



May 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.

MEMBERSHIP MEETING

Rebels with a Cause (film showing)

Wednesday, May 28, 7:30 pm

Location: Room 6, Orinda Community Center (directions below)

When the Golden Gate Bridge opened in 1937, Marin County became easily accessible as a bedroom community for San Francisco. Developers swooped in over the next 40 years with plans to build freeways, business parks, and tens of thousands of homes, including massive projects in the mostly undeveloped western part of the county. But despite political support for these developments at all levels of government, creative citizens were able to mount successful grassroots campaigns to scuttle the projects and preserve the land in perpetuity. Their successes, which resulted in the creation of Point Reyes National Seashore and the Golden Gate National Recreation Area, stand as precedents for open space preservation and inspiration for environmental activists today.

At our May meeting, we'll be showing the beautiful, 75-minute documentary film of these conservation efforts by filmmakers Nancy Kelly and Kenji Yamamoto. The film combines interviews with archival and landscape footage to showcase the citizen activists and the spectacular landscapes they preserved. The trailer is available for viewing at <http://rebelsdocumentary.org/trailer/>.

East Bay CNPS membership meetings are free of charge and open to everyone. This month's meeting takes place in Room 6 of the Orinda Community Center at 28 Orinda Way (in Orinda Village). Room 6 is at the south end of the Community Center building. The room opens at 7:00 pm; the meeting begins at 7:30 pm. Call 510-496-6016 or email sr0433@yahoo.com if you have questions.

Directions to Orinda Community Center at 28 Orinda Way

From the west, take Hwy 24 to the Orinda/Moraga exit. At the end of the off ramp, turn left on Camino Pablo (toward Orinda Village), right on Santa Maria Way (the signal after the BART station and freeway entrance), and left on Orinda Way. From the east, take Hwy 24 to the Orinda exit. Follow the

ramp to Orinda Village. Turn right on Santa Maria way (the first signal) and left on Orinda Way.

Once on Orinda Way, go 1 short block to the parking lot on the west side of the one-story Community Center building, which is set back from the street on the right. There is additional free parking on the street, next door beneath the library building, and in the parking lot south of the library. Room 6 is at the south end of the Community Center building.

From BART (4 blocks): Exit the Orinda station, turn right and cross a pedestrian bridge, then cross a second pedestrian bridge on the left. Go 1 short block on the sidewalk to the third pedestrian bridge. Go 2 blocks on Orinda Way to the Orinda Community Center. Room 6 is at the south end of the Community Center building.



SAVING KNOWLAND PARK

Snakes, Lies, and Cutting Red Tape: How the Oakland Zoo is Gaming the System

It is difficult to imagine the Oakland Zoo proposing anything more outrageous than their plan to build an environmentally destructive “conservation” exhibit on the richest and most sensitive lands in Knowland Park, but in their latest proposal the preposterous trumps the outrageous. The upshot of their bold move toward endgame is that not only would the public lose far more park land than initially approved, but all public access to the very best native plant habitat in the park would be legally barred forever.

To understand what is currently taking place behind closed doors, it’s necessary to recall that, when the Oakland City Council rubber-stamped its approval of the project in 2011, they did so with the assurance by the City Planning Department that there would be no significant impacts from the project—indeed the whole idea of using a Mitigated Negative Declaration was justified by that claim. But that was before other agencies outside the city had analyzed the project.

Enter the California Department of Fish and Wildlife and the US Fish and Wildlife Service. CNPS hoped that CDFW would take a firm stance on protecting the rare plant resources. The agency did suggest the zoo move its project away from the sensitive resources and put it in the abundant surplus land within the existing footprint, but the zoo refused. But when both wildlife agencies analyzed the expansion plan for impacts to Alameda whipsnake—a species listed under the state and federal Endangered Species Acts—they found that there were plenty of significant impacts not detailed or analyzed in the zoo’s environmental document and permit application. The zoo claimed, for instance, that many of the impacts to whipsnake habitat—much of which is rare chaparral and rare native grasslands—would be temporary. The agencies disagreed. The Zoo’s whipsnake consultant contended that the enclosures for the exhibit animals would remain viable snake habitat despite the fact that most of the exhibit animals are predator species that would readily prey upon the snake, should any venture into the exhibits. Again the agencies disagreed.

Impacts must be mitigated. Altogether, the agencies figured that the Zoo’s expensive tastes for building upon the highest and best quality whipsnake habitat would set them back about 52+ acres—an area almost as large as the 56-acre exhibit itself. What to do? Did the zoo adjust the site of the development to avoid impacts and the need to mitigate? Nope. What about buying mitigation credits from a mitigation bank? Nope. Instead, the zoo hit upon the brilliant scheme to cut through all the environmental red tape and take more free public park land with a little help from their friends in the city.

