



California Native Plant Society
Santa Clara Valley Chapter

THE BLAZING STAR

March-April 2007

GENERAL MEETING & PROGRAM

Friday, March 23rd at 7:30 pm
Saratoga Library Community Room
13650 Saratoga Avenue, Saratoga

Restoration of Mesopotamian Marshlands
Speaker: Dr. Michelle Stevens

We are pleased to re-schedule this program, which was postponed due to illness in January. A big thank you goes out to our January speakers Craige Edgerton and Tom Cochrane, who did a great job of filling in at the last minute.

Awareness about the country of Iraq has been a part of our lives for many years now, but what do we know of the physical characteristics of this country? Most of us picture a vast desert, but there is a surprising diversity of habitats, including a marshland larger than the Florida Everglades.

The Mesopotamian marshlands are the largest wetlands in the Middle East, covering over 7,500 square miles. Water was diverted from these marshlands, and they were drained for political reasons after the first Gulf War by the former Iraqi leadership in an astonishingly short amount of time, resulting in an eco-cultural disaster of epic proportions. Water is being returned to the marshlands, and the restoration and healing of this unique and culturally important wetland habitat has begun.

Dr. Stevens holds a Ph.D. in Ecology from UC Davis, and a Masters degree from the University of Wisconsin, Madison. She is currently initiating a non-profit organization, "Fountain of Hope", to raise scholarship and research funds for Iraqi scholars.

Directions: From Highway 85 take the Saratoga Exit (NOT Sunnyvale-Saratoga Road) and travel southwest towards the Village of Saratoga. Stay in the right lane of Saratoga Avenue. About ½ mile from the highway exit, there will be

a two-lane left turn for West Valley College at Fruitvale Avenue. Proceed through this intersection in the right lane, and take the next left turn into the library parking lot. The community room is at the front right of the library building.

CNPS general meetings are free and open to the public. For more information, contact Chapter President Kevin Bryant at mtngreen17@verizon.net or (408)353-8824.

Ken Himes Named CNPS Fellow

Longtime Chapter member Ken Himes was named a CNPS Fellow at the state Chapter Council meeting in December. Ken is the fourth Fellow named from our Chapter since 1972, following Carl Sharsmith, Gerda Isenberg, and Sally Casey. Ken has held nearly every officer and chair position in our Chapter over the last 20 years, and has been instrumental in the Chapter's efforts to preserve and maintain native plants at Edgewood Preserve.

Congratulations Ken!

Chapter Spring Flower Shows

Five Bay Area CNPS Chapters including ours, are sponsoring a booth at the **San Francisco Flower and Garden Show March 21-25**. See the story on page 4.

Our 35th Annual **Spring Wildflower Show** will be held **Saturday and Sunday, April 14 and 15**, at Mission College in Santa Clara. See page 2.

CHAPTER ACTIVITIES

Spring Native Plant Sale April 7 Call for Volunteers

Our Spring Native Plant Sale will be held on **Saturday, April 7, from 10am to 3pm** at our Hidden Villa nursery. Once again we're asking everyone who can to come and help with the sale. Most of the jobs listed below don't require expert knowledge of plants, and you can choose to work one or two hours or all day.

Before the sale, you can help during our **Wednesday** work sessions at the nursery from **noon to 3pm** (see the article later in this issue). **Special nursery work days** will also be held before the sale to help prepare the nursery and label plants for the sale. We'll work from **noon to 3pm** on **Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday, April 4, 5, and 6.**

On the day of the sale, we will need:

- People to help set up before the sale (starting at **8am**)
- People to help with parking
- People to answer customers' questions about the plants and help them decide which plants to purchase
- People who will write up the sales tags before customers go to the cashiers to pay for their plants
- Cashiers
- People who will help customers take their purchases to their cars and bring back the wagons and carts to the nursery
- People to help clean up after the sale (**3-4pm**)

The plant sales are always lots of fun to work at, and we hope you'll come and help! Lunch will be provided to volunteers, too. You do not need to sign up in advance – just come to the nursery at the time you'd like to work.

