An exciting effort is underway to address the introduction of wildland weeds through horticulture. Studies show that introduction of exotic ornamentals has been the top source of invasive plants historically. Those working to protect California’s natural areas have long wanted to address this pathway. Now, our collaborative effort is bringing together a powerful array of partners to discuss solutions to this vexing problem.

The group, which has been meeting for over a year, is called Cal-HIP, which stands for California Horticultural Invasives Prevention. Our mission is to develop and foster the implementation of strategies within the horticulture community to prevent new and continuing introductions of invasive plants to California’s wildlands. Our membership includes representatives from government, educational and research institutions, wholesale growers and retail nurseries, the florist and seed trade, landscape architects and contractors, and conservation groups (including CNPS). Terri Kempton of the San Francisco nonprofit organization Sustainable Conservation ably coordinates and facilitates the group.

Our goal is simple but the problem is complex. Cal-HIP has been providing most of the information that we have been working with. Their California Invasive Plant Inventory contains a number of domesticated plants that have gone wild, including the economically important olive and fig. Surprisingly there are also four California natives that have wandered out of their natural plant communities.

Our initial focus has been on the worst offenders that are, to varying degrees, still being grown and sold at nurseries and garden centers. These include giant reed (Arundo donax), pampas grass (Cortaderia selloana), scotch broom (Cytisus scoparius), ivy (Hedera sp.), fountaingrass (Pennisetum setaceum), and periwinkle (Vinca major). Though to restoration workers it may seem straightforward to ban these plants, there are plenty of biological complications.

Often these species are only available as more ornamental and possibly less invasive or sterile cultivars such as the popular and ubiquitous purple fountaingrass (Pennisetum setaceum ’Rubrum’). Cal-HIP is gathering information as to the accuracy of these claims. We are also going beyond anecdotal hearsay regarding the reputed sterility of several pampas grass clones: ‘Pumila,’ ‘Gold Band,’ and ‘Sunstripe.’ Nicholas Staddon from Monrovia (continued on page 6)
From the Executive Director:
Focus on membership, coordination

The more I learn about CNPS and California, the more pleased I am to be working with you. In recent weeks, I attended the CNPS Chapter Council meeting in Ridgecrest and the CNPS Southern California Conservation gathering in Burbank. During my journey to Ridgecrest, I drove through the Sierra Mountains and Mohave Desert; while traveling to Burbank I flew over the Central Valley, alongside the Sierra Nevada and Mohave Desert; while traveling to Burbank I flew over the Central Valley, alongside the Sierras. Seeing these areas helped me put into perspective the magnitude of these beautiful landscapes and the native plant species that we are striving to protect.

Participating in the meetings provided me the opportunity to meet more of our hardworking volunteers and learn more about the positive impact their work is having on native plant conservation throughout the state. I also became keenly aware of the challenges that chapter members are confronting, and the concerns they have about not having the necessary human and financial resources to cope with the imminent threats to our natural habitats from unwise development and poor decision-making.

CNPS projects undoubtedly are having a positive impact. As one of many examples I could cite, Halli Mason and other members of the Los Angeles/Santa Monica Mountains Chapter have recently succeeded in removing some invasive plant populations from one of the trails in the Caballero Canyon. Despite our successes, however, it is also evident that we need to increase our overall presence throughout the state. We need to be more proactive in recruiting new members. In addition, we need to seek new sources of funding so chapters can implement new and better projects that respond to ever-more-complex pressures facing native plants and their habitats. Key to more successful fundraising is better coordination between chapters and the state office, so that we can search more effectively for funds from local foundations with an interest in environmental issues. I look forward to working with you as we respond to these challenges.

Amanda Jorgenson
Executive Director

Thank You to Linda Ann Vorobik

On behalf of the Society, I would like to extend a very special thank you to Dr. Linda Ann Vorobik for her contributions as editor of Fremontia for the past five-and-a-half years. Linda began her tenure by coediting the last issue of 2000. Under her leadership Fremontia has undergone some wonderful changes. Beginning in 2001, Linda redesigned the look of Fremontia and began to include a wide variety of articles aimed at the varied interests of our members. Her vision of balance between technical articles and items of more general interest blossomed over her tenure as editor, resulting in a premier journal for native plant lovers as well as amateur and professional botanists.

Linda was also the innovator behind several special issues of Fremontia, with outstanding input from their convening editors and contributors. These included a double issue on rare plant laws and policies, a double issue on plant and insect interactions, an issue devoted to mosses and another about seaweeds, and an entire year of issues in celebration of our 32 chapters and their achievements over the past 40 years. But early 2006 marked the beginning of Linda’s greatest achievement—Fremontia in full color—and within budget.

