Milkweed seed is difficult to germinate, so many have been looking for plants. An ample supply is now available for $5.95 at Intermountain Nursery 30443 N. Auberry Rd., Prather.

Two varieties are ready: the Purple Milkweed and the Woolly Milkweed. Both need the same conditions: full sun and a dry location in which to grow. No water needed after the first season. Intermountainnursery.com

California Agriculture, is published quarterly by University of California, Agriculture and Natural Resources, and can be accessed online http://californiaagriculture.ucanr.edu

The current issue’s focus is on forestry and covers some timely topics. Here are some of them:

• Learning from the past--the unanticipated effects of fire suppression.
• Forest thinning may increase water yield from Sierra Nevada.
• Mapping forests with Lidar provides flexible, accurate data with many uses.
• Large tree removal in mixed-conifer forest halves productivity and increases white fir. This long term study confirms the negative consequences of preferentially removing large trees.
  --Sierra Nevada Adaptive Management Project-- All sides of the Sierra forest management debate have learned from SNAMP, Can stakeholders help ensure research results are part of future management?
• UC Cooperative Extension works with fire safe councils to reduce wildfires.
It was predicted to be an unseasonably warm day, but a good crew arrived to work on our pesky thistles. It wasn’t long before we were looking for shady areas to dig and pull. Fortunately we’re targeting mostly Milk Thistle now, and it thrives in shady spots. One enormous patch in particular, on the island east of the south pond, is shaded by gorgeous massive old Valley Oaks. We designated the largest and densest section (of thistles) for spraying, but decided to work out the outliers by hand. As an experiment, knowing the current blossoms would produce seed even after the plants were dug or pulled, we decided to cut the blossoms off before digging or spraying to see if depriving them of the nutrients in the stems and roots would prevent maturing (monitoring of specimen blossoms later seemed to prove this valid), however the process provided some close calls since it was difficult for the machete wielder to keep track of the diggers/pullers around him. Nobody was injured, but we agreed the process needed to be carefully choreographed in the future.

Another crew, working in the north leg of the Park (where, unfortunately, there is less shade) also marked a patch of Milk Thistle for later spraying, but dug lots of plants, including some Bull Thistle. Unhappily they reported seeing more new sprouts in the Ailanthus (Tree of Heaven) grove we’ve worked so hard to kill over the last two years -- so more work there.

We noted the Wild Roses and Elderberries were flowering prettily, as were some blackberries. The Anemopsis (Lizard Tail) bloom was just beginning and should be absolutely spectacular by next time.

Next time will be Saturday, May 16; there are still lots of thistles to dig, but we hope to get started on some trail maintenance as well, and perhaps, cage some of the new crop of Valley Oak seedlings. It would be great if you could lend a hand.

To get to the park, take Kings Canyon/CA 180 east across Academy to Centerville. Follow Smith or Oliver south to Rainbow 1/4 mi. Turn south on Smith about ¼ mi. to the Park gate. Call (559-451-1256) or email <warshaw1955@gmail.com> for more information. I’ll have my cell on at the park (559-281-8080).

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**THREE OBSERVATIONS**

---from Jane Pritchard

**Another Invasion by Aliens**

Perennial pepperweed (*Lepidium latifolium*) is a light green perennial up to 6 feet tall and is covered with pretty white flowers when it blooms. Rhizomes and numerous round, flat, notched seeds make established infestations nearly impossible to control. Introduced from Eurasia, this plant grows in Canada and the U.S. in various habitats (pastures, disturbed areas, fields, grassland, saline meadows, streambanks, sagebrush scrub, pinyon/juniper woodland, and edge of marshes) below 2500 meters (a little over 8000 feet). It has spread throughout California except the extreme northwest and the deserts. China Creek suits it well. Like other invasives, perennial pepperweed is highly competitive and forms dense colonies that displace native vegetation and wildlife.

---From Jeanne Larson

While weeding a few strays in my Mexican Primrose ground cover, there was a small moth, with spots on its wings, in a bloom a little less than 2 inches in diameter. It was beating its wings furiously. Then it beat its wings again furiously before flying away. This was a why moment, as Mexican Primroses spread too easily by vegetative spurs and don’t need seed to reproduce. However, I do have some tall Evening Primroses that are just starting to bud. I shall have to watch those closely as the blossoms of the Evening Primrose do not fade until early morning. Perhaps a moth is waiting for the Evening Primroses.

