

October 2017



The Bay Leaf

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

www.ebcnps.org

www.nativeherennursery.org

MEMBERS' MEETING

Northern California Black Walnut: A tree with many stories

Speaker: Heath Bartosh

Wednesday, October 25, 7:30 pm

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

Despite previous research and study, the original distribution, subsequent radiation, and genetic identity of the northern California black walnut (*Juglans hindsii*) remains a source of considerable perplexity and debate. This confusion is confounded by the perception that some northern California black walnut trees may be hybrids with other native or non-native *Juglans* species. To get a clearer understanding of the northern California black walnut's historic and current distribution as well as the rate of hybridization throughout a larger portion of its range, researchers, including our speaker Heath Bartosh, inventoried specimens in a number of counties and performed genetic testing on the trees. With information from the study, an informed decision can be made on the future conservation status of this native tree, which is currently recognized as rare. Heath will summarize what we know about northern California black walnut's past, present, and future, focusing on work done by a collaborative group of people interested in this mysterious native tree.



Heath Bartosh and northern California black walnut (*Juglans hindsii*)

Heath Bartosh is co-founder and Senior Botanist of Nomad Ecology, based in Martinez, California, as well as a Research Associate at the University and Jepson Herbaria at UC Berkeley.

ley. After graduating from Humboldt State University, Heath began his career as a professional botanist in 2002 and has been an earnest student of the California flora for the past 15 years. In 2009, he also became a member of the Rare Plant Committee at the state level of CNPS. His role on this committee is to ensure the rare plant program continues to develop current and accurate information on the distribution, ecology, and conservation status of California's rare and endangered plants, and help promote the use of this information to influence plant conservation in California.

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 or call 510-496-6016 if you have questions.

Directions to Orinda Public Library at 26 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.

Next Month's Program

Margareta Séquin: Plants, Bugs, and Molecules

November 15, 7:30 pm: Garden Room, Orinda Public Library

Lost and Found

Did you leave a jacket in the meeting room after the April 26 meeting? If so, please contact programs@ebcnps.org to claim it.

CONSERVATION ANALYST REPORT, FALL 2017

It has been a busy summer. Here are updates on ongoing projects of the Conservation Committee, descriptions of upcoming issues, and a featured project in the City of Antioch.

ACEforward Expansion Proposal Draft EIR published. ACEforward is a transportation improvement plan that includes the existing ACE rail corridor from San Jose to Stockton and extension of ACE service to Manteca, Modesto, Ceres, Turlock and Merced. The expansion would cause significant and varied impacts to protected plant species along the regional rail system's newest easements. I submitted comments on the Draft EIR, including requesting a description of the proposed project's plant survey dates, methods, and field techniques.

East Bay Regional Park District Land Use and management plans. The EBRPD asked for public comment on land use and management plans for several of its parks (<http://www.ebparks.org/about/planning>). David Bigham, Jim Hanson, and Karen Whitestone responded to requests for comments on four new park plans: Sibley/McCosker, Miller-Knox, Concord Hills, and Black Diamond Mines.

Carnegie SVRA Expansion into Tesla Park. The fight to Save Tesla Park moves forward. Friends of Tesla Park is continuing to build support for preserving Tesla at the state level. Senator Steve Glazer supports the idea of purchasing Tesla from State Parks through the mitigation fund of the Altamont Landfill Open Space Committee (ALOSC) as a way to preserve it. Sixteen Bay Area legislators have signed on to a [July 20th, 2017 letter to State Parks](#), encouraging them to act on the buy-back opportunity to purchase Tesla Park. ([More Bay Area Legislators have joined the call encouraging State Parks.](#)) FOTP is asking for help in getting more legislators to support this sale/purchase proposal - "Get your Legislator to sign on if they have not already, and thank them for taking this important step to protect Tesla Park." In addition to this continued advocacy for Tesla preservation, the litigation challenging the Carnegie SVRA General Plan/EIR and management practices also continues.

