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# Obispoensis

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

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November 2018

## *Vitis californica* (California grape)

I'm introducing a new artist with this cover of the Obispoensis. The artist is Heather Johnson, who paints beautiful renditions of California native plants, so I asked her if she would allow them to be displayed on the Obispoensis cover. Thankfully, she agreed and has sent me several. I was really taken by the first one I looked at! It was of a leafy twig of the California grape in fall color. California grapes are widespread through Northern California where they favor, but are not restricted to, stream sides. However, I was surprised by Heather showing them having bright red color. If you are seeing the cover in black and white, I recommend that you go to [cnpslo.org](http://cnpslo.org) and see them in their brilliant red color. The leaf color rendition produced by Heather closely matches the color of the leaves I saw in photos on the Web.

There is a problem with the leaf color however, and trying to resolve it lead me to a very interesting story. This is because the usual fall color of California grape leaves is pale yellow not red. So where did the red come from. It turns out that the entire story of its finding and selection is well known and is worth a google search. In late October 1983, Roger Raiche of the U.C. Berkeley Botanic Garden, first saw a California grape with bright red leaves growing alongside Palmer Creek Road in rural Sonoma County, west of Healdsburg, California. He collected cuttings, rooted them in the green house and finally planted them out in the botanic garden. They grew easily and with minimal care and little water. Later he gave cuttings to a garden volunteer who was also a member of the local California Native Plant Society Chapter. She donated a flat of them to her CNPS Chapter's plant sale. She labeled the flat simply "Roger's red grape." When those plants were sold, the name was born, although the cultivar 'Roger's Red' has never been registered or patented.

So far we find we have a cultivar with very unique fall color that was found growing wild. But, we still haven't discovered the origin or the red color. It turns out careful observation of the cultivar 'Rogers Red' indicated that it's not pure *Vitis californica* and that it shared characteristics with the European wine grape (*Vitis vinifera*). Further observations limited the possible ancestor to a particular variety of commercial vine grape commonly grown for its reddish fruits. The red fruits of this variety were used to add extra color to red wines. This variety was and still is *Vitis vinifera* 'Alicante Bouschet' and has been grown in California for years. As well as reddish fruits, this variety of wine grape produces bright red leaves in the fall. Enter DNA to the story. Several DNA studies proved that the cultivar 'Roger's Red' is truly a hybrid between the native California grape and the European wine grape *Vitis vinifera* var. *Alicante Bouschet*.

This California native (hybrid) is extremely popular and is widely available at nurseries and probably CNPS native plant sales around the state. It's easy to grow and tolerates many different soils, watering regimes and different levels of shade. Its major fault might be its rapid, aggressive growth. It will require taming. Its fruits are edible, but the seeds are large and the flesh is thin. Not a great 'eat-off-the vine' fruit but they can be turned into a nice drink.

Dirk Walters

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## THE GARDEN CORNER

### Beechey ground squirrel

California ground squirrel aka Beechey ground squirrel (*Otospermophilus beecheyi*), may look cute or even cuddly, but ground squirrels could be the worst things to hit your garden since your cousin came to visit in his RV. No, seriously, this last year saw an explosion of the squirrel population due to the late but heavy March rains which brought a profusion of good things to feed the ground squirrels. And multiply they indeed did.

First, don't use poison to control squirrels. The possibility of poisoning another species unintentionally, such as an owl, a hawk, or a turkey vulture is too problematic. Instead, I opt to capture the squirrel in a live trap then remove them to the wild, or to Pacific Wildlife Care to feed their rehab birds. Selecting a live trap can be complicated. I prefer the larger live trap to capture the critter. I use a combination of peanut butter and birdseed to bait the trap, placing it on the trap trigger. Once I catch the squirrel, I cover the trap with a towel so as to calm the little guy down until I can release him in another suitable place, which is up to you. Next month we will cover gopher control. Until then, Happy Gardening; John Nowak, Plant Sale co-Chairperson.

