

NORTHERN CALIFORNIA BOTANISTS

BOTANICAL LEAFLETS

ISSUE 36 SUMMER 2026



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

We had a beautiful spring this year, though the March heat dome certainly fast-forwarded the bloom season! The El Niño event we're experiencing gives a high likelihood of a significant fire year; if you live in fire country please pack a go bag, make an evacuation plan, and take a few more steps to harden your home. If you don't live in fire country but have friends and family who do, consider emulating our neighbors to the east with their Hurricane Parties: host them (and their pets) during red flag events.

Thanks to your generous support, we've been able to award twelve student research scholarships through the Barbara Castro Student Research Scholarship Program, the Shasta Chapter CNPS award, and the Sacra-



mento Chapter CNPS award. Summaries of that proposed research are in this newsletter!

Our next symposium will be January 11 and 12, 2027 in Chico, California – we're organizing and confirming the potential talks that have been submitted, and it's shaping up to be a great event! We will continue to have a remote option for people who are far away or have health concerns, financial restrictions, or

weather events that prevent attending in person. If you'd like to coordinate an online social feature for remote attendance (like a Discord server or similar), please reach out to us at ncbotanists@gmail.com.

The symposium will also have a lunchtime session on the new student chapter program! Details on this are still coming together, but we're very excited about engaging with more students about potential careers that involve botany.

Looking forward to seeing you in January!

Jane Van Susteren
President
Northern California Botanists

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Lawrence Janeway

MYSTERY PLANT

Most of you have seen these plants in fruit, but most have never seen it in flower. I had seen the fruits numerous times through the years but only saw flowers for the first time last year.



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NCB 2027 SYMPOSIUM

Planning is underway for the Northern California Botanists' 14th Symposium on Monday and Tuesday, 11-12 January 2027, in Chico. A call for papers has already gone out and development of the series of talks for each session is nearing completion. Sessions planned for this Symposium are:

Lichens and Bryophytes

Exploring the Range of Land Restoration and Stewardship

Strange Soils and Specialized Plants: Stories from Serpentine and Beyond

Pollinator Conservation Actions and Imperiled Species

Working Lands

Good News

New Discoveries

There will also be the usual exciting session of Lightning Talks, as well as a Poster Session with student poster contest. Watch for a call for Lightning Talks and a call for Posters in the next few months.

In addition, there will be 2 or 3 workshops and/or field trips planned for the following Wednesday, 13 January 2027.

If you're not already on the NCB email list to receive updates and announcements about this Symposium and other botanical happenings around northern California, contact Lawrence Janeway at ljaneway@csuchico.edu to be added to the list.



2026-2027 BARBARA CASTRO STUDENT BOTANY RESEARCH SCHOLARSHIPS

Northern California Botanists (NCB) supports undergraduate and graduate students through competitive scholarships for research in botany and plant ecology in northern and central California. Research scholarships funded by NCB aim to encourage students to pursue academic and professional careers in botany, support undergraduate and graduate research in botany and plant ecology, and implement the objectives of the NCB mission. The Sacramento Valley and Shasta Chapters of the California Native Plant Society generously support this program by providing funding toward additional scholarships. Barbara Castro was a founding board member of NCB and coordinated this scholarship program for many years among the many tasks she carried out for NCB during her years on the Board.

There were many great research projects to choose from. Congratulations to these students and thank you to all who applied! Watch for summary write-ups for each of these projects in the next newsletter.

