
Obispoensis

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



***Monolopia lanceolata* A. Gray**
hillside daisy



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MARCH 2012

Monolopia lanceolata –
Common Monolopia, Hillside Daisy, Common False Turtleback
With nod to *Monolopia congdonii*

The drawing on the cover was done for an Obispoensis cover by Bonnie back in 1993. It is on one of our wildflowers that may make an appearance in the eastern portion of our Chapter area. It is extremely common on the Carrizo Plain where it can turn hillsides a bright yellow in good years. A site on the internet reported that 2005 and 2011 were particularly good years. It can also be found on the tops of small rises and mounds. I have not seen the plant at Shell Creek, but I know it to be present in road cuts just a few miles to the east. The species is mostly restricted to Southern California interior coastal ranges and the Mohave Desert. It is listed as inhabiting grasslands and openings in foothill woodland and chaparral. In our area it definitely prefers to grow where vegetation is sparse. This is probably why it is particularly showy on south and west facing slopes in the Temblors.

The plant is *Monolopia lanceolata*. It is one of our many yellow-flowered members of the sunflower family or Asteraceae (Compositae). I've always called the plant by the common name, hillside daisy, but it appears that there are two new common names spreading through the literature. These are "common monolopia" and "common false turtleback." The second name (common monolopia) alludes to the fact it is the very widespread and tends to form huge colonies where it does grow. The problem with a plant like hillside daisy is that, although it is very common, there is hardly any thing written about it other than barebones taxonomic and ecological data. This makes writing anything about it rather difficult.

Now, enter a third common name, "common false turtleback." This one is totally new to me. The true turtlebacks are in the genus in the sunflower family, Psathyrotes. According to the literature, the two species in the genus Psathyrotes are found throughout much of the desert southwest. One species, *P. ramosissima*, is clearly the model for the turtleback name. It is a low shrub that forms a gray mound which, in the drawings and photos, clearly resembles the back of a gray turtle. The problem, at first glance, resides in the flowers. The largish yellow flowers of the hillside daisy just don't resemble the smallish, inconspicuous flowers of the true turtlebacks. Turtleback ray flowers lack the showy, flat ligules found in most species of *Monolopia*. Back in 1993, *The Jepson Manual* had four species in the genus *Monolopia*. The new *Jepson Manual* has five due to the transfer of a species from the genus *Lembertia*. The new addition is a rare plant known as San Joaquin woolly threads or Congdon's woolly threads and is a federally listed rare plant, *Monolopia (Lembertia) congdonii*. This species is found in a very few scattered locations on the Carrizo Plain and has been more or less removed from the rest of its historical range. It has very small, inconspicuous heads that superficially resemble the heads in the true turtlebacks. Non-flowering monolopias and the turtlebacks are similar. Both have gray stems and foliage. Both produce heads surrounded with prominent gray bracts. A gray-scale photo of *M. congdonii* is appended below.

Dirk Walters, illustration by Bonnie Walters



PRESIDENT'S NOTES

After our February show of wildflowers seen on favorite field trips in San Luis Obispo, we are coming to the AARP Center, adjacent to the Atascadero Lake Pavilion, for our annual North County meeting and some seriously good botany. This is an opportunity for those of you who don't normally like to drive over the grade at night to hear our excellent speaker, look at our impressive book table and mix and mingle with other native plant fans. The Meeting is March 1, social at 7:00 p.m., program at 7:30. Ryan O'Dell will speak on the serpentine floras of California. (see details elsewhere in this newsletter). To reach the venue, take Highway 41-West to Charles Paddock Zoo, turn SE (left) onto Santa Rosa and then left on Avenal. AARP is a long single story building close to the Avenal/Pismo Avenue intersection.

In our desire to create more activities north of the grade, we are interested in contacting any people who would like to offer suggestions for field trips, garden tours, restoration projects and more. CNPS hopes to work closely with the Atascadero Land Preservation Society, and they might give a short presentation at our meeting. We are also considering activities such as a conference/workshop on ethnobotany, extending our evening meetings to have plant-ID workshops before the main meeting, and we welcome other ideas. David Chipping

CONSERVATION

The Chapter Board approved a strong letter of support to a granting agency that might fund dune scrub restoration at Audubon's Sweet Springs Marsh. This mainly addressed restoration of upland habitats on the new east-side extension.

