



## Bristlecone Chapter

*Dedicated to the Preservation of California Native Flora*

# The California Native Plant Society

Bristlecone Chapter Newsletter

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**Volume 39, No. 3**

**May-June 2018**

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## President's Message, May 2018

Doug Tallamy was the opening plenary speaker at the CNPS Conservation Conference. He spoke about how native plants are critical to pollinators and other insects that provide important food sources for native birds and other animals. If you need more motivation to plant natives in your garden, or just want to watch a great video, you can catch his conference presentation, "Doug Tallamy: Restoring Nature's Relationships," on YouTube at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yo4ZJ-ryTaE>

On behalf of our Chapter's effort to help native pollinators, I was one of the presenters at the Eastern Sierra Land Trust's, Pollinator Garden Workshop. The event was well attended. Some attendees were there to get the pollinator garden grant (contact Ryan Delany at the Land Trust if you are interested in that); others just wanted more information about how to make their gardens more pollinator friendly. If you missed the workshop and would like to talk to some of the presenters, we will be at the Land Trust's (250 N. Fowler) "Gardenfest" on May 5<sup>th</sup> from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. I will have native plants for sale, The Master Gardeners and Audubon will be there to answer questions, and there will be plenty of pizza and beer to enjoy.

Pete Anderson, one of our outstanding volunteers at the greenhouse, has been helping the pollinators by putting watering wells around the two-year-old bitterbrush the BLM planted in the Round Fire area. Pete, along with myself, helped the BLM botanist, Martin Oliver, install a watering tank with drip lines to water some of the one-year-old plants. After we did all this work, two good storms rolled through so we don't know how well the system works yet, but they are in place for when the precipitation stops and the temperatures creep up.

--Katie Quinlan



Volunteer Pete Anderson (foreground) and Martin Oliver (background) of BLM install emitters along a drip line to provide much-needed water to the young bitterbrush.

Photo by Katie Quinlan.

## March General Meeting

**Wednesday, May 23<sup>th</sup>, 7:00 p.m.**

**Forest Service, Mammoth Ranger Station  
Auditorium, 2500 CA Highway 203,  
Mammoth Lakes**



**Speaker: Ann Howald**

***Discovering Mono County Plants: Making Progress Towards a Complete Checklist***

Botanists have been studying Mono County's plant life since William Brewer and the Whitney Survey team collected and identified plants near Mt. Dana and Mono Lake in the 1860s. Other past investigations have focused on the Sweetwater Mountains, Bodie Hills, Mono Basin, Glass Mountains, White Mountains and other locations. A checklist of the plants of the Rock Creek watershed was finished in 2017, and a study of Adobe Valley plants is in

progress. This talk will focus on Ann Howald's efforts over the past three years to compile an annotated checklist of all the plants known from Mono County, using the results of these previous studies, as well as her own work. Ann has studied the plants of Mono County since 1975. Since retiring three years ago, she has focused on plants in out-of-the-way locations in Mono County, especially those rarely visited by others. And she has reviewed thousands of Mono County plant collection records from herbaria all over California, leading to some fascinating detective work to verify which plants actually occur in Mono County. Her recent work, and that of others, has resulted in the addition of 24 species to the total list of plants known from Mono County, including two species new to California. At present, the total number of plant species known from Mono County stands at 1,695 and counting!



*Penstemon monoensis* (top) and Ann Howald (bottom).  
Photos by Ann Howald.

Ann first visited Mono County as a child on family fishing trips. During a geology field trip while a UC Santa Barbara undergrad, she first became aware of a shrinking Mono Lake and learned about its threatened ecology. Ann finished her BA in Zoology, then continued at UCSB to complete an MA in Botany. Always a starving student, in 1975 her graduate advisor offered her a summer job documenting the plants of the new UC natural reserve at Valentine Camp in Old Mammoth. This is when her love affair with the plants of Mono County really began. Since then, she has been a summer visitor to Mono County every year. She now lives in Hilton Creek throughout the summer, spending winters in Sonoma. In addition to working on a Mono County plant checklist, Ann does volunteer work and leads field trips for the California Native Plant Society, the Mono Lake Committee, the BLM, State Parks, and Sonoma County Parks. She teaches a field seminar on High Country Plants and Habitats for the Mono Lake Committee each summer. In her spare time, she pulls wildland weeds.