Happy Gardening; John Nowak, Plant Sale co-Chairperson.

Thanks for all the stuff that you just bought at the plant sale and just planted.



Photo: Wikipedia Media



# Dr. David Keil honored with a CNPS Fellowship

Acting on the nomination submitted by our chapter, the State Board recognized Dr. David Keil as a Fellow of the California Native Plant Society at its September meeting. He has been an active CNPS member; was a Cal Poly botany professor for over 37 years; and, through research and writing, has made significant contributions to California's native flora.

Dave earned his B.S. in 1968 and M.S. in 1970 from Arizona State University in Tempe, and his Ph.D. from Ohio State University. Dave joined Cal Poly faculty in 1976, and two years later was appointed Director of the Robert F. Hoover Herbarium. His collection totals over 30,000 specimens, most of them housed at the Hoover Herbarium. He joined CNPS shortly after his arrival, and in 1978, served as the Chapter President. In earlier recognition of his generous contributions to our chapter, Dave was the recipient of the 1989 Hoover Award. He has led numerous chapter field trips for the San Luis Obispo chapter, some planned with detailed plant lists, some spur of the moment.

Dr. Keil has also presented chapter meeting programs and workshops on a regular basis. His broad knowledge of the county flora allowed him to surprise those attending with new discoveries, unusual findings, as well as his great slides. For anyone not familiar with county flora, Dave would answer any question. His small workshops conducted before chapter meetings include oak identification, plant collecting, rare plant training and a new grass identification key. In 2009 Dave's participation on a 'quick' CNPS committee to develop a one page tri-fold of common plants for distribution by the City of San Luis Obispo became the 86 page *Wildflowers of San Luis Obispo, California*. It was an enormous success. As this nomination is being written, he is doing the proof reading on the revised second edition. After Dave's retirement from teaching at Cal Poly, he was recruited to serve as chapter Vice President and has done so since 2016. He has always been a chapter resource.

At the state level he participated on the Rare Plant Scientific Advisory Committee from 1998 through 2001. Since 2009, he has served as a member of the Fremontia Editorial Advisory Board. From 2014 through 2016, Dave reviewed student grant applications with the Education Program Grants Subcommittee. On an annual basis since 2009, Dave has conducted multi-day plant science workshops on California flora for the State Education Program. For the workshop held in April 2018, Dave watched the county landscapes closely, knowing that the drought was adversely impacting the flora, but he was confident the workshop would be successful, and it was.

In the world of service to botanic science, he had made significant contribution to *The Jepson Manual* Project. He authored the *Key to California Plant Families* and served as the editor and primary author of the *Asteraceae* for both editions of *The Jepson Manual*. Key writing has always been one of Dave's strengths, and it is a major part of the long-lasting legacy he has created throughout his career. For the second edition of *The Jepson Manual*, Dave authored a new key to families that encompasses the major taxonomic revisions that had taken place since 1993 and served as co-editor for the entire manual. His ability to track nomenclatural changes and translate them into meaningful morphological characters in all the major plant families was crucial for the writing of the new family key. Part of what makes Dave's keys so valuable is that they are written with field botanists in mind, anticipating user misinterpretation on minor

characters. This can only be done if the key writer is familiar with every other possible plant, which Dave usually is. Dave has authored over 130 species descriptions mostly in the *Asteraceae*, but also in the *Poaceae* and *Ranunculaceae*. Four taxa have been named in Dave's honor: *Ancistrocarphus keilii* Morefield, *Erigeron inornatus* (A. Gray) A. Gray var. *keilii* G.L. Nesom, *Wedelia keilii* B.L. Turner, and *Chrysanthellum keilii* B.L. Turner.

