Obispoensis

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

Fall Color: (Top) San Juan Creek at Highway 58 (Bottom) Shell Creek taken in previous years. photos by David Chipping

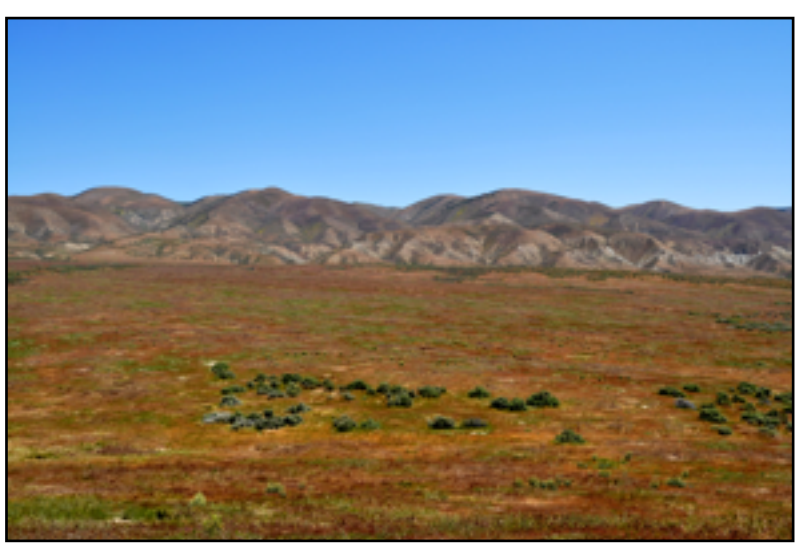
November 2020 Electronic Version

Fall Color: Good Locations to Scout Out

The cover shows two locations, but anywhere with lots of cottonwoods should provide lots of yellow color. The Salinas River floodplain will also provide a mass of willows with fall foliage. Shell Creek has a scenic array of trees, and a row of smallish trees on the south side of the highway can produce a beautifal contrast against the darker hillside. The road to the Cerro Alto campground, and the trail eastward from the campground can be very pretty. If you are looking for the red leaf color seen in the eastern US, only introduced trees will provide for you, but poison oak can be very beautiful. This can be found in the understory below the oaks of the Los Osos Oaks Reserve, which can be beautiful unless drought-induced leaf drop has taken place. The Coon Creek trail in Montana de Oro State Park can provide a nice display of yellow willow leaves, although the timing seems to be less and less predictable, You wll also see poison oak and the pink of dogwood leaves. Usually a cold night will hasten leaf color changes, and we are lacking really cold nights in recent years.

Don't forget the rich spectrum of colors seen in our eastern grasslands. The two photos below are taken along Elkhorn Road, (left) and close to KCL campground (right)

Photos: David Chipping



Winter Color: Duller Browns and Tans with a trace of white

Still Seeking Nominations - Community Award

CNPS SLO greatly values the individuals, organizations, and businesses that support and promote its mission in the local area. The Community Award is intended to highlight the important work that is conducted outside of the CNPS organization. For example, last year we honored the Atascadero Land Preservation Society (ALPS) for their work in purchasing and preserving land in the City of Atascadero.

This award is for any local individual or organization/business with a strong local presence that has made a significant contribution(s) to promoting native plants or the general natural environment within San Luis Obispo County. A significant contribution can include, but is not limited to, the following:

(a) Outstanding record of protection of native plants and habitats; (b) Inspiration of students and promotion of native plants; (c) Excellence in collaboration, commitment, innovation, and/or leadership* (d) Consistent demonstration of a cooperative and positive attitude; or (e) Exemplary service in a leadership position.

To nominate an organization, please contact the President (mjmoon@charter.net) and include the name of the organization and why you feel the organization should be honored. Final evaluation and award determination is made by the CNPS-SLO Board using the above criteria. This is not necessarily an annual award; it is presented when there is a desire to recognize a deserving recipient. The award is usually presented at the annual January banquet, and will consist of a framed certificate of recognition. ***Melissa Mooney***.

NOVEMBER 5th ZOOM 'MEETING'

From the field to the freezer: a snapshot of the Santa Barbara Botanic Garden's seed conservation program

Heather Schneider, PhD Rare Plant Biologist Santa Barbara Botanic Garden

For many people, talk of conservation seed banks calls to mind an image of a vault buried deep into the side of a mountain surrounded by the frozen tundra, but most seed banks are much less complicated than that. Nevertheless, the size of the freezer does not dictate its importance! Join Dr. Heather Schneider, Rare Plant Biologist at the Santa Barbara Botanic Garden, as she shares stories from the field and laboratory to illustrate the process of planning, making and curating conservation seed collections. She will also discuss collaborative efforts across California to seed bank the entire California flora, starting with the rarest plants. From the Channel Islands to the Sierra Nevada, the Garden's conservation seed bank program is safeguarding California's unique botanical diversity one seed collection at a time.

