



February 2015

The Bay Leaf

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

www.ebcnps.org

www.groups.google.com/group/ebcnps

MEMBERS' MEETING

An Ocean Garden: The Secret Life of Seaweed

Speaker: Josie Iselin

Wednesday, February 25, 7:30 pm

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

The spectacular flora of the intertidal zone along our coasts is worth every gardener's consideration; perhaps seaweed is the ultimate California native. Photographer, author, and book designer Josie Iselin will bring together the art and science of seaweed in a talk and slide presentation describing her unique way of building books, why she fell in love with seaweed, and some of the amazing science of the marine



an ocean garden
the secret life of seaweed

algae we find along our Bay Area shores, emphasizing the difference between marine algae and vascular plants. From the monochrome knotweed and bladderwrack of the Maine coast to the more spectacular bull kelp, sea grapes, and nori of the California coast, seaweed is a secret treasure of largely unseen forms. In her book *An Ocean Garden: The Secret Life of Seaweed*, Iselin reveals the unexpected beauty of seaweed, an often overlooked but fundamental aspect of ocean life that has great value for human health and well-being. Copies of *An Ocean Garden* will be available for purchase after the presentation (\$17.95 plus tax).

Josie Iselin is the photographer, author and designer of seven books, with new projects in development in her San Francisco

studio, Loving Blind Productions. She holds a BA in Visual and Environmental Studies from Harvard and an MFA from San Francisco State University. Her books focus on the forms in nature we find at hand, particularly at the beach. Her mission is to produce enticing, original, and well-designed books that combine art and science, leaving the reader with new information about and appreciation for the world around them. She hopes that celebrating the ordinary wonders we find at the beach will bring thoughtfulness and stewardship to this extraordinary place of discovery.

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 sr0433@yahoo.com or call 510-496-6016 if you have questions.

Directions to Orinda Public Library at 24 Orinda Way: **From the west**, take Hwy 24 to the Orinda/Moraga exit. At the end of the off ramp, turn left on Camino Pablo (toward Orinda Village), right on Santa Maria Way (the signal after the BART station and freeway entrance), and left on Orinda Way. **From the east**, take Hwy 24 to the Orinda exit. Follow the ramp to Orinda Village. Turn right on Santa Maria way (the first signal) and left on Orinda Way. **Once on Orinda Way**, go 1 short block to the parking lot on the southeast side of the two-story building on your right. There is additional free parking beneath the building as well as on the street. **From BART (4 blocks):** Exit the Orinda station, turn right and cross a pedestrian bridge, then cross a second pedestrian bridge on the left. Go 1 short block on the sidewalk to the third pedestrian bridge. Go 2 blocks on Orinda Way to the Orinda Library.

Upcoming Meetings

March 25, 7:30 pm, Orinda Library Garden Room

Program TBA

April 22, 7:30 pm, Aleta George: Poet Ina Coolbrith's Love of California Wildflowers

May 27, 7:30 pm, Bart O'Brien, Director, Regional Parks Botanic Garden

NATIVE HERE

Developing Pathogen Risks and Native Here Nursery

Some of you have heard the KQED story on a new invasive species – *Phytophthora tentaculata*. This is in the same genus as the organism that causes sudden oak death (SOD). *P. tentaculata* is a root rot pathogen and is spread by infected plant material, water, and soil and was recently responsible for a swath of dieback in an San Francisco Public Utilities restoration project. Back in December, Diana Benner, along with Alisa Shor, Kristen Hopper and me, put on a symposium to address this new risk to our wildlands. The seven most recent videos on the CNPS-Santa Clara Valley Chapter YouTube page contain most of the content of the symposium. We have restarted the California Native Plant Nursery Network and plan on continuing to share resources, knowledge, and emotional support to work through this and future issues.

What has Native Here Nursery done in response?

Charli Danielsen already had good growing practices in place. Our material is sourced locally, and primarily from seed, reducing introduction vectors. Additionally, we have our stock on benches above the ground, with relatively inhospitable wood chip mulch underneath. We are also growing near a location of known *Phytophthora ramorum* (SOD) infection, Tilden Park. As such, we are inspected for *P. ramorum* on a monthly basis and have not yet had a positive sample among our nursery stock. Native Here also lacks a greenhouse, which can act as a year-round breeding ground for pathogens. Those are good things, but we need to get better.

“Kitchen clean” is a simple way to think of it. The ground should be considered infected, and our potting benches and plant cages need to be kept clean. Native nurseries, including Native Here Nursery (NHN), must stop sharing dirty pots. This has been identified as one of the likely vectors for several pathogens. We strive to minimize waste, and re-using pots are a good way to do that, so we need to develop an effective

and efficient method for cleaning pots. We are also looking into the possibility of sterilizing our soil medium prior to potting-up, and re-thinking foot and vehicular traffic into the nursery (other possible vectors).