Please join me in thanking Linda Ann Vorobik for her contributions to the Society, and in wishing her well in all future endeavors.

Carol Witham
Sacramento Valley Chapter
From the Capitol

Bill considered to require transit agencies to use natives in landscaping

An election year always presents a special challenge to advance conservation issues, and this year is no different. Likely the biggest gains may be, of all things, in the funding arena. The 2006/07 budget includes $10 million for non-game fish and wildlife management, $5 million for wetlands habitat conservation, and $5 million for a coastal wetlands endowment fund. In addition, SB 1535, which increases fees that developers pay to the Department of Fish and Game for CEQA review, appears to be on its way to final passage.

While the Legislature and the Governor were unsuccessful in passing a bond measure that would have added more money for natural resources programs, Proposition 84 includes significant funding for critical habitat and wildlife conservation programs otherwise facing a drought in their funding stream.

SB 1608 (Simitian) received special attention from CNPS. This bill would require Caltrans and other transportation agencies to use native plants or other water-conserving plants in their landscaping projects. Even though the bill was not successful, it received lots of help from CNPS legislative staff and several dedicated volunteers. Our members helped review and log technical reports, searched the Internet for supporting information, and formulated justification arguments. Several even came to Sacramento to testify in a legislative hearing.

In making a case for the bill, rather than focusing on water conservation, we emphasized other benefits of using native plants, including reduced maintenance costs, pesticide use, water pollution, and soil erosion, as well as a halt to the spread of invasive weeds. It was frustrating that it was so difficult to find clear documentation of these benefits.

This bill may be reintroduced in 2007, so we need to begin now to accumulate information that demonstrates the value of using native plants in these highly visible public landscaped areas. Please contact me (vern@cal.net) if you have questions regarding legislation, or are interested in reviewing data to help CNPS formulate positions on specific bills.

Vern Goehring
CNPS Legislative Consultant

New Issue of Vegetation Program’s The Sampler

At the beginning of spring 2006, the Vegetation Program issued Volume 6 of The Sampler. This issue of the newsletter features the ambitious and varied projects of four CNPS chapters, and the latest vegetation project of the state program.

In it, the San Diego, Santa Cruz, Milo Baker, and East Bay chapters chronicle their paths to enlightened vegetation sampling, and the Vegetation Program describes a vegetation classification project in the northern Sierra Nevada foothills. We hope this issue is inspiring, especially to chapters considering starting their own vegetation project.

You may view this and past volumes of The Sampler at http://www.cnps.org, by clicking on the “Vegetation” Program link on the left-hand navigation bar, and then scrolling down the page.

Josie Crawford and Julie Evens
Vegetation Program Staff

Navy to Landscape With Natives

The CNPS state office was contacted in early July of this year by a representative of the U.S. Navy, who had been asked to follow through on a recent decision to use native flora in the landscape at military installations throughout the country. He was calling native plant societies in each state in search of plant lists and availability information.

After a brief discussion regarding the uniqueness of California’s flora, he was supplied with a list of all CNPS chapter websites for information on locally appropriate species, websites of other organizations, botanic gardens, arboreta, and native plant nurseries. He mentioned that he would next be tackling the issue of invasive plants at Navy facilities, and was promptly given the website for the California Invasive Plant Council. It is not known when the Navy will begin beautifying the grounds of its numerous facilities with California native plantings, but we are encouraged by the opportunity to support their efforts.

Peigi Duvall
CNPS Horticulture Director
EAST BAY CHAPTER:
Getting Creative With Chapter Outreach

The outreach/membership job is no easy task, as many of you know. In order to run with the big guys, we here at the East Bay Chapter have tried to be as creative as possible to grab that unsuspecting wanderer.

At tabling events we often have a lot of competition—with the bee keepers giving away honey and the birders doing bird whistles. A bouquet of native flowers, leaves, and catkins always draws attention. At a food and wine festival visitors were attracted by our display of edible native plants. We also offered tastes of wild grapes, gave away wild strawberry plants, and sold Margit Roos-Collins’ book on wild edible plants, Flavors of Home.

Whenever possible we try to make our tabling display site specific. As an example, for a bird migration celebration we gave out lists of plants that attract birds.

Janet Gawthrop, one of our dedicated volunteers, speaks Spanish. At Earth Day in Richmond, Janet was able to field questions from a rainbow of attendees, including many Spanish speakers.

