



July-August 2014

The Bay Leaf

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

www.ebcnps.org

www.groups.google.com/group/ebcnps

Please take a look at the new Web version of the *Bay Leaf* at <http://bayleafnewsletter.org/wp/>. It has all the same articles in a convenient and easy to read html format.

SAVE KNOWLAND PARK BIOBLITZ

On a sunny Sunday morning in early June twenty-three eager citizen scientists showed up to participate in the first bioblitz in Knowland Park. Three hours later the group had logged 542 observations covering 141 species and were busy comparing notes, uploading their data, and downloading some pizza at the bioblitz wrap-up at the home of Knowland Park neighbor and bioblitz organizer, Tom Cieszkinski.



Participants sign up for Save Knowland Park bioblitz (photo by Beth Wurzburg)

It takes a lot of skill and savvy to pull off a bioblitz, and Tom looked to a team of experts to help him make sure that the blitz went smoothly. Eddie Dunbar of the Insect Sciences Museum of California; Ken-Ichi Ueda, founder of iNaturalist; Dan Rademacher of Nerds for Nature, and Constance Taylor of Wild Oakland all supplied their collective blitzing experience, while Friends of Knowland Park saw to it that people signed in and were supplied with maps to help them find their way around the 500-acre park.

We asked Eddie Dunbar to tell us about his experience as an entomologist and as one of the leaders of the blitz in Knowland Park.

What's the biggest takeaway from the Knowland Park bioblitz? I've been working on a guide to the insects of Oak-

land since 1998 and wasn't aware until very recently of the western highlands of the park. The only other city park with such major open space is Joaquin Miller Park, which is well known. Most people don't know that Knowland Park exists. I was amazed to learn about it.

What's the value of a bioblitz in a place like this? I call it the WIMBY factor: people want to know What's In My Back Yard? The experience of learning about the extraordinary array of biodiversity found in a park at the urban edge is powerful. And it's intimate. When I sit down in nature I am an intrusive force initially, and insects and other critters hide. If I sit quietly for a while, I become part of the environment, the critters come out of hiding, and we begin to notice each other.

How did you get started in entomology? I was in the Cub Scouts and I had a den mother who was an entomologist doing graduate work at UC Berkeley. She noticed my interest in insects and she encouraged me. Bridging the divide between nature and science has been my mission for 25 years. As head of the Oakland-based Insect Sciences Museum of California, I engage citizen scientists to co-author field guides focused on insects in the San Francisco Bay Area.

People in this culture have a lot of fear of insects. When you're out on a bioblitz like this, how do you get people to overcome their fears? Each insect has a story and I try to tell those stories so that their curiosity and wonder replace their fears. Also I try to make sure that everyone has a loupe so that they can begin to examine the eyes, wings, mouthparts, etc. of the insects we see and that helps them really hone in on the functional aspects. I've seen little kids hold an insect half an inch from their eyes, but we lose that ability over time.

What's the best use for a park like Knowland? We need to get people out of the classroom and into nature. I've worked with students at Bishop O'Dowd and other schools doing bioblitzes. Knowland Park is a great place to do interpretive nature programs, whether with docents or setting up self-guided means through cellphone technology.

Continued on page 2

Knowland Park Bioblitz continued from page 1

What's your opinion about the Oakland Zoo's proposed California Trails exhibit? I'm all for it if it's built within the existing zoo footprint. But putting it up here in the park where it would displace wildlife and native plant habitat makes no sense. The park should be preserved as a place where the public can learn about the wild. The zoo could develop a great interpretive program by putting their exhibit infrastructure with the rest of the zoo and using the park as the real example of the wild.

If people want to participate in helping to identify the species (not just insects) observed during the bioblitz, how can they do that? Here is a link. Save Knowland Park Bioblitz-Observations (iNaturalist).



Sarah Kluger uploading data in the maritime chaparral (photo by Beth Wurzburg)

What are some places that people can see other photos of insects from Knowland Park? Insects of Knowland Park (since 2005) (iNaturalist). Insects of Knowland Park (from Insects of the San Francisco Bay Area).

