A Tribute to Jerry Cook – Mark Albert

Alas, a mentor has passed. Jerry Cook died peacefully on Sept. 29, 2002 at his home in Ukiah. He was 74.

For those of us outside his family and church, Jerry was a pillar of the academic and volunteer teaching community. He had a Masters Degree in Botany. Jerry's love of nature was palpable. His enthusiasm was infectious, even as he spoke Latin botanical names. That attribute, perhaps even a beatitude, made his teaching method fun and easy. Jerry's teaching was imbued with the rare "personal factor."

Jerry was a biology teacher at Ukiah High School for 32 years. He also taught at Mendocino College, and at the City of 10,000 Buddhas until this fall. He did volunteer teaching at the Redwood Valley Outdoor Education Project as well. He helped the volunteer staff at the Boonville Wildflower Show with flower identification every April. He has given dozens of wonderful slide-show lectures to our Sanhedrin chapter of CNPS over 20 years. Jerry has certainly introduced many hundreds of people to the particular botanical delights of our bioregion.

When my wife Judy and I heard the news, we immediately felt the loss, yet we couldn't keep from smiling when we thought of Jerry's irrepressible beaming personality and reminisced about particular excursions with him (there was always someone with him on his excursions). Jerry was an unusually positive and gregarious person.

Jerry was passionate about wildflowers, the more the better. Every spring he would lead several group trips to tour Bear Valley in full bloom. He made a particular study of the local lupines, which are quite difficult to tell apart without a hand lens. Jerry was an avid mushroomer, and many of us took every opportunity to go into the forest with him. If you needed a quick identification over the phone, Jerry was the one to call. He had the ability to visualize the plant or mushroom from his inner knowledge and could usually guess the name. The hospital used this skill whenever they had a suspected mushroom poisoning. Jerry's expertise was freely available to all who asked for it. How many of us have dropped a specimen by his house for identification, or just to get a dose of his excitement! In the last year, his passion turned toward the study of lichens.

Jerry loved botanical keys. I myself came into close contact with Jerry on our 'Mendocino Botany' project, which we intended to be an easy-to-carry local field flora. When the new Jepson Manual (Hickman, et al) appeared in 1993, Jerry got the idea of distilling down all the relevant keys in that heavy tome to only our county by referring to the Smith & Wheeler Flora. He did it all with a typewriter! I did the final typing into the computer, the editing and layout work. Every time I found a mistake, Jerry would immediately go to work on fixing the key. In the end the keys were still too cumbersome to work well in the field. The grass section was also too difficult to distill for our level of expertise. We slowly came to the realization that our premises were too shaky, as we didn't start in the field (a much longer process than distilling extant keys). I finally decided not to publish the work. However it is available in digital form for those who are interested. Though the project did not come to full fruition, because of Jerry's enthusiasm, the first big step has been taken, and the groundwork has been laid for another botanist to bring a local flora to the next level. I envision a downloadable and updatable online local flora with photos. Jerry and I also shared a passion for knowing the names of all our alien garden weeds.

A true mentor never dies. The knowledge and love of nature that Jerry has given to us, lives on in us, and in those we teach. All of us who knew Jerry Cook as the enthusiastic beaming teacher will always remember him, and smile.
As part of a memorial to Jerry Cook the Sanhedrin Chapter will work in conjunction with members of the Redwood Valley Outdoor Education Project (RVOEP) to plant and dedicate a meadow area on their property with wildflowers native to Mendocino County. Since Chuck Williams is an advisory board member of RVOEP he will be coordinating this effort for the chapter. The plan is to collect appropriate seed from those members who have a current seed surplus which they are willing to share, to gather wild seed either individually or as part of a chapter outing and to purchase varieties as needed. If you have seed or would like to participate in the planting effort in some other way please contact Chuck at: 462-8984.

**Growth and Uses of White Root Sedge**
- *Chuck Williams*

In year 2000 I was hired by the Pomo Band of Native Americans at Redwood Valley Rancheria to install a basket materials garden to help maintain their heritage. While almost all Pomo basket plants are found in riparian areas, the garden site is situated on a tract of upland valley floor right at the base of the hills where the addition of water is necessary.

Even though the garden includes Willow, Dogwood, Hazelnut, Redbud, Walnut, Bulrush, Bracken Fern and Soaproot, the most important plant is White Root Sedge (*Carex barbarea*), whose name kä-höm’ in Pomo means “water gift”. The core of the rhizome of the sedge, after removing the bark, is split once or more and used to sew together the spiral of willow twigs that form the coil of the finest Pomo coiled baskets. Similarly the rhizomes of Prairie Bulrush (*Scirpus maritimus*) and Bracken Fern (*Pteridium aquilinum* var. *pubescens*) and sometimes White root Sedge dyed black with Walnut hulls and rusty nails were used for the decorative element.