During his more than 37 years as a professor at Cal Poly, Dave taught courses in general botany, plant taxonomy, field botany and biogeography. He was awarded the university's Distinguished Teaching Award in 1980. Each year Dave traveled around California with his field botany students, teaching them the elements of California flora. Students have described the course as both the hardest and best course they have taken during their college careers. Classes taught by Dave were often a life changing experience for students. One former student said, "I...was accepted into the ecology program at Cal Poly San Luis Obispo. During my year there, I took Dr. David Keil's plant systematics class, which converted me from ecology to botany."

Dr. Keil joins chapter members Dr. Dirk Walters and Dr. David Chipping as Fellows of CNPS. Past Fellows from the chapter include Dr. Malcolm McLeod and Alice and Bud Meyer.



Dave receiving his award

Photo: Melissa Mooney. Laurel wreath: Mardi Niles



# Capturing California's Flowers: An image is worth a thousand words

Jen Yost

Digitization of herbarium specimens—capturing images and label data in digital formats—remains an enormous task for the world's herbaria. For 22 institutions in the U.S. state of California, this job has become easier with a new 4-year, \$1.8 million National Science Foundation grant (Award # 1802301) to establish a new California Phenology Thematic Collections Network (TCN). Spearheaded by Dr. Jenn Yost, Director the Hoover Herbarium at the California Polytechnic State University, this new network aims to image over 900,000 herbarium specimens from the oldest records, the most diverse families, and most threatened families in California. California is a biodiversity hotspot and home to more than one third of all U.S. plant species, emphasizing the need to understand this diverse and changing flora through herbarium records. The region's herbaria already have a strong history of collaboration in the Consortium of California Herbaria, and this project aims to strengthen and expand the capabilities of this community of universities, research stations, natural history museums, and botanical gardens.

The project is trailblazing not only in its ambitious digitization goals and cast of collaborating institutions, but also in its research aim: to better understand flowering time shifts by recording flowering (i.e., phenological) data for each specimen digitized over the course of the grant. Flowering time is an important biological phenomenon for science, society, and biodiversity, and herbarium specimens can provide rich data on how flowering times vary across time and space. This project builds upon recent advancements in standardization and sharing of phenological data, including the Plant Phenology Ontology and data standards developed in collaboration with the New England Vascular Plants TCN, to capture phenological data. Furthermore, the project will digitize specimens of 250 taxa currently monitored by the California Phenology Project and National Phenology Network, empowering future cross-comparisons of specimen-based and observational phenological data. The institutions involved in this project will explore several workflows for capturing phenological data: from specimen sheets during imaging, from label text using a new Attribute Mining tool, and from images using crowd-sourced Notes from Nature expeditions that engage a broad audience of citizen scientists, students, and volunteers to produce phenological scorings. With the efforts of this community of California herbaria, the project hopes to build a strong foundation for the future of capturing phenological data from herbarium specimens.

All specimen images and records produced in this project will be publicly available for research, education, and outreach via the CCH2 portal, an open-source, web-accessible database platform widely used by other collections and TCNs. The project will also develop new tools in CCH2 to mine, explore, and store phenological data, and all data will be aggregated and available through the iDigBio portal. For Cal Poly, this means a lot of great changes. We have hired Katie Pearson as the Project Manager and she is now based here in San Luis Obispo. We have purchased an imaging station to image 40,000 specimens over the next few years. Annie Ayers, a Cal Poly undergraduate and CNPS board member, has been hired as a curatorial assistant. Our workflows are changing and pretty soon, you'll be able to look at our specimens from the comfort of home!

The project runs from 2018 - 2022. Jason Alexander from UC Berkeley is the Data Manager and Katie Pearson is the Program Manager. The tools, techniques, and data generated as part of this project will expand the value of herbarium specimens in addressing society's problems. More information can be found at <http://www.capturingcaliforniasflowers.org> or by emailing [jyost@calpoly.edu](mailto:jyost@calpoly.edu). This project is funded by the Advancing Digitization of Biological Collections program of the National Science Foundation. Many California herbaria are contributing to this Thematic Collections Network.

