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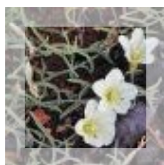
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## **Book on Placer, Nevada county wildflowers gets update**

California Native Plant Society Redbud Chapter effort took three years

By: Gloria Young / Of the Auburn Journal



“Wildflowers of Nevada and Placer Counties, California” second edition

Price: \$29.95

It is available at the following locations:

California Welcome Center, 1103 High St.,  
Auburn

Eisley Nursery, 380 Nevada St., Auburn

Flower Farm Nursery, 9280 Horseshoe Bar  
Road, Loomis  
Wild Bird Station, 1153 Grass Valley  
Highway, Auburn  
Winston Smith Books, 933 Lincoln Way,  
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Ten years after the completion of their comprehensive “Wildflowers of Nevada and Placer Counties, California,” members of the California Native Plant Society’s Redbud Chapter have released an updated version of the book.

The guide includes more than 500 wildflower species, each with a photo, description, blooming season, habitat and comments. In addition there are drawings of plant anatomy and icons for each plant family, habitat descriptions and tips on places to see the flowers in the wild.

The book covers the diverse topography of the two counties, from valley grassland, to the foothills, mid-Sierra, crest zone and eastern side of the Sierra.

The revise project began three years ago when copies of the original edition ran out.

“In 10 years, the first edition had become out of date in terms of new terminology,” committee member Bill Wilson said. “The last two decades have seen massive use of DNA to take a closer look at how plants are related. That means a lot of wildflowers get moved from one group to another.”

One of the challenges in putting the book together was keeping it readable for the novice while going beyond the basics for knowledgeable wildflower devotees.

An addition to the revised edition -- a key to new flower families - makes the book even more user-friendly. Team member Shawna Martinez, a botany professor at Sierra College, headed that effort.

“It was a major contribution,” Wilson said.

Along with compiling the information, Martinez used it as a classroom resource over the spring.

“So it was student-tested time and time again to debug it,” Wilson said. “When a student asked, ‘what is that?’ either the terminology was too complex, or if it needed a word, it could be looked up.”

Also new in the second edition are illustrations of plant parts, drawn by illustrator Ames Gilbert.

“You can look at the (drawing) next to the key and see the part of the plant it is referring to,” Wilson said. “(Gilbert) did an excellent job of making the drawings so it is easy to tell what plant parts are being discussed.”

A few plants were dropped and several added.

“The book does not cover every plant. It is basically the most common 500 plants that everyone will find in the two counties,” Wilson said. “Some rare ones were not included.

But there are some rare ones that were included. We left out ones that are questionable that occur in the high country that may or may not be in the two counties.”

The book has about a dozen new entries, including one that has a special meaning to a member of the committee – retired U.S. Forest Service Botanist Kathy Van Zuuk.

“Just before she retired, she discovered a new Morning Glory in the American River (Canyon),” Wilson said. “The world expert came in to verify that it was a new species and ended up naming it after her.”

Van Zuuk’s Morning Glory – or *Calystegia vanzuukii*, pictured on page 158 of the book, has small white delicate blossoms.

The books – the original and its successor – have been a labor of love from the beginning.

The idea for a book on wildflowers of the region began with CNPS Redbud Chapter member Chet Blackburn in 1999. Blackburn envisioned it as a small spiral-bound book of local wildflowers.

“They figured it would take two years to produce, but that was a joke – because the project kept growing and growing,” spokeswoman Julie Becker said in a press release. “Since Nevada and Placer counties cover a range of elevations ... they are home to 38 percent of all plant species known to grow wild in California.”

When that book was completed in 2007, the group began work almost immediately on a second book, “Trees and Shrubs of Nevada and Placer counties,” which was published in 2014.

Wilson, who is retired from teaching computer science at the community college level, has worked on all three books.

“Because I had experience in Photoshop, they drafted me to do most of the photo work,” he said.

For Wilson, one of the most enjoyable aspects was working with people who share the



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