



December 2003

The Bay Leaf

California Native Plant Society • East Bay Chapter • Alameda & Contra Costa Counties

Calendar of Events

Plant Sale Activities, p. 2

Tuesdays, December 2, 9, 16, 9 am to noon
Plants for sale and volunteer activities

Board of Directors Meeting

Wednesday, December 3, 7:30 pm, home of Phoebe Watts, 1419 Grant St., Berkeley, 510-525-6614. Phoebe's house is in north Berkeley 2 blocks west of Martin Luther King on Grant Street between Vine and Rose Streets

Native Here Nursery, p. 3

Fridays, December 5, 12, 19, 26, Native Here Nursery open 9 am-noon
Saturdays, December 6, 13, 20, 27, Native Here Nursery open 10 am-1 pm

CNPS Chapter Council Meeting & Annual Banquet

Saturday, December 6, Faculty Club at the University of California, Berkeley, see below

Native Plant Restoration Team, p. 4

Saturday, December 6, 1-4 pm, Wildcat Creek recovery project, Tilden Park

Field trips, p. 3

Sunday, January 4, 2004, 2:00 pm, Huddart County Park, 1100 Kings Mountain Road, Woodside (San Mateo County, Field trip to Huddart County Park to see fetid adder's tongues

Membership Meeting

December 2003
No meeting (holiday break)

Wednesday, January 28, 2004, 7:30 pm

Dr. Matteo Garbelotto: *Phytophthora*—including an update on Sudden Oak Death, Conference Center, U.C. Botanical Garden, Berkeley

Our New Slate of Officers is Now Official

On behalf of the old and new board, we would like to thank those members who took the time to fill out our Ballot in the October Bay Leaf and send it in, or drop it in our 2004 ballot box at the October Plant Sale.

The officers are Joe Willingham, President; Laura Baker, Vice President; Barbara Malloch Leitner, Recording Secretary; Nathan Smith, Corresponding Secretary; and Holly Forbes, Treasurer.

The Board of Directors

East Bay CNPS Supports the Committee to Stop the Dam Waste

Contra Costa Water District (CCWD) has placed a proposal to go to voters in its service area March 2, asking for approval for a larger reservoir. CCWD has refused to prepare an environmental impact report (EIR) before placing the proposal on the March ballot.

The existing Los Vaqueros reservoir was completed merely four years ago. It holds 100,000 acre-feet and

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CNPS Chapter Council Meeting & Banquet

The CNPS Chapter Council Meeting meeting and annual banquet will be held on Saturday, December 6, at the Faculty Club on the UCB campus.

Schedule

8:30 am – noon	CNPS Chapter Council Meeting Seaborg Room
Noon – 1 pm	Lunch hour
1:00 pm – 5:30 pm	Chapter Council Meeting, 2 nd session
5:30 pm – 6:30 pm	Social hour & no host bar, Heyn's Dining Room
6:30 pm - 7:30 pm	Annual Banquet Dinner, Heyn's Dining Room
7:30 pm – 9:00 pm	"Fire Ecology and Management in the Wildlands & at their Urban Interface" Dr. Jon Keeley, Re- search Scientist, U.S. Geological Survey, Western Ecological Re- search Center and Adjunct Pro- fessor, Department of Organism Biology, Ecology and Evolution, UCLA

cost \$450 million. Now CCWD wants to tear it down and build a new reservoir five times the current size, at a cost of \$1.5 billion.

CCWD has begun a public relations campaign to scare ratepayers about water quality and drought, even though the first reservoir solved those very problems.

In 1988, ratepayers approved the bond measure that built Los Vaqueros. CCWD made many promises in order to avoid opposition. Even though CNPS did not approve of the project, we participated in a process that held promise for some sensitivity to natural values.

CCWD promised no growth impacts. Have you driven through Brentwood lately? Were the new reservoir to be built, an additional 400,000 acre-feet of water would be diverted from the delta that could support more than 2 million new users.