Planted in a 4 to 8 inch deep layer of sand covering a compost enriched row in the existing rocky clay soil and drip irrigated all summer, the sedge grows 6-8 rhizomes 12-18 inches long and many shorter ones during the first year. At age 1½-2 years each “mother” sedge plant is surrounded by up to 20 young plants. Each of these sprouts put forth their own set of rhizomes which criss-cross with other rhizomes, creating a tangled network of roots just beneath the surface which makes it difficult to harvest long straight roots. Hence, the need for basketmakers to thin out their patches periodically and to be able to control other disturbances to the sedge patches by having ready access to them. Grown without summer water, as many natural patches on sandy riverside terraces were, the sedge goes dormant until winter rain revives it. The basketmakers learned that burning these dormant patches not only releases nutrients for next year’s growth but improves the quality of the root by keeping it white. Apparently humic acid created by decomposing leaves and twigs discolors the roots. In lieu of burning we rake away old leaves and add fireplace ash.

We are learning to take advantage of the prolific reproduction and accompanying tangle of roots by selling the young plants for riparian restoration and filter strips to clean up contaminated runoff. Where the invasive Giant Reed (*Arundo donax*) is removed, especially along the Russian River, planted White Root Sedge will quickly heal the scar and because it only grows knee-high any surviving *Arundo* will be easily seen for spot removal. Because White Root Sedge is at least somewhat drought resistant we are trying it as part of the plant component in low spots and long, slow draining ditches that catch water running off of roads and parking lots contaminated with oil and anti-freeze. Bioremediation of these pollutants takes place when they soak into top soil or pass slowly through vegetated wetlands. Both the plants and soil microorganisms consume and break down the pollutants.

The basket materials garden will ensure that future generations of Pomo will continue to know and use many important traditional native plants from the North Coast. In the process we all benefit: Kä-höm’ is both a gift to the people and to the land.
On July 22 and 23, 2002 a group of Sanhedrin chapter CNPS members and allies hiked and botanized the higher elevations of Snow Mt. in the Mendocino National Forest. Arriving at the Summit Springs trailhead in the early evening of the 22nd we explored the immediate area and noted 2 of the 4 Asclepias species found in the study area. One of these, the Narrow-Leaf Milkweed (A. fascicularis) was seen in two forms growing just adjacent to each other. A careful search by Andrea Davis and Quincy Vau did not reveal, unfortunately, any Monarch butterflies or their larvae being hosted by those plants. Camp was established beneath a spacious grove of Black Oaks and the ground, littered with shiny obsidian flakes, proved a silent testament to summer encampments dating back, undoubtedly, for millennia.

Early to bed - a somewhat mosquitoey night followed for those without netted protection - and then early to rise we set out on the summit trail carrying lunch and water, each of us with Heckard and Hickman’s 1985 annotated list of the vascular plants of Snow Mountain. The list contains 517 native and introduced species and varieties currently known to grow above 1500m on the massif, of which many are considered rare by CNPS. Not long into the hike Jack Booth spotted Balsam-Root (Balsamorhiza deltoidea), adding another new plant to the list.

This 7/22-23 trip followed a week behind the mid-July trip of 2001 and both proved to be peak-of-the-season, particularly at the highest elevations. Early season flowers such as Lupine and Clarkia were missed and although some early late-bloomers like the rare Snow Mt. Willow Herb (Epilobium nivium) and the California fuschia (Epilobium canum - formerly Zauschneria) were in respectable bloom in July they were at their peak a month later in mid-August. Other plants such as Paintbrush (Castilleja), Skullcap (Scutellaria californica), Broom-Rape (Orobanche), Wild Buckwheat (Eriogonum), Lemon’s Beardtongue (Keckiella lemmontii), Penstemon (including the north coast endemic, P. purpureus) and several bewildering populations of Coyote Mint (Monardella odoratissima or M. villosa) were in full bloom and provided for a very colorful and interesting experience.

This year’s trip was something of a follow-up to last year but with 14 participants instead of 4. Again we hiked the 3+ miles to the summit. Snow Mt. has two summits (East & West) both very close to the same 7056’ elevation and separated only by a high ridge about 1/3 mile long.

