Redbud's 2019 Plant Sale — California Native Plants for Beauty and Biodiversity

by Jeanne Wilson, Redbud Chapter President

I want to extend a heartfelt “Thank you!” to the Redbud Chapter’s volunteers and customers, members and friends, for helping make this year’s plant sale a huge success! We netted over $10,000, which we will use to prepare educational materials, expand our propagation efforts, offer grants to local nonprofits and schools, and sponsor speakers.

More People Shopping for Native Plants Than Ever
We were thrilled, and a bit overwhelmed, by the number of eager shoppers seeking native plants, easily the largest crowd we’ve ever had. We also really appreciate the welcome we received at our new venue, the Banner Community Guild. Being able to hold much of the sale indoors was great, although it turned out to be a bit more crowded than expected, at least during the initial rush.

Native Plants for Biodiversity
Our plant-sale theme — Native Plants for Beauty and Biodiversity — was completely timely. Biodiversity is essential to a sustainable and healthy ecosystem, and native plants are a critical part of our ecosystem. They provide habitat for insects, birds and other wildlife. They are also adapted to our climate and soils, so they need less water, and little or no fertilizer, pesticides or herbicides.

Native plants remove carbon from the air and sequester it in the earth more effectively than non-natives. For example, native bunch grasses grow roots anywhere from 2 to 10 or more feet deep, while a non-native lawn has roots only 1-2 inches deep. Also, they improve soil by interacting with native mycorrhizae, which in turn enable the soil to hold more sequestered carbon.
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**Over 2100 Plants & 170 Species and Varieties**
At the sale we offered over 2,100 individual plants and a diverse choice of over 170 species and varieties from more than 40 plant families. This included a dozen tree species, almost 100 shrub species and varieties, and 45 types of perennials. We also offered several species each of grasses, vines, ferns, rushes/sedges, and bulbs. One fourth of the plants were grown by Redbud propagators; the rest came from several native plant nurseries.

We did our best to have enough of your favorite species, though a number sold out in the first hour; we will try to have more of such popular species next year. If you wanted species you couldn’t get, please let us know by emailing your wish list to nativeplanthelp@redbud-cnps.org!

**Looking Forward to Next Year**
Though we had some “growing pains” (such as processing credit cards during the first hour, a shortage of volunteer cashiers, and crowded parking), thanks to the dedication of our volunteers, and the patience and cooperation of our customers, we got past the bottlenecks. With many helpful suggestions, we’re planning solutions for next year’s sale.

We’ve also started thousands of seeds from dozens of species for next fall’s sale — your requests can help us decide what else to grow. In the coming months, look for Redbud Chapter displays featuring our home-grown plants at local spring events such as the Mother’s Day Plant Sale at the Miners Foundry in Nevada City. We’ll have updates and announcements in our newsletter, on our Facebook pages, and on our website.

We look forward to planting and growing with you in the coming year!
Homegrown Natives Give Major Boost to Redbud Plant Sales
by Nancy Gilbert, Redbud Chapter Horticulture Chair

Over the past few years, a dedicated group of Redbud Chapter members have become proficient home native-plant propagators. We propagators are all active participants in our chapter’s Propagation Group, which is part of our horticulture program. We propagate both local native plants and hard-to-find California native plants at our homes and then offer our successes at the Redbud fall plant sale and at the annual Mother’s Day plant sale at the Miner’s Foundry.

Using Best Management Practices, IPM, and More
We grow all our plants according to Best Management Practices (BMP’s), which include strict sanitation protocols developed to avoid the spread of virulent plant pathogens such as Phytophthora diseases, fungal root diseases lethal to many native plants.

We also do not use pesticides, herbicides or fungicides but employ Integrated Pest Management (IPM) techniques to control pests and diseases. Our goal is to offer a wide variety of healthy native plants that are environmentally friendly in every way possible. We grow most of our plants from responsibly collected local seed and cuttings and swap seeds and cutting materials among members of our propagation group.

Our home propagators donated over 500 native plants to this year’s fall Redbud Native Plant sale. Many of these plants are locally native but difficult or impossible to purchase in nurseries due to one or several factors: seed is rarely available for sale, they are uncommon plants in the wild, they are slow-growing (so not very profitable), or they are just plain tricky to propagate and grow in pots, requiring special potting mixes and/or careful watering.

Propagating False Indigo (Amorpha californica)
One example is Amorpha californica, False Indigo, the larval host plant for our state insect, the California Dogface butterfly. This unusual shrub is a member of the pea family and is increasingly uncommon, largely due to loss of habitat from development. We were fortunate to have seed donated to us from Placer County and decided to give it a try.

