

**Sierra Foothills Chapter of the  
California Native Plant Society**

**2024 Field Trip Schedule**

The Sierra Foothills Chapter of the Native Plant Society is excited to present the 2024 Field Trip Schedule. These trips display the diversity of plant communities and elevations within our chapter. Trips span April-August from serpentine at Bagby and the Red Hills below 2,000' to Sierra Crest at Carson Pass and Leavitt Lake.

All field trips require an RSVP. Some locations and trails will have a limit on the participants or number of vehicles. Some trips are listed with multiple dates or a date range. These will have one trip with the specific date to be determined based on plant phenology to catch the best blooms. Some trips may have unplanned schedule changes, updates, or cancellations due to weather, road conditions, etc. Dates and any changes will be communicated to people that RSVP directly with the trip leader. The website and newsletters may not reflect schedule or meeting changes.

The field trip schedule, past years' schedules, and other event information is available on website: <https://chapters.cnps.org/sierrafoothills/meeting-events/>

For all field trips: bring lunch, water, sunscreen/sun protection, appropriate clothing, and footwear. We encourage closed toes shoes, pants, and bringing rain gear if there is any chance of rain. You are responsible for your own gear, food, and water. Field trip leaders do not provide anything for attendees other than cheerful guidance to experience native plants. Hiking level varies with each trip. Pets are not allowed at our field trips. These field trips may include typical Sierra Nevada exposure to adverse environmental conditions such as heat, rain, thunderstorms, poison oak, rattlesnakes, biting and stinging insects, and potential for altitude sickness at higher elevations. Your trip will be enhanced by bringing field guides, magnifying lenses, and a camera, though these are optional.

Carpooling is encouraged. Some field trips will have a cap on vehicles and a carpool will be arranged at the meeting site.

Please consider joining our membership and supporting the good work of the California Native Plant Society. Field trips are open to everyone, you don't need to be a dues-paying member to attend. All are welcome!

## 2024 Sierra Foothills CNPS Field Trip Schedule

Location	Date	Leader	Description
Merced River Trail -> North Fork of the Merced	7-Apr	Doug Krajnovich	Easy/kid friendly first part, hike to North Fork second Part
West side Trail	8-Apr	Elizabeth Vass	Outside of Tuolumne.
Ratto Ranch	10-Apr	Karen Orso	In conjunction with Sierra Rock Garden Society. Early access before the Ratto Ranch open house.
Red Hills/Chinese Camp Brodiaea Work Party	13-Apr	Elizabeth Vass / Tom Reyes	Hike at Red Hills, then head over to Chinese Camp brodiaea location to implement conservation efforts to protect the rare plant.
Ratto Ranch Open House	20-Apr	Open House	Native Plant Society members needed to serve as docents.
Bagby Serpentine Area	28-Apr	Peggy Moore	Rare flora on serpentine soils in Bagby area.
Hite Mine Road and Sierra Bladdernut	4-May	Doug Krajnovich	Cedar Lodge to Pinoche Ridge. Look for Sierra bladdernut flowers & fruit.
Hetch Hetchy Entrance Station to Tuolumne River Overlook	11-May	David Campbell	From Hetch Hetchy Entrance Station through forest and meadow to a rocky point with a good view.
Rebecca Lance Garden Tour/Sierra Rock Garden	19-May	Ron Allen / Rebecca Lance	Long established native plant garden tour. With Sierra Rock Garden Society.
Red Hills/Chinese Camp Brodiaea Work Party	1-Jun	Doug Krajnovich / Tom Reyes	Hike along North Serpentine creek, then head to brodiaea location to implement conservation efforts to protect the rare plant.
Carlton at Evergreen Rd. and the South Fork of the Tuolumne	15-Jun	Judy & Barry Breckling	Start at Carlton area along South Fork of the Tuolumne River, hike along mid-elevation cold air drainage specialists.
McGurk Meadow	29-Jun	David Campbell	McGurk Meadow, many mid-elevation blooms along Glacier Point Road.
Carson Pass Meadows	Mid July	Bob Dean	High elevation meadows with diverse blooms.
Lake Winnemucca	Late Aug.	Bob Dean	High elevation hike with diverse blooms and great scenery.
Wheeler Ridge	27-Jul	Louise Christy	Wheeler Ridge
High Sierra Double Header: Leavitt Lake -> PCT	10-Aug	David Campbell	Leavitt Lake -> PCT. Camp at Leavitt Lake Fri. and Sat. nights. Sat. hike south to and along PCT.
High Sierra Double Header: Blue Canyon	11-Aug	Tom Reyes	Blue Canyon off of Hwy 108

## **Sunday, April 7 – Wildflower Walk and Hike along the Merced River**

**Leader:** Doug Krajnovich

**Hiking Level:** Easy then Moderate - Flat Trail along railroad grade turned trail to start, then hiking up steeper foot trail with moderate elevation gain. 5.5 miles out and back.

