



YERBA  
BUENA  
NEWS

THE YERBA BUENA  
CHAPTER OF THE  
CALIFORNIA  
NATIVE PLANT  
SOCIETY FOR  
SAN FRANCISCO  
AND NORTHERN  
SAN MATEO COUNTY

Vol. 29 No. 4 ■ March 2016

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**PROGRAMS**

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Everyone is welcome to attend membership meetings in the Recreation Room of the San Francisco County Fair Building (SFCFB) at 9<sup>th</sup> Avenue and Lincoln Way in Golden Gate Park. The #71 and #44 buses stop at the building. The N-Judah, #6, #43, and #66 lines stop within 2 blocks. Please note location on May 12<sup>th</sup> is at SFSU, Botany Lab.

Before our programs, we take our speakers to dinner at Chang's Kitchen, 1030 Irving Street, between 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> Avenues. Join us for good Chinese food and interesting conversation. Meet at the restaurant at 5:30 pm. On May 12<sup>th</sup>, join us for dinner at the Olive Garden in Stonestown Galleria after the program. RSVP appreciated but not required. If you wish to notify, please call Jake Sigg at 415-731-3028.

**MARCH 3, THURSDAY, 7:30 PM**

*An Ocean Garden: The Secret Life of Seaweed*

**Speaker: Josie Iselin**

Josie Iselin will discuss her evolution as a book maker and photographer whose books focus on forms in nature and in particular the beach as a place where science and art come together. Josie will then use her most recent book as a guide into the intertidal zone and the fascinating world of ocean flora found there. She will introduce some of the most common seaweeds found here in the Northern California tide-pools. Her spectacular imagery will accompany throughout the talk.

Josie Iselin is the photographer, author and designer of seven books, with new project in development in her San Francisco studio, Loving Blind Productions. Josie holds a BA in Visual and Environmental Studies from Harvard and MFA from San Francisco State University. As a fine artist, Josie exhibits large-scale prints at select galleries and museums in California and Maine. She hopes that celebrating the ordinary wonders we find at the beach will bring thoughtfulness and stewardship to this extraordinary place of discovery.

