

CALIFORNIA NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY San Diego Chapter Newsletter

No Chapter Meeting in August

SEE YOU ON SEPTEMBER 20!

GARDEN STORIES Go Native

Thinking about spicing up your garden this Spring? Are you tired of the same old offerings that every nursery carries? Not to disparage some of the lovely Spring annuals and perennials. I also can't resist some of them for color and variety. But what if you literally "could have it all?" A beautiful, low maintenance, garden that attracts wildlife, uses very little water, has few or no pest problems is suitable to California's soil and climate, only requires a bit of deadheading and once established is almost "hands off?" No we're not talking about plastic in Paradise, but California native plants where the palette is amazing and any landscape design is possible from Japanese to Modern to Mediterranean.

California's native plants offer a unique opportunity to diversify your landscape while using plants that require no fertilizer and are easy to plant as they generally require no soil amendments. In summer your watering requirements actually go down as natives enter a sort of semi-dormancy and over watering can be a death knell. A native landscape is far from brown, scruffy and monotonous. When correctly designed a native garden can include flowering trees and shrubs, ground covers, and an amazing array of familiar perennials such as poppies, monkey flowers (*Mimulus puniceus*),

Penstemon spectabilis (showy penstemon), Dudleya brittonii (giant chalk dudleya), Lupinus succulentus (arroyo lupine), Epilobium canum (California fuchsia), Iris douglasiana (Douglas iris), Heuchera (different varieties of coral bells), and Galvezia speciosa (showy island snapdragon).

If going "all in" is too overwhelming then perhaps the next time you are replacing some annuals or perennials you'll give some consideration incorporating natives into your existing landscape. These plants will return year after year with little or no pruning just some deadheading and only require some mulch when planting. The exception to this is if you have clay soil or compacted and overworked soil. Then you'll need to add about 25% organic compost to the soil before planting. Then water like crazy, yes! This will remove the air pockets around the root ball. The first watering is the most important a native ever receives. Then, of course mulch, after applying preemergent, lay down a 3-4 inch layer of redwood bark. Pull it back 4-6" from the base of each plant so as not to smother it.

75% of your garden should be plantings in evergreens. This avoids the dead/dormant appearance. Suggested trees for this region are: Catalina Ironwood, Box Elder, Redbuds, Island Oaks, Coast Live Oaks, Desert Willows, and White Alder. Popular native groundcovers are *Ceanothus* 'Centennial' and Yankee Point.'

Of course a garden is incomplete without shrubs and screening plants. Natives reveal a rich abundance and diversity here in Manzanita, Wild Lilacs, Toyon, Elderberry, Island Mountain Mahogany, Coastal Sage, Flannel Bush, Coffeeberry, and the Island Bush Poppy.

Irrigation of natives is not complicated. They prefer moisture that is similar to rainfall. So a micro spray, not drip system, is best. If you have a drip in place it can easily be retrofitted. If your plantings are next to a lawn very likely you need do nothing. One caveat: more natives are killed especially in the summer by

over watering. This is their semi-dormant time and they may only need water every 7-10 days (even in heat).

So if you are ready to take the plunge or just put your toe in the water check with your local nurseries.

Pictorial Examples of what can be achieved with some of these colorful natives





Penstemon 'Spec.'

Encelia californica





Red buckwheat

California poppy

~ Giana Crispell **UCCE Certified Master Gardener**

BOARD MEETING

Wednesday, August 3, 6:30 - 9:00 p.m. 4010 Morena Blvd, Suite 100, San Diego (Thomas Guide 1248 C4). CNPS-SD Executive Board meetings are always the first Wednesday of the month, except when the 1st Wednesday falls on a holiday. Members are welcome to attend as observers. To add an issue to the agenda, please email president@cnpssd.org.

Seed and Bulb Sorting Party

Saturday, August 20 from 10 a.m. - noon

Mark your calendars for the seed and bulb team's next sorting parties where we sort and label seed we sell at the October Plant Sale. The meetings will be at the Tecolote Nature Center (5180 Tecolote Rd, San Diego).

Please email cnpssd.sd@gmail.com if you would like to join us! No experience necessary!

