



May 2015

The Bay Leaf

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

www.ebcnps.org

www.groups.google.com/group/ebcnps

MEMBERS' MEETING

A Presentation by Bart O'Brien, Director of the Regional
Parks Botanic Garden

Wednesday, May 27, 7:30 pm

Location: Auditorium, Orinda Public Library (directions
below)

Our speaker this month, Bart O'Brien (shown below giving a tour, photo by Bob Case), is one of the rock stars of the native plant world. Bart returned from southern California to his central/northern California roots in 2013, leaving a 23-year career at Rancho Santa Ana Botanic Garden to become the fourth director of the Regional Parks Botanic Garden in Tilden Park. There was great excitement when he was chosen as the garden's new director, and since his arrival he has been busy creating more excitement. Among his many accomplishments

so far he has expanded the garden's collection to include plants from Baja California, facilitated the installation of three beautiful new rock gardens in the southern California section of the garden, and initiated a successful fall plant sale (in addition to the garden's traditional spring sale). He also participated in an expedition of Baja plant experts to the islands of that area and completed checklists of the flora and the rare, endangered, and endemic plants of northwestern Baja. Bart is known for his expertise in both native plant botany and horticulture, and he is in demand as a speaker on a wide range of topics. Tonight's topic will be a surprise, but everyone who knows Bart knows it will be fascinating. Don't miss it!

Bart has loved plants from before he was old enough to read or write their names. After earning an undergraduate degree



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MEMBERS MEETING: BART O'BRIEN (CONT.)

in environmental planning and management from UC Davis and a master's degree in landscape architecture from Harvard. Bart worked in landscape design in Santa Clara County before becoming manager of Yerba Buena Nursery, Gerda Isenberg's pioneering native plant nursery in Woodside. In 1990 he was hired as Director of Horticulture and Curator of the Living Collection at Rancho Santa Ana Botanic Garden in Claremont, east of Los Angeles. He later became a Senior Staff Research Associate at Rancho and finally Director of Special Projects there. Since November 2013 he has been director of the Regional Parks Botanic Garden. He is co-author of three popular books on native plant gardening and the recipient of many awards.

East Bay CNPS membership meetings are free of charge and open to everyone. This month's meeting takes place in the Auditorium of the Orinda Public Library at 24 Orinda Way (in Orinda Village). The Auditorium is on the second floor of the building, accessible by stairs or an elevator. The room opens at 7 pm; the meeting begins at 7:30 pm. Email sr0433@yahoo.com or call 510-496-6016 if you have questions.

Directions to Orinda Public Library at 24 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 southeast side of the two-story building on your right. There is additional free parking beneath the building as well as on the street.

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 Library.

Summer Recess

East Bay CNPS programs will take a break for our summer recess during the months of June through August. Watch the chapter newsletter and website for announcements of our September meeting.

CONSERVATION ANALYST REPORT

Niles Canyon

On April 3, 2015 East Bay Chapter of the California Native Plant Society (EBCNPS) submitted comments to Caltrans regarding the draft environmental impact report (DEIR) for the Alameda Creek Bridge Replacement Project. Our letter expresses concern that Caltrans has designed this project as an overbuilt highway-widening project with little regard for the sensitive natural resources of Niles Canyon that would be permanently damaged as a result. The DEIR examines several project scenarios, all of which would result in the removal of between 284 and 414 native trees in the riparian area of the canyon.

EBCNPS's letter also noted that Caltrans is attempting to segment the Niles Canyon Corridor Project into several different projects that will all be subjected to independent environmental reviews. The effects of this entire project, the Niles Canyon Safety Improvements Project, Niles Canyon Short Term Improvements Project, and Arroyo de la Laguna Bridge Project must be properly considered as part of a total environmental review to ensure that cumulative impacts are properly quantified and understood.

EBCNPS's letter can be found on the conservation blog: <http://ebcnps.wordpress.com>

In 2011, the Alameda Creek Alliance had to sue Caltrans to halt its original project in the canyon due to inadequate environmental review. Unfortunately, Caltrans had already cut down nearly 100 native trees along the creek by the time

the courts stopped the project. Caltrans has yet to mitigate that damage

Point Molate

Now that the casino developer's lawsuit against the City of Richmond is approaching resolution the future of Point Molate is again being discussed by the City and its Point Molate Community Advisory Committee. On April 20th I gave a presentation to the Advisory Committee regarding the unique botanical resources at Pt. Molate and recommended areas for future research in the area. I hope that a better understanding of the existing environment at the site will empower decision makers with a strong conservation ethic when identifying areas for development and areas for conservation.

