**The Dream:** The garden is a story of a dream, of love, a promise and a commitment. The dream was that of the late Forrest Deaner, who laid the groundwork for the Garden, when he founded the Willis Linn Jepson Chapter in 1998. He recruited new members, horticulture and landscape professionals, negotiated and brokered with the State Parks for the garden site. The love was that of native California plants – he had this exciting vision of the Garden being “one of the only kind in the state” and worked tirelessly until the end to facilitate making it so, even as he was fighting the ravages of his rapidly deteriorating health. The promise was that of Norma, his widow, who promised him that she would continue his work. She sought the advice of experienced grant-writers, learned to write grants & got the funding for Phase 1. The commitment is that of the Botanic Garden Committee (Gary Brogan, Norma Deaner, Tim Sullivan, and Susan Dean) whose countless volunteer hours served to help complete the Garden in record time.

**Funding:** The 2000 Park Bonds Act through a grant award of $60,000 provided principal funding for the Garden from the State Coastal Conservancy in April of 2003. Additional funding was provided through a $4,090 grant for construction services from the California Conservation Corps; $1,500 and $2,000 grants from the Dey Community Fund, (a component of the Community Foundation of Solano County); a $2,000 grant from the Oracle Corporation through the California State Parks Foundation; and $4,300 raised by the Chapter from major supporters, members, friends, and plant sales.

**Partners:** The 3.5 acre Garden is a collaborative project of the California Native Plant Society – Willis Linn Jepson Chapter and the California Department of Parks & Recreation. Located at the Benicia State Recreation Area, it affords a scenic view of the Carquinez Strait where the Sacramento and the San Joaquin River make their way to the Pacific Ocean. Once full of invasive, overgrown Fennel and spiny Starthistle, the Garden has been transformed into a beautiful, colorful array of almost 1,000 native trees, perennials, shrubs, and grasses.

**Directions:** From Interstate 780 West, exit onto Columbus Parkway. Then turn left onto Rose Drive. Turn right into the Park. From Interstate 780 east, exit onto Columbus Parkway. Turn left into the Park. The Garden is about 1 mile in from the Park entrance, west of the Picnic area.

**Brief Description:** The garden site comprises about 3.5 acres within the Benicia State Recreation Area, adjacent to the main picnic area, and just below newly constructed trails around Dillon Point. Phase 1 of garden development entails path and walkway construction, installation of the garden irrigation system, and plantings for the demonstration gardens. Planned demonstration gardens will feature residential, hummingbird/butterfly, sensory, Native American, meadow, and riparian sections. Native plants of Solano County will be highlighted in the garden making it unique for the appreciation and understanding of the local flora of our environment. It will be an ideal setting for learning about native plants and how they may be used in home gardens and other landscape projects. Environmental education classes for school age children conducted by Jepson Chapter members will be enhanced, as well as encouraging field trip opportunities for students of all ages. The native plant botanic garden promises to be a wonderful source of enjoyment and educational interest for Solano county communities and be an attraction for visitors near and far, and serve to heighten appreciation and conservation of native plants.

The Chapter welcomes contributions which may be sent to California Native Plant Society - WLJ Chapter, P.O. Box 2212, Benicia Ca. 94510. Volunteers/helpers are encouraged and welcome to join in botanic garden development projects. For more information about the garden contact dan at danj@cnpsjepson.org or call 707.980-4416.
Opening Day Pictures
Garden Pictures Today

Butterfly Hummingbird Garden:

(Sambucus mexicana) Blue Elderberry

(Cirsium occidentale) Cobweb Thistle
Wildflower Meadow:

- (Eschscholzia californica) - California Poppy
- (Sisyrinchium bellum) - Blue-eyed grass
- (Symphoricarpos albus) - Common Snowberry

Riparian:

- (Cornus sericea) - Creek Dogwood
- (Aguilegia eximia) - Serpentine Columbine
- (Clematis ligusticifolia) - Wild Clematis
Residential and Sensory Gardens:

(Fremontodendron californicum)  (Carpenteria californica)  (Eriogonum arborensens)
Flannel Bush  California Bush Anemone  Island Buckwheat

Memorial Garden:

(Monardella oratissima)  (Dendromecon rigida ssp. harfordi)  (Trichostema lanaturm)
Mountain Monardella  Bush Poppy  Wooly Bluecurls
Native American:

(Ribes sanguineum var. glutinosum)  (Cercis occidentalis)  (Chlorogalum pomeridianum)

Pink-Flowered Currant  Western Redbud  Soap Plant