The latest maps <http://ebcnps.wordpress.com/2014/05/06/oakland-zoo-proposes-to-take-even-more-public-land-for-its-expansion/> show that the zoo, with the help of the City Planning Department, is intending to place a conservation easement on 52+ acres of park land, some of which lies within the project area, with the remainder outside the project area and even outside the special zoned land for the zoo to develop. Normally, the wildlife agencies want to exclude the public from mitigation lands—either through the use of private mitigation banks or, if

the development is on private land, to have a reserve set aside. But the zoo’s insistence on using public park land for its mitigation sites presents a dilemma, even beyond the fact that using already protected land is double-dipping. The expansion project is facing increasingly hostile public backlash as more people learn of the full range of impacts to the park and public access. Fencing off another 20 acres will be politically difficult, especially since the land in question is visible from Golf Links Road.

The zoo is arguing that the additional land won’t need to be fenced, claiming that the land is steep, inaccessible, and choked with poison oak. (A recent visit to the proposed mitigation site indicates that it’s no more inaccessible than off-trail areas of any other comparable park.) But blocking public access might well become a major stumbling block even if it’s done by signs (as the zoo suggests) stating that the mitigation lands are off limits to the public.

While there are numerous reasons why this form of mitigation does not meet the laugh test for the whipsnake, cheating the public out of an additional 20 acres of high quality park land is unthinkable. Worst of all, native plant lovers would now lose access to the rare maritime chaparral and the many acres of pristine oak woodland outside the project fence in addition to the proposed 56 acres containing native bunchgrass prairie, many species of locally rare plants, and two statewide rare plants.

We don’t know whether the agencies will accept this twisted plan enabling the zoo to virtually escape any authentic mitigation. We do know that negotiations are taking place behind closed doors, and CNPS has submitted a letter to the agencies detailing our concerns [http://ebcnps.files.wordpress.com/2014/05/04_21_14-letter-to-cdfw-re-oakland-zoo.pdf]. We also know that the City Council will have to approve any alteration of the Deed of Transfer (such as a conservation easement) in which State Parks conveyed Knowland Park to Oakland. This vote could come as soon as within a month but before the end of the year

We need your help! CNPS and Friends of Knowland Park are asking the public to sign letters to the Oakland City Council immediately to deny the bogus conservation easement [<http://www.saveknowland.org/5-ways-you-can-help-save-knowland-park/>] before the deal is cooked in private. We believe that this project can be stopped if the public is willing to convey its outrage to the city. We will be posting action alerts every week or so on the www.saveknowland.org website. Please stay tuned to find out what you can do to help us turn the tide.

Below are photos of the CNPS/FOKP Earth Day rally on 4/19/14. Protestors enjoyed songs performed by Country Joe McDonald, Hali Hammer, and Randy Berge. Here is a link to KTVU’s coverage of the event: <http://sanfrancisco.cbslocal.com/video/10072137-landconservationists-protest-plans-to-expand-oakland-zoo/>

The Knowland Park Team

ACT NOW TO HELP STOP A REALLY BAD PROJECT

Sign a letter to the Oakland City Council to stop the zoo's destructive project (even if you don't live in Oakland).

The Oakland Zoo is pursuing its plan to expand into Knowland Park. The project would greatly damage rare maritime chaparral, native grassland, and habitat for local wildlife, including the threatened Alameda whipsnake. The Zoo must provide mitigation for the land it is destroying, and it is proposing to take even more acreage in Knowland Park, much of which is not suitable habitat, removing even more of the park from open public use.

The Oakland City Council must approve this change. Please sign and send a letter to urge them to preserve the park from this development.

For a ready-to-go letter to the Oakland City Council (for residents and non-residents), go to <http://www.saveknowland.org/> and click the link in the Speak Up section on the right.

Print, sign and mail. Thank you!

Also, please sign the two petitions on the website. Visit the park now. The flowers are out!

See the photo on page 12 of the Earth Day demonstration against the Zoo's proposal.

Delia Taylor

SERPENTINE PRAIRIE WALK IN OAKLAND

This article describes a short walk through the Serpentine Prairie area of Redwood Regional Park. The trail is in good condition and not difficult. There is only 100-200 feet of elevation gain and loss over the walk.

Be aware that there is poison oak off the trails.

The underlying serpentine rock supports rare plants such as Presidio clarkia and Tiburon buckwheat as well as more common plants such as California poppies, buttercups, red maids, cream cups, mariposa lilies and blue-eyed grass. The prairie is also flush with a diversity of native grasses, some 18 taxa at last count. These grasses thrive in the cooler, higher elevation of the prairie. The Serpentine Prairie offers one of the best stands of coastal prairie found in the East Bay.