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## Volunteer at the Hoover Herbarium



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. Starting Sept 18th, the herbarium volunteers sessions will be Mondays from 3-5 pm and Fridays 9 - 11 and 1 - 3 pm.

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. Questions: email Jenn Yost at [jyost@calpoly.edu](mailto:jyost@calpoly.edu)

# Chapter Board Elections 2018-2019

The Nomination Committee presents the following slate of candidates

**President: Bill Waycott**, continuing

**For Vice President: Nishanta 'Nishi' Rajakaruna** (Thank you David Keil, new CNPS fellow, for your time as VP!)

Nishi Rajakaruna fell in love with plants at a young age during a visit to Sinharaja Rainforest, a lowland tropical rainforest in Sri Lanka. He received a BA in human ecology from College of the Atlantic (Maine) and conducted his post-undergraduate practical training in plant ecophysiology at Harvard University. His research on the evolutionary ecology of the *Lasthenia californica* complex earned him a MS and a PhD in botany from the University of British Columbia, Canada. Nishi conducted post-doctoral research in plant ecology at Stanford University. His research examines how plant diversity, ecology, and evolution are influenced by serpentine and other 'unusual' soils, including those with heavy metals. He has taught botany at College of the Atlantic and San José State University for 12 years and spent a year as a Fulbright Senior Scholar in Sri Lanka and India. He is currently an associate professor in plant biology at California Polytechnic State University where he teaches general botany and biogeography.

Nishi has published over 80 peer-reviewed papers and book chapters on plant-soil relations of serpentine and other harsh edaphic settings in California, Maine, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Iran, and Russia and is the co-editor of two key treatments on plant life on serpentine soils [Serpentine: Evolution and Ecology in a Model System (2011) and Soil and Biota of Serpentine: A World View (2009)] and a book titled Plant Ecology and Evolution in Harsh Environments (2014). He has served on the scientific advisory committees of the International Conference on Serpentine Ecology since 2006 and was the Recording Secretary of the California Botanical Society 2009-2010. He has been the Editor-in-Chief of Rhodora, the Journal of the New England Botanical Club, since 2014 and a member of the CNPS, SLO Chapter since Fall 2017.

**Treasurer: Dave Krause**, continuing

**For Secretary: Cindy Roessler.** I have been a member of CNPS for decades and moved to San Luis Obispo County about a year ago so now I am ready to help out the SLO Chapter by serving as a local officer. I have served on numerous boards and committees for conservation groups, so I have the experience and commitment to do the "boring" organizational work along with attending our local beautiful hikes and surveying our rare plant communities. In my professional career over 35 years, I've worked as an ecologist managing natural public lands in Florida and California. I am very familiar with California native plants, how to identify, find and enjoy them, and how they contribute to the ecology, beauty and economic stability of our state. Most of my experience is with oaks, grasses, ecological restoration, and control of invasive plants in the San Francisco Bay Area. I am amazed at how different the plants are in San Luis Obispo County, just 200 miles south of my former region of expertise, so I have been attending local trainings and hikes and it's exciting to be a student all over again. You can find out more about me by checking my natural history blog [www.dipperanch.blogspot.com](http://www.dipperanch.blogspot.com) or my LinkedIn account. As Secretary for the SLO Chapter, I foresee keeping records of the board meetings and handling other clerical duties so that the chapter can smoothly pursue its conservation and educational goals. I am particularly impressed with the participation of students and young people in the SLO CNPS chapter and will look for ways to support young people joining the organization.

