



Bristlecone Chapter

Dedicated to the Preservation of California Native Flora

The California Native Plant Society

Bristlecone Chapter Newsletter

Volume 44, No. 3

May–June 2023

President's Message

At times our chapter area demonstrates a remarkable contrast in the seasons, weather conditions, and vegetation and this year that's especially true. Spring arrived seemingly overnight in the Owens Valley, southern Sierra foothills and the Inyo Mountains. Exquisite green sprouts carpet the earth beneath shrubs. Wildflowers are thriving, water is flowing in typically dry drainages and rushing in perennial streams. Yet in the north and high mountains, the land still wears a thick blanket of snow. I hope everyone is doing alright after this extraordinary winter—especially those of you living in the snow-covered areas!

For me, the wildflowers are not only a source of beauty and delight, they also provide a dramatic reminder of the benefits of winter's relentless storms. But it goes deeper than that—the trees, plants, insects, and wildlife can now experience some relief from the hardships of drought, and I feel so grateful. I hope you have a chance to experience not only the bloom, but the lushness of the desert right now. It's truly astonishing. Visit the DeDecker Native Plant Garden or the Bishop Demonstration Garden. Attend one of the many field trips scheduled and led by CNPS volunteers. Go for a wander on the alluvial fans or the Owens Valley floor, and really observe and connect with the life out there.

Botanist and author Robin Wall Kimmerer reminds us that "...Paying attention acknowledges that we have something to learn from intelligences other than our own. Listening, standing witness, creates an openness to the world in which the boundaries between us can dissolve in a raindrop." Native plants and wild animals sustain us in so many ways—physically, mentally, and spiritually. Whether dramatic or subtle, rare or common, beautiful or

harsh, we owe these "other intelligences" our love and attention. And this spring is a perfect time to start.

—Kelly Bahr

Election Results and Call to Fill Empty Chairs!

Since the last newsletter CNPS members elected the board for the new year. The elected officers of this Chapter are President, Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer. In addition to these required elected officers, the Chapter Council Delegate and Members-at-Large are also on the executive board. The currently elected Executive Board includes:

President	Kelly Bahr
Vice President	OPEN
Treasurer	Sue Weis
Secretary	Kathleen Nelson
Chapter Council Delegate	Stephen Ingram

Members-at-Large:

Newsletter	Elaine Chow
Conservation**	Maria Jesus/ OPEN
Membership	Sue Carter
Website	Maggie Riley
Publicity	Gaylene Kinzy
Education	OPEN
Field Trip Coordinator	OPEN

We have a critical need for a Vice President. The duties of the VP include attending board meetings, setting up speakers for general meetings and assisting with other committees as needed. We also need to fill the Education chair and need one or more volunteers to assist the Conservation Chair** and to coordinate field trips. Please let any board member

know if you are interested in any open positions. You can also attend our next board meeting to learn more (May 17th 6:00–8:00 pm, location TBA).

Conservation Updates: Tri-Valley Groundwater Management District Board Meeting—Important Updates

The board meeting of the Tri-Valley Groundwater Management District (TVGMD) was Wednesday, April 26 at 6:30 at the Chalfant Community Center. Two important items were on the agenda: the confirmation of a board member for a vacant position on the board and the approval of a letter to the Mono Board of Supervisors requesting that Mono County take ownership of two proposed monitoring wells in the Tri-Valley. These decisions will have long-term impacts on groundwater management in the Tri-Valley area for domestic well owners, Fish Slough and ultimately for agricultural producers. Nick Buckmaster of the California Division of Fish and Wildlife believes Fish Slough is at the edge of irreversible decline and that residents of Tri-Valley and other concerned citizens are key to finding ways to reverse that decline.

Citizen action is vital to how these two items will be implemented. Two recent developments affecting Tri-Valley and Fish Slough are due to citizen involvement: the vacant board member position must now be elected and the Bureau of Land Management will take ownership of the monitoring wells to be drilled. Bristlecone members are encouraged to attend the monthly advisory board and board meetings of the TVGMD to advocate for protection of the wetland resources of Fish Slough. The next advisory board meeting is Wednesday, May 10 at 5:00 pm at Chalfant Community Center. The next TVGMD board meeting is May 17 at 6:30 pm at Benton Community Center. You can be placed on a notification list by contacting secretary@TVGMD.org. The TVGMD also circulates a quarterly newsletter that you can subscribe to on their website, tvgmd.org.

The Board Member Vacancy Will be Decided by Vote at the Next Scheduled Election

The TVGMD Board is composed of seven members, four are domestic well owners and three are owners of wells with a pumping capacity of 100 gal/min. The current board member vacancy has in the past been held by a domestic well owner. The larger capacity wells are assumed to represent agricultural interests.

