



Bristlecone Chapter

Dedicated to the Preservation of California Native Flora

The California Native Plant Society

Bristlecone Chapter Newsletter

Volume 41, No. 3

May-June 2020

Vice President's Message

Dear Friends:

In these challenging times, our chapter is thinking of you and wishing you health and safety. I'm feeling especially grateful for how close we are to the land in our chapter area and can still have the opportunity to be outside regularly and see the flowers emerging. I'm also finding more time now for mystical musings, and so will keep my message short with this recent happy vision:

I never knew the meaning of a halo until I saw the backlit glow of a pine, the way its precise needle-work itself seemed like time, and I feel sure that the sun sets to grace the world with this sight and that the sun rises the next day for the sheer pleasure of sharing the sight again.

-- Michèle Slaton

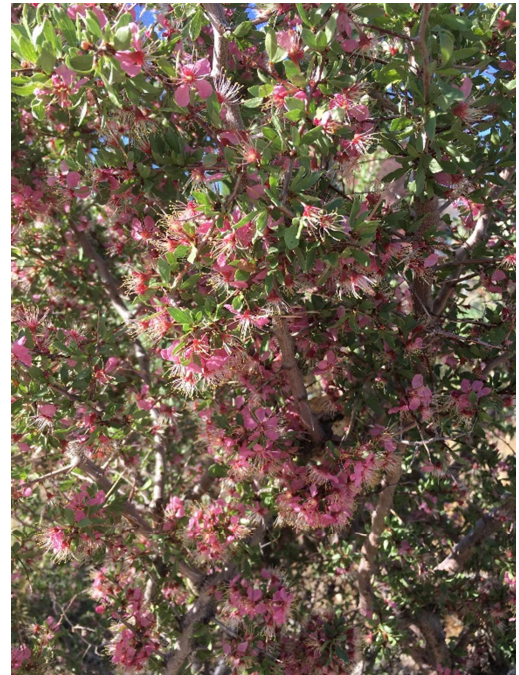
Coronavirus, COVID-19 & Cancellations

The coronavirus has affected us all at some level. So let's all continue to reduce those effects and avoid spreading the coronavirus that causes the infectious disease, COVID-19. To help protect our community, we are following the state's guidelines regarding gatherings, including "unnecessary" meetings of groups of people, by cancelling our events. This, of course, includes the May General Meeting, all upcoming field trips, and spring plant sale gatherings. Unfortunately, there is no way to predict when guidelines will change nor when things can go back to normal, or maybe a new normal.

In the meantime, go out on your own (or those you have isolated with) and enjoy the spring. Know before you go. Check government sources to be sure recreational sites, facilities, etc. are open to the

public, for example, the main sites of Death Valley National Park have been temporarily closed since April 4th.

For a less remote outing, visit the Bishop Community Garden in the city park. The Bristlecone Chapter supports a Native Plant Plot there and the desert peach is blooming this week (end of April). There is also a pollinator plot sponsored by the Audubon Society and many other interesting gardening demonstrations. We even have a mule topiary that was just installed, so it's not entirely covered in leaves yet.



Blooming desert peach, *Prunus andersonii*.

Photo by Sue Weis.

When stuck indoors, there are other options available with the help of technology: virtual events, such as Eastern Sierra Land Trust's Virtual "Victory Garden" Workshop (more details in Events below) or online volunteering, such as helping California herbaria expand their specimen database (see below).

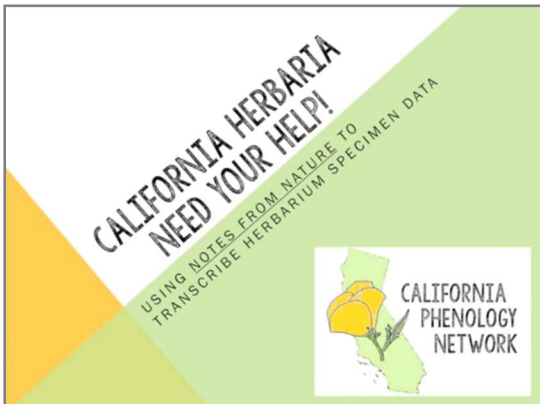
Please do continue to practice social distancing, of at least six feet, when you have to be around others outside of your isolation bubble. And don't forget to wash hands with soap thoroughly, as if you have to get at the garden soil stuck underneath those fingernails.