When to go: Conditions vary from year to year. Buttercups and poppies provided a wash of color on March 21, 2014. Individual blue-eyed grass and red maids were in bloom. On April 19, 2014, buttercups were still in bloom and the stands of poppies were producing more intense orange color. There were more blue-eyed grass and red maid flowers and stands of goldfields. Cream cups provided a new source of pleasure. Clarkia and mariposa lilies were not yet in bloom but the plants were in evidence. On June 30, 2010, Presidio clarkia, mariposa lilies and hayfield tarweed were in bloom.

Where: start from a parking lot next to the Richard C. Trudeau Training Center at 11500 Skyline Boulevard just south of the junction of Skyline Boulevard and Joaquin Miller Road in Oakland.

Driving directions: From Freeway 13 exit at Joaquin Miller Road and drive uphill until Joaquin Miller merges with Skyline Boulevard. Bear right. After 600 feet, turn left into the parking lot.

You can reach the parking lot by driving south on Grizzly Peak Boulevard / Skyline Boulevard from the Tilden Park area.

Walking directions: The single track Serpentine Prairie trail starts from the back of the parking lot. Walk downhill with a rail fence on your right (and left). The fence on the right will become a net-wire fence protecting the area under restoration. Continue walking along this trail, keeping the fence to your right. The restoration area is off limits but you can see a variety of plants on either side of the trail.

This trail continues downhill for some time before turning right at the end of the fenced restoration area. In spring, there will be patches of goldfields on the left as you walk by an equestrian center facility. The trail will turn right again, heading back to the parking lot with the fence on the right. A short side trail leads to an observation point looking across the restoration area. The rich population of native plants attracts many insects, which in turn attract swallows and other birds.

This loop provides a good introduction to the serpentine prairie area. Explore other trails as you have time.

Useful information about the Serpentine Prairie:

This video with Lech Naumovich providing a tour of the Serpentine Prairie provides information on what you will see.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yNLHeHQnJ2k>

A gallery of pictures of flowers taken on June 30, 2010 by Bill Hunt provides more examples.

http://naturelover.smugmug.com/Nature/Redwood-Regional-Park/12760574_mqmnXV#!i=919415228&k=jrSN646

The iNaturalist site also has pictures of plants and birds found at the serpentine prairie.

<http://www.inaturalist.org/places/redwood-regional-park-serpentine-prairie>

Conservation Notes: Serpentine grassland was once more

common in the East Bay Hills. The 46-acre remnant in Redwood Regional Park is the best example that remains. Preserving it is important if we are to see and appreciate this unusual habitat.

Redwood Regional Park is part of the East Bay Regional Park District. The Serpentine Prairie had been severely degraded by decades of overuse and misuse when local residents circulated a petition and involved the California Native Plant Society to change the way the area was managed. Within the Park District organization, David Amme became a champion for restoring the prairie. Working with these groups, the Park District produced a plan to bring back the prairie with its natural plant communities. A restoration project started in 2009 has produced remarkable progress. The restoration area now contains dense stands of native grasses and abundant wildflowers. This project is an example of success in preserving and restoring a priceless natural resource in an urban area.

References:

Skyline Serpentine Prairie - its value

By Steve Edwards, retired Director Regional Parks Botanic Garden

http://www.ebparks.org/Assets/files/message_from_steve_edwards.pdf

Habitat and Humanity from the July-September 2010 Bay Nature magazine

<http://baynature.org/articles/habitat-and-humanity/>

The article discusses several conservation projects in the Bay Area. The Last of the Serpentine Prairie section discusses the history of the serpentine prairie restoration.

Serpentine Prairie Restoration Project

<http://www.ebparks.org/Page556.aspx>

This article on the Park District web site describes the restoration project.

East Bay Park District Successfully Completes Stage 1 of Serpentine Prairie Restoration

<http://ebcnps.wordpress.com/category/serpentine-prairie/>

Serpentine Prairie Restoration Project Redwood Regional Park

2011 Annual Report: Year 3

<http://creeksidescience.files.wordpress.com/2012/01/serpprairereport-2011-final.pdf>

Oakland Geology: Serpentine Prairie

<http://oaklandgeology.wordpress.com/2009/05/18/serpentine-prairie/>

Skyline Serpentine Prairie at Redwood Regional Park

<http://naturalhistorywanderings.com/2010/04/20/skyline-serpentine-prairie-at-redwood-regional-park/>

Redwood Regional Park trail map

http://www.ebparks.org/Assets/_Nav_Categories/Parks/Maps/Redwood+map.pdf

See page 5 for aerial photos showing the restoration of the Serpentine Prairie.

Bill Hunt



Civicrops volunteers are shown mowing annual grasses. Results from the restoration show that well timed annual mowing (a replacement for grazing given the site constraints) appreciably increases native annual forb cover formerly displaced by non-native annuals grasses.



Serpentine Prairie in Redwood Regional Park before and after the restoration.