The Knowland Park Team



Clay Anderson gets up close and personal with a southern alligator lizard (photo by Eddie Dunbar)

FIELD TRIPS

Kennedy Grove Regional Recreation Area, El Sobrante, CA, Wed, July 2, 5:30pm - 7:30pm

SPAWNERS is excited to announce that EBMUD biologists Jonathan Price and Bert Mulchaey, and ranger/naturalist Joe Scornaienchi will lead us on a special hike to the Scow Canyon restoration site. The site was created as mitigation for the San Pablo Dam Seismic Upgrade Project. We will learn about the wildlife that we encounter along the way, and how the restoration project has improved habitat for endangered species. This is a moderate level hike with one fairly steep section. However, we will have vehicles to assist those who need help getting up the steeper hill. Apologies to your canine friends, but please leave dogs at home. RSVP: 510-665-3538 or courtney@thewatershedproject.org.

**Geology and Native Plant Hike
Wednesday, August 6, 5:30-7:30 pm**

Meet at Heavenly Ridge entrance, Sobrante Ridge Regional Preserve (end of Heavenly Ridge Lane in El Sobrante)

Over 5 million years ago El Sobrante was below the ocean, and this is where the rocks that make the hills we see today were formed. Andrew Fowler and Gudrun Kleist will lead us on an exciting geology and native plant hike through the Sobrante Ridge Regional Preserve. On this moderate level hike, we will learn more about El Sobrante's geology and investigate fossil sea shells that might be found in the rocks. We will also observe the plants that grow in the unique soil made from these rocks, including the rare Alameda manzanita. We will stop at the top of the ridge to enjoy the view and eat snacks. Wear sturdy shoes and bring a water bottle, and SPAWNERS will provide snacks. Apologies to your canine friends, but please leave dogs at home. RSVP to 510-665-3538 or courtney@thewatershedproject.org

Courtney Marshall
Program Coordinator
SPAWNERS

CONSERVATION ANALYST REPORT

Dublin City Council Adopts “Dublin Open Space Initiative” Creating Urban Limit Line in Dublin!

On June 3rd the Dublin City Council voted unanimously to adopt the Dublin Open Space Initiative. This initiative, created by Dublin Citizens with the help of local environmental organizations including the East Bay Chapter of the California Native Plant Society (EBCNPS), creates a permanent urban limit line at the City’s existing eastern edge and makes permanent a previously approved western urban limit line. The creation of this urban limit line removes one of the greatest threats to a large section of our East Dublin and Tassajara Botanical Priority Protection Area (BPPA) and is a major conservation victory for our chapter. You can learn more about our East Dublin and Tassajara BPPA at this link: [BPPA Guidebook](#).

Not only did the Council show its strong support for the will of Dublin Citizens to protect the remaining open space and agricultural lands in their region, it also went a step further, unanimously taking a position to formally oppose a competitive initiative which would have allowed for development of approximately 2000 homes in Doolan Canyon (Part of our East Dublin and Tassajara BPPA).

A huge thank you goes out to the citizens of Dublin who volunteered their time to collect signatures and came out in force to voice their support at the City Council meeting. A big thanks you also to the EBCNPS volunteers from throughout the region, who donated time and expertise to this effort. We could not have done it without you! This win is the culmination of all of your hard work with support from the Sierra Club, Save Mount Diablo, Greenbelt Alliance, Tri-Valley Conservancy, Friends of the Vineyards, Ohlone Audubon Society, Alameda Creek Alliance, EBCNPS, and the Center for Biological Diversity.

We are savoring this success, but our work is not over yet. The competing developers’ initiative, the so called “Let Dublin Decide Initiative” will still appear on the November ballot, and we are beginning our plans to counter their campaign this fall. Stay tuned for more information.

Our victory has been in the news. *Mercury News* story: Dublin adopts citizens’ initiative to create urban limit line on east side of town.

On June 13th *The Independent* published an editorial regarding this issue.

Livermore Area Recreation and Park District Board Votes to Support Preservation of Tesla (Corral Hollow BPPA) <http://tinyurl.com/l5zngcj>

On Tuesday, June 10th, the Livermore Area Recreation and Park District Board of Directors voted to keep the Tesla Park land in its master plan update. The Board also directed staff to review the forthcoming Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) when it is released and to send a letter to State Parks supporting Tesla as a non-motorized preserve. This vote represents a solid step forward in our continued efforts to build public and organizational support for a non-motorized Tesla Park preserve.