The way the present legislation reads, a 100-gal/min well owner can apply for a domestic seat if they also have a domestic well. So the issues before the board are to decide if the TVGMD by-laws need to be modified to clarify how board positions are allocated and choose a board member between the two candidates to request that the vacant position be placed on the ballot at the next scheduled election so that registered voters in the Tri-Valley area will select a seventh board member. The reason for this is that the board member position has been vacant for more than sixty days without action by the board.

Currently, monitored wells in the Tri-Valley area are showing steady declines over the years. Grant monies have been approved for groundwater model work to provide information for next steps to preserve groundwater, and more data is needed. There is a lack of data particularly from Hammil Valley, where most of the agricultural pumping is occurring. Monitoring wells are being proposed and are currently funded. See the next paragraph for more on this. Fair residential-/domestic-well-only representation on the board will be critical for these upcoming decisions on interpreting a groundwater model and implementing management strategies.

Letter to Mono County Board of Supervisors

Andy Puhvel, a board member of the TVGMD, has drafted a letter requesting that the Mono County Board of Supervisors take ownership of two proposed monitoring wells in the Tri-Valley area. He is asking the TVGMD board to approve sending this letter to the Mono County Board of Supervisors. His proposed letter reads in part as follows:

This letter's purpose is to state the Tri-Valley Groundwater Management District support of groundwater monitoring wells in the Tri-Valley area. Specifically, we recommend that the county take ownership of the two recently proposed monitoring wells in Hammil Valley.

The effort to get these monitoring wells installed has been a multi-year joint agency effort spearheaded by DWR, USGS, BLM, and Fish and Wildlife. It has taken years and a lot of work to get this far, and the already approved state funding for these wells and the geologic studies is approximately \$1 million. This includes all drilling fees, as well as geology reports showing key data on strata and aquifer layers which will be done on site by USGS Geologists.

However, at the April 26 board meeting, Aaron Johnson of the California Fish and Wildlife announced that the Bureau of Land Management has agreed to take ownership of the proposed monitoring wells. With information from the additional monitoring wells, a groundwater model will be developed that will include impacts to Fish Slough.

Proposed Operations and Pumping Plan under the Long-term Water Agreement

This winter has been phenomenal for precipitation in the valley and snow accumulation in the Sierras. The annual pumping plan amounts submitted by Los Angeles Department of Water and Power (LADWP) on April 20 therefore is lower than last year's pumping plan amounts. The recommended range for pumping in 2023-2024 is 40,130 to 51,470 acre-feet compared to 67,800 to 87,350 acre-feet for 2022-2023. The plan has already been reviewed by the new Director, Dr. Holly Alpert of the Inyo County Water Commission with recommendations then submitted to the Inyo County Board of Supervisors on April 25. The Inyo County Department of Water has until April 30, 2023 to submit their assessment of the operations and pumping plan. Despite this tight turnaround, these entities agree on several recommendations when the plan and Inyo County's response appear before the Standing Committee on May 26 at 11:00 am. Items for discussion as recommended by the Inyo County Water Commission and the Board of Supervisors include allowing groundwater and vegetation to fully recover to baseline levels, that no groundwater be exported to Los Angeles, that mitigation projects be completed as agreed by both Inyo County and LADWP, that proposals for Fish Springs Fish Hatchery be pursued and more accurate reporting from LADWP in its annual plan. The Inyo County Water Commission would like more direct meetings with the Inyo County Board of Supervisors.

The meeting of the Technical Group between Inyo County Water Department and LADWP will be held on May 9 at 1:00 pm. Citizens can participate in this video conference at:
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83794802777?pwd=S2c5UDJtUUNueXILNGRvdE9PSmpSdz09>

The Standing Committee meeting on May 26 will be held at LADWP offices in Los Angeles. Interested citizens can participate by video conference at
<https://ladwp.webex.com/ladwp/onstage/g.php?MT>

[ID=eea26c1a840a786flaffe7f948fe5f737](#). The password is 1234.

You can also contact Laura Piper at lpiper@inyocounty.us to be placed on the email list for upcoming meetings.

—Edie Trimmer

Notes from the Southern Deserts



Purple mat (*Nama demissa*) about one foot across, in a wash below Cottonwood Springs, Joshua Tree N.P. Photo by Stephan Ingram.

