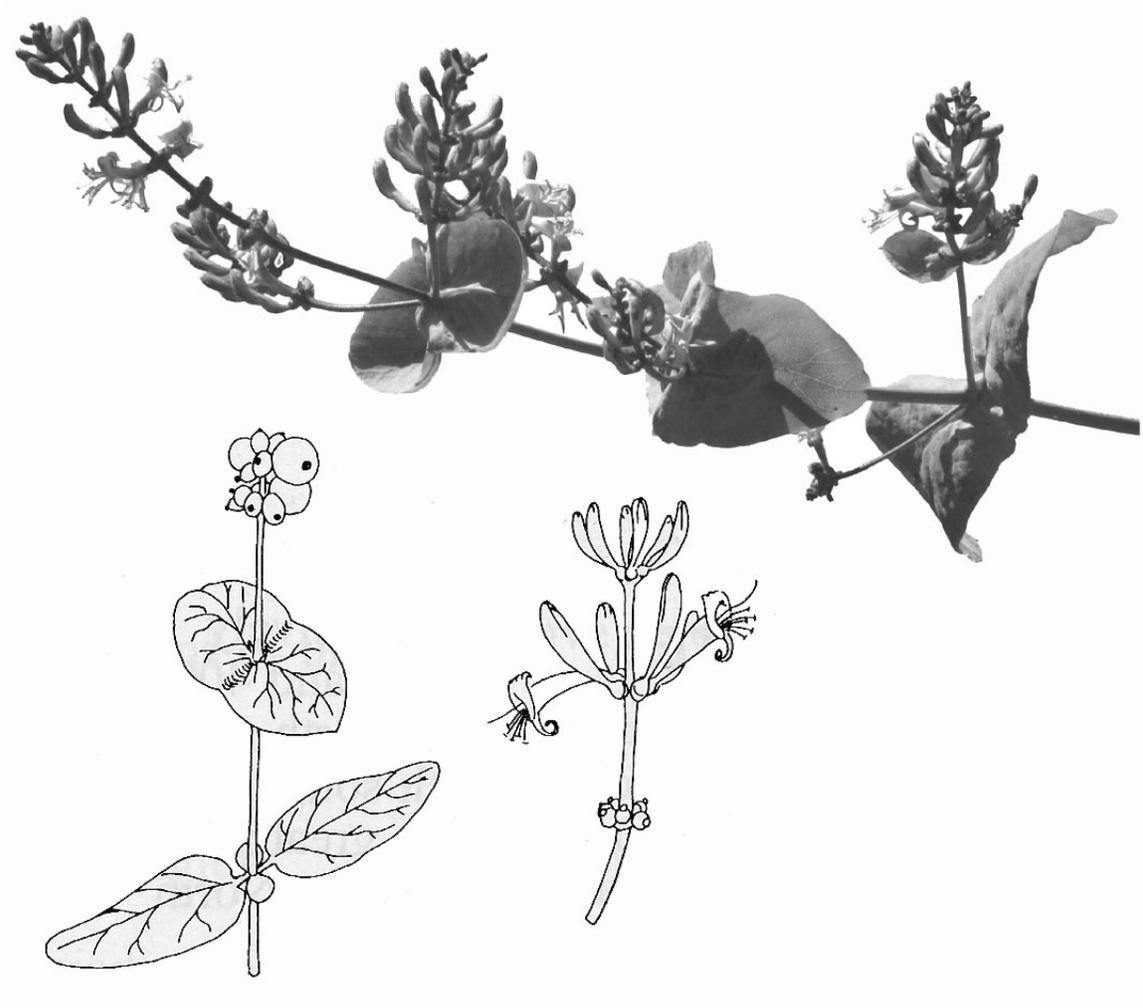


OBISPOENSIS

Newsletter of the San Luis Obispo Chapter of the
California Native Plant Society for San Luis Obispo
and Northern Santa Barbara Counties



DECEMBER 2006

About the Cover

California Honeysuckle (*Lonicera hispidula* var. *vacillans*)

