



## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## California Native Plant Society Announces Naming Rights Auction for Rare Species

January 23, 2018, Sacramento – The California Native Plant Society (CNPS) is auctioning a rare chance to name a newly-described California native plant. This is the first time naming rights have been auctioned for a plant in California.

Bidding opens Tuesday night, January 23, at 10:30 p.m. on eBay.

The plant will be a species (or subspecies) in the genus *Monardella*, the mint family (*Lamiaceae*). The mint family includes a diverse range of plants including mints, sages, rosemary, tarragon, and hundreds of other edible and scented plants.

“*Monardella* are widely appreciated for their lovely flowers, beautiful fragrance, and ability to support pollinators,” CNPS Executive Director Dan Gluesenkamp said. “This is a rare opportunity to be part of a genus that has a special place in the hearts of Californians.”



*Thanks to an extraordinary scientific donation to benefit the California Native Plant Society, donors can bid to purchase the naming rights of a rare Monardella (mint). Photo courtesy of CNPS.*

The winner will be able to provide the scientific name for one of four rare plants. The plants represent California’s geologic and biologic diversity, each occurring in different parts of the state:

- The White Mountains, home of the bristlecone pine, the oldest living organisms
- Wine Country, from the locations that burned last Fall
- The Sierra Nevada mountains, the iconic terrain celebrated by naturalist John Muir
- The California/Oregon border, home to geologically perplexing “Klamath Knot”

The starting price of the auction is \$10,000. The purchase will be a tax-deductible donation to the California Native Plant Society, a 501 (c) 3 non-profit organization working to conserve California’s native plants and their habitats.



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NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY

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“This is a great opportunity to honor someone who has made a difference for California conservation and native plants,” Gluesenkamp said. “It could also be an incredible Valentine’s Day gift for the right person.”

To launch the unusual auction, CNPS worked closely with its rare plant committee and the scientist donating the rights, who will ensure the naming conforms with the International Code of Botanical Nomenclature.

Bidding opens Tuesday night and will continue through the evening of February 2 at the organization’s Conservation Conference Banquet in Los Angeles. The online auction includes a “Buy Now” option for \$25,000. If a bidder purchases at the full price, that naming right purchase will be closed, but the donor may offer up an additional rare *Monardella* for auction through February 2.

To learn more about the CNPS Conservation Conference auction, go to [conference.cnps.org/auction](http://conference.cnps.org/auction). The auction includes a number of other noteworthy items, including a private tour and catered lunch at The Gottlieb Native Garden in Beverly Hills.

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**About the California Native Plant Society:**

*The California Native Plant Society is a statewide organization working to save and celebrate California’s native plants and places via plant science, advocacy, education, and horticulture. CNPS has nearly 10,000 members in 35 chapters throughout California and Baja to promote its mission at the local level. [www.cnps.org](http://www.cnps.org)*

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*Protecting California's native flora since 1965*

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