

CNPS 2026 Conference Session Topics List

Track	Session Title	Description
Conservation	Advocacy Lessons from Gen Z	Amplifying the stories of young adults leveraging their voices and mobilizing their peers for meaningful impact in the conservation movement.
Conservation	Coalition Building in the Conservation Movement	Californians across regions and cultures have personal and powerful connections to our state's remarkable natural landscapes. Seasoned advocates will share tips for finding common ground and strategies for building diverse partnerships for conservation success. (interactive discussion session).
Conservation & Horticulture and Land Management	Ecologically Informed Wildfire Policy and Management	California has embarked on an effort to treat millions of acres in the name of wildfire resilience. These millions of acres of treatments span the panoply of habitats that make our state globally significant. This session focuses on habitat management that is informed by the latest science.
Conservation	How Environmental Justice Informs Conservation Priorities	This session will center the voices of leaders working to ensure conservation efforts are equitable and beneficial to all communities, particularly Indigenous Peoples, communities of color, low-income urban and rural communities, and other marginalized groups who have been historically excluded in key land use decisions.
Conservation	Progress Toward 30x30	In the face of unprecedented attacks on the environment, the 30 x30 initiative remains a shining light on CA's leadership in large scale conservation efforts. This session will reflect on the progress that has been made, while looking forward to the opportunities ahead amidst a turbulent climate.
Conservation	Strategic California Public Lands Protection	Public lands reflect our shared values and protecting them is one of the most effective ways to safeguard native plants and their habitats. In this session, conservation advocates will share dynamic strategies to sustain the momentum needed for lasting protections of California's treasured public lands.

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Conservation	Tribal Sovereignty	Tribal sovereignty in the CA conservation movement, pathways to durable land protection, co-management, co-stewardship, and land back. This session will focus on the experiences of Tribal nations engagement with federal, state and local agencies and nonprofit partners in efforts to preserve, manage and regain stewardship of traditional Tribal cultural landscapes.
Education	Common Roots: Native Plants and Culture	California is one of the most culturally diverse states in the country, and the meaning and connections we have to the land are influenced by our cultures, lived experiences, and histories. Learn about compelling programming that focuses on uplifting these cultural connections, historic factors, and bringing people closer to nature and their culture.
Education	Native Plants for All - Insights for Inclusive Public Programming	Join us for an interactive session on how to make public classes, workshops, and events more inclusive and accessible to all. We'll share helpful tips and success stories, and discuss strategies together.
Education	Taking Action through Community Science	Community Science engages volunteers to work alongside scientists to better understand our world and the current issues we face. Come learn about community science programs that encourage the public to take action for the planet.
Education	Youth Engagement with Native Plants	How does the next generation engage with native plants? Learn how educators and organizations are fostering connections between youth and native flora, both within and beyond the classroom walls.
Horticulture and Land Management	CA Native Seed Strategy	Join us for an in-depth session on the California Native Seed Strategy, highlighting efforts to improve the availability and use of genetically appropriate native seed for restoration and stewardship.
Horticulture and Land Management & Conservation	Extreme Weather and a Changing Climate	California's changing climate continues to influence weather events from extreme rainfall to outbreaks of high winds that have fueled some of our most destructive wildfires. This session focuses on the influence of weather events on our state's ecosystems and how land management is also affected.

