

2010 Bristlecone Chapter Spring and Summer Field Trips

March 6, Saturday – Comanche Point, Tejon Ranch, Kern County. Leader: Ellen Cypher. The Tejon Ranch Conservancy has invited CNPS back to the Ranch for what we hope will be an outstanding spring bloom! The first of 2 trips will be to Comanche Point (600'-1,200' elevation). On these joint trips with the Kern County CNPS Chapter we'll work on creating plant lists, so come prepared to key. Ellen Cypher will assist with plant identification. Bring lunch, water, hat, sunscreen, layers of clothing, and wear sturdy boots. Pets and smoking are not allowed on Tejon Ranch. You may want to bring along copies of plant lists from nearby areas such as Wind Wolves Preserve and Hungry Valley (available on the Kern CNPS Chapter web site: <http://www.kerncnps.org/PlantLists/index.html>) as a starting point, as well as your *Kern County Flora*, *Jepson Manual*, and any other references that may be appropriate. If you plan to attend, please notify Kathy LaShure (760-377-4541; desert_encelia@verizon.net) by 5 pm on Friday March 5.

Those coming from the Indian Wells Valley or points north should meet at the Inyokern Post Office at 7:00 am to carpool to the site. If coming from the south or west, just meet at 8:30 am at the site entrance (see following). Please be prompt, as the gates must be locked once everyone arrives for the group to start. Directions to the site: we will enter at the Tejon Ranch gate at the end of Comanche Point Road. To get there, take Hwy 223 east to Arvin and turn south on South Derby Road/Tejon Highway. Tejon Highway dead ends into Herring Road/Comanche Point Road. Turn left (east) on Comanche Point Road follow it around to the Tejon Ranch gate.

March 20-21, Saturday-Sunday (Sunday optional) – Death Valley. Leader: Mark Bagley. Trip details will depend on flower blooms. The group will meet on Saturday morning, at 9 am, at the Furnace Creek Visitor's Center and Museum (the center opens at 8 am) parking lot. People should be gassed up and ready to go at 9:00 with food and water for the weekend and ready to camp (optional). Be prepared for dry camping if necessary. The trip will go until about 5 pm on Saturday when we should be arriving at our camping place. On Sunday the trip will end at about 2 or 3 pm, when I expect many will want to begin their drive home. Members of the Sierra Foothills Chapter will be joining the trip.

March 27, Saturday. Mary DeDecker Native Plant Garden Spring Cleaning. Leader: Jerry Zatorski. This is an annual spring cleaning for the garden. March is a great time to jump on any exotic weeds and get them out before they drop their seed as well as trim up anything that might need it. We'll meet at the garden at the Eastern California Museum in Independence at 9:00 AM, bring garden gloves, trowels, hand pruners, and wear sturdy work clothes. For more information contact Jerry at jerryzat@gmail.com.

April 9-11, Friday-Sunday – Wildflower Show, Maturango Museum, 100 E. Las Flores, Ridgecrest, 760-375-6900. Come see what wildflower treasures have been uncovered within a 50-mile radius of Ridgecrest. Volunteer teams with BLM permits will

search for flora on the east-facing slopes & in the canyons of the Sierra Nevada, in the Coso and El Paso Mountains, as well as the Indian Wells Valley itself.

April 11, Sunday - Highway clean-up. Leader: Scott Hetzler. Meet at the intersection of Highway 395 and Pine Creek Rd., west of 395, at 9.00 AM. We will try to be done by 1:00 PM. For more information contact Scott at (760) 873-8392.

