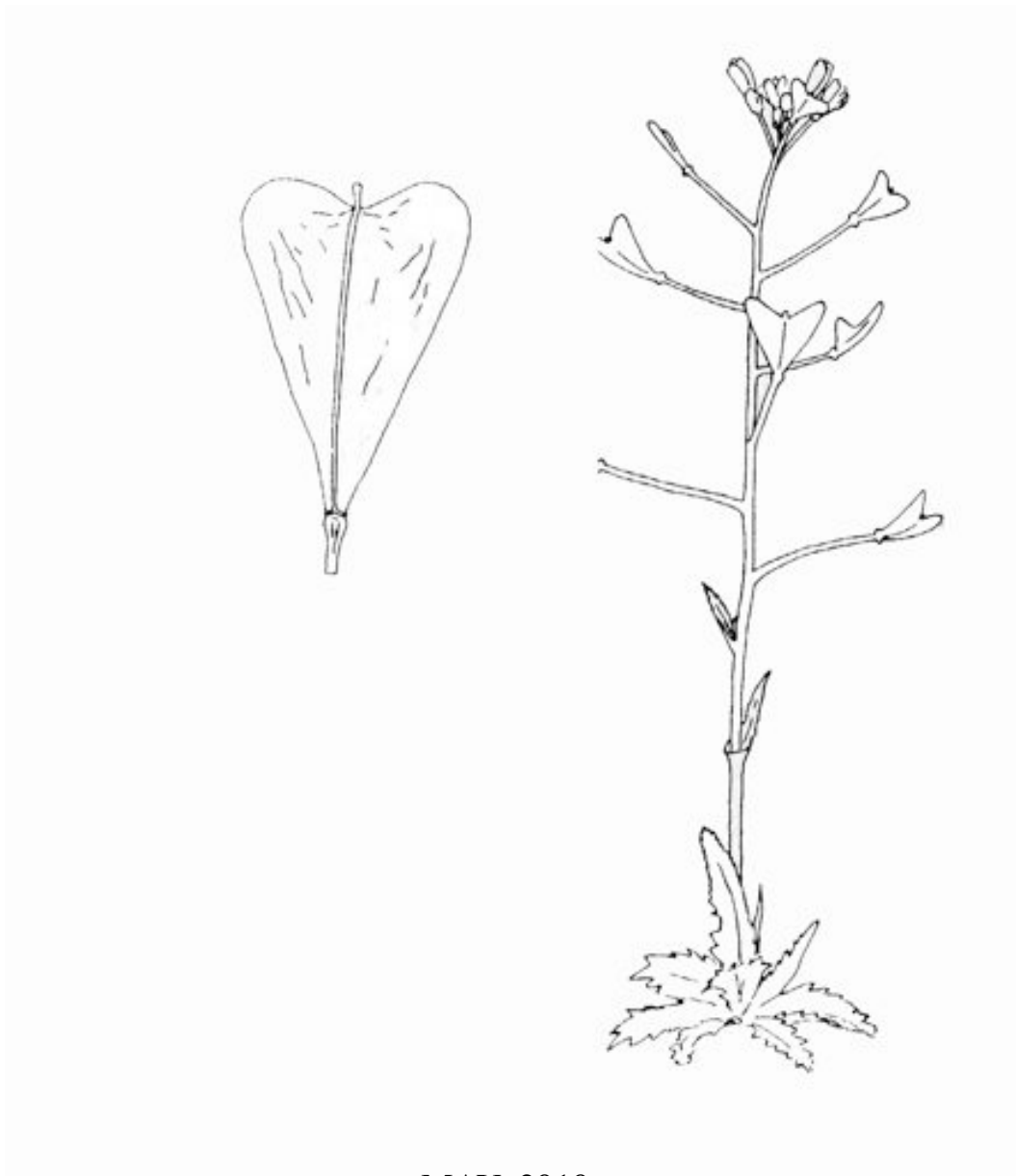


Obispoensis

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



MAY 2010

About the Cover

Capsella bursa-pastoris; Shepherd's Purse

This month's cover is of a drawing Bonnie made for the original edition of Dr. David Keil and my plant taxonomy textbook. It was completed back in 1975! My guess is that many of you will already recognize it as shepherd's purse (*Capsella bursa-pastoris*). It belongs to the mustard family, Cruciferae or Brassicaceae. Since the flowers are so tiny, the four white petals characteristic of this family are not apparent. There are six stamens and four of them should be longer than the other two. However, the flowers are so tiny, the difference is miniscule. The species is a prolific seed setter which explains how it is such an ubiquitous weed. One of my sources states that it self-pollinates in the early season and later aborts its stamens, which would indicate that it is able to set seed without the services of male pollen.

Its white flowers are so small that it could be in full bloom and most of us wouldn't even notice. However we notice its fruits. They are heart-shaped and are said to resemble a coin purse. The most commonly used common name is shepherd's purse which is simply an English translation of its specific name. *Bursa* = purse, *pastoris* = shepherd and *Capsella* translates as little box. So its scientific name translates as the little box that resembles a shepherd's purse. Other common names I've found include shepherd's bag, witches' pouches, rattle pouches, pick-purse, pick pocket, mother's heart, lady's purse, pick purse all refer to the shape of the fruit. St. John's weed and poor-man's pharmacy refer to its reported medicinal uses. However it is not mentioned at all in my encyclopedic *Medical Botany* reference book. The names pepper and salt and shepherd's sprout refer to its use as a spice and as a spring green. Many older references indicate that it was a major cultivated plant in Philadelphia during the colonial period. However, a reference from that time and place indicates that it wasn't. Another reference simply states that it's many references are simply unchecked repeats.

The plant is weed from Europe and probably arrived in this country with the very first European visitors. It is found everywhere, except the extreme desert, where there is a little disturbed ground. It is partial to gardens, pastures, vacant lots, lawns and road edges. It is easily removed so one might question how it is able to be so common. The answer, if you haven't guessed, is the huge numbers of tiny seeds produced in its multitudinous, distinctive seed pods. 🌱

