



Friends of the Herbarium

Biological Sciences Herbarium
California State University, Chico

Newsletter

Vol. 1 No. 1

June 1995

MESSAGE FROM THE BOARD:

Welcome to the Friends of the Biological Sciences Herbarium, California State University, Chico.

After the Herbarium gala last fall to commemorate the donation of John Thomas Howell's library from his estate to the herbarium, a group of interested folks began to gather to form a Friends of the Herbarium.

Our first event, the Inaugural Field Event at Vina Plains on April 1, 1995, was a rousing success. About 40 people joined us that day. Linnea Hanson welcomed everyone and Tom Griggs talked about The Nature Conservancy Vina Plains Preserve. Rob Schlising then explained the days activities. He had checklists for everyone for Vina Plains. We divided into four groups-three with famous botanists to determine how many species we could identify and the fourth to assist Rob with his research. The famous botanists were Barbara Castro, Lawrence Janeway and Gail Kuenster. After a wonderful couple of hours of identifying, each group tallied their plants and Gail's group had the most. Rob will explain his Vina Plains research separately. The day ended with refreshments and good conversation with all.

The Friends of the Herbarium also had a display at the Wildflower Show of the Mt. Lassen Chapter of the California Native Plant Society on May 7, 1995. Pictures of the Inaugural Field Event, plus a new brochure, were available. Many stopped by to visit the display.

In March, about 200 membership letters were sent to botanists in Northwestern California to solicit membership in the new Friends of the Herbarium. As of May 1995, we have 30 members and have raised \$1830.00. The new board of the Friends of the Herbarium and California State University, Chico are very excited by the response. Thank you! If you haven't joined yet, please do so.

From the Chair:

We at the Biological Sciences Department at California State University, Chico, welcome the members of the newly formed Friends of the Herbarium. We are proud of the rich history of productivity and professional endeavors displayed by the faculty, students and volunteers of the Herbarium. Community support is important in maintaining the excellence of the facility. We thank you for your membership donation; also we want to thank all the individuals that helped form the "Friends" group. Special thanks goes to Kingsley Stern, Linnea Hanson, Lawrence Janeway, Robin Fallscheer, Joyce Lacey, John Copeland and Jan Monelo.

Sincerely,
Dr. Michael A. Abruzzo, Chair
Department of Biological
Sciences



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With the membership letters a ballot was also sent to elect a Board of Directors for the Friends of the Herbarium. The board slate was elected as listed. These folks will serve for one year with elections occurring each spring. If you are interested in serving on the board, please let someone on the board know so that your name can appear on the ballot next year.

The Friends of the Herbarium is also seeking a name for the Herbarium but none surfaced as the resounding winner from the request with the questionnaire. For now, it will be the Biological Sciences Herbarium, California State University, Chico. Perhaps a name contest can be a future activity.

With the membership letters, a questionnaire was included to find out people's interest in activities the Friends of the Herbarium should provide. The following is a tally of the responses:

1. Newsletter – 14 people checked the newsletter specifically. One to four times a year were the suggestions for frequency. The Friends of the Herbarium plans on having a newsletter three times a year, as of now.
2. Fund raising – 5 people checked this specifically. Ideas for fund raising included sponsoring field trips a few times each year, plant sales, tee-shirts, notecards, pins and/or bumper stickers. Also mentioned was a botanical art and/or photo auction, and plant sales with CNPS.
3. Classes – 9 people checked this specifically. Ideas for classes included studying various plant families (Compositae, grasses, Cyperaceae) or groups (*Carex*, ferns), using the Jepson Manual, a class for beginners on general keying, and a field botany class. Offering Advanced Plant Taxonomy was another idea. It was also suggested that a class be offered to present information about the data that is stored at the herbarium and how researchers from different fields use this data. Herbarium tours including how available is the herbarium and how other people use the herbarium were suggested.
4. Talks – 6 people checked this specifically. An idea to invite keynote botanical speakers, and specifically Wes Dempsey slide shows, were suggested.