On April 2, I joined some fellow CNPS members for a few days of botanizing and weeding at Cottonwood Springs near the south entrance to Joshua Tree National Park. It was still early for wildflowers in most of the park, but in the lower elevations of the Colorado Desert from Cottonwood Springs to the south, flowers were out in abundance. One of the first Mojave yucca (*Yucca schidigera*) to flower in the area happened to be growing in our group campground, and dusk brought out numerous yucca moths all over its white, fragrant flowers.

Before Monday morning's planned trip to "Native Canyon" down the slope from Cottonwood, we had some work to do. With mockingbirds, white-crowned sparrows, and cactus wrens providing the soundtrack, we pulled nearly 10 cubic yards of Sahara mustard (*Brassica tournefortii*) in an hour or two in the wash just below the campground. Desert bluebells (*Phacelia campanularia*), purple mat (*Nama demissa*), sun cups (*Chylismia brevipes*), brown-eyed primrose (*C. claviformis*) and other less showy species were out in force.

The wash that drains “Native Canyon” was on fire with native flowering annuals. The red, tubular flowers of chuparosa (*Justicia californica*) attracted Anna’s hummingbirds, but everything in flower attracted us. Chia (*Salvia columbariae*) and at least three different poppy species (*Eschscholzia*) were abundant in the sandy wash. The poppy with the largest flowers was probably Mojave poppy (*E. glyptosperma*), and one of the smaller-flowered ones resembled little gold poppy (*E. minutiflora*). The genus is being revised and they are confusing, so we did not take the time to key further. It seems to be a good year for poppies everywhere!



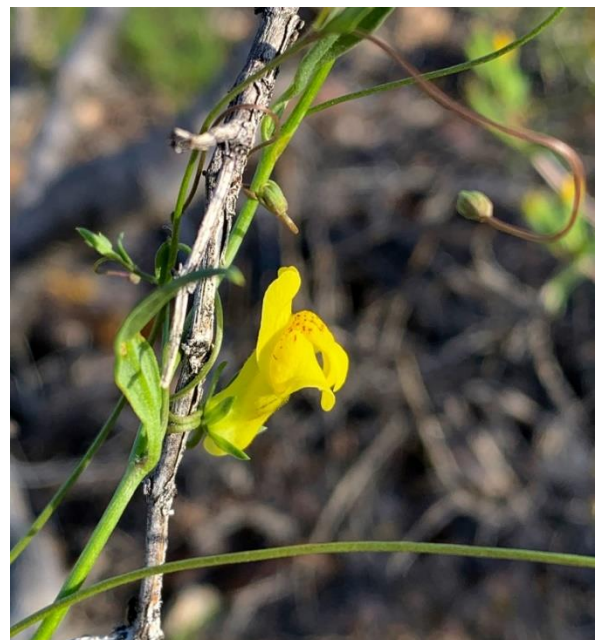
Mojave poppy (*Eschscholzia glyptosperma*), near Jubilee Pass, Death Valley N.P. Photos by Stephen Ingram

We pulled a few dozen invasive filaree (*Erodium cicutarium*), and ventured up into the canyon for lunch and more botanizing. Other interesting species in flower included rock hibiscus (*Hibiscus denudatus*), the monotypic desert starvine (*Brandegea bigelovii*), coyote tobacco (*Solanum obtusifolia*), windmills (*Allionia incarnata*), and the ubiquitous woolly daisy (*Eriophyllum wallacei*).

The following week I traveled to Shoshone for a few days of birding and botanizing with another CNPS member, my wife Karen. The floor of Death Valley had small but bright roadside displays of desert gold (*Geraea canescens*), notch-leaved phacelia (*Phacelia crenulata*), and other common species, but nothing like the wet years of 2017, 2005, and 1998. The absence of fall rains and a cool spring prevented a so-called Superbloom, but flowering annuals were (and probably still are) abundant around 1000 to 3000 feet in elevation, especially along Hwy 178, the Jubilee Pass Road.

The Dublin Hills and wash just west of Shoshone had a magnificent showing of the very fragrant sun cups, as well as many shrubs in flower, including brittlebush (*Encelia farinosa*), Cooper’s boxthorn (*Lycium cooperi*), and of course, creosote bush (*Larrea tridentata*). One of those creosote supported the easily overlooked yellow twining snapdragon (*Antirrhinum filipes*), twisting itself around and up a branch. What was not so easy to overlook were the orange twining stems of small-toothed dodder (*Cuscuta denticulata*). In many areas, it was observed parasitizing desert chicory (*Rafinesquia neomexicana*), poppies, and anything else it could get its haustoria on. Despite the spotty nature of rainfall in the deserts of eastern Inyo County, the spectacular but uneven occurrence of flowering annuals is well worth the hours spent driving to see them.