We are continuing to work with State Parks to try to increase weed control around Shark Inlet, and are hopeful for an attack by NRCS on Cape ivy in the wetland restoration area of Chorro Flats adjacent to Morro Bay State Park. In Los Osos Oaks, a small *Clarkia* population was being buried in veldt grass, which is being removed by hand. We are requesting that members with easily-portable GPS take the coordinates of any unusual plants they see, so that they can be relocated. This is especially important in an era of global warming when invasions of non-native species can be expected. David Chipping



Shark Inlet, Morro Bay

Chapter Meeting

Thursday, 7:00 p.m., March 1, 2012, AARP Center, adjacent to the Atascadero Lake Pavilion, Atascadero (see President's Notes for directions).

The speaker is Ryan O'Dell, a Natural Resources Specialist (Botany/Soils/Paleontology) with the Bureau of Land Management in Hollister, California. He has a BS in Plant Biology and an MS in Soils and Biogeochemistry from UC Davis. Ryan has been studying the serpentine ecology of California since 2000. His areas of interest in the field of serpentine ecology are plant tolerance, revegetation, and endangered plant species recovery.

Title: Serpentine Flora of California

Summary: California contains approximately 2,300 square miles of ultramafic rock (dunite, peridotite, and serpentinite), collectively called serpentine. Geologically, serpentine is oceanic crust and mantle which has been tectonically emplaced on land. Serpentine soils are extremely stressful for plant growth due to their adverse chemistry including low nutrient levels (nitrogen, phosphorus, potassium, calcium) and high heavy metal content (magnesium, nickel, chromium). The complex interaction of serpentine soils, topography, and microclimate in California has resulted in the evolution of unique serpentine tolerant flora and a high diversity of serpentine endemic plant species. Vegetative cover on serpentine varies from moonscape barrens to grassland to chaparral to conifer forest. California has one of the highest proportions of serpentine endemic plant species in the world. 669 plant species are classified as strongly associated with serpentine in California. Of those, 164 species are rated as strict serpentine endemics. This presentation will highlight the fascinating serpentine flora and serpentine endemic plant species from several localities distributed throughout California.

A Warm Welcome to New Chapter Members

David Giorgi, Cynthia Perrine and Tiffany Whitsitt. Thank you to Chapter members that have renewed: Atascadero Native Tree Association, Allison Goers, Joan O'Keefe and Diana & Bill Waycott.

What's New? Coming in May

The chapter is planning to have a plant ID "mini-workshop" from 6:00-7:00 p.m. before the May 3 general meeting. More details about it will be available in the April newsletter and on-line at our web site. Ideas or suggestions? Contact us at our web site.

Linda Chipping

Dr. Dirk Walters

Fellow of the California Native Plant Society



CNPS presents the Fellow award once a year as a means of awarding special recognition to persons who have made an outstanding contribution to furthering appreciation and conservation of California native flora and to the success of the Society. On the recommendation of the Board of Directors of CNPS, the Chapter Council has elected Dr. Dirk Walters to be made a Fellow of the California Native Plant Society.

Dirk Walters has been active in the conservation of native plants since his arrival in California in the late 1960s, where he joined and became an active member of the newly formed San Luis Obispo Chapter serving in leadership positions on both the Chapter and State level.

Dirk has blended his position as a Professor of Botany at Cal Poly San Luis Obispo with the interests of CNPS by arranging for Chapter meetings on campus and encouraging student membership.

He has performed botanical monitoring on behalf of CNPS's conservation program and has influenced planning at the Hearst Ranch and other locations in San Luis Obispo County. In the early 1980's Dirk, along with his wife Bonnie, undertook the work of monitoring the threatened and endangered Nipomo lupine, publishing "The Natural History of the Nipomo Lupine (*Lupinus nipomensis* Eastwood)" in the journal *Crossoma*.

Educating, hiking, teaching, plant-selling, writing, and advocating appreciation of native plants by the public are all activities Dirk is accomplished at. He has lead numerous field trips and produced many plant lists for different areas of San Luis Obispo County, has authored, co-authored, and contributed to academic and local publications including *Vascular Plant Taxonomy* and *Wildflowers of San Luis Obispo, California*. For many years has set up and staffed CNPS booths at community events and actively promoted CNPS with other conservation organizations that he is involved with.