--Michèle Slaton

## Conservation Update Local Water Issues

Water history in Mono and Inyo Counties is a 100-year struggle between Los Angeles Department of Water and Power (LADWP) and an unlikely coalition of tribes, ranchers, environmental groups, and local government agencies. Sometimes, the California State Lands Commission or Department of Fish and Wildlife join the coalition. Challenging LADWP on the balance of water rights versus sustainable water management is one of the very few issues the "members" of this coalition agree on. The coalition argues that wise management of surface and ground water resources are in the best interest of both LADWP and the two counties.

The disputes over water have been resolved by community activism, legal action, court decisions and legal agreements. The parties to these have changed over time, place and the issues addressed. The disputes and dialogue continue, with some disputes resolved, others without resolution, and often differing interpretations of existing agreements.

So—an update for 2018.

## Mono County



The Mono Lake Agreement, which seeks to restore the lake elevation to a management level of 6,392 ft., continues to be implemented. Lake levels increased by over three feet this past year due to record levels of snow and overall precipitation in 2016-2017.

In March 2018, LADWP offered 5-year leases to ranchers in Long Valley but with no water for irrigation or stock ponds. Ranchers with leases have protested, arguing their operations cannot survive this loss of water. Friends of the Inyo and Eastern Sierra Land Trust have joined in protesting the loss of water because of impacts on habitat, particularly for the Bi-County Sage Grouse. The Mono County Board of Supervisors has also joined in protesting the lease terms, but no state or federal agency has taken a position. Beyond the leases, there is no legal agreement or court decision in place for these LADWP lands.

### **Inyo County**

The Technical Group, comprised of LADWP and Inyo County Water Department representatives, has good news about Owens Valley water conditions. Snowpack is up to 66 percent of normal in early April (compared to 34 percent in January). And due to reduced pumping and water-spreading during 2017-2018, groundwater levels are up significantly throughout most of the valley.

But the news is not so upbeat on Well W385R at Five Bridges. Inyo County and LADWP are in dispute over whether a "Negative Declaration" issued by LADWP will allow a 2-month pumping test. Inyo County wants that declaration withdrawn. The Technical Group has met five times and has been at a stalemate each time. The most recent Technical Group agenda dispute areas are: "...whether Well W385R is a new well; whether the 1999 Revegetation Plan is applicable to the Five Bridges site; whether the goals outlined in the 1999 Revegetation Plan have been met for the Five Bridges mitigation site; what are LADWP's continuing obligations in Five Bridges, if any; and consideration by the Technical Group of revised management for Five Bridges."

The Technical Group will meet again at ~~9:00 am, April 25~~ (please note the updated meeting time) 11 am, May 4 at the Bishop LADWP office to give LADWP time to respond to an April 9 letter from Inyo County Water Department, which sets forth the county's position on all disputed issues. Other important dates are: May 10 deadline for annual Operations

Plan from LADWP; May 14 deadline for a report from the Technical Group on Five Bridges; May 15 Inyo Board of Supervisors regular meeting; May 23 meeting of Water Commission at 6:00 pm at Jill Kinmont Boothe Building; and a May 31 meeting of the Standing Committee. The Standing Committee includes members of the Los Angeles City Council, LADWP, Inyo County Board of Supervisors, Inyo County Water Commission and Inyo County Water Department.

### **Owens Lake Dust Control Project**

The working groups on groundwater and habitat standards have completed their recommendations for potential groundwater pumping for the Owens Lake Dust Control Advisory Committee. Currently, LADWP is preparing an environmental review of groundwater pumping at Owens Lake under CEQA which will be presented to the Advisory Committee. No date has yet been set for this meeting. A 60-day public comment period will follow the environmental review release.