The west ridge slightly lower and steeper has excellent views (when clear) north to Mt Lassen and Shasta as well, of course, of the entire Mendocino Nat. Forest north to the Yolla Bollys. The east summit is more of a tabletop and this year was covered with Eriogonum strictum ssp. proliferum and the Northeast endemic Snow Mountain Buckwheat (Eriogonum nervulosum) which reaches its northernmost known locality here. Both grow in low mats sometimes up to 18 inches in diameter and have silvery gray foliage with flower heads on 4” stems of several shades of rose, magenta, cream and pink. These buckwheats are worth the effort of the hike alone. It was here that Kerry Heise located a third, similar and unlisted Eriogonum, the species, E. ternatum, with bright yellow flowers and associated with serpentine in the Klamath and North Coast Ranges. Also present at this elevation was E. Lobbi, again with beautiful reddish-pink 1inch diameter flowerheads but on prostrate stems that at times formed a perfect circle surrounding the gray/green and almost round rosetted leaves.

On this summit also Margaret Widdowson proved extremely adept at locating in the low and flat yellow/brown rocky scree barrens the equally low yellow/brown wholly camouflaged Clustered Broom-Rape (Orobanche fasciculata). The conversation went something like, "Margaret, you’ve found 8 of those?? I haven’t even seen one yet! Where are they?” “Here's one.” "Where??" "Here." "WHERE??" "Right here." "Wher....., Ohhh, I see it.”

Another unusual plant found in the summit area was Anisocarpus scabridus (Scabrid Alpine Tarplant). It may be worthwhile to call to your attention that we live in taxonomically changing times - not that you had any doubt - and the aforementiond plant is a good example. Listed on Heckard & Hickman’s 1985 Snow Mt. list as Raillardella scabrida it was "Jepsonized” to Raillardiopsis scabrida in 1993 (CNPS List 4, limited distribution) and in 1999 was again revised to Anisocarpus scabridus (CNPS List 1B, rare).

Mid July in the mountains can be ideal weather. This year the far haze that obscured Shasta was not yet recognized to be smoke from the southern Oregon fires. The Snow Mt. weather was perfect although within the next few days smoke would be everywhere in northern California.
We attempted to do the 2002 trip a little smarter than in 2001 by driving up the day before. I would like to refine this a little more on future excursions. For one thing I would like to do a return trip, even if it’s just a few of us in late May to mid June, when the streams are running and there's possibly still a little snow on the ground. That should provide a whole new botanical perspective. But I believe the main and most rewarding trip should be in July again and we should plan to spend several days camped at higher elevation perhaps 2 1/2 miles up from the Summit Springs trailhead. This would allow for much more time in the known prime botanical areas as well as time to explore from a base camp to other locations within the wilderness area. There are several trails leading to promising botanical destinations which could be accessed via day hikes.

There has been interest expressed by both Sanhedrin and Milo Baker (Santa Rosa) chapter members for doing a joint Snow Mt. fieldtrip in the summer of 2003. Stay tuned in future newsletters for those trip announcements.

Participants* were: Mark Albert, Wind Boone, Jack and Mimi Booth, Andrea Davis, Kerry Heise, Jem and Jon Klein, Adrienne Simpson, Terry and Helen Sizemore, Quincy Vau, Vishnu, and Margaret Widdowson.

* It seems worth noting that 4 of our 14 participants were under the age of 25 and that the chapter would like to encourage other young people to join us in these - primarily botanical but also geological and ornithological adventures.

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**Calendar of Events**

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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event Description</th>
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<tr>
<td>December 11, 2002</td>
<td>Chuck Williams will give a slide presentation on the basket materials garden he has developed at the Redwood Valley Rancheria. Chuck was recently invited to give this presentation at the Annual Intertribal Nursery Council at the Flathead Indian Reservation in Pablo, Montana. The meeting will start at 7:00pm at the Methodist Church on 270 N. Pine St. in Ukiah.</td>
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<td>December 15, 2002</td>
<td>Mark Albert will lead a mushroom identification field trip. Meeting time in Ukiah is at 9:00 am in the Yokayo Bowl (bowling alley) parking lot at 1401 North state St. and in Willits at 9:45 in the Safeway parking lot near the Willits Arch. Location to be arranged. For further information contact Mark Albert at 463-8672. For persons new to the field of fungi who would like a good guide, David Arora's book “All That the Rain Promises and More” is highly recommended and is available locally.</td>
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<td>January 25, 2003</td>
<td>Join Geri Hulse-Stephens for a mid-winter outing in the Willits area. She’ll be exploring shady recesses and canyons for ferns and other interesting plants. Meeting time is 9:00am in the Safeway parking lot near the Willits Arch. For more information call Geri at 459-3689.</td>
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<td>February 8, 2003</td>
<td>Kerry Heise will lead a walk on the Hopland Field Station looking at mosses and early season wildflowers. Bring good boots for off-trail hiking. Meet at the field station headquarters at 9:00am. Call Kerry at 744-1620 for more information.</td>
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**Plant Photography Forum**