**APRIL 7, THURSDAY, 7:30 PM**

*The Flora of San Francisco's Dune Habitats*

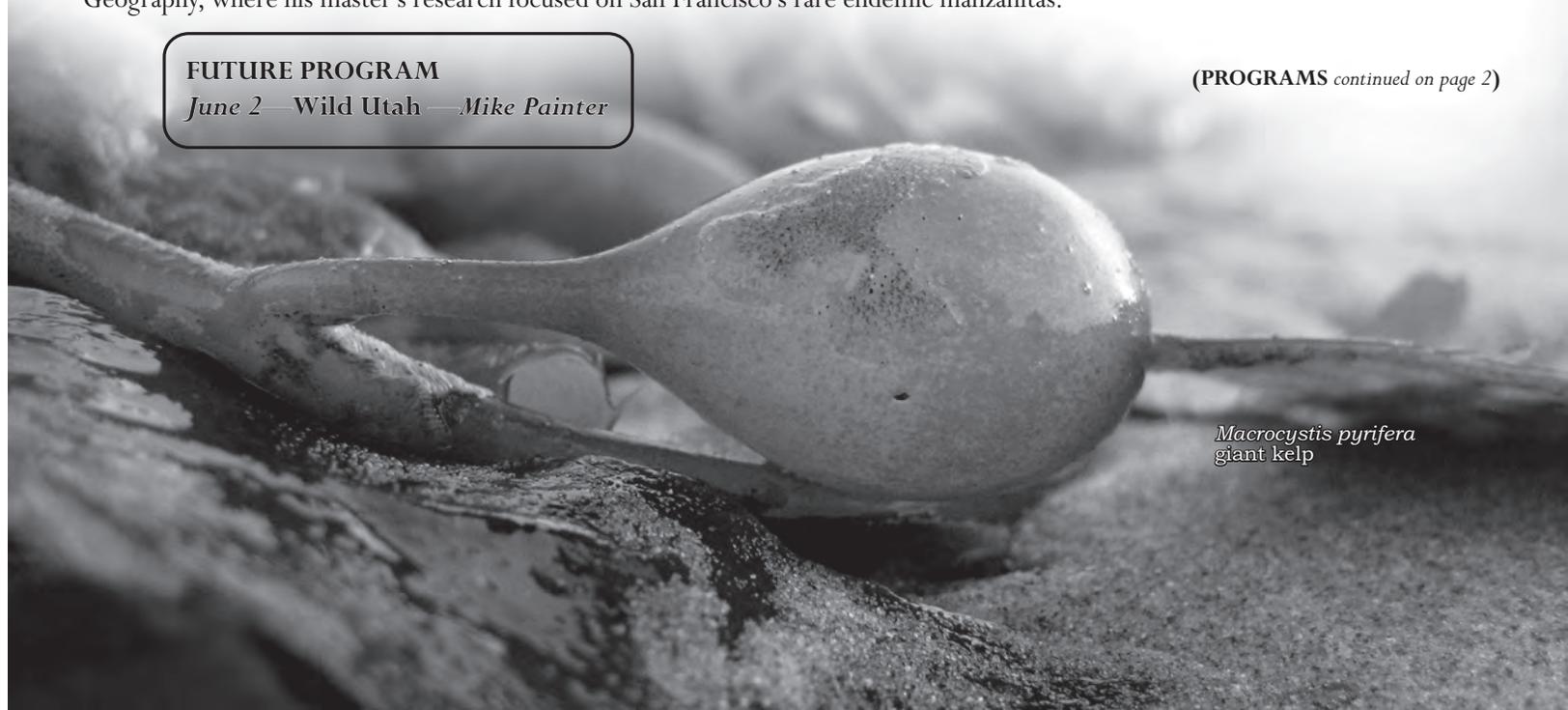
**Speaker: Michael Chasse**

San Francisco's sand dunes have gotten a bad rap. The vast dune complex upon which our city was built has often been described as a barren wasteland. It's an oversimplified narrative that served useful to a rapidly developing city, yet is far from accurate. San Francisco's dune habitats supported a rich flora growing in a variety of plant communities. Much of the city's dune flora, although fragmented and greatly reduced in size, still persists in our protected natural areas. This talk will dig deeper into the botanical history of San Francisco's dunes, then jump forward to an exploration of the vascular plant diversity which can be observed today. Efforts to preserve and restore San Francisco's dune habitats will be highlighted. Michael Chasse has been involved with natural areas stewardship in San Francisco for 20 years. He is currently a stewardship ecologist for the National Park Service, working to protect and restore local natural areas with the support of community volunteers. Much of his work is in dune habitats at the Presidio, Lands End, Fort Funston, and in Marin County at Muir Beach. Michael is a graduate of San Francisco State University's Department of Geography, where his master's research focused on San Francisco's rare endemic manzanitas.

**FUTURE PROGRAM**

June 2—Wild Utah—Mike Painter

(PROGRAMS continued on page 2)



*Macrocystis pyrifera*  
giant kelp

## PROGRAMS *(continued)*

**Please note the changes in date, time and/or location for our “Double Feature” Programs in May**

**MAY 11, (SECOND WEDNESDAY), 7:30 PM**

*The Secret Trees of the Sierra de Guadalupe Canyon*

**Speaker: Jon Harman, Ph.D.**

In 1718 Padre Ugarte needed a ship. The fledgling missions of Baja California needed supplies from mainland Mexico across the Sea of Cortez, but the ships available for purchase were “rotten worn-out old hulks only fit to drown Jesuits in”. Padre Juan determined to build his own. He hired shipwrights from Mexico, but needed lumber. This he found in an inaccessible canyon in the Sierra de Guadalupe near Mulege. There he logged huge trees and miraculously managed to get the lumber down to the coast. The ship he built was called Triunfo de la Cruz. The talk will document Jon Harman’s trip to the grove of *Populus brandegeei* and will present evidence that this may well have been Padre Ugarte’s grove.