Contact information for the coordinators:

Jean Struthers (650)941-2586, JeanStruthers@aol.com
Ray Deutsch (650)365-6136, henrymarsh@yahoo.com

Directions: Hidden Villa is located on Moody Road west of Foothill College. From Hwy 280 in Los Altos Hills, take the Moody Road exit and head west. Two miles west of Foothill College, look for the Hidden Villa sign and driveway on the left. Proceed over the bridge, and park in the visitor center parking lot to your right. The Native Plant Nursery is at the greenhouse just beyond the visitor center.

Spring Wildflower Show April 14 and 15

Our 35th annual Chapter Wildflower Show will be held at Mission College in Santa Clara. Show hours are **10am to 4pm** daily in the Hospitality Management Building. Admission is free, and parking is free in Lot C, immediately next to the show location.

The show is a two-day expo showcasing the diversity and beauty of wildflowers of Santa Clara and San Mateo Counties. Over 400 species of wildflowers and native plants are displayed, each accurately labeled, many suitable

for the home garden. Knowledgeable botanists and gardeners will be on hand to answer questions. Books, posters, seeds, note cards, and other wildflower-related items will be available for purchase.

To celebrate the 35th anniversary of the Wildflower Show, many special activities are planned, including free classes on native plant identification, wildflower gardening, and gardening with native plants, and a tour of Mission College native plant landscaping.

Directions: To reach the Mission College campus, take 101 to Great America Pkwy/Bowers in Santa Clara. Go north toward Great America. Turn left onto Mission College Boulevard and then right at the first traffic light and follow the road around the campus perimeter to Parking Lot C. Drive to the far end of the lot, which faces the Hospitality Management Building. **Parking is free ONLY in Lot C.**

Wildflower Show Call for Volunteers

It takes between 75 and 100 volunteers to make the annual Wildflower Show a successful event. You need not make a major time commitment to help; **even an hour or two** will be a major contribution to the Show's success.

We need assistance in all areas before, during, and after the show, including many tasks that require no or only minimal plant identification skills. Help is needed with distributing posters advertising the show, collecting plant specimens, assisting those collecting specimens, setting up the exhibition area, keying plant specimens, placing plants and name cards on the display tables, greeting and surveying visitors, serving refreshments for all the volunteers, staffing the Chapter sales table and displays, providing plants grown in pots, taking down the exhibition area, and preparing post-show reports of plants displayed.

To volunteer please contact Wildflower Show Chair David Chapman, at (408)323-1913 or dcchapman@earthlink.net.

Native Plant Nursery

Almost all the plants for sale at the spring and fall sales are raised by Chapter volunteers during our weekly native plant nursery work sessions. The sessions take place every **Wednesday**, from **12noon to 3pm**. Bring garden gloves, sunhat, clippers, and your lunch. Other tools will be provided at the nursery. Knowledge of plants is not necessary: your willingness to help is all that's required.

For more information, contact Jean Struthers at (650)941-2586 or JeanStruthers@aol.com; or Ray Deutsch at (650)365-6136 or henrymarsh@yahoo.com.

Gardening with Natives Presentations Water Gardening & Oak Tree Care

Gardening with Natives (GWN) is a special interest group within the Chapter which meets on the first Thursday of each month, usually at the Peninsula Conservation Center (PCC) in Palo Alto (directions below). The group is open to all, and includes a mix of seasoned native plant gardeners as well as beginners. Newcomers are always welcome.

Thursday, March 1, 7-9pm, PCC Water Gardening with California Native Plants Speaker: Jeff Caldwell

Are you wondering what natives you can grow in or around your birdbath, a patio water pot or pond, a real or artificial watercourse, or in an aquarium? Would you like to attract dragonflies, damselflies, birds and other critters to your water features? Jeffrey Caldwell, horticulturist and biologist, and a consultant with native ecological restoration experience, will speak about employing our native aquatic and wetland plants in various landscape settings.

