
Obispoensis

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



February 2017

Common (White) Yarrow (*Achillea millefolium*)

(Cover Photo: Dirk Walters)

The plant discussed in this issue of the *Obispoensis* is one that I've wanted to take on for a long time, but could never bring myself to ask Bonnie to draw. Since we are using photos to illustrate it by, I think it's time. One look at the leaves will indicate the reason for my reluctance. The leaves, which are up to four inches long and two inches wide, are divided two or three times into hundreds (thousands) of long, thin, needle-like segments which are weakly aromatic. The species epithet (*millefolium*) translates into 'thousand (mill) leaf (folia). The leaves spiral up the stem getting smaller higher up the stem. The flowers are small and clustered in heads which are themselves crowded into flat topped clusters. Most plants in the wild produce whitish flowers but occasionally one finds plants bearing yellowish or pinkish tinged flowers. These have been selected for deeper colors for use in the garden. There are many sites on the web that offer these 'colored' varieties for sale.

The species is extremely variable which would be expected by its essentially worldwide range. It's found throughout the Northern Hemisphere and just about everywhere in the Southern Hemisphere where humans have settled. A plant with such a wide a distribution as well as a strong correlation with human habitats would certainly be considered an introduced weed. I knew it in the roadsides and pastures of the Midwest, North East and in various weedy and native habitats here in California. So, where is it native? One can find any answer you want to believe on the Web. In fact, if I'd been asked where it was native before researching this article, I'd have said Eurasia. I found at least one web site that would have agreed with me. However, a majority of botanical sites as well as the Jepson Manual give its native range as "the entire Northern Hemisphere! So accepting it as a California native plant, where does it grow in California. Answer, practically everywhere there's they can get sufficient water. Yarrow is found from sea level to over 10,000 feet in a wide variety of habitats (including weedy ones) throughout that altitudinal range. One of the better local places to find it is in our coastal dunes where it can be found spreading across the base of dune slip faces. As such it serves as an important dune stabilizer. I should point out it is that because of its extreme variability common yarrow has had many scientific names applied to it, but recent thinking have reduced most of them to varieties.

The genus, *Achillea*, was applied to the plant by the Father of Taxonomic Botany, Linnaeus himself in the 1700's. He named it in Honor of the Greek hero, Achilles. Why did he name it after a non-botanical war hero who was killed in the Battle of Troy? Again if one should look up this plant on the Web, one would find lots and lots of sites that discuss its medicinal uses, many with warnings they are not guaranteeing its effectiveness. In the 17-hundreds yarrow was considered a panacea or a cure-all. The story goes that Achilles was charmed and no weapon could harm him. He'd the protection via his mother dipping him in the river Styx when he was a baby. The River Styx was the transport medium for souls to get to Hades (the land of the dead). However his mother was afraid he would drown if she let go of him completely; so she held him by his heel which therefore did NOT come in contact with waters granting protection. So at Troy, Achilles was killed by a poison arrow which nicked his unprotected heel. Why bring up Achilles Heel? According to the story told by my major Professor, no modern Pharmacopeia (an official list of medicinal plants) contains yarrow. I.e. after extensive testing, experts have determined that yarrow has NO medicinal value. That *Achillea millefolium* has no medicinal value "is in fact yarrow's Achilles heel".

Dr. Dirk Walters (drwalters@charter.net)

SOME REALLY SILLY? PAST YARROW USES

Editor

- Put it under your pillow and you will dream a vision of your future spouse;
- Snort it as snuff;
- Stick it up your nose to either (a) stop a nose bleed, or (b) to start a nose bleed to let blood out of your head to relieve a headache;
- Stick it in the other end and it stops your piles from bleeding;
- Use it as a shampoo and it will prevent baldness;
- Use it in Devil Worship... it was once called 'The Devil's Nettle';

and maybe not so silly... it was a salad ingredient in the 17th Century, and was mixed with hops to make a more potent beer in Sweden and parts of Africa. Now your'e talking.