VOUNTEER PROFILE: JANICE BRAY

Visitors to Native Here Nursery during the dry season may find themselves taking a momentary break from their botanical contemplations to admire the excellent pictures and informative text that accompany and conveniently identify each species. Or perhaps they will pause to appreciate the hand-painted banners that mark the home territory for each of Native Here's represented regions. By chance they arrived after seeing a carefully crafted poster for the fall Native Plant Fair. These and other artful and dedicated contributions to creating the unique blend of familiarity and inexhaustible mystery that characterize Native Here are the handiwork of long-time volunteer and secret weapon Janice Bray.

After first discovering her passion for native plants as a part of the Milo Baker chapter in the 70's and early 80's she brought her enthusiasm with her when she and her husband moved to El Cerrito and joined Charli and other early volunteers in the first years of the nursery. Having spent much of her life working with children in homes and classrooms, she remarked that to her, working with plants is almost the same, but much quieter! She reminisces about how in the early days, when the nursery was less than half the size it is today, they constantly had to move plants around the keep them from drying out in the summer (watering was, and still is, a volunteer effort). Having developed a talent for photography by "osmosis" (her husband of 44 years is a professional photographer), she began toting her camera on seed collecting expeditions and documenting local native plants in the field. These pictures formed the backbone of what was to be an ambitious visual encyclopedia of East Bay native plants, complete with information on distribution and habitat preferences – these are the same profiles that help introduce each plant in the nursery. A great companion to Barbara Ertter's *Annotated Checklist of the East Bay Flora*, this guide can be purchased on CD.

NATIVE HERE NURSERY

Nature observations at the nursery

The top of the large blue elderberry near the potting area has been the favored perch for a resident Bewick's Wren. To the best of our knowledge he spends the entirety of his day singing, with brief quiet bouts where one can only assume he is sneaking a snack on the job. Keep up the good effort, buddy, and soon you will have chicks to feed.

At the back of the nursery near the Mitchell Canyon project area, you can hear the sounds of a newly hatched clutch of birds. If you want to find out what type of bird they are, sit quietly under the oaks and cypresses. But please bring some freshly caught bugs as they sound quite hungry.

A 2-foot whipsnake has been sheltering among the silvery folds of a tarp that is covering the soil pile from evaporative solar rays. Other smaller whipsnakes and other snakes have been spotted and they probably prey on the treefrogs and brush rabbits. The rabbits love to nibble our herbaceous plants, which is one of the reasons for the protective cages.

The stories about Janice are many, and she is too humble to confirm them, but it has been said that she almost single-handedly watered the nursery for a year. One thing is certain: next to nursery-founder Charli Danielsen she is the longest standing volunteer at Native Here, and still going strong. The banners that identify regions of collection are recycled fabric from the awnings of her home nearby. The graphics on Native Here materials are generally hers as well. On any given week she may be found photographing tender endemics in the nursery, designing artwork for pamphlets and flyers, tabling at local native plant events, or watering and weeding in the nursery. Full of stories and good humor, she is a joy to encounter under any circumstance. As we spoke together under an oak in the nursery, we equally treasured the stillness that had gathered around us in the surprising damp of a late April rainstorm. When considering what California native plant she would be after some deliberation we came to rest upon coyote bush. Often overlooked, this ubiquitous workhorse of ecosystems across California is nevertheless the backbone of most of the communities it inhabits. For habitat value, dependability, sheer toughness, and team spirit it has no peer. Often it helps highlight the plants around it, casting their features in a more favorable aspect by virtue of its own good graces, and every now and then it shines like no other. It is hard to imagine a better counterpart for Janice, and Native Here would not be what it is without her dedication and creativity.

Adam Huggins

Native Here Nursery Inventory Specialist

What looked like Chalcedon Checkerspot caterpillars were a common sighting among the volunteer bee plants among the nursery during the first half of April. They were nowhere to be found by the end of April. Perhaps May will have something new in store for us?

Featured Plant for May 2014

Our featured plant this month is California larkspur, *Delphinium californicum*. These plants have been budding in the nursery for the past six weeks and are finally opening up into creamy lavender heaven. They are good for open or partially shaded areas with good drainage and can be found in the Bay Hills and Diablo sections and also reported in the Hamilton section. Have you spotted this on your hikes?

Volunteer Needs

- We need watering help through the summer. If you have a regular two-hour window during your week, or would like to adopt a section of the nursery, come in during our open hours to learn the routine and get a watering assignment.



California larkspur (*Delphinium californicum*)
Photo by Janice Bray

Theo Fitanides

RESTORATION

Saturday, May 3, 10 am, Point Isabel

Meet at the end of Rydin Road just off the I-580 next to Hoffman Marsh. Contact e-mail: kyotousa@sbcglobal.net, cell: 510-684-6484.

Saturday, May 3, 9 am, Redwood Regional Park, Canyon Meadows staging area

This crew will continue to attack French broom. Redwood Park staff will provide water and tools, but you are free to bring your own tools if you prefer.