CCWD promised to protect and expand recreational facilities. Swimming has not been allowed at the reservoir. Regional trail planning by the East Bay Regional Park District has been ignored. Multi-use trails for cyclists and equestrians have not been approved. Yet these promises helped convince many recreational groups to take a neutral position on Los Vaqueros.

CCWD promised to preserve the watershed now proposed for flooding. 1600 acres of sensitive habitat were destroyed and a 2.5 mile barrier to wildlife and recreation was created. The new project would flood endangered species habitat and the mitigation areas put in place to preserve listed plant and animal species after constructing the current reservoir.

CCWD led participants in the planning process to believe that they did not intend to expand the reservoir (although that was not in writing). Yet, here is this proposal, going to ratepayers in March of 2004. The new project would destroy 2600 acres.

CCWD raised rates far higher than it promised. Ratepayers already pay among the Bay Area's highest water rates, yet CCWD has only committed not to raise rates faster than inflation. CCWD has not agreed to pay down the first project's existing bonds, or to reduce rates. AND it wants a \$200 million "slush fund" to use without voter oversight. The 1999 reservoir cost approximately \$450 million. The proposed expansion has no specific projects chosen, but costs could top \$1.5 billion in public funds. Approximately \$200 million, the cost of the dam completed just a few years ago, would be wasted. CCWD claims it would be reimbursed \$100-200 million by (unknown) partners.

One of the claims CCWD is making is that this proposal is not a peripheral canal. But it appears that almost all of the benefits of the new project would be for other water districts. By storing more water and building new pumps, CCWD would create more flexibility for the State Water Project to send additional water south.

Benefits claimed are either ones already provided by the existing Los Vaqueros Reservoir or are goals that could be achieved by other means.

Please do what you can to prevent this waste of dwindling habitat and a perfectly functional reservoir. If you are a CCWD ratepayer, oppose this waste and urge your neighbors, community groups and elected officials not to support it.

Contributions may be made to Committee to Stop the Dam Waste, c/o SMD, 1196 Boulevard Way #10, Walnut Creek, CA 94595. The Fair Political Practices Commission requires that donors indicate their job category, employer and contact information.

More information is available at www.losvaqueros.us.

Charli Daniels, Conservation Coordinator

Plant Sale Activities



Tuesdays

December 2, 9, 16

(no meetings the 23rd & 30th)

9 a.m. to noon

Merritt College, Oakland

Landscape Horticulture Department

Parking fee: 50 cents

There are plants remaining from the plant sale and we will continue our Tuesday sales through January. The November rains promise a good start to plants in the ground and lend encouragement to those of us planning to add more.

Come for a visit, while the volunteers are making cuttings, survey the nursery stock, and introduce another native or two to your garden.

Horticultural note: This month and on into January is the only time during the year when your crowded native iris will take kindly to being dug up, divided, and replanted. The newly forming roots, soft and white, are just emerging from the rhizome and ready to spread. Trim and clean ragged leaves and dried up old roots from last year before replanting. Don't delay on this special chore.

Shirley McPheeters

Field Trips

Field trip to Huddart County Park to see fetid adder's tongues

Sunday, January 4, 2004, 2:00 p.m., Huddart County Park, 1100 Kings Mountain Road, Woodside (San Mateo County) California. Meet in the parking lot just past the pay station.

David Margolies (510-654-0283, divaricatum@aol.com) will lead.

We will hike on the Crystal Springs Trail, where fetid adder's tongue (*Scolioopus bigelovii*) blooms in early January. (In most locations outside botanical gardens, it blooms in late January or early February.) This is a gentle trail, losing about 200 feet over about 1/2 mile to the creek. We will walk to the creek and then return the same way. It is unlikely that there will be any other flowers out this early, but the presence of fetid adder's tongue tells us that the new flower season has started. (Other plants out of flower will also be identified.) The area is second growth redwood and mixed evergreen forest.