On October 1 the CNPS Plant Photography Working Group initiated a new email based discussion group at CNPS.org. The Plant Photography group is developing standards for a fully digital library of images for use by scientists, authors, and others in need of high quality images of our state's native plants and CNPS activities in general. One especially interesting part of the project will be an effort to record a photographic taxonomy of our most endangered species (multiple diagnostic views of each species -- sort of a photographic counterpart to Jepson's).
The discussion group is organized as an email "forum" with members receiving a copy of all postings and having their own messages distributed to the entire forum membership in turn. If you think this sounds interesting, you can take a look at our new web page at CNPS.org. You'll find us under Plant Science -- Photography. Be sure to check out the Position Papers at the bottom of the page -- they'll give you a little better idea of the overall organization of the project.

If you think you might like to help organize the project, you can join the forum by sending an email to PlantPhotography-forum-request@cnps.org. Put the word subscribe in the "subject" box and you'll receive a Welcome message when you've been added to the member list. We'd love to hear from you."

Thanks, Tom Elder (Plant Photography Project, Taxonomy Standards Chair)

The Relativity of Botanical Knowledge
- Vishnu

At Native Plant Society meetings and gatherings - some of which I've even organized - I've always acknowledged myself to be "barely an amateur, amateur botanist". I had a funny experience this Fall though, relating to what one might call, "the relativity of botanical knowledge".

I was out at Lake Mendocino in the area between the dam and the public campground on a weekly excursion to pick Verdone figs from a large 60+ year old tree. People from the campground were always coming by and they always wanted to know "What kind of tree IS this?" (Sometimes, assured that it was a fig tree, they would try one. I would offer them a nice ripe fruit but usually - through independence, distrust or unabashed ignorance - they preferred to pick their own still hard one.) This particular day an older fellow came by. He didn't know "for sure" it was a fig but "he thought so," and knew he LIKED figs and then he told me there were "2 more fig trees just like this one" in the campground. Now, I had heard this from several other campers in the past and so today I decided to go check it out and pick a few to compare.

It turned out when I got there that this same fellow was camped right next to the trees which he proudly pointed out to me. I only hope I was as generously uncritical sounding as SO many others have ALWAYS been to me when I had to point out to him that, "Yes, they do have large green leaves and the fruits DO appear somewhat similar but these 'figs' are actually walnuts".

Vineyards in Hardwood Rangeland Watersheds
– Adina Merenlender (UCCE Specialist with the Integrated Hardwood Range Management Program)

In northern Sonoma, Mendocino and Lake Counties, vineyard expansion has impacted upland and riparian hardwood communities. In order to reduce the environmental impact of hardwood rangeland conversion to vineyard it is important to encourage habitat restoration in and around the vineyard – an essential step for sustainable agriculture in this region.

This fall 80 grape growers in northern Sonoma, Mendocino, and Lake Counties attended an education event at the UC Hopland Research and Extension Center. The one day workshop encouraged hardwood rangeland conservation and restoration by providing grape growers with information on: 1) oak diversity, tree preservation, and oak regeneration, 2) physical and biological costs of oak removal (e.g. soil loss and bank destabilization and oak root fungus); and 3) riparian restoration. The event included field demonstrations, oak identification sessions, examples of successful restoration programs from local growers, and distribution of existing written materials and research findings.

The Integrated Hardwood Range Management Program (IHRMP) is dedicated to conserving California’s oak woodland resources. For more information about the IHRMP see our website at: http://danr.ucop.edu/ihrmp
The California Native Plant Society is an organization of lay persons and professionals united by an interest in the plants of California. It is open to all. The society, working through its local chapters, seeks to increase the understanding of California’s native flora and to preserve this rich resource for future generations. Varied interests are represented. Dues are tax deductible. You will receive this newsletter, the informative quarterly journal *Fremontia*, and a statewide newsletter.

**Membership Information**

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<td>Individual or Library</td>
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<td>Life</td>
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Make your check out to “CNPS” noting your affiliation to the **Sanhedrin Chapter**, and mail to:

*California Native Plant Society*

1722 J Street, Suite 17

Sacramento, CA 95814

** Writers Wanted!**

Everyone is encouraged to contribute to the newsletter. Please send articles, news items, poetry, drawings, etc. to:

Kerry Heise

Editor – CNPS Sanhedrin Chapter

4040 University Rd.

Hopland CA. 95449

Or email as an attached document to: kheise@nature.berkeley.edu

** Reminder **

For non-members the price of the newsletter is $7 per year and should be sent to:

Gladys Telschow

19 Highland Drive

Ukiah, CA 95482