WELCOME NEW **MEMBERS!**

David Bardsley John Dechert **Brenda Bennett** Julia Haerr **Leslie Bolick Kathy Neubauer Allison Bray Rachel Snavely Rooted in Place Landscape Architecture and** Consulting

San Dieguito River Valley Conservancy

NATIVE GARDENING

Native Gardening Committee

August 10. Meets 2nd Wednesday of each month. Info: Mike Gonzales at gardening@cnpssd.org.

SAVE THE DATE Garden Native Workshop

Saturday, September 10, 2016

We are planning our day-long fall workshop (formerly symposium), so save the date! We will offer talks, hands-on sessions, and valuable information by native gardening experts. The Fall Plant Sale will follow on October 15 (see below).

Old Town Native Plant Landscape

Saturday, August 13: Work Party - 1 to 3 pm. Big and Little Plants Call for Attention.

Help us finish "renewal pruning" a large patch of Salvia mellifera (black sage). We need to do this every three to five years to reduce twigginess and height. We did about half of them in July. The pruning cuts the 5'-plus high shrub back to strong branching to about 2' high or so, so they look like very twiggy hat-racks. When cooler days and rain come in October or November, hundreds of dormant bud sites on the old twigs will produce new growth, and will have plenty of time to set buds for flowering next March.

The Landscape is at the west end of Old Town State Park at the corner of Taylor and Congress Streets. Park for free in the CalTrans lot on Taylor across from the

their percentage is going down. We are winning!

Landscape. Have sun protection and drinking water. Bring gloves and pruning tools if you have them, or share ours. Questions? Email Kay at fieldtrips@cnpssd.org

What's Happening in the Landscape

The seven 7-year old coast live oaks in the Landscape are growing fast. Three are between 15 and 20 feet high! Four however, were being tilted by the prevailing westerly winds. One has tension cracks in the lower trunk. So Peter St. Claire, Al Field, and I got loppers and pruning saws and removed some of the branches on the east sides of several trees. We also cut off some low branches that were reaching out toward the pathways, and some crossing limbs. This pruning balanced all of them a bit, but not more than 20% was removed from any one tree. I really like how they look, and how we prepared them for future growth that will be structurally sound.

The week before, another CNPS work party pruned about half of the black sages along the upper slope. We have found that the black sage colony has needed renewal pruning (taking it to around 2'+ high) every three to five years. Peter will lead a work party August 13, and I hope they will be able to complete the sage pruning at that time. It will leave the plants plenty of time to develop buds for the next cool season's growth and flowering next April.

Peter and I also talked with a Park staffer that day about how to deter the people who I call "the bums" from trashing areas. We talked about the strategies we have employed: planting thorny plants, but many have been killed by trampling; and placing large cobbles, but a lot of them have been moved.

The Park may want to again plant yuccas and agaves in the open areas near the McCoy House fence. We did it before. However, if we get lucky and the current bums don't decide to stomp them, and if the plants survive long enough to grow big, then the bums will abandon those areas. We would reclaim them!

I have come to think that this is a perpetual problem with any park, anywhere. Bums abuse them, and caretakers clean up after the bum's messes and try to claim more of the park with beauty again, and again, and again, slowly gaining against the forces of ugliness and chaos.

There are far fewer bums than there were in 2006 when we started. It is just that the actions of even a few miscreants mars the beauty of the whole place. But if you think in percentages of land used by them,

Fall Plant Sale Saturday, October 15, 2016

The plant sale committee is always looking for volunteers. We work throughout the year planning the sale. Some jobs can be done on your own time while others require volunteers to work in groups. Some of the volunteer tasks include:

- Publicizing and promoting our sale, contacting news outlets, etc.
- Coordinating food: Setting up food for the volunteers on plant sale day, soliciting donations, etc.
- Packaging and labeling seeds.
- Propagating plants help the plant propagation committee grow plants for the sale.

If you'd like to get involved with one of the chapter's largest fundraisers, please join us by sending an email to plantsale@cnpssd.org.

Pre-ordering information for this year's plant sale: CNPS members are able to preorder plants and have them waiting for you on sale day. Details will be posted on the chapter's website at the end of August.

~ Carolyn Martus, Fall Plant Sale Chair

CONSERVATIONConservation Committee

August 2. First Tuesday evening of each month. Contact **Frank Landis** at conservation@cnpssd.org for location.

