

June 2018



The Bay Leaf

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

www.ebcnps.org

www.nativeherenursery.org

MEMBERS' MEETING ON BREAK UNTIL SEPTEMBER

East Bay CNPS members' meetings will take a summer break during the months of June, July, and August. Watch for announcements of our next meeting, which will take place on September 26, in the *Bay Leaf*, on the chapter website ([http://](http://www.ebcnps.org)

www.ebcnps.org/chapter-events-initiatives/members-meetings/), and on our East Bay CNPS Meetup page (<https://www.meetup.com/ebcnps/>). Please share your ideas for program topics or speakers; they are always welcome.

NATURE 'N ART RETREAT: JULY 15 AND LATER

Join Leslie Buck (she recently taught natural pruning for EBCNPS) in this new activity for native plant lovers: creating art together. **Nature 'n Art** is a bimonthly native plant art retreat for sketchers, photographers, poets, and more. The group will meet in different nature spots where everyone can wander, sketch, take photos and/or write poetry (any sort of art you prefer!), then meet and have snacks and show and inspire. Find Nature 'n Art on Meetup: <https://www.meetup.com/NATURE-N-ART/>.

Future Nature 'n Art Meetups: Just four more meetings this year: July 15th, September 16th, November 18th and then a year end gathering on January 20th.

Leslie is a life-long sketcher who dabbles in photography and plays with poetry and loves nature (see her Facebook and Instagram). She is the author of a garden memoir called *Cutting Back* about native garden design in Kyoto, and has a fine arts degree from UC Berkeley and School of Fine Arts at Bordeaux. Leslie loves to do small sketches, which she often gives to people depicted within her sketches.

SKYLINE GARDENS IN MAY

Here are a couple of photos that show the heart of what we accomplished in the week before May 15. The first is from the west face of the terraces approaching Barberry Peak:



Last year, this pocket was a snarl of Italian thistle, star thistle, wild oats, and more. We planted nothing here, just removed the invasives. Now poppies, rocks, melic, and phacelia can "mingle, merge, and marry" - unvexed and free.

And this from the cap of the Peak:



We cleared this area one year ago. June grass, center, is waving her fuzzy candle flames in afternoon sunlight. And all around, soap root plants are waving their spikes. They are just going crazy this year. The first flower bloomed on May 14.

Happy Trails,
Glen Schneider
(Photos by Cynthia.)

NATIVE HERE NURSERY

Spring has been a busy time at the nursery. We invite you to come and enjoy the beautiful annual wildflowers and other gifts of nature for your garden. Our wildflowers come from every corner of the East Bay right now, so come now to add color to your garden, as some of the annuals bloom in summer.

Volunteering activities in April set a record, in large part due to the wonderful activities of Annie's Organics (mac and cheese and many other organic products) and Da Vita Kidney Care. On Friday, April 20, nearly twenty volunteers from Da Vita cleared brush, washed nursery supplies, and dismantled and recycled old infrastructure.

Annie's Organics provided teams on April 18, 24, and 27 ranging from fifteen to twenty volunteers on each day to help us unpack, cover, and stack thousands of nursery pots, clean pots to be sterilized, weed, tend to our outdoor education center, spread mulch, and dismantle and recycle unneeded structures.

These events could not have been so successful without the help of our regular volunteers including David Epstein, Beth Wurzburg, Charli Danielsen, Penny Spear, Jenn Roe, Connie Chiba, Sara Goolsby, Lesley Hunt, Sue Duckles and more. The photographs illustrate the broad range of activities these teams performed and the transformation they made to the nursery. We thank each and all for their spirit of service.



Volunteering activities remain a vital part of the nursery: How can you help?

Get to know other native plant lovers when folks work together sowing seed or potting up seedlings.

Commune with native plants from a particular area as you offer them moisture from a hose, either on days when the nursery is open and busy with people or at other times when it is quieter.

Talk to a coyote while cleaning up the nursery.

Listen to birdsong while watering or weeding.

Help build up platforms for storing and displaying plants.

Learn how to write up sales, answer phone questions and greet visitors to the nursery.

Help nursery customers find the plants that best fit their gardens or projects.

Track the pattern of bloom and fruiting within the nursery.

If the activities described above sound like something you'd like to do, there are opportunities at Native Here Nursery. Volunteers are welcome to come in to learn more and decide what fits their interests and schedules.