The Advisory Committee was very receptive to my information and asked many good questions. I am looking forward to continuing this dialogue as the planning process for Point Molate continues.

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 at <http://ebcnps.wordpress.com/>.

Mack Casterman, East Bay Chapter Conservation Analyst

FIELD TRIPS

Saturday, May 2, 2015, 9:45 am to 3:45 pm, Briones, Blue Oak and Spengler Trails

Native plant expert Gregg Weber will lead on this trail that includes views of some unusual plants, such as wax myrtle and chapparal pea (think pink), and Mount Diablo fairy lantern and pygmy leptosiphon all in bloom. We will see a lot of diversity in grasslands, oak woods of several species, chemise/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.

Dogs: Our apologies, but please don't bring a dog along.

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. If you bring a guest(s), that guest(s) will be 100% responsible for his/her own health, safety and well-being.

Sunday, May 17, 10 am, Hillside Natural Area in El Cerrito Form up next to the Schmidt Lane trailhead, by the El Cerrito Recycling Area. We will traverse the hillside uphill, with a slight detour to look for Oakland star tulip.

Join friends of the Hillside Natural Area in El Cerrito to view the plants in this remnant oak woodland/savanna area. Janet Gawthrop will lead this trip in conjunction with the Hillside Festival, which aims to raise awareness of this woodland, with the goal of expanding and protecting it. We will focus on

plants but we can also talk conservation of the area in general. 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 Avenue and go north on San Pablo Avenue 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.

Click on the following link for a map with the Hillside Natural Area outlined: <http://tinyurl.com/q3feyyz> .

Sunday, May 17, 2:30 pm, David Margolies will lead a field trip to Los Trancos Open Space Preserve. Los Trancos contains coralroot orchids and many other flowering plants native to the Mid-Peninsula Open Space Preserve system. After taking the Los Trancos trail for about one mile, participants may also visit some other parks in the area.

How to get there: Take 280 south to its junction with 84/Woodside Road. Take Woodside Road west (up the hill) through Woodside to Skyline Boulevard. Turn left (south) on Skyline and go to Page Mill Road. Turn left (east) on Page Mill, and the park is about a ½ mile further on the left, before a steep downhill area. Notice the columbines on the right where the side of the road is wooded. You can also take 280 to Page Mill Road and come up to the park via Page Mill. If you reach Skyline Boulevard, you have gone about one ½ mile too far.



White fairy lanterns (*Calochortus albus*), left, and gum plant (*Grindelia camporum*), right. These plants are in bloom now and are often seen at Los Trancos Preserve, where David Margolies is leading a field trip on Sunday, May 17. The photos are by Janet Bray from the East Bay Native Plants CD, for sale at Native Here Nursery.

POINT ISABEL RESTORATION

You've probably heard us say this a million times before, but we have to say it again: If you ever want to see an expression of pure joy then you want to come down to Pt. Isabel and observe our large, native, yellow faced bumble bees (*Bombus vosnesenskii*) make contact with the flowers of California poppy (*Eschscholzia californica*) or lacy phacelia (*Phacelia tanacetifolia*). And it's very easy to observe at Pt. Isabel these

showed up, smiling (and looking extremely fit!), they got right to work and removed every piece of it. It was a fantastic accomplishment and our stewards and regular crew were delighted, and very relieved, when they saw what this wonderful group of volunteers had accomplished.

We are told that at one time there were many buckeye trees



days as the poppies and lacy phacelia are in all their glory and covered with bumblebees.

We are delighted to see how the eight Arroyo willows (*Salix lasiolepis*) and the cottonwood (*Populus fremontii*) have leafed out and already settled in to their new habitat close to the marsh. We were able to purchase these trees thanks to a generous donation from the CEO of Carpet Contractors, Inc., who is very interested in seeing the Bay Trail at Pt. Isabel become a real gateway at the southern entrance to the park.