Climate Change and Plant Migration

CNPS has a whole webpage full of policies, positions, and guidelines dating back to 1987 (http://www.cnps.org/cnps/conservation/policies.php). The first policy is the Policy Regarding Mitigation of Impacts to Rare and Endangered Plants, while the latest is on dealing with Phytophthora infestations in native plant nurseries. Now, as an organization, we're starting to think about a policy on plant migration and climate change.

As those who have read this column for a while know, the reason we're taking on climate change is that it's already a major part of what we deal with on the state and local level. It affects how we deal with the installation of new power plants (solar, gas, etc.), whether or not we oppose new developments, and so forth. Moreover, we were co-plaintiffs on the successful Newhall Ranch lawsuit I mentioned in January 2016, so we're dealing with climate change issues on a legal level as well. To be fair, most of what we can do legally is to tell developers and agencies to redo parts of their EIRs. Beyond that, we've got to figure out what to advocate for, what science to support, and what to teach our members and the public.

The problem with migration, which I'll get into, is that it vastly different from our existing mindset, one that we've spent so many decades fighting for. Our current working model is that plants are to be preserved where they grow, that we're not in favor of transplanting native plants as a form of mitigation, and so on. It's a static view, and unfortunately, the world is changing on us, whether we want it to or not.

Climate change poses a number of threats to plants, and I'll get to them below. Fundamentally, it means that some of California's plant species won't be able to grow in much or all of their current range. For at least some species to survive, they will need to migrate or be migrated by someone.

On the good side, the time scale of our climate problem is (hopefully!) decades. On the bad side, it will likely take years to figure out CNPS' policy on a statewide basis, because each chapter has different issues that need to be addressed. This has happened before, when our fire policy had to accommodate both northern California chapters that wanted more controlled burns in their area, and southern California chapters that wanted less. California is often too big for a one-size-fits-all policy, so it's going to take time for every chapter to figure out its needs, learn about other chapter's needs, and try to figure out how to accommodate everyone.

When talking about plant migration, there is what some term hard migration and soft migration. Hard migration is easy to explain: it's when a plant's native range no longer provides it with an appropriate climate to survive, (in terms of temperature, precipitation, days of frost, and so forth), so the species has to be moved to a new area, where it will be, yes, a nonnative, in order for it to keep from going extinct. Soft migration is where plants from the warmer end of the species' range are transplanted to the cooler end, so that when the range heats up, the species as a whole

hopefully becomes more heat tolerant. While the species will be still native, at least partially within its historical native range, this kind of proposal rightfully concerns those who believe that local native genotypes are the best, or only, way to go with native plants.

In previous episodes of climate change, like the ice ages, plants survived by migrating, even though the climate apparently changed rather rapidly. This is one thing to realize: native plants normally migrate over deep time. Not all of them do (we honestly don't know, because most species didn't leave behind known fossils), but probably a lot of them did and could migrate. The idea that they have to stay in one place eternally is based on the illusion of a constant climate fostered by a few decades of research on species that are millennia to millions of years old.

Of course it gets more complicated than that.

First, in San Diego, we have to figure out whether we should allow, or even introduce, plants native to Baja California to migrate north across the border in order to keep the species from going totally extinct. While there is a CNPS Baja Chapter, there are no US laws, regulations, or policies that allow us to deliberately plant Mexican plants in native landscapes, in parks, or preserves, or as mitigation. Given the increasing political paranoia over the border, giving sanctuary to Mexican plants migrating north is going to be tricky.

A related problem is what to do about species native to the Channel Islands. Those islands are not very large, and when they get too hot or dry for their current species, should we transplant their seeds to suitable mainland sites? Should we also transplant species from drier islands like San Clemente onto wetter islands like Santa Cruz? Should we transplant other native species (from California or Baja) onto the hottest Channel Islands, to insure that the islands don't become completely weed-covered or barren? This is a huge undertaking, as we don't know a great idea of the critical environmental requirements of most of these species (the critical requirements are those which, if they're exceeded, cause the plants die before they complete their lifecycles, and the number of individuals decreases).In at least one north coast San Diego city, some island plants like Catalina Cherry are considered non-native weeds, not to be planted in the city, so we want those plants on the mainland, we'll have to get some regulations changed too.

A third problem in San Diego is that most of our wildlife corridors tend to run more east-west than north-south, especially in the canyons near the coast.