Directions: Go to Woodside (if in the East Bay, cross the Bay Bridge and get on I-280 south; otherwise get on 280). Take the 84 west/Woodside Road exit. Go through the town of Woodside. Soon after the main part of the town, take a right onto Kings Mountain Road. The park entrance is on the right after a few miles. Go past the pay station into the main parking lot. We will meet there. Note that you must pay the parking fee even if the station is not staffed (use the envelopes provided).

Note: There is poison oak in the park. Poison oak is dangerous even when it has no leaves. Stay on the trail. It will probably be muddy and may be raining. Be prepared. The walk will take place unless the rain is of Noachian proportions.

David Margolies

Native Here Nursery

Fridays, December 5, 12, 19, 26, Native Here Nursery open 9-noon

Saturdays, December 6, 13, 20, 27, Native Here Nursery open 10-1

As I write this in November, the long-awaited fall rains have arrived. Seeds are beginning to germinate; shrubs whose leaves burned in the late heat spell are starting to bud. Bay Area planting time has arrived. Trees and shrubs that we had held back pending regulatory decisions are now available. Those taxa associated with Sudden Oak Death Syndrome (SODS) are marked with

yellow tags, and must not move beyond the cluster of affected counties. More information about SODS is available at the nursery and on the Internet.

Buttercups are emerging from dormancy, and as perennials and bulbs break dormancy, they will be set out for sale. Visit often this late fall and winter to see what treasures are offered.

Thanks to the Native Plant Restoration Team, the triangular space formed by Golf Course Drive and the nursery driveway has been planted with local natives from the nursery. This provides an attractive entrance to the nursery and brings to fruition a long-time conversion of the space from French broom. Ten years ago there were thousands, each year fewer, until just a handful of broom seedlings emerged in the last two years.

Please come in on December 6 when the lucky winners of the raffle will be drawn (details in November *Bay Leaf*).

Volunteers are always welcome to help any time the nursery is open (Friday and Saturday mornings). There's no need to arrange ahead of time. There will be tasks available.

Native Here has voice mail at 510-549-0211 and is located at 101 Golf Course Drive, across from the Golf Course main parking lot.

Charli Danielsen

Conservation Committee

Interested in helping save native plant populations in the East Bay? Here are some things you can do:

- ❑ Look at CNPS conservation policies on www.cnps.org.
- ❑ Identify contacts you might have in a public agency that controls open space lands.
- ❑ Estimate how much time you have to read documents, attend meetings, etc.
- ❑ Join a CNPS field trip, rare plant or plant communities activity.
- ❑ Contact East Bay CNPS Conservation Coordinator, Charli Danielsen charlid@pacbell.net or any board member to discuss your interest and availability.

Charli Danielsen

The last word in ignorance is the man who says of an animal or plant: What good is it?... if biotic, in the course of aeons has built something that we like but do not understand, then but a fool would discard seemingly useless parts? To keep every cog and wheel is the first precaution of intelligent tinkering.

Aldo Leopold

Native Plant Restoration Team



Team members “waterin’ in” the newly installed plants.

November’s Work Party at Native Here Nursery: “hands-on restoration” in the lovely Wildcat Canyon watershed. The twelve team members genuinely enjoyed tackling the project - creating a restoration/demonstration garden in front of the Nursery’s gate. While working, we discussed some basic restoration goals, site assessment and planning tasks, implementation tips and plant selection. Several members even gushed a bit about how exciting it was to do some restoration planting - our new babies!

Saturday, December 6, 1-4 pm, “Recovery at Wildcat Creek”, Tilden Park. This exciting new phase of our restoration project will involve installing creek-side plants from Native Here Nursery and the Regional Parks Botanic Garden. (Please note new starting time to accommodate those attending the Wayne Roderick Lecture Series at the Regional Parks Botanic Garden at 10:30 am.)