This has been a long battle, and EBCNPS remains committed with the Friends of Tesla Park alliance to achieve permanent preservation of the Tesla Park land.

Senate Bill 249 - Off-Highway Vehicle (OHV) Modernization and Reform. While SB 249 survived largely intact in the State Senate, the State Assembly's drastic weakening of the environmental protections in the bill led fourteen local conservation organizations to withdraw their support.

A number of large environmental organizations still support the bill, including the state CNPS and the Sierra Club, because there are some reforms included in the bill that would improve governance, increase diversity of stakeholder representation on the SVRA Commission, require some conservation measures, and ease matching fund requirements for NGOs applying for restoration grants on park land used

by off-highway vehicles. The bill's conservation measures include endangered species protection, requirements to use best science in habitat plans, and soil erosion standards. As of this writing, the bill is awaiting the Governor's signature.

UC Berkeley's Global Campus Richmond Field Station. Acres of rare coastal terrace prairie are in desperate need of attention due to continuing invasion by harding grass (*Phalaris aquatica*) and bristly ox-tongue (*Helminthotheca echioides*). Jim Hanson, Karen Whitestone, and U.C. Botanical Garden Curator and chapter member Holly Forbes recently met at the Field Station with Karl Hans from U.C. Berkeley's Office of Environment, Health, and Safety. There are several dense purple needlegrass (*Stipa pulchra*), California oatgrass (*Danthonia californica*), and native forb populations at the Richmond Field Station. We walked through what is known as the "big prairie" and talked about the condition of the prairie and several longstanding management issues. We also found out that U.C. is proposing to expand a book storage facility onto the "big prairie" under the CEQA environmental impact report developed for the former Richmond Bay Campus plan. The Richmond Field Station coastal prairie is included in our Chapter's Botanical Priority Protection Areas and is a longstanding Chapter concern.

Measure CC Parks Parcel Tax Renewal. The East Bay Regional Park District's parcel tax measure for "Park Access, Wildfire Protection, Public Safety, and Environmental Maintenance" will be up for renewal in late 2018. The Park District is formulating a proposal on how the funds will be used. Peter Rauch is actively representing our chapter's interest to the Park District within a stakeholder advisory working group of environmental and other nonprofits. The Chapter hopes to gain improved native plant protection and management in our regional parks.

Featured Project: Facing the Heat at Sand Creek Focus Area in Antioch. EBCNPS is a member of the Save Sand Creek Coalition, which meets regularly to discuss a proposed four square mile development in southern Antioch labeled by City staff as the "Sand Creek Focus Area".



Holly Forbes, Jim Hanson, Karl Hans, and Karen Whitestone (not pictured) hike to an intact wetland patch within coastal terrace prairie at UC Berkeley's Richmond Field Station.

CONSERVATION ANALYST REPORT (CONT.)



Young hawk lands on mowed portion of big prairie, site of proposed building expansion at U.C. Richmond Field Station. Photo by Jim Hanson.

Field Trip Chair Janet Gawthrop and several other chapter members attended a summer hike following a road adjoining the proposed development site and encountered heat-loving native plants like turkey mullein (*Croton setiger*), California milkweed (*Asclepias californica*), and gumweed (*Grindelia camporum*) . . . as well as a healthy Western rattlesnake!

Antioch's Planning Commission met in September and unexpectedly recommended the City perform a level of environmental review beyond what was recommended by City staff. An adequate environmental analysis would include comprehensive botanical surveys to detect sensitive natural communities and special-status species at the correct blooming periods. Earlier this year Unusual Plants Chair Dianne Lake compiled a list of more than 200 locally rare native plant species that could potentially exist in the Sand Creek Focus Area. A population of the critically endangered Mt. Diablo buckwheat (*Eriogonum truncatum*), a CNPS rarity rank 1B.1 plant, was recently rediscovered in the Black Diamond Mine Regional Preserve that adjoins the Sand Creek Focus Area. The Save Sand Creek Coalition hosts regular hikes and coffee conversations with residents and interested stakeholders. Most Antioch residents do not want more development in this area.

