
Obispoensis

Newsletter of the San Luis Obispo Chapter of the California Native Plant Society



MAY 2011

About the Cover

Tidy-tips (*Layia platyglossa*)

The plant emphasized in this *Obispoensis* is one of our more common spring wildflowers. It can turn the hills a shade of yellow. When people talk of great wildflower displays, it is often this plant of which they are speaking. Its flowers are predominately yellow. The center is dark yellow to even orange while the bases of the petal-like structures are medium yellow. The tips are pale yellow to white. When in mass, they form medium-yellow patches as opposed to dark orange-yellow of goldfields (*Lasthenia*). It is the pale tips that give this plant its common name – tidy-tips (*Layia platyglossa*). It is a member of the sunflower family, Asteraceae or Compositae.

The name Compositae is an older, alternative name that has been conserved by the Rules of Botanical Nomenclature. It refers to a trait shared by nearly all members of this very large family of having its tiny flowers aggregated (composited) into flower-like clusters commonly called heads. The heads are made up of two types of flowers. In the center of the head is a tight, disk-like cluster of dark-yellow to orange flowers with their petals (corollas) formed into a tube. These flowers are called tube flowers based on this trait or disk flowers referring to their forming that tight disk in the center of the the head. However, it is the “petals” that surround the head that give us the common name. The “petals” are actually the modified corollas (petals) of the second type of flower, the ray flower. Ray flowers are so named, I assume, because they radiate out from the outer edge of the disk. The flat strap-shaped petal-like corolla is termed a ligule and is made up of three fused petals. The ligule in tidy-tips generally has a medium yellow base and pale yellow to white tip.

A second species of *Layia* is called white layia, because its pale tip extends all the way to the ligule base. White layias are common in the drier portion of our Chapter area. Dr. Robert Hoover recognized eight *Layia* species in the county. However, I'm only familiar with four of them: common, white, Munz's, and Jones's tidy-tips. How do you tell them apart? Well, white layia is the easiest to distinguish because its ligule is completely pale yellow to white. The other three species would all appear to be tidy-tips in a casual photograph. In order to distinguish these, one needs to get kind of technical. A hand lens would also prove to be useful, if not essential. The main character that distinguishes the species resides in the greenish, modified leaves immediately surrounding the heads. Leaves associated with flowers are called bracts. A tight whorl or spiral of bracts is called an *involucre*. In the Asteraceae, these involucre bracts are given the unique term phyllaries. The phyllary tips in common tidy-tips are "visibly hairy." In contrast, the phyllary tips in Jones's

and Munz's tidy-tips either lack hairs or have hairs so short as to appear absent (puberulent).

The common tidy-tips is by far the most widespread and is easily the one most encountered. It is especially partial to well drained, sandy or rocky soils and is found practically everywhere. In contrast, Munz's and Jones's tidy-tips are more localized and are partial to clay soils. Munz's or alkali tidy-tips is found in extremely alkali soils such as around Soda Lake on the Carrizo Plain. Jones's tidy-tips is partial to soils derived from serpentine. It is known from several locations in the San Luis Obispo area.



It must be added that tidy-tips are extremely variable in many characteristics such as presence of odor, red striping and sticky hairs on the stem and the shape of individual bracts. Members of the sunflower family do not have typical green sepals. Instead of being green, they can be absent or consist of dry scales, bristles or some combination of both. Because the sepals do not look like sepals, botanists give them another name. They are called pappus. The pappus found in the various species of tidy-tips runs the full spectrum of forms with some species such as the common tidy-tips which can possess either no pappus or a pappus of thick fuzzy bristles (awns). — Text by Dirk Walters, Illustration by Bonnie Walters

CONSERVATION

CNPS testified at the first Planning Commission hearing on the Topaz Solar Plant that we would prefer the plant to be moved as far to the northwest as possible into existing ploughed fields, giving better protection to grassland areas closer to California Valley and the National Monument. We are unfortunately getting opposition from agriculturalists who wish to keep the Williamson Act-protected plough land from being converted.

In the last newsletter I had asked for help from any certified herbicide applicators that could help us perform weed control in our vastly underfunded public lands. None were forthcoming, and so I will now ask for any people who might be willing to shovel, hoe and rake to protect native plants. I will be working with California State Parks as they have expressed a willingness to work with CNPS on this issue. Projects I have in mind are the protection of wildflower populations though veldt grass and long leaf ice plant control in the Butte Drive area of Montana de Oro and the Powell Addition to Morro Bay State Park. There is

CHAPTER MEETING

How Native Plants have become a priority for UCSB open space areas.

