President’s Message - Vote for new chapter board

If you are a Mojave Desert Chapter member in good standing (that is, with dues paid), you will find a ballot to vote for our chapter board members, enclosed in the printed issue, on its way to you (not online). I want to encourage all members to fill one out and send it in—we have even included the postage! This will get our new board members in place, so we can bring more speakers and field trips your way.

With rainfall totals up, it is shaping up to be a terrific spring! Consider botanizing with us as we venture to Portal Ridge (3/18), Flat Top Mesa (4/15), the Blue Cut burn site (4/22), and other trips for which you will find details inside. When you venture on your own to find new wildflower sites, we encourage you to post your information and photos on our Facebook pages (we have two: California Native Plant Society Mojave Desert Chapter and Mojave Desert Chapter of the California Native Plant Society).

A big thank you to Madena Asbell for leading the effort to rejuvenate the chapter!  

~Tim Thomas
Schedule of Trips & Events

Of our chapter, other local CNPS chapters, and other local groups
For all trips – Wear layered clothing, comfortable walking shoes, & hat, & bring plenty of food and water

- **Sat., March 18**—CNPS will join Transition Habitat Conservancy for a morning wildflower hike in Transition Habitat’s **Portal Ridge Wildlife Preserve**. Stay for live demonstrations from a falconer who will show off birds and talk about the craft—a great opportunity to interact with some amazing raptors and learn from expert handlers. Wildflower walk begins at 9 am with falconry demo at 11 am. Gate closes at 2 pm. All ages welcome. From Victorville area, take Hwy 138 towards Lancaster/Palmdale. Go left on Pearblossom Hwy, then take Hwy 14 north. Take Ave. “I” west toward the Poppy Reserve. Continue past reserve to 190th St, then start looking for the ribbons or signs to follow to the site. If you wish to carpool, meet at the Phelan Rite Aid (near McDonald’s) at 7:15. Contact Wendy at 760-220-6141 for more information.

- **Sat., March 25**—Desert wildflower & wildlife hike in Afton Canyon, part of the new Mojave Trails National Monument. Sponsored by the BLM) and led by Tom Egan of the Defenders of Wildlife and CNPS Mojave Chapter Conservation Chair. 9 am - 4 pm with camping available overnight at Afton Campground.

- **Sun., March 26**—Water Education Day, sponsored by Joshua Basin Water District, 1– 4 pm, at the Joshua Basin Water District Office, 61750 Chollita Rd, Joshua Tree. Local and regional organizations and agencies will have educational displays and information on topics ranging from rainwater catchment systems to permaculture to native plants. Our chapter will have a table at this event. The JBWD will host its annual Minerva Hoyt Native Plant Sale featuring native plants grown by the Joshua National Park Nursery from locally collected seed.

- **First week of April** – We plan to have a general meeting in the Yucca Valley/Joshua Tree area. You will receive an email about the meeting place, day/date, and time when these details become available.

- **Wed., April 12**—**Adaptations of Plants to High Elevations**, presented by Pam MacKay at the Sierra Club Mojave Group meeting at 7 pm at the Sterling Inn at 17738 Francesca Rd, Victorville. Pam MacKay and Tim Thomas will also have their new book, *Southern California Mountains Wildflowers*, available for purchase and signing.

- **Fri., April 14** – Join leader Duncan Bell on a Southern California Botanists’ trip to the Pioneertown Mountains Preserve in the Sawtooth Mountains, a small desert range on the east side of the San Bernardino Mountains in an area that has seen almost no botanical exploration until very recently. The unique flora with both desert and coastal taxa includes regional endemics such as Robison’s monardella (*Monardella robisonii*),

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the Joshua Tree poppy (*Eschscholzia androuxii*), and the Pioneertown Linanthus (*Linanthus bernardinus*), which is known only from the Sawtooth Mountains. Meet at the Pipes Canyon Ranger Station at 10 am. Contact dbell@rsabg.org for more details.

- **Sat., April 15** – Meet at 8 am for a 3-mile, easy to moderately-strenuous hike to Flat Top Mesa in the Black Lava Buttes area, part of the new Sand-to-Snow National Monument. Led by Rancho Santa Ana Botanic Garden botanist, Duncan Bell. Take Hwy 247 (Old Woman Springs Rd) to Pipes Canyon Rd. Go west 3.5 miles, then left on Curtis to the turnout on the right. Parking limited, carpools encouraged.

- **Sat., April 22**, 9 am-2 pm. Our chapter will have a table at the Earth Day Celebration at the Hi-Desert Nature Museum & Yucca Valley Community Center, 57116 Twenty-nine Palms Hwy, Yucca Valley. Local experts will be on hand to provide demonstrations on composting, gardening with California native plants, growing your own food, and recycling. Local artists will offer jewelry and hand-made crafts for sale. Maker stations will introduce you to new crafts. This family-oriented event also includes kids’ activities, face painting, live music, dance performances, and much more.

- **Sat., April 22** – Botanize the post-fire Blue Cut burn site from Swarthout Canyon to Wrightwood with Wendy Walker, Tim Thomas, and Pam MacKay. We will meet at the McDonald’s at the intersection of Highway 138 with the I-15 freeway at 9 am, then we’ll head up Cleghorn Road to Lost Lake and other stops along the way to Wrightwood. We will have lunch at the Grizzly Café and then proceed down Highway 2 and Highway 138 to the Mormon Rocks.

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**Check out the High-Desert Keepers!**

Kudos to this new conservation group whose goal is to clean up illegal dump sites in desert communities of San Bernardino County! Jennifer Foy and Scott Brown, the group’s founder, presented their plan at the High Desert Conservation Coalition Meeting in Victorville on Feb. 8th. They need support from CNPS and all conservation groups in their ambitious effort to catch illegal dumpers and make fines for illegal dumping consistent throughout all counties in southern California. Visit them on their website, highdesertkeepers.org, to volunteer and/or make donations of rakes, power tools, shovels, generators, gloves, trailers, and much more.