On March 28 we welcomed to Pt. Isabel an amazing crew of CorePower Yoga teachers in training. We were facing a massive invasion of tall, flowering radish on one of our newest areas and were concerned about how we could remove it before it all went to seed. Then, the CorePower Yoga crew

(*Aesculus californica*) at Pt. Isabel and that they were probably cut down to make room for the railroad spur – there are still some rail tracks visible along the site. There are two large buckeyes on either side of the Hoffman Channel and we collect their seeds before they (and we) tumble into the marsh. We have quite a number of buckeye saplings growing along the project site now and Tom planted another five saplings in March. So perhaps they were all cut down but now they are all being put back.

Many thanks to the East Bay Regional Park District for their support, and especially to our ranger Bruce Adams without whom we could not hold such productive work parties.

Jane and Tom Kelly

MORE POINT ISABEL RESTORATION PHOTOS



Photos by Jane Kelly. On previous page, yellow faced bumble bees (*Bombus vosnesenskii*) make contact with the flowers of California poppy (*Eschscholzia californica*). Top left, a buckeye (*Aesculus californica*) sapling being planted; top right an Arroyo willow (*Salix lasiolepis*) sapling; below, the CorePower Yoga crew.

NATIVE HERE NURSERY

Thank you for a wonderful Spring Sale!

Our first annual pilot Spring Sale went off without a hitch and gave the nursery a nice \$3500 boost at the end of the fiscal year. We had several wonderful volunteers who assisted customers in finding appropriate plants, rang up sales, and even got some weeding and watering done. The planning and staffing model worked well for this event, which is a nice companion to our annual October Plant Fair which, due to the larger turnout, requires much more input.

We continue to have a great selection of plants in stock. Please look for an updated inventory on our website, www.nativeherenursery.org. Although late spring is a time of increased planting stress and water usage per planting, it is a perfect time to tour gardens and plan your fall plantings. If you haven't already signed up for the May 3rd Bringing Back the Natives Garden Tour please visit www.bringingbackthenatives.net to register. Native Here will be open from 10 to 5 on May 2nd and 3rd, with "How to Select Native Plants for Your Garden" talks at 11am and 3pm on Saturday, May 2nd, and again at 1pm on Sunday, May 3rd.

Native Here's Sense of Place Summer Talk Series

Select Saturdays from June through early September in the amphitheater, starting at 10:30 am.

We had a very successful open-air talk series last summer. This year's series will focus on water (with the addition of another talk on manzanitas because they are so fun) and we will have talks from an irrigation efficiency expert, non-irrigating native plant gardeners, the Bay Friendly Garden Coalition, and poets! Please stay tuned for the official announcement and lineup.

I know that many of you experienced the drought regulations of 1977 and have continued your water-use reductions since then. But a couple more people have moved to, or become renters in, California in the 38 year interim. We have a great deal more work to do to achieve moderately sustainable gardening en masse.

May Gardening Tip

Reduce the evaporative surface area of your more thirsty plants to conserve a little water. Summer is a good opportunity to selectively prune back thirstier plants, especially if they have already set seed due to the early spring. Please consider leaving the clippings as additional mulch and possible food for your loyal garden tenants and day users. Do not fertilize as this encourages tender new growth, which needs more water to avoid wilting.



Twinberry honeysuckle (*Lonicera involucrata*), top left; soap plant (*Chlorogalum pomeridianum*), top right; sticky monkey flower (*Diplacus [Mimulus] aurantiacus*), bottom left. All photos by Janet Bray from the CD East Bay Native Plants, for sale at Native Here Nursery.

RESTORATION PROJECTS

Saturday, May 2 and Saturday, May 16, the Pt. Isabel work sessions start at 9:30 am at Rydin Road.

Point Isabel, on the Bay Trail next to the dog park. Just off I-580 (take Central to the bottom of the I-580 overpass). At the stop sign (Rydin Road) turn right and come down to the end of the street. If you pass Costco on your right, you've gone too far. Contact info: Tom Kelly (510) 704-8628 (work), (510) 684-6484 (cell) or tkelly@kyotousa.org.

Saturday, May 9, 9:30 am, Huckleberry Park, starting from the parking lot, 6934 Skyline Boulevard, Oakland

Join Janet Gawthrop and other volunteers restoring Huckleberry Park in the Oakland hills. Please note that you may be exposed to poison oak during this event.