Community Recognition Award

The Community Recognition Award was presented to Susan Grimaud at the Annual Banquet for her work at Pismo State Beach, Oceano Campground Native Plant Garden, and North Beach Monarch Butterfly Grove.

The inscription reads, "With great appreciation of your dedication, knowledge and service in creating a California Native Plant Garden in the San Luis Obispo south county dunes area. Your extensive knowledge of, and gardening with, California native plants has enriched our community and visitors. Your contribution as Co-Chair, gardener, plant propagator, and garden tour leader has significantly enhanced the educational component of the California Native Plant Society."

Pismo Clarkia - *Clarkia speciosa* ssp. *immaculata*
by Mardi Niles, which graces Susan's plaque



Field Trips

Saturday, March 17, 8:45 a.m., Tejon Ranch Conservancy in Kern County. The Tejon Ranch Conservancy has invited us back to the Ranch for what we hope will be an outstanding spring bloom! We'll have a field trip March 17 to Comanche Point/Tejon Hills (600'-1,200' elevation). Comanche Point and the Tejon Hills are notable for supporting a number of special status plant species and the area burned in the Comanche fire in September 2011. This will be a joint field trip with the Kern County Chapter of CNPS.

Be sure to bring lunch, water, hat, sunblock, layers of clothing, and wear sturdy boots. Please bring a 4WD vehicle if you have one. Pets and smoking are not allowed on Tejon Ranch. There are no restroom facilities in this area of the Ranch. Please be there at 8:45 am.

From San Luis Obispo, take Hwy 166 to Hwy 99 and go north. Take the David Road exit east to North Wheeler Ridge Road, turn north to Herring Road and go east. Herring Road dead ends into Comanche Point Road and follow it around to the Tejon Ranch gate.

Anyone planning to join this field trip to the Tejon Ranch must have their name placed on a list of participants in advance. Please contact Bill Waycott (bill.waycott@gmail.com, (805) 459-2103) prior to March 17 to be included in the visit. Thank you very much.

Sunday, 18 March, 2012, 2-4 p.m. LVBHS Program at Lompoc Methodist Church.

Jean Wheeler will present a program The Mediterranean Vegetation and Wildlife in Western Australia. Ms Wheeler is a retired geography professor from Long Beach State, with a particular interest in biogeography. Her studies have included the Pacific Islands as well as Australia. She has led several bicycle tours there, and will be leading one in the fall of 2012. Most Australians comment that she's seen more of their country than they have! The public is invited at no charge. For details, contact Mimi Erland, 733-2323 or Charlie Blair 733-3189

Sunday, 25 March, 2012, Annual Hike to Coreopsis Hill led by Lauren Brown, Dirk Walters, and other local botanists.

If you are in the SLO area or points north, we will meet at 8:30 AM at the SLO Vets Hall then head south (see directions below). The hike will begin about 9:30 am at Beigle Road and will be a casual walk through the dunes to the top of Coreopsis Hill. This is a moderate hike, about 3 hours round-trip. Dress in layers, bring water and snacks, and have your "Dune Mother's Wildflower Guide" by Dr. Malcolm McLeod for the trip. For more information contact Lauren Brown at 570-7993 or lbrown805@charter.net. Heavy rain cancels this trip (light rain, bring appropriate clothing).

Directions from the north: Take Hwy 101 south from SLO. Turn right onto Hwy 1 at Pismo Beach. Continue southward to Oso Flaco Lake Road, turn right and proceed to Beigle Road (look for a chain link fence and gate). We will have people posted if we can park along the fenced road. If not, Please park along Oso Flaco Lake Road near the entry to the Oso Flaco

Lake State Park lot or in the lot (there is a parking fee). We can walk or shuttle from the parking lot. (Parking near Beigle Road is hazardous, so please park in a safe place closer to the State Park lot.)

Directions from the south: Take 101 north to Santa Maria and take the Main Street exit toward the town of Guadalupe. Turn right onto Highway 1 and head north to Oso Flaco Lake Road (about 3 miles north of Guadalupe), turn left onto Oso Flaco Lake Road and proceed to Beigle Road or the State Park Lot.

