

**Welcome to California Native Plant Society**

**Sacramento Valley Chapter**

# **Elderberry Farms Native Plant Nursery**



**CNPS' mission is to increase understanding and appreciation of California's native plants and to conserve them and their natural habitats, through education, science, advocacy, horticulture and land stewardship.**



# What is Elderberry Farms

Native Plant Nursery all about?



Ground work in progress! (March 2008)

The mission of the Elderberry Farms Native Plant Nursery is to propagate, promote and support preservation of the unique native plant resources of the American River Parkway ecosystem as well as promote awareness of the benefits of native plants, encourage community involvement, and

provide a source of locally native plants for restoration projects as well as home gardeners. This Spring we fenced our growing area and are building the rest of our infrastructure.

# Why the name: Elderberry Farms?

In addition to the elderberry being iconic to the Parkway and the American River, and really so many California watersheds, it ties in well with one of our missions in CNPS -



*Sambucus mexicana*; Blue Elderberry



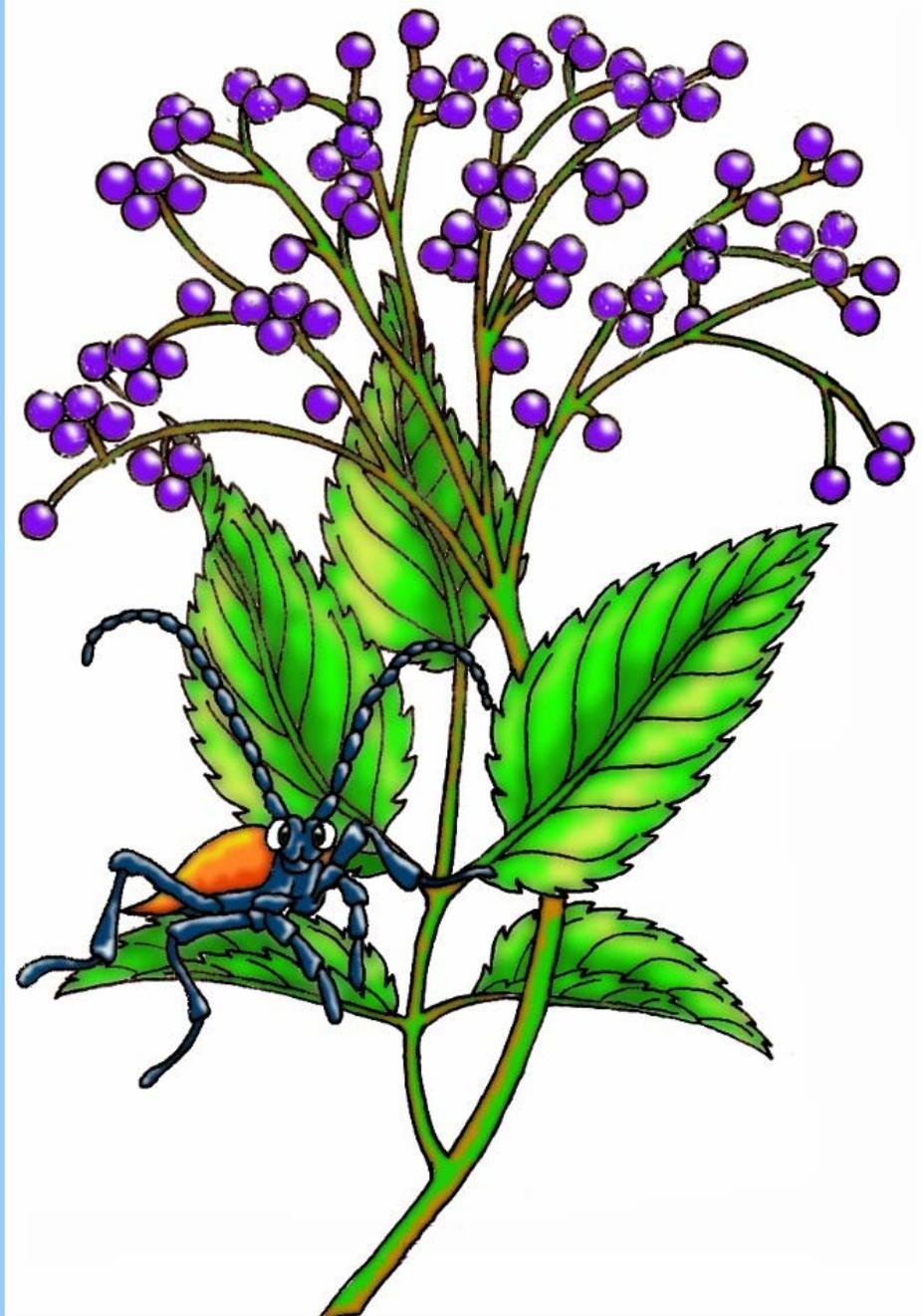
to preserve plants in order to preserve habitats and ecosystems (Valley Elderberry Longhorn Beetle being a case in point)...