Directions: From Grizzly Peak Boulevard, turn East on Shasta Road, left on Wildcat Canyon Road, right to Central Park Drive. Turn east at sign for Lake Anza, then an immediate left on Brook Road which dead-ends at Wildcat Creek (this is where we will be working). Plenty of parking is available. For road/trail maps of Tilden Park: www.ebparcs.org.

Supplies and gear: For each work party, we ask that you wear long sleeves and pants, a hat, sturdy shoes, and bring water, favorite gloves and gardening tools. We do have some gloves and tools to lend.

Saturday, January 3, 2004, “Selecting a Restoration Site”. The team will not officially meet on the 3rd. Instead, have some fun figuring out the puzzle of what plants grow where and why. Whether you are consider-

ing planting local natives in your own garden, want to teach school kids about botany or have a favorite trail that needs help from weeds, please see the Restoration Team’s **“Selecting a Restoration Site”** worksheet for a suggested outline. Worksheets are available at www.ebcnps.org under Restoration Team. Enjoy!

E-mail reminders: Please contact Jim Sharp at itsa@dnai.com to receive a reminder message the week prior to the event.

Questions or comments? Please call me at 510-558-8139.



California Rose (*Rosa Californica*), Berkeley Meadow, Eastshore State Park, Berkeley

Lookin’ for love: Roses and Kites in the Berkeley Meadow, Eastshore State Park

If you stretch your imagination a bit, it is possible to stand in the middle of the Berkeley Meadow and see what it once looked like and dream. True, the park’s edge by the freeway is noisy, the soil is fill, there are lots of invasive exotic plants and the shoreline has been altered irrevocably. But with so little bay shore left that is undeveloped (estimates are 10%), this very rare piece of habitat (dotted with meadows and thickets of willow and coyote bush) is **crucial** to the animals that call this place home.

Living in the meadow are many species of shoreline/coastal chaparral birds – including the threatened kites (that flutter wildly like butterflies while hunting rodents), harriers, and the darling burrowing owls. The native plants that are such an integral part of any healthy natural community are sadly scarce. An occasional elderberry, grindelia, madia, or artemisia gives a ray of hope for what this place could become. Restoration of this area by the State is reported to be in “fast track” mode, so the window of opportunity for

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input on the design, planning, and implementation of the restoration work to be started is narrow. Once work begins, due to the sensitivity of the threatened animals to the incursion of people and dogs, steps will be taken to sharply restrict the access to this area (estimated early next year).

Rumor has it that a new aerial vegetation map of the Berkeley Meadow is due out soon. It should be extremely useful in demarcating the most vital native plant and animal habitat. For more information regarding the Eastshore State Park, contact: the Citizens for the Eastshore State Park (CESP) at 510-339-9028, or www.eastshorestatepark.org.

If you are interested in the Restoration Team's preliminary plan to augment the restoration process, please contact Sarah at 510-558-8139.



Soft Drift, big leaf maple (*Acer macrophyllum*)

Collecting Leaves

"When leaves turn red and gold, the wayside becomes a paradise. Now is the time to have magazines handy for collecting leaves. If leaves are pressed right away and allowed to dry for two or three weeks, they keep their colors for a long time. You can make a new shade for your lamp, personalize stationery, make paper..."

Our Wonderful Wayside, John Hawkinson

Activities of Others

Volunteers sought to staff native plant gardens on spring garden tour

The Natural Garden Tours, which will take place on Sunday, May, 2, 2004, will feature 35 Alameda County gardens that:

- ° prevent pollution by avoiding the use of chemical pesticides and fertilizers

- ° reduce waste by composting, mulching, grass cycling and selecting appropriate plants, and
- ° support wildlife.

Fifteen of the gardens on the tour are planted with 50 to 100% native plants. We are seeking volunteers that have a knowledge of native plants, organic gardening and natural gardening techniques, and enjoy public contact and education to volunteer half a day to help greet tour participants and to help answer questions.