Saturday, 31 March, 2012, 9 a.m., CNPS and Sierra Club Spring La Purisima Burton Mesa Wildflower Walk. Meet at the La Purisima Mission Parking Lot, corner of Purisima and Mission Gate Roads (2295 Purisima Road, Lompoc) at 9 a.m. for this annual California Native Plant Society and Sierra Club spring tour of the beauties of the Burton Mesa Chaparral. This is turning out to be a fair year for wildflowers, annuals as well as shrubs. Optional afternoon tour. Sturdy shoes, lunch & liquids, camera and binoculars advised. For more information, call Charlie at 733-3189 or Connie at 735-2292.

Saturday, 7 April, 2012, Malcolm McLeod Annual

Field Trip Meeting to Shell Creek co-lead by Dirk Walters and David Chipping. This will be our monthly meeting for April. Meet at the SLO Vets Hall, 801 Grand Ave. (corner of Grand & Monterey Blvd) at 8:30 a.m. and/or Santa Margarita at 9:00 a.m. Bring your "Wildflowers of Highway 58" plant guide by Dr. Malcolm McLeod or plan to purchase one for \$10 on the trip. For more information call Dirk Walters at 543-7051 or Lauren Brown at 438-4645

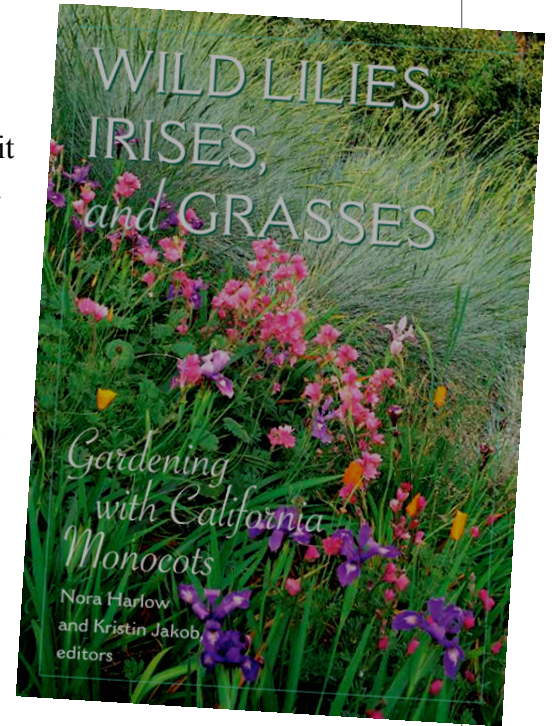
Saturday, April 14, an all day field trip to Chimineas. We'll find some wonderful places to go. Meet at the San Luis Obispo Vets Hall at 8:00 am to caravan. Contact George, (805) 438-3641, gbutterworth8@gmail.com for more information."

Saturday, 21 April 2012 9:00 a.m. LPNF and CNPS Wildflower, Native Plant Week, and Earth Day Weekend Figueroa Mountain, at the Figueroa Fire Station. The Santa Lucia District, Los Padres National Forest (LPNF) will hold one of its eleventh annual Wildflower Weekends on Figueroa Mountain in conjunction with the California Native Plant Society. This tour will feature a local celebration of the second California Native Plant Week (3rd week in April, the 14th-22nd this year). Meet at 9 a.m. at the Fire Station on Figueroa Mountain Road. Turn left at the SR 154-Figueroa Mountain Road intersection near Los Olivos, and proceed to the Fire Station parking lot. This will be a "drive and stroll" tour of this year's spectacular display. Sturdy shoes, lunch and liquids, and camera and binoculars recommended. Call Helen Tarbet at 925-9538 ext. 246 or Charles Blair, 733-3189, for details.

BOOK TALK

“Wild Lilies, Irises, and Grasses, Gardening With California Monocots” has been around for a few years. If you haven’t picked it up at the book table, I recommend you take a minute to look it over. This is a book that offers so much information in a very readable format. Almost every page has excellent pictures and truly lovely pen and ink drawings throughout the book.