(Source: Botanical.com)

Obispoensis is published October through June except January. Items for submittal to *Obispoensis* should be sent to dchippin@calpoly.edu. 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.cnpslo.org

Volunteer at The Hoover Herbarium

Dr. Jen Yost

During the volunteer sessions at the Hoover Herbarium, people can take part in any number of activities. One of our primary responsibilities is mounting new specimens. This involves taking dried and pressed plants and glueing them to paper. When we mount plants, we do it in such a way that those specimens will last for hundreds of years. Each specimen is a physical record of what plants occurred where and when. Without this valuable information we wouldn't know when a species goes extinct, expands or contracts its range, or where species occur. After mounting the specimens are databased and geo-referenced. Then they are filed into the main collection. We have over 80,000 specimens at the Hoover Herbarium. We are also working on a SLO Voucher Collection, which will contain one representative specimen for each species in the county. Volunteers look through our specimens and pick the one that should be added to the Voucher Collection. Additionally, we are actively working on our moss and lichen collections. Volunteers can choose what aspects of the work they would like to participate in. Any and everyone is welcome. **The Hoover Herbarium is located on the 3rd floor of the Fisher Science Building (33) in rooms 352 and 359.**

Parking permits are required Monday through Thursday, 7:00 am through 10:00 pm; and Friday, 7:00 am through 5:00 pm. You can either buy a \$6 day pass, a \$4 3-hr pass, park in a metered space, or park off campus and walk in. I can pay for metered parking, but you'll want to arrange that with me first. Questions: email Jenn Yost at jyost@calpoly.edu



Working, learning, and having fun in the Hoover Herbarium: Jen Yost



A herbarium plant sheet, a important archive of our local flora: Jen Yost

Editor's Note: Readers of the paper version of *Obispoensis* will miss the color photos that you can see in our downloadable web site version.

Hoover Herbarium update and times Winter 2017

Dr. Jen Yost

Thank you again to everyone who made 2016 a huge success in the herbarium. Here is some important info about the herbarium this quarter:

The times this quarter are Thursdays 3 - 5 pm and Fridays 12 -2 pm. I now have the ability to pay for metered parking so please let me know if you'd like to use that option.

Dr. Paul Wilson is guiding us on a moss collecting hike on Feb. 11th and will be talking with us in the herbarium on Feb 10th during the volunteer session. (see field trips section)

Last quarter, we mounted almost 1,000 new specimens. That was really incredible and thank you to everyone who helped manage the large number of students who were in there! We also finished cataloging the Herbarium Library, and boy did we find some treasures. We are still in the process of refiling all the books. Cathy and Jason are making progress on our lichens and mosses.

The SLO Voucher Flora Project is still happening and we are chipping away at that. All of our records can be searched here:
Plants: <http://nansh.org/portal/>
Mosses: <http://bryophyteportal.org/portal/>
Lichens: <http://lichenportal.org/portal/>

In other big news, our newest Botany faculty member, Dr. Dena Grossenbacher, has arrived to Cal Poly. She starts this quarter. She studies *Mimulus* and *Clarkia*, among other wonderful plants. I'm sure you will all meet her at some point this quarter.

Cal Poly Seminar Open To Public

Dr. Susan Mazer of UCSB on Feb 10th, 11 -12 am in the Biology Department Museum. Fisher Science 33-285. Dr. Mazer will be presenting a talk called "**Sexual Selection and the Evolution of Pollen Performance in Selfing vs. Outcrossing Plants: a Case Study in *Clarkia* (Farewell-to-Spring)**"

CHAPTER MEETING

Feb 2 2017- Thursday - 7pm

Visions for the Future of a North American Mycoflora: Christian Schwarz

Christian Schwarz is a mushroom enthusiast and taxonomist and citizen science advocate from Santa Cruz, the land of milk (caps) and honey (mushrooms). He studied at UCSC, and now spends his time photographing, teaching about, and making scientific collections of macrofungi. He is coauthor of "Mushrooms of the Redwood Coast", and is slowly building a mycoflora for Santa Cruz County. He also writes a blog called Notes of a Mycophile (www.christianschwarz.com). Fungi satisfy his curiosity with their seemingly endless forms (from the grotesque to the bizarre to the sublime). He has travelled in search of fungi throughout the United States, as well as central America, Indonesia, Borneo, and Europe. Besides mushroom taxonomy and mycofloristics, he's an excitable birder and passionate about citizen science, particularly the use of iNaturalist and similar tools.

