Special Plant Sale Issue

2019 Fall Native Plant Sale
Saturday, October 5, 2019

New Location!  
Banner Community Guild

12629 McCourtney Road, Grass Valley
2 miles past the Fairgrounds
going south, keep to right

9:30 a.m. - 10:30 a.m. Member Appreciation Sale
10:30 a.m. - 1:30 p.m. General Public

Become a Redbud member and shop early!

This issue focuses on our Redbud Native Plant Sale...the gorgeous and ever-so-ecologically beneficial plants you'll find at the plant sale, how to make the most of your visit to the plant sale, volunteering for the sale, and much more. It's chock full of valuable tips!!

Plus, you'll find a fascinating interview with Nancy Gilbert, our presenter on "Jewels of the Garden: California Bulbs, Corms, and Rhizomes," coming up Wednesday, September 25.
The 2019 Plant Sale is Almost Here! Get Ready!
by Jeanne Wilson, Redbud Chapter President

We look forward to seeing you at this year’s Redbud Native Plant Sale on Saturday, October 5!!

Beauty and Biodiversity
Our plant sale theme, “Native Plants for Beauty and Biodiversity,” emphasizes the part we can all play in restoring balance to our ecosystem and sustaining biodiversity. By planting locally native plants, we provide food and habitat for native pollinators and other beneficial insects, birds, and other wildlife. Native plants also improve soil health, enhance the organic content of soil, support mycorrhizae and other crucial soil organisms, improve moisture retention, and prevent erosion.

In addition, native plants, especially native grasses, trees, shrubs, and other perennials, play a vital role in removing carbon dioxide from the atmosphere and sequestering carbon in biomass and soil.

Amazingly, plants can create biomass out of thin air (carbon dioxide gas), thereby reducing the amount of greenhouse gases. Because reducing carbon emissions alone is not enough to slow or stop the accumulation of greenhouse gases, we need to enlist plants to help us in this critical task.

Wonderful array of plants (and people) enjoying the morning at last year’s Redbud Native Plant sale. Photo: D Wetzel
New Location
Our 2019 sale will be our first at the Banner Community Guild, 12629 McCourteny Road, Grass Valley. Though North Star House is a great venue, moving to the Banner Guild has several advantages:

- Most sale activity will be indoors, providing protection from bad weather
- We'll have indoor restrooms available on site
- The entrance and parking are not shared with other events (no Farmers' Market traffic)

We appreciate being able to have our sale at the Banner Guild and must protect their carpet and hardwood floors. We will have some new rubber-wheeled carts available to transport plants but won't have enough for everyone — we'll have plenty of cardboard boxes to supplement the carts. If you have a small, clean cart with rubber wheels, you may be able to bring it into the building. If you have an "outside" cart that could damage floors, you may bring it to take purchased plants to your car. Also, Floral Native Nursery will be outside, and you can use your wagon there.

Volunteer!
Redbud members are busy getting ready for the sale, but we still need more volunteers, especially on sale day (greeters, talliers, cashiers, monitors, and clean-up crew). We’d love to have your help, so please check volunteer needs, choose your spot(s), and sign up to volunteer.

Get Ready to Choose Your Plants
- Decide where you want plants and why — to attract pollinators, provide wildlife habitat, replace lawn with drought-resistant natives, have a native meadow for water infiltration, put in fire-safe landscaping, or find the perfect plant for a special place in your garden.
- Observe sun exposure, soils, and moisture levels where you want new plants; planting the right plant in the right spot is the key to success in growing native plants.
- Look up local natives on Calscape, the online CNPS database of over 7,000 California native plants. See Redbud’s resource, Using CNPS Calscape.
- See Redbud’s many online resources for growing native plants, including:
  - Redbud-CNPS Native Landscape Planting Guide
  - California Native Perennials and Shrubs for Sierra Foothill Gardens
  - Firewise Landscaping for Zone 1 Defensible Space
- Review the 2019 list of plants that will be at the sale (available 1 to 2 weeks before the sale)
- Make your prioritized list of plants to shop for, with 1st and 2nd choices

Plant List Available Soon!
The 2019 Plant List should be up on our website at least a week before the sale. Until then, you'll see the list from our 2018 plant sale, which is similar to what we'll have.