Report on the Inaugural Field Event at the Vina Plains Preserve, 1 April by Rob Schlisling

Sunny skies on the first of April, following ample rains in the last days in March, helped produce a highly visible set of species in flower for the phenological survey. Combining all the plant names listed by the teams searching for plants in flower and fruit, a total of 73 taxa (species, subspecies, and varieties) were found at the Vina Plains that day. This type of search or compilation has not been done before for a particular

5. Symposia – 3 people checked this specifically. Ideas for symposia topics included wetland issues, restoration issues with native plants, exotic plants, and Native American uses of plants.

6. All of the above – 12 people responded that they felt all these should be activities of the Friends of the Herbarium.

7. Other ideas – 3 people responded as follows:

- ensure Plant Taxonomy class is offered every spring. Members could volunteer as assistants on field trips or as guest lecturers.

- a Botanical Career Event inviting organizations that may potentially employ botanists.

- collecting trips to areas other than Butte County and the local Valley, including an invitation to the Klamath National Forest to visit their incredible botanical diversity.

- coordinate activities with the Friends of the CSUC Arboretum and campus Arboretum Committee.

8. Willingness to help – 10 people responded that they were willing to help with some of the above activities. We'll be calling you!

We're very excited to see the responses and suggestions we received. Please fill out a questionnaire if you have not done so. It will help the Board of the Friends of the Herbarium plan future events by knowing the kinds of activities that the membership would like to have the Friends of the Herbarium provide.

Again, welcome to the Friends of the Herbarium! □

day at the Preserve, so it is not clear if this number is a particularly high or low one for the first day of April. Some species may flower mainly in response to changes in day length, and thus may begin to flower at about the same time each year. Others, of course, could be slowed down or speeded up by features of temperature and precipitation in a particular year.

This grand total of plants found in reproductive state on 1 April represented 20 families (about 41% of the 49 flowering plant families known on the Preserve). It should come as no surprise as to which family had the most taxa in flower... [Hint: the Vina Plains Preserve is usually referred to as "annual grassland."] After the grass family (Poaceae) with 15 taxa, the top families were sunflowers (Asteraceae) with 11 species, legumes (Fabaceae) with 6, and lilies (Liliaceae, now considered to include the onions and brodiaeas) with 5. And how many of these annual grassland plants are annuals? The annual growth habit pertains in 58 (just under 80%) of the taxa seen in flower and fruit.

Among these 73 taxa found in earliest April, 21 (over 28%) are considered to be non-native plants – introduced (usually inadvertently) in the past, but certainly here to stay. These weeds on the team lists included particularly *Senecio vulgaris* (old-man-of-spring), *Capsella bursa-pastoris* (shepherd's purse), *Cerastium glomeratum* (mouse-ear chickweed), some *Lolium* (Italian rye) and *Bromus hordeaceus* [formerly *B. mollis* (soft chess)], but most frequently of all, teams reported four species of *Erodium* (*E. botrys*, *E. brachycarpum*, *E. cicutarium* and *E. moschatum*), the filarees and stork's bills.

This genus, *Erodium*, shared top billing for highest number of species flowering in a genus, with the genus *Plagiobothrys* (popcorn flowers), also with 4 species in flower (*P. fulvus*, *P. greenii*, *P. stipitatus* var. *micranthus*, and *P. stipitatus* var. *stipitatus*). While the filarees are weeds, the popcorn flowers are all natives. There were also 4 species of *Poa* (bluegrasses) identified, two of them introduced annuals and the other two small native perennial "bunchgrasses." Both *Lasthenia* (goldfields) and *Trifolium* (clovers) had 3 species identified – all native annuals. Many genera had 1 or 2

Friends of the Herbarium WORKSHOPS

Rare Summer Annuals of the Vernal Pools. 15 July, Saturday.

With Tom Griggs of The Nature Conservancy, we will spend the morning searching for the many summer annuals that grow on the Vina Plains. We will pay particular attention to the rare species of the vernal pools, *Orcuttia*, *Tuctoria*, and *Chamaesyce*. Meet at 8:00am at the main entrance to the Vina Plains Preserve at Hwy 99 at Haile Road. The trip will last until 12:00pm. This workshop is \$5 for members of Friends of the Herbarium and \$10 for non-members. For more information, contact Joyce Lacey at 916/343-2010.