Jon Harman, medical imaging consultant, has had a long career designing mathematical algorithms for medical imaging devices (CAT scanners and Ophthalmologic scanners). Jon has also been involved in the photographing, surveying, and recording of rock art sites in Baja California, California, Nevada, Utah, North Africa, and France. He has worked with US Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management archaeologists surveying petroglyph sites in the Tahoe National Forest and pictograph sites in the Carrizo Plain National Monument. He received his undergraduate degree at the University of Wisconsin, Madison and received his Ph.D. in mathematics from the University of California, Berkeley.

**MAY 12 (SECOND THURSDAY), 6:00 PM – 7:30 PM**

*Introducing Bryophytes - the other land plants*

**Speaker: Ken Kellman**

**LOCATION: San Francisco State University, 1600 Holloway Ave., Hensill Hall, Botany Lab, Room 440**

They’re all around us, in the woods and even in our streets. But have you ever taken a close – a really close – look at a moss, or the fleshy-looking spread of a liverwort?

Lacking flowers, fruits, or a vascular system, bryophytes have evolved surprising solutions to life’s challenges. Expert bryologist Ken Kellman will open your eyes to the small-scale wonders of these amazing life-forms at his presentation. We will be using dissecting microscopes to peer at the live specimens.

Ken Kellman first began to notice bryophytes in 1995 and almost immediately found species never before observed in our area.

Excited by the opportunity to make a contribution to science, he abandoned “normal” botanizing in pursuit of these tiny plants. His explorations have revealed several species new to science, and many more new to the central coast and the state.

Ken is an instructor at the Jepson Herbarium weekend workshops in Bryology. He has published *A Catalog of the Mosses of Santa Cruz County*, and is now collecting for a similar project in Monterey and San Mateo counties.



“Commonly we stride through the out-of-doors too swiftly to see more than the most obvious and prominent things. For observing nature, the best pace is a snail’s pace.”—Edwin Way Teale

## FIELD TRIPS

Members and non-members are encouraged to attend these FREE walks. Signups are not required. Contacts for additional information are listed at the end of each trip description. If rain is forecast, we recommend checking with the contact a couple of hours before the trip.

**MARCH 5, SATURDAY, 1 pm – 3 pm**

*Starr King Open Space*

**Leader: Jake Sigg**

California’s rare plant occurrences are heavily concentrated in areas containing serpentine soils, which are chemically unfriendly to most plant life. The Starr King Open Space sits on a band of serpentine substrate that runs through San Francisco southeast to northwest. It is owned by the residents of Potrero Hill, and managed by a board of directors, some of whom will attend this walk. One plant of particular interest is the yellow mariposa lily (*Calochortus luteus*). The locally rare bladder parsley (*Lomatium utriculatum*) was still present a few years ago and we will see if it is hanging on. Many other species are there, too: checker bloom, blue dicks, Ithuriel’s spear, yarrow, buckwheat, bunchgrasses, etc. No one knows more about San Francisco’s native plants than Jake; he will discuss prospects for their survival despite conservation threats. **Heavy rain postpones until April 9.** Meet in front of Starr King School on Carolina Street between 23<sup>rd</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup> Streets. Contact: Jake Sigg, jakesigg@earthlink.net or 415-731-3028.

**MARCH 19, SATURDAY, 10 am – 12:30 pm**

*Glen Canyon Spiders*

**Leader: Darrell Ubick**

Join California Academy of Sciences arachnologist Darrell Ubick for a springtime trip in search of spiders. They are abundant in Glen Canyon Park—probably hundreds of thousands of individuals representing hundreds of species. We are sure to see a variety since Darrell knows where to look and how to catch them without harming them. Along the way, he’ll share his knowledge of spider biology: how they make and use silk, find mates, tend their eggs, etc. Spiders are very diverse, and only some are orb weavers; this trip will expand your awareness of the invertebrates among us. **If it’s too wet for spidering, we’ll try again on March 26.** Meet behind the Glen Park Recreation Center where the lawn stops and the wild part of the canyon starts. Contact: Gail Wechsler, wechslerifolia@gmail.com.

