

May 2018



# The Bay Leaf

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

[www.ebcnps.org](http://www.ebcnps.org)

[www.nativeherenursery.org](http://www.nativeherenursery.org)

## MAY MEMBERS' MEETING

**Restoring Habitat for San Francisco's Rare Endemic  
Manzanitas**

**Speaker: Michael Chassé**

**Wednesday, May 23, 7:30 pm**

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

San Francisco hosts two of the rarest manzanitas in the world: Raven's manzanita (*Arctostaphylos montana* ssp. *ravenii*) and Franciscan manzanita (*Arctostaphylos franciscana*). These endangered species grew together in a distinct maritime chaparral habitat that once covered the serpentine hilltops of San Francisco. Their story is one of discovery, loss, salvage, and restoration, with a bit of serendipity sprinkled throughout. Michael Chassé will share the history and ecology of San Francisco's rare endemic manzanitas and how current efforts are returning these species to the San Francisco landscape. Michael Chassé is a biologist for the National Park Service at the Golden Gate National Recreation Area, where he has coordinated natural areas stewardship and rare plant monitoring for close to 20 years. He is a graduate of San Francisco



Michael Chassé with a Franciscan manzanita. Photo courtesy of the National Park Service.

State University's Department of Geography. His master's thesis focused on San Francisco's rare endemic manzanitas. Michael also served as a Peace Corps Volunteer in Mongolia in the early 1990s.

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 26 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](mailto:programs@ebcnps.org) or call 510-496-6016 if you have questions.

### Directions to Orinda Public Library at 26 Orinda Way

**DRIVING:** 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.

**VIA 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 Vacation

East Bay CNPS members' meetings will be on summer vacation from June through August. Watch the *Bay Leaf*, the chapter website (<http://ebcnps.org>) and Meetup (<http://www.meetup.com/ebcnps>) for announcements of the next meeting, which will take place on September 26.

# CONSERVATION REPORT

Just exactly how “east” IS the East Bay Chapter of CNPS? If we measure by native plant communities to be enjoyed and rare plants to be cherished, we are way way east: for example most of our Botanical Priority Protection Areas (<http://ebcnps.org/publications/guidebook-to-botanical-priority-protection-areas/botanical-priority-interactive-map/>) are in the eastern third of Alameda and Contra Costa Counties; dozens and dozens of rare plant occurrences show up all through the east, right up to the borders with San Joaquin County (see figure). But if we measure by membership, well, right now we are a western East Bay organization: Fewer than 15 percent of our members live inland, i.e., east of the Berkeley-Oakland-San Leandro Hills.

We are working to increase our eastern membership roster because a chapter is stronger when its membership reflects its entire geographic range (and the additional members wouldn't hurt). Adding members in the east also will result in a closer balance between the currently small number of local east-counties conservationists and the currently giant number of local east-counties conservation issues (so so many). When we have more members in an area, we have more influence. Two initiatives this spring are facing us east:

- I. Promoting EB-CNPS membership at east-side gardens at the May 6 Bringing Back the Natives Garden Tour (<https://www.bringingbackthenatives.net/>) . We will have membership tables at Gardens in half the east-counties cities where the self-guided tour touches down. The Bringing Back the Natives Garden Tour has been an excellent source of brand-new members for our chapter so it is exciting to deploy this recruitment tool “facing east”.
- II. Gathering signatures for the Antioch Sand Creek Area Protection Initiative. This initiative aims to preserve most of the Four Valleys Botanical Priority Protection Area. The California Native Plant Society East Bay actively supports the “Let Antioch Voters Decide: the Sand Creek Area Protection Initiative” (check out [Antioch Community to Save Sand Creek](#)) to preserve nature, open spaces, and historic qualities of the 1800-acre area. As a member of the Antioch Community to Save Sand Creek we are working with residents and other local conservation organizations to promote zoning that would

help the City of Antioch prevent suburban sprawl that destroys native plant habitat forever. The immediate goal is to qualify the initiative for the ballot. In fact, if you are interested in joining a fast-moving and well-organized crew of community members who are volunteering in Antioch to collect the signatures needed to place the initiative onto Antioch's November ballot, while you strengthen your community and have fun, please sign up for as little as one two-hour slot between 10-6 any weekend through May 23 and you will receive training and excellent tips for a successful experience. Some weekday shifts may be available. We'll match you up with a partner, or you can bring your own. Contact Lesley Hunt [ldhunt@astound.net](mailto:ldhunt@astound.net) to volunteer.