False Indigo seeds have a very hard outer coat that requires a “hot water treatment” so the seed will absorb moisture and germinate. To do this, you boil water, let it cool a few degrees, then pour this hot water over the seeds and allow the seeds to soak overnight before seeding. False Indigo is a slow-growing species; this year, we offered 3-year-old one-gallon and quart-sized plants. We will have more for sale next year.
Growing Western Azalea (*Rhododendron occidentale*) from Seed

We also had great success growing Western Azalea, *Rhododendron occidentale*, from seed. The seed is exceedingly small and thus the seedlings are tiny and fragile, requiring careful handling when potting up. Once the plants are a year old, they become much easier to grow and are ready for sale in two to three years. With its showy and fragrant flowers plus good fall color, Western Azalea is one of our most beautiful native woodland shrubs and, shoppers eagerly sought them out at our fall plant sale.

![Western Azalea (Rhododendron occidentale)](image)

Our propagation group will once again be growing many beautiful local and locally-adapted native plants for our 2020 plant sales. If you are interested in joining us in our endeavors to propagate plants, contact Nancy Gilbert, the Redbud Chapter’s Horticulture Chair. Growing natives is a satisfying, fun and challenging learning experience that benefits our region and our planet by “bringing nature home.”

A Great Big Thank-You to All Plant Sale Volunteers

by Carol Thompson, Plant Sale Volunteer Co-Chair

It might take a village to raise a child, but it takes a small army of volunteers, not only Redbud members but also friends, family, and members of the public, to pull off the Redbud Plant Sale each year.

Thanks to all 81 people who stepped forward and gave their time and talents to make the 2019 sale a success. We can’t list everyone individually, but I do want to mention a few people.
Huge Thanks to Our Volunteers!
First mention goes to the sale co-chairs — Nancy Gilbert, Shane Hanofee and Jeanne Wilson — who put in countless hours prior to the sale and worked all day Friday for set-up and all day Saturday for the sale.

We had volunteers who made information cards for the plants, who drove to pick up plants, spent Friday unloading, prepping, and organizing plants by species, set up tables and fencing, hung banners and distributed fliers, shuttled volunteers to and from the new location, greeted shoppers, helped load plants into cars, cashiered, tallied sales, answered questions (as plant sages and as information booth helpers), cleaned up after the sale, and performed many other essential tasks.

Examples of Our Special Volunteers
I want to specifically acknowledge a few individuals among the many who exemplify the Redbud volunteer spirit. As mother and daughter Jaime and Hannah C. were driving by the Banner Community Guild on Friday, they stopped in to find out what was going on. They volunteered on the spot and came back on Saturday to help for three hours as plant movers, carrying boxes of plants from customers in line to the outside holding area while patrons waited to pay for purchases.

On Friday, Margaret E. was on hand for 4 and 1/2 hours, helping with indoor setup and placing plants on the tables. She was scheduled to return Saturday to help as a greeter from 11 to 2, but she showed up at 8:30 and worked the entire day.

Our parking attendants, most notably long-time lead parking attendant Rondal S., kept things moving in a challenging environment, directing shoppers in and out in a safe and speedy fashion. We know that space was limited and traffic busy during the early crush, yet our parking folks maintained their cool; we very much appreciate their efforts.

Finally, our cashiers (Mary T., Patricia C., Marjorie A., Janet T., Vicky R., Loren W., Stephanie S., and Susan D.) tirelessly processed hundreds of transactions, despite issues with processing credit cards arising from unanticipated problems with wireless access — a few even worked unscheduled double shifts to handle the high volume of purchases. We thank our cashiers profusely for all their hard work.

How Much Volunteer Energy Our Plant Sale Requires
Wonderful volunteers like these made the event so successful. On Friday and Saturday alone, volunteers worked approximately 429 hours. People put in many additional hours before those two days as well. So yes, it does require a lot of help to pull off a plant sale and again, a great big thank you to all those who volunteered.
Volunteer Suggestions Welcome
Naturally, with the new site, we did experience some bumps along the way. If you were one of our volunteers this year and have suggestions for improving the plant sale process or the area of the sale that you worked, please email your suggestions to volunteer4redbud@gmail.com. We have already started discussing next year’s sale and truly welcome your input.

We hope to see you again next year!