Dirk Walters, Illustration by Bonnie Walters

President's Notes

What a great flower season this is turning out to be! The value of the Hearst Ranch coastal strip's protection is manifest in the wonderful combination of miniature chocolate lily and lilac colored *Calochortus uniflorus*, both of which were abundant. The Shell Creek field trip was a success, but most heartening was to see all of the non-CNPS people visiting the flowers. Linda Chipping and Heather Johnson put out a little table and sold out the wildflower books they had brought. Local media have featured the new City of SLO/CNPS wildflower book and demand is high.

As there is only one more newsletter before we go into summer recess, I should inform you that we are actively seeking another location for the November plant sale. We need a large place in or near the City of SLO that is both highly visible and offers some shelter opportunities in case of rain or high wind and has easy access and parking. If you have ideas besides the public parks, let us know as soon as possible. 🌱

David Chipping

Conservation

CNPS has always fought against any weakening of CEQA, the California Environmental Quality Act. Alas, politicians are using the desire to create work projects and jobs as a tool for dismantling CEQA. Some seemed to have been stopped in committee, such as SB 1010 and AB 805 which would have exempted a lead agency's certification of an EIR from judicial review. Others are at first glance of minor interest, but open the gates to great harm. One, AB 2165, would give complete CEQA exemption to a hospital project in the high desert and therefore be extremely bad precedent. The other, AB 1704, exempts recycled water pipeline projects in existing rights-of-way from CEQA review. This would remove protection for a rediscovered specimen of the extinct-in-the-wild San Francisco Presidio manzanita and also populations of Nipomo lupine in our local area. There have been proposals from the Governor's Office to exempt high speed rail from CEQA review, and the California Energy Commission allowed the Ivanpah Power Station project to go through with a "statement of overriding consideration" that the need overrode the damage to the desert. I am really worried that solar projects will get the same greasing throughout the county, with the two big Carrizo Plains projects getting the first accommodation. It is true that solar energy is better for the planet than carbon based fuels, but we do want to see the projects recognize and mitigate as much as possible their effects on native habitat. If you saw the incredible flower displays this year in the Carrizo Plain north of Belmont Trail, you would agree. 🌱