Thursday, April 5, 7-9pm, PCC Caring for California's Native Oaks Speaker: Deborah Ellis

Many of us are lucky enough to live nestled among the local oak woodlands and would like to know how to properly provide for mature oak trees. Or perhaps you would like to learn how to care for a young oak tree you've planted, or how to start a new oak woodland garden in your yard. There are different approaches to be taken with a young oak woodland garden versus a mature oak woodland garden. Learn more about oak tree care from Deborah Ellis, local Registered Consulting Arborist with the American Society of Consulting Arborists (ASCA).

Directions to the PCC: (Peninsula Conservation Center), 3921 E. Bayshore Road, Palo Alto. From Highway 101, take the "San Antonio North" exit, get immediately into the left-hand turn lane, and turn LEFT onto East Bayshore. This will curve around to the left, then right. Turn right on Corporation Way. Then turn into the first driveway on your left, which leads to the PCC parking lot. The meeting is in the Raptor Suite on the first floor, accessible from the parking lot.

For more information on the Gardening with Natives group, visit its website at www.GardeningWithNatives.com. GWN maintains a Yahoo group with 360 members, a true resource for native plant gardeners in this area. To join the Yahoo group, visit groups.yahoo.com/group/GardeningWithNatives. To contact the GWN Steering

Committee, email GardeningWithNatives@yahoo.com or call Arvind Kumar at (408)715-7020.

Native Hill - Frost and Lupines

Despite the frosts of January, most of our recent plantings at Native Hill on the Foothill College campus have survived. There was some minor damage and some loss of plants however, so we are still in the process of replanting.

Surprisingly, the annual lupines are very prolific this year, considering a severe lack of lupines last year. Ceanothus and manzanitas are presently in bloom and new growth is sprouting up everywhere.

As always, if you would like to volunteer at the garden or be added to the email list to be notified of upcoming workdays, contact Phil Higgins at phidor@juno.com or (650)941-4752.

Habitat Restoration at Edgewood Park

After ten weed filled years, Ken Himes is stepping down as overall leader of our efforts to remove invasive exotic plants and protect Edgewood's sensitive habitats. During his tenure, Ken oversaw growth of the program from 739 volunteer hours in 1995 to 3046 volunteer hours in 2006, creation of a successful yellow star-thistle mowing program, expansion of our efforts to many additional weed species, establishment of stable Wednesday and Saturday programs, and much more. Many thanks and hats off to Ken, for all his dedication and hard work!

Filling the void left by Ken will be challenging, but we're committed to carrying the program forward and continuing to build on our successes. Fortunately Ken will help lead our Wednesday evening sessions this year, so we'll have the benefit of his knowledge and experience for at least a little longer. For Friday mornings, Paul Heiple is now our official leader.

All are welcome to join our habitat restoration efforts. **Friday** morning sessions occur year-round, and start at **9am**. **Wednesday evening** sessions start at **5:30pm**, and will resume starting **March 14** after daylight savings time returns on March 11. **Saturday** sessions occur monthly during spring and summer, and start at 9am; for 2007 our sessions will be: **April 21, May 19, June 16, July 21 and, August 4**.

For details, including schedules and meeting places, see our Weed Warriors website at edgewood.thinkersrus.net, contact Paul at (650)854-7125 or pheiple@gmail.com, or email John Allen at jcakwa@earthlink.net.

Photo Group

Our Chapter Photo Group is a special interest group of members which meets on the third Monday of most months at the Peninsula Conservation Center (PCC) in Palo Alto. The Group is open to all, and includes both beginning and experienced photographers.

Our next meetings will be **Mondays, March 19 and April 16, from 7-9 pm** at the PCC. In March we'll discuss Sharing February Photo Group Outing Pictures, and in April we'll discuss 2007 Spring Photos. Bring photos to share: up to twenty slides, digital images, or prints per photographer are welcome. For more information, contact Patrick Gallagher, at (408)483-9366 or drrust@greenisles.com.