# Why else Elderberry Farms?

It also ties in with the edible gardening movement - we envision samples of Elderberry jam and pies on special occasions at the nursery!



**This is the  
Elderberry  
Farms  
LOGO... it  
features a  
friendly  
Valley  
Elderberry  
Longhorn  
Beetle!**



# What is a California native plant?

- They grew here prior to European contact.
- They co-evolved with animals, fungi and microbes, to form a complex network of relationships over geological time;
- They are uniquely adapted to the myriad climatic, geologic, soil and hydrologic features of our State, and;
- They are the foundation of our native ecosystems, or natural communities.

# What is a Native Plant?

Here is just one. **Vernal Pool Goldfields, *Lasthenia fremontii***



Vernal Pools are a native ecosystem dominated by native plants.

- **California hosts 7,200 native species of plants, which is more species than central and northeastern United States combined.**
- **Nearly 1/3 of native plants (over 2,000 species) in California are rare.**

# How do we know which plants are native?

- Specimens, seeds, and drawings of new world plants were taken to Europe by early explorers over many years. American frontier explores such as Lewis & Clarke also took records and samples.
- The science of paleobotany allows scientists to compare fossil records with modern plants to understand which plants are native to an area.
- While there is general agreement among plant scientists on which California plants are native, questions do arise.

# How do we know which plants are native?

A California native for this plant community.



*Carpobrotus edulis*; Iceplant



*Abronia villosa* var. *villosa*

# Why are native plants important?

1. Having evolved with California geology and hydrology, they are uniquely adapted to live on and stabilize soils prone to erode (such as the coastal strawberry).
2. Some native plants grow in hostile environments high in toxic elements, such as copper and iron, and provide beauty in otherwise desolate places (Ione Manzanita).
3. Native plants do the best job of providing food and shelter for native wild animals and thus are a cornerstone of biological diversity.
4. California has more habitat types and more plant species than any other state in the Nation and more rare, threatened, and endangered plants than any other state as well!

*Arctostaphylos myrtifolia*  
Ione Manzanita



This harsh landscape is home to this beautiful shrub. It blooms in January attracting humming birds from far away.

# Why are native plants important?

5. Biodiversity is vital to humans, because our survival depends on the earth and its life forms. Native plants are used in the development of new foods, medicines and industrial products.
  - Common Sunflower (*Helianthus annuus*) is the origin of the cultivated sunflower seed.
  - Commercial strawberries were developed using our coast strawberry, *Fragaria chiloensis*.
  - The pacific yew, *Taxus brevifolia*, yields Taxol, an anti-cancer drug (now manufactured in labs).
6. Native plants are also an essential element in the natural beauty for which California is famous!

Common Sunflower (*Helianthus annuus*) is the origin of the cultivated sunflower seed.



Commercial strawberries were developed using our Coast Strawberry, *Fragaria chiloensis*.



The pacific yew, *Taxus brevifolia*, yields Taxol, an anti-cancer drug (now manufactured in labs).



# Are non-native plants really harmful?

- When non-native plants spread and become established in wild areas, they are referred to as "naturalized."
- Some, such as forget-me-nots and English daisies are widespread, yet fairly harmless.
- Others take over natural areas and out-compete or smother native plants. They can do this because the natural pests, diseases or weather conditions which kept the plants in check in their homeland are absent here.
- Weeds deprive our wild animals of food and shelter, since native animals often cannot make much use of them.
- While immigrant people bring needed cultural and ethnic diversity, alien plants and animals can reduce biological diversity. Many weeds belong to the grass, pea and daisy families, with broom, jubata grass and Cape ivy as well-known examples.