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Castilleja mollis seed

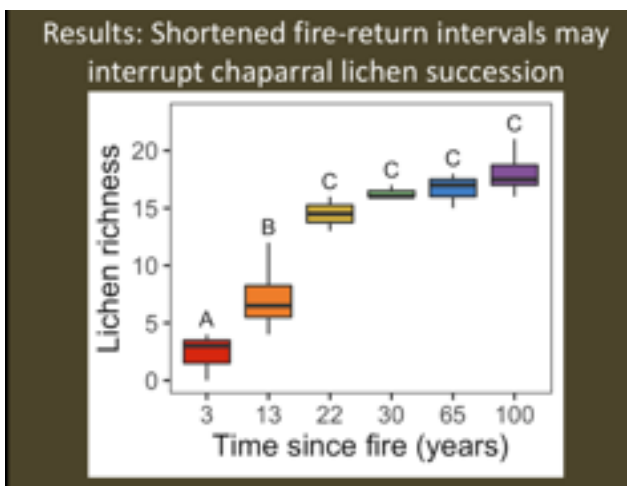
Dr. Schneider earned her PhD at the University of California, Riverside studying the impacts of nitrogen pollution on invasive and native annual desert plants. From there, she studied desert tortoise health and habitat as an Ecologist with the US Geological Survey. In 2013, she moved to Santa Barbara to work as a postdoctoral scholar at UC Santa Barbara where she worked on a nation-wide project to create the first research seed bank dedicated to studying the evolution of wild plants. She joined the Santa Barbara Botanic Garden as the Rare Plant Biologist in 2016. As the Garden's Rare Plant Biologist, Heather oversees the Rare Plant Conservation Program, which uses field, lab and greenhouse work to understand, protect and restore California's rare plants.

Altered fire regimes cause long−term lichen diversity losses

In a fascinating talk given by Dr. Jesse Miller of U.C. Davis to a primarily Cal Poly seminar via ZOOM, and to which CNPS members had been invited through the kindness of Dr. Nishi Rajakaruna, we learned a lot about how lichens react to disturbance. Although touching on a lot of things, especially related to forest communities of the Pacific Northwest, the feature described in the following is pertinent to the chaparral communities of our part of the world

Dr. Miller had students sample lichen diversity in chamise-dominated chaparral that had been recovering for different amout of years. Lichen species richness appears to take about 20 years to recover to pre-fire levels, and there is only a small additional increase until the stand is about 100 years old, This was about the age of the chaparral on West Cuesta Ridge that burned in the 1994 Highway 41 Fire, which was an exceptionally hot fire where much of the chaparral burned beyond the black-stick phase and vanished completely as white ash.

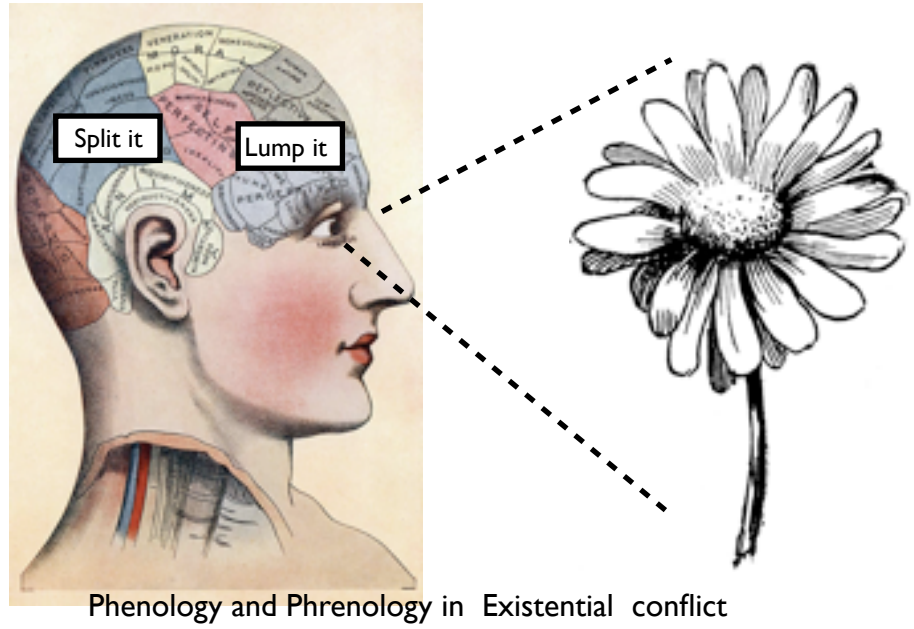
The last couple of years have seen very hot fires of record size and duration, and fire return intervals of only a few years due to the relatively recent phenomena of early invasion by fire-carrying introduced grasses. Thus it might be expected that many lichens dependent on the shade and interior conditions of large shrub sizes will vanish from our world.



Miller JED, Root HT, Safford HD. Altered fire regimes cause long−term lichen diversity losses. Glob Change Biol. 2018;24:4909–4918. https://doi.org/ 10.1111/gcb.14393

January flowerings: Time for a little Phenology

The plants listed below are recorded as starting their flowering season in January , although it might be later . Given the possible effects of global warming we are wondering when first flowers might appear this winter. The study of cyclic and seasonal natural phenomena, especially in relation to climate and plant and animal life, is called Phenology (not to be confused with Phrenology (the detailed study of the shape and size of the cranium as a supposed indication of character and mental abilities).