Keying with Natives

Join us on the last **Friday** of every month, from **6:30pm - 8:30pm**, in a fun gathering to meet with other native plant enthusiasts to sharpen your keying skills. The next meetings will be **March 30 and April 27** at the PCC building in Palo Alto. Contact David "Tex" Houston or Sally Casey for details. Contact David at tex009@sbcglobal.net, and Sally at (408)377-0989.

Keying plants out to insure their genus, species or sub-species is one of the best ways to better understand your local flora. Without this important skill, wonderful events like our **Wildflower Show** would not have the expertise needed to create the labels for the many plants on display. So come join the fun and learn more about keying plants and their interesting history.

San Francisco Flower and Garden Show March 21-25 -- Volunteers Needed

Five Bay Area CNPS Chapters (including Santa Clara Valley) are sponsoring a booth this year at the San Francisco Flower and Garden Show at the Cow Palace: www.gardenshow.com/sf.

The show is five days long, and there are a **lot** of volunteer opportunities available! Shifts are 2-3 hours long, and admission to the entire show is free to volunteers. Contact George McRae of East Bay CNPS, at elegans@aol.com or call (510)233-7374.

EDUCATION NEWS

Graduate Student Scholarships

Our Chapter is again offering scholarships to graduate students doing research on plant systematics, plant ecology,

plant physiology, plant community restoration or other related botanical studies of plants that grow in habitats in Central and Northern California. Students researching topics related to rare plants are encouraged to apply.

Two \$1,500 scholarships are available. Evaluation of student applications will focus on the stated purpose of the research, experimental design, and overall impression of the research project. Applicants should be enrolled in a graduate program in an accredited College or University and undertaking botanical research related to plants or native plant communities in Central or Northern California.

The application can be found on our website, www.cnps-scvc.org, and questions regarding the scholarship application can be emailed to Nora Monette at nmonette@aol.com. The **application deadline is March 23, 2007**.

Native Garden Resources for Teachers

Seven Trees Elementary School in San Jose recently received funding to create a native plant garden, thanks to the efforts of teacher Larry Volpe and Gardening With Natives member Agi Kehoe. The grants came from multiple sources, including the Keep San José Beautiful Beautification Grant Fund. Special thanks go to Agi for her many volunteer hours in drawing up the conceptual design, working on site, and supervising the project.

Even as we look for a volunteer chair to help teachers with school garden projects, our Chapter does have a new online group to discuss establishing school native gardens. The egroup has many people with years of experience in this area. Newbies are encouraged to join and ask questions. Visit groups.yahoo.com/group/cnpsScvEducation.

A second resource is our Chapter website section, entitled School Native Plant Gardens and Nature Areas. Go to the home page, at www.cnps-scvc.org, and click on the School Programs link.

CONSERVATION NEWS

Marsh Ecology Short Course

Our Chapter is co-hosting a Marsh Ecology Short Course at the PCC, **Thu-Sat, March 22-24, 9:30 am - 4:30 pm**.

Dr. Peter Baye will provide an overview of tidal marsh plants and communities, historic and modern, of the San Francisco Bay Estuary, in slide lecture and field trips to representative marshes and wetlands.

Dr. Howard Shellhammer will discuss the historical depth and character of South San Francisco Bay and the effects of sea level rise on salt pond restoration and levee design. Thursday's class will include a short field trip to the Palo Alto Baylands Marsh.

Clyde Morris will present an overview of the South Bay Salt Pond Restoration.

Course and materials fee is \$75. For further information, contact Libby Lucas at JLucas1099@aol.com or (650) 948-3552. Co-sponsored with Citizens Committee to Complete the Refuge. **To sign up**, make checks payable to CCCR and mail to 453 Tennessee Lane, Palo Alto, CA 94306.