Lisa Stratton, the Director of Ecosystem Management for UCSB's Cheadle Center for Biodiversity and Ecological Restoration, will give a brief history of how the study and practice of ecological restoration has become a priority on campus. She will describe several projects and restoration strategies involving the creation of vernal pools, restoration of degraded annual grasslands to coastal sage scrub using fire, and protection of the rare *Centromadia parryi* var. *australis*. Lisa will also cover the integration of bioswales and other water quality improvement measures into the fabric of campus. Lisa received her PhD from the University of Hawaii-Manoa in 1998 and moved to UCSB in 2005 after working in restoration on Catalina Island for 6 years with her husband, Peter Schuyler and two children.

Thursday, May 5, 2011, 7:00 p.m. at the San Luis Obispo Veterans Hall, 801 Grand Avenue, San Luis Obispo.

A Big THANK YOU to members Bill Shearer, Mardi Niles, Susan Grimaud, Wendy Brown, and Bill and Connie Shepard for opening their gardens for the Native Plant Garden Tour. What a wonderful variety of gardens and they each were so pleasant and great fun to visit. Each owner-gardener has invested so much of themselves in these gardens and the results were incredibly beautiful. Thank you from all of us in the Chapter.

Welcome New Horticulture Committee Chair

For some time now, I've been talking to Laura Camp about chairing this committee to help CNPS move the program forward, and she has finally agreed! Laura brings vast practical and professional horticultural experience to the role of Committee Chair.

As you know, both Brett Hall and I as co-chairs have been over-extended with other CNPS responsibilities and are delighted that Laura has agreed to take on the leadership of this important program committee. Brett and I will remain actively involved in the development of the Horticulture program within CNPS and stay engaged with committee affairs under Laura's leadership.

Laura will be getting in touch with you about her plans for Committee work, and will be scheduling a call very soon.

Please join us in welcoming Laura as the new Committee Chair!



Tara Hansen
Executive Director
California Native Plant Society

A Warm Welcome to New Chapter Members
Steve and Marilyn Mullany

also cape ivy that can be raked out of the understory in Los Osos Oaks. I am sure some of you may have some other projects in mind. I will set up a field trip to take any interested people to look at these projects. Please contact me if you are interested in adopting some small patch in wildflowers and saving them for future generations.

State Senator Canella is proposing a bill (SB 241) that will essentially gut the California Environmental Policy Act. CNPS urges you to contact Senator Sam Blakeslee and ask him to withdraw any support he might have for this bill. Blakeslee was one of the five state Republicans who bravely broke away from the main Republican block to attempt a budget negotiation with Governor Brown, but unfortunately he brought some elements of this bill into the bargaining process. The bill is long and you should read it at: http://www.aroundthecapitol.com/Bills/SB_241/20112012/

The bill prohibits any comments on a project after the official close of comments from being considered by an agency, even if the project was changed. It severely restricts consideration of cumulative impact, massively raises the costs of appeals and eliminates the fair argument standard for preparing an EIR, a fundamental element in the creation of CEQA. It exempts many projects and weakens enforcement to an extreme degree. There is more. You can contact Senator Blakeslee via his web page http://cssrc.us/web/15/contact_me.aspx David Chipping

PRESIDENT'S NOTES

If you have not yet visited our Facebook page at <http://www.facebook.com/CNPSSLO>, please do as it shows recent photos of field trips, up to date flower locations and more. If you would like to post information, you can send it to me at dchippin@calpoly.edu.

We had two excellent early April field trips to Shell Creek and then to Chimineas Ranch with George Butterworth. Even though we lacked the lush windflower carpets of last year, there was plenty to see at both locations including interesting snakes and lizards. In spite of the heavy rains of March, the rains of late 2010 combined with the extended January drought to reduce the show this year, although we hope late flowering species such as *Clarkia* might do well. It seems you never can tell, and that is half the fun. Where you WILL have fun is at the Santa Margarita Lake picnic on May 1, so we hope to see you there.

Work has started on compiling photos of the flora of the Carrizo Plains, using the team that put together the wonderful San Luis Obispo book. If you have photos of sufficient detail of species that you suspect might be missed by the committee, please send them to me. We don't want scenery but if you have high quality images of an interesting plant we would like to see them. Don't be shy. David Chipping

Thank you to our Chapter Renewing Members
Kathryn Bay, Ray Bedford, George Butterworth, Darcee Guttilla, and Jeff Prostovich & Sharon Lovejoy.