*Sally de Becker*  
Membership Chair

Every weekend since the first of March, volunteers from CNPS and other members of the coalition to Save Sand Creek have been gathering signatures to qualify our initiative for the November ballot. We've been at shopping centers, community events and meetings, and everywhere else we can think of. People react well when they hear we are volunteers. At the same time as we are gathering signatures for our initiative, we are also reacting to a proposed development in the initiative area. Called The Ranch, it proposes more than 1000 houses with all the usual impacts on biological resources, traffic, public services, pollution, etc. Karen Whitestone, our Conservation Analyst, is writing formal comments on the Draft Environmental Impact Report, focusing on the biological resources that are our area of expertise. She described what's at stake in the March Bay Leaf. Thanks to EBCNPS, the Alameda Creek Alliance recently endorsed our initiative. If you know of any other groups east of the hills that might be willing to do the same, please let me know at [ldhunt@astound.net](mailto:ldhunt@astound.net).

*Lesley Hunt*  
Antioch campaign liaison

*Nature will bear the closest inspection. She invites us to lay our eye level with her smallest leaf, and take an insect view of its plain.*

Henry David Thoreau

*You must live in the present, launch yourself on every wave, find your eternity in each moment.*

Henry David Thoreau

*Friends... they cherish one another's hopes. They are kind to one another's dreams.*