**Description:** Part One will be geared toward children and adults who have little or no botanical knowledge. This part will last two hours and will involve only a mile of walking on level ground. Part Two will commence when Part One concludes. We will follow the Merced River Trail to the North Fork and continue up a fairly steep uphill trail to the waterfall.

**Meeting Place:** Both parts will start at Railroad Flat Campground – the last of several campgrounds along the unimproved road that starts at the Briceburg turnoff from Hwy. 140.

**Meeting Time:** Part One will last from 9-11 a.m. Part Two will last from 11 a.m. until 4 or 5 p.m.

**RSVP and More Information Contact:** RSVP required so that I can notify people of any last minute changes or a weather-related cancellation. Contact [djkran@comcast.net](mailto:djkran@comcast.net) to sign up. Let me know if you will be bringing children and their ages so that I can prepare handouts that hopefully will be age-appropriate, encouraging, and fun.

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## **Monday, April 8 – West Side Trail**

**Leader:** Elizabeth Vass

**Hiking Level:** Easy

**Description:** West Side Trail outside of Tuolumne.

**RSVP and More Information Contact:** Elizabeth Vass at [vasselizabeth@gmail.com](mailto:vasselizabeth@gmail.com)

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## **Wednesday, April 10 and Saturday, April 20 – Ratto Ranch**

**Leader:** Karen Orso/Tuolumne Land Trust/Sierra Rock Garden Society

**Hiking Level:** Easy to moderate

**Description:** Karen Orso called our attention to the Ratto Ranch Open House which takes place every year on the weekend closest to Earth Day. Ratto Ranch is a fantastic 240 acre property in Jamestown that is administered by the Tuolumne Land Trust. It is closed to the public except for the annual event. This year's Open House is scheduled for Saturday, April 20. The Sierra Rock Garden Society has received permission to do an early bird tour of the property on Wednesday, April 10. Karen contacted the Rock Garden group and received permission for members of our CNPS chapter to join their April 10 walk. (A head count limitation might need to be imposed for April 10 if too many people express interest. There is no cap for the April 20 date.) In addition, the Land Trust is seeking volunteers from our group with botanical expertise to serve as docents on April 20.

**RSVP and More Information Contact:** Contact Karen Orso at [keolhg@msn.com](mailto:keolhg@msn.com)

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## **Saturday, April 13 – Red Hills and Chinese Camp Brodiaea Work Party**

**Date had to be changed to April 14 on account of weather.**

The Wildflower Walk will start at 10 a.m.

We will gather at the main Red Hills parking lot on the south side of Red Hills Road – the one with an outhouse. We will botanize for 3-4 hours at several locations.

We will drive to the conservation site at the end of the wildflower walk. If you are only interested in the work party, meet us at the Chinese Camp Elementary School parking lot at 2 p.m.

RSVP: for more information contact [djkran@comcast.net](mailto:djkran@comcast.net)

### **Original description:**

**Leader:** Elizabeth Vass - Red Hills, Tom Reyes – Chinese Camp Brodiaea Work Party

**Hiking Level:** Part 1 easy / Part 2 moderate

**Description:** Elizabeth will lead a hike at Red Hills, contact her for more details.

After the field trip, join us at our volunteer work party to help the rare Chinese Camp Brodiaea (*Brodiaea pallida*)! CNPS Sierra Foothills Chapter has partnered with a local landowner to preserve and steward the rare plant population on their property. We will work to remove several invasive plant species such as yellow starthistle (*Centaurea solstitialis*) and barbed goat grass (*Aegilops triuncialis*) to improve the habitat for this beautiful rare plant species.