Butterfly Returning to Edgewood

By Carolyn Strange, *Friends of Edgewood*

Edgewood Natural Preserve is renowned for its spring wildflower displays, but this year's buzz will be about what's fluttering above and munching below. Edgewood's famous butterfly is coming home.

Neither big nor showy, the Bay checkerspot butterfly (*Euphydryas editha bayensis*) ranks among the most studied insects in science. And Edgewood owes its status as a preserve to this butterfly, federally listed as threatened in 1987. But legal protection didn't stop an insidious chain of events that ultimately wiped it out at Edgewood, its last stand in San Mateo County. It was gone by 2003. The butterfly holds on at Coyote Ridge in Santa Clara County.

Backed by government agencies and advocacy groups, ecologist Stuart B. Weiss Ph.D., worked to not only understand the Edgewood extinction, but also reverse it. "It's time for a win on the endangered species front," Weiss says. Nutrient-poor serpentine soils usually thwart nonnative plants, providing havens for natives. But Weiss found that Italian ryegrass (*Lolium multiflorum*) was taking over, crowding out critical caterpillar food, California plantain (*Plantago erecta*). Ryegrass encroached because soil chemistry shifted. Vehicle emissions from nearby Highway 280 deposit nitrogen, effectively fertilizing the soil, and tipping the plant community balance. Weiss dubbed it "drive-by extinction."

Fortunately, well timed mowing effectively tips the balance back. Now, nearly 15 acres stand ready to host a homecoming. This winter, Weiss will transfer caterpillars from Coyote Ridge. In April he'll bring up some butterflies too. Docents will be sharing this exciting and hopeful story, in addition to interpreting Edgewood's natural features during **weekend wildflower walks**. See the

enclosed flyer for details, and join us in welcoming the butterfly home.

CHAPTER FIELD TRIPS

Chapter field trips are free and open to the public. They are oriented to conservation, protection and enjoyment of California native plants and wildlife, and we adhere to all rules and guidelines for the lands on which we are visiting.

In our region it is very important to be prepared for hiking on rugged & steep terrain, wide temperature ranges and rapidly changing conditions at any time of year. All participants should wear sturdy footwear and carry sufficient water, sun protection, food, clothing layers, personal first aid and other supplies you may need. If you have any questions about your ability to participate in a particular field trip, please contact the trip leader in advance.

Mar 4 Sun 10:30am Henry Cowell Redwoods

Join trip leader Kevin Bryant on a hike that slices through a portion of the Santa Cruz Mountains that contains many different plant communities over a relatively short distance. We'll traverse an uncommon type of mixed evergreen forest, inland marine sand hill habitat, a rich redwood forest (including a visit to the old growth area of the park), and a beautiful old growth sycamore grove along the San Lorenzo River. The trip will be less than 6 miles and will involve a brief car shuttle so that most of the trip will be downhill (with some brief steady uphill).

We'll meet at **10:30am** in the Safeway parking lot on the corner of Mt. Hermon Rd. and Graham Hill Rd. The trip is expected to last until **4pm**.

Directions: from San Jose, take Hwy. 17 to the Mt. Hermon Rd. exit. Turn right at the light off the exit, and continue through Scotts Valley to the end of Mt. Hermon Rd. in Felton. Turn left onto Graham Hill Rd. and left at the next driveway into the Safeway lot. We'll meet in the area of the parking lot closest to Graham Hill Rd. (farthest from the store). If you have any questions, please contact Kevin at mtngreen17@verizon.net, or (408)353-8824

Mar 11-16 Sun-Fri California Desert Adventure

Steve Hartman (recall that Steve brought the desert to our May 2006 program meeting) will be leading a multi-chapter week-long trip to explore the far southern California deserts including Anza-Borrego Desert State Park, the Algodones (Imperial) Sand Dunes, and the Chocolate Mountains vicinity.

Even though the annual wildflowers may be sparse this year, we will still find many perennials such as elephant tree, crucifixion thorn and the unique plants of the Algodones Dunes.