This is great for the inland plants, because they can either migrate towards the coast (which is cooler and wetter) or the mountains (which are at least sometimes wetter). You may have heard about this idea on the Garden Native tour this spring, which highlighted east county gardens in part to give coastal gardeners an idea of what future native plant gardens might look like.

Unfortunately, it's not clear whether it's okay to let new plant species migrate into existing parks like, say, the heavily used Torrey Pines State Preserve, let alone places like Cuyamaca Rancho, with their huge and active reforestation plan. Right now it's not okay to transplant native species into parks where they don't currently occur, especially where they'll compete with or interbreed with rarer coastal or mountain species. A good example of this is my favorite Nuttall's scrub oak (Quercus dumosa), which is a coastal species, which already hybridizes with the more inland California scrub oak (Quercus berberidifolia) on the inland edge of its range. Transplanting California scrub oak into Nuttall's scrub oak range will help hybridize the rare coastal oak into extinction.

Worse, on our heavily urbanized coast, there aren't many (to my knowledge, any) north-south wildlife corridors through which animals can carry plant seeds to help the plants migrate north up the coast. If urban San Diego gets too hot for Nuttall's scrub oak, for example, if we want to save this slow-growing little oak, we'll have to carry its acorns north. This means convincing our sister chapters to the north that they need to plant our acorns in their stands of Nuttall's scrub oak and take care of our oaks when we no longer can. Decades from now, our successors may even have to plant new Nuttall's scrub oak colonies on the California central coast, if we want this species to survive climate change. This is a problem for all coastal species, from Torrey Pines down to annual dudleyas and others.

Of course it gets even more complicated than that, because it's not just climates, it's soils, and fire history, and disturbance history, and symbiotes, competitors, and so forth. The only thing that keeps us from throwing up our hands in despair is the knowledge that plants have migrated before, so it's not impossible. They seem to be tougher than we give them credit for, although we don't know how it all works.

Fortunately, at this point, CNPS is in the thinking stage, and this fall, we'll start talking about it at the next chapter council meeting. This is a great time for you to get involved, whether you know about the scientific

research, have ideas for how to speed up the tedious and difficult research of determining plant niches, have gardening interests, or simply have strong feelings about plants being locally native and staying in their places. CNPS policies come out of discussion, and they're approved by the chapter council, not handed down from on high by the executive director. If you want to get involved, email me at conservation@cnpssd.org and let me know..

~ Frank Landis, Conservation Chair

BOTANIZING

Barber Mountain

Driving east on Highway 94, the sky was filled with low clouds, cool and overcast on this May morning in 2015. From Japatul Valley Road to Lyons Valley Road, we drove up to turn right on Barber Mountain Road. Decades ago, I drove on this road in my old 914 Porsche with its low slung body with no problems. Now, a locked gate prevents entrance onto the Barber Mountain Road. We had a key for one of the locks. When we arrived, a Border Patrol Tahoe SUV was also going in. A sensor had been tripped in one of the pathways so the agent was going to look for border crossers. Barber Mountain is 8 miles north of the border but apparently it is an area of interest. It is mostly within the Cleveland National Forest. border agent went on ahead but we spoke to him for a few minutes about the road. He said it had some rough spots.



Barber Mountain gabbro slopes.

Margie Mulligan was driving her Toyota 4 Runner. She drove it slowly and we did encounter some deep ruts parallel to the road. The concern is getting a set of wheels into a rut and bottoming out. I walked ahead and she negotiated the problem areas without difficulty. However, further up, another locked gate stood in our way and for this one we did not have a key. So we parked the car and began walking.



Lyon's Peak draped in fog.