David Chipping

Monthly Chapter Meeting

Natural and Cultural Histories of the Fort Hunter Liggett Region By Art Hazebrook

Overviews of the natural and cultural histories of the Fort Hunter Liggett region, as well as an in-depth look at the Integrated Training Area Management (ITAM) program will be presented. Five components comprise the ITAM program: Range and Training Land Assessment (RTLTA), Land Rehabilitation and Maintenance (LRAM), Sustainable Range Awareness (SRA), Training Requirement Integration (TRI) and Geographic Information Systems (GIS). Each component contributes to the overall ecological stability of the training lands at Fort Hunter Liggett.

Art has worked for the past 16 years at Fort Hunter Liggett. Initially hired as a seasonal field technician by Colorado State University's "Center for Environmental Management of Military Lands" (CEMML) in 1994, he quickly mastered the plant communities of the region and worked his way up to the Land Rehabilitation and Maintenance (LRAM) coordinator where he perfected erosion control techniques tailored to the constantly changing land use patterns associated with military training.

For the past 5-years Art has served as the Integrated Training Area Management (ITAM) Program Coordinator at Fort Hunter Liggett. Mr. Hazebrook has gained the recognition of his peers for sound land restoration practices utilizing California native plants and producing high quality Sustainable Range Awareness (SRA) products such as posters, brochures and videos that give military trainers the information they need to train realistically with minimal impacts to the environment.

Meet at the Veterans Building, 801 Grand Avenue, San Luis Obispo, 7:00 p.m., Thursday, May 6, 2010.

Field Trips

Saturday, May 1, 2010, 9:30 a.m. Los Padres National Forest, Santa Lucia District & CNPS **Pozo Wildflower Display & Tour Weekend.** Meet at the Pozo Fire Station on Pozo Road, south of SR 58 at 9:30 a.m. This will be a "drive & stroll" tour of wildflowers. Since the Hi Mountain Road may not be suitable for passenger cars, Helen will arrange for an alternative tour location. USFS Adventure or Golden Age Passes needed. Sturdy shoes, lunch and liquids, camera and binoculars recommended. Call Helen Taret at 925-9538 ext. 246 or Charles Blair 733-3189 for details.

Sunday, May 2 MCAS / CNPS PICNIC AT SANTA MARGARITA LAKE See page 5.

Saturday, May 8. A morning spring visit to Holly and Doug Anderson's property on the northern slopes of the Santa Lucia Range. We will start at 9:30 a.m. at 4849 See Ranch Lane, Templeton and be finished by 12:30 p.m. Here is an opportunity to visit and walk on a 20 acre parcel on land that has been owned by the Anderson's for twenty years. This is a secluded spot with oak and bay laurel woodlands, an open field with wildflowers, and a seasonal creek with Salinian bedrock mortars. When the Andersons acquired this property much of it was covered with a variety thistles, mustard, and hemlock. The property now has wild rye, California brome, meadow barley as well as yerba buena, wood ferns, poison oak and a variety of wildflowers. In May we can expect to see Chinese houses, hedge nettle, checker lilies and fairy lanterns along the ½ mile loop trail that *(continued)*



Lunch at Shell Creek, 2010

Field Trips continued

goes into the woodlands and back to the meadow. We will visit the bedrock mortars in the seasonal creek and view the Anderson's vegetable garden and chickens along the way. In making your travel plans try to arrive at the parking area by 9:15, before walking to the Anderson's meadow. Coming from the south: take Hwy 101 to Vineyard Drive/Templeton Exit and turn left onto Vineyard Drive. Follow Vineyard to intersection on Hwy 46. Turn left on to Hwy 46 and drive 2 miles west to Jack Creek. Coming from the north: Take Hwy 46 west 2 miles past Vineyard Drive to Jack Creek. From all directions: Turn right onto Jack Creek and a SHARP LEFT at the mailboxes. Take a right over a bridge and on to a dirt road and continue less the 1/2 mile to a vineyard gate. Follow the signs for parking and directions to the Anderson's property. Plan to make your own travel arrangements. For additional information please contact Mardi Niles at 489-9274 or email her at: mlniles@sbcglobal.net .