Field Trips

Sunday, May 1. The collaborative Morro Coat Audubon Society and CNPS picnic at Santa Margarita. See April *Obispoensis* for events schedule, http://www.cnps.org/cnps/chapters/newsletters/Obispoensis_SanLuisObispo.pdf

**April 30 and May 1 - 7th Annual Cambria Wildflower Show
Sat. 12-5 pm, Sun. 10 am - 5 pm - Cambria Vets' Hall**

A display of over 400 fresh native wildflower, trees and shrubs species that are flowering at the this time, collected from the Monterey County line to the Morro Bay Estuary and from the coastal bluffs to the ridge of the Santa Lucia Mountains. Every flower is labeled with its botanical name and family, along with its common name. Trained collectors have permits and collect only from areas that have an abundance of each type of flower. The purpose of this show is to enhance the enjoyment of the area's native plants. CNPS has our full book table display set up during the event. Students of all ages FREE. All others, a \$3 donation at the door. Sponsored by Friends of the Fiscalini Ranch, 927-2856.

Saturday, May 7, 9:00 a.m., Bishop Peak including Felsman Loop. Come celebrate Mother's Day weekend with a walk through the plant communities that inhabit one of our most popular Morros, Bishop Peak. Total distance is 6 miles taking roughly 3.5 hours. Start on the north side passing through oak woodland and grasslands with views of the city to the north, then transition to the south side passing through a diverse and attractive chaparral landscape with views of Laguna Lake and the Irish Hills. Meet at the trailhead on the west side of Patricia Drive in San Luis Obispo, between Patricia Court and Anacapa Circle. Bring adequate water, snacks, and dress in layers for the weather; a hat and sturdy shoes are advised. For info, call Bill at (805) 459-2103, bill.waycott@gmail.com.

Saturday, May 14, 10:00 a.m., Re-scheduled field trip to the Tejon Ranch Conservancy for SLO-CNPS chapter members and friends. Tejon Ranch Conservancy, led by Mike White, conservation science director, is hosting a visit to the higher elevations within the 240,000 acre Tejon Ranch in the Tehachapi Range.

Traveling to the Tejon Ranch: It is about a three to three 1/2 hour drive from SLO to the Tejon Ranch taking Hwy 101, Hwy 166 and Hwy I-5. Specific traveling instructions will be emailed to registered participants during the week prior to the event, once the location has been determined.

To Register: Because SLO-CNPS has made special arrangements with the Tejon Ranch Conservancy, all participants must register prior to this event, which is limited to 25 people. Please contact Lynne Peterson, email: lynne1112@hotmail.com, or by phone: (805) 706-0301, for questions or to make your reservations. For additional information, contact Bill Waycott (SLO CNPS' new field trip chair), email: bill.waycott@gmail.com, or by phone: (805) 459-2103.

Saturday, May 21, 9:00 a.m., Guidetti Ranch led by Neil Havlik, Natural Resources Manager, City of SLO. This field trip for CNPS members is limited to twenty people, on a first come first served basis. This hike is 7 miles round trip and takes about 4 hours. We will meet at Foods For Less parking lot, at the corner of South Higuera and Suburban Road, near the US Bank building at 9 a.m., and then drive together to the Guidetti Ranch. We will be looking for the Indian Knob mountain balm, *Eriodictyon altissimum*, among other plants. Bring lunch, water, sun protection, dress in layers, and have good walking shoes. Be sure to bring your copy of *Wildflowers of San Luis Obispo, California*. Sign up by calling Bill Waycott at (805) 459-2103 or emailing him at: bill.waycott@gmail.com.

Jepson Herbarium Public Programs

The following workshops still have space. Register soon - they are filling quickly!

Rare Flora of the Santa Cruz Sandhills

May 6-8, 2011

Mimulus in Yosemite

May 20-22, 2011

Potentilla

July 15-17, 2011

Introduction to Plant Morphology

July 30-31, 2011

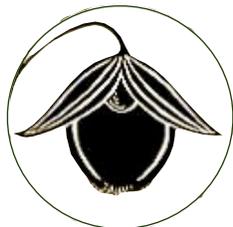
Aquatic Plants

August 13-14, 2011

Insect-induced Plant Galls of California

September 18, 2011

For more information, contact Jeanne Marie Acceturo (510) 643-7008, jmarie@berkeley.edu or visit our Web site: <http://ucjeps.berkeley.edu/workshops/>



Obispoensis is published October through June except January. Items for submittal to *Obispoensis* should be sent to rhotaling@charter.net.