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## Membership Corner

### Holly Sletteland

November is right around the corner, and by the time you read this, the election will likely be behind us. I just hope it gives us many reasons to be thankful in this month when we traditionally count our blessings. Regardless of the outcome, I will reflect on how lucky we are that there are still plenty of opportunities to enjoy our native flora in all of its seemingly infinite variations. I will also reflect on how lucky we are to have all of you sharing our appreciation of native plants, as well as a steadfast commitment to protecting them. Thanks to each and every one of you for being a part of CNPS! And a special thanks to those of you who affirmed your dedication by joining or renewing last month:

Karen Almas  
C. Warren Arnold  
Heather Budnarowski  
Jean Burns Slater  
John & Judy Chesnut-Neuhauser  
John Evarts  
John & Marjorie Evarts-Popper

Cynthia Fogarty  
Frances Glaser  
Marlin Harms  
Kristi Haydu  
Susan & Myron Hood  
William Johnson  
David Keil

Valerie Levulett  
Deven May  
Wendy McKeown  
Karen Osland  
James Patterson  
Michael Post  
Nishanta Rajakaruna

Sheryl Reimers  
Barbara Renshaw  
Dorothea Rible  
Barbara Rosenthal  
Kathy Sharum  
Amy Sinsheimer  
Sharon White  
Aleksandra Wydzga



## ETHNOBOTANY NOTES: Blue Elderberry (*Sambucus coerulea* or *mexicana*)

### A delicious, wildlife attracting addition to your garden

**Cathy Chambers**

This last year, I have become the Johnny Appleseed of elderberry plants. Although, I plant the elderberry plants and not the seeds. I have been making Elderberry jelly and tincture for my family for almost twenty years. We gathered them in Cambria just as we did blackberries. Then when I started landscaping seriously about two years ago to help out my mom, I realized that maybe I would not have to drive for miles to gather berries if I just planted the bushes in our yard and in the gardens to which I have access. Last year, I planted several at work, and several on my mom's property. This year I planted three at my house, and two in my friends' yards. However, I might have to wait a few years to see the fruits of my labors.

Native Californians also used the hollow branches to make flutes and clapper sticks. They used caution and respect and were aware that there are toxic compounds in the stems and leaves (such as hydrocyanic acid and sambucine.) These are also in the berries, but less so, and dissipate when cooked or dried. Research has found compounds in *Sambucus* that are anti-viral. They are also high in vitamin C. I'm sure that hundreds of years ago, when Europeans ate the jelly, and drank the wine all winter it helped them to fend off colds. When making jam or wine, the seeds should be strained out.

The flowers are also considered medicinal. They are picked when flowering then dried for tea that is used to break dry fevers and stimulate perspiration. The USDA Plant Database says that "The flowers contain flavonoids and rutin, which are known to improve immune function, particularly in combination with vitamin C. The flowers also contain tannins, which account for its traditional use to reduce bleeding, diarrhea, and congestion." They can also be prepared as a delicious cordial. Ethnobotanist Michael Moore writes that "The flowers and dried berries are useful as a diuretic and have been used for centuries as an aid to rheumatism and arthritis. The red elderberries are toxic and should not be used.

The elderberry grows throughout California and can be drought tolerant but will thrive better and grow much faster with some watering. It tolerates clay soils and seasonal flooding, but it also grows in sandy soil in my yard. It can grow to 10 feet tall. It has green foliage which is deciduous and has cream colored flower clusters. It is a great plant to bring birds into your garden. It also attracts hummingbirds and butterflies.



Elderberry Photos: David Chipping. Flute by SuncrowFlutes

The latest edition of our monthly newsletter Obispoensis is available for download as a PDF file from the link below. Find out about upcoming events, field trips, local issues impacting native plants, invasives to be on the watch for, horticulture tips for growing natives, contact info and more in each issue:

<http://cnpsslo.org>

Having trouble opening the file? You need to have Adobe Acrobat Reader installed on your device. It can be downloaded here:

<https://get.adobe.com/reader>



# CHAPTER MEETING Nov. 1st 2018 - Thursday - 7:00 pm

Veterans Hall, Monterey and Grand, SLO

Mixer and Browse Sales Table 7:00 pm, Program 7:30 pm



## PLANT PROPAGATION by ELLIOT PAULSON

Elliot graduated from Cal Poly in business finance, and then returned 6 years later as a graduate student in horticulture. He established **Clearwater Color Nursery** in 1987, where he grows annual color, vegetables, Mediterranean type perennials, and succulents along with California Natives. Plants are propagated in plugs, packs and pots both by seed and asexual cuttings. Elliot will tell us what works and what doesn't work. He will also engage other plant propagators in the audience.

