



MAY 2016

The Bay Leaf

CALIFORNIA NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY + EAST BAY CHAPTER
ALAMEDA & CONTRA COSTA COUNTIES

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MEMBERS' MEETING

Wednesday, May 25, 7:30 pm

The Edge of the Wild (film screening)

Speaker: Gail Mallimson

Location: Garden Room, Orinda Public Library (directions below)

San Bruno Mountain is an island of biodiversity surrounded by a rising sea of development. Eminent biologist E.O. Wilson identified it as one of 18 global biodiversity hotspots under threat and deserving immediate attention. Local citizens have long recognized San Bruno Mountain's importance, and for over 30 years have fought luxury housing and office park developments to preserve the mountain's habitat and native host plants for the endangered mission blue, callippe silverspot, and San Bruno elfin butterflies. This epic battle between private property rights and species survival resulted in a major shift in national environmental policy—one that allows private landowners to kill endangered species under a 1982 amendment to the Endangered Species Act. But the protectors of San Bruno Mountain have not rested, and their efforts to conserve it continue.

The beautiful documentary film "The Edge of the Wild" tells the story of this struggle both past and present. At our May meeting, we'll watch the 60-minute film and then learn from filmmaker Gail Mallimson about its creation and about the inspiring efforts to protect San Bruno Mountain and restore



habitat for the native species it supports. Says Mallimson, "It's not just about making change on a political level, but about making change in the hearts and minds of ordinary citizens, and reconstructing our role as stewards of wild lands." The film trailer is available for viewing at <https://youtu.be/19AJezPBl0>.

East Bay CNPS membership meetings are free of charge and open to everyone. This month's meeting takes place in the Garden Room of the Orinda Public Library at 24 Orinda Way (in Orinda Village). The Garden Room is on the second floor of the building, accessible by stairs or an elevator. The Garden Room opens at 7 pm; the meeting begins at 7:30 pm. Email programs@ebcnps.org 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.

Members' meetings will be on summer recess from June through August. Watch the online *Bay Leaf* newsletter for an announcement of our September 28 meeting.

A mission blue butterfly on a lupine. Photo by Patrick Kobernus of the USFWS.

CONSERVATION ANALYST REPORT

A 430-acre parcel called the **Richmond Hills Scenic Area**, north of Wildcat Canyon and off of San Pablo Dam Road, will soon feature in an initiative from the Friends of the Richmond Hills political action committee. They request amending the Richmond General Plan in favor of conserving the land, including restrictions such as minimum 20-acre parcel size, zoning for agricultural preserve and open space areas, and consideration for special status plant and animal species. Part of the parcel overlaps with our Sobrante Ridge Botanical Priority Protection Area (BPPA), so even though surveys are a bit out of date from several past development proposals in the early 2000s, we are confident that this habitat supports maritime chaparral at the minimum. Our board voted this month to support the initiative, and we will be shown as a supporter on literature and signature petition booths within the next three months.

On April 22 the quarterly Environmental Round Table, consisting of Parks District staff and local environmental organization representatives, convened at the Parks District headquarters. We heard updates on the progress of publishing the Pallid Manzanita Management Plan and discussed the Fuels Management Plan, which would greatly affect areas of **Huckleberry Botanic Regional Preserve**. Many surveys of local *Phytophthora* occurrences will begin soon.

The Friends of Tesla Park (FOTP) picnic took place on April 17 on Connolly Ranch near Tesla and Carnegie. It was a good opportunity for networkin and for Tesla viewing from a distance. We hiked Bald Mountain, heard a brief history lesson on the Irish sheep herders in the area, ate, and contemplated the future of Tesla. FOTP expects future litigation upon approval of the Environmental Report (EIR). We expect that the Off-highway Vehicle (OHV) Commission will release the final EIR sometime this summer.

There were two field trips exploring our eastern Botanical Priority Protection Areas (BPPAs). The area visited included the Byron Airport mitigation land alkali scalds areas, the Springtown alkali scalds, and the Sand Creek Focus Area in Antioch. Planned trips include a driving tour of several spots in eastern Contra Costa County. Allied organizations such as Save Mount Diablo have presented alternative proposals for development of the Sand Creek Focus Area that include generous open space allocations. I am writing a letter to the planning commission and will attend their next meeting.

Joy in the universe, and keen curiosity about it all - that has been my religion.