This will cost more money for nurseries and will result in the need for additional infrastructure at NHN. Please contact me if you have ideas for funding/ grant opportunities for infrastructure projects – e.g. plant benches, watering system for propagation areas, soil containment structure, etc.

A question now becomes: how clean can we expect to be? Will putting container plants into restoration sites come with a risk of invasive pathogen introduction? I have had many conversations with nursery, restoration, and regulatory organizations these past three months, trying to come up with answers and solutions. In tandem with cleaner growing practices, I am exploring alternative ways to support restoration efforts that may reduce infection risks, and could have side benefits as well (think on-site, or even in situ restoration nursery). Email me if you are interested in talking about this.

Keep in mind that native plant nurseries are not the only vectors of pathogens. Grading and other construction equipment, nearby gardens/communities, and latent pathogens that rear their heads with environmental disturbance or the addition of water. Then there is the issue of the primary introductions. I believe that we can point to the standard horticultural industry as the main factor in importing new pathogens; they have been dealing with exotic pathogens for a long while now.

Some of these widespread pathogens, such as *Phytophthora cinnamomi*, *P. cactorum*, and *Pithyium* spp., can be expected reside somewhere at NHN. I look forward to using trusted procedures and to finding new ways to continue to produce clean nursery stock for the local urban/wild interface of the East Bay.

Theo Fitanides, Native Here Nursery manager



Mount Diablo manzanita (left) and oak mistletoe (right). Photos by Kevin Hints.

KNOWLAND PARK UPDATE

On December 9th, by a vote of 5-2, the Oakland City Council approved a conservation easement on 53 acres of Knowland Park—public parkland—to provide “mitigation” land for the damage the Oakland Zoo’s controversial expansion will cause. On December 16th, the Friends of Knowland Park announced a referendum drive to try to put that decision to a vote of the public.

While acknowledging that the daunting nature of the task—the signatures of more than 21,000 registered Oakland voters would need to be collected in 30 days—members from the Friends of Knowland Park wanted to pursue every chance to save the heart of the park. More than 65 people volunteered to help collect signatures over the holiday season, and money was raised to pay some professional signature gatherers. Unfortunately we were not able to make our goal in such a short time. However, we were able to collect approximately 8,000 signatures—quite an achievement for an almost all-volunteer effort. Many volunteers said that although asking for signatures was outside their comfort zone they felt that it was a positive experience and that strangers thanked them for what they were doing. Because of the efforts of our volunteers, we were able to raise awareness among the public about development threats to our public parkland.

While we were disappointed that we weren’t able to get the required number of signatures to place the easement ordinance on the ballot, we were proud to speak up for our native plant communities, wildlife and public parkland. We wanted our effort on the official record, and so we brought our signed petitions to the Oakland City Clerk’s office on January 9th. There, the City Clerk’s assistant informed us that the City Attorney, Barbara Parker, had sent a letter the previous day, advising them not to accept our petition! She claimed that the City Council’s vote to approve an ordinance granting the

easement in Knowland Park was an administrative act, not a legislative one. Our lawyers disagree. We’ve heard of cities trying to get around public referenda in this way before, only to have their actions thrown out in court. Because we didn’t have the number of votes we needed to get our petition on the ballot, we did not pursue legal action against the city. However, we question the actions of the Oakland city attorney in this matter, as well as in her calling a closed-door meeting of the city council in October to discuss the terms of the easement. It’s a very strange thing to find our city attorney working so hard to protect the interests of the Oakland Zoo instead of the public interest.

The Oakland Zoo plans to break ground in Knowland Park this spring. Will they begin grading and construction, despite their saying that they’re \$10 million short of the \$62 million they need for the project? This leaves open the possibility that they won’t make their goal and the park will be ruined.

The Friends of Knowland Park remain committed to saving Knowland Park and to increasing public awareness of the threats to our parks. We will keep CNPS informed of our activities and events.

We want to thank the many CNPS members who have donated their time and money to the effort to protect Knowland Park. We’d also like to thank Mack Casterman, the Conservation Analyst of the East Bay Chapter of the California Native Plant Society, as well as the many members of the conservation committee who have worked so hard over all these years to document, protect and preserve the natural resources of Knowland Park.

Beth Wurzburg for the Knowland Park Team



Photos from the CNPS Conservation Conference taken by Theo Fitanides, manger of Native Here nursery. To the left, attendees move from one session to another. On the right, CNPS President Dan Gluesenkamp (left) confers with Michael Soule.