Introduction to keying *Carex*, Part 1. 12 August, Saturday.

An introduction to *Carex* terminology and keying, this one day FIELD class is led by Lawrence Janeway. We will visit a series of sites in the mountains west of Chico, a 1-2 hour drive, and field key the sedges we find there. Hand-lenses are essential, plus there will be a dissecting scope along to help illustrate some of the finer details. Following an earlier version of this class, Robin Fallscheer commented "It gave me the courage to key a *Carex*." We are tentatively scheduled to meet at 9:00am at Holt Hall at CSU, Chico. Scheduling may be adjusted to better fit the needs of participants. Transportation has not yet been arranged, but may be via car-pool. The class is limited to 20 participants; the fee is \$25 for members of Friends of the Herbarium and \$35 for non-members. For more information, contact Lawrence Janeway by e-mail at 75331.2654@compuserve.com or by phone at 916/899-7434.

Introduction to keying *Carex*, Part 2. 14 October, Saturday.

A more involved introduction to *Carex* terminology and keying, this LAB class is also led by Lawrence Janeway. This is not a direct continuation of Part 1; there will be much overlap, but the forum is different. Material of several species of will be available for keying by all members of the class, but special emphasis will be on helping those who bring their own specimens to key. We are tentatively scheduled to meet at 9:00am in Holt Hall, Room 129, at CSU, Chico. The class is limited to 20 participants; the fee is \$25 for members of Friends of the Herbarium and \$35 for non-members. For more information, contact Lawrence Janeway by e-mail at 75331.2654@compuserve.com or by phone at 916/899-7434.

Friends of the Herbarium WORKSHOPS Registration Form

Annuals of the Vernal Pools	_____ \$5.00 (member)	_____ \$10.00 (non-member)
Introduction to keying <i>Carex</i> , Part 1	_____ \$25.00 (member)	_____ \$35.00 (non-member)
Introduction to keying <i>Carex</i> , Part 2	_____ \$25.00 (member)	_____ \$35.00 (non-member)

Please make your check payable to "Friends of the Biological Sciences Herbarium"

Name _____
Organization _____
Address _____
City _____ State _____ Zip _____
Phone nos. _____ E-mail _____

Continued from page 2 Inaugural Field Event

species in flower, but the single species that got the most comments about it that day was the showy *Delphinium variegatum*, the royal larkspur!

Team lists indicated that several plants were past flower on the first of April, and were present in fruit only. These included one introduced grass *Poa bulbosa* (bulbous bluegrass) and at least four native species: *Lepidium niti-dum* (peppergrass), *Zigadenus fremontii*

(Fremont's zigadene), *Cardamine oligosperma* (western bittercress), and *Dodecatheon clevelandii* ssp. *patulum* (lowland shooting star).

The shooting star was given some special attention by a group of Friends of the Herbarium on April first, when a team tag-marked a large number of individual plants west of the barn, to determine if their reproductive display this spring differed on burned vs. unburned portions of the Preserve. Flowers turning into fruits were counted for each stem. The fruiting stems marked that

day have been sought out and collected in latest May, to get counts of the seeds per fruit. Dense and tall grasses hid many of the stems marked with stringed tags; mice and pocket gophers destroyed tags, strings, and whole plants in many cases. But about 75 intact stems have been recovered in each area – burned and unburned in early 1994 – and after a great deal of counting, a statement will be made as to the plants' reproductive output being higher (or not) on the burned grassland. Any volunteers to count seeds per fruit?

Yes! I would like to join!

____ Student \$5.00
____ Individual \$10.00
____ Contributing \$25.00
____ Sustaining \$100.00
____ Lifetime \$1,000.00
____ Donation \$ _____

Name _____
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Please make your check payable to:
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Friends of the Biological Sciences Herbarium

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Linnea Hanson Kingsley Stern
Joyce Lacey Jan Monelo
Robin Fallscheer Lawrence Janeway
 John Copeland

NEWSLETTER EDITOR

Lawrence Janeway

Friends of the Biological Sciences Herbarium

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