The cover of this issue of *Obispoensis* is a composite of something new and something old. The flowering branch is a gray scale photo. The drawings of the young fruiting and flowering branches were drawn by Bonnie many years ago for Dr. David Keil and my plant taxonomy textbook. It is California, pink and chaparral honeysuckle (*Lonicera hispidula* var. *vacillans*). The large, bright red clusters of fruits are particularly noticeable on north-facing slopes in our coastal canyons during the fall. The species ranges almost throughout California, west of the Sierra Nevada crest, north into Oregon and south into Baja. It is most common in our coastal areas. Several other species of *Lonicera* are more common in the interior.

The name, honeysuckle, refers to the copious amounts of nectar produced by members of this genus. A plant that rewards its pollinator with nectar gets off relatively cheaply. Nectar is primarily sugar water, whereas pollen, the other tangible reward, is not only the reduced, initially free-living male plant and thus expensive to make, it is also the source of the male gametes or sperm. The long horizontal corolla tube and spreading vertical limbs indicate that these flowers are pollinated by animals that must hover in front of it to get the nectar. Two pollinator types have this ability – hummingbirds and hawk moths. Both of these pollinators get their proteins from other sources and are using the flowers as we would an ice cream store – a place to get a sugar fix. The flowers are light purple to pink and are fully open during the day. Since birds share with us nearly the same vision being active during the day, it is my guess that hummingbirds would be the principal pollinator. I believe that I read some time ago, that country children pulled off the petal tubes and sucked out the nectar. In several of my references, the bright red berries are reported to have been eaten by Native Peoples. However, my references on edible wild plants for modern people do not mention them. I think I remember trying to eat a few berries of a different honeysuckle species in my youth and found them tasteless, fit only for emergency food.

The genus, *Lonicera*, belongs to the plant family known as the Caprifoliaceae. This family was classically defined by its woody habit and opposite leaves with no or rudimentary stipules. If the genera classically included in this family were placed next to each other in a garden, I suspect many would wonder what they all had in common. They would not be alone! Dr. R.F. Hoover in his *Vascular Plants of San Luis Obispo County* placed all of them into another family that was considered closely related at the time – the Rubiaceae (Coffee or Gardenia

Family). Current work with DNA sequencing indicates that this family, as classically defined, should be split. The viburnums and elderberries would be moved to the here-to-fore herbaceous family, Adoxaceae. *Lonicera* remains uncomfortably within the Caprifoliaceae. The genera from two herbaceous families – the Valerianaceae and Dipsacaceae are being moved into a new Caprifoliaceae. This is because the family name, Caprifoliaceae, is the oldest available name for this new assemblage of genera. – Dirk Walters, Illustration by Bonnie Walters

President's Message

Hello CNPS members. I have had a busy month so this message will be brief. I want to thank all of the volunteers that helped at the plant sale and everyone who came to purchase plants. I also want to welcome all the new members that signed up during the plant sale, or in recent months. I look forward to meeting you at our programs and walks.

I wish everyone safe and happy holidays and hope to see you at our Banquet in January. – Lauren Brown

Conservation

The November election was kind to our native flora. Proposition 90 was narrowly defeated, and thus will enable city planners to continue to moderate future development without fear of lawsuits. There is support of Proposition 84 to protect wetlands. Richard Pombo was booted out of both the House Resources Committee, but also the House itself. With his almost pathological hatred of environmental regulation, his agenda included dismantling the federal Endangered Species Act, selling off Federal Lands, and encouraging resource development in public lands with minimum impediment. It remains to be seen if our newly reelected governor will be any more friendly to the environment, as it didn't seem to enter the debate very much (apart from the charges from Westly that Angelides destroyed wetlands). But there is a troubling reality to this election, as environmental issues that interest CNPS did not garner much interest. Even the coalition of environmental organizations that worked to defeat Pombo argued mainly about connections to Abramoff and his influence-peddling, and not about his abysmal environmental record. Locally, environment-leaning supervisors are still the minority. Therefore we have a steep road to climb, and you must all play a part. Somehow we must reengage the public so that they again care about saving Nature, which currently ranks close to last in their lists of concerns. So maybe in the future we will actually be able to celebrate things getting better, rather than that things are not getting worse. That is how this election is defined. Remember also that over half of eligible Californians didn't even bother to vote.