Once "on board", volunteers participate in an online sign-up in order to keep track of what is already assigned and what is open for another volunteer to take on. Open hours are Tuesdays from noon to three, Fridays from 9 to noon, and Saturdays from 10 to 2. The nursery is at 101 Golf Course Drive in Tilden Park, on the Berkeley side, across from the Golf Course.

Commitment can be as little as an hour a week to three to four hours one day a week, or two to three hours twice a week. A volunteer can decide to concentrate on one aspect of the nursery or be involved in multiple tasks.

During summer the plants need tender loving care—water and weeding, although for some, care involves sheltering from water and sun for the summer. It is a particularly busy time, but many of the year-round volunteers take vacations, so there is always something needing attention.

Charli and John Danielsen

VOLUNTEERS AT NATIVE HERE NURSERY



Annie's Organics volunteer crew (top). Removing old infrastructure (left). Unpacking new pots (right). Cleaning pots (previous page).

FIELD TRIPS IN JUNE

Saturday, June 9, 2018, 9:45 am to 2:15 pm, Redwood Regional Park, sedges, ferns, manzanitas, violets
We will see about five species of sedge and learn some basics of sedge ID. The *Field Guide to Intermountain Sedges* and the key from the 2012 *Jepson Manual* will be available for reference. We will take Redwood Peak Trail, French Trail, Starflower

Trail, Tres Sendas Trail, and Stream Trail. Plenty of redwood violets, stream violets, both are yellow. Hosted by Gregg Weber.

For more information visit <https://www.meetup.com/ebc-nps/events/wdhvglyxbmb>.

VOLUNTEERS AT SAN NICOLAS (CHANNEL) ISLAND

From April 12 to 16 nine Bay Area volunteers spent an unforgettable five days on San Nicolas Island (SNI), one of the eight Channel Islands. SNI has limited access because it is a Navy facility. This island was the home of the "Lone Woman of San Nicolas Island", the Native American woman who inspired the book *Island of the Blue Dolphins*.

The trip was coordinated by Jane Kelly and Channel Islands Restoration (CIR) based in Santa Barbara. CIR is a non-profit that works to restore habitat on the California Channel Islands and Central Coast for the benefit of rare and endangered native species. CIR's Executive Director Ken Owen made this trip possible, and we were lucky to have the assistance of CIR's Volunteer Coordinator Nancy Diaz, who helped us with every detail of the trip including the U.S. Navy vetting process. Unfortunately, because of several date changes, Jane and her husband Tom were unable to join us.

At Pt. Mugu Naval Air Station we were greeted by CIR's Project Manager Kevin Thompson and Nursery Manager Kelle Green. We were joined by long time CIR volunteer Robin Birney. Robin had been to the island on many occasions and was very helpful in getting us situated.

After a short flight we arrived on SNI, checked into our comfortable rooms at the hotel in "Nicktown", and were ready to go to work by 10 am. Our objective was to plant many of the 13,000 plants grown specifically to revegetate a three mile stretch along a road that had been severely impacted by a pipeline project as well as by overgrazing.

All the plants had been grown in the nursery from seeds and cuttings collected exclusively from the island by CIR's Nursery Manager Kelle Green and her crew. Cuttings were collected from as many different populations as possible and interplanted to ensure biodiversity among their offspring.

The nursery itself was impressive: long benches covered with many different types of plants from grasses to cactus, an automated watering system, and ant moats on all legs to prevent introduced pests like Argentine ants from infesting the pots and being spread beyond Nicktown.

Adjacent to the nursery is a garden where Kelle is growing many plants to be used for future propagation. She is especially proud of her healthy little forest of *Lycium brevipes* (desert boxthorn). In the fall of 2015 cuttings were collected from 10 plants and propagated. They thrived, and from these plants 400 more were grown to be planted for this project.

On our arrival we were greeted by gale force winds of 40 miles per hour with gusts up to 50 miles per hour, which made the job on our first day difficult. We were issued goggles to keep the sand out of our eyes and we wore most of our clothing layers. Holes needed to be dug (chiseled) deep enough for the top of the root ball to be at least 1.0"-1.5" below grade (deeper is better said Kevin). This helps

to prevent the incessant winds from blowing away the soil and exposing the roots and creates a nice bowl to contain the irrigation water.

