

---

# *Obispoensis*

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

---



November 2025

## Douglas's Nightshade *Solanum douglasii*

**About the Cover:** The plant in this issue is one of the many kinds of plants known as nightshades. This common name is generally applied to species in the extremely large genus *Solanum*, which has over 1500 species. Nightshades vary in habit from annual herbs to small tree-like shrubs. They have flowers bearing fused petals that arise from a very short hidden tube. Because the petals often flare out at a right angle from the top of the tube, the flower appears to have the form of a rimless wheel. This shape, botanists refer to as **rotate**. Nightshades have a fleshy fruit resembling a small tomato (*S. lycopersicum*) and are termed a **berry** by botanists. The color of flowers and fruits vary among the species. Bonnie's drawing of a nightshade is of a perennial with white to pale violet flowers and fruits that ripen from green to black. Its scientific name is *Solanum douglasii*. Because there are many similar species, and because they resembles the very common, cosmopolitan, weedy species, *Solanum nigrum*, all are generally referred to by the same common name, black nightshade. However, the common name for *S. douglasii* is green spot nightshade. This refers to some tiny green spots (easily missed but seen in our cover photo) at the base of the corolla lobes. In our area there is a similar but less common, more delicate, smaller flowered, annual black nightshade that is currently given the name *S. americanum*. In Dr. Hoover's original SLO County Flora it is *S. nodiflorum*.

Both the annual and perennial species discussed above are closely related enough to interbreed and produce hybrids where both species coexist in habitat suitable for both. Once, I came across two nightshade species growing together in a disturbed area in the late fall. The individual plants varied not only in physical characteristics but also lifespan. Some individuals were already dead or barely alive while others in various levels of health. In other words, not only were the individuals showing a full range of variability between the two species in morphology (which they did), they were also varying from truly annual (dead) to fully perennial (healthy). This was a classic hybrid swarm and showed that not only the physical characteristics form a continuum between the two hybridizing species, but also so does the lifespan.

The genus name, *Solanum*, is derived from the Latin *Solamen*, which means to quiet and refers to the presence of a gallery of  $\pm$  quieting alkaloids, especially glycoalkaloids. In their native forms, glycoalkaloids are an irritant, but when partially digested they break down into harmless sugars and steroidal alkaline aglycones that cause major disruptions of nervous system function. Each species has its own mixture of glycoalkaloids, and whichever predominates will dictate which symptoms predominate. The glycoalkaloids are in any green plant tissue such as leaves and stem, but they are particularly concentrated in green fruits. It is interesting to note that in some species, totally ripe fruit does not contain any poisons and therefore can be eaten raw (i.e. tomato). However, I think it would be better for the berries to be cooked into pies or made into jams or jellies as cooking tends to destroy the alkaloids. I also recommend caution in eating fruit from any wild member of the genus *Solanum* unless you are sure it's one of the nonpoisonous ones.

I am going to ask everyone to go and study Bonnie's drawing again. What is weird about the plant as drawn? Bonnie was absolutely accurate in her depiction of the plant, so it is the plant that seems to be violating basic plant anatomy. Have you figured out what is weird yet? The most prominent violation is where the most prominent inflorescence is attached to the stem. It is inserted into the middle of the region between inflorescence attachment which should arise from the node where the leaves are attached. But, in the drawing, it arises from the internode where there are no cells capable of dividing and producing an inflorescence existing at this location. Also weird are the cluster of different sized leaves attached at the same position on the same stem. The portion of a stem where a leaf is attached is a node. If a plant has alternate leaves, which nightshades are reported to have, there should only be one leaf attached at each node. If the arrangement is opposite (two leaves per node) or whorled (three



or more leaves per node), all the leaves should be identical. What's happening? One possible hint might be that the stem is not round in cross section but variously ridged. This probably means that a given leaf or inflorescence will start at a node, but stay attached to or embedded within the stem for a distance covering one or more node before it will finally separate. The largest leaf of a node is probably the one that belongs at that node. The inflorescence is easier to explain. The base of the inflorescence stalk (peduncle) arises out of the end of one of the wings. So, it too began at the leaf bud at the node directly below it. It then continued halfway up the internode where it separated to form the inflorescence. It's plants like this that drive beginning botany students up the wall.