Update on Placer County Sunset Area-Placer Ranch Development Plan
by Jeanne Wilson, Redbud Chapter President

Recently, we sent an email alert to our Redbud members and friends about the threat to thousands of acres of vernal pool complex in west Placer County. Unfortunately, at a 6-hour meeting on Thursday, November 21, the Placer County Planning Commission approved the Sunset Area-Placer Ranch Plan by a vote of 6 to 1. At its December 10 meeting, the Placer County Board of Supervisors considered and approved the Plan, clearing the way for developing over 8,000 acres (13 square miles) of vernal pool complex and farmland.

Aerial View of vernal pools in Placer County adjoining areas already developed
Value of Vernal Pools
The planned development will destroy the majority of one of the largest remaining vernal pool complexes in Placer County. In the past 100 years, more than 90 percent of California’s vernal pools and their unique plant communities and wildlife habitats have been filled in, plowed under, and paved over.

In addition to their role as hotspots of native plant and animal biodiversity, vernal pool complexes are a critical part of the ecosystem, helping to sequester carbon, absorb storm water and spring runoff, filtering and cleaning the water, and recharging groundwater resources. In addition, they are vital to many of our state’s migratory, grassland, and riparian native birds and other wildlife.

Environmental Costs of Development
In addition to these direct and devastating impacts, the Sunset Area-Placer Ranch project will have other profound ecological consequences. Almost 8,000 new housing units, primarily high-end single-family homes, will be built, along with millions of square feet of office, commercial, and industrial buildings, as well as related new infrastructure. The plan includes a proposed donation of land for a new California State University (CSU) Sacramento campus for 25,000 CSU and 5,000 Sierra College students; yet the CSU governing board has not agreed to accept the donation of land, let alone approved building a new campus. CSU has said that if they do decide to accept the land, they will not comply with the County's own General Plan or any of the EIR mitigations.

The development will lead to an estimated 800,000 new daily trips on local roadways — and constant gridlock. In addition to loss of habitat, the area will experience a net increase in annual carbon emissions of over 1 billion pounds per year with disastrous consequences. Vastly increased carbon emissions will contribute to increased temperatures, poorer air quality, and harm to neighboring native plant communities, including in the proposed conservation area set aside to mitigate the destruction of the vernal pools. For example, the resultant coating of grime on leaf surfaces will impede photosynthesis, weakening the plants and making them more vulnerable to plant diseases and pests.

Given Placer County’s direct investment of over $5,000,000 of taxpayer money in this project, the approval on December 10 was anticipated. That leaves legal action as the only option to stop the destruction of precious vernal pools and their native plant communities. See December 11 Press Release of the Center for Biological Diversity.

A Gofundme account has been created to provide resources for this legal action. Even a small donation would help reach the fundraising goal. Even if you can't make a donation, it would be great if you could share the fundraiser link to help spread the word.

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Redbud Membership Celebration
by Diane Wetzel, Redbud Membership Chair

Do you want to make the 2020 Redbud Membership Celebration happen? Let’s celebrate all our Redbud CNPS members! We need a few creative and enthusiastic people to JOIN THE PLANNING TEAM!
Help make pivotal decisions about the Celebration:
When to hold it — April, May...next November after the plant sale?
Where? Outdoors? In a favorite welcoming (affordable or free) venue?
What kind of event do you want to help create — a picnic, a potluck? other ideas?...
Help define the fun! What do you want to help bring to this celebration — live music, a special speaker, environmentally-themed, icebreaker games? Should we look back to review our accomplishments? How might we look forward?

We have so many current members and newcomers with impressive experience and great expectations. How can we best interact with, involve and engage our 380+ members to share the energy that comes with our dedication to native plants? Is it time to update or redefine our chapter’s response to the need to sustain biodiversity?

Could you join the planning team? Want to share a comment, idea, or dream but aren’t ready to be on the team? Email Diane or email Jeanne Wilson at nativeplanthelp@redbud-cnps.org.

Redbud Officer Election Results
The Redbud Chapter’s biannual officer elections were held at our pre-speaker member meeting on September 25. Jeanne Wilson, Susan Chalpin, Desiree Hennessy, and Susan Dewar ran unopposed for the offices of President, Vice President, Treasurer, and Secretary, respectively. All were elected unanimously to two-year terms extending from October 2019 through September 2021.

A most sincere thank-you to all our elected officers for their invaluable service to the CNPS Redbud Chapter.

Redbud is Looking for a Few Good Volunteers
Here are volunteer roles where you can truly contribute right now! Just contact nativeplanthelp@redbud-cnps.org.