April 17, Saturday – El Paso Wash, Indian Wells Valley. Leaders: Kathy LaShure & Jane McEwen. We will explore the area southwest of Ridgecrest (north drainage of El Paso Mountains) that is the proposed site for the Solar Millennium Ridgecrest project. Ileene Anderson, Center for Biological Diversity biologist, has given us some guidelines. “*Eschscholzia minutiflora ssp. twisselmanii* (Red Rock poppy), *Cymopterus deserticola* (Desert cymopterus), *Phacelia nashiana* (Charlotte’s phacelia) are rare plants that immediately come to mind, although I think the *Cymopterus* is a bit of a long-shot. The other two are likely though. Also in that wash area, keep your eye open for cross between *Hymenoclea salsola* and *Ambrosia dumosa*. I found this in Dove Canyon years ago – big shrub that I couldn’t ID (embarrassing). Inter-genetic hybrids are unusual and should count for something!! We can also look for cryptobiotic soil crusts, unusual plant assemblages, new rare alliances as described in the new Manual of CA Veg.” We might also spot a Desert Tortoise munching on wildflowers!

Meet at 9:00 AM at the intersection of Brown Road & Powerline Road. That’s 7 miles south of the intersection of Hwy 178 and Brown Road in Inyokern or 2.9 miles west of the intersection of Hwy 395 and Brown Road (coming from Ridgecrest). Passenger cars OK to meeting site. Bring water, snacks, hat, sunscreen, *Jepson Desert Manual*, notebook and pencil, camera. For further information, please contact Kathy LaShure (760-377-4541; desert_encelia@verizon.net).

April 24-25, Saturday-Sunday. Eureka Valley. Leader: Michèle Slaton. Come spend 1 or 2 days in the south end of Eureka Valley in Death Valley National Park. Meet Sat. 8:00am at the Big Pine Campground, at the intersection of Hwy 395 and 168. We will hike up the road and side canyons of Dedeckera Canyon on Sat., and car camp near the dunes that night. On Sun., we will either explore the sand dunes or another Last Chance canyon north of Dedeckera. Expect to see many rare plants, including July gold, Eureka Dunes evening primrose, Eureka Valley dunegrass, shining milkvetch, naked stemmed daisy, and Gilman’s cymopterus. Bring all your camping necessities and typical hiking gear. Expect to walk about 6 miles each day. There is no water available in Eureka Valley. 4WD required for some group members, but not all...Please RSVP so that we can inform the Park of our group size, and to help arrange vehicles and timing for those who can come just one day. Contact Michèle with any questions at mslaton@schat.com or 938-3258.

May 1, Saturday – Owens Valley East Side. Leader: Sally Manning. The colorful western escarpment of the Inyo Mountains will serve as a backdrop as we investigate the plant communities and spring wildflowers east of the lower Owens River south of Independence. Los Angeles DWP has proposed constructing solar power generation

facilities across several square miles in this area. We'll tour the area on unpaved roads, probably with minimal walking. Meet at 9 a.m. at the Manzanar National Historic Site parking lot. Bring water, sun protection, lunch or snacks, and a plant identification book if you have one. This is planned as a half-day trip. Contact Sally at (760) 873-3790.

May 1, Saturday – Caliente Creek, Tejon Ranch, Kern County. Leader: Ellen Cypher. This second trip courtesy of the Tejon Ranch Conservancy will visit the Caliente Creek area (800' – 1,200' elevation). The date was chosen in order to increase chances of catching the rare Vasek's *Clarkia Clarkia tembloriensis* ssp. *calientensis* in bloom. Bring lunch, water, hat, sunscreen, layers of clothing, and wear sturdy boots. Pets and smoking are not allowed on Tejon Ranch. You may want to bring along copies of plant lists from nearby areas such as Wind Wolves Preserve and Hungry Valley (available on the Kern CNPS Chapter web site: <http://www.kerncnps.org/PlantLists/index.html>) as a starting point, as well as your *Kern County Flora*, *Jepson Manual*, and any other references that may be appropriate. If you plan to attend, please notify Kathy LaShure (760-377-4541; desert_encelia@verizon.net) by 5 pm on Friday April 30.