Directions: In Oakland on Highway 13, take the Redwood Road exit and go east (uphill). At the top of the hill you will cross Skyline Boulevard and pass the Skyline Ranch Equestrian Center on the right. Farther along you will pass Piedmont Stables on the left. Big Bear Staging Area will be on the right about one and one-half miles from Skyline Boulevard, followed by MacDonald Staging Area on the right and Redwood Gate on the left (seasonal parking fee). Turn left into the entrance and be sure to tell the park worker that you are volunteering in order to save the entry fee. Proceed straight on the park road and meet park staff and volunteers at Canyon Meadows picnic area.

Saturday, May 10, 9:30 am, Huckleberry Regional Park (main parking lot)

- Sign up to help on the two days that the nursery will be participating in the Bringing Back the Natives Garden Tour. (May 3 & 4) by e-mailing nativehere@ebcnps.org.

- The first Plant Fair 2014 Committee Meeting is Saturday, May 17th, 1 pm at the nursery. Be part of the committee on an ongoing basis or volunteer to contribute what you can.

- Help with advertising ideas, outreach and education ideas, restoration contract leads, speakers for summer talks, etc. (i.e. "non-nursery" activities).

- Open hours drop-in help – Fridays in the morning, Saturdays around midday, Tuesdays in the afternoon.

- What inspires you? Drop in or send us an email at nativehere@ebcnps.org with an idea.

We will meet in the parking lot, and then hike into the work-site. Volunteers who wish to work at the knoll near the park entrance may do so if they wish. Park staff will have poison ivy block, tools, gloves and water. If you have special tools requests or questions, please e-mail jmanley@ebparks.org or janetgawthrop47@gmail.com

Directions: From Highway 13, exit at Moraga/Thornhill if you are coming from Highway 24 or other points north. Stay on southbound Moraga as it parallels Highway 13 until it changes its name to Mountain. Turn left (uphill) onto Snake at the stoplight for Mountain and Snake. To go to Redwood Park, keep going straight as Snake changes its name to Shepherd Canyon Road and follow it until it ends at the intersection with Skyline. Turn right onto Skyline and follow it to the Skyline Gate entrance on the left side of the road. For Huckleberry and Sibley parks, follow all of the directions up to the left turn onto Snake. You will then make a hard left turn (more than 90 degrees) to stay on Snake. Follow Snake to its end at Skyline, and then turn left to follow Skyline to the parking lots. Huckleberry Park appears first on the right side, and Sibley Park is a scant half mile further north on Skyline.

Sunday, May 18, 9 am, Sibley Regional Park

This restoration crew will proceed with the choice of pulling vinca and forget-me-nots near the Skyline parking lot, or attacking the wall of broom nearer the Old Tunnel Road staging area (Orinda side of the park).

Directions: See Huckleberry Regional Park entry above.

Tuesday, May 6, 10 am, Habitat and Trails Stewardship.

Join the Garber Park Stewards as we continue chopping and pulling the usual suspect invasives (Algerian and Cape ivy, poison hemlock, thistle, and veldt grass (*Erharta erecta*), perform trail maintenance, and cage young native trees (oaks, maples, buckeyes) to give them a chance to grow and not become a tasty treat for the deer.

Wear long sleeves and pants, and shoes with good traction. We provide tools, gloves, water and snacks but we encourage volunteers to bring their own gloves and reusable water bottles. Meet at the Evergreen Lane Entrance at 10 am. Directions: From Ashby Avenue go .4 mile up Claremont Avenue to the Claremont Avenue Entrance. It's a short, but steep climb up Sylvan Path to the Evergreen Lane Entrance. Bus: via AC Transit #49. Exit at the stop at Ashby/Claremont Avenue intersection. Then follow the directions above to the Claremont Avenue Entrance. Note: You can still drive directly to the Evergreen Lane entrance, but it's a beautiful hike up Sylvan Path past our newest restoration site, Fern Glen, that we encourage you to take this route. For a map and internet directions www.garberparkstewards.org, or contact Shelagh garberparkstewards@gmail.com.

Saturday, May 17, Habitat and Trails Stewardship. We will continue removing invasive weeds and performing trail maintenance. For details see the Tuesday, May 6 description.

FIELD TRIPS

Sunday, May 4, Antioch Dunes

Join Heath Bartosh to tour this remnant of dune plant communities, deposited by the prevailing winds at this southwest edge of the delta. Two dune areas remain behind fences, where the US Fish & Wildlife Service manages the land to preserve several rare plant species, Antioch Dune evening-primrose and Contra Costa wallflower. In addition, USFWS also manages a recently described species of naked-stem buckwheat that is also a host plant of Lange's metalmark butterfly. Many other rare or unusual plant species still grow on one or both refuge sites, although many dune species grew well beyond the refuge boundary before sand mining and later residential development. Bring hand lenses, East Bay checklists, lunch and water to spend a warm day in prime time to locate unusual flora in bloom. Dress for heat, but be sure to cover your legs or wear gaiters to protect against ripgut brome seeds.