FRIENDS OF SAUSAL CREEK PLANT SALE

Sunday, October 22, 10 am to 3 pm, Friends of Sausal Creek (FOSC) Native Plant Sale and Open House at FOSC Nursery in Joaquin Miller Park, Oakland. Native plant experts will be available all day to help shoppers pick appropriate plants for their specific planting areas. The day's festivities include

DIMOND PARK WORKDAY

Saturday, October 7, 10 am to noon, FOSC Dimond Park Native Plant Demonstration Garden Workday. Join like-minded folks on the first Saturday of each month to collaborate on tending this well established public garden in Oakland. All skill levels welcome, but volunteers should have some basic gardening skills, a general understanding of California native plants, and a desire to learn more about plant identification,



Looking south from outer edge of proposed Antioch housing development toward Mount Diablo. Photo by Cooper Ogden, Save Mount Diablo.



Save Sand Creek Coalition members and local residents attend an Antioch Planning Commission meeting where an expanded environmental review was approved. Photo by Karen Whitestone.

Thanks to East Bay Chapter President Beth Wurzburg and East Bay Chapter Acting Conservation Chair Jim Hanson for assistance in the preparation of this report.

Karen Whitestone, East Bay Chapter Conservation Analyst

a presentation on Propagating Native Plants at noon and live bluegrass music at 1 pm. For more details see www.sausal-creek.org > Programs > Native Plant Nursery (at bottom of page under "Native Plant Sale").

pollinator/plant interactions, needs of specific plants, habitat enhancement, and garden design for year-round beauty and minimal maintenance. Activities include weeding, pruning, mulching, planting, watering, and lively conversation. For more info, contact Jill Miller at field@sausalcreek.org or (510) 853-3533.

SKYLINE GARDENS REPORT, SEPTEMBER 2017

We'll be out regular days this fall - Wednesday at 4 and Sunday at 9:30. Please let us know if you can make it at skylinegardens@ebcnps.org.

We have selected six areas at Skyline Gardens in the Oakland Hills to expand restoration efforts in the coming year. All of these are open, grassy areas. I want to take you through the process, step by step.

As an overview, these areas are all rich in native grasses and forbs (leafy plants), nearly all of them perennial. These include soap root, blue dicks, mule's ears, lomatium, California poppies, coyote mint, california fuchsia and a number of bunch grasses. These areas are also being hammered by invasive grasses (wild oats, bromes and such) and rose clover. These aggressive exotics tend to smother the natives and choke out the native annuals. The challenge, then, is to eliminate the seed bank of the invasive annuals while preserving the natives.

Here's the method: first, we clear off last year's herbage. Then, when the rains come and the invasives sprout up (mostly thistles and grasses), we will spray them with vinegar. At this time, the native perennials are still dormant, so we can be very thorough in the vinegar spray and not worry about burning them. Later, we will plan a second vinegar spray in these areas, but more carefully. From then on, it will be hand weeding. The following spring, the perennials will flourish with competition removed. We will make sure that none of the invasives make seeds. We will need to continue this program in each area for at least two seasons, for that is how long most of the invasive seeds can last in the soil. Once we have eliminated the seed bank of invasives, we can begin to sow back in native annuals from seeds collected nearby in the watershed.

Let's go through the process we used last Sunday. We've got some good pictures, thanks to Vijay and Bob. The first photo shows one of the new target areas on Barberry Ridge (looking south, the peak is just beyond).



This is the 'before' picture. In this shot, most of the herbage is dead invasive annual grasses. The natives are now sleeping,



underground as roots and bulbs, through the dry season.

So first we cut this all down to the ground level with a weed-



eater (string trimmer). We use a battery powered unit for fire safety.