Everyone can relate to weeds, which is why we often have a bouquet of weeds. One of our handouts contains a list of the 20 most invasive weeds in our area. In the near future we also hope to have a sheet on how to get rid of them.

Partnering with watershed or historical groups helps us get our message into new communities. Besides our regular venue, this year we will have tables at a watershed forum, an open space area in Walnut Creek, the John Muir historical site, and the Bay Area Open Space Council.

Delia Taylor, Outreach/Membership Chair and Elaine Jackson, President, East Bay Chapter

NAPA VALLEY CHAPTER:
Newsletter Series on Listed and Nonlisted R&E Plants

In early 2005, faced with the sudden resignation of our newsletter editor, I volunteered as interim editor. Looking for material to fill out the pages of The Fawn Lily, I came up with the idea of writing a regular column about the rare plants of Napa County. It occurred to me that many of our members do not have access to the CNPS Inventory and so may be unaware that many of these special plants can be found nearby.

I began by writing about those plants at the highest level of recognized rarity and endangerment. In subsequent articles I followed up with articles about species recognized as rare and endangered by CNPS, but not yet granted listing status and protection by state or federal agencies. I included information about their distribution and abundance in Napa County as well as elsewhere, and also described the local habitats where they are found. Lastly, I provided a line drawing of each species, generally of my own creation, to assist in identification.

My hope was that the articles would increase chapter members’ knowledge of these plants, motivate them to be on the lookout for undocumented locations, and increase their appreciation of them. The response of chapter members to the articles has been quite positive. For chapters that have not run similar articles in their newsletters, I suspect this approach may appeal to your members.

Jake Ruygt, Conservation and Rare Plant Chair, Napa Valley Chapter
In Recognition

CNPS regularly recognizes members for outstanding contributions to the preservation and appreciation of California’s native flora. Recent recipients of the organization’s Volunteer Recognition Award include the following individuals:

Dave DuBose served as Shasta Chapter president for five years and organized the September 2001 Chapter Council Meeting in Red Bluff. His presentations on weeds at public events have been very well received and have become a hallmark of Shasta Chapter’s public offerings. Dave has been the linchpin of the chapter.

Jack and Grace Beigle have been active participants in the San Luis Obispo Chapter and in many other local nature groups, as well as strong advocates of native plant awareness and conservation. They have also been of great support to the membership. Jack was a key player in helping to prepare and publish the Dane Mother’s Wildflower Guide and other books on local wildflowers for CNPS and other groups. He was also one of the founders of the California Exotic Pest Plant Council (now the California Invasive Plant Council).

Gary Suttle of the San Diego Chapter is largely responsible for the protection of a rare local plant, Nuttall’s lotus (Lotus nuttallianus), which he “adopted” and studied. His own efforts and his ability to involve others, including city staff, demonstrate what a dedicated, self-taught volunteer can accomplish.

In addition, Jake Sigg of the Yerba Buena Chapter has received the Jack Morrison Lifetime Achievement Award from San Francisco Tomorrow. Jake was cited for his passionate advocacy to protect California’s native plants, not just in San Francisco but around the state, and for traveling to Sacramento and Washington to advocate for environmental legislation. He is a past president of CNPS, and served as state chair for invasive exotics from the early 1990s until 2004.

CNPS Volunteer Recognition Awards honor the contributions of members who work tirelessly for CNPS either locally, regionally, or statewide. If you know of someone in your area deserving of this award, please let your chapter president know. Send nomination statements to blairce@sbceo.org.

Charles Blair, Chair
Volunteer Recognition Committee

A Note of Appreciation to Jake Sigg

Recently I had the opportunity to meet with Jake Sigg, one of CNPS’ long-time supporters, to talk about his conservation work and interest in the Society. As many of you know, Jake has dedicated most of his life to the conservation of California’s native plants. He has also inspired others to join CNPS and support our mission.

During our meeting, I learned that several years ago Jake decided to make sure his support to CNPS would have an everlasting impact, by leaving half of his estate to the organization. His gift ensures that CNPS will have more of the resources it needs to fulfill its mission, and will carry on the work that Jake is doing in his life.

His hope is that more members will make a similar provision in their wills to help provide the financial stability that is essential to the Society’s continued work.

BEQUESTS ARE EASY TO ARRANGE

Bequests from wills and living trusts, as well as major gifts, are significant sources of support for CNPS. Bequests are also one of the easiest gifts to arrange.

You can donate a specific sum of money, an asset, or a percentage of your estate to the California Native Plant Society. You can also donate a percentage of “the rest, residue, and remainder” of your estate after first providing for your friends and family members.