**Dr. Dirk Walters**

**Editor's Musings on Nightshade:** So why do we think of these plants as 'deadly nightshade' ? There is a European and Asian member of the Solanaceae that owns up to the name 'deadly', and it is *Atropa bella-donna*. The plant is extremely toxic if leaves and berries are ingested or even handled. Wikipedia notes "*These toxins include atropine, scopolamine, and hyoscyamine, which cause delirium and hallucinations, and are also used as pharmaceutical anticholinergics. Tropane alkaloids are of common occurrence not only in the Old World tribes Hyoscyameae (to which the genus Atropa belongs) and Mandragoreae, but also in the New World tribe Datureae—all of which belong to the subfamily Solanoideae of the plant family Solanaceae.*" The Jepson Herbarium and CalFlora do not mention any escape of this plant into the wild, but in case you see the fruit as single large berries and not clusters of smaller berries, maybe give the plant a 'pass'.

...and speaking of nightshades and *Solanum*, my favorite is *Solanum umbelliferum* var. *xanti*, or *Solanum xanti*, according to your taxonomic desires, and which can be found in bloom most of the year. Called appropriately 'purple nightshade', the species name '*xanti*' seemed to me to be a bit of puzzle if searching for a latin root for the name. Another SLO county plant that bears the name is *Chorizanthe xanti*, and it turns out both are named after a Hungarian, János Xántos.

The Smithsonian Institute Archives state "*János Xántus (1825-1894) was a Hungarian exile and zoologist who collected specimens in America and Asia. He was born in Csokonya, Hungary, on October 5, 1825. He initially studied law, but joined the Hungarian Army after Hungary attempted to break from Austria. Xántus was captured and imprisoned, managing to escape to Saxony a year later. He came to the United States in 1851 and began traveling across the United States working in a variety of jobs to earn a living. Xántus enlisted in the US Army in 1855. During his time in the service he began collecting natural history specimens. With the encouragement of Army Medical staff member, he began collecting for the Academy of Natural Sciences of Philadelphia. He began a correspondence with Spencer F. Baird, Assistant Secretary of the Smithsonian Institution, in 1857. With Baird's encouragement, Xántus collected extensively in California during the mid-1850's for the US National Museum, while he was stationed at Fort Tejon, California, as a hospital steward.*"



## Baneberry (*Actaea rubra*) can be berry berry bad, and you can wind up 'berried'

From Bacon, A.E. (1903). "An Experiment with the Fruit of Red Baneberry". *Rhodora*. 5 (51): 77-79.

"At first there was a most extraordinary pyrotechnic display of blue objects of all sizes and tints, circular with irregular edges; as one became interested in the spots a heavy weight was lowered on the top of the head and remained there, while sharp pains shot through the temples. Then suddenly the mind became confused and there was a total disability to recollect anything distinctly or arrange ideas with any coherency. On an attempt to talk, wrong names were given to objects, and although at the same time the mind knew mistakes were made in speech, the words seemed to utter themselves independently. For a few minutes there was great dizziness, the body seeming to swing off into space, while the blue spots changed to dancing sparks of fire. The lips and throat became parched and the latter somewhat constricted; swallowing was rather difficult; there was intense burning in the stomach with gaseous eructations, followed by sharp colicky pains in the abdomen and also pain across the back over the kidneys. The pulse rose to 125, was irregular, wiry, tense; the heart fluttered most unpleasantly. These symptoms lasted about an hour and were followed by a feeling of great weariness, but in three hours from the time of taking the dose all seemed to be again normal".



*Actaea rubra* Coon Creek  
Chapter Photo Collection

## One more scary, spooky plant for the Halloween witches cauldron- *Senecio elegans*

A relatively recent arrival on the sandy soils of coastal terraces in San Luis Obispo County is purple groundsel, *Senecio elegans*. The plant is endemic to the southern tip of Africa. Why do I call it spooky? Because the beauty is deceptive, as the plant is loaded with pyrrolizidine alkaloids. Put some of this in your salad to make it pretty, and say goodbye to your liver, lungs and kidneys.