Saturday, May 22, A Field Trip to the Guidetti Ranch led by Neil Havlik, Natural Resources Manager, City of SLO. This will be a field trip for CNPS members and will be limited to twenty people, on a first come first served basis. This hike is 7 miles round trip and takes about 4 hours. We will meet at SLO City Hall parking lot at 9 a.m., make a bathroom stop at the Damon-Garcia Sports Fields, then drive together to the Guidetti Ranch. We will be looking for the Indian Knob mountain balm, *Eriodictyon altissimum*. Bring lunch, water, sun protection, dress in layers and have good walking shoes. Be sure to bring your copy of *Wildflowers of San Luis*



Neil Havlik on our last trip to the Guidetti Ranch in 2003. He is looking at the Indian Knob mountain balm, *Eriodictyon altissimum*. Photo by Mardi Niles

Obispo, California. Sign up by calling Mardi Niles at 489-9274 or emailing her at: mlniles@sbcglobal.net.

Saturday, May 29, 9:00 AM, A Field Trip to the North Coast Bluffs of SLO County led by D. R. "Doc" Miller. This is a morning field trip to look for rare and/or spring blooming plants along the north coast bluffs. We will meet at the parking lot at the Elephant Seal Overlook at 9:00 AM. How to get there: Driving north on Hwy 1 go 4.4 miles past the Hearst Castle Visitor Center. Make a left hand turn, using the turn lane, and go into the parking lot, on the ocean side of Hwy 1. It is south of Piedras Blancas Lighthouse. Wear sturdy shoes, sun protection, dress in layers with a windbreaker, bring plenty of water and a snack. Please, no dogs. For additional information contact Mardi Niles at 489-9274 or by email: mlniles@sbcglobal.net.

CNPS on Facebook

We now have a Facebook page. Go to "California Native Plant Society, San Luis Obispo County." . You will find information on the latest field trips and other news, and be able to share photographs. We hope you will become a fan and spread the word to your Facebook friends. Post your wildflower observations and photos. Names don't have to be in latin or even identified by species.

BOOK NEWS-

Good news for all you book lovers. We've lowered the prices on our Highway 58 (Shell Creek) Wildflower book, **And** the price on our Carrizo Wildflower book. Each is now selling for \$8.

OR

(drum roll please) \$10 for **BOTH!!!** You can buy these books at our May 6 meeting at the SLO Vets Hall or by mail, see our website for more information. These books would make great Mother's Day gifts! Our own wonderful CNPS-City of SLO Wildflowers of SLO book is jumping off the shelves for \$13.00. This is another super gift idea.

A truly excellent publication that I recommend to everyone is **Pacific Horticulture**. The focus is on horticulture for the west coast. This is their 35th year of publication and I've saved every one of their four-time-a-year publications because the information in each article is timeless, educational and informative. There is always at least one article on growing natives. Check it out at www.pacifichorticulture.org.

-HeatherJohnson

SUNDAY, MAY 2 MCAS / CNPS PICNIC AT SANTA MARGARITA LAKE

This FIFTH FABULOUS collaborative Morro Coast Audubon Society and California Native Plant Society picnic will include several field trips. Daily use fees will be waived for event participants; we welcome members of either organization as well as the general public.

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

*8:00-11:00 AM RIVER ROAD RAMBLE: BIRDING with Alan Schmierer at RIVER ROAD: An easy 3 mile walk along the Salinas River before it flows into the lake. Appropriate for all experience levels.

