



Friends of the Herbarium

The Chico State Herbarium
California State University, Chico

Newsletter

Volume 19 Number 2

December 2013

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Herbarium Roots: Marge Anthony, Ph.D., Mentor and Role-model, Part 1

Friends of the CSU Chico Herbarium recently adopted a logo which includes the stated mission of “Preserving a Botanical Legacy”. This crossed my mind while travelling west on Hwy 20 on the 24th of April, 2013, heading to the coast with Josephine, our good friend Lowell Ahart, and our dog Jepson. We were going to The Sea Ranch on the Sonoma Coast to visit with Lowell’s plant taxonomy instructor, Dr. Margery Anthony, who in 1960 introduced him to what would become a lifelong passion. In the 53 years since that undergraduate botany class at Chico, Lowell has made many valuable contributions to the Chico State Herbarium and to the flora of northern California. He sometimes shares stories about various collecting trips and from his formative years, often mentioning Dr. Anthony and her plant taxonomy class. Lowell’s rich botany legacy started in Chico with her as mentor, now more than a half-century ago.

The next morning we left the motel in Gualala, excited in knowing that Lowell and Dr. Anthony were about to meet again, for the first time since 1972. We anticipated a memorable day ahead; of course this proved true! We met Dr. Anthony at her home at The Sea Ranch, situated on a grassy slope overlooking the wooded hills, coastal terrace, and ocean beyond. She warmly greeted us, insisting we call her Marge. We spent most of the day in conversation, tape recorder on the table between us. Settling into the morning on her deck, we explained again that we were working on “Legacy Articles” for the CSUC Herbarium, and were interested in learning more about her Chico story, how she came to be a professor there, about the Biology Department then, about people and the Herbarium.

(Continued on page 2)



2013 1st Place Winner—*Calystegia soldanella* by Ayla Mills

3rd Annual Fall Photo Contest

Our 3rd annual Fall Photo Contest was a success. The 18 photographs received were outstanding technically and artistically, which made judging them challenging to the board members who voted. First place (\$100 prize) was of beach morning glory, *Calystegia soldanella* taken by Ayla Mills. Second (\$50) and third (\$25) place went to Joan Walters for her seedpod of *Asclepias speciosa*, and a scene of the water buttercup, *Ranunculus aquatilis*. It was a treat to have all entries on display November 2nd at our annual meeting—a wonderful way to celebrate the unique flora of California.

J. Whittlesey

(Additional winning photos on page 7)



The **Friends of the Chico State Herbarium**, Biological Sciences, California State University, Chico, was formed to help maintain the high quality of work known to be associated with the Herbarium. The primary purpose of the group is to provide community support for the Herbarium. This includes raising funds for items that are not covered under the University budget. Scientific and academic pursuits are the focus of the group. The Friends also offers low cost workshops and classes on various botanical topics.

The **Friends of the Herbarium** operates under the auspices of the California State University, Chico, and enjoys non-profit status and has access to the use of University classrooms and equipment.

Memberships are renewed on January 1 of each year.

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Newsletter

Volume 19 Number 2

The Newsletter is published one to three times per year by the **Friends of the Herbarium**, Department of Biological Sciences, California State University, Chico. Subscription is free with membership. Submissions on herbarium-related topics are welcome.

Herbarium Roots: Marge Anthony (continued from page 1)

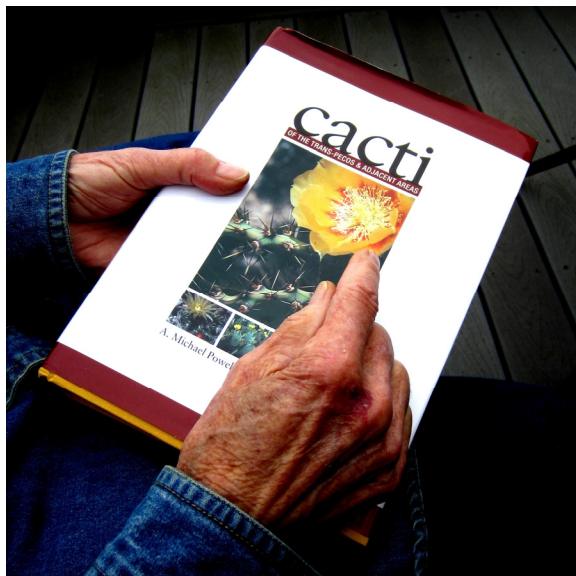
In reply to the question, “how did you choose Chico to come and teach”, she said with a laugh that it was mostly chance, and in fact, if she got around to writing her memoirs or autobiography, it would be titled, “A Serendipitous Life”. Marge conceded, however that she has natural curiosity and has always been a motivated and hard worker.