We saw our first Island Fox at the Club that evening. The Island Fox (*Urocyon littoralis*) is endemic to all but the two smallest Channel Islands, Anacapa and Santa Barbara. With its expressive face, long bushy tail and weighing only 5 lbs it is incredibly cute. During our stay we saw several more of these little foxes in their natural environment.

By the next morning the wind had died down to a comfortable breeze, a meadowlark was providing background music with his sweet song and Kevin was using an auger to help dig the holes. We greatly benefitted from Kevin and Kelle's extensive knowledge and organizational skills. We learned to use a simple but effective jig to mark the placement of the planting holes with the first row set back from the road about 8 - 10 feet. The plants were placed into their appropriate spots with Kelle calling out the 'code' names for each plant: e.g. brevi = *Lycium brevipes* (desert boxthorn); opuchen = *Opuntia* spp. (prickly pear) + *Chenopodium californicum* (California goosefoot), both planted in the same hole. The first couple of rows were short plants like grasses and *Achillea millefolium* that can tolerate the occasional tire or being mowed. This will also allow for better visibility of the foxes, their greatest threat on the island is being hit by a vehicle.

Thorny plants like cactus and boxthorn were planted in the back rows. These are the preferred habitat of the Island Night Lizard (*Xantusia riversiana*), another cute island native. This species is endemic to only three islands (SNI, San Clemente and Santa Barbara) and was recently delisted. We were able to see one up close when SNI's Natural Resources Manager William Hoyer showed us one he was preparing to relocate from Nicktown to a more natural environment. We also learned the reason for the BBQ tongs in the tool box - they make planting a cactus a cinch.

In 4 1/2 days, and together with CIR's Kevin, Kelle and Robin, we managed to plant almost 1,700 plants including: *Achillea millefolium* (yarrow), *Artemisia nesiotica* (Island sagebrush), *Chenopodium californicum* (California goosefoot), *Distichlis spicata* (saltgrass), *Eriogonum grande* var. *timorum* (San Nicolas Island buckwheat), *Frankenia salina* (alkali seaheath), *Lotus argophyllus* var. *argenteus* (Southern Island silver lotus), *Lupinus albifrons* (silver lupine), *Hordeum brachyantherum* ssp. *californicum* (California meadow barley), *Lycium brevipes* (desert boxthorn), *Lycium californicum* (California boxthorn), *Opuntia* spp. (coastal prickly pear), *Stipa cernua* (nodding needlegrass), *Stipa pulchra* (purple needlegrass).

As a desert island SNI gets an average of only 7" of rain a year; these plants would not survive without additional water. Thankfully, there are fire hydrants at regular intervals along the roads. Our last job was installing a drip system, one dripper for each planting hole. The drip system

SAN NICOLAS ISLAND REPORT CONT.

is hooked up manually to a fire hydrant and runs for 45 minutes to an hour, first every two weeks and then at longer and longer intervals until the rains (hopefully) start. All the fresh water to the island is supplied by a surprisingly small reverse osmosis desalination plant.

One plant that recovered remarkably well from decades of uncontrolled sheep grazing is *Leptosyne gigantea* (giant coreopsis). Many areas of the island are covered in a miniature forest of these “Dr. Seuss” plants. Robin told us that flying in after a wet winter the whole island appeared yellow. Their main bloom season is February, but there was one late bloomer right by the road looking like a big cheery sunflower bouquet. It made us smile every time we drove by.

Our time on SNI was not only work. We were given tours every late afternoon to see different parts of the island. SNI has one of the largest breeding colonies of northern elephant seals in California with 20,000 animals crowding the beaches in winter. Kevin told us that during the height of the breeding season there is not a spot of sand visible. The bulls and the newly pregnant females had already left for their northern feeding grounds, but there were still plenty of younger seals on several beaches, including the aptly named Bachelor Beach. A few sea lions mingled with the elephant seals.

We saw several examples of CIR restoration projects, including an impressive dune planting. A gully at the edge of Nicktown had been planted a year ago with plants similar

to those we were planting. It was amazing to see how much these plants had grown in just one year. We hope ours will look as happy in another year. What a contrast to the landscape at the south side of the island: a badland with deep gullies severely eroded from decades of overgrazing.

On our last day we had the opportunity to spend time at Rock Crusher at the West end of SNI. Here the crashing waves had eroded away the softer rocks leaving columns of dark rocks, creating an almost alien landscape.