**APRIL 2, SATURDAY, 10 am – 1 pm**

*San Bruno Mountain: Owl Canyon*

**Leader: Doug Allshouse**

Owl Canyon is not as heavily forested as the adjacent Buckeye Canyon, and has a bit more wildflower diversity. It is still recovering from a 2008 wildfire, and evidence of adaptation to a fire regime is everywhere. Many tree and shrub stumps have sprouted—oak, bay, toyon, hazelnut, ocean spray, hollyleaf cherry, coffeeberry, oso berry—and fire-reliant blueblossom seeds in the soil have produced large thickets on the canyon sides. We’ll have a chance of seeing larkspur, star lily, hound’s

(FIELD TRIPS *continued on page 3*)

## FIELD TRIPS *(continued)*

tongue, paintbrush, lupine, johnny jump-up, blue-eyed grass, clematis, and many ferns. After a stop for lunch or a snack on the flowering grassland ridge that connects with Buckeye Canyon, we'll look for colonies of blennosperma on the way down.

**Heavy rain postpones to April 9.** From Bayshore Boulevard in Brisbane turn onto Valley Drive. Turn left at the traffic light onto South Hill Drive. Turn left at the Aircraft Technical Publishers sign at 101 South Hill. Meet in the rear of the parking lot.

Contact: Doug Allshouse, dougsr228@comcast.net, 415-584-5114, or cell 415-269-9967.

### APRIL 17, SUNDAY, 10 am – noon

#### *Sign Hill (South San Francisco)*

**Leaders: Liam O'Brien, Loretta Brooks, Chuck Heimstadt**

Liam O'Brien is a lepidopterist, artist/illustrator, and award-winning environmental educator. Loretta Brooks and Chuck Heimstadt live on the edge of Sign Hill and have become its ardent stewards. Participants will benefit from their collective knowledge and enthusiasm. We expect to see plenty of wildflowers, including silver bush lupine, host plant of the endangered mission blue butterfly; fields of California poppies; and perhaps coastal larkspur with its electric blue blooms. A portion of this gorgeous grassland is protected as Sign Hill Park, and the other 47 acres are equally worthy of preservation yet are privately owned and vulnerable to development. **Significant rain or high wind will postpone to April 24.** We will walk at a leisurely pace, but due to uneven ground and steep trails we recommend wearing sturdy shoes and long pants. Meet at Sign Hill Park's west entrance: from the Oyster Point exit off 101, go west on Hillside Blvd to Stonegate Drive, turn off Hillside and keep going uphill on Ridgeview Court to the end. Contact: Chuck Heimstadt or Loretta Brooks, chuckheimstadt@yahoo.com or 650-952-6174.

## ACTIVITIES

### 2016 SAN FRANCISCO FLOWER & GARDEN SHOW!—VOLUNTEERS ENCOURAGED!

The Yerba Buena Chapter will again be coordinating the CNPS booth at the annual **San Francisco Flower & Garden Show**.

**When:** Wednesday - Sunday March 16-20, 2016 (10am-7pm; 6pm Sunday) **Volunteers much needed for set up on Tuesday March 18.**

**Where:** San Mateo Event Center, 2495 South Delaware Street, San Mateo. (Parking is plentiful and there is public transportation/shuttle to the site.)

### APRIL 23, SATURDAY 10 am – 2 pm

#### *San Bruno Mountain: Summit Trail*

**Leader: Doug Allshouse**

The Summit Trail is a 3-mile loop in the northern portion of the mountain, and it has very high species diversity: more than 170 native species and 250 altogether. From Radio Road it passes through eucalyptus and descends past active seeps to reach April Brook; we'll see horsetails, fringe cups, iris, coast rock cress, ferns, and hopefully woodland star. From there we'll head up a ridge dotted with isolated grasslands to Bitter Cherry Ridge, where there are views of the ocean and the Daly City dunes. We'll cross the summit, check out some interesting manzanitas and huckleberries at Kamchatka Point, then descend through Cable Ravine back to the parking lot. Elevation gain on this walk is about 400 feet. **Heavy rain postpones until April 30.** Bring a lunch/snack and layers of clothing; due to the marine influence you never know what weather to expect. At the park entrance on Guadalupe Canyon Parkway, pay the \$6 fee at the kiosk, turn right at the stop sign, continue under the overpass, and meet in the parking lot on the other side of Guadalupe Canyon Parkway. Contact: Doug Allshouse, dougsr228@comcast.net, 415-584-5114, or cell 415-269-9967.