Henry David Thoreau



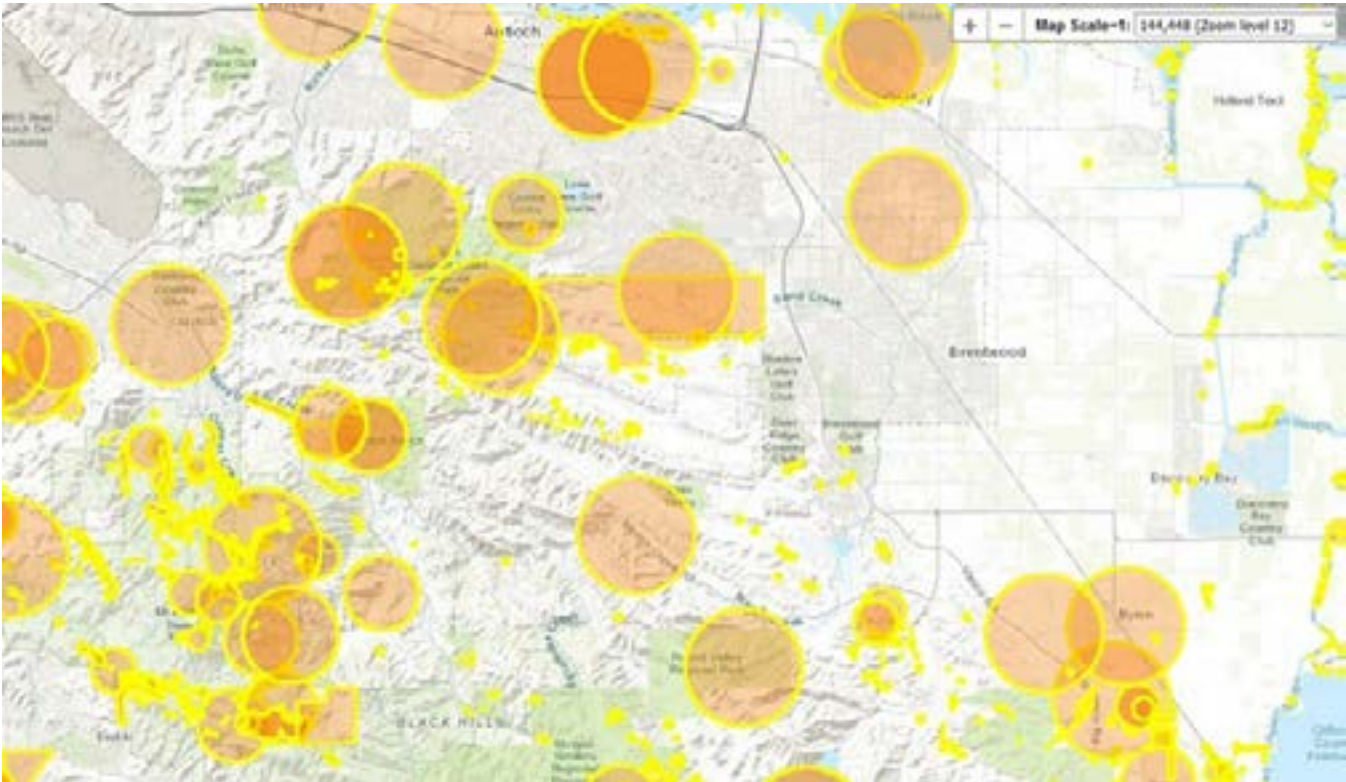


Figure 1 Rare plant occurrences in eastern Alameda and Contra Costa Counties, outlined in yellow.

## MOUNTAIN VIEW CEMETERY UPDATE

An article was published in the *East Bay Times* on April 18, 2018 about the Mountain View Cemetery settlement (<https://www.eastbayexpress.com/oakland/cemetery-and-enviros-reach-deal-on-oaks/Content?oid=15223807>).

The emphasis of the article by reporter, Darwin BondGraham, is how important coast live oak trees are for the environment. "It's hard to overstate how important *Quercus agrifolia* is to California's landscape and ecology. Commonly known as the coastal live oak, mature trees spread their limbs upward and out to create massive dome-like interiors shaded by boughs draped in evergreen, holly-shaped leaves. Live oaks thrive through coastal California's hot summers, wet winters, fog, and frequent fires, to which they're well-accustomed. In East Bay's flatlands and foothills, they provide shelter and food that virtually every species survives on."

He quotes Cindy Margulis, the executive director of the Golden Gate Audubon Society, about the importance of oak trees not only for birds, but also for the visitors to the cemetery, "If you think about the people buried there, and the people who come to visit their loved ones' graves, they need that place to be refuge, too."

The East Bay CNPS Board has set up a committee to set priorities for the Oak Woodland Protection, Conservation and/or Restoration Fund. We will let you know the goals of the fund in a future issue of the *Bay Leaf*.

We want to remind you that as the Mountain View Cemetery Association (MVCA) begins their expansion project for the new development, CNPS has agreed *not* to oppose the project further and not to trespass in the construction zone. CNPS members cannot act on behalf of CNPS to communicate with MVCA or City of Oakland staff without first obtaining permission from the CNPS Board.

Judy Schwartz



A coast live oak at Mountain View Cemetery.

## NATIVE HERE NURSERY IN MAY

A visit to the nursery will delight your eyes with the blooms of star flowers (*Lysimachia latifolia*), stream violet (*Viola glabella*) redwood violet (*Viola sempervirens*), checker bloom (*Sidalcea malviflora*), Douglas iris (*Iris douglasiana*), blue-eyed grass (*Sisyrinchium bellum*), California poppy (*Eschscholzia californica*), woodland star (*Lithophragma heterophyllum*), and annuals such as wind poppy (*Papaver heterophyllum*), Chinese houses (*Collinsia heterophylla*), chick lupine (*Lupinus microcarpus*), and some *Clarkia* species.

Purchase them now and enjoy the blooms in the pots. Do not transplant the perennials until after flowering. The annuals will die after setting seeds, so can be enjoyed either in the ground or in pots.

When you visit for any of our thrice weekly sales (Tuesdays noon-three, Fridays nine to noon, or Saturdays ten to two) look for price labels adorned with a paper clip. Those paper clips mean the plant is half of the usual price that colored label represents. We need to clear some of our older trees and shrubs to make room for the seedlings that are coming

along. While there is always a display of half price materials across from the office, there are other half price “deals” hiding throughout the nursery.

### Volunteer opportunities

If you’d like to spend a quiet forty-five minutes or an hour or two meditating with a hose in hand, the nursery requires watering from many volunteers through the warmer months. While there are opportunities to water during sales hours, it is also possible to commit to watering early on other mornings. A brief training session is required for “on your own” watering. Contact the volunteer coordinator, Ruth Pearsons at rpearsons1@mac.com or talk to me at the nursery to set up a time for training and for watering.

