Calendar of Events

- **General Membership Meeting, California Native Gardening by Helen Popper, Monday, September 24th, 7PM (see page 3)**
- **Plant Propagation Workdays – Vallejo, Every Thursday and Sunday, 10AM–12, Vallejo Sanitation District, Call Becky at 429-2494**
- **Forrest Deaner Botanic Garden Workdays, Every Saturday, 9:30-11:30, Benicia State Rec Area**

President’s Report

I am sure all readers are familiar with the year-long efforts of the Jepson Chapter Board and members to respond to the Governor’s decision to close 70 state parks, including the Benicia State Recreation Area (BSRA), home to the Forrest Deaner Native Plant Botanic Garden. This report is an update on this issue.

I am still recovering from the news of the unauthorized vacation buyout program by State Park officials, coupled with the discovery of more than $54 million in park fund balances that should have been disclosed and directed to parks and recreation operations. This news was a sucker punch to all of us who have worked so hard to keep state parks open, from the children who held bake sales to the corporate boards that made six-figure donations for their cherished state parks.

We are grateful for the donations, volunteerism and activism by Chapter members and friends to maintain the Botanic Garden. The status quo remains as the State tries to figure out what to do. The park is open to vehicles except for Monday thru Wednesday. The Garden receives water and the Chapter retains access to its BSRA propagation and storage facilities.

Amid all this controversy and uncertainty, volunteers continue to attend the Garden workdays every Saturday morning. In closing, I want to acknowledge the extraordinary efforts of Board member Norma Deaner, Dan Jensen, Volunteer Coordinator, and Carol Berman, President of the Benicia State Parks Association for their work on behalf of the Garden.

Sincerely, Steven Goetz, President – Jepson Chapter

CNPS Supports Vallejo Native Habitat Project

In June, the Board of the Jepson Chapter provided a letter of support to the Solano Resource Conservation District (RCD) for their Vallejo’s Blue Rock Springs Corridor (BRSC) Project. The RCD is seeking a grant from the Coastal Conservancy to fund this important creek revegetation project.

Blue Rock Springs Creek runs the length of the Corridor which is open to the public, has two public schools on its borders, is downstream from a golf course, surrounded by dense housing development, and serves a vital flood control function. BRSC is currently the site of several environmental education programs managed by RCD that monitor stream water quality and install native plants along the Corridor.

The proposed project will work with the Jepson Chapter, local agencies and community groups to restore 53 acres of riparian and upland habitat in BRSC. Project goals include:

- Revegetate the riparian corridor;
- Control invasive weeds in select areas and replace them with native plants;
- Address areas of erosion;
- Install 2 additional dog waste stations;
- Monitor bird, aquatic invertebrate and plant populations, in addition to chemical and physical properties of Blue Rock Springs Creek; and

(See page 2 - Vallejo Project)
Vallejo Project  continued from page 1

- Integrate and coordinate the complimentary efforts of local watershed groups, restoration partners, and education programs in the Corridor.

Work will include native plantings to close all gaps in the riparian corridor. A 3.5 acre area currently dominated by non-native grasses will be restored to native perennial grassland. Native trees and shrubs will be planted in the upland areas, restoring oak woodlands to over 25 acres within the Corridor. All plantings will be irrigated and monitored for a minimum of two years after installation. Approximately half of the native plants installed at the site will be propagated from stock in the BRSC watershed.

Invasive weeds such as artichoke thistle and pampas grass, which are in the very early stages of infestation in the Corridor, will be monitored, treated and likely eradicated. Other non-native invasive species, such as Himalayan blackberries, will be controlled and removed from select areas and replaced with native plantings.

Two areas that receive urban runoff from surrounding neighborhoods will be planted with native grass and sedge plugs that will act as a biofilter and help reduce erosion into the Creek. Stream banks will be similarly planted to prevent sloughing and minimize soil erosion. Work will be performed by RCD staff, volunteers, Calif. Conservation Corp, and the Greater Vallejo Recreation District.

The Jepson Chapter Board of Directors has agreed to become actively involved in this proposal by helping the RCD recruit volunteers and educating the community in the benefits of this exciting project. Grant awards will be announced by the California Resources Agency next year.

CNPS Plans Conservation Meeting in Santa Cruz

CNPS will hold its Fall Conservation Meeting at the UC Santa Cruz Arboretum on September 8, 2012. Each fall, the CNPS Chapter Council holds a day-long series of talks and discussions addressing a focus topic.

This year, speakers will present a retrospective, including case studies, of how plant species and plant communities have been addressed in Natural Community Conservation Plans (NCCPs) over the past 20 years. Presentations will include recommendations for improving plant community conservation in future NCCPs, and tips for plant advocates interested in engaging in NCCP processes in their Chapters.

For some time the Solano County Water Agency has been working on a Multi-species Habitat Conservation Plan, which is similar to a NCCP but follows the federal Endangered Species Act. NCCPs are governed by the California Endangered Species Act.

The Agency must prepare this plan in order to renew its contract with the Bureau of Reclamation for operating federally-funded water projects that serve agriculture and cities in the county. Cities and other agencies in Solano County with projects that potentially impact the species covered by the plan are also participating.