– David Chipping

Plant Sale



With another successful plant sale under our belt, I would like to take this opportunity to thank all of the volunteers for a job well done! This being our 36th plant sale, there is no doubt that I could not have asked for a better group of helpers. Everybody showed



up at their specific times, did their jobs perfectly, and best of all we had a fun time. The plant sale is more than a way for us to make money; it is also our number one way to have public contact. Some people wait months to come to our sale just to get a special plant, t-shirt, or book, and of course to ask questions, questions, and more questions about plants! Once again I want to thank all of you for your great help and look forward to working with you all next year!

Until I see you again - Happy Gardening. John



John Nowak

CNPS Wants Your Feedback!

The California Native Plant Society is seeking input from members as well as the general public through a statewide web-based survey. Data from this survey will help shape future programs and projects.

The survey takes about five minutes to complete. At the end, respondents have a chance to enter a drawing to win a free copy of the new book, *California Native Plants for the Garden*, by Carol Bornstein, Bart O'Brien, and David Fross .

The survey is accessible at:

<http://www.surveymonkey.com/s.asp?u=27338260042>

– Arvind Kumar, Publicity Chair
California Native Plant Society
(Santa Clara Valley Chapter)

Malcolm McLeod Scholarship Fund

Our chapter has established a Malcolm McLeod Scholarship Fund. The purpose of the fund is to assist students who are pursuing a botany or related degree. Rhonda Riggins Pimentel has agreed to chair the Scholarship Fund Committee, which will establish guidelines and make decisions for awarding funds to students. Several donations have been received in memory of Dr. McLeod, but the chapter would like to build the fund. Therefore, we want to encourage our chapter members to consider a year-end, tax deductible donation. Identify your donation for this Scholarship Fund and send it to us at P.O. Box 784, San Luis Obispo, CA 93406.

– Linda Chipping

Mary Coffeen Remembered

A dear friend to many Central Coast residents, Mary Coffeen passed away on October 4 in Auburn Ca., where she had lived with her daughter Marcia since 2000. Mary often talked about her public education activities at Rancho Santa Ana Botanic Garden in Claremont. Mary brought her passion for native plants with her when she moved to Morro Bay, where she lived for 20 years. She was the author of *Central Coast Wildflowers*, published in 1993. Between October 1994 and February 1995, Mary led nine walks for CNPS at Cerro Alto after the 1994 Highway 41 Fire. She kept a diary, recording the regeneration of plants and excerpts were published in our newsletter. Mary received our chapter's Hoover Award in 1993. A memorial service will be held for Mary next spring at Shell Creek, a place she said was Heaven. We will keep you informed when an exact date is selected. Donations in memory of Mary can be made to the conservation organization of one's choice.

– Yolanda Waddell

Jacques Poirier

Earlier this month, CNPS and the natural history community lost a very good friend by the untimely death of Jacques Poirier. He was a plant and nature enthusiast; an avid hiker and environmental advocate. For the past 17+ years he worked at the entrance of the La Purisima Mission SHP, having retired a few years ago. Many of his friends gathered for a quiet memorial of his life at one of the fountains in the Mission Garden on Sunday the 12th of November. His cheer and enthusiasm will be sorely missed.

– Charles E. Blair



Saturday, December 16, 9 a.m. Fungal Foray led by David Krause, Mark Brunschwiler and Dennis Sheridan. We will look for mushrooms growing in the Monterey pine forests of Cambria. Meet at the San Luis Obispo Vets Hall parking area on Grand Avenue at 8 a.m. If you plan to drive with someone else please park your car on the street, just outside the parking lot. Meet at the Cambria Vets Hall at 9 a.m. Bring field guides, mushroom basket (you may want to collect some edible types) and water. Dress appropriately for the weather. Be prepared for poison oak. The hike will be easy, about a 3 hour stroll through the woods. For additional information call Dave Krause at 927-5182 or Mardi Niles at 489-9274.