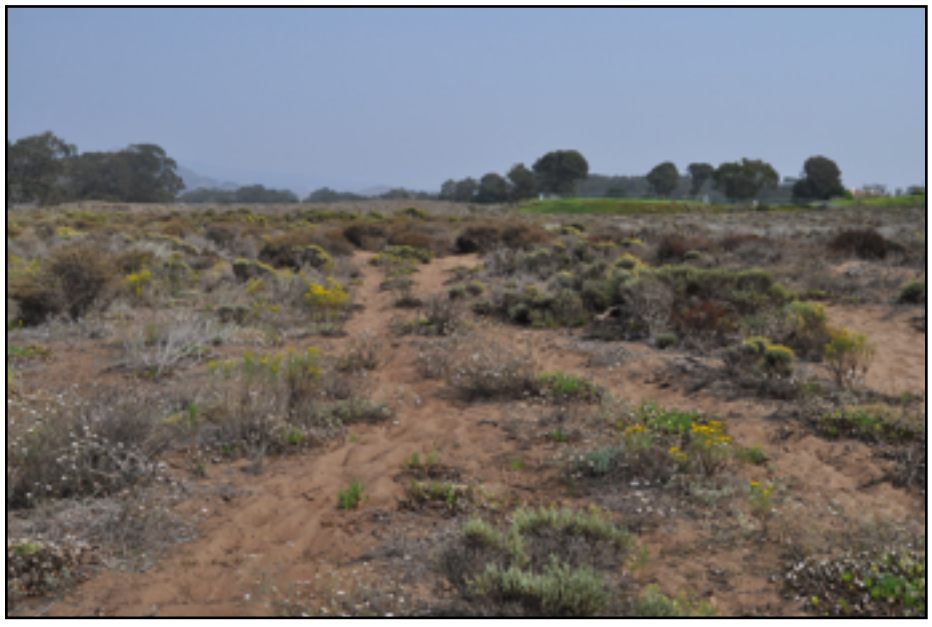


Phenology and Phrenology in Existential conflict within the mind of *Homo taxonimicus*

Acacia longifolia
Alnus rhombifolia
Anthoxanthum occidentale
Arctostaphylos cruzensis
Arctostaphylos glandulosa
Arctostaphylos glauca
Arctostaphylos luciana
Arctostaphylos morroensis
Arctostaphylos osoensis
Arctostaphylos pechoensis
Arctostaphylos pilosula
Arctostaphylos rudis
Arctostaphylos tomentosa
Blennosperma nanum
Brassica rapa
Brassica tournefortii
Calendula arvensis
Camissoniopsis cheiranthifolia
Capsella bursa-pastoris
Cardamine californica
Cardamine hirsuta
Cardamine oligosperma
Ceanothus cuneatus
Ceanothus oliganthus
Ceanothus spinosus
Ceanothus thyrsiflorus
Cistus incanus
Claytonia perfoliata
Clematis lasiantha
Cotula australis
Dendromecon rigida
Dichelostemma capitatum
Dimorphotheca ecklonis
Erythranthe grandis
Fragaria vesca
Garrya elliptica
Genista monspessulana
Lamium amplexicaule
Leptosyne gigantea
Lobularia maritima
Oxalis pes-caprae
Paeonia californica
Panicum miliaceum
Pedicularis rigginsiae
Plantago ovata
Polycarpon tetraphyllum
Quercus agrifolia
Rhamnus crocea
Ribes malvaceum
Ribes sericeum
Ribes speciosum
Romulea rosea
Salix lasiolepis
Salsola australis
Salvia spathacea
Tauschia arguta
Umbellularia californica
Viola odorata

Increasing damage by equestrians in Montana de Oro SP

The two photos taken below are at the junction of the relatively new Butte Drive aquisition and the original park. Originally the foot trail was about 6 ft.-10 ft, wide in this area, and the sides had a rich assortment of dune plants. Although the Butte Drive parcel has been massively degraded by veldt grass invasion, this area is (or was) in fairly good condition, apart from way too much long-leaf ice plant. Recently riders are cutting parallel tracks to the main track, as seen below. Not only does this directly destroy the native flora, but the loose sand is a seed bed for veldt grass invasion. I have asked State Parks for a solution, such as a one-wire fence such as that used for the coastal plover exclosures, but that suggestion got a chilly response decorated with dollar signs. I will be meeting in the field with one of their staff, and will see if we can get something done. *David Chipping: Conservation Chair*



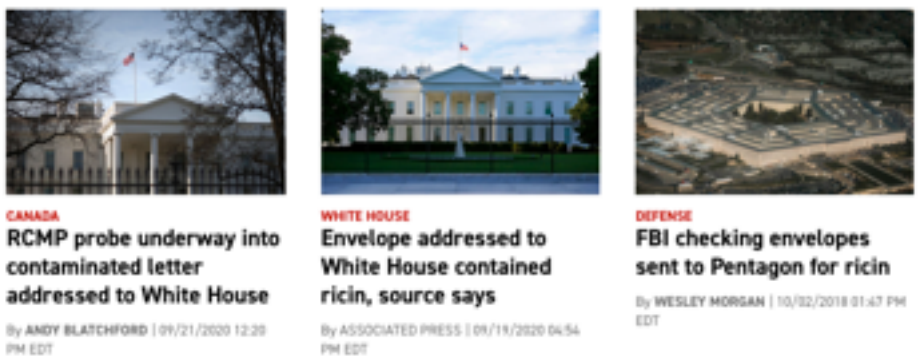
Invasive Species Report: Mark Skinner
Ricinus communis


Photo: David Chipping

Castorbean is in the Euphorbiaceae family. This distinctive and spectacular perennial shrub can grow over 10 ft tall. It produces many cane-like stems with large palmate leaves of 8 plus or minus lobes ranging in color from a shiny deep green to a plum-red-purple. Castorbean produces manifold large clusters of seeds. Fruit capsules are covered with soft gray-green to reddish purple spines that harden to prickles when they dry.