Christian states: "We are riding the early stages of a wave of change in the way taxonomy and floristics are done. I'll be talking about the de-professionalization of taxonomy, open-access publishing, citizen science, and more."



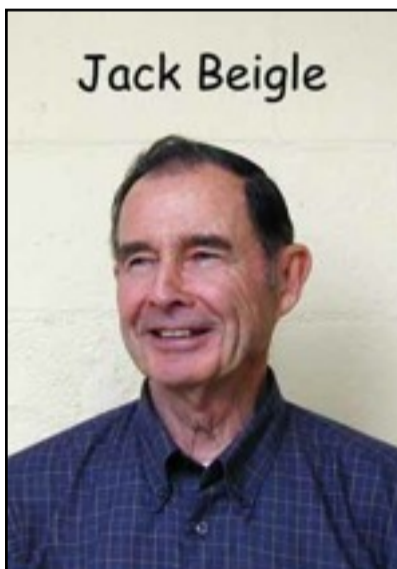
Christian Schwarz

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IN MEMORIAM: "JACK" BEIGLE

Many members of our chapter will remember with a smile the work done by Jack and his wife Grace in supporting our chapter and for his work in association with Kathleen Jones (the Dune Mother) in the protection of the south county dune system. Jack also played a major role in a pampas grass eradication program, and helped bring the very first conference of the just formed California Exotic Plant Council (now CalIPC) to Morro Bay. He was a State Park Docent, particularly at the Oceano Dunes Center and Butterfly Preserve. Jack died in December in Pacific Grove, and is survived by his wife, Grace and children.



MEMBERSHIP CORNER

A very Happy New Year to all of our members! A number of you made us especially happy by joining the chapter or renewing your memberships last month. A big thanks to all of the following:

Jane Alderman	Susan McIntyre
Pamela Bonner	Julie Merrill
Susan Brooks	Nancy Mosunich
Nancy Chromy	Paula Motto
Margaret Crockett	Maria Page
Nita Fishburn	Janet & Ian Plested
Cynthia Fogarty	Steve Roehrenback
Cynthia Gaulin	John Schmitz
Carol Harlow	Cate Uccel
Timothy Kershaw	William Van Beurden
Sally Krenn	Jenn Yost
Stephan Lamb	

Of course, whether this year turns out to be a good year or not depends in large part on what we make of it. We hope that you'll make time to get out and rejoice in what may be a splendid wildflower year as a result of the recent rains. Join us for a field trip or just head out on your own. Or stretch your brain by taking a class on our local flora by the esteemed Dr. Keil or attending one of our monthly lectures. Resolve to make a difference in the future of our signature oak woodlands by writing a letter or speaking out in support of a protective county ordinance. Let's make 2017 a memorable year.

Holly Sletland (hslettel@calpoly.edu)

CNPS Workshops and Professional Training

The Plant Science Training Program specializes in providing workshops for professional botanists, biologists, and ecologists to teach the skills and provide the tools and resources for conducting sound scientific surveys for rare plants, rare plant communities, vegetation, and wetlands. Discounted registration fees are offered to CNPS Members.