It turns out nearly all members of the genus *Senecio* have this property, which was developed to ward off browsing animals. Besides this plant, there are five other members of the genus in the county.





**DISCOUNTED MEMBERSHIP AVAILABLE IN-PERSON AT THE PLANT SALE**

**CNPS Members enjoy native plants all year long!**  
*through events, publications, nursery discounts, and workshops*

**Become a member today for just \$30!**

*40% off the regular membership price*

Your membership includes:

- Quarterly issues of the inspiring *Flora* magazine
- Discounts at select nurseries
- Local events and connections through our chapter



Or visit:

[bit.ly/JOINCNPS](http://bit.ly/JOINCNPS)



Looking to renew your membership? Visit [CNPS.org/renew](http://CNPS.org/renew)

# Chapter Monthly Program

## Thursday, November 6th, San Luis Obispo Vets Hall

(corner of Mill St. and Grand Ave)

Keying Workshop 6pm, Social Gathering 7pm; Business and Program Starts 7:30pm.

### David Chipping

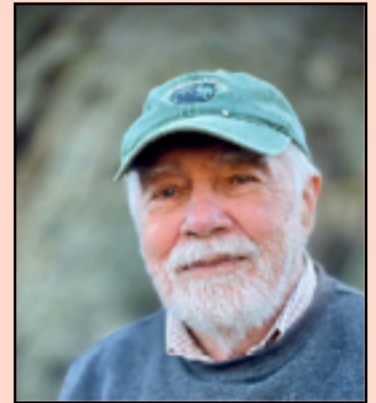
Emeritus Professor of Geology, CalPoly

### Two Seasons in the Eastern Sierra Nevada

The talk will feature the spring wildflowers of the Sierra slope west of Lone Pine, centering on the Whitney Portal Trail. This will be followed by an appreciation of fall color north of the Sherwin Grade, including Convict Lake, McGee Creek and Rush Creek below Silver Lake.



David Chipping was educated at Cambridge University before coming to the USA to earn a Masters and Doctorate in Geology from Stanford University. He joined the faculty of Cal Poly in 1971 teaching geology, finally retiring in 2013. He is currently the president of the Friends of the Carrizo Plain, and has served various positions on the SLO chapter board since joining in the late 1980s. He has served as the last unpaid State Conservation Director, and is a Fellow of the Society.



## CNPS-SLO Mini-Keying Workshops: Ferns!

- ❖ Free pre-meeting keying workshop using the Vascular Plants of SLO County
- ❖ November 6, 2025, 6-7pm; SLO Vets Hall
- ❖ Facilitated by Dena Grossenbacher
- ❖ Learn about key characteristics to identify fern species and practice keying locally collected specimens
- ❖ Participants provide their own hand lens, headlamp, dissection tools
- ❖ We will provide extra tools and copies of relevant key



Photo: *Adiantum jordanii* by Mary Merriman (2016)

## Will YOU Help Our Chapter?

Our CNPS San Luis Obispo Chapter is an all-volunteer organization. We rely on the dedication of volunteers to advance our mission of preserving California's native plants. The Chapter's offerings to its membership (e.g., field trips, programs, plant sales, newsletter), as well as the essential public role of education and advocacy for local flora, is directly tied to the enthusiasm, energy, and time of its volunteers. Some of our most faithful and effective volunteers have been busy serving on the Board of Directors and making the Chapter the excellent organization that it is for multiple years, even decades; some have been essentially serving since our Chapter's inception (looking at you, Neil Havlik and Dirk Walters).

CNPS-SLO connects people to our local natural places to enrich their lives and build community support in protecting the natural world. We are most effective at this when we work on a person-to-person basis which takes the effort of a diverse group of volunteers. **Will you join us?** Here's where our Chapter needs assistance:

**Vice President:** Jacqueline Rose is stepping down in January after serving during a critical time in our Chapter, filling the VP role and allowing former VP Dena Grossenbacher to join Bill Waycott as Co-Presidents. Jacqueline brought us excellent speaker programs in the past year and pulled us into the modern age with botanical trivia at our Annual Banquet! We are now seeking a person to fill this important role in 2026 or in future years.