New volunteers are always welcome to join in a variety of tasks at Native Here.

*Charli Danielsen*

## CNPS CELEBRATES JOHN MUIR’S BIRTHDAY

The event featured a game, “Native or Not”, and the prize was the new beautifully done gardening brochure. The lady with the hat is Shirleymae Skaredoff and the lady sitting is Diane Viera.

Elaine, a former CNPS East Bay Chapter president, is active in maintaining the California native garden that surrounds the visitors’ center at the John Muir National Historic Site.

*Elaine Jackson*





## FIELD TRIPS IN MAY

**Saturday, May 5, 2018, 4 pm to 6:30 pm, introductory plant walk at El Cerrito Hillside fest, hosted by Janet Gawthrop**  
Madera Open Space, northeast side of Hillside Natural Area, El Cerrito, 8500 Madera Drive adjacent to Madera Elementary School, El Cerrito. Meet by the public staircase downhill from Madera Elementary School. We're re-doing the beginner-level plant walk as a celebration of the recently acquired Madera Open Space, along with El Cerrito's Hillside Fest weekend. We'll be covering many of the same plants, but made easier by starting just below the ridgeline (along Arlington) next to Madera Elementary School. If you don't want to lug along a plant key, you can go back to my plant list from this chapter's listing on May 15, 2016. Yes, the list is still there, and you can find pictures of plants on the list by going to the alphabetical name indices at [www.calflora.org](http://www.calflora.org). For more information click on this link: <https://www.meetup.com/ebcnps/events/249242953/>

**Sunday, May 13, 2018, 7:00 am to Saturday, May 19, 8:00 pm, Botany in Mojave National Preserve**

These walks are timed for spring perennials such as *Penstemon*, and *Calochortus* at mid elevations in Mojave National Preserve. There is dispersed camping at numerous spots, and several group campsites in the Preserve. Make reservations now. Hosted by Gregg Weber  
Click on <https://www.meetup.com/ebcnps/events/248123891/> for details.

**Saturday, May 19, 10 am, wildflowers and other plants on Albany Hill.** Join Margot Cunningham on this 1.5 - 2 hour walk to learn about the great diversity of native plants grow-

ing on this small urban open space. We'll start near the north side of the hill, cross Cerrito Creek, walk along the riparian/oak woodland edge, head back through the lower meadows, then ascend through the oak woodland to the crest, about a 340-foot climb. We'll see more meadow and woodland plants on the crest and west side, then return to the start. See lists of plants, bryophytes, fungi and other organisms found on Albany Hill at [www.tendancienthill.org](http://www.tendancienthill.org). Meet at the south end of Santa Clara Avenue in El Cerrito, next to Cerrito Creek (3499 Santa Clara Avenue, El Cerrito in Google Maps). Public transit: 0.5 mile walk from EC Plaza BART, 0.2 mile walk from San Pablo Avenue/Carlson Boulevard stop on AC Transit 72 line. More info: [tashorehill@gmail.com](mailto:tashorehill@gmail.com), 510-289-5346.

Please note that Janet Gawthrop is hosting for Meetup purposes and will attend, but Margot Cunningham is the leader and is far more knowledgeable about Albany Hill.

**Sunday, May 20, Briones - Blue Oak and Spengler Trails**

Hosted by Gregg Weber

Click on <https://www.meetup.com/ebcnps/events/qk-scljyxhbbc/> for details.

**Saturday, May 26, Saturday, May 26, 2018, 9:45 am to 12:45 pm, Mount Diablo Falls Trail, Middle Trail**

Hosted by Gregg Weber

Anybody who wants to carpool, meet at Orinda BART at 9:15. I will be there, maybe others too.

Click on <https://www.meetup.com/ebcnps/events/tdhvg-lyxhbjc/> for details.

### The wisdom of John Burroughs

*To me, nothing else about a tree is so remarkable as the extreme delicacy of the mechanism by which it grows and lives: the fine, hair-like rootlets at the bottom and the microscopical cells of the leaves at the top.*

*Man takes root at his feet, and at best, he is no more than a potted plant in his house or carriage till he has established communication with the soil by the loving and magnetic touch of his soles to it.*

*Most young people find botany a dull study. So it is, as taught from the text-books in the schools; but study it yourself in the fields and woods, and you will find it a source of perennial delight.*

*Nearly every season, I make the acquaintance of one or more new flowers. It takes years to exhaust the botanical treasures of any one considerable neighborhood, unless one makes a dead set at it, like an herbalist.*

*To treat your facts with imagination is one thing, to imagine your facts is another.*

John Burroughs (April 3, 1837 – March 29, 1921) was an American naturalist, nature essayist, and conservationist.