# Invasive vs Native

**A California native for this plant community**

*Lupinus arboreus*, Bush Lupine



Scotch Broom (*Cytisus scoparius*)  
exclude plants and  
animals in many locations.



# Invasive Himalayan Blackberry smothers the area where this rare plant should be!



Looking for: Sanford's arrowhead (*Sagittaria sanfordii*)

**Status: CNPS 1B - Rare, threatened, or endangered in California.**

# Invasive vs. Native

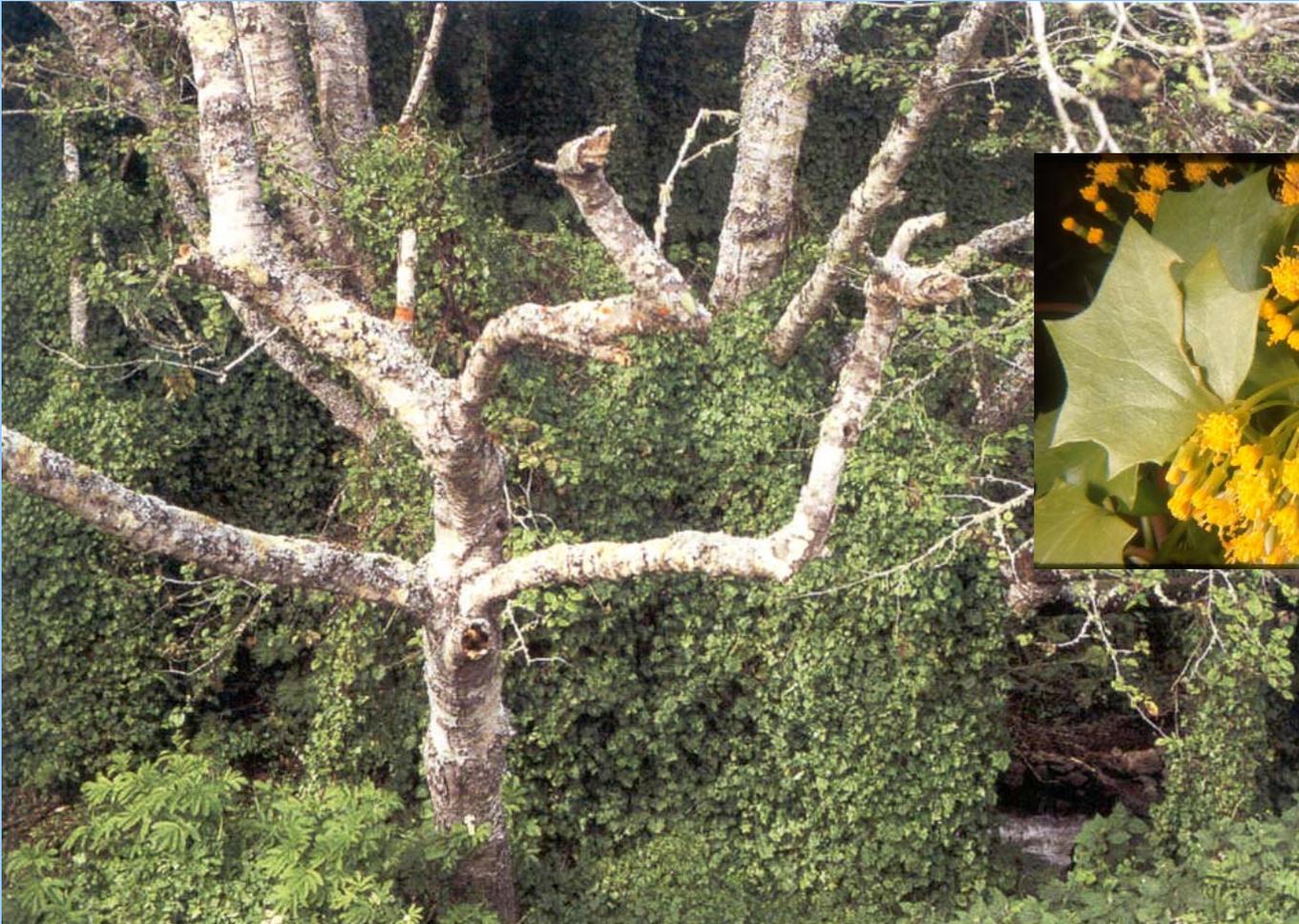


Red Sesbania, *Sesbania punicea*



**A California native for this plant community.**  
Rose-mallow, *Hibiscus lasiocarpus*

# *Senecio mikanioides*; Cape Ivy



# **Why Grow Native Plants?**

## **PROMOTE BIODIVERSITY**

Human development through agriculture and urbanization has drastically reduced native plant communities in California.

By growing native plants in our gardens, we are restoring some of the natural biodiversity of our area.

Many species are dependent on the habitat provided by native vegetation and taken in aggregate, home plantings can enhance the wildlife populations of an area.

# Promote Biodiversity.. at home!



Before... and after



# Why Grow Native Plants?

## **REDUCE the Use of WATER**

Native plants are adapted to the unique climatic conditions of their growing area and once established they require little or no supplemental irrigation.

When we grow plants found in our resident plant community, we use far less water than traditional garden landscapes.

Using drought tolerant natives in our California gardens conserves a scarce natural resource and saves money on water costs; it's a sensible choice.



# Why Grow Native Plants?

## **REDUCE the Use of PESTICIDES**

Many native plants are not severely affected by insect pests and diseases that afflict traditional ornamentals.

Often, natives have adapted defense mechanisms to pests common in their habitats or have a high tolerance for pest damage.

As a result, less pesticide is required to maintain native plant gardens in good condition.



Decreasing or eliminating pesticide use in the garden also promotes biodiversity, reduces our exposure to toxic substances and saves money.

Again, natives plants are a sensible choice.

# Nursery Workday in April



# Nursery Workday in May

another shelter & lots more potted!



# What will we grow? American River Beauties!

We'll be choosing among the 159 species of native plants that grow along the American River Parkway.



Purple milkweed



California Button willow

**Butterfly attracters!**

# Flowers of every color!

*Mimulus guttatus*, Monkey Flower



*Penstemon heterophyllus*; Foothill Penstemon

and these...

