

California Native Plant Society: Happenings & Exploring the Calflora Database

February, 2016

Byline:

CNPS



Beginners and experts, non-members and members are all welcome at our programs and on our outings. Almost all of our events are free. All of our events are made possible by volunteer effort.

Evening Programs

At the Six Rivers Masonic Lodge, 251 Bayside Rd., near 7th and Union, Arcata. Refreshments at 7:00 p.m.; program at 7:30 p.m.

Wednesday, February 10—David Imper and Greg O’Connell explore the North Coast’s rare plants. Beginning with a presentation about the Red Mountain Two-Flowered preserve, Dave Imper will explore the needs of establishing a conservation easement and the monitoring and habitat maintenance required for the foreseeable future. Dave hopes to engage the CNPS community in this exciting opportunity to work together in this area of unique serpentine soils that supports the only known population of *Lathyrus biflorus*. Following Dave’s presentation, Greg O’Connell will describe the goals of the Big Lagoon Bog restoration project, as well as the CNPS Rare Plant Treasure Hunt Program.

Wednesday, March 9—California’s Vast Habitats Seen Through Wildflowers. Local photographer Larry Ulrich began his career while travelling and working with his wife and photographic partner Donna. Experienced botanists with stunning, inspiring, and meaningful work, Larry and Donna have been making a living with a camera since 1972. They will present an overview of the many habitats in California, followed by images of a variety of native plants through the seasons.

Wednesday, April 13—Continued Adventures Hiking and Botanizing in the Austrian and Italian Alps. Kjirsten Wayman, a local chemistry professor and aspiring botanist, spent the last year living in Austria and northern Italy. The Alps are home to many plants and wildflowers, both familiar and unfamiliar to the California botanist. This photographic botanical exploration will highlight a selection of interesting flora and spectacular landscapes of the Austrian and Italian Alps with only the enthusiasm a California botanist could share!

Field Trips & Plant Walks

Saturday, February 27—Dune Forest Exploration. Two manzanitas and their hybrid will be targets for a day in the dune forest of the North Spit. Pink calypsos are unlikely but possible. Treks across the dunes to the beach or over the railroad to the salty shore of the bay are likely. The exact location of this outing is still being worked out, but expect between two to four miles of walking. Meet at 9 a.m. at Pacific Union School or arrange another place. Dress for being in the weather all day! Bring lunch and water. Return late afternoon. For information call Carol at 707-822-2015.

Sunday, March 27—Arcata City Trail field trip. The recently completed, northernmost section of the Humboldt Bay Trail is a paved trail from Arcata Skate Park on Sunset Ave. to Samoa Blvd. Including the adjacent Shay Park, the 1.3 mile route passes three species of blackberries, at least three species of willows, four conifers, and (with a small detour) a population of the rare Howell's miner's lettuce (*Montia howellii*). We will document these and the common native and non-native plants seen along this unfamiliar path through familiar territory. Meet at the Foster Ave. side of the new roundabout on Sunset Ave. Park in the nearby neighborhood. We might do a shuttle to make the walk one way, or may add on Potawot Village or Arcata Marsh. Be prepared for weather and walking; bring your lunch and water. Please tell Carol you are coming: 707-822-2015.

Saturday, April 2—Burnt Ranch and Grays Falls Day Trip. It's fawn lily time at Burnt Ranch Campground! East along Highway 299, we may also find other spring blooms like Indian Warrior and Checker Lily. We'll look for the minute, rare Howell's *Montia* in campsite #16, then explore the varied habitats at Grays Falls Picnic Area, including the short trail down to the falls. Meet at 8:30 a.m. at Pacific Union School, 9:15 a.m. at the museum parking lot in Willow Creek, or about 10 a.m. at Burnt Ranch Campground. Dress for the weather; bring lunch, water and clippers (for clipping Himalayan blackberry). Return late afternoon. Please tell Carol you are coming: 707-822-2015.

Exploring the Calflora Database



Figure 1 (left): Calflora.org homepage: search for plant information or enter an observation.
Figure 2 (right): Searching for plants around Carlotta, CA.

On February 10, the CNPS North Coast chapter's program will feature information about CNPS' rare plant program. If you're interested in learning more about California's rare native plants, join us to explore information found on Calflora.org. An online database of California plants, Calflora can be a great resource for information about rare, native, and naturalized vascular plants (Figure 1).

To begin using Calflora, consider registering. This is a free service that allows you to contribute observations to the database. Not only will this help CNPS better understand plant distribution throughout the state, but information entered about rare plants will greatly help CNPS' rare plant program by providing information about population sizes and verifying whether or not a species is still found at a particular location.

If you're looking just to find general details about a plant, Calflora's search capabilities are vast. Enter the name of the plant you'd like to learn more about (common, scientific, or just part of the name), and hit search. The search results show a distribution map, identification photographs, whether or not the plant is included in the CNPS Inventory of Rare and Endangered plants, and much more.

Calflora also enables searches by location, and returns a list of plants that grow in a particular area. After clicking on "What Grows Here?" on the Calflora homepage, you will be directed to the "What Grows Here?" tool. In Figure 2, I drew a polygon around my address and learned I should be able to find 142 plants around my home.

Advanced searching options are available through Calflora that allow you to customize your particular inquiry, and does not require a steep learning curve. I encourage you to explore this database, and we'll see you February 10!