**Recording Secretary:** Cindy Roessler is also stepping down in January after completing seven years of dedicated service as our Secretary. She plans to focus her talents on the Chapter's website calendar and social media to widen our reach in the community. The role of the Secretary is to prepare the agenda for the five Board meetings we have each year, take notes and summarize them into minutes of the meetings. Cindy has created digital templates for minutes and agendas that the new person can use. This is a very good entry point if you've always secretly wanted to know what goes on at our Board Meetings. Cindy will be around to ease you into this role.

In addition to these elected Board positions, there are many other ways to help. If you enjoy interacting with people, we need your smiling face behind our CNPS table at various public events. If you enjoy shopping at our native plant sales, consider volunteering some time to help make them happen. If you enjoy walking or biking with friends in nature, consider serving as a fieldtrip leader. Contact us at [sanluisobispo@cnps.org](mailto:sanluisobispo@cnps.org) if you'd like to volunteer your skills, whatever they may be. Better yet, come to our upcoming November 6<sup>th</sup> meeting at the SLO Vets Hall, meet some of our current (and former) Board members and Committee Chairs, and ask questions about the open positions. Our ability to remain effective and vibrant as a CNPS Chapter depends on members who are more actively involved. Please consider being that type of member and keep our organization going. Let us know how you'd like to help, and we will find a place for you.

With appreciation, **The 2025 Nominations Committee**

**Erratum: Page 2, 2<sup>nd</sup> paragraph of the September 2025 *Obispoensis* mistakenly dated Dr. Robert Hoover's letter (soliciting people to become CNPS members to form a new local chapter) as January 1986. The letter was actually dated January 1966. Our SLO Chapter was subsequently formed that year. The editor needs better glasses.**

### Lichen of the Month- *Hypogymnia gracilis*



*Hypogymnia gracilis* is known as a tube lichen, bone lichen, or pillow lichen. It is distinguished by swollen lobes that are usually hollow, and is found growing on the bark of chaparral shrubs. The photo was taken in Morro Dunes Ecological Reserve, and collections have been made from Los Osos Oaks Reserve, Los Osos Elfin Forest, Nipomo Regional Park and Cuesta Ridge. It is not very common in those locations. The species is mostly found fairly close to the coast, but there are some collections from Pinnacles National Park and from the Sierra Nevada. The genus has a worldwide distribution. The genus name reflects the fact that the lower surface of the thallus is bare of any attachments to the substrate, with the 'hypo' derived from the Greek for 'under' and 'gymnia' from the Greek for 'naked'.

photo: D. Chipping

## Seed For Sale at Plant Sale

There will be seeds for sale at our fall plant sale. Lots of seeds. Thanks to the many who brought seeds to the seed exchange and left them for the sale, we have over 100 species, some that we have never offered before.

As always, I remind you that these are, for the most part, garden collected seed. This means that some seed may be hybridized. Plants grown from seed collected from cultivars cannot be called that cultivar. They will be close, but will not have the same genetic makeup of the plant giving the seed. For this reason they are not generally suited for restoration plantings, but they can be great garden plants.

Another reminder is that these seeds are not guaranteed to germinate. We do not do germination testing or look for viable embryos. We just collect and clean as best as we can. It's a volunteer effort, not a commercial one. The seeds sales are a fundraiser for the society's operations.

Sometimes I am asked how many seeds are in a packet. This is quite variable but generally there are tens or even hundreds of seeds. Some seeds are very tiny and some are comparatively huge. The tiniest of the seeds will be put in a little glassine bag so you don't lose them when opening the packet. The 1/16 teaspoon that we might put in the bag might hold a thousand or so seeds. I have not spent the time counting. For some species we do actually try to count them, but most are measured by teaspoons or fractions of teaspoons.

Some of the decisions on quantity are based upon how many seeds we have, but generally there will not be enough in the packet to plant a garden bed. If we have enough, you are welcome to buy multiple packets. At \$1.00 per packet, you will have enough seeds to experiment and see what works. And, with this low price, you can try multiple species with little financial outlay.