### MAY 29, SUNDAY, 11 am – 3:30 pm

#### *Montara Mountain Manzanitas in Spring*

**Leader: Mike Vasey**

This trip is the second in the manzanitas-through-the-seasons series planned for 2016, allowing participants to observe plants in a single location as they go through their annual cycle of growth and reproduction. Mike Vasey is a coauthor of the excellent new *Field Guide to Manzanitas* (available at store.cnps.org). He will give tips on how to identify manzanitas and discuss what makes this a quintessential California genus. Montara's manzanitas already flowered in December-January, and by late spring we expect to see fruit and immature inflorescences. The latter emerge immediately after the plant flowers then stay in suspended animation for most of the year; they are important in distinguishing species. **Seriously wet weather will postpone this trip to June 5.** Meet at San Pedro Valley County Park near the visitor center, at the end of Linda Mar Boulevard in Pacifica. Contact: Gail Wechsler,

**Website:** [www.gardenshow.org](http://www.gardenshow.org)

This will be the 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of this popular Bay Area garden event, which features garden displays, seminars, children's activities, and of course, many educational and sales booths.

*Our beautiful booths over the past several years have been very effective!*

Over the five-day show, our volunteers inform *thousands* of people about CNPS. Using the many plants in our display, we explain the benefits of planting local natives, sign up new members, and have *lots of fun!*

For more information and to volunteer, please contact Ellen Edelson, e.edelson@sbcglobal.net, 415-531-2140.

## ACTIVITIES *(continued)*

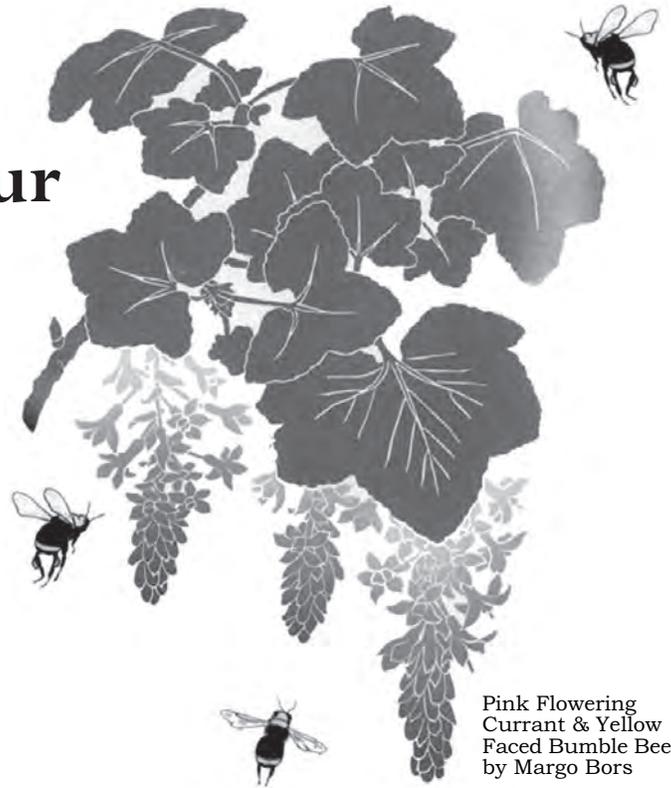
# 11th San Francisco Native Plant Garden Tour

Sunday April 24, 2016  
11am-3pm

FREE ADMISSION, NO REGISTRATION REQUIRED

SAVE THE DATE for the Native Plant Garden Tour organized by the CNPS Yerba Buena Chapter. The purpose of the tour is to expose gardeners to native plants, their charms and benefits, and to show some of the possibilities of including them in an attractive, wildlife-friendly, water-wise garden. To this end we include an array of private gardens: mature gardens featuring 100% natives (focusing on compatible plantings), mixed gardens, professionally designed and maintained artistic gardens, gardens focusing on habitat for wildlife (for example, the chorus frog), gardens integrating food production, and gardens in transition to include more natives.