Castorbean is native to tropical Africa and Eurasia. It grows in disturbed places and loves riparian areas. The foliage is toxic and its seeds are extremely toxic as they containing ricin: 4 seeds can kill an adult. Livestock are poisoned when seeds are inadvertently mixed with feed.

Castorbean is quite a project to remove although, I'll confess, it's a pleasure to cut down by machete. Most plants are easy to hand pull. It does cause contact dermatitis on skin, and so gloves are highly recommended. Remove the roots too because they can regenerate easily. The material will decompose but it is essential to dispose of the seeds.


CANADA
RCMP probe underway into contaminated letter addressed to White House
By ANDY BLATCHFORD | 09/21/2020 12:20 PM EDT

WHITE HOUSE
Envelope addressed to White House contained ricin, source says
By ASSOCIATED PRESS | 09/19/2020 04:54 PM EDT

DEFENSE
FBI checking envelopes sent to Pentagon for ricin
By WESLEY MORGAN | 10/02/2018 01:47 PM EDT

Ricin is a lectin (a carbohydrate-binding protein). A dose of purified ricin powder the size of a few grains of table salt can kill an adult human. The median lethal dose (LD50) of ricin for mice is around 22 micrograms per kilogram of body weight via intraperitoneal injection. Oral exposure to ricin is far less toxic. An estimated lethal oral dose in humans is approximately 1 milligram per kilogram.

HOW DOES YOUR GARDEN GROW?

"Now Autumn's fire burns slowly along the woods. And day by day the dead leaves fall and melt." – William Allingham, Irish-born English poet (1824-1889). Yes, maybe not quite as dramatic here on our Central Coast, but Fall is upon us. Along with the cooler nights and shorter days, there is that anticipation of rain coming soon.

Fall is the perfect time to think about expanding the garden or replacing old shrubs and perennials that have had their fun and now it is time to go to sleep. For my friends living in Los Osos, I would like to dedicate this article to one of the more stately shrubs growing there ... Morro (Bay) Manzanita.

Arctostaphylos morroensis or Manzanita, as the early Spanish called them, provide many benefits to Los Osos native habitat. The Spanish diminutive of manzana (apple) is manzanita, so a literal translation would be "little apple". Throughout the State of California this genus provide nutrients to bees, birds and mammals, such as bears, coyotes, opossums and raccoons.

Over the years of working in Los Osos gardens, I have come across seedlings sprouting in lots that were scrapped clean in the 1980s. I found this to be amazing and was curious on how this could be. After researching Manzanita, I found in areas that have been previously developed years ago that seedlings would sprout providing that two conditions were met. Scarification and stratification, so what do these terms mean?

Scarification is the breakdown of the seed coat so that the seed can germinate; nature generally does this over time by sand/soil abrasion, wind and/or rain events. Stratification is generally exposure to lower temperatures which signal the seed to germinate. It is amazing the will of nature to suceed even in these times of climate change.

So how does the story of the Morro (Bay) Manzanita affect how your garden can grow? It is important to do research before you purchase plants. Select plants, such as the Morro (Bay) Manzanita for Los Osos, that will grow in your climate zone and soil type. Simply then provide water and protection from mammals and insects.,

So this ends the third issue of How Does Your Garden Grow? Enjoy the season. Best wishes for happy gardening.

JOHN NOWAK

What's In A Name? William Brewer and his place in the San Luis Obispo Flora

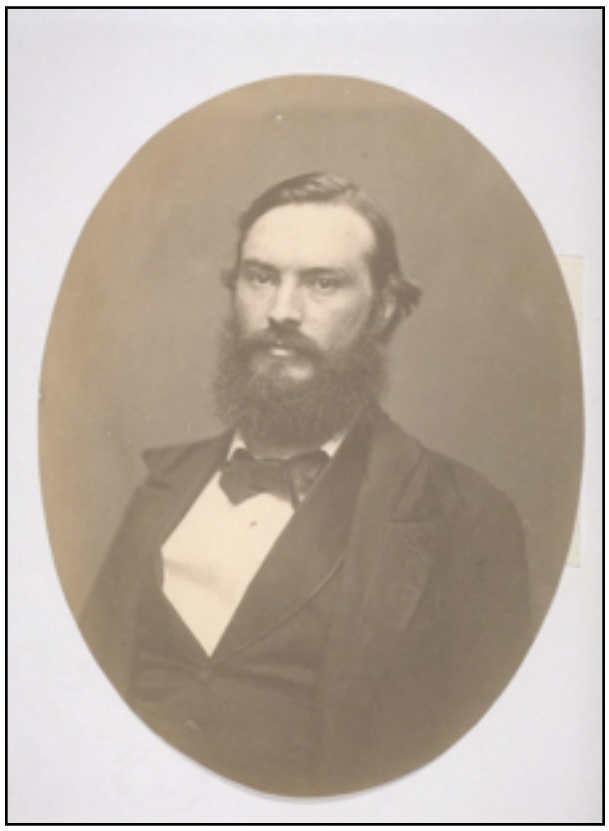


Photo: Public Domain

In 1860, shortly after the death of his wife and newborn son, Brewer was invited by Josiah D. Whitney to become the chief botanist of the California Division of Mines and Geology (predecessor of today's California Geological Survey).[3] Brewer led field parties in the extensive survey of the geology of California until 1864, when he became the Chair of Agriculture at Sheffield Scientific School. Brewer wrote extensively during the survey including many letters to family and friends, a compendium of which was eventually published by the Yale University Press in 1930 as *Up and Down California* in *1860-1864*. (Wikipedia Entry).