Directions: From either direction on Highway 4, exit at A Street/Lone Tree Way, and follow A Street north under 4 to Wilbur Road. Turn right at Wilbur Road and follow it to the traffic light at Fulton Shipyard Road. Turn left onto Fulton Shipyard and follow it to the locked gate at the Stamm Unit. It is important to be on time, as both refuge units are usually closed to the public; the fence gate will be locked behind us after entry. For more information, e-mail janetgawthrop47@gmail.com or susan_euing@yahoo.com.

Sunday, May 4, 2014, 11:00 am, south end of Bear Valley Road, Bear Valley Road and California 20, Williams, CA

Gregg heard the Bear Valley wildflower display is pretty good this year, so we decided to get on up there this Sunday. Hope you can come with us.

We will traverse Bear Valley from south to north, then go up Brim Road to Walker Ridge. We will travel south on the Ridge back to our starting point.

The loop is expected to take 5 hours (combo of driving & walking). We hope to be on road home around 4:30ish at the latest.

Please be advised that there are effectively no facilities.

Some plant ID resources for our trip

Photos of plants in the area

CNPS plant list <http://files.meetup.com/4793842/Bear-Valley-Walker-Ridge-CNPS-Plant-List.pdf>

Join us looking at wildflowers in Bear Valley.

Bear Valley, about 2 hours north of the Bay Area, [is known](#) for its [display of wildflowers](#).

We'll meet where Bear Valley Road starts, then travel north on Bear Valley Road a good 10-12 miles by **rough, rocky dirt road** to the wildflower area.

We'll hope for little rain and rock spray on the road so that

the road is passable, but we should be aware that our hopes might be dashed.

Safety: Outdoor activities are inherently risky. On hiking trips, grave injury and death are not out of the realm of possibility. By coming on this trip, you agree to be 100% responsible for your own health, safety and well being as well as damage of any kind to equipment brought by attendee. If you bring a guest(s), that guest(s) will be 100% responsible for his/her own health, safety and well being, as well as damage of any kind to equipment brought by attendee.

Dogs: Our apologies, but please ask Fido to sit this one out

Sunday, May 11th, Mount Diablo State Park, North Peak trail from Devil's Elbow to North peak burn area. Meet at the Devil's Elbow parking lot at 10 am. This trip will be most of the day, so bring lunch and water. We should arrive back at the parking lot around 3:30 pm.

I think the hike will be about 4 miles, and probably about 1000 feet down, and 1000 feet back up to the parking area. The trip leader is Gregg Weber.

Directions: Take 680 to the Diablo Road exit, and go east on Diablo Road At Green Valley Road, only one lane goes straight ahead. After Green Valley Road, go on and do not turn at the Diablo Country Club sign. In about a mile, turn left at the Mount Diablo State Park sign. Continue to the end of Mount Diablo Scenic Boulevard, which becomes South Gate Road as it enters the park. Pay the \$10 gate fee at the entrance station (or have your state parks pass visible). Continue to Junction Ranger Station, and turn right. About 3/4 mile past Juniper Camp's large parking area is a small parking area at Devil's Elbow, where we will meet at 10 am.

Allow about an extra 30 minutes driving time from the base of Mount Diablo, up to Devil's elbow.

Saturday, May 17, 10:15 am, Hillside Natural Area/Hillside Festival

Join friends of the Hillside Natural Area in El Cerrito to view the plants in this remnant oak woodland/savanna area. I am leading this trip in conjunction with the Hillside Festival, which aims to raise awareness of this woodland, both to expand and protect. We will focus on plants but we can also talk conservation of the area in general, not only the vegetation.

Meet us at the Schmidt Lane trailhead, also the festival location and near one of the most complete recycling centers in the Bay Area. From I-80, you can exit at either Central Ave. and go north on San Pablo Ave. to Schmidt, or exit at Potrero and go south on San Pablo to Schmidt. If you don't mind a short walk on city streets, you can take BART to El Cerrito Plaza, transfer to AC Transit # 72 northbound. Get off the # 72 bus at San Pablo and Schmidt and walk east (uphill) to the Schmidt Lane entrance. We will repeat the walk at 1:30 pm

for the benefit of Saturday sleepers. The trip leader will be Janet Gawthrop, janetgawthrop47@gmail.com.

Sunday, May 18, Blue Oak and Spengler Trails, Briones Park
Meet at the parking lot at the end of Blue Oak Trail at 10 am.

The staging area is at Gloria Terrace / Reliez valley Road. 1942 Reliez Valley Rd, Lafayette

Native plant expert Gregg Weber will lead on this trail that includes views of some unusual plants, such as wax myrtle, chaparral pea (think pink), Mount Diablo fairy lantern and pygmy *Leptosiphon* all in bloom.