Join us for the whole trip, or drop in any time you are able to. Destinations Sunday-Wednesday are for all vehicles. Camping and travel on Wednesday night, Thursday and Friday require off-road 4-WD vehicles.

For trip details or to **reserve your spot**, contact Steve at naturebase@aol.com or leave a message at (818)881-3706.

Mar 16-18 Fri-Sun Carrizo Plain

Join members Carolyn Dorsch and Michael Yantos for a spring exploration of central California, including the Carrizo Plain National Monument.

This will be a joint trip with the Desert Survivors conservation group in an exploration of flora and fauna. Easy car stops and short hikes. Explore grasslands, see spring blooms, Soda Lake playa, evidence of San Andreas fault and possibly Painted Rock and Caliente Ridge. Camping Friday and Saturday.

Contact Carolyn Dorsch at cdorsch1@aol.com, (650)322-0955) for a trip information sheet or to **sign up**.

Mar 24 Sat 10am Butano Park from Gazos Creek

Join leaders Ken Himes and Steven Smith to explore a new trail in Butano State Park. The Candelabra Redwood Trail was completed in June 2006 and features a unique old growth redwood tree shaped like a candelabra in this gem of a State Park. This trail crosses several habitats. We will proceed on into the park to see Calypso Orchids (*Calypso bulbosa*). We will return the way we came for a total of about 5 miles. As time permits we can also look for Salmon Berry (*Rubus spectabilis*) and other flowers along Gazos Creek Road.

The hike is expected to last about five hours. The trail out will be a moderately steady climb. Bring lunch, water, and sturdy hiking shoes. Contact Ken at (650)591-8560 or Steve at (650)345-4595 or stevensmith3@rcn.com for additional details.

Directions: Take Hwy 92 to Half Moon Bay then L on Hwy 1 about 23 miles to Gazos Creek Road. Turnoff left onto Gazos Creek Road. Immediately park on the south side of the road. We will carpool from there so **be there by 10:15am**. We will go up Gazos Creek Road to a small parking lot 0.3 miles past Cloverdale Road.

Apr 1 Sun 9am Coyote Ridge Wildflowers

Join a Coyote Ridge docent on a Spring Wildflower tour sponsored by our Chapter. See the next trip below for details. To **sign up** and for directions, contact Kevin Bryant at mtngreen17@verizon.net or (408)353-8824.

Spring Wildflower Tours on Coyote Ridge

The Silicon Valley Land Conservancy, along with CNPS and Santa Clara Valley Open Space Authority, is celebrating one of the most spectacular wildflower blooms in the Bay Area by offering docent led tours to view this incredible serpentine grassland.

The associated endemic plant community on Coyote Ridge supports the largest remaining population of the threatened Bay checkerspot butterfly, as well as many rare and uncommon plant species. The interpretive hike will include discussions on endemic plant communities, the effects of air pollution on terrestrial environments, cattle grazing as a management tool and conservation through mitigation. Breathtaking views and natural history discussions will be plentiful.

Hikes begin promptly at **9am** and will conclude no later than **1pm**. Sturdy walking shoes, layered attire and binoculars are recommended. Don't forget your lunch or snacks for the picnic on the ridge!

Hikes will take place primarily on **weekends and Wednesdays in April**, with trips possibly extending into late March or early May depending on bloom time.

Driving tours are also available. For more information, contact Rebecca Sloan at (408)260-3043 or rebecca.svlc@gmail.com.

Apr 21 Sat 10am Henry Coe State Park

Join us as we scratch the surface of northern California's largest state park, located in the wild and rugged wilderness area of Santa Clara County that extends into western Stanislaus County. We will botanize a slice of this phenomenal wilderness in a less than 8 mile exploratory hike.

Expect elevation gain/loss of 1,500 ft. or less. We will plan on returning to our vehicles between **4 and 5pm**, and there is a nice casual meeting place in Morgan Hill for those of us wishing to relax and have dinner after the hike.

Contact Kevin Bryant at mtngreen17@verizon.net or (408)353-8824 for trip details, meeting location, and driving directions.