EBCNPS supported this effort by submitting a letter to the board and by having a representative make comments on behalf of our interests at the meeting. We will continue our efforts to inform governmental representatives about the botanical value of the Tesla Park land and the importance of preserving it.

Volunteering: The Conservation Committee is always looking for new volunteers to get involved in our many projects. If you are interested in working with me on any of the projects that you have read about on our blog or in past Conservation Analyst Updates please feel free to contact me by phone at 510-734-0335 or by email at conservation@ebcnps.org. And as always, for more detailed updates on all of our conservation projects please visit the Conservation Blog. ”

POINT ISABEL RESTORATION TEAM VOLUNTEER TRIP

Pt. Isabel Crew's Voluntourism in Fort Bragg and Mendocino

Members of the Pt. Isabel crew chose Fort Bragg and Mendocino for their annual Voluntourism Trip in June of this year. (Voluntourism combines a trip with volunteer work. We made prior such trips to Mono Lake, the Inyo Forest, and to the



Bishop Pine seedlings Photo by Jane Kelley

Channel Islands.) Our voluntourism involves working with local environmentalists and California native plant people. When we go to a location the folks that we assist give us tours and presentations. For example, the Mendocino Land Trust set up a canoe trip on Big River for us. When we were at Mono Lake, the Mono Lake Committee arranged for a special guided

canoe trip on the lake. We work for them, and they provide us with an educational/recreational experience.

We coordinated our trip with Mario Abreu from Mendocino Coast Botanical Garden and the Mendocino Land Trust (MLT). Mario Abreu scheduled three work parties for the crew: removing velvet grass and sweet vernal grass from a restored native plant area on the coastal bluffs in the Botanical Garden; a broom bash along Albion Ridge Road (where members of the local California Native Plant Society chapter spotted us working and brought us refreshments); and planting forty-three Bishop Pine seedlings that Mario had propagated by heating up pine cones in the Garden's oven to release their seed.

Nicolet Houtz of MLT took us and MLT regular volunteers to Hare Creek Beach, where we removed masses of ice plant and weed-wrenched loads of seed-laden Scotch broom. MLT volunteers have already done great restoration work at this beach, and we could see what it will look like when they are finished.

Our crew was guided by Mendocino resident and artist/interpreter Sarah Ginskey (former head of the CNPS East Bay restoration team). Sarah organized several special activities for us as a reward for our weed removal work. The activities included: the First Friday Art Walk in Ft. Bragg, the Point Cabrillo Light Station State Historic Park 105th anniversary celebration where we learned that the Lightkeepers Association, the community, agencies, and politicians have come together to preserve the Light Station and to have the Lens



Volunteers at Albion Ridge in Mendocino County Photo by Jane Kelley

POINT ISABEL VOLUNTEER TRIP CONTINUED

used as a private aid to Navigation; a private showing of Taylor Lockwood's Treasures from the Kingdom of Fungi, a visit to a blow hole behind the Little River cemetery, a guided hike through the Van Damme pygmy forest, and a private presentation on whales by local expert Ron LeValley. We went on a complimentary trip on Big River provided by the Stanford Inn by the Sea's Catch-a-Canoe solar eco-tour where Manager Rick Hemmings and his son Blake took us nearly 5 miles upriver on the big outrigger where we paddled, sailed, and motored amongst seals, great blue herons, a green heron, nesting cormorants, and more while Rick filled us in about the history of Big River.

Our trip ended with a tour of Jug Handle Creek Farm and Nature Center lead by Helene Chalfin and Board Member Lori Hubbard. We visited the attractive Victorian house that is available to rent and toured the nursery with its many

California native plants, learning about the youth programs that are supported by the Center. Helene stopped by in the evening to show us the inspiring film about John Olmstead and his efforts to preserve Jug Handle. The film by his son Alden, "The Story of Jug Handle" demonstrates what a small group of dedicated people can accomplish when they set their minds to it.

Overall, we had another fantastic voluntourism experience made so by the great work being done by Mario Abreu of the Mendocino Coast Botanical Garden and by the Mendocino Land Trust, as well as by the care and attention shown to us by Sarah Ginskey and by everyone we encountered in Fort Bragg and Mendocino.