Those coming from the Indian Wells Valley or points north should meet at the Inyokern Post Office at 7:00 am to carpool to the site. If coming from the south or west, just meet at 8:30 am at the site entrance. Please be prompt, as the gates must be locked once everyone arrives for the group to start. Directions to the site: we will meet at the intersection of Bena Road and Highway 223 (just south of Highway 58) and then travel to the field site.

May 9, Sunday – Black Canyon (Independence burn area). Leader: Richard Potashin. Happy Mother's Day and what better gift to give your mothers than flowers in their natural setting. This area got torched in the infamous Inyo Complex fire of 2007 but rebounded in 2009 with one of the finest floral displays on the Eastside. We'll explore the fans leading up to Black Canyon and take a short walk on an old mining road. In addition to discussing fire ecology and reclamation, we'll be capturing the beauty around us with a variety of artistic media and creating a card for Mother's day. Recommend high clearance vehicles. Meet at the Blackrock Rest Area at 9:30 A.M. Bring water, lunch, hat and sunscreen, cameras, and your favorite art media; pastels, watercolors etc. The trip will end at 3:00 P.M. For more information contact Richard Potashin at 760-878-2379

May 22, Saturday – Black Canyon and Marble Canyon, White Mts. Leader: Jerry Zatorski. Black Canyon begins at about 4500 ft at its opening on the alluvial fan of the Owens Valley. From there we will head up-canyon making stops along the way as the flowers dictate. At about 5500 ft Marble Canyon forks off to the east, and we'll hike up to the Montenegro Spring area at about 7000 ft. We will also hike a bit up Black Canyon to at least Lower Black Canyon Spring. At these elevations many botanical treats can be found, and with some determination and little luck, species such as Broom Milkvetch, Desert Crab Apple, Dwarf Ninebark and Mono Penstemon are all certainly possible here. Don't forget binoculars! This is not only a great location for plants, but is also an

excellent place to see and hear Broad-tailed and Black-chinned Hummingbirds flying about defending breeding territories along with numerous other passerines all in full breeding plumage and song. There will be about 5 miles of hiking at least half of it up hill. Participants should bring lunch, snacks and plenty of fluids. Dress for the weather & conditions, hat, sunscreen, hiking shoes... 4WD vehicles with clearance are strongly recommended as the road up Black Canyon is always unpredictable. We will meet at 7:00 AM at the junction of Warm Springs Rd. and East Side Rd. This is a Joint trip with Eastern Sierra Audubon Society. For more information contact Jerry at jerryzat@gmail.com.

June 5, Saturday. Blackrock meadows: desertification in the name of mitigation.

Leader: Daniel Pritchett. In July 2007 the Bristlecone Chapter of CNPS formally requested DWP and Inyo County to modify groundwater management in the Blackrock area due to degradation of rare alkali meadow habitat. Shortly after we made our request, a fire burned part of the area. On this field trip we will learn about the ecology of alkali meadow ecosystems and their responses to groundwater drawdowns, fire, and non-native trout. We will explore an area from the Ft. Independence reservation north to 8-mile Ranch/Blackrock hatchery area. Sense of humor and capacity for outrage required. 4x4 not necessary but high clearance may help. Meet at Ft. Independence travel plaza/casino parking lot at 8:45AM. Bring water, snacks, hat, and sunscreen. Trip will end by noon. For more information contact Daniel at 873-8943.

June 6, Sunday. Highway clean-up. Leader: Scott Hetzler. Meet at the intersection of Highway 395 and Pine Creek Rd., west of 395, at 9:00 AM. We will try to be done by 1:00 PM. For more information contact Scott at (760) 873-8392.