- Mar 1-3 Vegetation Mapping: Location: Redlands. Instructors: Julie Evens, John Menke, Todd Keeler-Wolf
 - April 4-6 Introduction to Plant Identification - Part II: Location: Auburn. Instructor: Josie Crawford
 - Apr 18-20 Introduction to Plant Identification - Southern CA: Location: Frazier Park & Tejon Ranch. Instructors: Nick Jensen
 - **May 2-4 San Luis Obispo County Flora: Location: San Luis Obispo County. Instructor: David Keil**
 - May 17-19 Introduction to Plant Identification - Part I: Location: Berkeley. Instructor: Josie Crawford
 - Jun 7-8 Rare Plant Survey Protocols: Location: Redding, CA & Hog Lake, near Red Bluff, CA. Instructors: Heath Bartosh, Aaron Sims
 - Oct 3-5 Vegetation Rapid Assessment/Relevé: Location: Bodega Bay. Instructors: Jennifer Buck-Diaz and Anne Klein
 - Date TBA Wetland/Riparian Plant Identification
 - Date TBA CEQA Impact Assessment
- REGISTRATION:** <http://www.cnps.org/cnps/education/workshops/>

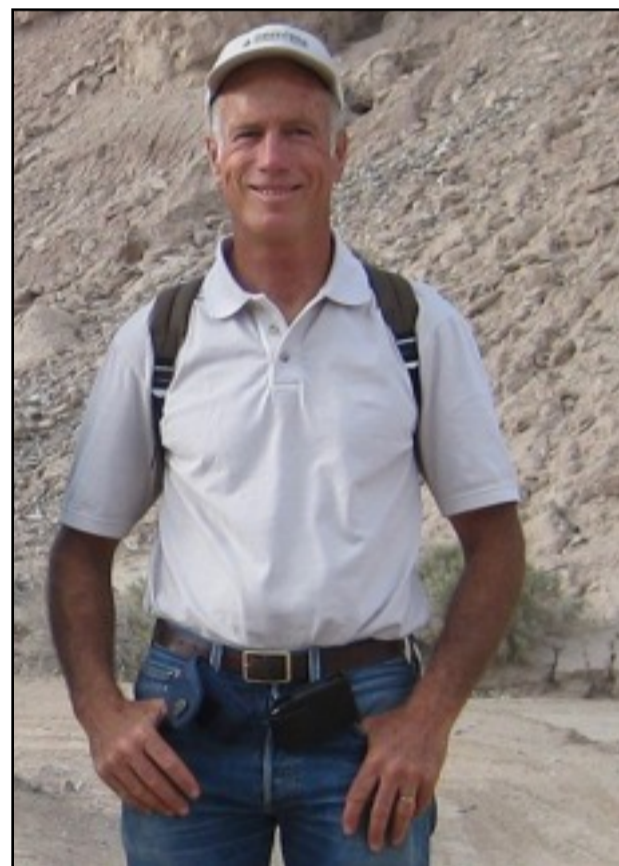
2017 HOOVER AWARDEE BILL WAYCOTT

Teachers are supposed to inspire their students. I am sure they do. But sometimes students also inspire their teachers. As a Teaching Assistant at UC Santa Barbara in 1970, one of my students was Bill Waycott. Bill loved plants, loved the field trips, loved the plant ID. He became very enthusiastic about California flora and developed an abiding interest of it. In 1971 we went our separate ways, and seldom saw or heard from each other. But I always remembered his interest and enthusiasm.

In 1996 I became the Natural Resources Manager for the City of San Luis Obispo. Imagine my surprise and delight when my wife (who had also been one of my students) told me that she had met Bill at her work, that he lived in town and was married (to Diana, yet another of my students) with two daughters. We hooked up again.

Bill's work had him traveling a lot, so he only belatedly got back into native plants; that old interest and enthusiasm was still there. Eventually, he became more and more active in the SLO Chapter of CNPS. In 2011, when the Field Trip board position became vacant, Bill saw an opportunity to participate more fully. He soon became the Field Trip Chair and continues in that capacity today. In addition to organizing our many field trips, he is often the trip leader. It is a position that lead to his interest in furthering CNPS outreach and building connections with other like minded groups. This includes co-sponsored field trips as well as opportunities to host educational tables at activities, such as with the Central Coast Concerned Mountain Bikers.