CONSERVATION ANALYST APPEAL

Conservation Analyst Fund Appeal is at \$31, 220!

Please join the 178 members and friends who have made donations to support Mack Casterman (shown in photo at right) as our Conservation Analyst. We need \$8780 to reach our goal of \$40,000. Please be as generous as you can.

Send your check made out to California Native Plant Society or CNPS to:
 CNPS East Bay Chapter
 PO Box 5597
 Elmwood Station, Berkeley, CA 94705

Write "Conservation Analyst Fund" in the memo.

Or you can contribute via Paypal at: www.ebcnps.org.

Thanks to all who have contributed so far. We appreciate very much the recent donations from:

Mary Alderson, in honor of Delia Taylor
 Leslie Brandt
 Zelda Bronstein
 Carol and John Casterman
 Mark Detterman

Robert Elia
 Marilyn Halberg
 Dean Kelch and Daniel Weinstein
 David Margolies
 Winton and Margaret McKibben
 Sharon Ordeman
 Sue Rosenthal
 Doris and Richard Ryon
 Amy Stewart
 Mary White, in honor of David Margolies
 Bill and Mary Alice Yund



MESSAGE FROM THE CHAPTER PRESIDENT

Dear East Bay CNPS members,

2015 is starting out with many impressive activities in our chapter. The Conservation Committee is working on several vital projects to protect native plants at Knowland Park, the East Bay Hills along the urban-wildland interface, and on our eastern border at Tesla. The Rare Plant Committee, Unusual Plants Committee, and Vegetation Committee continue their quest to discover and document the status of our native plant resources. Several restoration projects control invasives and reintroduce native plants in preserves in Alameda and Contra Costa counties. Native Here Nursery is in a planning process to expand its sales and services. And we have a vibrant mem-

bership lecture series, field trip program, and a scholarship program for research projects related to our native flora.

I invite you to deepen your appreciation of our native plants by joining us this year. We have activities for all ages, skills, and knowledge, from "beginner" to "expert". Please take a look at our website for opportunities, and contact our volunteer coordinator, Delia Taylor, to find out more.

With best wishes for the new year,

Barbara Malloch Leitner
 East Bay Chapter president

ELECTION RESULTS FOR 2015 CHAPTER OFFICERS

Votes cast: 99

President	Barbara Leitner	99
Vice-President	Beth Wurzburg	99
Treasurer	David Margolies	99
Recording Secretary	Sue Duckles	99
Corresponding Secretary	Clara Gerdes	99

CONSERVATION ANALYST REPORT

EBCNPS Submits Letter in Response to FEMA East Bay Hills Fuels Management Plan

On January 21st the East Bay Chapter of the California Native Plant Society (EBCNPS) submitted a letter to the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) in response to the recently released Final Environmental Impact Statement for their East Bay Hills Fuels Management Plan. EBCNPS's concerns are focused on changes made to the Final Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). Specifically, the Final EIS calls for modification of the projects proposed by Berkeley and Oakland that planned to remove *Eucalyptus* and restore native habitat. FEMA is now requiring that UC Berkeley and Oakland adopt a plan that is similar to that proposed by the East Bay Regional Park District, where *Eucalyptus* stands would be thinned and managed rather than removed. This raises an issue with the regulatory process, since both UC Berkeley and Oakland's projects were determined by the United States Fish and Wildlife Service to be self-mitigating due to the native habitat restoration that would have been achieved.

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

The release of the Final EIS has raised more questions than it has answered. EBCNPS plans to continue following this issue as it develops.

Volunteering: The Conservation Committee is always looking for new volunteers to get involved in our many projects. If you are interested in working with me on any of the projects that you have read about on our blog or in past Conservation Analyst Updates feel free to contact me by phone at 510-734-0335 or by email at conservation@ebcnps.org. For more detailed updates on all of our conservation projects please visit the Conservation Blog at <http://ebcnps.wordpress.com/>.



More photos from the Conservation conference taken by Theo Fitanides and friends. On the left, attendees fuel up on coffee. On the right Theo, Dr. Yost, and friends from Cal Poly react to the auction at the banquet.