—Stephen Ingram



Yellow twining snapdragon (*Antirrhinum filipes*), Dublin Hills, Amargosa Desert.



Desert bluebells (*Phacelia campanularia*) with silver cholla and Mojave yucca, Cottonwood Springs, Joshua Tree N.P.
Photo by Stephan Ingram.

2023 Bristlecone Chapter Field Trips

Sunday, May 7, 2023. Rising from the Ashes, Hogback fire area near Lone Pine. Leaders: Richard Potashin and Nancy Hadlock.

9:00 am – 1:00 pm

Meets at Moffitt Ranch turn off from highway 395 (about 3 miles south of Manzanar)

Fires have been demonized for centuries. However, fires can produce a positive effect. Following wildland fires, plant seeds are stimulated by the flames and fertilized by the ashes. What comes up the following years can be a profusion of plant species that have not been viewed for years. Join BLM volunteers Nancy Hadlock and Richard Potashin in search of what has appeared this season following 2021's fire season.

High-clearance vehicles recommended. Bring water, hats, snacks/lunch, boots. Any questions, contact 760-258-6574 or aspenluv1@gmail.com


Saturday, May 13, Southern Owens Valley Botanical Exploration. Leader: Jerry Zatorski.

This will be primarily a driving excursion through some of the Owens Valley, Independence to Lone Pine. This area is often forgotten when it comes to looking for interesting flora, but when the rains do come the desert flats and slopes come alive. From the common annuals and shrubs to the often sought after rarities, anything can be possible. The exact route will be determined prior to the trip based on the most favorable flora displays. Participants should bring lunch, snacks and plenty of fluids, field guides, hand lens. Dress for the weather & conditions, hat, sunscreen, hiking shoes... For those driving, 4WD vehicles are strongly recommended as the roads are always unpredictable and a little extra assurance is nice to have. Have your vehicle fueled up and ready to go. We will meet at 7:00 am at Independence Park, at the south end of Independence. For more information contact Jerry at jerryzat@gmail.com. Trip plans are subject to change or cancellation by DWP depending on the status of the run-off.

Saturday, May 27, Black Canyon and Marble Canyon, White Mts. Leader: Jerry Zatorski.


Black Canyon begins at about 4500 ft at its opening on the alluvial fan. 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, Buckwheat, Desert Crab Apple, Dwarf Ninebark and Mono Penstemon are all possible and may only scratch the surface here. Don't forget binoculars! This is not only a great location for plants, but is also an excellent place to see and hear hummingbirds flying about defending breeding territories along with 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, field guides, hand lens. 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. For more information contact Jerry at jerryzat@gmail.com.

 **Saturday, July 15, Upslope and into the sky: alpine plant communities and climate change in the White Mountains, CA. Leader Kaleb Goff.**
Meet at the Sheep Pass Parking Lot, White Mountains, CA: (37.531658, -118.205511),

Join PhD student and enthusiastic field botanist Kaleb Goff on a field trip to explore the alpine plant communities of the austere yet stunning White Mountains. Learn about the delicate balance of life in these environments, and how these communities are being impacted by climate change. From the delicate blooms of *Townsendia* to the robust culms of *Calamagrostis*, see firsthand the adaptations that allow these plants to exist in extreme conditions. Explore the multitude of microhabitats that characterize alpine landscapes, and leave with a renewed sense of wonder.

I imagine a relaxed walk and exploration from ~10 am to 4 pm, with time for lunch included. The total walking distance would be about 2 miles, though some of this is steep, rocky and off-trail.

 **Saturday, August 26, Saddlebag Lake and Hummingbird Lake. Leader Jerry Zatorski.**
This will be a backcountry hike from the parking lot at Saddlebag Lake. The trail around Saddlebag Lake is well maintained and the views of the back side of Yosemite are spectacular. The hike around Saddlebag Lake is relatively flat, and once on the northern end of the lake we'll head north making our way up to Hummingbird Lake, and maybe a little further on trails and some cross country. Most of this area is in the alpine zone, above tree line, and the snows should have receded enough for us to be greeted by many alpine species. Depending on your level of fitness, this is a moderate to strenuous hike at high elevation (all above 10,000 ft), and is only recommended for those in good hiking condition. This trip will take most of the day and participants should bring plenty of fluids and food, field guide, camera, a hand lens, and dress for weather. We will meet at the Saddlebag Lake parking lot at 8:00 am. From Lee Vining, go west 9.8 miles up SR 120 (Tioga Pass Rd), just after the first lake on the left (Ellery Lake) take the right turn to Saddlebag Lake and go 2.5 miles to the trail head. For more information contact Jerry at jerryzat@gmail.com.