Along with his wife Megan, he runs the nursery on Los Osos Valley road with 13 dedicated employees. The nursery delivers plant material to local retail nurseries, the Central Valley, and Santa Barbara county.



**Sunday, November 18th, 9:00 am, Mountain bike ride, Santa Rita Road, Templeton.** Meet in the Templeton Dog Park parking lot, located at the corner of Vineyard Drive and Semillion Lane. The group will ride along Santa Rita Road to the summit, about 14 miles round trip, with a gradual 1,200 elevation gain. This ride passes through some of the most pristine riparian landscapes in San Luis Obispo Co. and will be a perfect time to view trees in fall color. Bring a mountain bike, helmet, adequate water, and snacks. No RSVP needed, and no dogs please. For more information, contact Bill, [805-459-2103](tel:805-459-2103). Rain cancels.

**Saturday, December 8th, 9:30 am, Bill Deneen Memorial Hike to Point Sal and Get-Together.** As a way to acknowledge the contributions of Bill Deneen and to remember him, we are planning a hike to his beloved Point Sal. We will hike to the ridge and then to the beach, though hikers can choose to go as far as they would like. The total hiking distance is up to 10 miles with more than 1,000 ft. elevation gain – so it is easy to strenuous, depending on the length chosen.

After the hike, hikers and non-hikers alike will meet at La Simpatia Restaurant (827 Cabrillo Hwy, Guadalupe) at 2:00 pm, to eat, trade stories, and remembrances. Bring a story and any pictures or memorabilia you would like to share.

Directions to Point Sal: from Hwy 101 exit Hwy 166 west towards Guadalupe. Turn left on Highway 1, then right on Brown Road. Continue on Brown Road until the gate. Park at the gate. Make sure to leave no valuables in your car, there have been break ins. Dress in layers, bring hat, sunscreen, plenty of water, snacks. Contact Andrea [805-934-2792](tel:805-934-2792), or Carlos [805-546-0317](tel:805-546-0317), or Bill [805-459-2103](tel:805-459-2103). Rain cancels the hike, but not the get-together at 2:00 pm.

**Editor's Note: Readers of the paper version of *Obispoensis* will miss the COLOR that you can see in our downloadable web site version. Visit the website at [www.cnpsslo.org](http://www.cnpsslo.org)**

## PRESIDENT'S NOTES

### Bill Waycott

[This month's President's notes is the second part, continuing from the October issue.]

Last month I wrote about my curiosity for the origin and distribution of some of the invasive plants that have become naturalized on the Central Coast. I continue this month with excerpts from historical accounts. These come from an article published in the Bulletin of the Southern California Academy of Sciences, October 1920, entitled "The Immigrant Plants of Southern California", by Samuel Bonsall Parish, a noted amateur California botanist. In the article, the author reports historical data on 281 non-native species observed in Southern California at that time, citing reports from some of the earliest botanists who visited the area, as well as stating his own views on this subject. Here are four excerpts of the article, addressing early plant introductions, two putatively during the "Mission era", or pre-gold rush, and two thereafter.

*Avena fatua*, Wild oats: The wild oat must have been among the earliest introductions of the Mission era and being well suited to the conditions, have spread with rapidity. Newberry reported in 1854, "throughout central and southern California, wherever the ground was not occupied by forests, wild oats covered surfaces of many hundreds of miles in extent as completely as the grasses cover the prairies of Illinois," and he was inclined to regard this species as indigenous. His report indicated that at that early date, wild oat was even more abundant than at present (1920), the increase of agricultural cultivation having curtailed their area. It is by way of California doubtless; the wild oat has reached other parts of the United States. It is native of the Mediterranean region, but entered this state from Mexico. [To the layperson, this implies the extensive spread of wild oat populations reported by Newberry in 1854, must have been realized within the 100 years prior, as the first of the Alta California Mission was founded only in 1769.]