In the photo above, a section is being mowed.

Then we remove the dead grass.

We rake it up, making big piles. We gather the piles on to a tarp for removal. Where do we put all this? We stuff it under groves of coyote brush, where it will feed the rabbits.

Here is the 'after' picture. Compare it with the first photo above:



Here the grass has all been cut at ground level. Now, you can see a bunch of rocks and stones that were buried in the grass. We leave a thin coat of grass bits to protect the soil and encourage seeds to sprout. The new invasive seedlings will be easy to find and spray; they have no place to hide! This section is now ready for rain. In the coming weeks, we will clear and prep the other 'expansion areas' in the same way. A couple of the crew got the wind in their sails and went over the peak and started clearing down the south slope, below

the cap of the peak, below where we weeded so carefully last year. Here they are with the Caldecott way down below: They said that with luck, they could probably clear all the way



down to the Tunnel by morning. Maybe someone should go out and check on them.

Happy Trails,
Glen Schneider

P.S. Skyline Gardens is now on Facebook - don't forget to 'like' us.

Quotations from the great naturalist and conservationist John Muir (1838-1914)

Keep close to Nature's heart... and break clear away, once in awhile, and climb a mountain or spend a week in the woods. Wash your spirit clean.

Nature is ever at work building and pulling down, creating and destroying, keeping everything whirling and flowing, allowing no rest but in rhythmical motion, chasing everything in endless song out of one beautiful form into another.

Going to the woods is going home, for I suppose we came from the woods originally. But in some of nature's forests, the adventurous traveler seems a feeble, unwelcome creature; wild beasts and the weather trying to kill him, the rank, tangled vegetation, armed with spears and stinging needles, barring his way and making life a hard struggle.

The more I see of deer, the more I admire them as mountaineers. They make their way into the heart of the roughest solitudes with smooth reserve of strength, through dense belts of brush and forest encumbered with fallen trees and boulder piles, across canons, roaring streams, and snow-fields, ever showing forth beauty and courage.

A few minutes ago every tree was excited, bowing to the roaring storm, waving, swirling, tossing their branches in glorious

enthusiasm like worship. But though to the outer ear these trees are now silent, their songs never cease.

The coniferous forests of the Yosemite Park, and of the Sierra in general, surpass all others of their kind in America, or indeed the world, not only in the size and beauty of the trees, but in the number of species assembled together, and the grandeur of the mountains they are growing on.

The redwood is the glory of the Coast Range. It extends along the western slope, in a nearly continuous belt about ten miles wide, from beyond the Oregon boundary to the south of Santa Cruz, a distance of nearly four hundred miles, and in massive, sustained grandeur and closeness of growth surpasses all the other timber woods of the world.

When we contemplate the whole globe as one great dewdrop, striped and dotted with continents and islands, flying through space with other stars all singing and shining together as one, the whole universe appears as an infinite storm of beauty.

I care to live only to entice people to look at Nature's loveliness. Heaven knows that John the Baptist was not more eager to get all his fellow sinners into the Jordan than I to baptize all of mine in the beauty of God's mountains.

NATIVE HERE

Nursery Activities

Barbara Leitner and Beth Wurzburg have been talking with the park district and the County Ag department about the requirements for phytosanitation foot baths and have found that it will be considerably easier to meet the requirements than we had thought.

We are adding a new feature to our online inventory. Species that are appearing for the first time this growing season will be marked as *new*.

The nursery is switching over to winter activities. Seed sowing and potting up seedlings and cuttings will be the major focus for the next few months. The need for waterers continues – if you can help once or twice until the rains come, we would greatly appreciate it. Get in touch with Ruth Ann Pearsons at rpearsons1@mac.com to volunteer.