Program Chair
Have ideas for Redbud’s “Passionate About (Native) Plants” presentation series? Recommend programs to the Board; recruit and schedule speakers; and reserve venues. Have confirmed speakers provide presentation title, a few photos, brief presentation description, and a short bio; submit schedule and info to Newsletter Editor, Publicity Chair, and Web Editor for use in publicizing the programs.
President-Elect
Want to learn about what makes Redbud tick? Want to make a real difference, with the potential to lead? Consider volunteering for the position of President-Elect. This individual is appointed, not elected, and serves in training to become President. The President Elect serves on Redbud committees as appropriate, assists the President with chapter activities, and presides over meetings if the President and Vice President are not available. If later elected to office by the membership, the President-Elect becomes President. If interested, please email president@redbud-cnps.org.

Education Chair
We’re looking for an Education Chair. This person molds this role to their interests and skills. The Education Chair develops and maintains a supply of educational handouts and provides them to meetings, plant sales, and other activities. They may develop and oversee California native plant-related grant programs, scholarships, and educational activities in local schools, for chapter events or in the community.

Work with Children Propagating Native Plants
Our Horticulture Chair, Nancy Gilbert, will be helping the fourth-grade student volunteer “Restoration Rangers” at the Grass Valley Charter School with some native plant propagation this year. They have a greenhouse at the school to work in and keep plants over the winter.

Nancy is looking for a couple of Redbud volunteers who have some knowledge of propagating native plants and would enjoy working on this. You might also get to join Nancy in visiting some potential local restoration sites with Josie Crawford and Sierra Streams Institute. It’s a fun experience working with the children. If interested, email Nancy Gilbert.

Note: In addition to the preceding positions, we have openings in all our committees for people who want to help protect, explore, grow, and educate about California’s amazingly diverse native plants (almost 8,000 species). Please contact nativeplanthelp@redbud-cnps.com if you’d like to be involved in any of the following committees: Field Trip Committee, Plant Sale Committee, Program Committee, Advocacy Committee, Conservation and Rare Plant Committee, Membership Committee, Propagation Committee, or Ethnobotany Committee — Get involved and get to know us!

Our “Passionate About (Native) Plants” Public Lecture Series
Here are the 2020 dates and locations for our Passionate About (Native) Plants Lecture Series. Mark your calendars now! Speakers and topics coming soon. For more information in the near future, see our Redbud Upcoming Events page.

We are actively looking for a Program Chair. If you can help with programs for 2020, contact president@redbud-cnps.org.

Sierra Fawn Lily (Erythronium multiscapulatum) --- featured in 2019 presentation. Jewels of the Garden
All programs are 7 to 8:30 p.m. Socializing and member meeting begin at 6:30 p.m. (non-members welcome)

- **February 26, Wed.** “Fire and Fungi in the Western Mountains,” Thea Chesney, Auburn Library.
- **April 29, Wed.** “The Role of Herbaria in Preserving California’s Unique Botanical Heritage,” Hannah Kang, Madelyn Helling Library, Nevada City
- **June 24, Wed.** Auburn Library, Auburn
- **August 26, Wed.** Madelyn Helling Library, Nevada City
- **September 23, Wed.** Madelyn Helling Library, Nevada City
- **Oct 28, Wed.** Auburn Library, Auburn

### Upcoming Field Trips

Thanks to our botanically astute and very busy member, Shane Hanofee, we’re off to a great start with field trips in 2020. As dates approach, check Redbud Field Trips page for details on the field trips included here. Dates and locations are subject to change.

Also check our website for more field trips added as the season progresses.

- **Feb 29, Sat.** Spring Fungi. Hidden Falls (Auburn). Trip leader Shane Hanofee.
- **Mar 7, Sat.** Native trees and shrubs. Sammie’s Friends area (near McCourtney Road and Wolfe Mountain Road). Trip leader Shane Hanofee.
- **Mar 21, Sat.** Wildflowers. American River Canyon (Auburn State Recreation Area or near there). Trip leader Shane Hanofee.
- **Apr 4, Sat.** Wildflowers. Stevens Trail (N Fork American, Colfax). Trip leader Shane Hanofee.
- **April 11, Sat.** Wildflowers. Euchre Bar. Trip leader Shane Hanofee.
- **Apr 18, Sat.** Geophytes. Spenceville (off Hwy 120). Trip leader Shane Hanofee.
- **May 2, Sat.** Wildflowers. Table Mountain (near Oroville). Trip leader Shane Hanofee.

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*Whiteleaf Manzanita (Arctostaphylos manzanita) in bloom at Sammie’s Friends*

*Blue Dicks (Dichelostemma capitatum) in bloom at Spenceville*