Benefits to volunteers include a pre-tour meeting with the owner and private tour of the garden you will be staffing, a guaranteed tour reservation for the half day you are free, and a Natural Garden Tour t-shirt. Gardens will be assigned on a first-come basis. For more information, please e-mail Kathy Kramer at Kathy@KathyKramerConsulting.net, or call 510-236-9558 between 9 am and 9 pm.

The Tour is sponsored by the Alameda County Flood Control and Water Conservation District, Alameda County Waste Management Authority & Recycling Board, and the US Fish and Wildlife Service's Coastal Program.

Pros and Cons of the Oakland Fire Assessment District Ballot Measure

Residents living in the Oakland Hills are being asked to vote on a mailed ballot measure to create a Fire Assessment District that would raise \$2,000,000/ year for fire prevention programs. The lion's share of this money would go toward various vegetation management programs, including goat grazing on public lands. If the measure passes, four city council members (Districts 1, 4, 6, and 7) would make two appointees each to a Citizen's Advisory Board (CAB), the member at large would appoint one, and the mayor would appoint two (with one of his appointees a professional firefighter). This advisory board would oversee the expenditure of money for projects and review vegetation reduction plans.

By now prospective voters have received their mailed ballots which will be counted after January 6, 2004. Should a voter decide to change his/her vote during this period, there is a phone number (510-339-3092) to do so. If passed, the measure sunsets after 10 years.

Because the public lands covered by the proposed district encompass valuable plant resources including listed species and intact native habitat, the East Bay Chapter of CNPS (EBCNPS) offers the following evaluation of the measure, noting that though the measure creates the Fire Assessment District itself, the program

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of the FAD is largely unknown. Although EBCNPS and other local groups are meeting with some of the City Council members to get further information, much of the actual program will not be established until the measure is approved.

Pros: With the loss of state funding and the current budget crisis, the City will be without any money for critical fire prevention efforts. EBCNPS believes in sound vegetation management around homes as part of an overall program of creating defensible space and in key public areas to retard the spread of fire. The creation of a Citizen's Advisory Board offers the first real attempt at creating public input into Oakland's fire prevention program and could perhaps provide a much broader, more community-based approach to reducing the size and impact of the inevitable wildland/urban fires. Second, the City's inspection and enforcement of vegetation reduction on private property has been inconsistent, with some parcels ignored and others nearly laid waste by over-zealous enforcement. The advisory board might offer the possibility of more measured and intelligent enforcement of compliance. Also, when public lands are managed intelligently, vegetation management can accomplish positive reduction in exotic invasive plant species. Third, the cost and oversight of the program lie with the people most affected by wildland fires, representing a reasonable fee for greater fire protection.

Cons: The measure is largely an unknown quantity and is based almost exclusively on vegetation management as a strategy to prevent fires, yet Oakland's Fire Department is geared chiefly toward fighting structural fires. In Urban/Wildland fires, Job #1 is protecting homes, a task most easily achieved by reducing the combustibility of the structures themselves. Vegetation management around homes is just one piece of creating defensible space. Keeping roadsides mowed is an essential component of fire prevention because it addresses the most frequent ignition sources. Beyond that, removing vegetation from public lands becomes an increasingly complex matter. Removing large amounts of vegetation for "fuel breaks" is essentially a contingency plan (Job #2). The significance of this is that without public commitment to realign priorities to reduce the fuel capacities of the structures which are the single largest source of fuel in the Oakland hills and which constituted the largest source of fuel in the 1991 fire, fuel breaks become the focal point, and fuel breaks can be economically costly, environmentally damaging, and ineffective in preventing major structural loss. The science of managing large areas of vegetation without creating significant downside is far more complicated than the science of protecting structures from burning for which there are comparatively few variables.

