



CALENDAR 2023

In-person meetings will be held at the **Norman Murray Center** in Mission Viejo.

Feb 15in-person meeting

Apr 19in-person meeting

Jun 21in-person meeting

FieldTrips

Feb 11Tree of Life Field Trip

Feb 25Oak Canyon Field Trip

POPCORN FLOWER EXPERT WILL SPEAK AT CHAPTER MEETING

Wednesday, February 15

Plant dispersal between the American continents and the special case of the Popcorn Flowers.

Michael G. Simpson, speaker

This meeting will take in person at the Norman Murray Center in Mission Viejo. Doors open at 7:00 pm; the program begins promptly at 7:30.

For over a hundred years, botanists and biogeographers have noticed an interesting pattern: the occurrence of the same plant species or very close relatives on either side of the tropics in North and South America. This

biogeographic pattern, known as American amphitropical disjunction or AAD, represents the repeated formation of North America–South America sister lineages through dispersal and subsequent diversification on separate continents. This phenomenon has been recognized and studied by Asa Gray and Joseph Hooker (1880), Lincoln Constance and Peter Raven (1963), Robert Thorne (1972), Sherwin Carlquist (1983) and other prominent botanists.

Since subtribe Amsinckiinae (Boraginaceae) is one of the richest groups of plants displaying the AAD pattern, it has drawn the attention of our own Michael Simpson. Michael has been involved with studying that plant group for years and is therefore in a prime position to take advantage of new and emerging data. The field of systematics (on which Michael wrote the book) now has the phylogenetic, biogeographic, and dating tools to assess the evolutionary and biogeographic history of AAD organisms and to begin relating

these with common mechanisms of dispersal, climatic shifts, and geologic events.



Mike with *Cryptantha alyssiodes* high in the Chilean Andes

Michael G. Simpson is Professor Emeritus at the Department of Biology, San Diego State University and Collections Manager of the SDSU Herbarium. Michael currently studies the subtribe Amsinckiinae (Boraginaceae), American amphitropical disjunctions, and plants of Chile. He is author of the widely used textbook *Plant Systematics* (Elsevier-Academic Press, 2006; 3rd ed. 2019). He was intimately involved in the writing of the **Checklist of Vascular Plants of Ronald W. Caspers Park** with Ron Vanderhoff and others and was also instrumental in arranging the **2022 OC CNPS Botany Blitz** in that park. Michael also serves on the OC-CNPS Rare Plants Committee.

Native Gardeners Corner: *Members' Tips, Tricks, and Techniques*

This column is a regular newsletter feature offering chapter members and local experts a chance to briefly share information on many things related to gardening with natives.

The request for this edition was: **“Of the many native sages (*Salvia* species) which is your favorite and why?”**

Alan Lindsay: “My favorite sages are *S. brandegeei*, *S. clevelandii*, and *S. mellifera*, not necessarily in that order. They are all found naturally in coastal Southern California. And, all three species are surviving the drought in my Seal Beach garden and the Golden West College Native Garden with little or no watering. My Black Sage (*S. mellifera*) did die several years ago but came back as seedlings and they are thriving. I'm on my third Santa Rosa Island sage (*S. brandegeei*) because the first two outgrew the space I'd given them so they had to be removed. This time, the third one was given plenty of room, all by itself.”

Rama Nayeri: “My favorite is the standard Cleveland's sage. I love it because it is ridiculously fragrant, it's nice and big, and I can dry the leaves and have many uses for them.”

Naomi Fraga: “My favorite sage is *Salvia funerea* (Death Valley sage). It is not available in the horticultural trade (yet) and so far, botanists at California Botanic Garden have not seed banked it. It seems to produce few viable seeds, and it has not been successfully propagated by cuttings. It's a beautiful sage with spiky leaves that grows on limestone cliffs. It grows in two greater population areas—in the Death Valley region and to the south around Mojave Trails National Monument. I enjoy this plant because of its calyx lobes which are floofy and it has beautiful deep purple flowers (in addition to its spiky leaves).”



S. funerea



S. spathacea

Terry LePage: “Oh that's too hard a question. I'll answer by the seasons.

Late winter/spring: Hummingbird sage, *Salvia spathacea*; it pops up under other plants in a layer of bright green cheer. Late Spring through summer: Cleveland sage cultivar 'Winifred Gilman' is a favorite. All year round: White sage, *Salvia apiana*, which looks most elegant in half shade where it doesn't send up flower spikes and acts like a well behaved perennial. All native to Orange County!”

Lori Whalen: “White Sage! It's by far the easiest to maintain, it looks amazing year round, is super hardy, and has so many uses. I've never discarded a single trimmed stalk.”

Ron Vanderhoff: “Too many to choose just one. I cannot live without Cleveland Sage (*Salvia clevelandii*) and it's many selections and hybrids. It is the most adaptable, easy to grow and garden tolerant of them all, It's my first "Sage advice" for any new native plant gardener. Then, for a slightly shaded position I love Hummingbird Sage (*Salvia spathaceae*). The showy ruby: red flowers and the fruity fragrance of the foliage are delightful.”