Bill has brought a new enthusiasm to the chapter. Along with long-time CNPS member John Chesnut, he brought the state Rare Plant Treasure Hunt, a citizen-science program, to San Luis Obispo county. He has participated in many rare plant hunts statewide, and was recognized for attending the most outings in 2014.



In 2015, Bill was elected President of our local chapter. In that capacity, Bill continues to expand outreach opportunities for the chapter. Coordinating with the City of San Luis Obispo, CNPS has partnered to restore the native flora along San Luis Creek in Mission Plaza. During these drought years, he has arranged participation in KCBX radio programs to inform the public about drought tolerant native plants for the yard. Like many of our members, he has a great interest in collecting seed and growing native plants. He has grown plants and provided them for the annual plant sale, and for use at our many booth opportunities during the years. He was unanimously reelected chapter President in 2016.

Bill has also extended his interest and commitment to CNPS to the state organization. He was elected a Chapter Council representative to the State Board, and recently assumed the position of Vice President.

Yes, students can and do inspire their teachers. Bill has inspired all of us over the years. It is with great honor and pride that we recognize his services and accomplishments for us as our most recent winner of the Robert F. Hoover Award.

Neil Havlik



Saturday, Feb. 11, 10 am Join A Cal Poly Bryophyte Walk. Dr. Paul Wilson will lead a “Moss Walk” on Saturday, Feb. 11 at 10 AM. Please meet at the entrance to Poly Canyon (Intersection of Village Dr. and Poly Canyon Rd. 35.304389, -120.658476) The easiest parking may be Lot K1. Parking is not enforced on campus so parking in any general lot will do. Bring a hand lens. It will be an easy walk of 1 to 2 miles taking a couple of hours. Bring a lunch and water. After lunch we will join Dr. Wilson in the Plant Taxonomy Laboratory to view some of the specimens under microscopes.

Sunday, Feb. 26th, 9:00 am, Plants on the dunes at Montaña de Oro State Park. Join us for a plant ID walk through the coastal habitat at MDO, including the fore and back-dunes, coastal scrub and maritime chaparral communities. Learn the easy to identify species along the trail. Meet at the Sand Spit Road parking lot, located at the end of Sand Spit Rd. in MDO St. Park. Make sure to bring water and snacks. Sturdy shoes, sunscreen, hats, and jackets are recommended. No RSVP needed. Also bring paper and pencil to take notes, and a camera for a photo record. If you want a preprinted copy of the plant list for MDO St Park, let the hike leader know 24 hours in advance via e-mail or phone. This is a moderate hike, with an elevation gain of 300 ft., a 2.5-mile roundtrip, maximum of 2.5 hours. For more information, contact Bill Waycott, (805) 459-2103, bill.waycott@gmail.com. Rain cancels.

President's Notes – Feb 2017

I attended two state-level meetings last month in Berkeley, CA and want to briefly share some of the details with you. The CNPS State Board meeting was held Friday afternoon (Dec. 2nd 2016) and the State Chapter Council meeting was held Saturday and Sunday morning (Dec. 3rd and 4th 2016). I think it is important that we know this organization has a state-level work force that has its finger on the pulse of vital plant conservation, government oversight, and public engagement issues. For an overview of what CNPS does statewide, please refer to the CNPS Strategic Plan (go to cnps.org and type in CNPS 2016-2021 Strategic Plan, then scroll down to find the file).

At the Board Meeting, we heard the reports on a myriad of topics: Finances, Budget, Audits, Membership, Fund Raising, Planned Giving, Strategic Planning, Botanist Certification, Landscape Professional Certification, Phytophthora Control, Calscape Website Review, Plant Conservation, Books, Board Responsibilities, Elections, Litigations, and Fellows Recognitions.

At the Chapter Council Meeting, we heard about Alliances and Leadership, a CEQA Overview, Engagement on the Local Level, and Working with a Dedicated Volunteer Base. We heard a report on work done by the UC Berkeley Botanical Garden to restore several rare plant populations around the SF Bay Area. There were also breakout sessions on Education, Membership, and Logistics. Saturday evening's banquet speaker was Jim Shevock, on The First Land Plants: the diversity and distribution of Bryophytes in California.