If you already have a will, a codicil (a brief legal supplement adding to or modifying your existing will) can be a simple way of providing a bequest without having to draft a new will.

Talk with your attorney about your desire to benefit CNPS and then let us know of your intentions. This will allow us to consider how your gift can best be used. For more information on bequests, please contact Cari Porter, CNPS Development Director, at 916-447-2677.

Amanda Jorgenson
Executive Director

Long-time CNPS supporter, Jake Sigg, who was recently honored by San Francisco Tomorrow (see adjacent story).
Protecting California’s natural areas

Growers has offered his company's assistance in doing some of the testing. Cal-HIP is also following invasives research being done at UC Davis and UC Santa Cruz.

Periwinkle (Vinca major), a popular ground cover, is an aggressive invader of wildlands and difficult to eradicate.

Even with an obvious invasive such as ivy, it is unclear which species or cultivars are to blame. For instance, Sarah Reichard from the University of Washington has passed on the findings of genetic research being done on escaped ivy populations in the Pacific Northwest. Though it was thought that English ivy (Hedera helix) was the main invasive ivy, research showed that the vigorous tetraploid, Irish ivy (Hedera hibernica) so far seems to be the primary culprit.

Along with the recognized roster of established invaders, there is the ongoing threat of new interlopers, especially since there seems to be a significant lag time between when a plant is introduced and when it is found invading natural areas. For example, the seemingly innocuous licorice plant (Helichrysum petiolare) has recently been discovered in large infestations on hillsides in Marin County. The lovely Chinese Tallow Tree (Sapium sebiferum), which seems well-behaved in the Santa Clara Valley, is currently spreading into wetlands surrounding Sacramento.

This spring, the California Association of Nurseries and Garden Centers (CANGC), adopted the Voluntary Codes of Conduct for Nursery Professionals established by a coalition of groups at the Missouri Botanical Garden. By following these guidelines, member wholesale growers and retail outlets will help stop the spread of invasive plants through horticulture. However, not all growers and retailers are members of trade organizations like CANGC.

As we get closer to untangling the conundrums and figuring out the logistics of phasing out some of the most invasive plants and the circumstances under which some plants could remain in cultivation, we are going to turn our attention to getting nurseries on board with the program, and educating the gardening public. Cal-IPC has been publishing and distributing its Don’t Plant a Pest brochures, and has additional versions coming out for the Central Valley, Sierra Foothills, and Tahoe Basin.

Through Carl Bell and Bethallyn Black of the UC Cooperative Extension, we hope to have information and guidelines concerning invasive plants included in the Master Gardener Program curriculum. We are just beginning to get our message out to magazines. We plan on having all educational institutions with horticulture programs include information about the invasives issue. We’re also planning on providing some input into the upcoming edition of the Sunset Western Garden Book. Stay tuned for more from this program in the coming year!

More information about the work of Cal-HIP, including its informative newsletter, is available at: http://www.suscon.org/invasives/.

Angel Guerzon is a landscape designer in Santa Cruz, represents CNPS on the Cal-HIP Steering Committee, and has served for over 10 years on the boards of the Santa Cruz Chapter of CNPS and the UC Santa Cruz Arboretum.

Rare Plant Program Staff Changes

During her two years as program director, Ann helped lead a series of open forums and a visioning exercise with CNPS chapter representatives to determine the future of the Rare Plant Program, as well as to prioritize its activities in a participatory manner. In addition, she wrote articles for Fremontia and the CNPS Bulletin, gave talks and led fieldtrips, regularly attended Chapter Council Meetings, and sponsored outreach to the chapters. Her continued contact and consultation with the chapters strengthened communications between the Rare Plant Program staff and the chapters, and facilitated the discussion of rare plant issues.

Meanwhile, since May, Pat McIntyre has been working as an interim, part-time assistant botanist (May–September). Pat has been directly linked with the rare plant program since 2005 when he started working as a volunteer intern. He is a botanist with a strong academic background and relevant work experience in California. Currently he is a Ph.D. student at UC Davis, and would like to do his research on serpentine species.

All of us at CNPS thank Ann and Misa for their dedication and significant contributions over the past two years to the protection of the rare and endangered plants of California. We wish them the best in the years to come and look forward to continued collaboration in conserving California’s native flora. We also welcome Pat’s assistance and interest in supporting CNPS plant conservation efforts during this short transition.

[Editor’s Note: As of press time, CNPS has selected Kristi Lazar to be its new Rare Plant Botanist. For more information, see the story on page 8.]