Another question concerns planting the seeds. I generally plant in pots using seed starter mix. There are some exceptions: I have had some success scattering *Clarkia unguiculata* and also *Grindelia* on the ground. Perhaps my lack of success in sowing seed on the ground is due to my lack of preparation of a good planting bed. But I find it easier, and more fun, to watch the seeds germinate in their pots and then plant them out. Some seeds need special seed treatment. The book sale table will have copies of a book I find to be a great resource: Dara Emery's Seed Propagation of Native California Plants. There is also information online for a few species; for instance I have had some success germinating the difficult *Romneya* using techniques found on YouTube.

I look forward to seeing you at the seed sale tables. And, thank you to all who donated seed. It makes it possible to have much more diversity at our sale.

**Marti Rutherford**



The October Meeting's Seed Exchange and Book Sales Tables (Photos: Mardi Niles)




## Autumn bike ride in Adelaida, Saturday, November 15th, 2025, 10:00 am

Saturday, November 15th, 2025, 10:00 am, Autumn bike ride in Adelaida, CA. Join us for a view of Fall colors along beautiful rolling hills, rural canyons, and oak woodlands. This will be a loop ride of about 2 hours with a distance of about 10 miles on a paved road. There are moderate hills along the way. Elevation gain is about 750 ft. Bring your bike, helmet, other appropriate gear and apparel, and water/snacks. Bring a lunch for a picnic after the ride. Meet at Justin Vineyards parking lot, 11680 Chimney Rock Road, Paso Robles (35.654924, -120.900850). For information and a possible carpool, contact David 805-459-9007 (Cambria) or Bill 805-459-2103 (SLO) for questions or information. Rain or threat of rain cancels.



Sign in (English) 

Iniciar sesión (Español) 

### LOOKING BACK: WHAT THE OLD NOVEMBER NEWSLETTERS TELL US

November 2015: The monthly meeting featured Rick Mathews of Madrone Landscapes who presented on the use of native plants in the garden. The Chapter was represented at a meeting on coastal erosion by the Corps of Engineers, where previous input from CNPS and from the National Estuary Program was completely ignored. There was a field trip to the upper portion of Hazard Canyon.

November 2000: The monthly meeting featured Art Cowley speaking on the Record Tree Registry. There was extensive coverage of weed issues, and the initiation of the Sudden Oak Death surveys.

November 1995: We were facing major efforts to weaken the California Endangered Species Act. Shirley Sparling led a field trip to the Morro Bay wetlands. Issues included illegal grading in the Irish Hills and potential expansion of Cabrillo Estates into rare manzanita habitat.

November 1990: Issues included revegetation at Pismo Lake and participation in a feral pig management group. The monthly meeting featured Stephen Kapa presenting on carnivorous plants. The plant sale took place at Great Western Bank in Madonna Plaza.

November 1985: No newsletter, but Chapter concerns were with the Enduro Dirt Bike routing and management of botanic resources on West Cuesta Ridge.

## Line Art in the Public Domain

Three of the four volumes of the **Illustrated Flora of the Western States** by **Abrams et. al.** can be downloaded on a page by page basis, These three links take you to the book cover, from which you can scroll through all the pages. Copy the links and paste them into your browser,

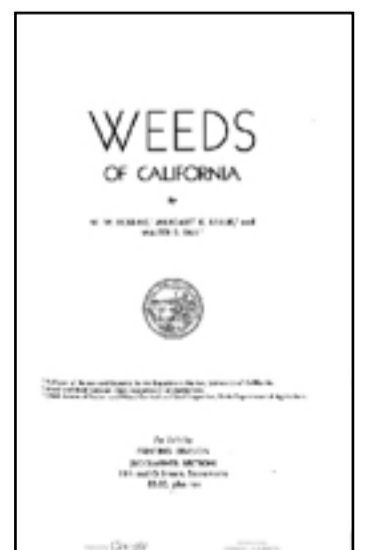
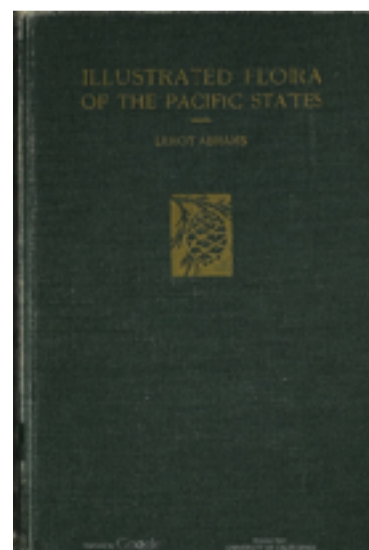
Volume 1: <https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=uc1.31175008627641&seq=1>