Other Sale Tips
- If you have questions, ask a Redbud Native Plant Sage or check the Information Table.
- Look for books on growing California native plants at the Redbud book table.
- Note the genus/species of your plants so you can find information about growing them. For example, take a photo of the Plant Information Card for each species you buy.
After the Sale

- If possible, try to plant when you get home or soon after. Until then, store your plants in a sheltered, shaded place.
- For questions, you can use Calscape or email nativeplanthelp@redbud-cnps.org.

See you October 5!

Please Bring Your CNPS Card to the Plant Sale

An important benefit of CNPS membership is our "Member Appreciation Sale," 9:30 to 10:30 am on Oct. 5, which is open only to members — non-members can join at the door. If you're a member, you can simplify and speed up the process of checking memberships by bringing your CNPS membership card.

If you can't find your membership card, or don't know your membership status, email secretary@redbud-cnps.org by noon on Wednesday, October 2. We'll email you to confirm whether you are a current member. If you belong to another CNPS chapter, or if you are a new or recently renewed/rejoined member, you'll need your card, confirmation, or receipt to enter the Member Appreciation sale and receive discounts on books or posters.

Volunteers Still Needed!
by Carol Thompson and Geoff McGinnis

It’s time again for the Redbud Native Plant Sale. Our theme this year is
NATIVE PLANTS FOR BEAUTY AND BIODIVERSITY.

NEW DATE: Saturday, October 5
NEW LOCATION: Banner Community Guild,
12429 McCourtney Road, Grass Valley
NEW PLANT SALE VOLUNTEER COORDINATORS:
Carol Thompson and Geoff McGinnis.

Reach us at volunteer4redbud@gmail.com with any questions.

Sign Up with SignUp.Com
Our Redbud SignUp.com site is active, and you still have time to volunteer to help at the sale. People have already signed up for 89 percent of the pre-sale set-up positions and 72 percent of the sale positions! Great work, everyone who’s signed up!

But some spots are still open, just waiting for folks who haven’t yet signed up to fill one — or more(!) — of them. So, if you haven’t volunteered yet, go to Redbud’s SignUp.com site to secure your best spot today. We’ve posted all the positions on the site to make it easy — easy for you to sign up and easy for us to track the positions that still need to be filled.

When you go to the site, you’ll see two options to choose from: Set-up day positions on Friday, October 4, and sale-day positions on Saturday, October 5. Select the right option to find the position you want to fill.
Find the Volunteer Job That Fits YOU
Do you want to have the same role as last year, or do you want to try something new? Some positions have changed due to our new location; so look through them all and read the descriptions to make sure you find the right position(s) for you! You could be a set-up person, a cashier, a tallier, a plant monitor, a greeter, a plant sage answering any or all questions about the plants, or any of the other tasks listed.

Become a member of the crew that makes this sale so successful every year!

If you have any questions, or any problems signing up, please contact Carol at volunteer4redbud@gmail.com, or leave a message at 916-295-1912.

Remember, volunteers who sign up in advance to work a minimum of one three-hour shift will receive a voucher for a free one-gallon plant.

We really appreciate your time and effort — Thanks again!

California Native Plants for Your Garden — A World of Choices
by Nancy Gilbert, Redbud Chapter Horticulture Chair

As Redbud Chapter’s Horticulture Chair and a member of the Plant Sale Committee, it is my job to ensure that we have a diverse selection of many of California’s most garden-worthy native plants. By providing a diverse selection of healthy native plants, our plant sale aims to offer species and cultivars for every garden and type of ecosystem in our area. Last year we offered nearly 2000 native plants at our sale, and this year we hope to have just as many.

Redbud Has Been Propagating Locally Native Plants for the Sale
Our Redbud Chapter’s home propagators will be bringing many locally native plants that we have grown from seed and cuttings. Following are descriptions of a few of the locally native plants we have propagated for our sale this year.

- *Eriogonum grande v. rubescens* (Red-flowered Buckwheat) is the perfect plant for a dry, sunny border where you want to attract a variety of pollinators. It has gray-green, spoon-shaped, evergreen leaves at the base of the plant and it is topped with ball-like clusters of stunning pink-red flowers during summer. Though native to Southern California, it performs very well in our Zone 7 gardens but may be damaged if temperatures drop below 20° F.

- *Amorpha californica* (California False Indigo). This plant is almost never available in nurseries. It is a slow grower, and seed is rarely available, but we were blessed with a gift of seed from Shutamul Bear River Preserve by Redbud member, Peggy Beltramo. This delicate-looking Sierra foothills shrub is a member of the pea family and is the larval host plant for our state insect, the California Dogface Butterfly. In early summer it has showy, purple flower plumes that lure pollinators.