Check the website for more information in later March. Further information: Susan Floore at [sfloore@att.net](mailto:sfloore@att.net) or 415.285.4692. Also, please let Susan know if you can volunteer to assist with tour planning or to host one of the gardens on the day of the tour.



Pink Flowering  
Currant & Yellow  
Faced Bumble Bee  
by Margo Bors

Visit [sfnativegardentour.org](http://sfnativegardentour.org) for up-to-date information.

### PLANT IDENTIFICATION WORKSHOPS

Second Thursday of the month 6 – 7:30 pm.  
San Francisco State University

1600 Holloway Avenue  
Hensill Hall, Botany Lab, Room 440

Note: May 12<sup>th</sup> will be a program on bryophytes given by Ken Kellman.

**We will discuss a plant family for approximately 30 minutes and then delve into keying plant(s) of the same family.** Understanding the characteristics of plant families is important not only when keying plants but also when botanizing while hiking or walking.

Talented and knowledgeable graduate botany students at San Francisco State University lead the workshops on the second Thursday of the month. Refer to the program page of this newsletter to learn more about it. The atmosphere is relaxed. Bring your copy of the new edition of the *Jepson Manual* and a hand lens. If you have any further questions, please email Mila Stroganoff at [milastroganoff@sbcglobal.net](mailto:milastroganoff@sbcglobal.net).

Getting to SFSU by public transit: MUNI's M-Ocean line and #28 bus both stop at 19<sup>th</sup> Ave & Holloway Street. At the Daly City BART station, board a SFSU shuttle which runs every 10-15 minutes. If you drive, there is street parking on 19<sup>th</sup> Avenue as well as paid campus parking. Hensill Hall is located just off 19<sup>th</sup> Avenue, between Winston and Holloway.

### SPRING EVENTS ON MOUNT SUTRO

#### Guided Wildflower Walks

Saturday, March 26, 10 am  
Sunday, April 10, 1 pm  
Saturday, April 30, 10 am

#### Plant Sale & Open House

Mount Sutro Native Plant Nursery  
Saturday, March 12, 10 am - 3 pm  
For more information visit [www.sutrostewards.org](http://www.sutrostewards.org).



*Asarum caudatum* wild ginger

# DOUG'S MOUNTAIN JOURNAL

## A Chronicle of Natural History on San Bruno Mountain

by Doug Allshouse

Something that was missing the past few winters has finally found its way home. After living with and frankly loving the mild days and nights, the return of really cold nights and mornings has been welcomed with open arms. Actually it has meant wearing gloves and a thermal shirt under my trusty 15-year old Alvarado Street Bakery hoodie that was given to me prior to my retirement from Safeway in 2001. Looking out the window at the thermometer on the fence to see temperatures of 34-44 degrees at 6:00 AM is bracing compared to temps in the mid- 50s the past few winters. Maybe our native perennials will actually experience dormancy.

Winter is the season of renewal, of rebirth on the West Coast. It's my second favorite season after spring. But the one thing I miss during winter is the dearth of easily accessible, organic and gluten-free snacks: like wild blackberries, huckleberries, miner's lettuce, and strawberries. As for the mild-peppery flowers and sweet-piquant pods of wild radish, if you can't kill them—EAT THEM! I could include the bitter-sweet taste of ripe, black coffee berries if it weren't for their cathartic properties when consuming too many. The genus of *Rhamnus* is used world-wide as a laxative.