Recipient	Degree	University	Title of Research Project
Marife Aucaapoma	PhD	Claremont Graduate University	Diversification and endemism in <i>Zeltnera</i> (Gentianaceae): Phylogenomic and morphological perspectives on a cryptic Pan-American lineage
Elena Bewick	MS	Cal Poly Humboldt	Influence of soil inoculum on plant establishment and microbial communities in restored coastal dunes
Lynn Breithaupt	PhD	University of California, Merced	Potential phenological mismatches in seasonal wetlands: Testing the effects of plant-pollinator timing shifts on plant fitness
Maya Canapary	MS	University of San Francisco	Desert to dunes: Adaptation to climate variability in annual plants across California's arid landscapes
Sean Dillon	Under-graduate	Cal Poly Humboldt	Assessing resilience of a rare Northern California forb (<i>Limnanthes bakeri</i>) to drought and flooding
Erica Fontanez	MS	Claremont Graduate University	Phylogenetic and biogeographical analysis of <i>Chloropyron</i> (salty bird's beak, Orobanchaceae), a genus of salt marsh dependent species
Anjum Gujral	PhD	University of California, Davis	Functional patterns of forest succession under climate change and shifting disturbance regimes
Jennifer Hedin	MS	Cal Poly Humboldt	Understanding threats to whitebark and foxtail pines in the Klamath Mountains, California
Ava Joseph	PhD	Claremont Graduate University	Montane and alpine diversification in a megagenus: A systematic and biogeographical study of western North American <i>Astragalus</i>
Hannah Kang	PhD	Brigham Young University	Phylogenetic relationships and diversification of <i>Navarretia</i> (Polemoniaceae)
Rebecca Ryvola-Marez	Under-graduate	California State University, Los Angeles	Phylogenetics and taxonomy of <i>Chorizanthe</i> subgenus <i>Quintaria</i> (Polygonaceae)
Molly Waddington	PhD	University of South Carolina	Local adaptation to oceanic salt spray between populations of coastal <i>Mimulus guttatus</i>

2026 DEAN W. TAYLOR BOTANICAL EXPLORATION AWARD

In 2020, we lost Dean William Taylor, a giant of the Northern California botanical community. He had an irrepressible enthusiasm for everything botanical, a genius for teaching, and an unparalleled understanding of the mechanisms driving plant speciation and distribution. His record of outstanding collections and discovery of new taxa speaks for itself. Dean was a champion of the unexplored botanical diversity of California and frequently took the stage at our symposia to encourage people to collect specimens and work to define that diversity. In the

absence of his electrifying speeches and reliable advice, we hope that our material support of this Award will help a new generation of botanists fill his shoes.

The aim of the Dean W. Taylor Botanical Exploration Memorial Award is to cover costs associated with botanical exploration in Northern California. This award is open to all people with an interest in the native plants and wildland ecology of Northern California, including students, practicing botanists, land

managers, and dedicated herbarium collectors. We encourage projects that echo Dean Taylor's goals of finding unknown botanical diversity in California, namely collecting in under-collected areas, work to explore the habitat and range of known taxa, and efforts to discover and define new taxa.

Watch for an announcement in September about applying for Awards for the 2027 field season.

Congratulations to our 2026 Dean W. Taylor Botanical Exploration Memorial Award recipients! The recipients of this award receive a cash award to further their botanical research. We are pleased to announce the awardees and title of their research. Details about their projects will be shared in the next newsletter.

Marife Auccapoma, Claremont Graduate University - California Botanic Garden
Diversification and endemism in *Zeltera* (Gentianaceae): Phylogenomic and morphological perspectives on a cryptic Pan-American lineage

Jake Jacobsen, California Department of Fish and Wildlife
Resurveying the rare serpentine endemic, *Verbena californica* (Red Hills vervain)

Oluwadamilola Peters, University of California, Merced
Documenting the Central Valley rare flora

Moss Phipps, University of California, Santa Cruz
Better understanding the status of *Arctostaphylos ohloneana* from the Lockheed Martin Complex in Santa Cruz County

Answer to "Mystery Plant":

Phoenicaulis cheiranthoides (Brassicaceae – Mustard family), daggerpod. Both photos were taken 4 June 2025 by Lawrence Janeway in Lake County, Oregon, just a little over the border from California. The flowering plants were in a north facing opening at 1927 m (6322 ft) elevation, while the fruiting plants were in a south-facing opening at 1860 m (6102 ft). Exciting to see both flowering and fruiting plants on the same day, along the same road, here facilitated by the differing aspects and the slight change in elevation.