I have found this journal of his expedition through the State, and especially through San Luis Obispo County, to be absolutely fascinating. I particularly enjoyed the joy he found in rolling rocks down the steep face of Cuesta Ridge.

As Chief Botanist, he collected a great number of plants and his name appears as the species name on the following plants currently found in our county:

Packera breweri; Boechera breweri; Monardella breweri; Calandrinia breweri; Chorizanthe breweri; Salix breweri and *Juncus brewer*i.

Many of these names are in his honor, and not because he was the first to describe them, and others that he collected from the County do not bear his name. He described the only known occurence of *Micropus californicu*s ever collected in the County from near Arroyo Grande (Dr. David Keil). Other plants that were once bearing his name have been renamed by more recent taxonomic analysts. For example *Atriplex lentiformis* seems to have 'lumped' *Atriplex lentiformis subsp. breweri* into oblivion. In a search of the Consortium of California Herbaria website at the CCH2 gateway for the collections made by Brewer, 69 herbarium sheets were found, and none of them listed Brewer as the authority who described and named the plant. This is probably because all of Brewer's academic training and career up to this time was in chemistry, and definitely not botany, and the main thrust of the 1860-1864 expeditions was geology. (Editor's Note: Yaaay!)

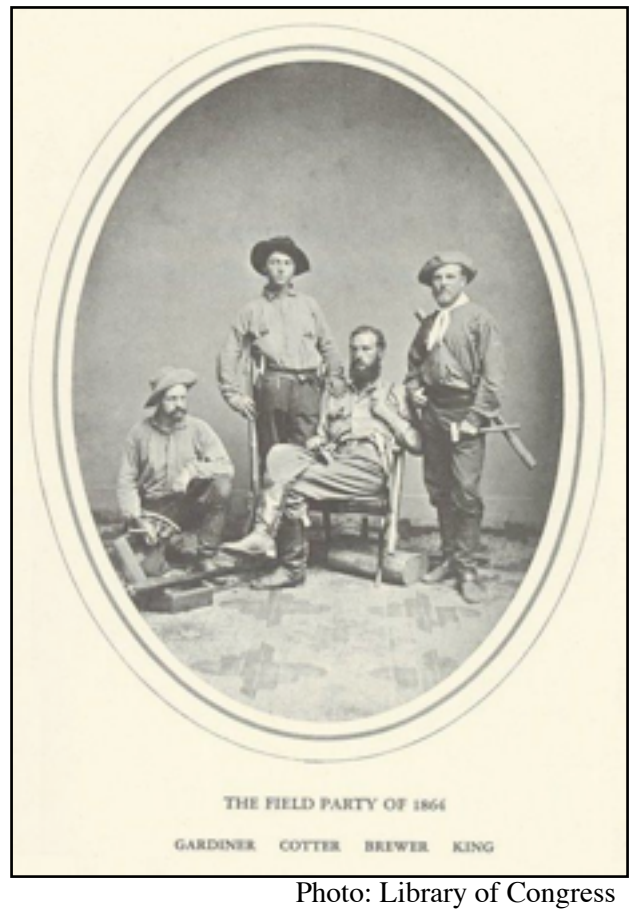
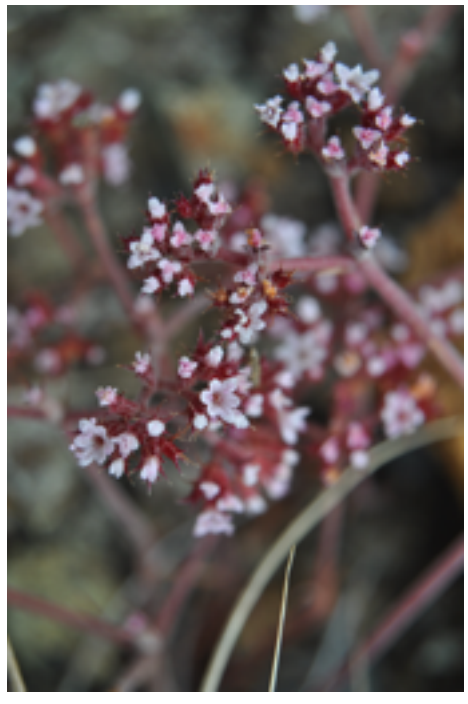
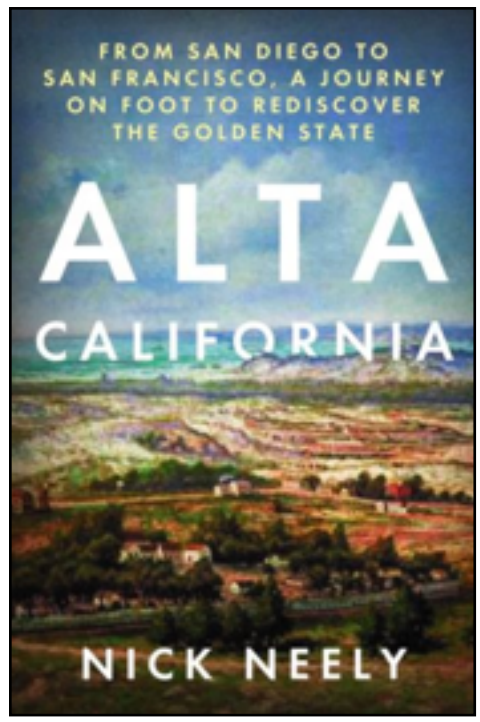