Of the 37 species addressed in the plan, 12 are native plant species that are either listed or proposed for listing under the federal and/or state endangered species act. Once the plan is adopted, construction projects that will impact these species will have a streamlined process for mitigating their impacts. A description of the plan can be found on the web at: http://www.scwa2.com/Conservation_Habitat_Info.aspx

Jepson Chapter members who want to find out more about this planning process and how it might affect conservation of native flora in Solano County are encouraged to attend the CNPS Fall Conservation Meeting. It is free and open to all CNPS members.

The meeting is from 8:30 to 5:00. The Arboretum is on the UC campus at 1025 High Street. To attend, RSVP with Larry Levine, at levinel@northcoast.com. He’ll provide details on the meeting room and food; lodging if you plan to stay overnight; and a link to the google site that will have additional details on the meeting as they become available.

Conservation Campaign

Help CNPS Preserve California’s Wild Gardens

The Conservation Campaign is a year-long special effort to raise money to support the CNPS Conservation Program. The core of the Conservation Program is science and law, as well as a love of nature. The program engages in state or federal conservation activities that protect native flora. Through your contribution to the Conservation Campaign, you will join those who fostered this effort for half a century. Donations can be made on-line at: cnps.org or by mail: CNPS Fund Appeal, 2707 K St., Suite 1, Sacto, CA 95816.
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR HIRED

Daniel Gluesenkamp has accepted the position of CNPS Executive Director. Upon accepting the position, Dan said, “The chance to lead CNPS is a dream comes true. Much of what we love in California is here because it was saved by CNPS. I believe the Society’s greatest successes are still ahead, and I am honored being chosen to serve.” Stay tuned for more from Dan when he starts in August.

Most recently, Dan served as Executive Director of The Calflora Database where he led the organization in developing new tools for research and conservation of California flora. Dan earned his Ph.D. at UC Berkeley studying the ecology of native and invasive thistles. He was Director of Habitat Protection for Audubon Canyon Ranch and has had leadership roles in the California Invasive Plant Council and Bay Area Early Detection Network.

RESEARCH GRANTS OFFERED

The CNPS Educational Grants Committee is requesting proposals for its four educational grant programs. These annual grants are a major component of CNPS leadership in promoting the “preservation of California’s native flora,” and offer financial support, avenues for presenting research, and professional opportunities to the upcoming generation of concerned botanists in California.

A description of the four grant programs and guidelines for submitting a proposal are available from the CNPS website: http://cnps.org/cnps/education/grants.php

Academic status can vary from non-student, high school, undergraduate and graduate students. Address requests to the Chair, Educational Grants Committee. Completed proposals must be received in the CNPS office no later than September 30, 2012.

Proposals are evaluated by reviewers who include active academic botanists, experienced botanical consultants, agency representatives, and Chapter conservation officers. Response letters are mailed early in November. Each student whose work is supported by CNPS is asked to submit a report, to Fremontia, when the research is completed. Having a report published in the widely circulated CNPS journal could constitute a young botanist’s first Published Citation.

Jepson Chapter News

PLANT TALK IN SEPTEMBER

Our September 24 meeting will feature Helen Popper, who will introduce the audience to her book California Native Plant Gardening, A Month by Month Guide. This book clearly lays out tasks that ensure maximum success with growing, propagating and maintaining a garden in rhythm with the seasons. The talk will be held at 7pm in the Community Room of Heritage Presbyterian Church, 1400 East 2nd Street in Benicia.

BOARD/COMMITTEE VACANCIES

Our chapter is shaped by the people participating in it and your Board strives to always maintain an open, friendly, and helpful attitude toward all our members. Although our chapter is small, it offers many ways to become involved in promoting the conservation and enjoyment of native plants. More is better.

Please consider stepping in to an open position, assisting one our committee chairs, or leading a hike. Current open positions on the Board include secretary, education programs, newsletter editor, webmaster, books/poster sales, and programs/outreach. You have an opportunity to help shape the chapter: Step out! Step up! Step in! Contact any board member. We hope to hear from you.

Native Gardener’s Corner

This new column will be a regular newsletter feature offering chapter members and local experts a chance to briefly share information on many things related to gardening with natives. Each column will be based on a question to our readership. The answers received will be published in the subsequent newsletter.

This idea is based on a column featured in the newsletter for the Orange County Chapter.

This new feature relies solely on reader participation, so are you ready? The question for the fall issue is “Which native plant will you “never” plant in your garden and why?”

Please send your answers to sqoet@sbcglobal.net by September 10. Check out the Orange County Chapter newsletter for their answer to this question at http://www.occnps.org/
WILLIS LINN JEPSON CHAPTER
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CNPS MEMBERSHIP FORM

Name: ________________________________
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I wish to affiliate with:____ Jepson Chapter  
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Individual Membership Categories:
____ Student/Limited Income, $25
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____ Benefactor, $600
____ Mariposa Lily, $1500

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renew automatically year after year via the website www.cnps.org and click on JOIN.