*MEET AT RIVER ROAD ACCESS

STAGING area for ALL other activities will be WHITE OAK PICNIC area (handicap accessible)

9:00 AM WHITE OAK BIRDING WALK with Mike Stiles (ALL experience levels)

9:00 AM WALK ON THE WILD SIDE HIKE: Join SLM Ranger Chuck Woodard for a pontoon boat ride across the lake to explore birds and plants on the far side of the lake on a portion of the new Falcon Trail (limited to 12 participants).

9:30-11:00 AM: BEGINNING BIRDER'S WALK: Join Stephanie Little and Jen Moonjian for a FUN introduction to the world of birding. Kids and adults welcome; binoculars, etc. provided.

10:00 AM PADDLEPAZOOA: Kayak / canoe with Jack Beigle (bring PFDs, sunscreen, binoculars)

10:00 AM PLANTAPALOOZA: Plant walk with David Chipping and Dirk Walters

11:00-1:30 PACIFIC WILDLIFE CARE on site with live birds giving informal 15-20 minute "visits" with feathered friends

12 NOON LUNCH BREAK Join us for an old fashioned new fangled PICNIC. Bring your own sandwich (or something to grill), a side dish, snack, or dessert to share and your own (preferably reusable) place setting and beverage container.

Throw in your picnic tablecloth if possible. Assorted drinks provided by MCAS.

1:00-2:00 PM WILDFLOWER SKETCHING with Barb Renshaw and Rachael Yon. Sketchpads and colored pencils provided, but bring your own if you have them.

ONGOING (throughout the day)

MCAS BOOK SALE: Help MCAS clean out the office and pick up some second-hand books.

WATERFOWL AND WOODPECKER WATCH: Birdwatching around the picnic area

FISHING: Kid's Cove (for kid's only) and shore fishing around picnic area

HIKING: Grey Pine Trailhead located at picnic area

JUNIOR RANGER PROGRAM: Self-directed activities for school-age children

BRING any kayaks, canoes, spotting scopes, binoculars, cameras, field guides, bikes, fishing gear etc. for enjoying the day at the lake. (The marina store stocks supplies and rents boats.)

DIRECTIONS to Santa Margarita Lake White Oak Picnic area: From Hwy. 101, take the Santa Margarita (Highway 58) exit and drive through the town of Santa Margarita. Turn right on Highway 58. At the junction with Pozo Road (in approximately 2 miles), stay on Pozo Road for approximately 7 miles and follow the signs to the Santa Margarita Lake turnoff. Turn left and drive one mile to the park entrance. Turn right after entering the gate and follow the road for one mile to the White Oak Picnic area. (Allow 30-40 minutes from the SLO area.)

*DIRECTIONS to RIVER ROAD access Follow the above directions until the Santa Margarita Lake turnoff. Instead of turning, continue driving straight on Pozo Road for approximately 7.8 miles. Immediately after the bridge, turn left on RIVER ROAD and continue another 2.2 miles to the staging area on the left side of the road. (Allow 45-50 minutes from the SLO area.)

For additional information contact Al Schmierer, aaschmierer@yahoo.com or 772-2026, MCAS Field trip chair, or Mardi Niles, miniles@slonet.org or 489-9274, CNPS Field Trip chair.

Thank You to our Renewing Members, and a Warm Welcome for New Members of our Chapter

New Members: Lorene Cabrera, Joe Christianson, John Doyle, Darcee Guttilla and Chris Sunderland

Renewing Members: Christina and Eric Bird-Holenda, George Butterworth, S. Ela, Francesca Fairbrother, Suzette Girouard, Sara Kocher and Dan Levi, Merrill

Lynn, Kate Montgomery, Al Normandin, Jody Olson, Dominic and Christine Perello, Ellen and C.S. Perryess, John Pierszalowski, Natalie Schaefer, Dennis Sheridan, Ken Sikes, Aaron Sims, Leonard and Michelle Torres-Grant, and Jean Young

Dedicated to the Preservation of the California Native Flora

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 quarterly journal, *Fremontia*, the quarterly *Bulletin*, which gives statewide news and announcements of the Society activities and conservation issues, and the chapter newsletter, *Obispoensis*.



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