**RSVP and More Information Contact:** For Red Hills Hike - contact Elizabeth Vass at [vasselizabeth@gmail.com](mailto:vasselizabeth@gmail.com). For Chinese Camp brodiaea work party, contact Tom Reyes at [treyes@cnps.org](mailto:treyes@cnps.org)

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## **Sunday, April 28 – Plants of the Bagby Serpentine**

**Leader Name:** Peggy Moore

**Hiking Level:** Easy

**Description:** In 2007, the CA state director for Bureau of Land Management designated an area north of the Merced River at Bagby and bisected by Highway 49 as an Area of Critical Ecological Concern specifically for rare plant protection.

If we're lucky with timing, we'll see the serpentine soil specialists, shaggyhair lupine (*Lupinus spectabilis*) and milkwort jewelflower (*Streptanthus polygaloides*) as well as Cascade onion (*Allium cratericola*, serpentine indicator) and serpentine Sierra bluecup (*Githopsis pulchella* ssp. *serpenticola*, strong serpentine indicator). Hartweg's doll's-lily (*Odontostomum hartwegii*) and California juniper (*Juniperus californica*) also occur in the area along with some other interesting plants. We are likely to make several roadside stops and take short walks.

**Meeting Place:** Meet in Mariposa in the Foster Ace Hardware parking lot near the NW corner of Highway 140 and Highway 49 North (5188 Calif. Hwy 49 N, Mariposa CA 95338). We'll carpool north on Hwy 49 for about 15 minutes to the serpentine area around Bagby (where Hwy 49 crosses the Merced River). We'll plan to be back at our meeting place by 2:00 p.m.

If you're coming from the north, please arrange a meeting time & place with Peggy.

**Meeting Time:** 9:00 a.m. in Mariposa

**RSVP and More Information Contact:** Peggy Moore at [pemoore4@gmail.com](mailto:pemoore4@gmail.com) or 209-617-7775. Space is limited to 15.

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## **Saturday, May 4 - Hite Mine Road and Sierra Bladdernut**

**Leader Name:** Doug Krajnovich

**Hiking Level:** Moderate. ~1000 ft. elev. gain and 2 miles one-way to the ridge; some obstacles but not too bad. The distance to the first sierra bladdernut tree is much shorter. Participants can turn around at any time.

**Description:** The plan is to follow Hite Mine Road from Cedar Lodge to Pinoche Ridge. Many plants will be blooming, but our target plant will be Sierra Bladdernut (*Staphylea bolanderi*), the sole representative of its genus and family, at least in California. Mariposa County is at the extreme northern end of its range.

**Meeting Place:** Cedar Lodge on Hwy. 140. Gather outside the registration office/store.

**Meeting Time:** 9:30 a.m.

**RSVP and More Information Contact:** Doug K. at [djkran@comcast.net](mailto:djkran@comcast.net)

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## **Saturday, May 11 – Hetch Hetchy Entrance to Tuolumne River Overlook**

**Leader:** David Campbell

**Hiking Level:** Moderate

**Description:** This quiet hike away from crowds is a steady climb that starts at Hetch Hetchy Entrance Station in Yosemite National Park. We'll hike through mixed conifer forest to a small meadow and up to a rocky point with views of the Tuolumne River and Hetch Hetchy. A wide variety of species occur throughout different habitats. The hike will climb ~500' over the course of 1.2 miles (2.4 miles there and back).

**Meeting Place:** Hetch Hetchy Entrance Station

**Meeting Time:** 9:00 a.m.

**RSVP and More Information Contact:** David Campbell at [DCampbell.CNPS@gmail.com](mailto:DCampbell.CNPS@gmail.com). Space is limited, RSVP is a must for this trip due to day use permits to enter the park.

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## **Sunday, May 19 – Garden Tour with the Sierra Rock Garden Society**

**Leader:** Ron Allen, Rebecca Lance, and Sierra Rock Garden Society

**Hiking Level:** Easy

**Description:** We have the opportunity to join the Sierra Rock Garden Society in visiting the garden of Rebecca Lance in Sonora. This waterwise garden has been in place for over 20 years and has a very large number of California natives, including over 20 species of Eriogonum (including some that are rather rare), many penstemon, salvia, and a host of other native perennials, bulbs and shrubs.