Meetings

San Luis Obispo Chapter Meeting: Thursday, December 7, 2006, 7:00 p.m. The program, "Ooohs & Aaahs, the County's Incredible Places" given by David Chipping, is a show of the county's most beautiful places. Meet at the Veterans Hall on Grand Avenue, San Luis Obispo.

Annual Banquet: The Annual Banquet will be at the Fairways at Dairy Creek Golf Course, San Luis Obispo, on January 20, 2007. The announcement will be mailed in early January.

Jepson Herbarium Weekend Workshop Near San Luis Obispo

The Friends of the Jepson Herbarium are pleased to present a broad range of topics for this year's weekend workshop series. The following workshop will be held near San Luis Obispo. For a complete workshop schedule, or to register, please consult <<http://ucjeps.berkeley.edu/jepwkshp.html>> or phone Cynthia Perrine, Public Programs Coordinator at the Jepson Herbarium, (510) 643 – 7008. Unless otherwise specified, workshops are held at UC Berkeley.

April 20 – 22: *Chorizanthe* at Sedgewick Reserve, Jim Reveal leader.

The genus *Chorizanthe* Benth., found in the same subfamily as *Eriogonum* Michaux (*Eriogonoideae*), contains 50 species, nearly half of which are designated by CNPS as special status and/or uncommon. Distribution is



restricted to temperate western North America and southwestern South America. Although the genus has clear morphological characters, getting an individual keyed to the species level can be challenging. This workshop will also cover additional, closely related genera that make up the subfamily *Eriogonoideae* in *Polygonaceae*. The purpose of this workshop will be to (1) review the history of discoveries, (2) review the general morphology and taxonomically significant features of the plants, (3) illustrate the major taxonomic groups and species complexes, (4) discuss the ecological and habitat characteristics as well as the distribution of *Chorizanthe* and relatives in California and elsewhere, (5) work with commonly available and recently rewritten keys, and (6) have hands-on experience identifying various members of the group in the field and laboratory.

Docent Training at the San Luis Obispo Botanical Garden

Would you like to become Tour Docent and share your love and knowledge of native plants with children and/or adults? Are you interested in sparking interest in our local Botanical Garden and becoming an active participant in its growth? Well, the San Luis Obispo Botanical Garden invites members of CNPS to our upcoming Docent Training program in the spring of 2007. There will be training for both Adult Docents and Children's Docents

Adult Docent Training

These volunteers point out plants that provide food, shelter, medicine, and oxygen for humans and animals, as well providing a beautiful enhancement to our environment.

Docents guide visitor tours on Saturdays at the Garden for college classes and for a rapidly growing number of other outside groups. Tour topics include plant adaptations to our dry summers, how native peoples around the world use plants, why pollinators such as bees, butterflies, and birds are attracted to plants, and how attractive native plants can be grown in the home landscape. These tours are part of the Garden's growing education program, and they increase interest in the native plants of the Central Coast.

The next **Adult Docent** training session will be:
Saturdays - March 17, 24, 31, and April 7, 2007
from 9 a.m. to 11 a.m.

Please contact Ron Kindig for more information:
ronkindig@charter.net or 481-4451 (h).

Children's Docent Training

The San Luis Obispo Botanical Garden offers free educational field trips to school groups. There is a growing demand for these field trips from area schools and you can be part of sparking interest in plants and local ecosystems in young people. We currently offer K-8 grade level tours in some of the following topics for schools: Five Senses Tour, Discovery Tour, Plant Needs & Human Needs Tour, Pollination Tour, Plant Adaptation Tour, California Natives – Plants & People Tour and the World Ethnobotany Tour.