Call for Volunteers

For our local chapter's needs to those of the botanical community of California, volunteers are wanted.

California Herbaria Need Your Help!

If you're wondering how you can volunteer from home, look no further. Bring the herbarium into your home...and help advance science! California herbaria (collections of plant specimens) are seeking volunteers to help transcribe data from images of herbarium specimens using a simple online interface called Notes from Nature (notesfromnature.org). Notes from Nature can be accessed from any computer connected to the internet and does not require any prior knowledge. Volunteers are guided through a simple tutorial and provided with lots of help along the way. There is a short video from the California Phenology Network that introduces Notes from Nature and explains how to get involved: <https://youtu.be/Fh2Rg39qm-0>.



Native Plant Propagation Center

We propagate native plants for restoration projects in cooperation with BLM, USFS and other organizations and for our annual plant sale in August. Sales provide funding for research projects on the local native flora through our Mary DeDecker Botanical Grant Program. To grow all the native plants—sometimes by the thousands—we need volunteers to help mix up potting soil, fill pots, plant seeds, and water plants. We are coordinating

volunteer work to maintain safety distances among workers. Interested members are encouraged to contact Sue Weis at treasurer@bristleconecnps.org.

Garden Work Days

Our two native plant gardens, one at the Bishop Community Garden and another in Independence, the Mary DeDecker Garden, may have one to a few work days throughout the year in need of many hands to make work light. Keep an eye out for updates on future work days by checking our website (www.bristleconecnps.org/events) or your email (make sure you are opted in for receiving information by email).

Conservation: Updates on Water Issues

Water for Long Valley Leases

According to email exchanges between Aquaduct Manager Clarence Martin and lessee Matt Kemp, Los Angeles Department of Water and Power has agreed to provide a minimum of 11,000 acre-feet* with more area possible depending on assessments from April's storms. The water for spreading on leases will be available by April 27. This is good news for ranchers and for natural habitat in Long Valley, although the amount falls well below what has been spread in past years.

Legal action for a long-term resolution of water provided to lessees has been slowed by the coronavirus pandemic, but administrative records have been submitted. Next steps in the process would be setting up a briefing schedule and hearing date.

Pumping Test Results for Five Bridges

The two-month pumping test for the Five Bridges area is complete and monitoring data is being analyzed by Inyo County, LADWP and other parties of the Memorandum of Understanding (Sierra Club and Owens Valley Committee, California State Land Commission and California Division of Fish and Game). Inyo County Water Department will have a report with the data and some analysis in a week or so. A more complete report will follow in a month or so.

Owens Valley Ground Water Authority

The Owens Valley has been ranked as a low priority basin, down from a moderate priority, by the California Department of Water Resources. Therefore,

some members elected to drop their membership in OWGVA because of the cost to their water districts. The OWVGA then approved adding three new members: Ken Toy of Meadow Creek Mutual Water Company with two votes in exchange for \$11,000-a-year contributions to OWVGA and Mel Joseph of the Lone Pine Paiute-Shoshone Reservation and Mary Roper of the Owens Valley Committee with one vote each.

The management of groundwater underlying Owens Lake will likely fall under either the Long Term Water Agreement or OVGWA. The groundwater resources are part of the water balance of Owens Valley but are in a unique position because the resources have not been adequately defined and are owned by the State Land Commission.

-- Edie Trimmer

* LADWP has updated their estimate to a total of 15,000 acre-feet of water.

Field Notes: April, 2020

Some plants you search for and some plants you stumble upon. Sometimes it's both.

When I find records of plants that grow in and around the Owens Valley, which I have never seen before, my interest is piqued. This is especially true when the plants have been found near our home in Big Pine. I spend a lot of time poking around the Waucoba Lake beds east of Big Pine along Death Valley Road (Waucoba Road). I had found some records of a plant called *Chylismia heterochroma*, or Shockley's evening-primrose. William Shockley (1855–1925), an American mining engineer, first collected this plant in western Nevada (Esmeralda County) in 1881. Found just in western Nevada and eastern California, there are 55 records of this plant in Mono and Inyo Counties and over 200 from western Nevada.