Apr 22 Sun 10am Montara Mountain

Join Toni Corelli for a walk on the west side of Montara Mountain. First we will hike along the Gray Whale Cove Trail at McNee Ranch Park. Then we will visit a coastal bluff in Moss Beach for a "special" plant visit. This will be a full day field trip and will not be expected to end until **4pm**. Learn about the unusual maritime flora of the Montara Mountain coastal region and experience many plants that only occur on the San Mateo Coast.

This is a very easy walk with little elevation gain and we will cover approximately 6 miles. Bring lunch, water, and layers.

Directions: Meet at **10am** at the Montara State Beach parking lot in Montara on Hwy. 1. It is on the west side of Hwy. 1 North (PAST) the Outrigger Restaurant.

Save the Dates:

We have two field trips coming up, to be further described in the next issue of the *Blazing Star*:

May 5-6	Morro Bay (SLO)	Spring exploration of central California's coastal region, Morrow Bay, Montana del Oro and Los Osos. Easy car stops and short hikes.
Jun 30 - Jul 6	State of Jefferson	Explore this remote part of northern California and southern Oregon. Camping or nearby motels.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

News and Activities from Other Organizations

Ulistac Wildflower Show April 7

Ulistac Natural Area in Santa Clara holds **restoration workdays** on the first Saturday and third Sunday of every month. Workday activities include watering, weeding, mulching, and planting hundreds of oaks and native plants.

For times and what to bring and wear, see the calendar at the Ulistac website, by visiting www.scu.edu/envs/ulistac, and clicking on the Volunteer link, then the Calendar link.

If our Chapter Native Plant Sale isn't enough native plant activity for you on **April 7**, consider visiting or volunteering at **Ulistac's Wildflower Celebration** taking place on the same day, from **9am to 1pm**.

Volunteers are needed for two hour segments, to help with children's activities, to lead tours of the park (training provided), to lead demonstrations (are you an expert at

something?), or to help with setup/clean up. Wildflower Celebration volunteers will receive a free Ulistac Natural Area Volunteer t-shirt!

For more information, contact Lindsey Cromwell, Ulistac outreach coordinator, at (408)554-5419 or ulistac@scu.edu.

Pinnacles Needs Weekend Weed Warriors

Join other weed pulling volunteers at Pinnacles National Monument this spring and help get rid of weedy pests such as yellow star-thistle, bull thistle, Italian thistle, summer mustard, puncture vine, and even the attractive periwinkle.

Benefits of being a Weekend Weed Warrior at Pinnacles for just a three hour shift include spending time outdoors in a wonderful place, education about weeds and the ecology of Pinnacles, snacks and refreshments, and a chance to make new friends.

For more information, contact Valerie Nuttman at (831)389-4485 ext. 272, or Valerie_Nuttman@nps.gov.

Going Native Garden Tour April 29

The 5th Annual Going Native Garden Tour will take place **Sunday, April 29, from 10am-4pm**. This free tour showcases habitat and environmentally friendly gardens with a special focus on native plant landscaping. The tour is looking for volunteers to help out at gardens on tour day; for more info. Visit www.GoingNativeGardenTour.org.

Bringing Back the Natives Tour May 6

This free tour showcases 60 Alameda and Contra Costa County gardens that feature native plants, provide habitat for wildlife, and are pesticide-free and water-conserving.

The event includes a **Native Plant Sale on May 5 and 6**, which will take place at a number of native plant nurseries, some not normally open to the public.

Volunteers are still needed to help out the day of the tour. Information and registration is at www.BringingBackTheNatives.net, or contact tour coordinator Kathy Kramer at (510)236-9558 9am to 9pm or email her at Kathy@KathyKramerConsulting.net.

<p>DEADLINE FOR THE NEXT <i>BLAZING STAR</i></p> <p>Saturday, April 7, 2007</p> <p>Email: mattsson@surfpix.net Phone: (408)255-3767</p>
--