Volume 2: <https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=uc1.31175008055397&seq=1>

Volume 3: <https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=uc1.31175016221114&seq=1>

Weeds of California, a Bulletin of the California Department of Agriculture also has great line art, and also lots of native plants that might be weedy in nature.

<https://catalog.hathitrust.org/Record/006826230>



# The July Madre Fire on Caliente Mountain

Neil Havlik of the Carrizo Conservancy and Dirk Walters and David Chipping of the Friends of the Carrizo Plain and CNPS went with Johna Hurl, the monument's manager, to examine the effects of the fire on vegetation. As you can see from Photo 1, the valley floor was not burned east of Soda Lake Road, but, in some locations, fire reached the road. However the fire took out the red barn at Selby Camp (Photo 2), and the old barn at the KCL camp, so evidence of the past farming history of the area is vanishing.



Photo 1



Photo 2



Photo 3



Photo 4

Photos 3 and 4 are from the top of Caliente Ridge. Note the mix of green, scorched and completely blackened shrubs on Photo 3 and the large islands of unburned vegetation on Photo 4. At the level of grasses, the burn was also patchy, and there was not a lot of white ash to be seen, as this is evidence of a high temperature burn. Thus seed survival over much of the burn might be expected to be significant.

## Filling Out the Chapter's Photo Collection

As you know, we have been trying to obtain photographs of every plant, native or introduced, mentioned in Dr. Keil's SLO County flora. The flora includes introduced plants and garden escapees, but although photos of most of these can be found on CalFlora and similar sites, we are trying to create a collection that has chapter ownership rights to the photos. The subset of 'wants' below was chosen as it represents plants which are **known to bloom into November**, and this might give you reason to hunt them down. This is a small subset of our missing plant photo list, which runs to nearly 500 plants., **WE WELCOME DONATIONS OF YOUR PHOTOS TO THE CNPS COLLECTION, WHERE THEY ARE UNDER FREE USE /NONE COMMERCIAL USE COPYRIGHT AND CAN BE USED BY THE PUBLIC.**

*Ammania coccinea*  
*Amaranthus deflexus*  
*Amaranthus hybridus*  
*Amaranthus palmeri*  
*Amaranthus retroflexus*  
*Bassia scoparia*  
*Brickellia californica*  
*Cuscuta campestris*  
*Chorispora tenella*

*Crepis capillaris*  
*Deinandra kelloggii*  
*Deinandra lobii*  
*Diptotaxis muralis*  
*Diptotaxis tenuifolia*  
*Eclipta prostrata*  
*Erythranthe arvensis*  
*Euphorbia prostrata*  
*Euphorbia serpens*

*Fallopia convolvulus*  
*Glinus lotoides*  
*Holocarpha virgata subsp. virgata*  
*Limonium sinuatum*  
*Mentha canadensis*  
*Mollugo verticillata*  
*Oxybasis rubra*  
*Parnassia palustris*  
*Passiflora tarminiana*


*Persicaria maculosa*  
*Physalis philadelphica*  
*Plantago arenaria*  
*Potentilla rivalis*  
*Rorippa curvisiliqua*  
*Rorippa palustris subsp. palustris*  
*Solidago elongata*  
*Symphyotrichum defoliatum*  
*Symphyotrichum subulatum*




## Membership News



Greetings from the Membership Corner!