NORTHERN CALIFORNIA BOTANISTS IN ACTION



Emma Dohnalik is a Botanist Aide at Sierra Pacific Industries where she assists with special-status plant surveys and herbarium curation. She majored in Wildlife and Fisheries Sciences at Texas A&M University and was preparing to start a career in wildlife conservation when she had two formative experiences that sparked her interest in botany: taking a fire ecology class which nurtured a soft spot for bunchgrasses and seeing *Primula hendersonii* for the first time. After graduation, she had the privilege of working and traveling throughout the Pacific Northwest before ending up in Redding, California. This year will be her second season at Sierra Pacific Industries, and she is excited to see even more plants and to tackle unknown sedges with gusto. Her favorite observation from the 2025 field season was *Penstemon cinicola*, but spotting a rubber boa was a treat as well. Emma's favorite part about working in northern California is getting to see all the incredible landscapes and geology the state has to offer, especially the Trinity Alps.



Neal Kramer is now an independent consulting botanist/ecologist and certified arborist, but his "roots" with plants developed early, as a youngster, when he assisted his mother with her awesome vegetable gardens. After high school, supporting his undergrad education with 5 years as a seasonal wildland fire fighter, Neal studied Landscape Architecture and Natural Resources at Cal Poly, San Luis Obispo before transferring to UC Berkeley to complete a Botany degree. He then went on to earn a Masters degree in Forest Ecology at the University of Idaho. After completing his Masters, Neal spent time as Production Manager for a large wholesale nursery on the coast south of San Francisco. A wonderful place for him and his wife to raise 2 great kids!

In 2006, with the goal of spending more time outdoors, Neal jumped at an opportunity to do on-call field work with an environmental consulting firm. He has since enjoyed working with many different companies on projects throughout California and neighboring states. He is especially fond of time spent doing plant surveys on wildlands, developing plant lists, documenting rare plants, mapping plant communities and monitoring vegetation over time. Recent significant projects have included work on agency projects (CDFW, USFS, BLM) and with conservation organizations such as Tejon Ranch Conservancy and The Nature Conservancy. Neal feels very lucky to have had opportunities leading to what he is doing today!



Noé Romo Loera is the restoration ecologist and manager for Friends of Sausal Creek (FOSC) in Oakland, California. In his role at FOSC, he plans, implements, and monitors restoration projects throughout the sausal creek watershed. His background working with federal agencies, (U.S Fish and Wildlife Service and U.S Forest Service) as well as non-profits (American Forests and Sequoia Riverlands Trust), allowed him to develop robust skills in vegetation and habitat mapping, wildlife monitoring, and community engagement. His work has also taken him to many places in California where he got to explore many diverse habitats. The Sausal Creek watershed contains a multitude of habitats and urban uses, this means that he and FOSC's nursery and rare plant manager get to work with a wide variety of plant communities. Among these plant communities are rare endemic species such as the pallid manzanitas! The unique community based approach that FOSC takes to restoration allows him to engage with community members to make ecological restoration accessible to all. He is especially passionate about participatory science in his work. To him, it is a milestone to see people foster or deepen their relationship to the land, plants, and animals that live around them.



NORTHERN CALIFORNIA
BOTANISTS

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If you haven't already... please
renew your membership for 2026!

Please send address changes to:
ncbotanists@gmail.com

A cooperative association of Federal, State, Academic, Consulting, and other Botanists in the Northern California region, **NORTHERN CALIFORNIA BOTANISTS** is an organization with the purpose of increasing knowledge about botanical issues concerning science, conservation, education, and professional development. Our primary objectives are to establish a communication forum via occasional meetings, scholarship funds for student research and special projects related to botanical problems and exploration in northern California, a job forum, and symposia that focus on the botany of northern California.

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION/RENEWAL

Name: _____

Affiliation: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Email: _____

MEMBERSHIP DUES:

_____ Individual \$25.00 _____ Student/Limited Income \$15.00

_____ Family or Small Business/Non-Profit (two memberships) \$40.00

In addition, I would like to donate \$_____ to Northern California Botanists to help fund NCB programs and student research scholarships.

Make checks payable to "Northern California Botanists" and mail to:

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