive” (tell that to a goldfinch or a wrentit !) It just isn’t tidy enough for our tastes or our attempts to have native habitat “our way”. This is one of the reasons I grow native plants and lots of them. I want to get to know them and the connections they have with their neighbor plants and animals. I want to know more than how tall they get or what their roots might do to my foundation. I want to enjoy them in their spring splendor, but I want to know what gathers the seed from those branches’ months later. I want to know what butterflies will sip their nectar in the day
and when the night shift begins, what moths may lay their eggs on its leaves. I want to do more than line them up along a fence or group them in complimentary colors in a cottage garden. The Hooker’s evening primrose is an ideal plant for any gardener to grow and start the journey of discovery with. The pioneering habit it has in filling open ground (whether in the edges of a drying pond or the middle of your garden pathway), the lavish abundance it provides for pollen and nectar hunting insects and birds during the day, and the night, the crunchy foliage it provides to hungry caterpillars and frequently thereafter to birds. The perfect perches and feeders it develops at the end of the summer season, attracting seed eating birds and making perfect wands for little ones to merrily shake along a pathway, bestowing natures generosity on future gardeners, finches, hummingbirds, and the White lined sphinx moth’s…. The show is still going on this month, wherever Hooker’s evening primrose is growing, step outside some evening and check it out. Or plant one in your educational garden and bring the whole interconnected show to you. You could do worse.

Cheers
Pat Regan

This is one of many California native plants that will be available at our October 7 annual Sale at MEarth.
UPCOMING CNPS MONTEREY BAY EVENTS!

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event Type</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Location</th>
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<tr>
<td>CNPS General Meeting</td>
<td>May 10th</td>
<td>Pacific Grove Natural History Museum, 165 Forest Ave., Pacific Grove</td>
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<td>Photo Contest!</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Have some plant pictures you are proud of? Enter them in our upcoming photo contest. Please look for details on our website and facebook page next week!</td>
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STEWARDSHIP OUTINGS!

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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>California State Parks</td>
<td>Every 4th Tuesday</td>
<td><a href="#">CLICK HERE</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Marina Oak Woodland Community Garden Project</td>
<td>Saturdays from 9 am to 1 pm.</td>
<td>Meet at the Marina Library playground at 190 Seaside Circle, 150 feet south of the Marina Library playground. Look for our garden shed! For more info, contact Bruce at (831)277-7690 or <a href="mailto:bdelgado62@gmail.com">bdelgado62@gmail.com</a></td>
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VOLUNTEER WEBSITES!

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<td>Sustainable Monterey County</td>
<td><a href="#">sustainablemontereycounty.org</a></td>
<td><a href="#">CLICK HERE</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Monterey District Natural Resources Volunteer Program</td>
<td><a href="https://www.parks.ca.gov/?page_id=30618">https://www.parks.ca.gov/?page_id=30618</a></td>
<td><a href="#">CLICK HERE</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>To RSVP for State Parks Natural Resources projects</td>
<td><a href="mailto:Samuel.Winter@parks.ca.gov">Samuel.Winter@parks.ca.gov</a></td>
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Helpful CNPS Information

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Join CNPS Today!

You may also join online at www.cnps.org

★ Print very clearly, please. ★

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Individual Membership Levels:

☐ Limited Income $25 ☐ Patron $1,000
☐ Individual $50 ☐ Benefactor $2,500
☐ Plant Lover $120 There are more options online
☐ Supporter $500 including business and library.

Please mail this membership form with payment to:
Brian LeNeve, CNPS Monterey Bay Membership
PO Box 1012, Carmel, CA 93921

Dues and gifts to CNPS are tax deductible.