Lockeford Plant Materials Center

United States Department of Agriculture
Natural Resources Conservation Service

Quarterly Newsletter – Fall 2010

21001 N. Elliott Road, Lockeford, CA 95237 Tel: 209-727-5319 Fax: 209-727-5923
Website: http://Plant-Materials.nrcs.usda.gov

Seeds of Success

The CAPMC and the California office of the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) have an agreement to collect native plant species in coordination with the Seeds of Success (SOS) Program. The SOS Program supports the systematic collection and development of native plant materials, (www.nps.gov/plants/sos/), it supports native species research, and provides the initial seed stock for commercial seed/plant increase for revegetation of sites following disturbance. The similarity between the missions of SOS and the PMC make this collaboration particularly important to the PMC.

During the summer Agronomists Christina Smith and Anna Young-Mathews made 27 seed collections from 20 plant species through California.

Delphinium recurvatum **and** ***Sagittaria sanfordii***

Featured Plant Materials Center Releases: Four-wing saltbush and Quailbush.

A major function of the Plant Materials Centers is to develop plant materials for conservation use. The majority of the species developed at the California Plant Materials Center (CAPMC) for release have been native plants selected for their desirable characteristics for California. The CAPMC maintains plantings and produces seed, but for many there is less demand than might be expected. We will feature select releases in this and future newsletters.

Two shrubs were released by the CAPMC in 1979, these were 'Marana' fourwing saltbush (*Atriplex canescens*), and 'Casa' quailbush (*A. lentiformis*). The CAPMC keeps plantings of these releases, and limited seed reserves, and can harvest more seed to meet increased demand.

Fourwing saltbush is found throughout Southern California http://plants.usda.gov/plantguide/pdf/pg_atca2.pdf. The 'Marana' release originated from plants near El Cajon, California and was selected for ease of establishment and drought resistance. It is best adapted to areas in the southwest including southern New Mexico, southern Arizona and southern to central California. Quailbush occurs from the upper San Joaquin and Salinas valleys south to lower California and extends eastward into Nevada, Utah, and New Mexico http://plants.usda.gov/plantguide/pdf/pg_atle.pdf. 'Casa' has exhibited excellent performance as a conservation plant. Both of these shrubs provide excellent wildlife habitat including for upland game cover. They grow well on a variety of soil types including alkaline soils. The plantings at the CAPMC are vigorous, require no maintenance and compete well with weeds.

Native American Field Day for Youth

The Second Annual Tribal and Native American Youth Field Day was held at the California Plant Materials Center on July 29, 2010. The CAPMC has a history of working with the local Native American groups, making plantings of cultural significance to Native Americans and supporting Indigenous Stewardship Methods (ISM).

The Field Day commenced with an introduction by Reina Rogers, NRCS Tribal Liaison, then continued with a walking tour of the PMC, including sedges growing along the river that were planted previously and have been managed for basketry. After a picnic lunch, the Field Day concluded with presentations on California native basketweaving materials and techniques by California native basketweavers.

Reina Rogers describes native plants and their uses in the Native Plant Resource Hedgerow.

The CAPMC is planning to dedicate a 10 acre field adjacent to the Mokelumne River for plants of cultural significance to Native Americans. We are collaborating with Native Americans and Tribes so that it will be a resource for them in developing native plantings and as education for the youth. The site will serve as a resource for plant materials and seed as many plants that were used extensively by Native Americans are becoming scarce as land management practices have changed. The site will also serve the interests of NRCS as a laboratory for investigation and demonstration of ISM.

Agronomists, Christina Smith and Anna Young-Mathews, helped the participants transplant sedge plants *(Carex barbarae*) to take with them for transplanting in the fall.

One aim of the Field Day was to ask for suggestions and partners in developing the native plant area. Plantings will include traditional foods, such as grains, bulbs and other root foods, berries, fleshy fruits and leafy green producing plants, as well as utilitarian and medicinal plants. The 10 acre area already contains elderberry (*Sambucus caerula*), redbud (*Cercis orbiculata*), willows (*Salix* spp.) and oak trees (*Quercus* spp.) as well as annual grasses and forbs, including tobacco plants. Planning, planting and weed management practices will be in harmony with Indigenous Stewardship Methods.