John Burroughs

A man can get discouraged many times but he is not a failure until he begins to blame somebody else and stops trying.

John Burroughs

On April 11, the East Bay Environmental NGOs monthly meetings reconvened at Save Mount Diablo (SMD). I met with SMD, Greenbelt Alliance, and the Brentwood Agricultural Land Trust to discuss current issues including the Contra Costa Transportation Authority (CCTA) proposal, the Concord Naval Weapons Station, Richmond Hills, urban limit lines Tassajara/Doolan Canyon, and the Dublin initiative. This group is proving to be helpful for resourcing assistance, evaluating ideas, and as a sounding board on local issues. They have already increased my education and awareness of topics EBCNPS may get involved in.

I met with the our Chapter president and vegetation chairs, to review understanding of enforcement of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) with regards to plant communities and rare plants, as well as the roles of current databases (the Vegetation Cassification and Mapping Program (VegCAMP), the California Natural Diversity Database (CNDDDB) and codes (*Manual of California Vegetation*).

On April 5 the state CNPS office held their monthly conservation conference call. Topics discussed included Calfire vegetation treatment program, forestry related legislative bills AB2162 and AB1958 (both addressing oak woodlands), and CNPS herbicide policy.

Concord Naval Weapons Station: our organization has been paying attention to the progress of this open space preservation and development in Concord. The land is still federally owned as these plans are being developed. The City Council chose Lennar this month as developer for phase one of housing construction. The East Bay Regional Park District (EBRPD) plans incorporate ample open space for public use. Our chapter will continue monitoring the planned landscape uses. None of these plans can be finalized until the property is transferred from federal ownership to the City of Concord and the East Bay Regional Parks District. This is common practice to minimize liability, and it is helpful to keep it in mind for all federally owned land, like the former military bases Alameda Point and Hunter's Point. We expect the transfer and initial development to advance no sooner than 2017. Our chapter looks forward to continuing collaboration with the Park District and with other local environmental organizations in monitoring these open space plans.

Karen Whitestone
Conservation Analyst

Nature teaches more than she preaches. There are no sermons in stones. It is easier to get a spark out of a stone than a moral.

John Burroughs

I still find each day too short for all the thoughts I want to think, all the walks I want to take, all the books I want to read, and all the friends I want to see.

John Burroughs

FIELD TRIPS

Sunday, May 15, 9:45 am, Blue Oak/Spengler Trails in Briones Regional Park

Meet Gregg Weber at the Gloria Terrace staging area so that we can start this half-day hike promptly and take advantage of cooler morning temperatures. Be sure to bring water and some protection from the sun. For a full set of directions and/or to request to carpool from Orinda BART go to www.Meetup.com/ebcnps/, RSVP and post any questions not answered in the trip description.

Sunday, May 15, 10 am, Hillside Natural Area in El Cerrito (end of Schmidt, near the recycling center)

This plant walk will be one of several field trips starting at 10 am, so it may be easier to find me a few minutes before the walk starts. This field trip is only one of a series of daylong activities at the third Hillside Open Space Festival. For more information on the rest of the festival go to www.ectrailtrekkers.org. If you go to www.meetup.com/ebcnps/ you can find the vascular plant list compiled in 2014 and more complete driving and mass transit directions. If you want to monitor one of several unusual plants for the chapter find the *Unusual*

Plants Database on the home page of our website, ebcnps.org. I am eager to find Oakland star tulip, though it's probably too late to find it in bloom. At last check the giant vetch population (*Vicia gigantea*) looked pretty stable and will likely still be flowering on the field trip.

Saturday, May 28, 9:45 am, Falls Trail in Mt Diablo State Park

This year's ascent will provide not just great views of unusual plants in flower, but perhaps also a look at the waterfall revived by this year's late rains. While I admire the persistence of the May trickle in the face of the prolonged drought it might be a fun change to get sprayed by the waterfall. If you want to carpool from Orinda BART go to www.Meetup.com/ebcnps/ and be sure to remember that the carpool leaves for the trailhead at 9:15 am. (Driving directions to the trailhead are also on the trip announcement.)

Janet Gawthrop

RESTORATION

Saturday, May 7, 9 am until 1 pm, and

Sunday, May 8, 9:30 am until 1:30 pm

Join Redwood Regional Park staff to help pull out French broom (*Genista monspessulana*) while the remaining soil moisture minimizes your work. Both weeding crews will start from the Canyon Meadows picnic area, where you can pick up water, loaner tools and gloves as needed. Be sure to email redwood@ebparks.org if you need loaner gloves or tools--it helps rangers set up for the crew.