The next State-level meeting is scheduled for March 10th to 12th 2017 in Santa Barbara Co. Included in the meeting is an all-day field trip to Santa Cruz Island on Sunday the 12th. I would encourage anyone interested in attending this meeting to contact me for more details (bill.waycott@gmail.com).

CNPS is a non-profit organization with complete transparency. At the local level, our bi-monthly Board meetings are open to all members. Please participate. **Bill Waycott**

Conservation: Oaks, Oil, and Trailheads

David Chipping (dchippin@calpoly.edu)

Oak Ordinance: CNPS has met with SLO County Planning staff and with U.C. Extension in regard to developing a permanent oak ordinance. We have argued for total protection of valley oak, and for a concentration in controlling oak clearances for alternative agricultural land uses among other things. The language of the preliminary oak ordinance posted on the county web site has been withdrawn by staff and we have not seen an updated version yet. Whatever staff develops, it will be before the Planning Commission on February 23rd. Please aim on being there as the new Board of Supervisors and their Commission appointments may be more hostile to any protections whatsoever.

BLM New Regulations on Oil Extraction. BLM has come up with new regulations that facilitate oil drilling on their lands, but I am happy to say the SLO County is not included.

Los Padres National Forest has raised its fees at trailheads and campgrounds, ceding management to a private for-profit company. Los Padres Natxh has listed the new fee structure at <http://lpfw.org/52-los-padres-recreation-sites-now-under-private-for-profit-management/>

Invasive Species of the Month
Sahara Mustard (*Brassica tournefortii*)

Sahara mustard is annual from the Mediterranean and has been spreading rapidly into coastal San Luis Obispo County. It is in Los Osos, Grover Beach, Oceano, the Nipomo Mesa and the Santa Maria River. Sahara Mustard first appeared in North America in 1927 in Coachella Valley and has spread throughout the Sonoran Desert. It grows in disturbed areas: mainly roadsides, dirt roads and construction sites. Locally it has spread from sticky seeds on pick-up truck tires, construction equipment, rodents and from wind. One of the awful qualities about this weed is that it out-competes native plants, especially annuals, simply because it grows very densely.

The 3 to 12 inch deeply lobed leaves exist as a rosette which is low, only several inches above the ground. The small, pale yellow flower stalks may reach 4 feet and produce zillions of seeds (actually up to 9,000 seeds) that are viable for more than 3 years.

Controlling Sahara mustard may be done by hand pulling. It is easier to pull than Black mustard. Sahara mustard is prolific and annoyingly often grows amongst tree and shrub plantings: pulling is the only option in this instance. It is best to pull when they are emerging. Once seed pods develop, the plant will set seed after it has been pulled, so it should be removed from the site. When away from native plants monotypic Sahara mustard may be sprayed with Telar, Milestone, Garlon 3A or Transline (they are all broad leaf herbicides). Grazing is not a good idea because there are toxic compounds in the seeds.

Mark Skinner (mskinner@coastalrcd.org)



(above) The pale yellow flower, with 4-7 mm petals, and siliques, growing to 3-7 cm long (David Chipping)
(below) Basal rosette (David Chipping)

MARLIN HARMS DOES A MIND WALK FOR CENTRAL COAST PARK ASSOCIATION

On Feb 13, 10:15 AM Marlin Harms will present “**The Unique Flora of the Central Coast,**” a tour of SLO County's wildflowers that will include noteworthy photos as well as some life history features of both familiar wildflowers plus less well-known endemic and endangered species. He will offer some locations to see wildflowers, some of which may be new to those who aren't ardent CNPS field trippers. Part of a Mind Walk series, Morro Bay Veteran's Hall, 209 Surf St., Morro Bay. Free to Cent. Coast State Parks Assoc. Members, \$3 for others.

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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*.



San Luis Obispo Chapter of the
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