The next **Children's Docent** training sessions will be:
Saturdays - February 3, 10, 17, 24, 2007 from 9 a.m. to 12 noon.

Please contact Teresa Lees for more information:
education@slobg.org or 927-5922 (h).

Note: We would be interested in setting up a special training session too for folks from CNPS who want to give just the California Natives Tour at the Botanical Garden.

Visit our website, www.slobg.org, to learn more about our education programs and events and activities at the San Luis Obispo Botanical Garden.

Executive Board Members & Committee Chairs

President

Lauren Brown (805) 438-4645 brownla@saic.com

Vice President

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Recording Secretary

Linda Chipping (805) 528-0914 lindachipping@yahoo.com

Corresponding Secretary

David Chipping (805) 528-0914 dchipping@calpoly.edu

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David Krause (805) 927-5182 dkincmbria@aol.com

Membership

Eleanor Williams (805) 528-7202

Conservation

David Chipping (805) 528-0914 dchipping@calpoly.edu

Rare Plant Coordinator

John Chesnut (805) 528-0833 jchesnut@slonet.org

Invasive Plants Control

Lauren Brown (805) 438-4645 brownla@saic.com

Legislation

David Chipping (805) 528-0914 dchipping@calpoly.edu

Education

Susi Bernstein (805) 349-7180 susanne.bernstein@lfr.com

Historian

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Horticulture & Plant Sales

John Nowak (805) 464-0717 gritleys@sbcglobal.net

Publicity

Deb Dight (805) 462-3116 ddight@aol.com

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General Sales & Inventory

Heather Johnson (805) 528-0446

Book Publication

Jack Beigle (805) 773-2147 jbeigle@charter.net

Plant Sales

Karen Kawczynski (805) 481-0148

Poster Sales

Merril Lynn

Photography

Craig Cunningham (805) 466-1427

Newsletter Editor

Robert Hotaling (805) 238-6044 rhotaling@charter.net

Obispoensis is published October through June except January. Items for submittal to *Obispoensis* should be sent to rhotaling@charter.net. The deadline is the 10th of each month. Botanical articles, news items, illustrations, photos, events and tidbits are welcome!

Visit the websites:

www.cnps.org and www.slo-cnps.org

Field Trip to Sweet Springs & Shark Inlet



Lessingia filaginifolia



Shark Inlet – Salt Marsh



David Chipping points out evidence of the Paso Robles earthquake having changed the floor of the bay.



Coastal Scrub



Memorial Oak for Malcolm McLeod at Sweet Springs Preserve



Croton californicum



Lupinus chamissonis



Senecio sp.



Shark Inlet and Dunes



Shark Inlet at the southern end of Morro Bay in Montaña de Oro State Park. Viewing past destruction of the salt marsh habitat. Vegetation along the bay includes: *Sueda californica*, *Frankenia salina*, *Jaumea carnosa*, *Distichlia spicata*, *Salicornia virginica*, *Limonium californicum* and *Atriplex patula*. We counted twelve species of plants in bloom on this mid-October day.

Dedicated to the Preservation of the California Native Flora

The California Native Plant Society is a statewide non-profit 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 and conservation. Membership is open to all.

Membership includes the quarterly journal, *Fremontia*, the quarterly *Bulletin*, which gives statewide news and announcements of the Society activities and conservation issues, and the chapter newsletter, *Obispoensis*.



*San Luis Obispo Chapter
of the California Native
Plant Society*
P.O. Box 784
San Luis Obispo, CA 93406

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Books to Consider for Yourself & As Gifts

one of the new books you will find at our monthly meetings is *care and maintenance of southern california native plant gardens*. it is very well illustrated and among topics covered are soils, planting tips and pruning, pest management, watering and when to do it all, geared for native plants in your yard. and, it's in english and spanish.

there is also a wide variety of nature and california oriented books, many of them new uc press additions that will spark your interests. bring your holiday shopping list to our december meeting and select books, posters or t-shirts for friends and family.