She explained that she had exposure to biology and natural history early in life, as her father was a mammalogist who worked with the American Natural History Museum in New York City. “He was frequently away from home on field expeditions”, she recalls. Twice though, Marge, her mother and brother accompanied him west where he worked on projects, and they enjoyed themselves, “as tourists”. These trips, one to Jackson Hole Wyoming and the other to the Grand Canyon, were the beginnings of her life-long fascination with the western U.S. landscape.

After finishing high school in New Jersey, Marge briefly attended college in Vermont, majoring in biology. There, she was not only the sole fe-

male student in her botany class, but the ONLY student, as all males had volunteered or were drafted to serve in WWII. In order to finish her degree she transferred to the University of Michigan. As a young woman in the biology program there, she was in the minority. She recalls being treated very well and was encouraged to pursue a PhD, which she did.

Her major professor at University of Michigan was Dr. Alzeda Clover; her chosen thesis project was the “Ecologic and Systematic Analysis of the Genus *Opuntia* in the Big Bend Area of Texas”. This landscape, then newly established as a National Park, was a completely wild frontier. Marge told us about how she and her field-working companion, Arliss Denyes were outfitted with a University-supplied truck and camping gear, and of how in 1947 and 1948 they made their own back-country roads as they went. Arliss was working on the ecology of small mammals in vegetation ecotones. The two young women carried pistols, and slept with them loaded under their pillows at night. The side-arms were meant not so much for rattlesnakes or pumas, as for fugitives, known in those days to hide from the law in these remote lands.



She completed her doctoral dissertation in 1949, which documented the ecology and distribution of 31 *Opuntia* taxa and described for the first time, 1 new species, 4 new varieties and 3 new hybrids. Her research at the Big Bend National Park has been cited in at least four books subsequently published through the years, and her name remains as original authority on 4 taxa in the Cactaceae treatment in the recently published Flora of North America, Vol. 4.

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Marge showed us a photo of Chubby Cholla (*Cylindropuntia imbricata* var. *argentea*), discovered and first described by her, on the cover of *Cacti of the Trans-Pecos and Adjacent Areas*, Powell, M.A., and J.F. Weedon (2004).

2013 Friends of the Chico State Herbarium Annual Meeting

The 2013 Friends of the Chico State Annual Meeting occurred on November 2, 2013. Prior to the Annual Meeting itself, Jim Bishop gave a talk for the Friday Seminar series on November 1, 2013 sponsored by the Friends of the Chico State Herbarium on "Alpine plants: Their Adaptations and Use as Biological Indicators of Climate Change". His talk included the California and Nevada projects of the Global Observation Research Initiative in Alpine Environments (GLORIA) which is an international program that can afford opportunities for student volunteers. It was a very informative talk with beautiful photos of the alpine areas of the southern Sierra Nevada and White Mountains.

On Saturday November 2, refreshments, carnivorous plants and photo contest photos were in the herbarium in 129 Holt Hall. After enjoying the reception in 129 Holt we moved to 170 Holt for the annual meeting and special talk. In 170 Holt, Colleen Hatfield, Director of the Chico State Herbarium welcomed eve-



2013 Annual Meeting Open House



Elena Gregg, FOH Board President

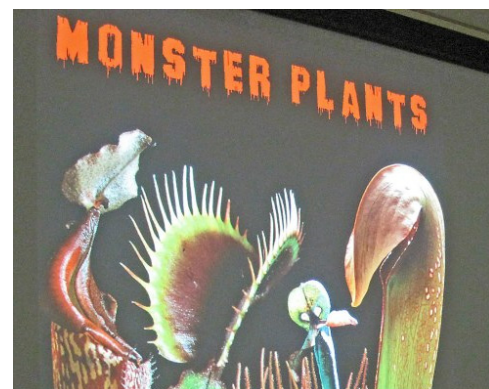


Dr. Barry Rice, Guest Speaker

ryone to our annual meeting. Elena Gregg, President of the Friends of the Chico State Herbarium, talked about our accomplishments this past year. This included the various workshops we have been able to provide, the display that was done at the public library and then used at the Mt. Lassen Chapter Wildflower Show and in Bidwell Park at Celebrating the Jewell, the spring and fall photo contests, the workshop display in the hall outside 129 Holt and the Annie B Drive. Lawrence Janeway, curator of the Chico State Herbarium, talked about the accomplishments of the Herbarium. These will be highlighted in the next newsletter. The proceeds from the workshops and other fundraising by the Friends provides the funds for Lawrence's salary. It was very impressive to see all that the herbarium has been able to accomplish.