To get to Canyon Meadows, you need to go through the main entrance on Redwood Road. If the entry kiosk is open, tell the gatekeeper that you are volunteering with the French broom crew. You need to drive almost all the way to the end of the entry road to reach the Canyon Meadows sign.

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Saturday, May 14, 9:30 am, Huckleberry Botanic Regional Preserve

Meet park staff at the main parking lot to pick up gloves, tools, check soil conditions and decide where to work. A couple of volunteers checked on the park after the regular work date was rained out and reported that both natives and weeds are growing by leaps and bounds. Special thanks to Clara and Marcia for keeping all those annual sprouts in check before they go to seed. If you arrive late look for us either downhill on the loop trail or on the flat knoll at the end of the "driveway" leading from the parking lot. Calling won't accomplish much, because there are no cell phone towers in the park.

To reach the parking lot exit Highway 13 at Park and go uphill over the freeway to the stoplight. Turn left at the light and follow Mountain parallel to 13 until you reach the traffic light at Snake. Turn right (uphill) onto Snake and follow it winding to its other end at the junction of Snake and Skyline. Turn left onto Skyline and go north several hundred meters to the parking lot on the right. Heavy rain cancels.

Sunday, May 15 at 9:00 am, Sibley Park

Meet park staff at the Skyline parking lot (Oakland-side), especially if you need to pick up loaner gloves and water or if it's your first time. If the Old Tunnel Road staging area is closer (Berkeley/Orinda side), be sure to email park staff at sibley@ebparks.org so we know to look for you. Probably we will return to the wall of broom near the Round Top Creek bridge and pull out as much broom as we can while the ground is still soft.

Directions are the same as for Huckleberry Park, but then continue north on Skyline another few hundred meters to reach the Sibley parking lot.

Saturday, May 21, 9:30 am, Pt. Isabel restoration

Meet Tom & Jane Kelly at the end of Rydin Road, to the left of the Central Avenue exit from I-580 in El Cerrito. From there you can pick up gloves and tools and work at any of the areas along the salt marsh side of Rydin Road. If you have questions it's best to direct your e-mail inquiry to tkelly@kyotousa.org.

In any weather, at any hour of the day or night, I have been anxious to improve the nick of time, and notch it on my stick too; to stand on the meeting of two eternities, the past and future, which is precisely the present moment; to toe that line.

Henry David Thoreau, the chapter "Economy" in Walden

POINT ISABEL RESTORATION

CorePower Yoga “teachers in training” returned to Pt. Isabel at the end of March to put their training into action. CorePower Yoga encourages its new instructors to incorporate a community service component into their programs as a way of applying the values of yoga into their lives beyond the studio. We are always grateful for their contributions and the way they put their beliefs into action.

The weeds – first the oat grass and riggut brome, then the radish, the vetch and the thistle are growing faster than ever. It is amazing to see how they sprout, mature, flower and set their seed in what seems like only a week or three. But if you are going to get only one chance to reproduce you have to be quick.

We are delighted and relieved to finally spot multiple bumblebees collecting pollen on the tansy leafed phacelia (*Phacelia tanacetifolia*) and the California poppies (*Eschscholzia californica*).

The plants flowered in early March but the bumblebees were absent until the first week of April. Did the plants bloom too early?

Jane retired on March 31 and is very happily spending more time at Pt. Isabel. She would be most welcoming of any others who would like to spend some quiet time pulling oat grass and making room for the increasing number of natives that are volunteering all along the trail. We also hold work parties every first and third Saturday of the month. **Note that in May we will have only one work party, on May 21. There will be no work party on May 7.** You can contact us at kyotousa@sbcglobal.net.

Thanks as always to the East Bay Regional Parks District for their fantastic support for this project.

Jane and Tom Kelly



Core Power Yoga Teachers at Point Isabel. Photo by Jane Kelly.

POINT ISABEL RESTORATION PICTURES



Above: Point Isabel regular crew. Below: Core Power Yoga volunteers. Photos by Jane Kelly.



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EBCNPS Sponsored Activities

East Bay Chapter News list
Emailed announcements of
upcoming EBCNPS events
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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