## SKYLINE RESTORATION REPORT: APRIL 2018

This last week it's been more hand weeding and a lot of mowing with the weedeater and hand sickles. We are still focused on Italian thistle and invasive grass seeds. If we cut these grass tops before their seeds ripen we will be saving ourselves a ton of work for next year. It's all hands on deck! We go out on Wednesdays at 3 pm, and will be out on Sundays at 9:30 am. Please let me know if you can make it.

Also, please note, we'll be skipping Sunday, May 6, on account of the Bringing Back the Natives Garden Tour.

Here is the link to the latest species list for Skyline Gardens. [http://ebcnps.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/Skyline-Gardens-species-list-4\\_23\\_18.xlsx](http://ebcnps.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/Skyline-Gardens-species-list-4_23_18.xlsx). We are now at 263 native species for our study area. This list is in the format of the East Bay Parks lists for each Regional Park - which means that it is divided into sections for ferns, grasses, herbaceous, and woody native plants. Each section is then alphabetic by botanical name. If you click to the column on the left of each entry, you will link to the Calflora page for that species. This will include color photos of the plant and a statewide map of California with a blue dot showing where each species has been recorded. This link is a great feature and big help in learning the plants.

Also included on this Skyline list are major sections for exotic plants, lichens, birds, and much more. It was developed and kept up by Bob, who deserves an enormous cheer for his efforts.

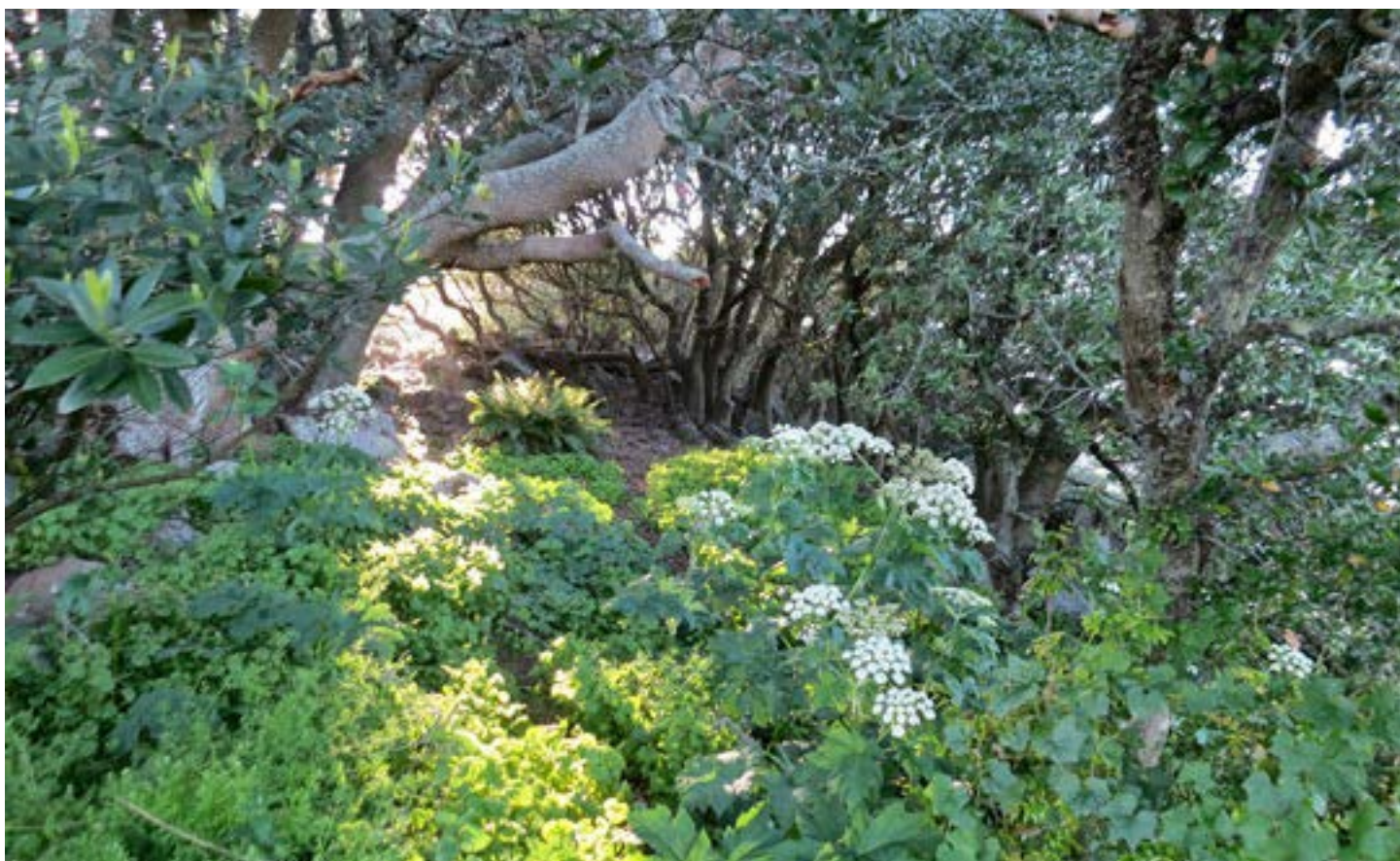
The Bay Glade has been one of the major areas of our work. When we started clearing veldt grass (*Ehrharta erecta*) there in August of 2016, it seemed like an impossible job. Veldt grass had completely taken over the understory of this quarter-acre wooded grove. But, we've gone and done it anyway. Along the way, have had some 16 workdays there, twice including groups of 20 UC Rotaract students, and also students from Irvington High in Fremont. Veldt grass takes two seasons to eradicate and so we are just now mopping up stragglers.