Accordingly, the level of expertise required to oversee the Fire Assessment District would be very high; however, no mechanism or requirement for this is yet built into the plan. The only professional appointee mandated for the Citizen's Advisory Board is someone with fire-fighting experience. We would need professionals in a variety of fields willing to give their time to the CAB to ensure that the vegetation plans are carefully laid out to protect significant natural resources, including listed plants and intact native habitat, and to prevent erosion and the further invasion of exotic plant species. At present, this expertise is spread out across different disciplines and as yet has not been drawn together in an Integrated Fire Management approach. The plans themselves must be site-specific and guided by adaptive management considerations aimed at restoring balance in the natural environment. Fire plans would originate with the city's fire department, and thus it is possible that the CAB would be asked to react to projects rather than participate in the planning of them. Without this guiding expertise but with funding of \$2,000,000 annually, the Fire Assessment District could do a great deal of unintended damage while perhaps failing to offer a sophisticated and effective reduction of real threat of fire.

EBCNPS recommends that members contact their City Council Members and visit the website for further information (www.keeпоaklandfiresafe.org).

Jane Brunner, District 1 238-7001
Jean Quan, District 4 238-7004
Desley Brooks, District 6 238-7006
Larry Reid, District 7 238-7007

Laura Baker, for the Conservation Committee

Weaving together the large and small fragments of natural habitat on both public and private lands is the only way to fully protect America's natural heritage. Even an acre of old timber, a remnant wetland, or an isolated spring often harbors hundreds of species, including many of threatened status. By inventing new economic incentives for conserving these special places on private lands, the spirit of wilderness can be taken literally to the grassroots and made more fully part of the national passion. Recognition and reward can engage the attention and win the support of landowners and local communities. These are the practical steps we must take to join our daily lives more fully with the natural world.

E.O. Wilson, The Diversity of Life

Flowers changed the face of the planet. Without them, the world we know—even man himself—would never have existed. Francis Thompson, the English poet, once wrote that one could not pluck a flower without troubling a star. Intuitively he had sensed like a naturalist the enormous interlinked complexity of life. Today we know that the appearance of the flowers contained also the equally mystifying emergence of man.

Loren Eiseley

Board of Directors

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Vacant

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rosacalifornica@earthlink.net

Rare Plants:

John Game, 1155 Spruce St., Berkeley 94707, 527-7855

Regional Parks Botanic Garden Liaison:

Sue Rosenthal, P.O. Box 20489, Oakland 94620, 496-6016,
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Recorded Chapter Information: 464-4977

CNPS Home Page: www.cnps.org

East Bay Chapter CNPS Home Page:
www.ebcnps.org

**Bay Leaf &
Board meeting minutes online**

Chapter CNPS-EB-Alerts E-mail List:
Find out more; email to listserv@usobi.org with:

Membership Application

Name _____

Address _____

I wish to affiliate with:

____ East Bay Chapter (Alameda and Contra Costa Counties)

____ Other _____

E-mail _____
(optional)

Membership category:

- ___ Student, Retired, Limited income, \$20
- ___ Individual, Library, \$35
- ___ Household, Family, or Group, \$45
- ___ Supporting, \$75
- ___ Plant lover, \$100
- ___ Benefactor, \$500
- ___ Life, \$1000

Mail application and check to: California Native Plant Society, 2707 K Street, Suite 1, Sacramento CA 95816



Juncus parryi

Because it is wind pollinated, the rush does not need to invest energy in attracting pollinators, thus its pale brown flower and lack of odor and nectar. Usually rushes grow in moist places but this one grows in dense tufts on dry grassy or stony, granitic slopes high in the Sierra Nevada where Barbara Ertter teaches an exciting class on the genus at the Sierra Nevada field station. Dr. Ertter has observed that rushes have two distinct morphologies: outcrossing and selfing. In the outcrossing morphology, the anthers are greater in length than the filaments and the style and stigmas are also long as we see here. When the flowers are open widely at full anthesis, the style is well separated from the anthers. In the selfing morphology, the filaments are greater in length than the anthers and the style and stigmas are short. At anthesis the flowers are often not widely open and generally the style is in close proximity to the anthers.

Photo and notes by Margaret Ely

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