**CALENDAR OF EVENTS**

- **Saturday, September 18, 10AM, Dedication of Interpretive Panels at the Botanic Garden, Benicia State Recreation Area** (Article to Right)
- **Monday, September 27, 7PM, Chapter Meeting. Presentation on East Bay Native Plants for the Garden, (see article below)**
- **Saturday, October 2, 9AM -1PM, Autumn Garden Workshop, Benicia Community Garden** (see page 3)
- **Saturday, October 16, Native Plant Sale, 10AM – 2PM, City Park, Downtown Benicia** (see page 3)
- **Monday, October 25, Chapter Meeting, T.B.D.**
- **Plant Propagation Workdays – Vallejo, Every Thursday and Sunday, 10AM– 12, Vallejo Sanitation District, Call Becky at 429-2494**
- **Forrest Deaneer Botanic Garden Workdays, Every Saturday, 9:30-11:30, Benicia State Recreation Area**

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**PRESIDENT’S REPORT**

The Jepson Chapter invites the public to celebrate the dedication of eight interpretive panels at the Forrest Deaneer Native Plant Botanic Garden. These panels represent the Chapter’s first permanent educational outreach effort at the garden which is located at the Benicia State Recreation Area.

The interpretive panels are the result of hundreds of hours of volunteer time, a partnership with the California Department of Parks and Recreation, and funding from Solano County, California State Parks Foundation, and the Delta Protection Commission.

The dedication will begin at 10 am and will last about an hour. Along with words from invited dignitaries, the Benicia High School Marching Band’s Brass Quintet will perform. Two important initiatives will also be featured at the dedication ceremony.

The first is the Proposition 21 – Yes for State Parks initiative. This statewide ballot measure is slated for the November 2nd ballot. It will create a stable source of funding for state parks. California vehicles will get free day-use admission in exchange for $18 added to your annual vehicle registration fee to fund state parks. For more information on this important issue check out www.yesforstateparks.com.

The second is the Chapter’s new volunteer and educational outreach initiative called the 10x10 program. This project is designed to compliment the current Garden work day with a focus on maintaining established areas. Volunteers select a 10-foot by 10-foot area to keep weed free by tending the Garden one or more hours per month.

Following the ceremony, docent led tours of the Botanic Garden will be available, as well as some healthy snacks and beverages. Everyone is welcome. Dogs must be on leashes. Visit the Chapter website, www.cnpsjepsonchapter.org for more info.

Regards,

Gene Doherty – President, Willis Linn Jepson Chapter

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**East Bay Native Plants for the Garden**

East Bay native plants and their use in the garden will be discussed at our general membership meeting on September 27th. Janice Bray, a CNPS member and volunteer at the Native Here Nursery in Berkeley will begin this discussion using a slide show of over 50 trees, vines, shrubs, perennials, bulbs, grasses and annuals native to the East Bay. She will describe how local people have used them in their garden landscapes. Find out what these plants need to survive and stay healthy, and why it is so important for all of us to use native plants in our garden.

We are fortunate to have this discussion precede our fall native plant sale. Please attend to welcome Janice and get ideas on plants you might want to buy at our plant sale. The meeting is free, open to the public and will begin at 7pm at the Heritage Presbyterian Church, 1400 East 2nd Street in Benicia. Call 745-4675 for more information.
Adventures in Propagation

SEED COLLECTING – By Becky Mannion

This is the fun part in seed propagation. Now getting the seed into the ground (or medium) is satisfying, and watching the little green sprouts come up can be delightful, but for real out and out absolute like a 10-year old fun, it’s collecting. The amazing bit is that it can be done in deep civilization or as far out in the wild as you can get.

Seed collecting can be tricky. When are the seeds ripe, how can I find seed, how do I re-find the plant if it dries up after the rains…? There are some seeds that are tricky. When the pods turn brown is the best time to collect, but you have to be careful. If you are too late you’ll find that there are no seeds on the lupines or the poppies!