We will see a lot of diversity in grasslands, oak woods of

several species, chamise/black sage chaparral with pipevine swallowtail caterpillars.

The Blue Oak loop has a 700 foot elevation change and quite a few ups and downs. The round trip is about 5 miles.

Directions: Take Highway 24 to Lafayette, and exit at Pleasant Hill Road north. Go about one mile north on Pleasant Hill Road, and turn left onto Reliez Valley Road. Stay on Reliez Valley Road for about 3.5 miles. The parking lot is on the left, after Withers Avenue. Do not go into the park entrance farther north on Reliez Valley Road or you will miss the field trip.

CONSERVATION ANALYST REPORT



What ORV traffic does to a landscape.

Update on Dublin Urban Limit Line Initiative

Dublin residents are making their voices heard. It is clear that they are fed up with development and traffic and that they have a strong interest in protecting open space land. On Wednesday, April 16th, supporters of the "Dublin Open Space Initiative 2014" turned in petitions with over 3650 signatures to the Dublin City Clerk's Office. That's 160% of the 2281 valid signatures needed to qualify the initiative for the ballot! It is important to note that this signature effort was accomplished in only 8 weeks even though legally the petition had 26 weeks to qualify. We are taking that as a strong sign of general support for open space protection in Dublin.

The initiative is being led by Dublin residents Morgan King and David Bewley, who worked with community groups

including the East Bay Chapter of the California Native Plant Society (EBCNPS) as well as Save Mt. Diablo, The Sierra Club, Greenbelt Alliance, Friends of the Vineyards, Tri Valley Conservancy, and the Alameda Creek Alliance to draft the initiative. The initiative came about as a response to the continued influx of development proposals throughout Dublin, especially Pacific Union's proposal for 2,000 residential units in rural Doolan Canyon (Part of EBCNPS's East Dublin and Tassajara Biological Priority Protection Area (BPPA)). The development proposals continue to encroach into open space areas in spite of the fact that thousands of houses have already been approved in East Dublin but not yet built.

The measure will give Dublin voters the final say on any further expansion of Dublin eastward into Doolan Canyon

or farther westward into the hills. The initiative will create an urban limit line at the current eastern edge of the City and would make permanent an existing west-side urban limit line.

Important: Developers – almost certainly Pacific Union – have started circulating a competing measure deceptively titled “Let Dublin Decide” which would do just the opposite (it would force the city to expand east, allowing Pacific Union’s 2000-unit development project). It would take urban growth boundary decisions out of the hands of voters, leaving control in the hands of the city council.

We are no longer collecting signatures. If you see signature collectors out there claiming to be trying to qualify an open space initiative they are paid signature collectors trying to qualify the developer’s initiative, the so-called “Let Dublin Decide” initiative.

Many thanks to all of you who donated your time and volunteered to collect signatures. We couldn’t have done it without you.

Stay tuned in the coming weeks for updates regarding the adoption process for this initiative.

Richmond Field Station

Our work to protect the remnant coastal prairie grassland at the Richmond Field Station from destruction during the build-out of the proposed UC Berkeley/Lawrence Berkeley Laboratory second campus (Richmond Bay Campus) is continuing as we wait for the Final EIR for the project’s Long Range Development Plan to be released.

Last month I spoke in support of a City of Richmond resolution which would direct planning staff to route traffic around the Richmond Field Station rather than constructing a throughway across the middle of the coastal prairie as shown in earlier planning documents for the Richmond Bay Campus and the South Richmond Area Plan. The Planning Commission has sent this resolution the City Council who will consider it at their upcoming meeting in May.

In advance of the release of the Richmond Bay Campus FEIR, we are working to set up further meetings with representatives from UC Berkeley and Lawrence Berkeley Lab to make sure that the importance of the prairie as a critical resource deserving of protection in their planning documents is impressed upon them.

Documents related to the protection of the coastal prairie grassland in the Richmond Field Station:

<http://tinyurl.com/kpj8w9h>

<http://ebcnps.files.wordpress.com/2014/01/final-ebcnps-letter-for-rbc-deir.pdf>

http://ebcnps.files.wordpress.com/2013/10/ebcnps-vision-statement-for-richmond-bay-campus_2013.pdf

<http://ebcnps.files.wordpress.com/2014/01/ebcnps-raw-comments-final.pdf>

Carnegie-Tesla (Corral Hollow BPPA)

We recently received word that the DEIR for the Carnegie State Vehicle Recreation Area General Plan Update (which includes consideration of opening the 3,400 acre Tesla Park area to off road vehicles) has been delayed until fall of 2014. It had originally been scheduled to be released this spring. We are taking the delay as a sign that the Off Highway Motor Vehicle Recreation Division of State Parks is having trouble addressing the significant environmental impacts of opening the Tesla Park area for off-highway vehicle (OHV) recreation.