Amanda Jorgenson is the executive director of CNPS.
California wild grape
(Vitis californica)

By Abbie Blair

Spice up your fall garden with vivid displays of vibrant crimson, gold, yellow, and orange with the seasonal showstopper, California wild grape.

Train this deciduous native vine, which grows up to 40 ft., on trellises, arbors, and fences, or leave it free to form a dense cover over sheds. Without support, it forms a low mounding groundcover. Growing several feet yearly, it readily engulfs any object or plant nearby seeking support. For a groomed look keep your shears handy.

Prune supported plants to control growth when dormant in December or January. Remove stems at the base, leaving a few at whatever length you desire. In the spring stems will emerge from the base, while new growth will burst out all along the retained stems, resulting in a full vine from top to bottom.

California wild grape can be planted in full sun or partial shade, and thrives with infrequent to moderate irrigation. It is tolerant of most soil types and is not dependent on cold temperatures to induce fall color. Its cut foliage enhances indoor decorations, and its stems are often used to make wreaths.

Both the species and named selections are widely available, and come in various colors and plant sizes. The cool green foliage of summer eventually turns into warm gold and yellow tones. Below are a few cultivars to consider.

‘Roger’s Red’: Very popular for its bright green summer foliage that changes into vibrant crimson. Vines can reach up to 40 ft.

‘Russian River’: A slightly shorter plant growing up to 30 ft. Fall foliage is plum red, and can extend into winter.

‘Walker Ridge’: Tops out at 15 ft. Summer grey-green foliage, but later transforms into an array of yellows to orange.


Abbie Blair is a horticulturist and garden writer, and lives in the Santa Cruz Mountains. Horticulture questions? Send them to abbieblair@baymoon.com.

Late summer foliage of Vitis ca. ‘Roger’s Red’ in Redwood City garden.

Fall Garden Calendar

- Prime time to plant native garden.
- Sow annual wildflowers and warm season grasses.
- Deep soak gooseberries and currants to break summer dormancy.
- Divide clumping perennials, including iris.
- Prune conifers.
- Deadhead final summer blooms.
- Refresh mulch.
- Adjust irrigation frequency for the season.
- Flush irrigation lines.

Ask the Gardener

Q: How are natives best planted?

Prepare a hole twice the width of the pot and just as deep. Roughen the sides of the hole with a pick or stake. Water the plant and the new site thoroughly before planting. Remove the pot and examine the root ball. If necessary, loosen roots, being careful to avoid damaging them. Position the root ball just at soil level and backfill with the existing soil.

When soils are primarily heavy clay or sandy, add compost to the backfill to aid rooting and water retention. Tamp the backfill firmly. Create a low berm around the plant that is slightly larger than the hole. Apply at least two inches of mulch, leaving the crown (stem or trunk area) exposed, then water in thoroughly. Remove berm when rains begin.

Peigi Duvall
CNPS Names New Rare Plant Botanist

Kristi Lazar has been selected to be CNPS’ new Rare Plant Botanist. She succeeds Misa Ward (see story on page 1) who left the position earlier this year.

Kristi has a M.S. in plant biology from the University of California, Davis, and a B.S. in conservation biology from Sacramento State University, where she graduated Summa Cum Laude and with honors. For her thesis, she worked with Dr. Michael Barbour in the characterization of rare plant species of vernal pools of California. As an undergraduate student, Kristi participated in numerous field studies of rare species. She also acquired other botanical field experience working in the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta under Department of Fish and Game’s Todd Keeler-Wolf and Diana Hickson.

To assist Kristi in becoming familiar with different aspects of the job, Pat McIntyre, interim Assistant Botanist, will continue to work part time until the middle of September. In addition, Misa Ward has kindly offered to provide general guidance and orientation to the Rare Plant Program, and Roxanne Bittmann of DFG will help familiarize Kristi with the California Natural Diversity Database and DFG procedures.

Thanks to the CNPS Rare Plant Botanist Search Committee for their hard work in helping us find an excellent candidate. Please join me in welcoming Kristi to CNPS and in wishing her the best in her new position.

Amanda Jorgenson
CNPS Executive Director

Change of Webmasters

John Donoghue, CNPS’ webmaster since 2001, is leaving the position and moving with his family to Arizona. Mark Naftzger, an experienced web designer, has been named as his replacement. As webmaster, John maintained and improved the CNPS website. He added more functional discussion boards, as well as an online bookstore. John also helped reorganize the website and added features that made it easier to use.

“I am honored to have served as webmaster for such a prestigious organization,” John said. “Mark is an outstanding individual. He’ll be a great asset to CNPS.”

Mark Naftzger