If you see a flower you like take a piece of plastic tape, (you can get it at the Home Depot) and tie it around the plant you want to collect seed from. Once the flowering is done the plant will turn brown and blend in with the soil around it. With the tape, you’ll be able to find it. Don’t be a sailor; don’t tie it tight, it’s just a prop to tell you where it is. Shrubs and trees are a bit different since they don’t fade into the background when the season gets hot. But there are some rules you should follow. Primarily, don’t pick up tree seeds off the ground. Chances are they are infested already and rejected by the tree. Take them off the tree. Even when you get them off the tree there is a test you can do to find out if they will sprout or not. It’s called “sink or swim”. Swimmers are the ones that won’t germinate.

There is a book called *Seed Propagation of Native California Plants* by Dara E. Emery. Don’t get it from Amazon; get it from Santa Barbara Botanic Garden. It doesn’t have everything listed in it, but it has enough. Trees seed usually needs about 2 months in the freezer before planting. Put the seed in a plastic bag, add seed mix and water then put it in the freezer. Mark your calendar so you don’t forget when to take them out.

If you are going seed hunting there are a few things you should remember. First and foremost is to take water and a hat. Summer or winter, high country or out in the marsh. You may be surprised at how long you’ll be out or how much exposure you are getting. Fifteen minutes can turn into several hours if you are not paying attention. Other essentials are brown paper bags, hopefully something to label with (sharpies are good on brown paper bags), scissors, and Teknu. Teknu is the barrier between you and the poison oak. Poison oak drops its leaves in winter and you usually don’t realize you have stuck your hand in it until it’s too late.

Otherwise you have to wear long sleeves and gloves. Finally, get permission from the landowner to collect seed. Collecting on publicly-owned land requires a permit from the supervising agency. CNPS can help you obtain the necessary permits from public agencies.

Now you have your seeds in your brown paper bags and you get home. The trick is to let all the seeds dry out before you pack them up for germination. This should take maybe a week or two in your kitchen then into a plastic bag and into the fridge. The crisper drawer is the best place. The important part here is to get the label right. If all you knew was the common name when you picked up the seed, you can look it up on the internet and get the botanical name. Usually there are pictures so you can check if that’s actually the plant you have seeds for.

Sometime in January, when you fear you will never see the sun again, it’s time to sow your seed. The soil medium should be as sterile as possible. You can even plant in perlite or vermiculite. Seed naturally comes with already packaged fertilizer. It doesn’t need to be fed until after it comes up and has its first real leaves on it. The best fertilizer…no, later with that. We’re just trying to get the seeds up.

You can put your flats outside. They are, after all, California natives. Still I have never seen two winters alike so you have to be aware of the water and the wind and not let the flats dry out too much. The first leaves up are called cotyledons. I am unsure to their use to the plant and they don’t resemble what comes later, it does tell you that the seed has done its job. Next subject: Stepping up.

**NEARBY EVENTS OF OTHERS**

- Sept. 14, 7pm, Gardening for Wildlife and Birds by Kathleen Chasey, Curator of the Martha Walker Native Plant Garden in Napa. Napa Solano Audubon Society Meeting. Florence Douglas Senior Center, 333 Amador St., Vallejo

- Sept. 22, 6:30pm, Gardening for Wildlife by Phil Van Soelen, native plant expert and author. CNPS Napa Chapter Meeting, Skyline Park Social Hall. 2201 Imola Ave, Napa

- Sept. 22, 7pm, Experimenting with Native Plants in the Landscape by Pete Veilleux, owner of East Bay Wilds Nursery, CNPS East Bay Chapter Meeting. Garden Room, Orinda Library, 24 Orinda.
JEPSON CHAPTER UPDATES

AUTUMN GARDEN WORKSHOP

On Saturday, October 2, the Jepson Chapter and the Benicia Community Garden will host a gardening workshop with emphasis on autumn tasks in the garden. The workshop will take place at the Benicia Community Garden next to Heritage Presbyterian Church at 1400 East 2nd Street. We will have demonstrations on:

- **Pruning Shrubs.** Special tips on pruning natives and drought tolerant species, although most techniques will apply to all woody plants.
- **Tool and Irrigation Maintenance.** Learn how to put your drip irrigation to bed for the rainy season. A few cleaning and sharpening techniques will keep your gardening tools in good condition as well as making your work much easier.
- **Sheet Mulching.** A demonstration of an easy, no-till system of preparing a plot for spring planting. This system is suitable for existing lawns or any plot of land.
- **Planting, Dividing and Maintenance of Perennials.** See how to make new plants from existing ones. You can have new plants or simply refresh your existing ones.