- *Rhododendron occidentale* (Western Azalea). It is also rarely found in nurseries. It, too, is a slow grower from seed. This medium-tall deciduous shrub inhabits moister woodland sites in partial sun, where its gorgeous flowers entice visitors in close for a whiff of its captivating fragrance. Plant it near a walkway or patio where you can appreciate it.
Acer macrophyllum (Big Leaf Maple) is a local native tree of great beauty found growing in moist canyons and in riparian areas. It is fast-growing and best with summer irrigation and afternoon shade. It displays showy panicles of flowers in spring and the very large leaves turn bright golden yellow in autumn. It eventually becomes quite large and makes an excellent shade tree.

Wide Selection of Plants Coming from Nurseries
We also purchase a wide selection of healthy plants from nurseries that grow natives, such as Cornflower Farms and Suncrest Nurseries. They offer many of the most popular and garden adapted varieties and cultivars (cultivated selections grown from cuttings) that are proven winners and die-hards. Some of these include:

- Arctostaphylos densiflora ‘Howard McMinn’ and ‘Sentinel.’ Two similar cultivars of the wild and rare Vine Hill Manzanita. Both are medium-sized shrubs with shiny, green, evergreen leaves, pink flowers in spring, and mahogany-red stems and bark. Always good-looking, it combines beauty with durability and adaptability. (They can even survive in hot parking-lot planters). It looks best with occasional summer water in our area but can survive without summer irrigation once established.
• *Ceanothus gloriosus* ‘Anchor Bay’ & ‘Heart’s Desire’ are similar-looking selections of California Lilac that make exceptional ground covers on sunny banks and at the front of borders; they grow 6” to 12” high and spread up to 8 ft horizontally. Because they have shiny green and prickly holly-like leaves, deer rarely browse them, unlike many Ceanothus species. As a bonus, they have clusters of lavender-colored flowers which attract many native bees, butterflies and flower flies.

• *Salvia ‘Pozo Blue.’* Pozo Blue Hybrid Musk Sage is one of the showiest and most adaptable of the shrub-type sages. It is also quite cold hardy and does very well in sunny, low to no summer water locations within our Sunset Zone 7, 8 and 9 regions. It is a mounding shrub to 3 to 4 ft high when in bloom with bright blue flowers. It can tolerate a wide variety of soils so long as it has good drainage. Native sages are pollinator magnets and are not bothered by deer, due to their pungent foliage.

• *Cercis occidentalis,* Western Redbud, our chapter’s signature native plant, is one of our state’s most widely distributed, beautiful, and useful large shrubs. It is deciduous and offers good red-orange and yellow fall color, as well as gorgeous magenta blooms in spring, followed by decorative pea-type seed pods. Being a legume, it fixes nitrogen in the soil, plus it is drought- and deer-resistant. Native Carpenter Bees and bumblebees find it irresistible.

We have the good fortune to have two outstanding plant vendors at our sale this year: returning again from Chico is Floral Native Nursery, which always brings a wonderful selection of healthy native plants and knowledgeable sales people to assist you. In addition, Justin Maciulis from the Grass Valley area, will be selling his home nursery native plants, including some hard-to-find species, such as our locally native form of *Fremontodendron decumbens,* Pine Hill Flannelbush, which is a rare and threatened species. Justin will be selling many other native plants that inhabit our local chaparral habitats, such as Coyote Mint, Sulphur Buckwheat, and Sticky Monkeyflower.

**Even Native Plant Seeds**

Marty Pancoast will once again be offering Jon Shilling’s custom “Placer and Nevada Counties Wildflower Seed Mix” at our seed sales table. We often have other native plant seeds, donated by our Redbud CNPS members, available at this seed table as well.

Variety is the “spice of life,” and our annual fall plant sale will offer plenty of spice for your gardens and landscapes. To have the best selection of our plants, become a CNPS member, and you will have the opportunity to shop during “Member Appreciation Hour” from 9:30 to 10:30 a.m., which is open only to CNPS members.
Jewels of the Garden
California Native Bulbs, Corms and Rhizomes

Come see and hear Nancy Gilbert’s special presentation, “Jewels of the Garden”
Wednesday, September 25
7 to 9 p.m.
Socializing and Board elections at 6:30 p.m.
Madelyn Helling Library, 980 Hellion Way, Nevada City

Nancy’s talk will focus on our local region’s native bulbs, corms and rhizomes, as well as very garden-worthy ones from other areas of California. The presentation will explain and illustrate various types of geophytes and their strategies for survival, how to successfully garden with our native bulbs, and their ethnobotanical and ecological importance. The show includes a native bulb bloom calendar, with spectacular photos.