The following list includes members who have joined, rejoined, or renewed their membership in September or the first two weeks of October 2025. Those who have “joined” are brand new CNPS members, and we welcome you. Those who have “rejoined” were once CNPS members, took a break from membership and have now returned (welcome back!). “Renewed” members continued their membership by their anniversary date. Thank you all for your membership, your interest in the CNPS-SLO Chapter, and your dedication to California native plants. If you have any questions regarding membership, please reach out to me at: [chris.slo.cnps@gmail.com](mailto:chris.slo.cnps@gmail.com)



**Christopher Rose**

### JOINED

Aaron from King City  
Amalia from Los Osos  
Ann from Modesto  
Cynthia from Moreno Valley  
David from Shingle Springs  
David from Arroyo Grande  
Grant from SLO  
Jennifer from Pinole  
Linell from Salinas  
Sally from Cambria  
Timothy from Cupertino

Andrew from SLO  
Ashley from El Cajon  
Barbara from Atascadero  
Bernie from San Jose  
Brian from Ventura  
Cindy from Los Osos  
Cynthia from Paso Robles  
Darwin from Carlsbad  
David from Fresno  
Dessie from San Miguel  
Douglas from Ojai  
Erica from Carmel Valley  
Erin from Sunland

### REJOINED/RENEWED

Gary from SLO  
Henry from Cambria  
James from Los Osos  
John from Cambria  
John from Solvang  
Kathleen from Cambria  
Keir from Atascadero  
Kristina from Cambria  
Kristoph from Aptos  
Linda from Arroyo Grande  
Madeline from Arroyo Grande  
Marilyn from Arroyo Grande  
Mariposa from Ojai

Marlin from Morro Bay  
Mike from Santa Maria  
Monique from Fresno  
Nancy from Templeton  
Nancy from Paso Robles  
Patrick from Carmel  
Peter from SLO  
Phil from SLO  
Ray from Carpinteria  
Ruth from Salinas  
Ruth from Santa Barbara  
Susannah from San Ramon  
Suzanne from Cambria

**NEW MEMBERSHIP SPECIAL AT THE PLANT SALE.** You can join CNPS for 40% off the regular cost of an annual membership while at the Nov. 1st plant sale (see details on the plant sale in this Newsletter). That’s a new membership for only \$30! New member packages can also be purchased as a gift (make sure you have the recipient's address and email to complete the signup). Please come to the plant sale and get a membership discount!

---

## Horticulture Now

Welcome to Horticulture Now, a column which features thoughts about horticulture from past and present. You were probably expecting John to write about how perfect the timing is for spraying weeds and spreading mulch, but you're wrong. Possibly he is going to write about how to properly prepare your garden for the plants you purchased at this year’s plant sale...Nope. This month's article is going to discuss the ways to deter birds from damaging your wildflower seedlings.

Birds come to our gardens all the time. You see birds digging about, eating bugs and gobbling down weeds. Unfortunately, these same birds do not know the difference between weeds and freshly planted wildflower seedlings. Nobody wants to come home and find their hard work chewed into little shreds. What can one do?

Let’s start with discussing bird behavior and how we can use this to help deter birds. Birds are extremely afraid of moving things, so we can use that to scare them away. Products such as sparkling ribbons attached to stakes are available at retail stores. Another effective form of deterrent is a motion sensor device called Scarecrow. It is attached to a garden hose, and operates by shooting water about when the birds enter the area. This provides an additional benefit of applying water which could help germination.

Another method that I favor is to sow your seeds in areas covered with 3/4 inch of small, crushed stones. The stones protect the seeds until after germination. I then use the sparkly ribbons on the stakes to protect the new seedlings. I first saw this technique at the Santa Barbara Botanical Garden. It is effective for seedling establishment as the stones provide additional heat during the day, which warms the seedlings and helps them grow. The sparkling ribbons protect the seedlings by scaring the birds.

Lastly, many gardeners prefer cheese cloth-covered tunnels. The tunnels come in 10-, 20-, and 40-foot lengths, and can be purchased online. Tunnels also come in various widths and heights. Simply place the tunnels over your freshly sown seedling areas. Secure them with drip pipe retention steel pins. The tunnels work because they exclude birds from easily causing damage, and offer an additional benefit by keeping out insects.