We left on the afternoon plane just as the wind was picking up again. We were tired and sore, but also thankful for the opportunity to enjoy an enlightening experience. We learned so much from Kevin and Kelle about the flora and fauna of the island and about restoring a badly damaged desert island. It was a privilege to work alongside such dedicated people as Kevin, Kelle, and Robin. Most important, we had a small part in helping create habitat for those cute island critters.

Gudrun Kleist for the SNI Planting Crew (Kristen Hopper, Lisa Lackey, Ingrid Madsen, Kimberly Moses, Margaret Norman, Joel Peter, Christopher Richard, Penny Spear)

Note: Volunteer contractors are no longer allowed to take pictures on SNI. With the exception of the coreopsis photo taken at the Santa Barbara Botanic Garden all photos are courtesy of CIR’s Navy approved archives.



Left, an island fox; right above, the SNI nursery; right below, an island night lizard. Photos by CIR. More pictures on page 7.

DUDLEYA FARINOSA REPLANTING

We traveled to Fort Bragg recently, where we spent a fair amount of time removing invasive plants along the coast and volunteering at the Mendocino Coast Botanical Gardens (MCBG). No sooner had we arrived at the end of April than we started hearing details about the disheartening story of succulent plant poaching (*Dudleya farinosa*) along the northern coast of California by a group of men who were sending the succulents to markets in Asia where the plants reportedly bring \$40-\$50 apiece.

In March, three men were apprehended by California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) for poaching and 2,300 *Dudleya farinosa* were recovered. While the perpetrators have been charged with felonies, it remains to be seen how they will be punished. The good news is that CNPS chapters in the county have been asked to return the plants to the coastal bluffs.

We had the good fortune to hear about that effort from CNPS Dorothy King Young (DKY) Chapter Education Chair Mario Abreu, a friend and recently retired plant collections curator and naturalist from MCBG. He invited us to join volunteers on May 1 at the Botanical Gardens and to replant about 180 of the *Dudleya* on the Gardens' coastal bluffs. The *Dudleya farinosa* used for the MCBG project were recovered from an additional March CDFW "bust" along the Mendocino Coast near Anchor Bay which were obtained by DKY members Kathleen and Lloyd Chasey.

Working with Mario, Jenny Lang (a fantastic MCBG gardener who is taking on Mario's former position), and a great group of local volunteers, we planted the 180 *Dudleya farinosa* on the beautiful bluffs. On May 7 Tom and I returned to the Gar-

dens and irrigated the succulents while also removing South African small leaf trailing ice plant (*Lampranthus spectabilis*) from the bluffs.

Sophia Pisciotta, Nursery Manager of the Mendocino Coast Botanical Gardens, tended the Gardens' allocation of stolen *Dudleya farinosa* back to health and ensured healthy roots on the plants chosen for replanting on May 1. Sophia is caring for the 100 remaining succulents in the nursery to be planted along the ocean side of the MCBG coastal bluff Mt. Promontory site in fall 2018.

We are fortunate to have skilled and thoughtful crew members at MCBG in Fort Bragg who will safeguard these precious plants.

For more on the *Dudleya farinosa* story, see <https://www.mercurynews.com/2018/04/20/busting-plant-smugglers-along-californias-coast/>

LATE BREAKING NEWS - apparently the CDFW have made another bust - this time near Big Sur.

Mario Abreu tells us that on Sunday May 5 a concerned citizen in Big Sur contacted CDFW. She had observed two poachers along the road near Garrapata in Big Sur. She confronted the duo, saw that they had *D. farinosa* plants, and admonished them that it was illegal to take them. She took photos of the poachers and the license plates of their vehicles and even got a picture of the plants in a bag. This tip mobilized wardens from Northern, Central and Southern districts and Special Teams. A search warrant was served in Palmdale, where the suspects were found in possession of 600 plants with 1,872 rosettes.
Jane and Tom Kelly



MENDOCINO DUDLEYA RESTORATION PICTURES



Pictures below from San Nicolas Island. giant coreopsis in the Santa Barbera Botanic Garden. Photo by volunteer Ingrid Madsen Right: Lupine on the island. Photos by CIR.