Both Inyo County Water Department and LADWP have websites dedicated to these and other water-related reports. You can contact Edie Trimmer (edieann@xmission.com) with questions or comments.

*--Edie Trimmer*

## **Steve Matson's 2017 Year in Review, Part I: Early season**

My two field trips of the year bookended the season. April at the Sawmill Pass trailhead on Division Creek was a bit of a bust. With a big water year behind us, spring was cooler than average, so we were many weeks too early for this early spring trip. October, we had perfect weather (not hot or windy) at Klondike Lake so perhaps I was redeemed (see the full reports in Chapter Newsletter Volume 38, Nos. 3 and 6).

But what about the rest of the year? Exploring this region of California is one the most rewarding things I do in life. In this article I review one other trip I made this last spring.

At the end of April, when I thought it might still be too early for most plants in our region, I joined a Rare Plant Treasure Hunt sponsored by CNPS and led by Steve Schoenig from Davis, CA. Floristically, Eureka Valley was decent but unspectacular. Far better was

## Garden Updates

Spring is always a busy season at the greenhouse. We have had several “pot parties” with a lot of help from great volunteers; the benches are now full of pots and I anxiously wait for seedlings to sprout up in them.

I tried a new technique this year and had some exciting results. Many of the seeds I plant first need to be leached to remove any inhibitors. So this year, instead of putting the seeds in water-filled jars and filling and decanting the water several times in a day, I put them in nylon stockings and placed the stockings in the ditch that runs in the back of my yard. The continuously flowing water probably leaches them better than when they sit in a jar of water. I also found that certain seeds that I typically direct-sow, like *Elymus cinereus* and *Eriogonum umbellatum*, do much better if they are soaked in the ditch overnight to fully imbibe the water.

My most exciting experiment this year was growing *Coleogyne ramosissima* (Black brush). This is a late successional desert species that has hardly ever grown back after a fire. So when Black brush communities burn, they are gone. This is the first year I have had any seeds to work with but it turns out they are pretty easy to sprout.

This year, on the plant signs at the sales, there will be a scan code that will link to the Calscape website where you can get detailed information about each plant. You can also just go to [Calscape.org](http://Calscape.org) and type in the name of the plant and get the same information (in case you forgot to take a picture of the sign or didn't download a scan code reader to your phone).



To get more plant details, use the scan code (red arrow) that will be found on plant signs.

the area around Crankshaft Junction on the east side of the Last Chance Range. A primary objective of this Treasure Hunt was to map populations of a recently described species of *Erythranthe*. *Erythranthe* is the new name for some plants most of us learned as *Mimulus*, or monkeyflowers. *Erythranthe calicicola* is a limestone endemic known from northern desert mountains. I took pictures of it back in 2005 near Harkless Flat and had called it *Mimulus rubellus*. Naomi Fraga and Dana York described *E. calicicola* in 2012, segregating it from other taxa. We found a lot of it near Crankshaft junction, as well as the spectacular *Calochortus kennedyi* and the very rare *Penstemon calcereus*.

We succeeded in mapping the *Erythranthe*, as well as *Cymopterus gilmanii*. We also looked for *Aliciella ripleyi* but without success.



*Erythranthe calicicola* (top) and *Penstemon calcereus* (bottom). Photos by Steve Matson

One night camping at Eureka Dunes punctuated the two-day trip and seeing a Chuckwalla in Bowling Ball Canyon on the return drive capped it all off.

This is the first of more stories about my continuing botanical adventures in this region.

--Katie Quinlan

## THE JEPSON VIDEOS: Visual Guides to the Plants of California

Jepson Herbarium has announced the debut of a new project, [The Jepson Videos: Visual Guides to the Plants of California](https://naturalhistorywanderings.com/2018/02/25/the-jepson-videos-visual-guides-to-the-plants-of-california/), a YouTube channel of short videos on how to identify California plants and more.