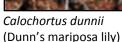
Fog was draped around the boulder-topped Lyons Peak. The top of the mountain and the lookout tower poked through the foggy layer. The temperature was cool with a few clouds but quite a bit of sun. It had rained the week before so there was some residual moisture in the air and the soil was damp. We could see far to the southwest toward Mexico past a series of foothill peaks including Mother Grundy Mountain with its boulders forming a weird upward viewing hook-nosed face. The stretch of the road we walked on passed through granitic rocks; good sized boulders. California Buckwheat (Eriogonum fasciculatum) was in full flower with masses of white flower heads covering the plants. The chaparral was apparently in good shape on the north slopes though the Arctostaphylos glandulosa (Eastwood's Manzanita) had lost quite a few leaves due to the prolonged seasons of drought. Blue flowered Ceanothus tomentosus (Ramona Ceanothus), Ceanothus perplexans (Cup-Leaf Lilac), one of the corky stipule types with white flowers (stipules are little scales near the base of the leaves on the stems). The shiny-leaved Xylococcus bicolor (Mission Manzanita), and the pinkish Phacelia cicutaria (Caterpillar Phacelia) were also growing there. It was typical chaparral including the large rounded-leaved Rhus ovata (Sugarbush), and small fan-shaped or Birch tree shaped leaved Cercocarpus betuloides (Birch-Leaf Mountain Mahogany). Rhus ovata is in the same family (Anacardiaceae) as Toxicodendron diversilobum (Poison Oak), Anacardium occidentale (Cashew Tree) and Magnifera indica (Mango Tree). Malosma laurina (Laurel Sumac), which is also a member of that family, was a major component of the mixed chaparral. Cercocarpus is in the rose family (Rosaceae) though it has small flowers and fruits that look like twisted feathers. This was on the north side of Elena Mountain composed of typical tonalite granitic rock which at 3,339 feet is actually higher than Barber Mountain.

As we walked, I could hear Mountain Quail calling with their distinct high pitched "mwok" call. The tall spindly yellow-flowered sun cup *Eulobus californicus* (False Mustard) was growing along the slopes on the side of the road. Eventually, after about a half a mile walking, we encountered the gabbro formed slopes. The gabbro rock supports vegetation that is a smooth and dark texture from a distance instead of the more typical granitic slopes strewn with tan boulders. The pale bluish-pink three-petaled *Calochortus splendens* (Lilac Mariposa) was also conspicuous there. Though it is quite common in this County, it is still a treat anytime it is observed.

Along the road, we saw red-flowered Silene laciniata (Southern Pink) with its fringed petals and Solidago velutina (California Goldenrod) growing at the side of the slopes facing north. As we entered the gabbro, the vegetation changed almost instantly with the appearance of Chamaebatia australis (Southern Mountain Misery). It has a lighter green coloration and softer texture than other chaparral plants due to its fern-like leaves. As I have mentioned in other articles about gabbro peaks, Chamaebatia australis has a very characteristic odor like oily turpentine and its leaves are sticky. The strong scented resin will quickly apply to one's clothing leaving a scent that is difficult to wash away. Eriodictyon crassifolia (Felt-Leaf Yerba Santa) grew in the draw areas that drifted below the road. The large ripply leaves remain during all but the driest times, but the lavender tube-shaped flowers are short lived in the spring. Its aromatic foliage provides an indication of its medicinal value for the native people of the region. Diplacus clevelandii (Cleveland's Monkey Flower) with smooth yellow colored flowers also made an appearance on the slopes as we split up with me walking along the road and Margie up in the chaparral. Diplacus clevelandii is a CNPS rare plant. Calochortus dunnii (Dunn's Mariposa Lily), another rare plant, with its bright white petals that have brown spots near the center at the base of each petal and bright yellow hairs, was growing there in good numbers. Monardella hypoleuca (Felt-Leaf Monardella) an additional rare plant, appeared in the understory. White flowered Allium haematochiton (Red-skin Onion) was growing in clusters along the way. The Monardella hypoleuca was not in flower, but the strong spearmint odor of the leaves is characteristic along with the felty gray leaf color and texture. Sweet smelling Salvia clevelandii (Cleveland Sage) was also growing here with its deep blue flowers but not in great numbers. Still, its laundry-like scent carried a long distance through the moist air. Phainopeplas, seemingly one of the most common chaparral birds in summer, were calling and Spotted Towhees were creating their odd staccato sound that

sometimes seems a bit like an alien spaceship.







Brodiaea terrestris ssp. kernensis (Dwarf Brodiaea)

Barber Mountain is actually formed as a long ridge trending east-west with the road passing along its north side, parallel with the ridge. At 3,257 feet in elevation, still a respectable mountain, and it is entirely composed of gabbro or black granite rock, a rock type composed of minerals with high concentration of magnesium and iron that weathers into soil that supports unique plants. It is sort of a diluted form of serpentine. It characteristically does not have boulders, but rather is more or a pyramid or coneshaped mountain or ridge with steep sloping sides.