Dr. Barry Rice, from University of California, Davis and Sierra College, was our special speaker who talked about "Murderous Plants". His talk about carnivorous plants was very informative and enjoyable for all. After his talk he had some pitcher plants that he sliced open so that people could see the decaying bugs in the bottom of the pitchers. Both he and his wife Beth answered the numerous questions that folks had. His talk was very entertaining and will be remembered by all!

L. Hanson



Herbarium Roots: Marge Anthony

(continued from page 2)

Work wasn't easy to find after graduation. She had written numerous letters to universities inquiring about potential teaching opportunities, without success. Marge had two criteria for prospective schools; they had to be co-ed, and "in the Rockies or west".

One day, a professor in her department came along with a letter announcing an open faculty position at Arizona State University, Tempe. She wasn't sure of her chances of being hired when she applied, considering the invitation letter mentioned that the Botany Department was looking for "a fellow who's good at taxonomy and field work". Shortly after sending off her application to Arizona, she also wrote a letter to Stanford University. Stanford wasn't her first choice however, knowing it was mainly a research institution. Marge noted, "I didn't want the pressure of teaching AND publishing, but I was desperate". Getting a job was her priority at the moment.

As it happened, Dr. Vesta Holt, the namesake of present day Holt Hall, founder of the Chico State Herbarium, and Biology Department Chair at the time, was also a Stanford Graduate. Chico State College had an open faculty position in the Biology Department. Vesta had sent a letter to her former professor at Stanford asking if he knew of someone there who might be interested to come and teach in Chico. With both Vesta and Marge's letter at hand the professor suggested, "You two should get together!" He sent Marge's letter to Vesta, and encouraged Marge to apply to Chico, which she did.

Meanwhile, the Department Chair at Arizona State, "decided it was high-time for a woman to be in their department, God Bless him". Marge got accepted both to Arizona and Chico at the same time, the letters almost arriving the same day. She recalls, "I hated to turn down Arizona, as they had done a lot of soul-searching. But Vesta's letter was very warm, as she was, *and after all at the foot of the Sierra, in California, which is just what I wanted!*" She continued, "So that's how I wound up at Chico's Teacher's College. I'd never heard of the place so could never have applied there. It's only because I applied to Stanford and Vesta was from Stanford, and happened to be looking for a botanist; *serendipity!*"



Dr. Marge Anthony moved to Chico in 1949 where she joined Dr. Vesta Holt (Biology/Botany), Dr. Homer Lowe (Entomology), Dr. Tom Rogers (Zoology) and Dr. Allan Douglas (Microbiology) as the fifth faculty member of the Department of Biological Sciences, Chico Teacher's College.

The day was getting on and we took a break. While Josephine helped Marge make lunch and coffee, Lowell and I botanized down her driveway and along the grassy road edge below. We returned to the deck to share in the pizza and show-off some of the 15 plant species collected (Lowell Ahart, Dr. M. Anthony, J. Dittes & J. Guardino #18,587–18,601). Marge enthusiastically added three new native-plant names to her copy of *The Sea Ranch Flora*, all "belly-plants": (*Cicendia quadrangularis*, *Isolepis cernua* and *Isolepis carinata*), commenting on their small stature (all less than 2" tall) and, how wonderful it is to have new discoveries made right along her driveway by "real botanists"!

As we began again to talk about her "Chico Story", Marge mentioned that she was hoping that the mail-delivery truck would arrive soon, and in time for us to go for an afternoon hike along one of the local Sea Ranch trails. She was expecting delivery of a new radio system that she'd ordered for her trusty little Cessna 150, which she still pilots seasonally between her home on the Sonoma Coast and her northern residence in Olympia, Washington.