Chylismia heterochroma is clearly not a rare plant, but also not collected all that often (in CA). More to the point, however, is that I had never seen it before, or heard others mention it. It had been on my radar for a few years, but I really only started looking in 2019. There are collections from the Waucoba Lake bed region, in May and July. I started looking in June with absolutely no luck whatsoever. July, the same story. Come August 10, however, I was out walking the dogs (who are no help in locating anything except dead

things to roll in) just inside the boundary of Inyo National Forest. I go here occasionally to check on a population of *Hecastocleis shockleyi* ("nevada prickly-leaf"). Curiously enough, Shockley discovered this plant also in Esmeralda County in 1881. It also is known just from southwestern Nevada and eastern California.



Chylismia heterochroma, Shockley's evening-primrose.
Photos by Steve Matson.

I am checking on one Shockley discovery when I find one of his other discoveries! A lot of plants in the Evening-primrose family (Onagraceae) are difficult to tell apart. These are plants which have been slotted into the genera *Oenothera* or *Camissonia*, some of which more recently have been moved into other genera (such as *Camissoniopsis*, *Eremothera*, *Chylismiella*, and *Chylismia*). Visitors to the desert will often find a plethora of four-petaled, inferior-ovaryed plants that have white or yellow petals. I often grimace at these plants, wondering if I have ever seen them before....common?....rare? Not so with *C. heterochroma*! As befits its name, it is differently colored, or variably colored. So before me was this lavender and yellow beauty all covered with glands and a few feet tall in some cases.

"OMG," I muttered to myself, getting all jittery as I knelt in the soft lake bed dust. Here is what I had been wondering about for years and had spent months looking for. And there was a lot of it! How could I have missed this before? I continued to find it into October, but primarily along the Death Valley Road, either on the lake bed deposits, along washes nearby, or on Monola Formation scree, right along the road visible from a car. How could so many collectors (who have driven and collected along this road) have largely missed this plant?

My hypothesis is that the unusual precipitation patterns of 2019 created a special opportunity for certain plants to germinate and thrive during 2019. It is not merely the quantity of rain and snow that fell late 2018 into the spring of 2019. How late some of the precipitation occurred may have been critical. I kept saying over and over during May 2019..."Oh, it snowed up on Black Mountain again". For me it was a boon to be surprised over and over again. As every year is different, every year comes with an ever changing botanical landscape to startle and amaze us.



Hecastocleis shockleyi
("nevada prickly-leaf").
Photos by Steven Matson.



A further note about William Shockley. Besides having discovered many new plant species, he and his wife Mary Bradford had an only son, William Bradford Shockley, who went on to co-invent the transistor for which he received the Nobel Prize in Physics in 1956.

-- Steve Matson

Wild Flowers in the Inyo Mountains



Left: *Calycoseris parryi*, yellow tack-stem, Black Canyon Rd., April 11, 2020. Right: *Astragalus newberryi*, Newberry's milkvetch, Inyo Mountains, April 4, 2020.

Adventures close to home in the Inyo Mountains can lead to wonderful plant and flower discoveries. Insects such as painted lady butterflies, bees, and flower-visiting beetles were also observed. The presence of a large hedgehog cactus (*Echinocereus mojavensis*) up a small trail was a surprise that highlighted the adventures.

-- Lorraine Masten and Bob Zimmerman



Lorraine Masten posing with a large *Echinocereus mojavensis* (hedgehog cactus) near a trail in the Inyo Mountains, April 4, 2020. Photos by Bob Zimmerman.

Wondering About our Plant Sales...

Though spring plant sale events have been cancelled, we are still selling plants by the order. Call Sue Weis at 760-937-2595 if you'd like to meet at the White Mountain Research Station growing facility to buy plants that were grown last year. We are unable to

accept credit cards at the moment, so bring checks or cash (unable to make change).

We are also trying to grow more plants for the late summer sale, though plants will likely be limited in diversity and quantity.

New Shirts to Show Your Support of our Chapter

New colors of Bristlecone Chapter shirts are available to buy now! The new shirts have a monochromatic design on the back and a pocket logo on the front. You can order both the old and new styles from Spellbinder Books—just give them a call.



The bright colors of the previous edition are tucked in with the earthy tones of the new edition on the shelves at Spellbinder Books.

New Members, Welcome!