Jane, Tom, Gudrun, John, Rob, Nina, Janet, Liz, David, Joanne



Volunteers at Hare Creek Beach in Mendocino County (photo by Jane Kelly)

MEMBERSHIP MEETING: ON BREAK UNTIL SEPTEMBER 24

Membership meetings will be on summer recess for the months of July and August. But mark your calendars now and watch the *Bay Leaf* for the announcement of a great program when we resume or regular meetings in September:

Wednesday, September 24, 7:30 pm, Orinda
Heath Bartosh and Chris Thayer – Imperiled East Bay Ecosystem: The Oakley Sand Mounds.

SAVE THE DATE!

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 12

GOURMET GREENS AND BEASTS FEAST

POTLUCK PICNIC FOR
CNPS AND THE WILDLIFE SOCIETY

IN TILDEN REGIONAL PARK

DELICIOUS FOOD AND DRINK
FUN GAMES AND ACTIVITIES FOR ALL AGES

WATCH FOR MORE INFORMATION IN THE SEPTEMBER BAY LEAF.

NATIVE HERE

Welcome to Summer! We continue to see Whipsnakes (striped racers), a persistent mouse nesting under our protective potting bins, a Gray Fox and many of its distinctive signs (scat, headless woodrats, etc.), flowers, pollinators, and birds, birds, birds. A pair of Pacific-slope Flycatchers successfully fledged 3-4 young from a tall one-gallon tree-pot hanging from the underside of the rear potting bench. They have begun a second clutch and at the writing of this article there were two eggs in the re-used nest. The nearby coyote bush thicket probably provides a good amount of food with its abundance of insect habitat.

I hope that some of you were able to make it to hear Jim Hale speak about Native American ethnobiology and ethnobotany on June 28th. Please continue to join us for our summer talk series: "A Sense of Place."

Future talks

Charli Danielsen - "Fire and Water in the Summer Landscape". July 12th, 10:30 am. Our very own gem and founder of Native Here will speak on ways to conserve water, your landscaping, and your structures in a set of dry years such as we are having.

Bert Johnson - "Manzanitas of the Bay Region". July 26th, 10:30 am.

Kirk Lumpkin, et al. - "Native Plant Poetry". August 9th, 10:30 am.

Bart O'Brien - "Native Plant Horticulture". August 23rd, 10:30 am.

Glenn Keator - "Designing with Natives". August 30th, 10:30 am.

Please see our website, NativeHereNursery.org for more information and a list of the poets.

Volunteer Needs

As summer gets underway, we have been feeling a new buzz up at the nursery. We have four interns this summer, who are contributing to the nursery's mission and being trained in our philosophy of growing plants. The interns are doing great work and enlivening the atmosphere. We have also been blessed with new volunteers who are more likely to stay around and become the supports that uphold our project.

Our greatest unfilled need continues to be waterers, and contact person to organize the watering sections. We have had several people take on watering sections in the nursery, but we need a few more. With John and Charli and others spending a large amount of their time seed collecting, there is a large void to be filled. I can fill in watering when needed, but my time is better spent writing emails, making lists, and trading plants with the locals for money.

Theo Fitanides
Manager, Native Here Nursery

NATIVE HERE: A VOLUNTEER STORY

If you were to spend the afternoon at the nursery, catching the last of the *Triteleia* blooms and marveling at the stillness of thousands of plants photosynthesizing on a hot summer afternoon, you probably wouldn't even notice the two little shade houses near the parking lot that shelter the precious cuttings of some of our more challenging plants. But on any Saturday this month, this is where you would find Bay Area native Marilyn Perry, deftly potting up our newly rooted *Arctostaphylos*. I had the opportunity to slip her a few questions for this month's *Bay Leaf*, and I hope you enjoy the results as much as I have.

First, tell me about your life outside the nursery.