J. Dittes

In the next issue of the Friends of the CSUC Herbarium Newsletter, we'll share more from our visit with Dr. Marge Anthony in Herbarium Roots: Marge Anthony, Ph.D., mentor and role-model, Part 2.

Dr. Marge Anthony and Lowell Ahart at The Sea Ranch on the Sonoma Coast on April 25, 2013. Lowell was in Marge's plant taxonomy class in 1960 and they had not seen each other since 1972.

Recent Workshops

Introduction to the Willows (*Salicaceae*) of California

On Saturday June 22, 2013, John Bair led a full classroom in willow identification and ecology. Based in Arcata, California, John is a recognized expert in willow and cottonwood taxonomy and physiology with a special interest in the effect of stream flow regulations on *Salicaceae*. Distinguishing between willow species in the field is often tricky for botanists; however, John emphasized key differences in vegetative material that made it easy for even the novice botanist to be able to differentiate between species. Focus was on the leaf, stem, and other growth characteristics with an emphasis on the regional distribution of each willow species. Over three days prior to the workshop, John collected fresh willow material from Humboldt Bay to over 10,000 feet in the Sierra Nevada. In addition to the many specimens collected for the workshop, John provided the class with several handouts, including willow identification articles, keys, as well as willow ecology and restoration information. Recent taxonomic changes in the second edition of the Jepson Manual were reviewed and several of the species were taken through the new Jepson Manual keys. The workshop was a huge success with participants – not to mention that many of the attendees had already taken his willow workshop more than once!



Introduction to Native Bees as Pollinators

Rob Schlising and Rob Irwin gave their workshop for the 4th year, on July 18, with a full house of attendees from across the North State. Participants watched up-dated Powerpoint presentations that illustrated the nature of native bees, their habitats and their importance. Hands-on work included keying pinned specimens with an expanded key to local bees written by Rob Irwin. A new workshop feature was the special attention to bumblebees, since the western bumblebee (*Bombus occidentalis*) has declined almost to extinction in much of its range in Pacific Coast states. Don Miller, entomologist at Chico State, showed historical collections to illustrate the morphology of this species—for which public lands now need to be managed. On July 19, half of the class took the optional fieldtrip to the mountains, to see live bees nesting and to net them at flowers for close observation in glass bottles before their release. A roadside population of *Nama lobbii* attracted many species of bees, and *Penstemon neotericus* illustrated the unusual pollen wasp in action. The major study site, at 6500 feet elevation, had *Monardella odoratissima* in superb flower. We observed numerous kinds of native bees and other insects on flowers, and collected two species of bumblebees (but not *B. occidentalis*) for study.



Medicinal Plants with Stuart Wooley

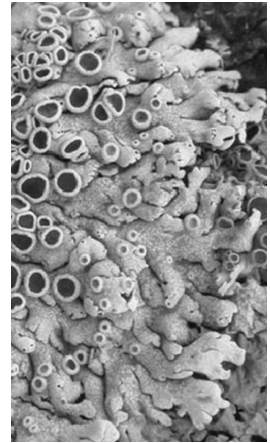
On October 26, the Friends of the Chico State Herbarium hosted a half day workshop on medicinal plants taught by Dr. Stuart Wooley. Dr. Wooley is currently Associate Professor of Botany at California State University, Stanislaus. The workshop began with a discussion of how plant chemicals are absorbed and digested in the human body to better understand the science behind how medicinal plants work. After this introduction, a wide variety of plants, both native to California and non-native, were discussed in depth. Dr. Wooley explained their biology, chemistry, folk uses, current research evidence for their use, and the different ways to prepare them. Some of the plants discussed included chamomile, mint, cranberries, California poppy, ephedra, cinnamon, and California bay. The class continued the discussion of medicinal plants and their uses while walking through the California native plant garden on the University campus. At the end of the day, the class had the special treat of dividing and potting a number of live plants to take home for cultivation including two varieties of mint, lemongrass, and ginger. With his workshop, Dr. Wooley opened the world of medicinal botany to the novices in the class and expanded the knowledge of current research and the chemistry of medicinal plants to the many experienced ones in attendance.