FIELD TRIPS FEBRUARY AND EARLY APRIL 2015

Sunday, February 15, 2:00 pm, MacDonald Fire Road in Chabot Regional Park: Meet at the MacDonald Staging Area on Redwood Road in Chabot Regional Park. (Take Highway 13 south to Redwood Road exit, turn left onto Redwood Road after exiting, go over the hill. The MacDonald Staging Area is on the right about one mile into the valley. If you come to the entrance to Redwood Regional Park on the left or to Pinehurst Road, you have gone too far. It is still early for flowers, but some are in bloom as are shrubs and trees. We will look for western leatherwood, which is in flower and visible off trail through the bare branches of other shrubs. And we will see what else is in bloom or starting. An uphill walk but not too strenuous. Meet at 2:00 pm. (We are walking south/southeast towards Castro Valley, so if you are late, just catch up.) Trip leader: David Margolies (divaricatum@gmail.com, 510-393-1858).

phin Charters to Brooks Island in San Francisco Bay, opposite the Richmond shoreline. East Bay Regional Parks provides only limited visitor access, and 22 visitors is maximum enrollment for this trip. The trip fee is \$72.00, and participants should call the reservations line (888-327-2757) with the East Bay Regional Park "course code" of 9076. Do not call the California Native Plant Society because we cannot reserve a spot for you--only EBRP reservations can do that.

Human occupation of Brooks Island goes back about 3000 years to Native American use of this 47-acre island. Since then, the island was a family homestead known as Sheep Island, then used as rock quarry, and finally as the Sheep Island Gun Club before park acquisition. Bring lunch, water, and plant keys and be ready for getting in and out of the Zodiac to land on the small dock.

Saturday, April 4, field trip to Brooks Island. Reservations due March 30: John Kipping will lead this field trip via Dol-

POINT ISABEL RESTORATION IN JANUARY

Point Isabel in January 2015

When we began our revegetation project at Pt. Isabel all those years ago, we were attempting to improve the habitat value of the edge of Hoffman Marsh. When we started, the area was infested with French broom, fennel, radish, cape ivy, ice plant, trash, and more. Much of that is gone as we re-plant with native plants and continuously try to keep up with the annual weeds – a Sisyphean task at times. But, had Sisyphus had our crew of volunteers, he'd have easily pushed that rock over the peak of the mountain on his first attempt. Our stewards and volunteers are relentless and are unfazed by the oxalis and oat grass that are everywhere. They just roll up their sleeves and work!

Our efforts to improve the habitat are really paying off. This month we were delighted to observe a flock of cedar waxwings devouring the berries on the toyon shrubs (*Heteromeles arbutifolia*) planted by project volunteers. Core volunteer John Kenny walked the trail on January 15 and took a short movie (<http://youtu.be/4ju6nFkoAJ8>) of about 3 dozen “masked bandits” that he spotted feasting on toyon berries in a cluster we planted some years back. On January 19 during the King Tide, we spotted the waxwings again resting in a buckeye tree next to the channel and eyeing the remaining berries on

the toyon at the northern edge of the project. White-crowned sparrows are plentiful and harvesting seeds along the bank. We always spot hummingbirds at the site.

Hoffman Marsh is full of birds now. Night herons, great blue herons, egrets, turkey vultures, an osprey, numerous raptors, beautiful ducks of all kinds, willets, cormorants, and more. Core volunteer Rob Kirby has been volunteering for years at Pt. Isabel, attending work parties but also regularly going out on his own to pick up trash and prevent it from entering the marsh. We receive many compliments from passersby about Rob's fantastic work and we know how effective it is.

No rain yet this month but it is planting season and our stewards have been planting out sagebrush (*Artemisia californica*), lizardtail (*Eriophyllum staechadifolium*), and purple needlegrass (*Stipa pulchra*). Stewards and volunteers have also been removing loads of oxalis as well as some invasive box straw, radish and oat grass.

Many thanks as always to East Bay Regional Park District Supervisor Scott Possin and his staff for all of the enthusiastic support they provide for this project. Their consistent collaboration is invaluable.



Top left, Jan 17 volunteers, top right cedar waxwings rest on California buckeyes, bottom January 3 volunteers. Photos by Jane Kelly.

RESTORATION SCHEDULE

Saturday, February 7, 9:30 am, Pt. Isabel restoration (Eastshore State Park) with Tom & Jane Kelly of Greens @ Work

Saturday, February 7, 10 am, Sabercat Creek, Site 3 with City of Fremont Environmental Services. Site 3 is near Via Orinda in Fremont. Bring gloves. For more information go to <https://sites.google.com/site/sabercatcreekrestoration/>

Saturday, February 14, 9:30 am, Huckleberry Regional Park (Oakland)

Meet at the parking lot and we'll decide on a worksite in light of whatever rain falls (or doesn't) in February. You can bring gloves and the tool of your choice, but park staff can provide loaner gloves and tools.