The workshop is free, but with a $20 donation to Benicia Community Gardens you will receive $20 worth of coupons that may be redeemed following the workshop for $20 worth of plants. Native plants will be offered as well as other garden specimens. You must register to attend and donations may be made at this time. The first 40 respondents will be accepted.

Send checks made to “Benicia Community Gardens” to: BCG c/o Sue Wickham, 411 Duvall Court, Benicia, CA. Any questions? Contact Sue at swgeo1@gmail.com or Meg at umberto111@sbcglobal.net

VOLUNTEER TO PROPAGATE

We know most of you are not propagating because we don’t see you at our propagation sessions held every Thursday and Saturday at Vallejo Sanitation District. Yes, we do it twice a week.

Your Chapter’s Plant Propagation Committee seeks to generate interest in our activities through Becky Mannion’s articles on ‘Adventures in Propagation’ (see page 2), and by showing you where we do it. See our website for an on-line tour of our facilities at Val San and Benicia State Park and a description of some of the tasks we need your help with.

CHAPTER PLANT SALE - OCTOBER 16TH

This year the fall plant sale will be co-located with the Benicia Arbor Day event in Downtown Benicia’s City Park at First St & Military. Plant sale hours are 10am to 2pm.

Plants featured include shrubs and perennials adapted to dry summer conditions and small native trees suitable for smaller yards. Ground covers and flowering plants will be available as well. In this down economy, we will be selling many plants in 4” pots that are very affordable and will grow well when planted in the fall.

Check our website for a list of all plants for sale, www.cnpsjepsonchapter.org and help spread the word by posting the enclosed flyer for our plant sale on a bulletin board in your neighborhood or at work. CNPS members will receive a 10% discount on all purchases!

Call Sue at 747-5815 if you can volunteer to help with any of the tasks below.

- **Day of Sale help:** We can always use an extra helper to help bring sold plants to cars, and assist with setup and cleanup.
- **Outreach:** Place or put out a stack of flyers. Download the flyer from the chapter website or call Sue.
- **Haulers:** Oct 15th haul plants to or from our nurseries in Benicia and Vallejo. Truck or van works best.
- **Post-sale nursery cleanup,** organize leftover plants. Thursday and Sunday morning.

### Other Native Plant Sales

- **UC Davis Arboretum,** September 25, 11am to 1pm, some natives, Arboretum Teaching Nursery, Garrod Drive, Davis
- **UC Berkeley Botanical Garden,** Sept 26, 11am-2pm, some natives, 200 Centennial Dr,
- **Napa CNPS,** Oct 2 & 3, 10am to 4pm, Skyline Wilderness Park, 2201 Imola Ave, Napa
- **Milo Baker CNPS,** Oct 9, 9am to 1pm, Veterans Memorial Building, 1351 Maple Ave, Santa Rosa
- **East Bay CNPS Plant Fair,** Oct 16, 10am to 3pm, Oct 17, noon to 3pm, Native Here Nursery, 101 Golf Course Dr, Berkeley by Tilden Golf Course
- **Solano Resource Conservation District,** Oct 23, 8 to noon, Conservation Fair & Plant Sale, 6390 Lewis Rd, Vacaville.
WILLIS LINN JEPSON CHAPTER
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• Botanic Garden, Norma Deaner

CNPS MEMBERSHIP FORM

Name: ________________________________
Address:________________________________
City/Zip: ________________________________
Telephone:______________________________
Email (optional):__________________________
I wish to affiliate with:____ Jepson Chapter
____ Other_____________
Membership Category:
___ Student/Limited Income, $25
___ Individual, $45
___ Family/Group/International, $75
___ Plant Lover, $100
___ Patron, $300
___ Benefactor, $600
___ Mariposa Lily, $1500

Mail with check to CNPS, 2707 K Street, Suite 1, Sacramento, CA 95816, or you can join or renew automatically year after year via the website www.cnps.org and click on JOIN.