Winter Plant Sales

Native Here is open three days every week for plant sales, and the upcoming rainy season is the best time of year to buy plants and get them in the ground. In addition to our successful September Manzanita Day, we will have five additional focused events this winter:

- October 28 – ferns and friends: what to plant under your trees
- November 18 – riparian focus with some special discounts on water-loving trees
- December 9 – trees (conifers, oaks and others)
- January 20 – grasslands (including annuals and bulbs)
- February TBD – *Trillium* time

We are looking for speakers. If you know of anyone who would be appropriate, please write to Lesley Hunt at ldhunt@astound.net and let her know.

Lesley Hunt

COAST CLEANUP

The 2017 Coast Cleanup at McNabney Marsh was a big success. Twenty-four volunteers showed up to remove the invasive stinkwort and pick up trash. We removed all of the stinkwort at the staging area at Waterbird Regional Preserve and adjacent areas along Waterbird Way and part of Waterfront Road. Twelve bags of garbage were removed and a pickup truck bed of stinkwort was eliminated from the area.

The program was a joint effort between the Contra Costa Resource Conservation District, Mt. View Sanitary District, the California Native Plant Society, and Friends of Alhambra Creek. Special thanks to Lisa Anich, Heidi Petty, and Elaine Jackson for all of the prep work. A very special thank you to



Bert Johnson, local manzanita expert, gave a talk on growing manzanitas at our first focused sales event of the season. The event was well attended and afterward many in the audience purchased manzanitas and other plants.

Jesus Diaz for loading and transporting the removed plants and helping with the logistics.

The weather was perfect and all the volunteers worked very hard to improve this important wetland habitat in Contra Costa County. We couldn't have done it without you!

Kelly Davidson

District Biologist

Mt. View Sanitary District

925-228-5635 x19

RESTORATION PROJECTS

Every Wednesday 4 pm to sunset and Sundays 9:30 am-1 pm, Skyline Gardens Project holds 3.5 hour workdays in the Berkeley/Oakland hills on Skyline Trail and its environs. RSVP Skylinegardens@ebcnps.org if interested.

The Skyline Gardens Project is a combination botanical survey and restoration project in the Skyline Trail area of the Oakland-Berkeley Hills. The purpose is to document the native flora and to remove invasive plants to restore the full native diversity of the area. The project is sponsored by the East Bay Chapter of the California Native Plant Society (CNPS) in collaboration with East Bay MUD. We hold workdays twice weekly, Wednesday late afternoons (after work) and Sunday mornings for three hours each.

See the Skyline Gardens Report page 4 for more information.

We will be having our broom pulls in October as follows: Saturday, October 7th, 9-1 and Sunday, October, 8th, 9:30-1:30. No registration necessary. We are meeting both days at Canyon Meadow and pulling on Eastridge.

Monica

Redwood Operations

Operations staff | Park Operations

East Bay Regional Park District

7867 Redwood Road, Oakland, CA 94619

510-544-3127

redwood@ebparks.org | www.ebparks.org

Saturday, October 14, 2017, 9 am-noon, Sabercat Creek Habitat Restoration, Site 4. Enter at the trailhead at Quema Drive and Paseo Padre Pkwy, go down the slope to the main trail and turn left (head east) through the cattle gate. Look for browse protection cages to your right.

FIELD TRIP

Sunday, October 15, 9:45 am, Mount Diablo, Back Canyon, End of Regency Drive - 117 Regency Drive, Clayton, Mount Diablo: Back Canyon, Meridian Point, Meridian Ridge Road. Let's carpool from Orinda Bart. Leave Orinda bart at 9:20. This is a moderate round trip of 5 miles.

Saturday, October 28, 2017, 9 am-noon, Sabercat Creek Habitat Restoration for Make a Difference Day, Site 5, Becado Place. Registration is required. Please visit www.fremont.gov/SabercatRestoration. Click on the "Eventbrite" hyperlink to find the pages for upcoming events. Heavy rain cancels the event. No experience is necessary. All ages are welcome, but children under 12 years must be accompanied by an adult.