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Horticulture and Land Management	Growing Partnerships: Aligning Community, Industry and Policy	This session will dive into why it can be hard to find native plants in nurseries, and how the critical intersections of partnerships, policy, and industry alignment is needed to scale up native plant and seed use across California.
Horticulture and Land Management & Plant Science	People, Plants & Pollinators	This session will explore the powerful connections between people, native plants, and pollinators, with a focus on how community-driven efforts can support biodiversity in both urban and agricultural landscapes. Join us to learn how everyday actions and innovative data tools are shaping the future of pollinator conservation.
Horticulture and Land Management & Plant Science	Stewarding the Land	This session will uplift the voices, knowledge systems, and leadership of California Native American Tribes in caring for and restoring the lands that have sustained their communities since time immemorial. Presenters will share experiences of cultural and ecological stewardship, offering insights into ongoing practices that honor ancestral relationships and responsibilities to place. We invite participants to listen, learn, and reflect on how these enduring connections to land guide efforts toward a more just, resilient, and inclusive future.
Plant Science	30 Years of A Manual of California Vegetation	A historic investment in vegetation mapping and a profusion of projects have occurred over the last two decades. Projects have involved many partners and perspectives to obtain high-quality, fine-scale vegetation data, represent new vegetation alliances and map millions of acres of natural landscapes, with far-reaching applications. We celebrate this progress and the 30th anniversary of the Manual of California Vegetation (MCV).
Plant Science & Conservation	Assisted Gene Flow	This session will focus on climate change adaptation and assisted gene flow in natural plant populations. Let's exchange experiences, best practices, and policies to guide ecologically informed applications of assisted gene flow.

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Plant Science	Bryophytes and Lichens: Exposing the Lifestyles of Those That Like to Keep a Low Profile	Bryophytes and lichens are important yet understudied components of California's biodiversity. Many of these tiny but mighty beings are indicators of ecosystem health and deserve more attention. Some have conservation status but many more await listing. This session highlights the growing conservation movement and may also include topics of biogeography, ecology, and floristics of these underserved organisms.
Plant Science	Cryptic Biodiversity	Recognition of cryptic biodiversity has rapidly accelerated in step with improvements in molecular methodology. The resulting taxonomic decisions can have significant implications for downstream conservation applications, yet standards by which to implement conservation of cryptic species are lacking. This session will include case studies of cryptic biodiversity in the California Floristic Province and how this knowledge can be successfully integrated into conservation initiatives, as well as perspectives on best practices.
Plant Science & Horticulture and Land Management	Ecological Restoration	Learn how land managers are increasing the resilience of native plant communities by restoring ecological functions, rehabilitating degraded lands, and applying adaptive management to guide restoration success.
Plant Science & Conservation	Geospatial Approaches to Plant Monitoring and Conservation	This session explores how GIS, remote sensing, and spatial analysis are being used to monitor plant populations and inform conservation across California. Presentations will focus on data-driven approaches to vegetation mapping, species distribution, and ecological modeling.
Plant Science	Grasslands and Meadows	California grasslands and meadows are among the most endangered ecosystems in the United States and are important subjects of ecological research and experimentation. This session focuses on grassland research and management including biotic enhancement, invasive species, livestock grazing, and ecological restoration within our unique California grassland/prairie ecosystems.

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Plant Science	Groundwater-Dependent Wetland and Riparian Ecosystems	Groundwater-dependent ecosystems (GDE's) are communities of species that depend on groundwater for survival and support a diverse array of plants and animals. Policies such as the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA) require local sustainability plans to protect these sensitive species & habitats. Is this framework working?
Plant Science	New Discoveries in the California Flora	While great progress has been made in our understanding of the flora of California, new discoveries occur every year as a result of novel species discoveries, the application of new research methods to 'old' plants, or range extensions of plants that also occur outside of California. Join us to discuss exciting new discoveries.
Plant Science	Rare Plants	Rare plants occur in nearly every type of habitat in California and are an important part of the state's ecosystems, pollinator communities, and overall biodiversity. While great progress has been made in our understanding of rare plant taxonomy and ecology, many unanswered questions remain. Join us in this session to learn more about the fascinating rare plants that call California home.
Plant Science	Science-Based Monitoring and Management of Invasive Plants	This session will focus on how invasive plants are impacting native plants and plant communities. We will share success stories about invasive plant management leading to increased biodiversity.
Plant Science	Sensitive Natural Communities	From County to regionally based efforts, scores of people & entities work to identify, conserve or restore threatened and endangered habitats across California. Highlights from around the state underscore the continued needs for conserving and managing these special communities and places in the state.
Plant Science	The Evolving Role of Herbaria in California Botany	This session will include presentations about the changing roles of herbaria in the modern era, including (1) mobilization of specimen data, rapid accumulation of genetic data, and contributions to research (2) new educational and outreach opportunities, and (3) innovative ways of enabling conservation efforts.