An Interview with Nancy Gilbert
Nancy is the Redbud Horticulture Chair and Co-Chair of our Native Plant Propagation Group; she is a photographer, naturalist, and co-author of Redbud’s two guides to the native plants of our local area: Wildflowers of Nevada and Placer Counties, and Trees and Shrubs of Nevada and Placer Counties. She grows dozens of species of native plants on her 13 acres set in oak woodland with scattered conifers near Grass Valley, and many of her favorites are native California bulbs.

The lily Bridges' Triteleia (Triteleia bridgesii), with a Yellow-Faced Bumblebee. This lily is local to our area. (Photo: N. Gilbert)

Peninsula Onion, also known as Mexicali Onion (Allium peninsulare), is one of many local alliums and other bulbs. (Photo: N. Gilbert)
What’s so special about California native bulbs?
Nancy: California has 200 species of native bulbs, more than anywhere else in the world except South Africa. They range from tiny plants only an inch high that require a hand lens to appreciate to spectacular lilies 8 or 10 feet tall. They grow in every habitat, from the coast, to the great valley, to the hottest desert, to the highest mountain. Native California bulbs are unexcelled for beauty, range of shape and color. They are persistent and spread readily once mature; some can be found in large masses of tens of thousands.

When people visit our property, the bulbs are the first thing they notice. The flowers reflect light and have a sheen that draws your eye, and they have brilliant colors and unusual, elegant, unique shapes that attract specialized pollinators — bulbs are great pollinator plants.

Bulbs combine beauty, utility and ease of care — zero work once planted, you just need to protect them from gophers and deer. And you can even eat them — almost all have ethnobotanical uses.

Tell us a little about your background with California native bulbs.
Nancy: I learned from experience, starting with growing Humboldt Lilies, which we sold locally because they don’t travel well. In the 1980s, we took over stock from a bulb nursery that closed when the owners became ill and moved out of state. We later started our own nursery. This couple had traveled all over California for 50 years and had records of where they found native bulbs; we’ve visited many of these locations.

Bulbs are fascinating because the same species may be very different in different areas, and they also hybridize readily. Most bulbs are easy to grow but slow to mature, good for the patient but lazy gardener. Some are very difficult to grow, which I found challenging.

You have said “There’s a native bulb for every niche in your garden.” What are some of the most effective uses of bulbs in the garden?
Bulbs are perfect for planting in Firewise Zone 1 near the house — they provide spring beauty and food for pollinators but then disappear by fire season.

By planting several types of bulbs, you can have a very long bloom period, starting in February and extending into July or August including Fritillaries and Fawn Lilies (Erythroniums), Calochortus (Fairy Lanterns, Mariposa Lilies) and Dichelostemmas, Brodiaeas and Triteleias.

Bulbs can be used in dry areas of the garden, in rocky soil or rock gardens, on slopes. Different species are adapted to different soils and drainage -- even lava caps, serpentine, and high-mineral, rocky soils, where nothing else can grow. One reason bulbs do well in these settings is that they do better with less competition, fewer weedy plants.

What are the keys to success in growing native bulbs?
See where they grow in the wild, and note the elevation, sun exposure, soil type, and companion plants. Much of this information about the natural habitat of different species is available on CalScape.com and the Pacific Bulb Society website.

Some bulbs are tolerant and versatile, very adaptable and hardy — these easy bulbs are a great place to start. If you live in an area where there are wild bulbs, you can grow locally adapted bulbs from seed, and they will be healthier. Though you don’t need to amend the soil or use fertilizer for bulbs planted in the ground, a light dusting of wood ash adds minerals, but avoid manures — they have too much nitrogen.
Recommended bulbs for the beginner include Dichelostemmas, Triteleias, Brodiaeas, and Alliums (wild onions). Beautiful and hardy, they mature quickly and make lots of offsets. They can even survive gophers, which leave small offsets behind. If you succeed with those, you can try Fawn Lilies and the large lilies such as the Humboldt Lily.

**Which bulbs are your favorites?**
I love them all, but especially Fawn Lilies, Humboldt Lilies, Pretty Face, Fritillaries and Bridges’ Triteleia scattered in the dappled shade of an open woodland of mixed oaks and conifers.

*Humboldt Lily (Lilium humboldtii)*