A power line road intersects the main road and drops quickly down the canyon to the north side. Near its intersection was a small grassy meadow patch. One of the most interesting surprises for me was *Brodiaea terrestris* ssp. *kernensis* (Dwarf Brodiaea) that was growing there. It has what appear to be six bright purple-blue petals (actually petals and sepals) growing from a bulb in the middle of drying golden brome grasses and *Erodium* spp. (Filaree). It grows from northern Baja California up the Coast Ranges to Monterey and up the southern Sierra Nevada on the east side of the Central Valley.

I headed down the power line road that leads into the canyon. Our primary goal at this time was Packera ganderi (Gander's ragwort) again, a yellow flowered plant with dark green leaves that grows in chaparral understory or chaparral opened by previous fire, and we found it in the north slope chaparral on the gabbro. I found one quite a way below, down on the power line road. The road was very steep and it had a series of earthen water bars at diagonal across it. One could imagine a ten wheel SDG&E truck traversing this road that was so steep that it was difficult to walk without slipping and falling; one of the steepest roads I ever climbed. The bulbous geophyte Bloomeria crocea (Goldenstar) with delicate yellow six petaled (like the Brodiaea actually petals and sepals) star flowers arranged in a form of a fireworks ball of light was growing in some of the shrub openings. The typical understory plants Cordylanthus rigidus (Stiff-Branched Bird's Beak) and Eriophyllum confertiflorum (Yellow

Yarrow) were also in the understory and openings. Deinandra fasciculata (Fascicled Tarplant) flowering in the open patch areas in dense masses of yellow. Quercus (Oak) shrubs, probably acutidens were also present though not a major part of the chaparral in the gabbro soil areas. Of course, Adenostoma fasciculatum (Chamise) was present in all of the chaparral vegetation. Ticks were not evident here but when I was down on the lower power line road I felt an itch on my neck. Upon investigating it with my fingers, I was surprised to find a tick attempting to drill into my neck. I pulled it off quickly. I could not even remember brushing against any shrubs let alone some that were so high that it could have crawled onto my neck so fast. I was apparently successful in preventing it from cutting into my neck since I had no bite.

On the way back we came across *Penstemon heterophyllus* (Foothill Penstemon) growing in several clumps with its blue, purple and pink pitcher-shaped flowers. It was in full bloom and very showy, more eye catching than most plants in nurseries. As we were leaving, we encountered another Border Patrol officer since we evidently tripped a sensor near one of the gates.

Barber Mountain does not support any really unique plant species, but it has a good representation of gabbro soil specialists and even though it is not far from urbanization, it feels very remote. In addition, its location in the southern part of the County is surprisingly high in elevation and moist with a patchwork of interesting and unique forms of chaparral.

~ Tom Oberbauer. Vice President

The CNPS-SD Newsletter is generally published 12 times a year. The newsletter is not peer reviewed and any opinions expressed are those of the author identified at the end of each notice or article. The newsletter editor may edit the submittal to improve accuracy, improve readability, shorten articles to fit the space, and reduce the potential for legal challenges against CNPS. If an article, as edited, is not satisfactory to the author, the author can appeal to the board. The author has the final say on whether the article, as edited, is printed in the newsletter. Submissions are due by the 10th of the month preceding the newsletter; that is, October 10 for the November newsletter, etc. Please submit items to newsletter@cnpssd.org

CNPS-SD Activities Calendar August 2016

8/2: Conservation Committee Mtg, p.4

8/3: **Board Meeting**, p.2

8/13: Old Town Native Landscape, p.3 8/10: Gardening Committee Mtg, p. 3 8/20: Seed & Bulb Sorting Party, p. 1

	MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION
	_Student or Limited Income \$25;Individual \$45;Family \$75
Plant	over \$100;Patron \$300;Benefactor \$600;Mariposa Lily \$1,500
Name(s): _	
Address: _	
Phone:	e-mail:
Mail check payab	le to "CNPS" and send to: CNPS, 2707 K Street, Ste 1, Sacramento, CA 95816-5113.

CALIFORNIA NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY

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August 2016 Newsletter

Dedicated to the preservation of the California native flora CALIFORNIA NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY – SAN DIEGO

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