Stir Crazy? Take a look at our Native Plant Botanic Garden

Visiting the Forrest Deaner Native Plant Botanic Garden in the Benicia State Recreation Area just became harder on March 30, when the California Department of Parks and Recreation closed their parking lots due to the current public health emergency. So, for those who cannot get to the park entrance and walk or bike the 1.5 miles beyond the entrance gate to reach the Botanic Garden, the Jepson Chapter is bringing you a virtual visit in this newsletter. At the end of this article you will find a series of photos of plant from the Botanic Garden.

The photos focus on plants in the Botanic Garden that can also be found at the Chapter’s Spring Plant Sale, which is currently scheduled for April 25th, but may be postponed or canceled due to the public health emergency. An announcement on the status of the Spring Plant sale will be issued to Jepson Chapter members in early April.

This 3.5 acre native plant botanic garden is a great resource for CNPS members and anyone looking for plants that are adapted to our climate and soil, low maintenance, attract wildlife and look good. Many of the plants are in bloom and most plants are labeled with their names. “Jot down the names of the plants you like and you may find them in our nursery inventory posted on the Society’s website www.jepson.cnps.org” said Barbara Reiley who organizes the Chapter’s biennial plant sales. Currently the Botanic Garden is accessible by pedestrians and bicyclists, from sunrise to sunset.

The Botanic Garden was established in 2004 by the Jepson Chapter to foster an understanding and appreciation of plants that are native to California, with an emphasis on plant communities that are found in Solano County. It is named after the founder and first President of the Willis Linn Jepson Chapter, Forrest Deaner. The garden provides Solano County residents with a local opportunity to see California’s native flora in a garden setting.

“Many of these plants are unfamiliar to home gardeners and can be hard to find at the local nursery”, says Reiley. “The Botanic Garden demonstrates that native plants can be an attractive addition to the home garden and gives you an idea of their space requirements.”

Many of the plants grown at the Jepson Chapter native plant nursery started from cuttings and seeds collected at the Botanic Garden, with the permission of State Parks. You can find the names of the plants in the following photos in the inventory of the nursery which is posted on the Chapter’s website. The captions in the photos have hyperlinks to Calscape, which provides details on the plants characteristics, the wildlife is supports, landscaping information, and its natural setting.
Entrance to the Forrest Deaner Native Plant Botanic Garden is framed by Island snapdragon (*Galvezia speciosa*) in the foreground and California sagebrush (*Artemesia californica*).

Western redbud (*Cercis occidentalis*) on both sides of this trail in the Native American section.
Common manzanita (*Arctostaphylos manzanita*) in the Chaparral section.

Woollyleaf manzanita (*Arctostaphylos tomentosa*) in the Chaparral section.
Dwarf coyote bush (*Baccharis pilularis*) on left, Purple sage (*Salvia leucophylla*) on the right.

Black sage (*Salvia mellifera*) in the Residential Demonstration Garden.
Spice bush, (Calycanthus occidentalis), flowerbuds are forming. It is located in the Residential Demonstration Garden section.
Concha Ceanothus (*Ceanothus ‘Concha’*) in the Residential Demonstration Garden section.

California buckwheat (*Eriogonum fasciculatum*) on left and background, Red-flowered buckwheat (*Eriogonum grande var. rubescens*) on right, and Dwarf coyote bush (*Baccharis pilularis*) behind.
California fescue (*Festuca californica*) in the Meadow section.
‘Jellybean Fiesta Marigold’ monkeyflower (*Mimulus ‘Jellybean Fiesta Marigold’*) in the Foothill Woodlands section. This is a hybrid not native to Solano County and not found in Calscape.
Silver lupine (*Lupinus albifrons*) in the Meadow section.

Deergrass (*Muhlenbergia rigens*) is dormant here since it is a warm season grass. It is located in the Meadow section.
Foothill penstemon (*Penstemon heterophyllus 'Margarita BOP') in the Meadow section.

Hummingbird sage (*Salvia spathacea*) in the Foothill Woodland section.
Blood currant (*Ribes sanguineum v. glutinosum*) in the Foothill Woodlands section.
Snowdrop Bush (*Styrax officinalis*) in the Meadow section. The flower buds are forming now.
Dwarf coyote bush (*Baccharis pilularis*) on left, Purple sage (*Salvia leucophylla*) on the right. Snowflurry ceanothus (*Ceanothus thyrsiflorus ‘Snowflurry’) is in the back and is not available at the Jepson Chapter nursery.