



CNPS Honors New Fellows

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In recognition of exceptional contributions to California's native plants, CNPS has named three long-standing members as the newest CNPS Fellows: Larry Levine, Bart O'Brien, and Dieter Wilken. [CNPS Fellow](#) is the highest honor CNPS awards its members.

"Beyond their incredible accomplishments on behalf of the Society, all our Fellows share one special characteristic: they have inspired all of us to work harder to save and celebrate our incredible flora," says CNPS Executive Director Dan Gluesenkamp.

Larry Levine – Technology Champion and Chapter Council Leader

Larry has devoted hundreds of volunteer hours annually to the furtherance of the CNPS Mission," Gordon Leppig



CNPS Fellow Larry Levine

An active CNPS member and volunteer for 30 years, Larry has been a champion for process and technology improvement within the organization. His CNPS roles have included North Coast chapter publicity chair, webmaster, wildflower show co-chair, phytophthora committee member, chapter council delegate, and his current position as chapter council vice-chair. During his years of service, he championed new technologies like moving the CNPS Rare Plant Inventory online, introduced the round table format to chapter council, and boosted North Coast field trip attendance by hosting two-hour plant walks as an alternative to all-day hikes. In nominating Larry for CNPS Fellow, sponsors Gordon Leppig and Carol Ralph also credited Larry with his

research on rare plants, including [Bensoniella](#) (*Bensoniella oregona*), a saxifrage, and [Howell's alkali grass](#) (*Puccinellia howellii*).

Bart O'Brien – Native Plant Horticulturist and Author

I used to bash on California native plants until I went on a tour with Bart O'Brien. Welcome me to the nunnery as your newest convert," a Yelp reviewer as captured in *Pacific Horticulture Magazine*.



CNPS Fellow Bart O'Brien

One of California's leading experts in native plant horticulture, Bart's impact is felt statewide. A long-time member and former president of the CNPS Santa Clara Valley Chapter, he is the current director of the the [Regional Park Botanic Garden in Berkeley](#). Before that, he served as the director of special projects for Rancho Santa Ana Botanic Garden, during which time the Southern California Horticultural Society named him the 2005 Horticulturist of the Year. While in Southern California, Bart also developed an interest in the botany of Baja California and continues to serve as a board member for Terra Peninsular. Among his many accomplishments, he is credited with compiling a list of more than 7,000 California native cultivars, helping to save the Edgewood Park serpentine grasslands, and co-authoring multiple books, including [Care and Maintenance of Southern California Gardens](#).

Dr. Dieter Wilken – Rare Plant Botanist and Conservationist

Our most experienced advisor on California's rare plants," Jim Andre



CNPS Fellow Dieter Wilken

Dr. Wilken (or Dieter) is one of California's most influential living botanists. He was a founding member of the CNPS Rare Plant Program Committee and helped standardize and document the [CNPS Rare Plant Review Process](#). Dieter also managed the first edition of [The Jepson Manual](#) (1993), was the primary editor of the *Manual's* 2nd edition (2012), and editor of *The Jepson Desert Manual* (2002). In addition to his work with CNPS and the Jepson Herbarium, Dieter served as the rare plant program director for the Santa Barbara Botanic Garden (SBBG) from 1993-2013, led the digitization of specimen labels and information, and co-authored *Ceanothus* (2006) and a *Flora of Santa Cruz Island* (1995). An international expert on [California lilacs](#) (*Ceanothus*, Rhamnaceae), showy Ipomopsis (*Polemoniaceae*), and the genus *Hulsea* (*Asteraceae*), he is the winner of the 2008 Center for Plant Conservation's Star Award. Today, he is a research associate at SBBG and a frequent expert contributor to the CNPS Facebook group and iNaturalist, where thousands of amateur and professional botanists benefit from his expertise each week.