In conclusion, planting a wildflower garden can be a fun family activity but birds can quickly ruin your hard work. Protecting young seedlings with various methods can greatly improve success and months of enjoyment. Until next time, happy gardening.  
**John and Suzette.**

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

**Co-Presidents**

Dena Grossenbacher  
denagrosATgmailDOTcom

Bill Waycott (805) 459-2103  
bill.waycottATgmailDOTcom

**Vice President**

Jacqueline Rose  
jacqueline.SLOcnpsATgmailDOTcom

**Secretary**

Cindy Roessler  
skanticsATgmailDOTcom

**Treasurer**

David Krause (805) 459-9007  
dkincmbriaATAolDOTcom

**Chapter Council Rep.**

Melissa Mooney  
mjmoonATcharterDOTnet

**Conservation/Legislation  
Position Open**

(Interim): David Chipping  
(805) 528-0914

**Chapter Wholesale Contact**

Linda Chipping (805) 528-0914  
lindachippingATyahooDOTcom

**Education**

Zach Tanner  
ztannerATgmailDOTcom  
Susi Bernstein  
susi.slo.cnpsATgmailDOTcom

**Horticulture & Plant Sales**

John Doyle (805) 748-7190  
jdoylelandscapingATgmailDOTcom

**Field Trips**

Bill Waycott (805) 459-2103  
bill.waycottATgmailDOTcom

**Plant Communities**

Melissa Mooney  
mjmoonATcharterDOTnet  
Cindy Roessler  
skanticsATgmailDOTcom

**Workshops**

Mindy Trask  
workshopsDOTcnpsloATgmailDOTcom

**Retail Sales Manager**

Joyce Bauerle  
whaledreamsATyahooDOTcom

**Historian**

David Chipping (805) 528-0914  
dchippinATcalpolyDOTedu

**Invasive Plants Control**

Mark Skinner  
mks333ATsbeglobalDOTnet

**Membership**

Christopher Rose  
chris.slo.cnpsATgmailDOTcom

**Rare Plant Coordinator**

Kristen Nelson  
kmmnelson.nativeplantsATgmailDOTcom

**Web Site Coordinator**

David Krause (805) 459-9007  
dkincmbriaATAolDOTcom

**Hospitality**

Lauren Brown: (805) 570-7993  
Brownlm4560ATgmailDOTcom

**Chapter Publications**

Matt Ritter  
mritterATcalpolyDOTedu

**Cal Poly Faculty  
Representative**

Dena Grossenbacher  
denagrosATgmailDOTcom

**Cal Poly Student  
Representative**

Erin Lyn Virnig  
mvrnigATcalpolyDOTedu

**Photography**

Photo Curator  
David Chipping (805)  
528-0914  
dchippinATcalpolyDOTedu

**WE ALWAYS NEED PEOPLE TO HELP OUT. OUR MISSION IS VITAL AND OUR FLORA IS AT RISK.**

Newsletter Editor David Chipping (805) 528-0914 dchippinATcalpolyDOTedu

### *Protecting California's Native Flora since 1965*

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, *Artemisia*; the quarterly *Flora*, which gives statewide news and announcements of the activities and conservation issues, and the chapter newsletter, *Obispoensis*.



*San Luis Obispo Chapter of the  
California Native Plant Society*  
P.O. Box 784  
San Luis Obispo, CA 93406



Print, Clip & Mail, or use QR Code



## *Join Today!*

- Student / Limited Income \$25
- Individual \$50
- Plant Lover \$120
- Supporter \$500
- Patron \$1,000
- Benefactor \$2,500

*I wish to affiliate with the San Luis Obispo Chapter*

*Inquiries:*

*Phone: (916) 447-2677 Fax: (916) 447-2727 (State)*  
*e-mail: cnps@cnps.org (State)*

*Websites:*

Websites: [www.cnps.org](http://www.cnps.org) (State) & [www.cnpslo.org](http://www.cnpslo.org) (Local)

New  Renewal  Gift

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_

State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail \_\_\_\_\_ \* NEEDED FOR NEWSLETTER

Please make your check payable to CNPS and mail to:  
attn Membership, California Native Plant Society, 2707 K Street, Suite 1,  
Sacramento, CA 95816-5130

GIFT MEMBERSHIP RECIPIENT

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_

State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_

Do you want CNPS to send gift recipient a postcard identifying you  
as giftor  Yes  No