Come dressed for the weather and prepared to get dirty (sturdy closed-toe shoes/boots, long pants, hat, sunscreen, and long-sleeved shirt recommended). Bring a signed waiver form, a reusable water bottle, and community service hours forms, if applicable. We'll provide tools, some gloves, and water to refill bottles. If you wish to bring your own gloves or tools, please label them

For more questions or comments, please contact Sabrina Siebert at ssiebert@fremont.gov or call 510-494-4570.

Saturday, October 7, 9:30 am, Point Isabel restoration, Eastshore State Park. Our group starts across from the parking lot at the end of Rydin Road. You can e-mail kyotousa@sbcglobal.net to RSVP.

Saturday, October 21, 9:30 am, Point Isabel restoration, Eastshore State Park. Our group starts across from the parking lot at the end of Rydin Road. You can e-mail kyotousa@sbcglobal.net to RSVP.

Hosted by: Gregg W. (Co-Organizer)

For more information click on this link: <https://www.meetup.com/ebcnps/events/241327255/>



McNabney marsh after the cleanup. (See article on page 6.)

POINT ISABEL RESTORATION SUMMERS IN OREGON

Nine of us went on the 2017 voluntourism trip to central Oregon in August to volunteer with the Deschutes Land Trust and to view the solar eclipse.

The Land Trust's Volunteer Coordinator, Ginny Elliot, and their botanist Pat Green, took us first to Whychus Creek, a 41-mile long stream of which the Land Trust currently protects 8 miles. We removed mullein (*Verbascum thapsus*) and spotted knapweed (*Centaurea stoebe*) in this beautiful area while admiring the newly planted native trees, shrubs, and grasses. We heard and spotted many birds including a kingfisher. The second work party was held at Metolius Preserve, another beautiful site where Lake Creek provides habitat for trout and salmon.

We removed invasive mullein and yellow salsify aka goat's beard (*Tragopogon dubius*) and were delighted to see for the first time the lovely native fewleaf thistle (*Cirsium remotifolium*) as well as a blooming specimen of the rare Peck's penstemon (*Penstemon peckii*).

Kudos to the fantastic Deschutes Land Trust for their great care of these lands and our sincere thanks to them for hosting us on this amazing voluntourism trip.

While in Oregon, Gudrun Kleist led a hike to the top of Black Butte Mountain where we admired the ponderosa

pinus (*Pinus ponderosa*), greenleaf and pine mat manzanitas (*Arctostaphylos patula* and *Arctostaphylos nevadensis*), golden (giant) chinquapin (*Chrysolepsis chrysophylla*), Washington Lily (*Lilium washingtonianum*) and more. We snacked on delicious ripe service berries (*Amelanchier alnifolia*) all the way to the top. From the 6,358 ft peak, and notwithstanding the wildfires, one could see Mount Washington and Three Fingered Jack as well as the snowcapped North Sister, Mount Jefferson, Mount Hood and even Mount Adams in Washington State. We also hiked from the Metolius Preserve to Suttle Lake, a great trail with native plants abounding and where we found only three invasive mullein plants in the entire seven mile round trip. It was such a rare pleasure to hike through extensive natural lands with barely an invasive plant in sight.

On August 21st, we awoke to clear blue skies and brilliant sunshine and walked from our house at Black Butte Ranch (within the path of totality) to a meadow just down the road. There we experienced the dazzling total eclipse (*et obscuratus solis*) - a breathtaking finale to this trip.

Jane and Tom Kelly (for the Voluntourism Crew: Lou Demateis, Miriam Joscelyn, Rob Kirby, Gudrun Kleist, Lewis Payne, Julian Pelzner, Sue Schoening)



POINT ISABEL OREGON PICTURES



Work party at Metolius Preserve (previous page) and work party at Whychus Creek (photos at Jane Kelly). Pecks penstemon (left, photo by Gudrun Kleist) and a total eclipse of the sun! (Right, photo by Lou Dematteis.)

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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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