I'm a graphic designer specializing in book design. I work for a science textbook publisher, and I live with my partner and son in a house that was built around 1909. Keeping the house standing takes up a lot of our energy, as does the garden, which used to be a lawn, rhododendron, azalea, that sort of thing. Now it's vegetables in raised beds, fruit trees, ferns, a tiny pond, a very haphazard assortment of natives and, well, "other." Many graphic designers, as it happens, are interested in gardens. There are so many similar problems to solve: layout, color, scale, composition, lighting, and texture, to name a few. I could think of our garden as a great big design challenge to solve, but mostly we putter, and one thing leads to another...and another.

How long have you been volunteering at NHN?

Since August 2013.

Why are native plants important to you?

I love the flora and fauna of our state and feel supremely lucky to have grown up in the Bay Area. It always irks me when people say that we don't have seasons. Of course we do. And natives are the friends whose familiar faces we look forward to seeing when their season comes around. There are so many forces at play now, changing the landscape, maybe irreparably, and who knows what the future will bring. But I hope these friends – and the creatures that depend on them – will be with us long into the future.

Where did your interest in native plants come from?

My parents, Ruth and Lewis Perry. My mother grew up near Placerville and loved the foothill wildflowers, and she introduced me to the Sierra flowers on family camping trips. She was also a tireless gardener, garden designer, eco-activist, recycler, among other things. Her gardens didn't have a native plant emphasis: she would freely mix natives and non-natives. My father has an encyclopedic brain, and handed down his love of all things California: birds, hiking, the high Sierra. The

older I get, and the more troubled our planet, the more sacred these enthusiasms of my parents are to me.

Why did you decide to volunteer at NHN?

For one thing, it helps keep the climate change sadness at bay. Another is that my plant knowledge doesn't really go very deep. I'm "lite" on botany and plant identification and I don't know my Latin names. So my main goal at the nursery is to learn as much as I can. If a day comes that I can actually help a nursery customer with a plant question, then I'll know I've turned a corner.

What is your favorite nursery activity?

To learn how to do something new. Recently John has let me pot up some mazanitas (*Arctostaphylos manzanita*, *A. crustacea*, and *A. glauca*) that he grew from cuttings. That's been very gratifying: easing the roots apart without breaking them turns out to be something I'm not bad at. Watering can also be very relaxing. Also Margo told me that some years there are frogs' eggs in the big tubs that need looking after. I sure hope that happens during my tenure.

What have you learned?

There is so much to learn and remember and so little time. So I have to remember not to get discouraged. That's a life lesson. Also, saying "I don't know what that means" or "I don't know that plant" is critical when learned folk like Charli, John, Margo, Theo, and Adam are your teachers. And look at what an expression of love the nursery is: all the years of planning, meeting, building, repairing, collecting, planting, tending, coaxing, potting up, selling, buying, etc. You just have to pause for a minute to take that in.

Is this part of your life a secret?

Not at all. I love telling people the latest: a plant in bloom, a bird's nest, turkeys in the trees. [Interviewer's note: I remember it well. Those turkeys were 100 ft. up a eucalyptus]

If you were a native plant, which one would you be?

I refuse to choose!

Thanks Marilyn!

Adam Huggins

PLANTS, POLLINATORS, PREDATORS

Bill and Lesley Hunt (our chapter's vice president and president) were at the butterfly festival at Coyote Hills Regional Park. They prepared several posters to display. The contents of one poster, about insect and arachnid pollinators and predators on plants, is reproduced here. All photos by Bill Hunt.



Checkerspot butterfly on *Helianthus* flower. Insects need a variety of plants to feed them through their lives.



Pollinators come in all sizes from this large yellow-faced bumblebee down to insects you can barely see without magnification.



This adult milkweed bug feeds on the nectar and sap of milkweed plants.



This yellow crab spider on a mule's ear flower is waiting for other insects to come close enough to be seized and eaten.

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EBCNPS Sponsored Activities

East Bay Chapter News list Emailed announcements of upcoming EBCNPS events

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Native Here Nursery

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Plant Fair

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Membership Application and Renewal Form

Name _____

Address _____

Zip _____ Telephone _____

Email _____

I wish to affiliate with:

East Bay Chapter (Alameda and Contra Costa Counties)

Other _____

Membership category:

Individual, \$45

Family, Library, Group or International, \$75

Plant lover, \$100

Patron, \$300

Benefactor, \$600

Mariposa Lily, \$1500

Limited Income or student, \$25.00

Other _____

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