Upcoming Workshops Sponsored by Friends of the Herbarium

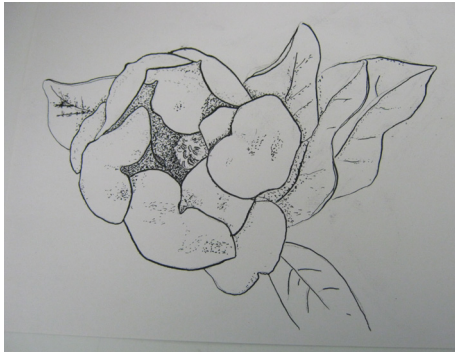
Identifying Lichens to Genus—March 1, 2014, Saturday

Tom Carlberg will repeat his workshop that introduces lichens, on March 1, 2014. As in years past, he will provide plenty of lichen materials, so that all workshop attendees can examine a type of lichen at the same time, as he works the group through his key to genus. In addition to this hands-on work, Tom has Powerpoint presentations that illustrate many features of lichens and their habitats. A popular feature of this workshop is the mid-day fieldtrip (attendees bring their bag lunches) to view and collect local lichens in nature for several hours. The remainder of the afternoon is spent back in the Herbarium, examining and working the collections through the key. More information on Tom and on the workshop can be seen on the FOH web site, where his description states “Questionably plants, definitely native, unquestionably important, and usually small, lichens are an overlooked but present link in most ecosystems.”



Botanical Illustration Workshop—April 26, 2014, Saturday

Want to draw plants and flowers? Here's your chance! Local illustrator and teacher, Judy McCrary, will lead this one day workshop on botanical illustration. The workshop will concentrate on pencil and ink techniques, although other media may be explored depending upon the interest of the participants. Bring plant cuttings and flowers to share and draw.



All workshops unless otherwise noted are held in Holt Hall 129 on the CSU Campus. Registration cost is \$100.00 personal, \$125.00 business, \$90.00 for members of Friends of the Herbarium, and \$40.00 student (only 2 seats available per class at the student price). Check out the FOH Workshop website for updates on these workshops at www.csuchico.edu/biol/Herb/Events.html.



Additional Winning Entries from the 2013 Photo Contest



2nd place, *Asclepias speciosa*, and 3rd place, *Ranunculus aquatilis*, by Joan Walters

Photo Display of Recent FOH Workshops

Two wall cases near the Herbarium (129 Holt Hall) have a new display that highlights many of the public workshops FOH has sponsored over the last few years. Photos for the exhibit were contributed by members of the Board as well as other community members and workshop participants. Along with text describing the workshop, photos often show the instructor or the class along with the workshop subject matter. The exhibit highlights highly diverse workshop topics, among them Nature Journaling, The Jepson Manual Second Edition, Springtime Grasses of California Valleys and Foothills, Identifying Lichens to Genus, Emerging Botanical Field Methods, and Wreath Making. Some

of the instructors presenting these classes are local to the Chico area, but many are from other parts of the state. Instructors are offered a limited amount of workshop registrant fees; however, some instructors choose to donate their services entirely. Workshops run one-half, one, or even two days long—and are conducted in the Herbarium or in the field.

There are two major purposes behind FOH sponsoring workshops. The first is to showcase and promote, in a variety of formats, the diversity of plants and plant communities in northern California. The second is to raise funds to support a part-time curator for the Herbarium, since the state of California no longer provides money that covers the functioning of a large and active herbarium like the one at Chico State. R. Schlising



One of the two wall cases in Holt Hall displaying some of the workshops presented by FOH

2013 Update to *Selected Plants of Northern California and Adjacent Nevada* Now Available

Order the book via the order form on the web site: www.csuchico.edu/herbarium/studies/detailed-book-list.shtml. Avoid shipping charges by visiting the herbarium to buy a copy.

Featured in the next FOH Newsletter

- Sue Taylor, a prodigious collector, and dedicated volunteer Curator of the Herbarium in the 1970's and earliest 1980's, who laid the foundation for a Butte County flora with her excellent detailed checklists called *Flora Buttensis*,
- Dr. Marge Anthony in Herbarium Roots: Marge Anthony, Ph.D., Mentor and Role-model, Part 2.



Yes! I would like to join/renew!

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Friends of the Herbarium

The Chico State Herbarium
California State University, Chico

**JOIN US FOR THE NORTHERN CALIFORNIA BOTANISTS
SYMPOSIUM TO BE HELD IN CHICO ON 13-14 JANUARY 2014**

Friends of the Chico State Herbarium
California State University, Chico
Chico, CA 95929-0515
(530) 898-5356