The deadline for the June issue is May 10. Botanical articles, news items, illustrations, photos, events and tidbits are welcome!

Visit the websites www.cnps.org and www.cnps-slo.org

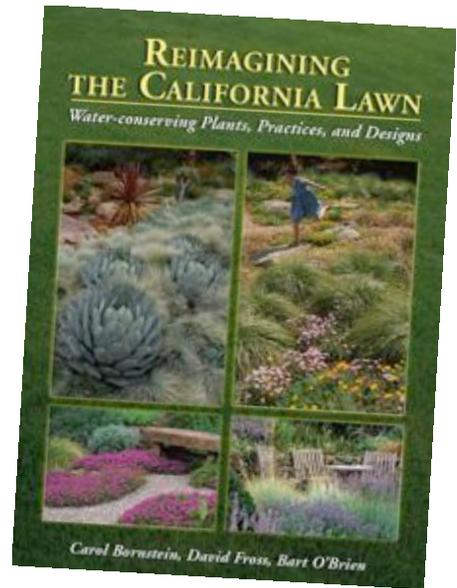
MAY BOOK NEWS

Reimagining The California Lawn by Carol Bornstein, David Fross and Bart O'Brien has arrived and it is just excellent reading. \$30.00. Matt Ritter's newest *A Californian's Guide To The Trees Among Us* has so much information, photography and poetry packed within the pages you will enjoy reading it again and again.

We've also added *Oaks of California, Eastern Sierra*, and Glenn Keator's *The Life Of An Oak* to our book table.

Be sure and join us at our May meeting at the SLO Vets Hall on May 5 and plan to visit the Cambria Wildflower Show on Saturday, April 30 and Sunday, May 1 for a truly stupendous wildflower display.

-Heather Johnson



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Please make your check payable to CNPS and mail to:
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P.O. Box 784
San Luis Obispo, CA 93406

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



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WILDFLOWER HOTLINES & WEBSITES

California Vernal Pools www.vernalpools.org
Links to guided tours of the Jepson Prairie, Mather Field,
Rancho Seco Howard Ranch, Santa Rosa Plateau & Vina
Plains Preserve.

Desert USA's Wildflower Watch
www.desertusa.com/wildflo/wildupdates.html
Updates on desert wildflowers in AZ, CA, NV, UT, & TX.

Antelope Valley California Poppy Preserve
www.parks.ca.gov takes you to State Parks home page, click
on "Find a Park" link.
661-724-1180 (recorded wildflower report)

Anza-Borrego Wildflower Hotline
760-767-4684—Recorded information
www.california-desert.org. Great information on weather and
timing for desert bloom.

Carrizo Plain National Monument
Goodwin Educational Center (some recorded info)
805-475-2131
Bakersfield BLM Field Office 661-391-6000 www.blm.gov/ca/st/en/fo/bakersfield/Programs/carrizo.html.

Death Valley National Park
760-786-2331—Press 1, then 5 for recorded wildflower
information.
<www.death.valley.national-park.com/info.htm#flo

Henry W. Coe State Park www.coepark.org

Jepson Prairie Preserve
Site operable from early March through Mother's Day.
www.solanolandtrust.org/o_1_jepsonPrairie.php

Joshua Tree National Park
760-367-5500—Press 1, then 9, for recorded wildflower
information. www.nps.gov/Jotr/index.htm

Kern County Wildflower Hotline
661-322-WILD—Reports beginning in March.
www.visitkern.com/wildflowers.asp

Mojave Desert
www.digital-desert.com/wild-flowers/

Pinnacles National Monument
Bear Gulch Visitor Center 831-389-4485 www.nps.gov/pinn

Point Reyes National Seashore
415-464-5100—Press 2 to talk to park ranger at
Bear Valley Visitor Center www.nps.gov/pore

Theodore Payne Foundation Wildflower Hotline
818-768-3533—Taped wildflower reports for Southern
California. Recording begins the first Friday in March,
updated every Thursday through May.
<www.theodorepayne.org/hotline.html includes links to
dozens of wildflower sites.