---From Thelma Valdez

Vite, vite, vite! The Harvest Brodiaea is up, blooming, and some have already completed their bloom cycle. Early leaves of Blue Curls (Vinegarweed) and Dove Weed are out. The warm, dry winds of the past week have blown needlegrass seed hither and yon. It’s now time to trim and rake through the grasses, removing as much dry, dead material as possible as a substitute for a good burn. The quiet of summer dormancy is almost here. Don’t let is pass you by without your fair share of naps.
Membership

John & Michele LuValle

Thanks to new and renewing members:

If you require corrections or additions to your membership information, contact John LuValle at jluvalle@mcn.org.

The Sequoia chapter serves Fresno, Madera, and Kings counties.

The IRS considers dues in excess of $12 per year and all gifts to CNPS as tax deductible. Renew your CNPS membership online using a credit card. As an option, renew automatically year after year. It is quick, easy, and convenient, and reduces renewal-mailing costs. Visit www.cnps.org and click on the JOIN button.

Next Newsletter: July/August 2015

Send newsletter corrections or suggestions to Helen Shaw helshaw@gmail.com. The deadline for the next newsletter is Friday, July 3.

JOIN THE CALIFORNIA NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY RENEW

Membership includes the quarterly CNPS journal, Fremontia; the quarterly Bulletin which gives statewide news and announcements of activities and conservation issues; and our chapter newsletter, Carpenteria.

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California Native Plant Society
2707 K Street, Suite 1
Sacramento, CA 95816-5113

The California Native Plant Society is a statewide nonprofit organization of amateurs and professionals with a common interest in California’s native plants. The mission of the Society is to increase understanding and appreciation of California’s native plants and to preserve them in their natural habitat through scientific activities, education, science, and conservation.
This month I celebrate the completion of my water-wise native plant garden. As you know I’ve worked on removing my front lawn by killing it with glyphosate in the fall of 2013 and having some help digging it out while I was healing from a fracture. This took most of 2014; then I purchased lots of plants at our fall plant sale. I also constructed a broken adobe paver pathway in an oval. Although I purchased many plants for my mini meadow I also transplanted many clumps of Nassella cernua and pulchra from the established area into the bare area. They are now blooming and wave in the breezes.

I also moved many clumps of Berkeley Sedge, known as Carex divulsa or as tumucolla. However, now that it is identified as a European invasive plant on the Plantright.org website, I will remove it and replace with some more yarrow for now. I already have the red/orange variety “Fireland” and a pink one plus an almost blooming white one. I have a Pensatmon heterphyllus “margarita BOP” in bloom for over a month now. I also moved several clumps of iris douglasiana, the native iris, and they’ve bloomed, too.

I’ve planted Monardell villas, Coyote Mint and another Salvia clevelandii variety “Winifred Gilman.” I haven’t decided whether I’ll trim off the flower heads of the grasses but they attach themselves to my socks and tee shirts. The main color for the past 2 months has been the native orange poppy. These were not planted but have been welcomed to fill in all the spaces. They are getting leggy and get pulled out weekly as other plants fill in. I have a few buckets of the compost left to fill in the areas where I couldn’t spread it earlier. Drip irrigation is set up and still is not perfect, but it’s flexible and so am I.
May 2015

Sequoia
Chapter CNPS

Photo credits:

**Linda Sward**: Blow-wives, Keck’s Checkerbloom

**Aaron Turner**: California Thistle (east of Tollhouse Rock), Clustered Broomrape, Miner’s Lettuce

**Eileen Bennett**: Astoria Violet, Bush Poppy, California Figwort, Foothill Lomatium, Nightshade, Oval-leaved Viburnum
May 2015

Sequoia Chapter CNPS

Photo credits:

Aaron Turner: Alumroot, Mountain Dogwood, Showy Phlox, Sticky Currant, Wild Pea
Eileen Bennett: Evening Snow, Monkeyflower
Warren Shaw: Bird’s Eye Gilia, Blue-eyed Grass, Penstemon
Madeleine Mitchell: Blue Elderberry
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