These introductory videos can be used in a variety of ways, including a review of the characteristics needed for basic plant identification, formal and informal teaching, and broader appreciation of the flora.

Check out this link as well:

<https://naturalhistorywanderings.com/2018/02/25/the-jepson-videos-visual-guides-to-the-plants-of-california/>

## Calling Plant Photographers

Calflora has gaps in its photo collection of native and non-native species in the Death Valley area. You can plan a trip using the online interactive map—just move the cursor to where you'll be heading next and click search! You may also draw your own polygon to look at a more specific area within the protected area. Click on the following link to find lists of the needed species <http://conta.cc/2CLExlQ>.

There are three ways to add your photos to Calflora:

1. Use our smart phone app Calflora Observer Pro on iOS or android.
2. Add them later by choosing the location where you were on the map (see the webpage's video tutorial).
3. Upload geotagged photos.

Calflora is happy to answer questions at [support@calflora.org](mailto:support@calflora.org)

## Welcome New Members!

Many thanks to all who have recently joined our Bristlecone Chapter! Welcome, Jeff Holmquist, Adrienne Miller, Josh Amaris, Christina Mitine, and Marie Paris. And to those who have renewed memberships, thank you for your continued support!

## Up-Coming Events

(For updated information, visit [bristleconecnps.org/events](http://bristleconecnps.org/events))

### Bristlecone Chapter Board Meeting

**Wednesday, May 9, 6:00 pm**

Eastern Sierra Land Trust, 250 N. Fowler, Bishop  
All members are welcome.

### Bristlecone Chapter General Meeting

**Wednesday, May 23, 7:00 pm**

Forest Service Mammoth Ranger District  
Auditorium, 2500 CA Highway 203, Mammoth Lakes

### CNPS Field Trips

(Check online for the most up-to-date info [bristleconecnps.org/events](http://bristleconecnps.org/events))

### Saturday, May 12. Field Botany and More by Fault. Leader: Jerry Zatorski

In the middle of the Owens Valley, the Earthquake Fault of 1872 has a prominent mark on the landscape. There are places where the offset is an obvious drop off, others with spring fed sag ponds, and others with elongated meadow habitats. We will explore several of these areas beginning with a fault line meadow north of Twin Lakes. There will be brief stops at Goose Lake and Billy Lake to compare the two lakes; one is natural and the other is man-made. After that we will look at two mitigation projects that have taken advantage of the Fault's physical geography. Finally we will stop at a more classic precipice overlook as one might expect along a fault line. Naturally there will be a good dose of early season valley floor botany along with other natural features. There will be about five miles of moderate hiking at a botanist's pace and expect to be done by late afternoon. 4WD vehicles are recommended as the dirt roads on the Valley floor are always unpredictable. Participants should bring lunch, snacks and plenty of fluids. Dress for the weather conditions (hat, sunscreen, hiking shoes...). There is a downloadable version of an Owens Valley plant list on the Bristlecone Chapter web site which can be printed out or uploaded to a smart device. We will meet at 8:00 a.m. at the Blackrock Rest stop, about 15 miles south of Big Pine and about 10.5 miles north of Independence. For more information contact Jerry at [jerryzat@gmail.com](mailto:jerryzat@gmail.com).



## Up-Coming Events

(For updated information, visit  
[bristleconecnps.org/events](http://bristleconecnps.org/events))

### **Saturday, May 19 Harkless Flat and Blake Mine.**

Leader: Steve Matson

This trip takes us by car east up Death Valley Road out of Big Pine and into the Inyo Mountains. We may stop at the Waucoba Lake beds briefly, and then again at Devil's Gate before turning off on a generally well-graded dirt road. We hope to take in all the shrubs and annuals along the dirt road as we cross over to an outstanding overlook of the Owens Valley. We will focus on limestone outcrops and seek out *Erythranthe calicicola*, *Hecastocleis shockleyi*, and *Eriogonum glandulosum*. If time allows, we will walk down a steep rough trail to a mine site perched high above the valley. Meet at 9:00 a.m. at the visitor kiosk on the corner of 395 and 168 in Big Pine. Contact: ssmat@sbcglobal.net, 760-938-2862.