Bob Allen: “My favorite sage is black sage, *Salvia mellifera*. Yes, it's not as unique as some others, but it lives in many habitats that I enjoy. It's my constant companion near the beach, in coastal sagebrush scrub, in chaparral, in riparian, and even among coniferous forests in the Santa Ana Mountains. Its scent reminds me of the wilderness that calls to me every day.”

Amy Litton: “The beauty of white sage elevates this species to the next level: I suppose it's the leaf shape & color, plus the plant's form. With blooms it's incredible, especially when you take time to observe the pollinators at work! I can't walk by these plants in the wild without rubbing a leaf & enjoying the fragrance.”



S. mellifera



'Pt. Sal'

Jake Hoffman: "Tough decision but after some thought...For its versatility, durability and resilience in my garden Hummingbird Sage, *Salvia spathacea*. I would also like to nominate its cousin California Hedge-nettle, *Stachys bullata*, as it takes far less water than I thought and smells good too."

Dan Songster: "I was going to say that for beauty, fragrance, pollinator use, and ease of growth, I am not sure you can beat Cleveland Sage (*Salvia clevelandii*). I was going to mention its several related cultivars and hybrids like, 'Winifred Gilman', 'Betsy Clebsch', 'Allen Chickering', 'Aromas', 'Poza Blue', and 'Whirly Blue'. But since no one mentioned the Purple Sage (*Salvia leucophylla*) especially the cultivar 'Pt. Sal', I must say it is one of the easiest to grow and what a ground cover on a slope!"

Our question for the next Tips & Tricks column: "What native plants do you have that once established, you "never" water? Besides their water thrifty nature, what do you like about them?"

FEBRUARY FIELD TRIPS

Note: While participation in most field trips is free, all require signing a waiver. Please go to occnps.org for a link to the sign-in.

Saturday, February 11: Tree of Life Nursery with Jonathan Robbins

Led by nursery staff, this tour offers a "backstage" view of the propagation and growing areas generally off-limits to nursery visitors. As one of the largest native plant growers in the state, Tree of Life Nursery provides over 500 plant species to habitat restoration projects, landscaping companies, and backyard gardeners. Go to their website for directions to the nursery: californianativeplants.com. The free tour will begin at 10 am in the parking lot.

Saturday, February 25: Oak Canyon Nature Center

Oak Canyon Nature Center is a 58-acre natural park in Anaheim Hills. It contains coast live oak woodlands, coastal sage scrub, and riparian habitats. This will be an easy to moderate hike of between 1.5 and 2 miles identifying all the native and non-native plant species in the Nature Center. This is a perfect field trip for students and those interested in learning the common native plants. No entrance fee is required though donations at the Nature Center are greatly appreciated. Physical Difficulty: Easy to moderate
Meet at 9 am at the Oak Canyon Nature Center Parking Lot, 6700 E. Walnut Canyon Road, Anaheim, 92807.
Leader: Sandy Leatherman, sandy@leathermanbio.com; approx. time 9 – 12 am.

FLOWER FESTIVAL AT TREE OF LIFE NURSERY

Tree of Life Nursery is hosting a Flower Festival on Saturday, March 25. This festival will celebrate all sorts of native flowers. There will be 15-minute lightning talks featuring wildflowers, vendor booths, a native plant bouquet contest and more! See next month's newsletter for more details or visit the Tree of Life website at californianativeplants.com/

A SAGE IN EVERY GARDEN

***A Sage in Every Garden* wraps up in February with Five Free Sage Events.**

OCCNPS has nearly reached their goal of giving away 2,000 free white sages to Orange County residents, while also educating the public about the threat faced by white sage as it is poached from our natural lands to satisfy worldwide demand for smudge sticks. If you haven't had a chance yet to pick up your free sage, stop by one of the events listed below. The City of Dana Point was so impressed with the program that they are sponsoring an extra event at the Dana Point Headlands on February 18.

Saturday, February 11, 2023: *Environmental Nature Center*, 1601 E. 16th St. Newport Beach, 92663. 10 am. 120 plants will be given away.*

Saturday, February 11, 2023: *Orange Home Grown Farmers Market*, 303 W. Palm Avenue, Orange, 92866. 9 am. 48 plants will be given away.”*

Saturday, February 18, 2023: *Dana Point Nature Interpretive Center*, 34558 Scenic Dr., Dana Point, 92629. 10 am. Sponsored by the City of Dana Point. 96 plants will be given away.*

Sunday, February 19, 2023: *Orange Coast Unitarian Universalist Church*, 2845 Mesa Verde Dr. E., Costa Mesa, 92626. 10 am. 48 plants will be given away.*

Saturday, February 25, 2023: *ShIPLEY Nature Center*, 17851 Goldenwest St., Huntington Beach, 92647. 10 am. 96 plants will be given away.*

*One per resident while supplies last. Plant giveaway numbers and venues and dates may change.