# Beautiful Shrubs



Hollyleaf Redberry



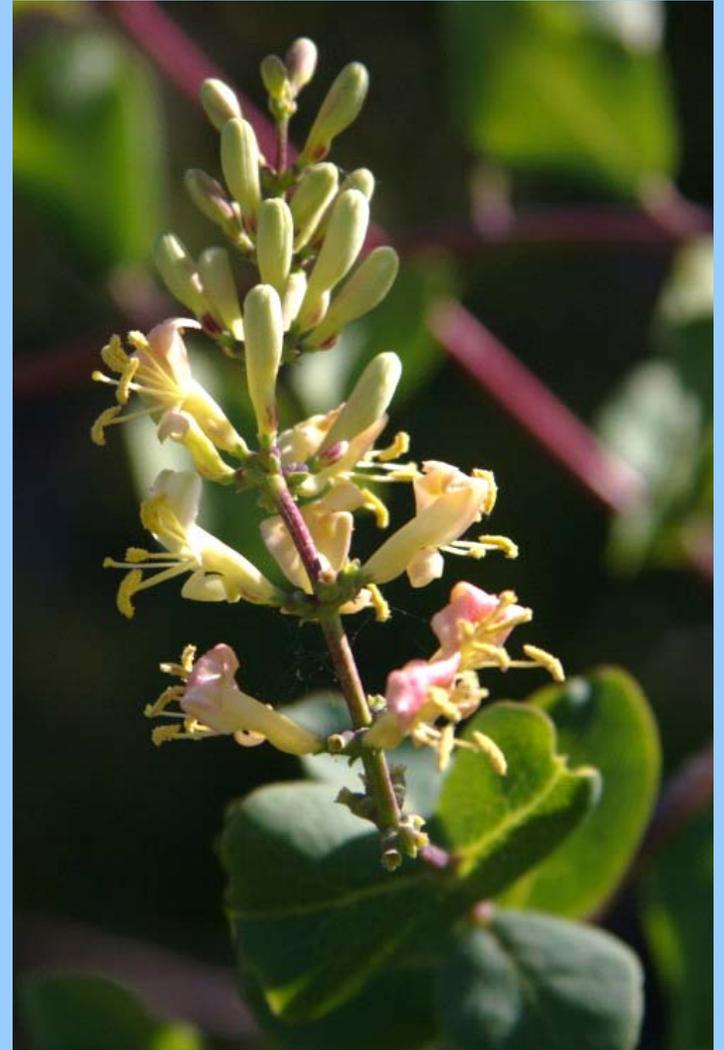
California Snowdrop Bush

and these...

# Unusual Vines!



Pipevine – unusual flower, great shade,  
hosts Pipevine Swallowtail!



Chaparral Honeysuckle –  
hummingbird food!

Blue Elderberry (of course!) and these...

# TREES

*Aesculus californica*

California Buckeye



*Cercis occidentalis*;  
Western Redbud  
**and many, many more!**

# How can you help? Volunteer- Seed collecting Mondays!



Monday mornings join us out on the beautiful American River Parkway collecting seeds and taking cuttings. We'll be meeting at various locations, so contact Chris to find out details.

Please contact Chris at [lewisc916@yahoo.com](mailto:lewisc916@yahoo.com) or 916/812-2876

# How can I help? Volunteer Nursery Wednesdays!



Each and every Wednesday spend a pleasant morning at the Nursery from **9:00 – 12:00**. We'll be doing a range of jobs, so join us for the fun!

Please contact Chris at [lewisc916@yahoo.com](mailto:lewisc916@yahoo.com) or 916/812-2876

# How can you help? Volunteer- 2<sup>nd</sup> Saturday Workdays

This Summer we'll  
continue with building  
and other large  
projects.

**June 14**

**July 12**

**August 9**

**9:00-12:00**



Please contact Chris at [lewisc916@yahoo.com](mailto:lewisc916@yahoo.com) or 916/812-2876

# THANK YOU

We want to Thank the following people, organizations, and businesses for their support of Elderberry Farms Native Plant Nursery:

**For our LAND:** SOIL BORN FARMS;

**Grants from:** Sacramento Valley CNPS, River City Run, Sustainable Sacramento/Sierra Club, Jones & Stokes;

**Donations & Materials:** Mary & Joe Maret, Sacramento County Parks, Sacramento Weed Warriors/ American River Parkway Foundation, Save the American River Association, Peaceful Valley Farms, Emigh Hardware, Teichert... and more to come!

**Volunteers** – are the backbone of the entire effort. We operate with about 15 regular volunteers and 40+ occasional volunteers!

# How can I get to Elderberry Farms?

**Within Soil Born Farms at American River Ranch- 2140 Chase Dr in Rancho Cordova**

## **Driving Directions from Sacramento:**

- Highway 50 East
- Mather Field/Rancho Cordova Exit
- Left on Mather Field
- Right on Folsom Blvd (after crossing light rail)
- Left on Coloma Rd (Raley's on your left)
- Left onto Chase Dr



The Nursery address is 2140 Chase Dr. Take the gravel road on your left directly before Hagen park kiosk. Follow drive through gate (to open simply lift chain). Where the drive splits go up toward the left and park where you see other cars, near the farm stand.

## **Bicycling directions on the American River Parkway!**

Elderberry Farms is just 1 mile upstream from the bicycle bridge that connects William B Pond and Goethe Park (now named River Bend Park). If coming from Sunrise, you can bike in at Hagen Park. Then just after the Kiosk, take the driveway to your right.



## **Light Rail/Bus directions!**



If riding Light Rail, get off at Mather Field/Mills Station. This is about 1½ miles from the Nursery- an easy bike ride east (continue using driving directions). The Nursery is on Bus line 21, which has a stop at Cordova High School which is at the other end of Chase Drive.

# Fall Plant Sale

McKinley Park's Garden & Arts Center  
- 4<sup>th</sup> Saturday in September - **SEPT 27th**  
*(SIGN UP if you would like an email notice)*



**Why do this? Our future generations!**