Thank you to all those who newly joined our chapter. And to all members, whether you're a new or a long-time member, we strongly encourage you to be an active member. Volunteers keep our chapter alive and makes it grow. Welcome...

Brent in Sugarloaf,
Kerstin in Tyreso,
and Matt in Nevada City

Up-Coming Events

(For updated information, visit
www.bristleconecnps.org/events)

Wednesday, May 13, 6:00 pm
Bristlecone Chapter Board Meeting

Wednesday, May 18, 7:00 pm
Bristlecone Chapter General Meeting
CANCELLED

Bristlecone Field Trips

(For updated information, visit
www.bristleconecnps.org/events)

**ALL FIELD TRIPS ARE CANCELLED OR POSTPONED
UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE**

Other Events

Virtual "Victory Garden" Workshop

Eastern Sierra Land Trust's Virtual Event

Are you ready to relish that one-of-a-kind, hands-on connection with the bright spring season? We can help you create a blooming backyard and even grow your own food, with these virtual versions of our popular pollinator garden workshops! Special guest speakers will join us online to discuss native plants, pollinators, soil, growing vegetables, and more. You'll learn how to make a garden that's a haven for butterflies, birds, and bees, and just how these creatures help bring your garden to life. Visit www.eslt.org/events/ for more information, or contact ESLT Education Coordinator and AmeriCorps Member Marie at marie@eslt.org.

Up-Coming Events

(For updated information, visit
www.bristleconecnps.org/events)

The Happy Place ESLT Book Club

Eastern Sierra Land Trust's Virtual Event

While we practice physical distancing, we can still collect in a powerful place—the magical landscapes of literature. Join ESLT and your community members in conversations online, as together we indulge in impactful stories, travels, and tales about the natural world. Book suggestions are welcome! This is a great opportunity to support local bookstores – we'll be sourcing our copies from the shelves of Bishop's own Spellbinder Books. Stay tuned to www.eslt.org/events/ for more information, or contact ESLT Education Coordinator and AmeriCorps Member Marie at marie@eslt.org if you're interested in participating.

July 7–8, 2020

Rare Plant Survey Protocols, CNPS Workshop

Truckee Town Hall, 10183 Truckee Airport Rd,
Truckee, CA 96161

Rare Plant Survey Protocols: A Scientific Approach, taught by Heath Bartosh & Aaron Sims, with a guest lecture from Kristi Lazar. In this two-day workshop you will learn to conduct rare plant surveys and report your findings, contributing to the documentation and protection of California's profusion of unique rare plants. This course includes a certificate of completion for participants who complete CNDDDB forms satisfactorily and pass an (optional) open book exam at the end of the course. Professionals, academics, and conservationists are encouraged to attend. Fees are \$395 CNPS Members / \$425 Non-Members. There is a limited capacity of 20 participants so register soon at www.cnps.org/education/workshops/rare-plant-surveys-july-2020.

Up-Coming Events

(For updated information, visit
www.bristleconecnps.org/events)

July 28–30, 2020

Intro to Plant Identification, CNPS Workshop

Sierra Nevada Aquatic Research Laboratory
(SNARL), 1016 Mt. Morrison Road, Mammoth Lakes,
CA

This three-day, beginner-level workshop covers 15 common plant families, with a focus on eastern and southern California plants. Taught by Nick Jensen & Sandy Namoff, you will learn over 5,000 taxa—more than 70% of the plant diversity in CA! Beginners will become familiar with plant parts/terms and learn the diagnostic characteristics of the most important plant families in CA. Those with more botanical experience can improve their skills in identifying plants in more difficult groups (e.g., Poaceae and Asteraceae).

Pre-registration is required (workshops sell out due to limited capacity). \$395 CNPS Members / \$415 Non-Members. For more details and to register, go to: www.cnps.org/education/workshops/plant-id-july-2020.

August 18–20, 2020

Vegetation Rapid Assessment/Relevé: The CNPS & CDFW Combined Method, CNPS Workshop

University of California, Santa Cruz, CA

This course will be a combination of lecture and field exercises in vegetation sampling with a focus on collecting data using the CNPS-CDFW combined vegetation rapid assessment and relevé methods. We will discuss applications of fine-scale vegetation sampling, classification, and mapping, how to document sensitive natural communities, and how vegetation information fits into planning documents.