June 19th, Saturday. Badger Flat. Leader: Kathleen Nelson. We will be participating in The Great CNPS Rare Plant Treasure Hunt of 2010. Our quest: a population of limestone daisy (*Erigeron uncialis* var. *uncialis*) in the Badger Flat area, reported in 1954 by John Roos. Depending on time, we may also search for older records of little cutleaf (*Hymnophyllum filifolium* var. *nanus*) or broad-keeled milk-vetch (*Astragalus platytropis*) as well. High clearance vehicles required. Be prepared to hike and/or scramble. Don't know what we'll find, so plan on most of the day. Lunch, water, sunscreen, hat, sensible shoes, and perhaps binoculars to view cliff-dwelling plants. Meet at 9:00 am at the park at the south end of Independence, or 8:00 am at the City Park in Bishop, between the ball fields. Contact Kathleen Nelson, 760-873-2498, kgnelson01@fs.fed.us if you have questions.

June 26, Saturday. Wheeler Crest. Leader: Sue Weis. On another Rare Plant Treasure Hunt, we'll be searching for Raven's milk-vetch and Father Crowley's lupine reported in 1988 by Dean Taylor. There may also be some grey-leaved violet and the views are amazing. High clearance 4WD vehicles are needed for Sand Canyon Road, then we'll hike on an old rocky jeep road for about four miles to the reported locations. Meet at Swall gravel pit at 8:00, bring lunch, cameras, and the usual field gear for an all day trip. For more information, contact Sue Weis at sueweis@aol.com or 760-873-3485.

July 17, Saturday – Bloody Canyon, Sierra Nevada Mts. Leader: Jerry Zatorski. Beginning on the south ridge above Walker Lake we hike down to the lake and make our way up the Walker Creek drainage. The name of this canyon hints to the geologic story here. As we ascend the rock and soils change from the familiar gray and tan like in much of the Sierra Nevada to rust or old blood color which is characteristic of older roof pendent rock. Not only is roof pendent geologically interesting, there are also a special array of plants that are often found on these soils. From mountain riparian forest near Walker Lake to subalpine forest to alpine talus at the highest elevations this hike will traverse a variety of habitats and elevations. The trail tops out at Mono Pass just over 5 miles from the trail head and if we get that far, this will be the return point for this trip. Participants should be in good hiking condition at high elevation, and prepare to hike all day. Participants should bring lunch, snacks and plenty of fluids. Dress for the weather & conditions, hat, sunscreen, hiking shoes... 4WD vehicles are recommended on the road to the trail head. We will meet at 8:00 AM at the Parker Lake Rd at the junction of SR 158. For more information contact Jerry at jerryzat@gmail.com.

August 14, Saturday. Aspens. Leaders: Richard Potashin and Nancy Hadlock. Joint trip with Audubon Society. Meet at the USFS Visitor Center in Lee Vining at 10:00 AM. From there we will car pool to a special Conway Meadows aspen grove full of quality carvings and dramatic undergrowth (high clearance vehicles recommended). Be prepared for a short, moderately strenuous hike into the grove with plenty of riparian habitat to observe along the way. Nancy and Richard will introduce you to the wonders of aspens and the mysterious lives of those who spend time in them. Bring your binoculars, good walking/hiking shoes, a bag lunch, cameras and dress in layers. Program will conclude at 4:30 pm. For more information contact Nancy and Richard at aspenluv@suddenlink.net or 760.878.2379.

October 17, Sunday. Highway clean-up. Leader: Scott Hetzler. Meet at the intersection of Highway 395 and Pine Creek Rd., west of 395, at 9.00 AM. We will try to be done by 1:00 PM. For more information contact Scott at 873-8392.

FIELD TRIP POLICIES

For all field trips, be sure to bring plenty of water, lunch, good walking shoes or boots, and appropriate clothing for hot sun and inclement weather. Plant lists, floras, a hand lens, binoculars, camera would also be useful. Trips will leave at the time announced, so please arrive at the meeting site a few minutes early. Unless indicated, the average car should do fine. Car pooling is encouraged. Everyone is welcome, but NO PETS! For general field trip questions or if you would like to lead a field trip please contact Sue Weiss at 760-873-3485.