Saturday, February 14, 9:30 am - 12:00 pm, the El Sobrante Library, 4191 Appian Way

Join SPAWNERS as we pull invasive weeds, clean up trash and install native plants at our streamside restoration project at the El Sobrante Library. All ages welcome. Children must be accompanied by an adult. No training necessary. Please wear sturdy shoes, comfortable work clothes, and bring a water bottle. SPAWNERS will provide tools, gloves, and snacks. RSVP to Martha at 510-788-0897 or courtney@thewatershed-project.org if bringing a group of 4 people or more.

Sunday, February 15, 9:00 am, Sibley Regional Park

You can meet with the park staff at the Oakland side parking lot (off Skyline, just north of Huckleberry Park), or come in from the northeast at the Old Tunnel Road staging area. In either case, we'll end up at the toolbox next to the wall of broom above the creek.

Saturday, February 21, 9:30 to 12:30, fern workshop at Garber Park (Oakland)

Join Lech Naumovich and Garber Park Stewards for this fern ID primer and expansion of Fern Glade in the park. Garber Park is an open-space park entirely in Claremont Canyon,

which has at least 5 fern species. The fern glade expansion will clear exotic weeds away from existing populations of sword fern (*Polystichum munitum*) and wood fern (*Dryopteris arguta*). All skill levels are welcome and no previous experience is necessary. Dress in layers to get dirty, and wear sturdy shoes that can grip a slope. Garber Park Stewards will provide tools, water and snacks for the expansion work. The workshop will proceed in light rain, but a downpour will cancel. RSVP as the workshop will be limited in size: E-mail Shelagh at garberparkstewards@gmail.com or call 510-517-1918.

Directions: Meet at the Evergreen Land entrance to Garber Park. This is a subtle end-of-the-road entrance, and the closest address is 144 Evergreen Lane in Berkeley. Drivers can follow Ashby Avenue, then to Alvarado Road to Slater Lane, with a right turn from Slater to Evergreen Lane. Mass transit users can take AC Transit # 49 bus from Rockridge BART to the stop just past the stop light at Claremont and Ashby Avenue. Walk or bike uphill on Claremont past the Claremont Hotel employee parking to the street parking next to the trailhead with the Garber Park Stewards sign.

Saturday, February 21 and Sunday, February 22, 9 am to 3 pm, major broom pull at Skyline at Keller.

The Oakland Fire Department and Wildfire Prevention District are sponsoring this effort to create a firebreak in an area that has seen two small fires in the last year. Terrain is mostly flat. Tools and training provided. No experience necessary. 16 and older please. Wear long pants, long sleeves, and sturdy shoes. Bring gloves, hat, and sunscreen.

Saturday, February 28, 9 am to 3 pm, Beaconsfield Canyon Volunteer Workday

We'll be pulling thistle, vinca and other invasives, working on trails and possibly planting. All are welcome. Gloves, tools provided. Wear long pants, long sleeves and shoes with good treads. Meet at 2639 Beaconsfield Place, off Chelton Drive, in Montclair. Contact is Richard Kauffman: richard@rkcommunications.com.



On the left, Janet Gawthrop explains. On the right, a five finger fern. Photos taken by Phred Jackson on an EBCNPS field trip in Tilden Regional Park on November 28, Buy Nothing Day. During the winter they close off South Park Drive across from the UC Botanical Garden to protect the newts' annual crossing. Read more about the hike at <http://tinyurl.com/kx4hyxs>

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EBCNPS Sponsored Activities

East Bay Chapter News list Emailed announcements of upcoming EBCNPS events

List manager--Martha Booz
mlbooz@calnatives.com

Native Here Nursery

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

Native Here inventory specialist
Adam Huggins

Plant Fair

vacant

Restoration Huckleberry Regional Preserve

Janet Gawthrop, leader
janetgawthrop47@gmail.com

Point Isabel

Tom and Jane Kelly, leaders
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510-684-6484 (c)
kyotousa@sbcglobal.net

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hbartosh@nomadecology.com

John Muir NHS (Martinez)

Elaine Jackson, leader
925-372-0687
elainejx@att.net

Walnut Creek

Lesley Hunt, leader
925-937-6791
ldhunt@astound.net

Membership Application and Renewal Form

Name _____

Address _____

Zip _____ Telephone _____

Email _____

I wish to affiliate with:

___ East Bay Chapter (Alameda and Contra Costa Counties)

___ Other _____

Membership category:

___ Individual, \$45

___ Family, Library, Group or International, \$75

___ Plant lover, \$100

___ Patron, \$300

___ Benefactor, \$600

___ Mariposa Lily, \$1500

___ Limited Income or student, \$25.00

___ Other _____

Mail application and check to: California Native Plant Society, 2707 K Street, Suite 1,
Sacramento CA 95816