Previous page: the Mendocino crew., photo by JoAnne Abreu. Top: recovered Dudleyas ready to plant. Photo by JoAnne Abreu. Above left: a Dudleya replanted. Above right: Tom Kelly irrigating. Photos by Jane Kelly.



RESTORATION PROJECTS IN JUNE

Sundays, Skyline Gardens Restoration, June 3, June 10, June 17, and June 24. Also most Wednesday afternoons. Bring: water, snack, hat, gloves, boots, long pants and shirts. Tools will be provided.

So far 253 native species have been identified in the mile-and-a-half corridor. (List pdf available on request.) Because of the high density of native plants, it is a great place to botanize, learn, and observe – not only species, but how they behave and associate in plant communities. We will learn natives not only as flowers, but also as seedlings, plants, seed heads, and at rest. We will learn them in community – what species they grow with, and how they disperse and interact. We will learn the botanical seasons in detail.

The project is open to anyone with a strong interest and commitment, regardless of background. Because of the nature of our permit from EBMUD, each outing will be limited to 15 persons, so RSVP to glennyfrank@gmail.com is mandatory.

Saturday, June 2, 10:00 am to 2:00 pm, June 9, 10 am to 2 pm, Point Isabel Regional Shoreline, Richmond. Point Isabel restoration. Join Greens at Work near the parking lot at the end of Rydin Road, on the side next to the salt marsh. This crew now carries into the afternoon, with a break at noon if you need to leave for Saturday errands.

Saturday, June 2, 9 am to 1 pm, Redwood Regional Park, 7867 Redwood Road, Oakland 94619, French broom removal. For event locations contact park staff via phone at 510-544-3127, or email: redwood@ebparks.org. No registration is required. Rain cancels.

Sunday, June 3, 10:00 am to 1:00 pm, the monthly North Basin restoration meets at McLaughlin Eastshore State Park in Berkeley, on the Bay shoreline south of Tom Bates soccer fields. A map of the area can be found at <https://goo.gl/rqdZQW>. For directions to the work site or more information about this project contact John Kenny (johnkenny54@yahoo.com).

Saturday, June 9, 2018, 9:30 am to 12:30 pm, Huckleberry Parking Lot, 6934 Skyline Boulevard, Oakland, meet at main Huckleberry parking lot. Click on this link for more

information: <https://www.meetup.com/ebcnps/events/dqwtthyxbmb/>

Sunday, June 10, 9:30 am to 1:30 pm, Redwood Regional Park, 7867 Redwood Road, Oakland 94619. For event location, please contact Park staff via phone: 510-544-3127, or email: redwood@ebparks.org. Project: French broom removal. No registration required. Rain cancels.

Saturday, June 16, 10 am-noon, Garber Park volunteer workday. We will continue clearing the invasives on the Evergreen Lane Hillside, where we now have several access points on the steep slope. For those who prefer flat there's work along the trails or in lovely Fern Glade. We provide water, snacks, gloves, and tools. Children are welcome if accompanied by an adult. Wear long sleeves and pants and boots with good tread. Meet at the Claremont Avenue entrance, 0.4 miles up Claremont Avenue (towards Grizzly Peak Boulevard) from the intersection of Claremont at Ashby. For more information, a map, and directions visit our website garberparkstewards.org or contact Shelagh@garberparkstewards.org.

Sunday, June 17, 9 am to 1 pm, Sibley Volcanic Regional Preserve at the staging area at 6800 Skyline Boulevard, Oakland (just east of Skyline's intersection with Grizzly Peak Boulevard), monthly invasive plant removal and grassland restoration. Call (510) 544-3112 or email Sibley@ebparks.org for more information and to register.

Saturday, June 23, Point Pinole Regional Shoreline, Richmond, 9:30 am to 12:00 pm. Join Point Pinole Regional Shoreline park staff to help restore native grasslands and marsh areas. Volunteers are needed to help remove invasive plants, weeds and shoreline debris. Registration is required. Call (510) 544-3063 for more information.

Saturday June 30, 9:30 am -11:30 am, TASH (Tending the Ancient Shoreline Hill) work party. Help remove invasive plants on Albany Hill. Gloves and tools provided. Wear long sleeves and pants and sturdy shoes. Email tashorehill@gmail.com for location.

Margot Cunningham

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Committees are formed based on chapter needs and the interests of volunteers. Proposals for committees and projects are welcome and will be considered by the Board

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