Sunday, May 17, 9 am, Sibley Park, starting from the Skyline entrance

Restoration activities of other organizations

Saturday, May 2, 9 am, Redwood Park French broom rip

Our Saturday, May 2nd broom pull meeting spot will be at the Redwood Bowl on Skyline Boulevard, next to the Chabot Space and Science Center. We will meet at 9:00 am and hike to Baccharis and Westridge where we will pull until 1:00 pm. As always, delicious snacks will be served. There is no registration required. Due to lack of staffing, our Sunday, May 10th pull will be cancelled. Hope to see you there!

Monica (Redwood Ranger) (510) 544-3136.

redwood@ebparks.org | www.ebparks.org

Tuesday, May 6 and Saturday, May 16, 10 am - noon, May habitat restoration workdays in Garber Park

Join us as we attack the fire prone invasive weeds in selected spots in Garber. Our work has been so successful over the past five years that we are close to eradicating French Broom! But, we do keep finding a few large clumps, and many, many seedlings. The seedlings are easy to spot and easy and fun to pull. We have also made tremendous strides in ridding the park of Himalayan blackberry, Cape and Algerian ivy, poison hemlock and thistle. Our goal is total eradication of these weeds, and your help is needed! By weeding out the invasives we give the natives their best chance to survive and provide a defensible space against wildfires for the many houses adjacent to the park.

Everyone welcome. We provide drinks, snacks, tools, and gloves. Wear long sleeves and pants and shoes with good tread. For directions (public transportation and car), maps, and further information go to the menu on our home page, or contact Shelagh garberparkstewards@gmail.com.

For pictures of Earth Day, beautiful spring scenes along the Garber Trails, and a wonderful 3-minute video of the event taken by Marilyn Goldhaber of the Claremont Canyon Conservancy visit our website: www.garberparkstewards.org.

The US Fish & Wildlife Service and adult volunteers will conduct surveys for Antioch Dunes evening primrose on Wednesday, May 20 and Thursday, May 21 from 8:30 am-4:00 pm. You can sign up for one or both days by contacting Susan Euing at susan_euing@yahoo.com or call (510) 521-9717. The Wednesday survey will be at the Stamm Unit (501 Fulton Shipyard Road in Antioch 94509 for mapping), and the Thursday survey will be at the Sardis Unit (1551 Wilbur Avenue in Antioch).

Join the City of Fremont's Environmental Services at Sabercat Historical Park to weed, create plant basins and mulch mats around native plants, and to install browse protection cages to protect certain native plants while they are still young. We'll also be removing some aggressive exotic plants, such as Himalayan blackberry, poison hemlock, Italian arum, various ivy species, and several different exotic thistles and grasses.

Here are our upcoming work parties:

May 2, 2015 (1st Saturday), 10 am-1 pm, Sabercat Creek Site 2 (accessible from the Via Orinda trailhead)

May 17, 2015 (3rd Sunday), noon-4 pm, starting at Sabercat Creek Site 3 to plant snowberries; possibly moving east to site 4 if we finish at site 3 (accessible from Via Orinda or Quema Drive trailheads)

May 24, 2015 (4th Sunday), noon-4 pm, Sabercat Creek Site 4, in the areas with less poison oak (Paseo Padre Parkway underpass area; accessible from the Quema Drive trailhead)

May 27, 2015 (Wednesday), 9 am-1 pm, Sabercat Creek Site 4 (Paseo Padre Parkway underpass area; accessible from the Quema Drive trailhead)

May 28, 2015 (Thursday), 1 pm-5 pm, Sabercat Creek, probably site 5, starting at the Becado Place cul-de-sac (unless there is a lot more to do at site 4)

June 6, 2015 (1st Saturday), 10 am-1 pm, Sabercat Creek site TBA

June 14, 2015 (2nd Sunday), noon-4 pm, Sabercat Creek site TBA

June 28, 2015 (4th Sunday), Creek Clean-up in Fremont, Creek TBA

Contact info: sabrina.cityoffremont@gmail.com, 734-649-3795 (cell)

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EBCNPS Sponsored Activities

East Bay Chapter News list Emailed announcements of upcoming EBCNPS events

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mlbooz@calnatives.com

Native Here Nursery

510-549-0211
Manager—Theo Fitantes
nativehere@ebcnps.org

Native Here inventory specialist
Adam Huggins

Plant Fair

vacant

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janetgawthrop47@gmail.com

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John Muir NHS (Martinez)

Elaine Jackson, leader
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Walnut Creek

Lesley Hunt, leader
925-937-6791
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