Photo: Library of Congress



(Left) *Packera breweri* (photo: Craig Cunningham from Stadium Park, Atascadero); (Center) *Chorizanthe breweri* (photo: David Chipping, Froom Creek trail); (Right) *Monardella brewer*i (photo: David Chipping Avenales Ranch, Pozo)

The Portola-Serra Expedition saved by Madrone?



I would like to introduce you to a fascinating book by Nick Neely, which is an account of his long hike from San Diego to San Francisco following the route of the Gaspar de Portola - Junipero Serra expedition of 1769. Father Juan Crespi made copious notes of what the expedition saw on the way, and was one of the first three diarists to describe the interior areas of Alta California.

Like most adventurers of the time, the expedition had no knowledge of the importance of vitamin C in countering the effects of scurvy. It was the curse of mariners on long voyages, although the curative effects of citrus had been noted by the early 1500s. Early symptoms are malaise and lethargy. After one to three months, patients develop shortness of breath and bone pain. Myalgias may occur because of reduced carnitine production. Other symptoms include skin changes with roughness, easy bruising and petechiae, gum disease, loosening of teeth, poor wound healing, and emotional changes (which may appear before any physical changes). Dry mouth and dry eyes similar to Sjögren's syndrome may occur. In the late stages, jaundice, generalised edema, oliguria, neuropathy, fever, convulsions, and eventual death are frequently seen. (*Lynne Goebel, MD*. "*Scurvy Clinical Presentation*". *Medscape Reference*.)

Many of the expedition members died of scurvy, and many were on their last legs, unable to walk, when the expedition reached the Bay Area. Luckily, madrone was in fruit, and lacking much else to eat, the berries were eaten in large quantities. An almost immediate recovery resulted, nobody died, and the group went on the 'discover' San Francisco Bay. DC

The Pacific madrone (*Arbutus manziesii*) native to the west coast from Vancouver Island to California. A member of the Ericaceae, the Heath Family, the flowers are similar to those of manzanitas (bottom right), but the fruit hangs in panicles and resembles that of toyon (above). The fruit is meant to be pleasant to taste, according to Nick Neely, although I make no recommendations and urge caution in species identification before chowing down on any berries you might find. The picture of Father Serra is Public Domain, of plants by David Chipping.

GOT THE MADRONE MUNCHIES?

I was sort of surprised in the number of madrone-containing food items available. A tea can be made from the bark, which apparently tastes as follows: "*The taste of madrone bark tea is like a combination of cinnamon, mushrooms, wood, tannin and something else I find hard to pinpoint; a zephyr of fruitiness is the best I can come up with*." Hank Shaw (https://honest-food.net/experiments-with-madrone-bark-tea/). Do a web search on "recipe with madrone". DC

Coastal Climate and the California Current: Modeling the Effects of Future Climate Change on Coast Range Flora.

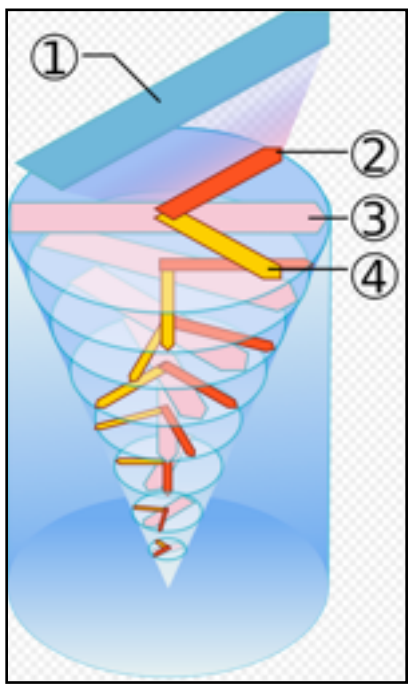
The California Current is a largely wind-driven current that is the eastern side of the counterclockwise North Pacific Gyre. It is generated by the generally eastward wind direction of jet-stream-governed airflow coming up against the North American continent and diverted southward. For California's coastal flora that generally enjoys a cool summer climate, the important feature about the current is an associated upwelling of cold, nutrient-rich waters from the ocean depths. This cold water forms a band about 20 miles wide, creating the famously chilly waters along our coastline and, most importantly, cool air and fog. This in turn accounts for the major floral differences between the western and eastern Coast Ranges.

The upwelling is generated by the Ekman Effect, in which waters driven southward and into the higher surface rotational velocity of the planet as latitude decreases tends to bend to the west and away from the coast. This is the Coriolis Effect. Cold water upwells to replace this displaced surface water.