### **Saturday, May 26. Waucoba Wash Exploration.**

Leader: Jerry Zatorski

Waucoba Wash drains the southeast side of Waucoba Mountain into Saline Valley. We begin our trip at just over a 5,700' elevation, away from the searing weather that can plague Saline Valley by late May. We will explore the wash from Saline Valley Road and make our way upslope visiting four different spring and seep areas. According to a 1973 Mary DeDecker plant list, there was Narrow-leaf Cottonwood, *Populus angustifolia*, up in the canyon.

There will be about five miles of moderate hiking at a botanist's pace with about 975' of elevation gain and loss, and expect to be done by the afternoon. 4WD vehicles are recommended as the dirt roads into Saline Valley can be unpredictable. Participants should bring lunch, snacks and plenty of fluids. Dress for the weather conditions (hat, sunscreen, hiking shoes...). There is a downloadable version of an Inyo Mountains plant list on the Bristlecone Chapter web site which can be printed out or uploaded to a smart device. We will meet at 7:00 a.m. at the Glacier View Campground just north of Big Pine (US 395 x SR 168). For more information contact Jerry at jerryzat@gmail.com.

## Up-Coming Events

(For updated information, visit  
[bristleconecnps.org/events](http://bristleconecnps.org/events))

### **Saturday, June 2. Bodie Hills, Masonic area.**

Leader: Ann Howald

Meet at 9 a.m. at the Bridgeport Forest Service Office on Highway 395, a few miles south of Bridgeport. Going in on the Masonic Road, we'll make a couple stops to look for pinyon-juniper understory plants, then continue on to do some easy to moderately strenuous hiking in the Masonic town area and/or lower Masonic Mtn. We'll be looking for some not-too-commonly seen taxa like: *Astragalus oophorus* var. *lavinii*, *Boechera bodiensis*, *Collomia tinctoria*, *Lathrocasis tenerima*, *Lupinus brevicaulis*, *Muilla transmontana*, *Nemacladus rigidus*, and *Phacelia monoensis*. We'll return on Masonic Road at the end of this all-day trip. High clearance vehicles needed. This will be a joint trip with the Range of Light Chapter of the Sierra Club, but conducted at our usual botanist's pace! Questions? Contacts: Ann at (707) 721-6120, [annhowald@vom.com](mailto:annhowald@vom.com); or Dick Hihn at 760-709-5050, [rhihn@skidmore.edu](mailto:rhihn@skidmore.edu).

This will be a joint trip with the Range of Light Chapter of the Sierra Club. Meet at 9:00 a.m. at the Bridgeport Forest Service Office on Highway 395, a few miles south of Bridgeport. For answers to trip questions, contact Ann at (707) 721-6120 or [annhowald@vom.com](mailto:annhowald@vom.com). Range of Light Chapter contact: Dick Hihn at 760-709-5050 or [rhihn@skidmore.edu](mailto:rhihn@skidmore.edu).

## Up-Coming Events

(For updated information, visit  
[bristleconecnps.org/events](http://bristleconecnps.org/events))

**Saturday, June 23. Botany for Beginners, Mammoth/Long Valley.** Leader: Michèle Slaton  
 We will explore places in bloom from Long Valley meadows to Convict Creek and the Sherwins, and get to know the common plants in flower. The general public, including adults and kids of all ages are welcome on this field trip to learn some basic skills to get you started in identifying plants. Experienced botanists are also welcome to share their skills. We will focus on learning common wildflowers, starting with common traits used to recognize plant families. You'll learn how to identify plant parts and how to use a plant key.