Meanwhile, the natives we liberated there are now flourishing and other natives have begun to move back in, most noticeably huge drifts of miner's lettuce. We've also replanted five species of woodland natives that we grew from Skyline area local seed or cuttings.

This spring, it looks just grand. The cow parsnips (*Heracleum maximum*) are now in full flower and we have restored and reclaimed our magical grove. Below is a picture from yesterday:

My sister Betty calls places like this "Merlin Country". And word has it that the Hobbits have now returned.

Happy Trails,  
Glen Schneider





# RESTORATION PROJECTS

**Redwood Regional Park, 7867 Redwood Road, Oakland, Fench broom removal: on the first Saturday of each month from 9 am to 1 pm.** For event locations, please contact park staff via phone: 510-544-3127 or email: redwood@ebparks.org No registration required. Rain cancels events.

**Saturday, May 5, Join the City of Fremont's Environmental Services for a day of habitat restoration work on Sabercat Creek the first Saturday of every month from 9:00 am to 12:00 pm.** We will be weeding, planting or maintaining native trees and shrubs, and sheet mulching to preserve soil moisture and decrease competition from aggressive exotic plants. Click on <https://sites.google.com/site/sabercatcreekrestoration/> for more information about how you can participate in this project.

**Sunday, May 6, 10:00 am - 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](mailto:johnkenny54@yahoo.com)).

**Sundays, Skyline Gardens Restoration, May 6, May 13, May 20, and May 26 for 3 1/2 hours. Also most Wednesday afternoons.** Bring: water, snack, hat, gloves, boots, long pants and shirts. Tools will be provided. A most welcome storm front has helped to ensure the longevity of the recently planted natives up on Skyline as well as encourage more flowers to appear. Now is the time to see white popcorn flowers, pink California currant and blue dicks as well as our Golden State flower, the glorious California poppy!

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 is mandatory.

**Saturday, May 12,, 9:30 am to 12:30 pm, Huckleberry Regional Botanic Preserve**

Join Janet Gawthrop and other volunteers restoring Huckleberry Regional Botanic Preserve in the Oakland hills. Please note that you may be exposed to poison oak during this event so if you are sensitive to it you may wish to consider another event.