*Brassica nigra*, Wild mustard: Abundantly naturalized as a "ruderal weed" and also in grain fields. In the coastal district, in the rich adobe soils of the hills and mesas, it often covers wide areas with a close growth 5-10 feet high, excluding all other vegetation. It is sometimes harvested for the seed. It was certainly introduced during the Mission era, and there is a persisting tradition among some Spanish-speaking Californians that the Mission fathers were accustomed to carry the seed with them and sowed it by the wayside. This seems improbable, but the fathers no doubt grew the plant in their gardens, as the young leaves are relished by the Mexicans and others, too, as a pot herb. The seeds would be scattered by the small birds, who freely eat them.

*Conium maculatum*, Poison hemlock: Introduced into ornamental cultivation under the name of "Carrot Fern" around 1905, soon escaping and now frequent in wet places and abundantly naturalized in willow thickets along river beds. Widely distributed in localities throughout the state, but probably of recent introduction.

*Lactuca serriola*, Prickly lettuce: naturalized and common. A very recent immigrant, but here as elsewhere, its diffusion has been rapid. The species is an abundant weed in cultivated grounds, gardens, roadsides, and waste places, but they do not make their way into unbroken dry hills and mesas. While an obnoxious weed, these plants have not proved themselves so injurious in this region, as they are reported to be elsewhere. The earliest records for this state are: Berkeley in 1890, Sacramento in 1891.

Thus, intentional or unintentional, the vast array of exotic species naturalized in this state were clearly human-caused events, often out of ignorance and oblivious to what was to follow. Every introduction to California apparently has its own unique story, how it was thought to be of ornamental or agricultural value, or how it just hitchhiked its way here. I think as CNPSers, we need to keep a look-up for unusual species and report them to the County Ag Department, if it is something new to the area.



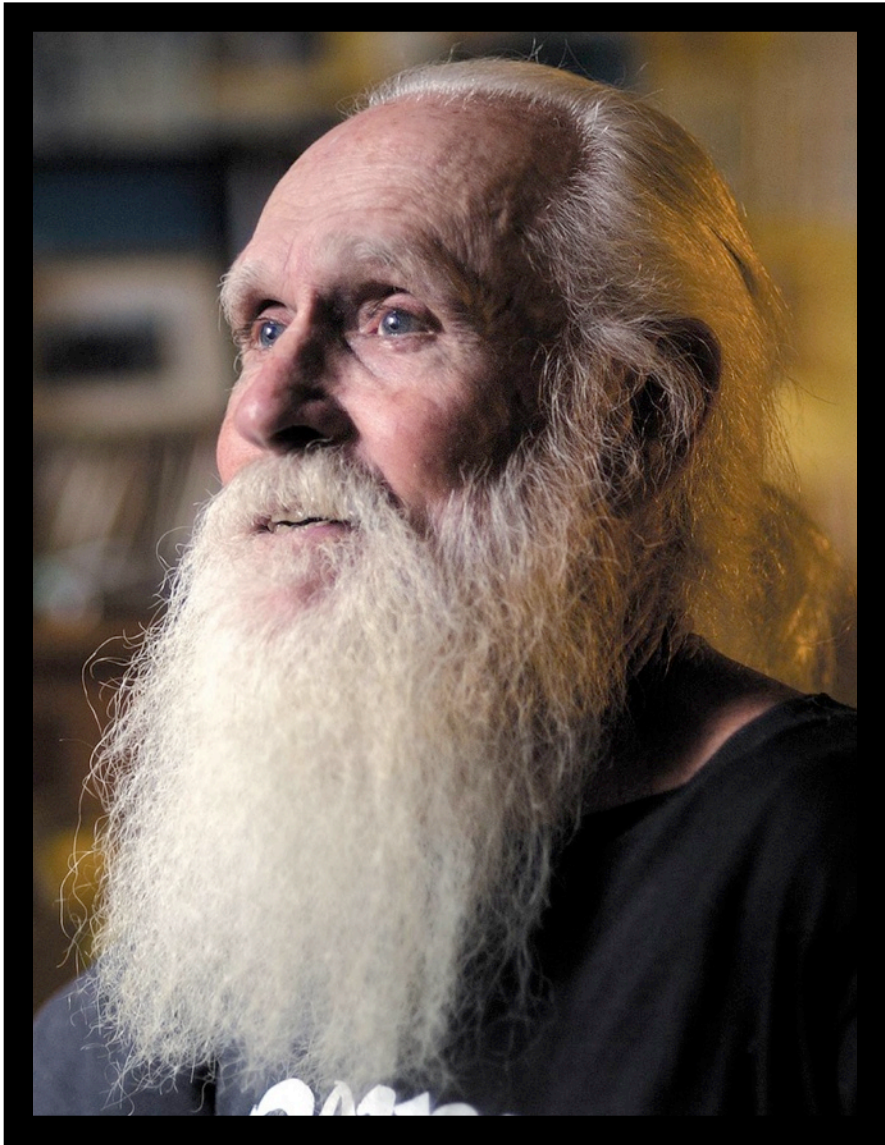
From left to right, *Avena fatua*, *Brassica nigra*, *Conium maculatum*, *Lactuca serriola* Pictures: Wikipedia Commons