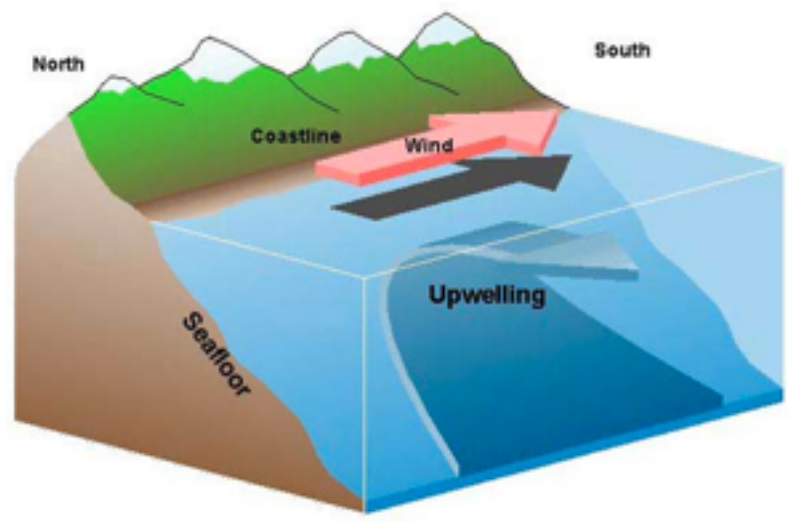
Early predictive models on global warming seemed to show that a greater temperature differential between the more rapidly warming continent and the ocean would induce stronger winds along the coast, thus actually increasing upwelling and making the coast as cool, or cooler. Models also suggested deeper penetration of fog into the interior, like the process that sucks the fog through San Francisco Bay when the Central Valley heats up.

However, Terri Cook, in *Geophysical Research Letters (May 2017)*, summarizes the recent model, by Brady and others in the same journal, that suggests that earlier models break down for central California, bringing more intense upwelling in the spring, but less intense upwelling in the summer when we most need it. Northern California, and the fog-drip-dependent coastal redwood forest, will still be cooler, but we on the Central Coast may suffer a warmer and less foggy summer.

This will make heat-induced plant mortality more of a threat. However, they suggest that the signal-to-noise ratio will not make anthropogenic changes evident until the second half of the century.



(Left) ① The dominant wind drives ② water in the same direction, but combines with ④ the Coriolis Force to drive the offshore current ③

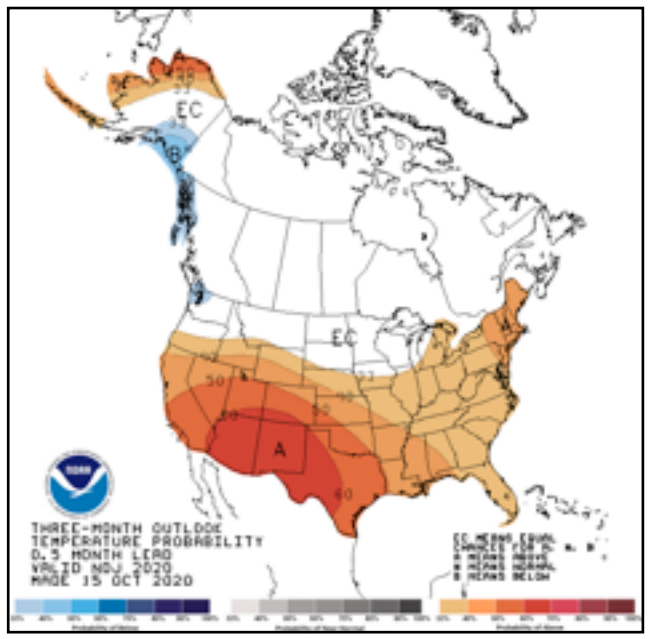


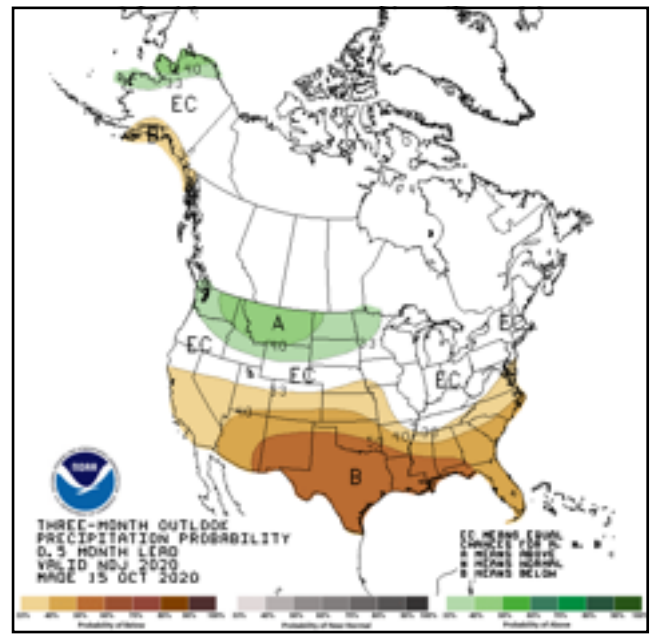
(Right) These displaced surface waters are replaced by cold, nutrient-rich water that wells up from below. Figure modified by D. Reed from image by J. Wallace and S. Vogel, El Niño and Climate Prediction . *Image courtesy of Sanctuary Quest 2002, NOAA/OER.*

(Below left) Fog banks up against the coast at Montana de Oro State Park. (Below right) The Bishop pine forest of Montana de Oro is dependent on fog drip. Photos: David Chipping

The Shorter Term 3-Month Weather Forecast: Hotter & Drier

If the distant future of weather is a bit uncertain, the NOAA predictions for the next three months is very likely to be correct. While dealing in probabilies and not certainties, they show that we have a 40-50% chance of being warmer, and a 0-10% chance of being drier. Gardners should plan accordingly. Recycle as much water as possible and collect roof runoff.