Professionals, academics, conservationists and other participants can earn a certificate of completion by successfully completing two vegetation rapid assessment field forms on the final day. The registration and course fees are \$375 CNPS for members and \$395 for non-members. Visit www.cnps.org/education/workshops/vegetation-sampling-august-2020 for details.

Up-Coming Events

(For updated information, visit
www.bristleconecnps.org/events)

**August, Date TBD, 8:00 am (members only),
9:00 am (general public)**

Bristlecone Chapter Annual Plant Sale

White Mountain Research Center,
Owens Valley Station, 3000 E. Line St., Bishop

This is the largest native plant sale of the year! Members can start shopping at 8 am, while the public starts at 9 am. If you become a member that morning, then come on in at 8! A variety of flowers, shrubs, and trees adapted to our area will be for sale. See our 2019 list for what we might have available:
www.bristleconecnps.org/native_plants/sale/plant_lists/2019-06-plant-list.pdf

If you have any of the black plastic pots from last year's sale, we would love for you to recycle them with us. Bring them back and drop them off in our labeled recycle bin.

Proceeds from the annual native plant sales provide funding for our Mary DeDecker Botanical Grants. The grant program is a fitting way to remember Mary DeDecker's many contributions to the people and plants of the Eastern Sierra.

September 1-3, 2020: CEQA Impact Assessment, CNPS Workshop

Sacramento Splash Education Center,
4426 Excelsior Road, Mather, CA

In this workshop you will learn how CEQA can be leveraged to give California's plants and lands a voice in the face of development. We'll cover how to read and analyze the biological resources section of an EIR or MND, and to submit critical, scientifically-based comments. \$375 CNPS Members / \$395 Non-Members. Find information to register at
www.cnps.org/education/workshops/ceqa-september-2020

Up-Coming Events

(For updated information, visit
www.bristleconecnps.org/events)

September 15-17, 2020

Whitebark Pine Ecosystem Foundation (WPEF) International Conference on the "Research and Management of High Elevation Five Needle Pines in Western North America"

Hilton Garden Inn, Missoula Montana

Due to concerns about the effects of the Covid-19 virus on the High Five II Conference in September, registration has been put on hold. Conference planning continues, so please check back for the status of the conference and updated schedule in early June. Also, please continue to submit abstracts for posters and presentations. Visit the conference website at www.highfivelines.org for details.

Send your articles and other information by June 15, 2020 for the next issue.

Bristlecone Chapter Directory

President: Katie Quinlan president@bristleconecnps.org

Vice President: Michèle Slaton 760-920-8693

Secretary: Kathleen Nelson goatheads@aol.com

Treasurer: Sue Weis treasurer@bristleconecnps.org

Chapter Council Rep: Stephen Ingram

stephen@ingramphoto.com

Conservation/Partnerships: **OPEN**

Programs: Michèle Slaton 760-920-8693

DeDecker Grants: Michèle Slaton 760-920-8693

Field Trips: Sue Weis treasurer@bristleconecnps.org

Historian: **OPEN**

Bishop Plant Sales: Katie Quinlan

president@bristleconecnps.org

Mammoth Plant Sales: **OPEN**

Publicity: Gaylene Kinzy gkinzyreische@gmail.com

Newsletter: Elaine Chow newsletter@bristleconecnps.org

Membership: Elaine Chow membership@bristleconecnps.org

Website: webmaster@bristleconecnps.org

Hospitality: **OPEN**

T-shirt Sales: Stephen Ingram stephen@ingramphoto.com

DeDecker Garden: **OPEN**

The California Native Plant Society

Bristlecone Chapter

P.O. Box 364

Bishop, CA 93515-0364

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Note: If you still receive this newsletter via US Mail, please help the Bristlecone chapter save money, energy, and trees by sending your email address to newsletter@bristleconecnps.org so you can receive the electronic version.

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 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: _____

Membership Category

<input type="checkbox"/> Student / Limited Income	\$25
<input type="checkbox"/> Individual	\$50
<input type="checkbox"/> Plant Lover	\$120
<input type="checkbox"/> Supporter	\$500
<input type="checkbox"/> Patron	\$1,000
<input type="checkbox"/> Benefactor	\$2,500
<input type="checkbox"/> Steward	\$5,000
<input type="checkbox"/> Guardian	\$10,000
<input type="checkbox"/> Additional Contribution	_____