A monocot is generally defined as petals, stamens and other flower parts by three. Leaf veins run parallel to the length of the leaf. Most monocots grow from bulbs, corms, or rhizomes. This book covers such diverse natives as lilies, erythroniums, fritillaries, calochortus, trilliums, alliums, irises, orchids, grasses, sedges, rushes, agaves, yuccas, nolinias, and palms. I get a kick out of growing some of the plants covered in the book and have learned how to succeed with some of these monocots because of this book. Be sure to look for this at the book table next month in Atascadero. -Heather



To the CNPS Awards Committee and CNPS members

When Mardi Niles convinced me that I should attend the CNPS banquet because Bill Shearer was to be given the Hoover Award, little did I expect that there was a hidden plot! I was rushing down the last crumbs of some baker's luscious lemon torte, when I heard Mardi announce my name and couldn't believe my ears. What bafflement! What surprise! You did fool me...

The plaque of recognition that I was so graciously handed for my work at the Oceano Native Plant Gardens will be a treasured memento. It is adorned with Mardi's lovely Pismo Clarkia artwork. And the evening will certainly be one to remember. I do appreciate this kindness on your part.

In 1993, when Grace and Jack Beigle asked me to join them working on the Oceano Native Plant Gardens at Pismo State Beach, it not only became just a new activity, it enriched my life immensely. They became my mentors and I enjoyed working with them for many years until they moved away. Now Bill Shearer and I continue with the help of a group of extremely dedicated volunteers, many of whom have been with us for a very long time. So, in honoring us, you honor them, too. We have a good time when we meet every Tuesday morning at 9 a.m., sometimes at the Nature Center on Pier Ave.. and more recently, on the first and third Tuesdays when we meet at the Monarch Butterfly Grove. There, for the last few years we have had a good deal of success in removing African veldt grass and replacing it with native dune vegetation. This has been a source of much satisfaction for us all. We hope that you will come and see some of our progress and if you'd like join us in our efforts.

Well, now you have inspired me to keep doing better, to become ever more committed to those native plants that we love. Thank you, CNPS, for all the work that you do and for the generous recognition that you bestowed on me.
Sincerely, Susan Grimaud

Native Garden Tour

Our second annual native garden tour will take place April 15 through 21, 2012, as a part of California Native Plant Week, which overlaps with Earth Week.

Last year we had city gardens, country gardens, large and small gardens, but all were interesting and educational. If you would be interested in having your garden on this year's tour, please call Heather Johnson at 528-0446. Gardens should be open at least one day during Earth Week, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. (your choice of day(s) of the week).

Please let us know as soon as possible so we can get accurate publicity started.

Thank you,

Heather Johnson
528-0446

Officers & Committee Chairs

President

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

Vice President

Matt Ritter
mritter@calpoly.edu

Recording Secretary

Kristie Haydu (916) 899-9227
pickleberry26@hotmail.com

Treasurer

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

Chapter Council Representative

Kristie Haydu (916) 899-9227
pickleberry26@hotmail.com

Chapter Publications

James Johnson (805) 528-0446
jw_johnson@msn.com

Chapter Wholesale Contact

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

Conservation

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

Cuesta Ridge Monitor

Neil Havlik
nhavlik@slocity.org

Education

Susi Bernstein (805) 349-7180
fiddle58@att.net

Field Trips

Bill Waycott
bill.waycott@gmail.com

General Sales - Book & Poster Sales

Heather Johnson (805) 528-0446
SLO_CNPS_Booklady@yahoo.com

Historian

Dirk R. Walters (805) 543-7051
drwalters@charter.net

Horticulture & Plant Sales

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

Hospitality

Mardi Niles (805) 489-9274
mnliles@sbcglobal.net

Invasive Plants Control

Lauren Brown (805) 460-6329
lbrown805@charter.net

Legislation

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

Membership

Eleanor Williams (805) 528-7202
ecwilliams108@gmail.com
Linda Chipping (805) 528-0914

Photography

James Johnson (805) 528-0446
jw_johnson@msn.com

Plant Sales

Position Open

Publicity

Jeff Prostovich
prostovich@earthlink.net

Rare Plant Coordinator

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

Webmaster

Judi Young
judith_young@yahoo.com

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.cnpslo.org



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 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
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Inquiries

Phone: (916) 447-2677 Fax: (916) 447-2727

e-mail: cnps@cnps.org

Websites: www.cnps.org & www.cnps-slo.org



Please make your check payable to CNPS and mail to:

California Native Plant Society

P.O. Box 784

San Luis Obispo, CA 93406