Deepest Valley Cooperative Native Plant Propagation Nursery (DVCNPPN) Update

Greetings everyone! It's nice to see spring's arrival after the winter we have endured. Firstly, I'd like to give a quick introduction, my name is Gaylene Kinzy, and I began co-propagating native plants with Katie Quinlan at DVCNPPN last spring. Prior to that I was a volunteer propagator at DVCNPPN for 5 years and have a background in horticulture and botany.

Katie and I have begun operations (with the help of our volunteers) for 2023 at DVCNPPN. The greenhouse is now full of 100's of healthy native plant starts.

A selection of native plants from DVCNPPN can be purchased at Eastern Sierra Land Trust's *GardenFest* on Saturday, May 6th, 2023. Please visit our website for more information.

If you are interested in volunteering at DVCNPPN please email me at gaylene.kinzy@gmail.com and I will pass your information along to Katie. Lastly, we are in need of more black pots. If you have empty ones from previous CNPS purchases, please return them to DVCNPPN at White Mountain Research Center located at 3000 E. Line St. in Bishop.

—Gaylene Kinzy,
Nursery co-propagator & Publicity Chair



DVCNPPN greenhouse, April 2023. Photo by Gaylene Kinzy.

Up-Coming Events

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

Chapter Events

Wednesday, May 17, 6:00 pm

Board Meeting

Location or Zoom TBD

All members are welcome to join. Contact our Secretary, Kathleen Nelson, at secretary@bristleconecnps.org for the Zoom link.

Saturday, May 20, 9:00 am

**CNPS Bristlecone Chapter Plot,
Bishop Community Demonstration Garden in
Bishop City Park, 688 N. Main St.**

Join Sue Weis on the third Saturday of each month, starting at 9:00 am, to work in our plot of native plants. Workdays will be canceled if raining or snowing. Questions? Contact sue.weis98@gmail.com

Chapter Field Trips, see pages 4-5.

**Please send any submissions to us by
June 15, 2023 for the next issue.**

Bristlecone Chapter Directory

President: Kelly Bahr kbahr@cnps.org

Vice President: **OPEN**

Secretary: Kathleen Nelson
secretary@bristleconecnps.org

Treasurer: Sue Weis treasurer@bristleconecnps.org

Chapter Council Delegate: Stephen Ingram
stephen@ingramphoto.com

Conservation/Partnerships: **OPEN**

Education: **OPEN**

Programs: **OPEN**

DeDecker Grants: Kathleen Nelson

secretary@bristleconecnps.org

Field Trips: **OPEN**

Bishop Plant Sales: Katie Quinlan

plant_sale@bristleconecnps.org

Publicity: Gaylene Kinzy gkinzyreische@gmail.com

Newsletter: Elaine Chow newsletter@bristleconecnps.org

Membership: Sue Carter membership@bristleconecnps.org

Website: **OPEN**

T-shirt Sales: Katie Quinlan plant_sale@bristleconecnps.org

DeDecker Gardener: Kelly Bahr kbahr@cnps.org

Up-Coming Events

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

Other Events

Ongoing through early May

Rare Plant Monitoring at Eureka Dunes, Death Valley National Park

Volunteers needed! If you are interested in helping to monitor rare plant populations at Eureka Dunes, please contact Carol Fields, Death Valley N.P.

Biological Science Technician, by email

Carol.Fields@nps.gov or phone (760)786-3252 as soon as possible.



CALIFORNIA
NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY

Bristlecone Chapter

2023 Spring Native Plant Sale

In-person at ESLT's "Gardenfest"

Saturday, May 6th

11:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

at 250 N. Fowler St., Bishop, CA

Julie Fontaine will also be selling her compost tea.



For more info visit:
<http://bristleconecnps.org/>

We suggest coming at the beginning of the event, plants go fast!

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 www.cnps.org and click JOIN/RENEW (at the top-right or select it after clicking the menu button at the top left of the webpage) or mail the form below:

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ **State:** _____

Zip Code: _____ **Phone:** _____

Email: _____

I wish to be affiliated with the Bristlecone Chapter: _____

Other: _____

Membership Type: ____ New Member
____ Renewal

Mail To / Make Payable To:

California Native Plant Society, Attn: Membership
2707 K Street, Suite 1
Sacramento, CA 95816

Membership Category

<input type="checkbox"/> Student / Fixed 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	_____

Gift Contribution: _____ Wherever needed ☐
Specific Area: _____

Go Perennial! To become a monthly sustaining (perennial) member, join or renew online at www.cnps.org/perennial