Click on <https://www.meetup.com/ebcnps/events/dqwt-thyxhqbq/>

**Martin Luther King Jr. Regional Shoreline, Oakland, 10:00 am to 1:00 pm, second Saturday of every month.** Looking for 30 volunteers. Registration is required at MLK Jr. For more information and to register call (510) 544-2515.

**Saturday, May 19, 10:00 am to 12:00 pm, Garber Park, 7397 Claremont Avenue, Berkeley.** Meet at the Evergreen Lane entrance to Garber Park. We meet on the third Saturday of every month, from 10 am until noon, to work on removing invasive plants from Garber Park, and sometimes to plant natives and maintain the trails.

**Saturday, May 19, Jane and I are taking a few days off, so our only official May work party at Pt. Isabel will be on May 19, 9:30 am to 2 pm.** May we suggest that you take some time to visit the Bay Trail during early May to see how all your efforts are paying off. It is really quite beautiful out there now. We often see people stopping to take pictures of the plants and just the other day, a young man set up an easel at one end of the Trail and began painting the poppies and phacelia. We just hope he had enough paint to get it all down on his canvas! Where: Pt. Isabel, on the Bay Trail, halfway between the dog park and Central Avenue. Just off I-580 (take Central to the bottom of the I-580 overpass). At the stop sign (Rydin Road) turn right and park along Rydin Road. (If you pass Costco on your right, you've gone too far!) We set up about half way between the Bay Trail entrance and the dog park. Contact: Tom Kelly (510) 704-8628 (work), (510) 684-6484 (cell) or [tkelly@kyotousa.org](mailto:tkelly@kyotousa.org)

RSVP - it will help us coordinate tools with the East Bay Regional Park District. And remember to bring good energy, hats, sun screen, water, and family and friends. We'll supply refreshments.

**Sunday, May 20, Sibley Volcanic Regional Preserve at the Bay Area Ridge Trail gate near the Old Tunnel Road staging area.** Invasive plant gate removal and grassland restoration work on the third Sunday of each month, from 9 am to 1 pm. Call (510) 544-3112 or email [Sibley@ebparks.org](mailto:Sibley@ebparks.org) for more information and to register.

**Saturday, May 26, Point Pinole Regional Shoreline, Richmond, 9:30 am to 12:00 pm, fourth Saturday of each month.** Looking for 20 volunteers. Registration is required at Point Pinole. For more information and to register call (510) 544-3063.

**TASH (Tending the Ancient Shoreline Hill) Last Saturday of the month work party, May 26, 9:30 am-11:30 am.** Email for location – [tashorehill@gmail.com](mailto:tashorehill@gmail.com). Gloves and tools provided. Wear sturdy shoes and clothes that can get dirty. For more information: [www.tendancienthill.org](http://www.tendancienthill.org)  
*Margot Cunningham*

# POINT ISABEL RESTORATION

Wouldn't it be grand if every day were Earth Day? We never stop marveling at nature and the awe we experience when we think of how this planet has all the ingredients to sustain life. Knowing that there are somewhere between 100 billion and 200 billion galaxies in the universe, we're feeling pretty confident that life exists elsewhere but knowing this doesn't diminish the deep respect we have for the way nature has created the conditions for life to exist here. That's a big part of what motivates us to work on the little part of this miracle at Pt. Isabel and try to do what we can to improve the health of the soil, air, and water that gives everything life.

Our work parties in April have been small, but the output of the volunteers has been extraordinary. The Bay Trail at Pt. Isabel has never looked better and we invite you to come out and walk the trail and see for yourselves. We have been pulling out oat grass and ripgut brome and all the California native plants are thriving and hosting many pollinators. If you stand quietly for just a moment and look at the stretches of blooming California poppies (*Eschscholzia californica*), tansy leaved phacelia (*Phacelia tanacetifolia*), bee plant (*Scrophularia californica*), sticky monkeyflower (*Diplacus aurantiacus*), Douglas iris (*Iris douglasiana*) and one-leaf onion (*Allium unifolium*), your eyes will see a flurry of different bees and other insects moving from one plant to the next.

We did a presentation this month to the Contra Costa County Fish and Wildlife Committee (FWC). FWC provided us with a grant for plants and equipment, the second grant we received in the past several years. They mentioned that they hadn't received many applications from West County this funding cycle and hoped they would receive more in the next round (August/September). See this link for more information: <http://www.co.contra-costa.ca.us/4317/Fish-Wildlife-Committee-FWC>

Special thanks this month to Pt. Isabel Stewards Nancy and Luciano for their unceasing work in removing oat grass from among the salt grass (*Distichlis spicata*) that is thriving at marsh edge and for controlling the pepper weed at that section of the project.