**Meeting Place:** Contact Ron for more information and to arrange for carpooling

**Meeting Time:** 10:00 a.m.

**RSVP and More Information Contact:** Ron Allen at [allenron0308@gmail.com](mailto:allenron0308@gmail.com)

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## **Saturday, June 1 – Red Hills Serpentine Creek and Chinese Camp Brodiaea Work Party**

**Leader:** Doug Krajnovich - Red Hills walk along Serpentine Creek, Tom Reyes – Chinese Camp Brodiaea Work Party

**Hiking Level:** Part 1 easy / Part 2 moderate

**Description:** For Part 1, Doug will lead a short, late season (for Red Hills) hike along Serpentine Creek.

After the field trip, join us at our volunteer work party to help the rare Chinese Camp Brodiaea (*Brodiaea pallida*)! CNPS Sierra Foothills Chapter has partnered with a local landowner to preserve and steward the rare plant population on their property. We will work to remove several invasive plant species such as

yellow starthistle (*Centaurea solstitialis*) and barbed goat grass (*Aegilops triuncialis*) to improve the habitat for this beautiful rare plant species.

**RSVP and More Information Contact:** For Red Hills Hike - contact Doug at [djkran@comcast.net](mailto:djkran@comcast.net) . For Chinese Camp Brodiaea work party, contact Tom at [treyes@cnps.org](mailto:treyes@cnps.org)

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## **Saturday, June 15 – Carlon Area Along Evergreen Road**

**Leaders:** Judy and Barry Breckling

**Hiking Level:** Easy

**Description:** We'll spend time botanizing along the north and south sides of the South Fork of the Tuolumne River. Some of the plants we'll be looking for are Phantom Orchid (*Cephalanthera austinae*), Giant Trillium (*Trillium angustipetalum*), and Bride's Bonnet (*Clintonia uniflora*), and we hope to see one other spectacular plant.

**Meeting Place:** We'll meet at 9:30 a.m. at the library parking lot in Groveland (next to Mary Lavaroni Park on Main Street, Highway 120). Due to limited parking at Carlon and a parking fee of \$10, the trip will be limited to 18 people, and we will be car pooling and maybe doing some strategic car shuttling.

**Meeting Time:** Meet at 9:30 a.m. in Groveland (if coming from the south/through Yosemite, meet at Carlon area at 10:00)

**RSVP and More Information Contact:** Judy Breckling at 209-878-3041 or [breckling@garlic.com](mailto:breckling@garlic.com)

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## **Saturday, June 29 – McGurk Meadow, Yosemite National Park**

**Leader:** David Campbell

**Hiking Level:** Moderate

**Description:** From Glacier Point Road in Yosemite National Park, we'll hike to McGurk Meadow. This mostly flat hike, about two miles round trip, will lead to a rich mid-elevation meadow.

**Meeting Place:** Carpools and day use permits must be arranged in advance, main carpool will meet in El Portal. Separate carpools may be organized – contact David early to arrange details.

**Meeting Time:** Meet for carpools at 8:00 a.m.. At trailhead by 9:00 a.m.

**RSVP and More Information Contact:** David Campbell at [DCampbell.CNPS@gmail.com](mailto:DCampbell.CNPS@gmail.com) . Space is limited, RSVP is a must for this trip due to day use permits to enter the park.

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## **Mid July, depending on best bloom period – Carson Pass Meadows**

**Leader:** Bob Dean

**Hiking Level:** Strenuous due to high elevation

**Description:** The destination of this hike is a small meadow with a lot of native plants. The hike starts at about 8,000 feet elevation and rises to about 9,000 feet, with a lot to stop and see along the way including ancient junipers, beautiful scenery and plenty of wildflowers in the snowmelt-fed runnels.

**Meeting Place:** TBD

**Meeting Time:** TBD

**RSVP and More Information Contact:** Bob Dean at 209-754-5887

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## Saturday, July 27 - Woodchuck Basin to Wheeler Ridge

**Leader Name:** Louise Christy

**Hiking Level:** Moderate, some steep parts, altitude

**Description:** This high-elevation trail features expansive views, forest, meadows, wildflowers, and some interesting volcanic geology. The distance to the top of the ridge is 1.7 miles; so our hike will be 3.4 miles round trip. Hiking difficulty is moderate, with some steep parts and switchbacks, but we'll go slowly to look at interesting plants along the way. The trailhead is at 8,700 feet, and the elevation gain to the ridge is 1,700 feet.