We will meet at 9 a.m. at the Green Church at the intersection of Hwy 395 and Benton Crossing Road, and carpool to the extent possible. Bring everything you need for a full day in the field. All instructional materials will be provided, but bring a hand lens or magnifying glass, and plant guide/key if you have one. Contact Michèle Slaton (760-920-8693 or [mslaton02@gmail.com](mailto:mslaton02@gmail.com)) with questions.

Michèle taught college botany for two years and has worked for the past 18 years as a Forest Service and Park Service botanist and ecologist in eastern California.

## Up-Coming Events

(For updated information, visit  
[bristleconecnps.org/events](http://bristleconecnps.org/events))

**Saturday, July 21. Wyman Canyon, White Mts.**  
 Leaders: Courtney Collins & Michèle Slaton  
 We will explore the areas in bloom from the bristlecone pine forest down into pinyon-juniper woodlands and riparian areas. We can expect to see several showy wildflowers, and also rare plants, including Dedecker's clover (*Trifolium kingii* ssp. *dedeckerae*), small-flowered rice grass (*Stipa divaricata*), and Nevada ninebark (*Physocarpus alternans*). We'll spend time searching for the limestone daisy (*Erigeron uncialis*) – a treasure first seen in Wyman 30 years ago, but not documented since.

We will meet at 8:30 a.m. in Big Pine at the intersection of 395 and 168, and regroup again at 10 a.m. at the top of Wyman Canyon (the southern intersection of the Bristlecone Road with Wyman, ca. 2.5 mi. north of Schulman Grove). 4WD will be required. Bring everything you need for a full day in the field. Contact Michèle Slaton (760-920-8693 or [mslaton02@gmail.com](mailto:mslaton02@gmail.com)) with questions.

**Please send your articles or information to us by June 15, 2018 for the next issue.**

### Bristlecone Chapter Directory

President: Katie Quinlan 760-873-8023

Vice President: Michèle Slaton 760-920-8693

Secretary: **OPEN**

Treasurer: Sue Weis 760-873-3485

Chapter Council Rep: Stephen Ingram 760-937-9918

Conservation/Partnerships: **OPEN**

Programs: Michèle Slaton 760-920-8693

DeDecker Grants: Michèle Slaton 760-920-8693

Field Trips: Sue Weis 760-873-3485

Historian: Kathy Duvall 760-387-2122

Bishop Plant Sales: Katie Quinlan 760-873-8023

Mammoth Plant Sales: Sherry Taylor 760-934-2338

Publicity: **OPEN**

Newsletter: Elaine Chow [newsletter@bristleconecnps.org](mailto:newsletter@bristleconecnps.org)

Membership: Elaine Chow [membership@bristleconecnps.org](mailto:membership@bristleconecnps.org)

Website: [webmaster@bristleconecnps.org](http://webmaster@bristleconecnps.org)

Hospitality: **OPEN**

T-shirt Sales: Stephen Ingram

DeDecker Garden: Steve Dickinson

## The California Native Plant Society

Bristlecone Chapter

P.O. Box 364

Bishop, CA 93515-0364

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## Membership

*The California Native Plant Society is an organization of laypersons and professionals united by an interest in the plants of California. It is open to all. The society, working through its local chapters, seeks to increase the understanding of California's native flora and to preserve this rich resource for future generations.*

**To Join or Renew Online:** Go to [cnps.org](http://cnps.org) and click on the JOIN/renew button at the top of the page, or mail in the form below:

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Address:** \_\_\_\_\_

**City:** \_\_\_\_\_ **State:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Zip Code:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Phone:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Email:** \_\_\_\_\_

I wish to be affiliated with the Bristlecone Chapter: \_\_\_\_\_

Other: \_\_\_\_\_

### Mail To / Make Payable To:

CNPS Membership Coordinator

2707 K Street, Suite 1

Sacramento, CA 95816

**Gift Contribution:** \_\_\_\_\_ Wherever needed ☐

Specific Area: \_\_\_\_\_

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