Many thanks also to our EBRPD Supervisor, Scott Possin, for spending 5 1/2 hours with us (and Pt. Isabel Steward Lewis) removing an entire large area of French broom at the Ramblers' Clubhouse at Miller Knox Regional Shoreline. Once it was gone we admired the sizable patch of soap plant (*Chlorogalum pomeridianum*) that had been hidden beneath it. Happy Earth Day(s), Everyone!

Jane and Tom Kelly



Left, a bumblebee on *Phacelia tanacetifolia*; right, a Douglas iris planted by Steward Nana. Photos by Jane Kelly.



## PT. ISABEL RESTORATION CONTINUED



Above, the April crew; below left, California poppy; below right, *Allium unifolium*. Photos by Jane Kelly.



## UNUSUAL PLANT REPORT

I am happy to report that we have lots of boots on the ground looking for unusual plants this spring, thanks to the many who responded last month to both my BayLeaf article and to several personal requests I made.

If you recall, one of the goals for this spring is to update as many as possible of the older records from the 1990's, a time when our Chapter did year round weekly surveys and developed a great deal of data and knowledge about our East Bay native flora.

So far, at least 36 populations have been updated, many of them from the 1990's and earlier, with one not having been reported since 1949 (*Phacelia ciliata* in Byron).

In addition, a new population of *Amsinckia lycopsoides* was discovered in Oakley, and a new population of *Camissoniopsis micrantha* was found last month at Skyline Gardens in upper Siesta Valley (south of Tilden and east of Grizzly Peak Boulevard). This latter species had not been reported in that area since 1956, when it was vouchered from Strawberry Canyon.

My favorite personal find has been the return of *Triphysaria versicolor* subsp. *faucibarbata* to Franklin Canyon Road near Martinez. This is a route I drive often and I used to enjoy the *Triphysaria* every spring. But it disappeared many years ago (last reported in 2000). Over the years I have looked for it every spring and asked many people if they've seen it lately, and the answer was always "not for a long time". I had just about given up on it when on April 11 of this year I was driving along Franklin Canyon Road admiring the buttercups and I suddenly noticed a squat yellow flower that was definitely not a buttercup! I did a quick U-turn, jumped out of my car, and found myself looking at about 15 *Triphysaria* plants! I couldn't believe it! They looked as happy and nonchalant as if they'd never been gone. I don't know

if it was the dry winter and spring rains that brought them back or what, but I am delighted. On April 18 the population was up to 58 plants, and I hope it continues to increase and comes back every year.

I hope everyone else is out enjoying our wildflower season, and finding a lot of plants, unusual, rare, and just plain pretty.

If you are interested in looking for and helping to monitor our unusual plants, please go to the Chapter website ([ebcnps.org](http://ebcnps.org)) and click on the plant science tab to sign up for access to the unusual plants database, if you haven't already done so. The database has a documentation tab with information about the database, what it is, and how to use it. You can search for species or observation records, using many different parameters including rank, habitat, locations, dates observed, etc., and choose a plant(s) or area(s) to monitor. You can also sign up to add your own observations to the database, providing plant name, location, date observed, number of plants, condition of plants and site, etc. The more boots we have on the ground and eyes looking at the plants, the better we can keep track of the status and health of our local flora.

Finally I would like to make a request for any observations of *Muilla maritima* or *Blennosperma nanum* var. *nanum* in our two counties this spring or in recent years. You can either add your observations to the database or contact me directly ([diannelake@yahoo.com](mailto:diannelake@yahoo.com)). I have a sense that both of these species are declining, even though *Blennosperma* used to be quite common, but I need field evidence and I would also welcome comments about your experience with these two species in recent years in the East Bay. Do you agree that they are declining, or do you think they are doing okay?

Happy Botanizing everyone!  
Dianne Lake, Unusual Plants Co-ordinator



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## EBCNPS sponsored activities

### East Bay Chapter News list

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*Officers and Committee Chairs serve on the Board*

*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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