**Meeting Place:** For carpooling, meet at Feeny Park in Murphys at 8:00 a.m. We will then drive up Highway 4 to the Woodchuck Basin trailhead. Alternatively, meet at the trailhead at 9:30 a.m.

**Meeting Time:** 8:00 a.m. Feeny Park, Murphys, or 9:30 at Woodchuck Basin Trailhead

**Space is limited, please sign up.**

**RSVP and more Information Contact:** Louise at (408) 507-7001 or [louisedchristy@gmail.com](mailto:louisedchristy@gmail.com)

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## Weekend of August 10-11 – High Sierra Double Header

**Motivation:** We're continuing a High Sierra Double Header and invite you to make it a weekend. High Sierra field trips sometimes get canceled because of thunderstorms, and even with perfect weather, attendance is often light because it is a lot of driving from the foothills for a day trip. Drive up on Thursday or Friday, get acclimated to the altitude, then join us for one or both weekend field trips.

We'll seek to secure a campsite at Leavitt Lake down a rugged four wheel drive road off of Sonora Pass. RSVP in advance. We may be able to shuttle folks in from Hwy 108 if you come in 2WD vehicle, but will need to arrange details in advance. We'll stay there Friday and Saturday night. Packing up camp Sunday morning and heading to the Blue Canyon Trailhead for Sunday's field trip.

As always at this elevation, afternoon thunderstorms are possible. We'll pay close attention to the forecast leading up to the trip and adjust plans if needed.

## Saturday, August 10 – Leavitt Lake to the Pacific Crest Trail

**Leader:** David Campbell

**Hiking Level:** Strenuous. Elevation starts at 9,500' and climbs up from there

**Description:** Starting at Leavitt Lake at around 9,500', already at treeline, we'll climb up to meet the Pacific Crest Trail above tree line. We'll enjoy alpine plants and spectacular views along the way. The campsite and Leavitt Lake is a destination in and of itself.

**Meeting Place:** Meet at the Leavitt Lake Trailhead, if camping with the larger group, we'll leave camp together – the trail head is a short distance away. There are several camping locations.

**Meeting Time:** 9:00 a.m. at the trailhead.

**RSVP and More Information Contact:** David Campbell at [DCampbell.CNPS@gmail.com](mailto:DCampbell.CNPS@gmail.com)

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## Sunday, August 11 – Blue Canyon Lake

**Leader Name:** Tom Reyes

**Hiking Level:** Arduous due to high elevation and 1200ft elevation gain

**Description:** We will climb from highway 108 near Sonora Pass to a beautiful 10,000ft Lake near the crest of the Sierra Nevada where we should see a good diversity of subalpine-alpine wildflowers. The hike will be 3.6 miles out and back with a 1200ft climb.

**Reservation/Signup Needed:** Parking is limited so please sign up with Tom

**Meeting Place:** Meet at 9:30 a.m. at the Blue Canyon trailhead, approximately 1 mile west of Sonora Pass. Parking is limited so carpooling is highly encouraged. Some participants from the previous day's field trip will be camping at Leavitt Lake.

**Meeting Time:** 9:30 a.m. at Blue Canyon trailhead

**RSVP and More Information Contact:** Tom Reyes at [treyes@cnps.org](mailto:treyes@cnps.org)

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## **Late August - Early September, depending on best bloom period – Winnemucca Lake/Mokelumne Wilderness**

**Leader:** Bob Dean

**Hiking Level:** Strenuous due to elevation

**Description:** This trail is well known for its beautiful vistas and splendid wildflower displays.

There were excellent wildflowers in 2019 when we visited on September 8. Trip may be pushed out to catch the best blooming period. We will cover some ground and begin our walk back no later than early afternoon. That time of year there's the possibility of thunderstorms building up by late afternoon and we don't want to be caught in the open. There should be plenty of leisure time to look at plants and catch an occasional bird. Carry a poncho or rain cover of some sort and something to hold body heat. Be sure to bring water and something to munch on. Despite the altitude the walk will be leisurely so I don't anticipate too much exertion.

**Meeting Place:** We'll meet at the Carson Pass sno-park parking lot on the north side of Hwy. 88

**Meeting Time:** TBD

**RSVP and More Information Contact:** Bob Dean, 209-754-5887

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