We've added many more plants to our online sale!

Pick up your plants **November 07 from 9am - Noon** at the CNPS pickup location off Broad Street in San Luis Obispo. (Note: there is no actual address for this location. It is at the east end of Francis Street in San Luis Obispo, behind Rizzoli's Auto Repair. Please park on Francis St. while picking up plants.)

GPS coordinates for Pick-up location: Lat: 35.266967 degrees, Long: -120.651302 degrees.

Please only place your order if you are able to pick up your plants on

November 07 between 9am and Noon

There are no options for other pickup times/dates or for shipping these plants. Please only order if you plan to pick up during that window.

BONUS!

Our SEEDS, BOOKS, and T-SHIRT SALES TABLE will be at the Pickup location

And everyone picking up their plants gets 10% off!

The chapter's Book and T-shirt Sales Table will be setup at the online plant sale pickup location on Nov 7 from 9am to Noon only. This is an opportunity to purchase native plant gardening, plant identification and local outdoor trail guide books, as well as T-shirts. We will be outdoors with face masks and social distancing required to ensure everyone's safety. Pick up a book you wish you had or tackle your holiday gift list and receive a **10%** discount as a thank you for supporting our online sales. Purchase with a debit or credit card is preferred. If you have any questions regarding books or T-shirts, send us a note at info.cnpsslo@gmail.com.

A Big Thank You

Please forgive the tardiness of this note of thanks. Due to a number of overlapping issues, we were not able to update the membership file, and so this list of wonderful people extends back to April of 2019. You are the lifeblood that keeps us going.

New Members

Tim Bean, James Cowan, Kristina Demirchyan, Janice Elliott, Ryan Fisher, Melissa Hill, John-Paul Leonardo, Katherine Marlow, Jodie Nelson. Marianne Palmer, Shirin Shamloo, Dori Triplett, Janis Triplett, Jennifer Von Reis Saari, Sadie Weller, Matthew Wheeler, Nikolas Wianecki, Michael Williamson, Annie Yakutis

Renewing Members

Katherine Brown, Gwenn Abrams, C. Warren Arnold, Jesse Arnold, Kathryn Bay, Robin Bradley, Merry Bridges, Jean Burns Slater, Mike Caouette, Michael Casey, Catherine Chambers, Andrea Chavez, Patricia Cullinan, John Evarts, Ted Fainstat, Francesca Fairbrother, Nancy Fitzhugh, Chuck French, Connie Geiger, Scott Goldstein, Susan Halpin, Gail Hammerschmidt, Marlin Harms, Sandra Heller, Judith Hemenway, Scott Hennessy, Bruce Heublein, Lawrence Hickenbotham, Russell Hodin, Susan Hood, John Hood, Dan Hooper, Judy Johnson-Williams, Michael Keeshen, Cheryl Kershaw, Tamara Klug, Jacqueline Knowlton, Craig Knox, June Krystoff-Jones, Gail Lampert-Thomas, Amy Levine, Lisa Ludovici, Ruth Madocks, Jean McBride, Marilyn Miller, Esther Miller, Robin Mize, Kate Montgomery, John Moule, Karen Muschenetz, Karen Osland, James Patterson, Elliott Paulson, Sarah Raskin, Jennifer Roe, Kristie Scarazzo, Natalie Schaefer, Kathy Schartz, Gary Schoolcraft, Amy Sinsheimer, James Smith, Jan Surbey, Doug Tait, Zachary Tanner, Julie Thomas, Bonnie Thompson, John Veres, Nancy Wicks, Justin Wood, Annie Zell

Shell Creek 2017: David Chippng

Remember.. you are notified about our newsletter's availability for download, special activities, and breaking news by email, so make sure you go to our website and register your email address. The printed version of Obispoensis has been discontinued.

THE GOOD PEOPLE WHO MAKE THE CHAPTER 'HAPPEN' AND HOW TO FIND THEM

President
Melissa Mooney
mjmoon@charter.net

Vice President
Kristen Nelson
kristenkmn@gmail.com

Secretary
Cindy Roessler
skantics@gmail.com

Corresponding Secretary
Marti Rutherford
slomire@msn.com

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

Chapter Council Rep.
Melissa Mooney
mjmoon@charter.net

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

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

Education
OPEN
YOUR NAME HERE?

Field Trips
Bill Waycott (805) 459-2103
bill.waycott@gmail.com

Retail Sales Manager
OPEN
YOUR NAME HERE?

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

Invasive Plants Control
Mark Skinner
mskinner@coastalrcd.org

Membership
LynneDee Althouse
LynneDee@althouseandmeade.com

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

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

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

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

Horticulture & Plant Sales
John Doyle (805) 748-7190
doyle5515@sbcglobal.net

Publicity & Web Master
Judi Young
judi@judiyoung.com

Hospitality
OPEN:
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Chapter Publications
Matt Ritter
mritter@calpoly.edu

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