We will be using this extra time to continue to build support for protecting this valuable area (part of our Corral Hollow BPPA) and to prepare our technical comments for the DEIR.

EBCNPS Submits Comments on Dutch Slough Tidal Marsh Restoration SEIR

On March 7th, EBCNPS submitted comments on the Dutch Slough Tidal Marsh Restoration Draft Supplement EIR. The SEIR was created to address the potential environmental impacts of proposed changes to the tidal wetlands restoration project in the Dutch Slough area at the mouth of Marsh Creek in Eastern Contra Costa County. EBCNPS’s letter raises concerns about the removal in this most recent document of plans to restore areas of upland and interior dune habitat as part of this project. The project area contains sandy soils and remnant Stabilized Interior Dune Habitat that is exceedingly rare today and which should be protected and managed for native habitat values.

EBCNPS Comments on Dutch Slough Tidal Marsh Restoration SEIR 03_07_14: <http://ebcnps.wordpress.com/2014/03/11/>

POINT ISABEL RESTORATION

Pt. Isabel Restoration - April 5, 2014

We were pleased to have the Project Peace East Bay team join our work party at Point Isabel on April 5th. Project Peace participants included young Liam and even younger Maggie. Skylar, the speckled canine, kept a careful eye on the group's activities. We divided the volunteers into small groups and assigned one of our regular volunteers as crew chief to each group before sending them off along the trail to tackle the weeds. Margot, who has taken on the stewardship of the entryway to the Point Isabel restoration site (corner of Central Avenue and Rydin Road), worked with her crew clearing weeds and removing trash from a ditch that she plans to plant this coming Fall. The area is City of Richmond property and Margot is now its official steward under the City's Adopt-a-Spot program.

Other crews worked along the trail removing oat grass and radish from around the sagebrush (*Artemisia californica*) toyon

(*Heteromeles arbutifolia*), purple needle grass (*Stipa pulchra*), lacy phacelia (*Phacelia tanacetifolia*) and more. As weeds were removed small volunteer lizard tail (*Eriophyllum staechadifolium*) and *Artemisia* starts were discovered. Project Peace and our core group did a fantastic job rescuing our native plants and grasses and removing the weeds before they could go to seed. At a mini-work party in mid-April, each large stand of lacy phacelia was covered with small bumblebees harvesting nectar and pollen.

Many thanks to the EBRPD crew for their support. Thanks also go to Greg Hardesty of the City of Richmond for helping us adopt the spot and for organizing the cleanup of a large trash pile at the southern end of the site.

Jane and Tom Kelly



Project Peace and Point Isabel Crew Chiefs



“The Oakland Zoo is pursuing its plan to expand into Knowland Park. The project would greatly damage rare maritime chaparral, native grassland, and habitat for local wildlife, including the threatened Alameda whipsnake.” See Delia Taylor’s article on page 3 and Laura Baker’s on page 2. Photo by Karen Smith

SUDDEN OAK DEATH BIOBLITZ

Saturday, Sunday, May 10-11, East Bay Sudden Oak Death Bioblitz

Your help is needed to track Sudden Oak Death, the pathogen that is decimating our beautiful Coast Live Oaks. Well-timed action can slow spread and save specific trees, as well as the many birds and other wild creatures that depend on oaks.

On Saturday, May 10, attend a 1-hr training at 10 am the Orinda Public Library (sign up at wllhh@ymail.com) or at 1 PM on the UC Berkeley campus (sign up at <http://www.eventzilla.net/web/event?eventid=2139027398>)

On your own schedule Saturday or Sunday, look for infected bay-tree leaves. Return samples by Monday morning. You can survey in your own back yard, or take a leisurely walk or drive or a vigorous hike. If you don’t have a site or route in mind we will recommend some.

For times of trainings in other parts of the Bay Area, go to <http://nature.berkeley.edu/garbelotto/english/sodblitzparticipate.php>. For general information on sudden oak death, go to www.suddenoakdeath.org.

The annual East Bay survey is organized by UC Berkeley’s Dr. Matteo Garbelotto and sponsored by groups including Garber Park Stewards (garberparkstewards@gmail.com), Friends of Five Creeks (f5creeks@aol.com), and Friends of Sausal Creek (coordinator@sausalcreek.org). Contact any of them for more information.

Susan Schwartz

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EBCNPS Sponsored Activities

East Bay Chapter News list Emailed announcements of upcoming EBCNPS events

List manager--Martha Booz
mlbooz@calnatives.com

Native Here Nursery

510-549-0211
Manager—Theo Fitanides
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Native Here inventory specialist
Adam Huggins

Plant Fair

vacant

Restoration Huckleberry Regional Preserve

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janetgawthrop47@gmail.com

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Walnut Creek

Lesley Hunt, leader
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ldhunt@astound.net

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