# In Memory of Bill Deneen

Bill Deneen, long time CNPS member, Hoover Awardee, and champion of the Guadalupe-Nipomo Dunes died at the age of 93 in September. Bill taught biology at Santa Maria High School for 25 years, during which time he became a passionate advocate for the environment. He worked with Kathleen Goddard Jones and others to keep a nuclear power plant from being built in the Nipomo Dunes, which he loved with a deep passion. Later he was arrested from ‘crossing the blue line’ at protests against the re-siting of the power plant at Diablo Canyon, earning him the title of ‘ecohooligan’ which he wore proudly for the rest of his life. In recent years he opposed the use of OHVs in the dunes, and was on the enemies list of the local OHV community. He founded an Environmental Award which he gave out to encourage conservation action, and in a touching moment in his failing last years was given his own award by his admirers. In a sort-of-goodbye party in 2015 held at the Dana Cultural Center, he received accolades from friends and family to notable politicians like then-Assemblyman Katcho Achadjian and Congresswoman Lois Capps. Capps called Bill a ‘national treasure’. Older members of the chapter will remember the many field trips he led into the dunes, and his fierce sense of humor. Bill... we will miss you... and thanks.

David Chipping



## Sudden Oak Death Not Yet Arrived in SLO County

Good news on the Sudden Oak Death front. As a result of last spring’s Sudden Oak Death Blitz, and additional collecting by agency staff, we find that. as yet, there were no positive finds in SLO County. In all, 699 trees were surveyed, of which 18.7% appeared symptomatic, but which did not test positive in the lab. It appears that there are other infections of California Bay that appear similar to those of SOD. None the less, as the disease is present just north of the county line on the Big Sur coast, the risk still hangs over us like the proverbial Sword of Damocles. **David Chipping**

### THE GOOD PEOPLE WHO MAKE THE CHAPTER ‘HAPPEN’ AND HOW TO FIND THEM

<b>President</b> Bill Waycott (805) 459-2103 bill.waycott@gmail.com	<b>Chapter Council Rep.</b> Melissa Mooney: mjmoon@charter.net	<b>Field Trips</b> Bill Waycott (805) 459-2103 bill.waycott@gmail.com	<b>Rare Plant Coordinator</b> John Chesnut (805) 528-0833 jchesnut@slonet.org	<b>Horticulture &amp; Plant Sales</b> John Nowak (805) 674-2034 gritlys@gmail.com
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