And that brings up a gripe of mine, a head-scratcher in fact; just what was wrong with *Rhamnus* that it had to be changed to *Frangula*? What was wrong with *Myrica* (wax myrtle) that it had to become *Morella* and, for crying out loud, it was so much easier to say and remember *Picris* (prickly ox-tongue) than *Helminthotheca*? These taxonomists need to leave well enough alone!! I hadn't even gotten familiar 25 years ago with the genus *Orthocarpus* (owl's clovers) when it became necessary to learn not one but two new genera for it, *Castilleja* and *Triphysaria*. But probably my most memorable scrape with changing taxonomy began in October 2014 when I updated my San Bruno Mountain plant database to the Jepson 2 nomenclature, not a small feat to be sure. Scarlet pimpernel, *Anagallis arvensis*, changed families from the Primrose family to the Myrsine family. In February 2015 I got around to writing a plant description for scarlet pimpernel only to discover that in just the few months since October they had also changed the genus to *Lysimachia*! I am sure happy that I didn't buy the hard copy of Jepson.

In the "Good news-bad news" department, we are experiencing a wetter January than last year's January goose egg with more storms and far more snow where it counts, which is good news. The bad news is that locally we are still behind last year's rainfall totals by 3.4 inches and the El Nino storms and pounding surf threaten to eat Pacifica's coastline until it hits bedrock.

At the end of September I heard and saw a Swainsons Thrush hiding in a large patch of arroyo willows on the Bog Trail. This is highly unusual since they breed here and this guy should have headed south by August. Two weeks later, on consecutive days, I heard my first Varied Thrush and Hermit Thrush. Only once in the 34 years that I have traversed the trails have I seen these three thrushes on the same day. It's extremely rare. It's also rare to see two Black and Yellow Argiope spiders, a male and a female. These orb weavers are commonly called garden spiders and they rest on the middle of their large webs with adjacent legs together; making it appear as though they have 4 legs, in an X shape. They also make a white zigzag band vertically across the middle of the web.

One morning I was standing on the upper bridge of Colma Creek admiring the creek dogwood. In late fall and throughout the winter the red bark intensifies in color making this deciduous shrub even more noticeable. Add in the bluish-white berries and it's quite the sight to see. There was a fog hanging in the air and all was quiet, very peaceful, and I was settling into this blissful moment when a flicker decided to announce its presence. My peace was shattered, but only briefly; after all, flickers are cool.

Where did the term "bird brain" come from? I think I have at least one answer to that question and I nominate the Black Phoebe as the perhaps the most exquisite example. So I'm walking along the Old Guadalupe Trail—actually it's a road—one morning and 50 feet in front of me is this phoebe. As I get closer to him, he becomes afraid and flies 30 feet further down the road. As I approach him again the same thing happens. To be honest, I have observed this behavior in other birds before with the Mourning Dove being especially guilty of this, too. This phoebe kept flying and landing, flying and landing for at least 300 yards until it finally wised up and flew onto a bush at the side of the road and stayed there until I passed. It never ceases to amaze me why the birds haven't figured out that all they have to do is to fly around and land behind me. Problem solved!

Those who follow my mountain moments know about my scrapes with skunks. The more I encounter them the less concerned I get, except for one particular encounter in December. The exception to the rule is when two skunks fight with each other. I got out of the house a wee bit earlier than usual and December mornings stay a wee bit darker a wee bit longer. I was barely able to see three skunks ahead of me when suddenly two of them began screaming at each other and engaging in nose-to-nose contact which transitioned into tumbling about. There was nothing anyone could threaten me with to make me take a step closer to the combatants; best to just let them figure it out. Eventually one of them turned tail and walked away and the three went their separate ways allowing me to resume to my destination.

But just a few dark mornings ago in late January, I heard a similar scream and began looking down to locate another skunk. Suddenly I saw movement about 15 feet up a eucalyptus tree and just as suddenly I saw a silhouette of about 4 feet of wings unfurl and fly away. I turned my flashlight on to no avail and wisely assumed it to be a juvenile Great-horned Owl. It probably was the same owl I heard last fall with its mother. Juvenile GHOs sound like a rusty gate hinge. There are two pairs of owls calling to each other, the Crocker Gate pair and a new pair near Colma Creek. It will be interesting to see if the newbies produce youngsters.

A couple of things are happening that point toward spring. I've been hearing Bewick's and Winter Wrens singing and the woodland sanicle and footsteps-of-spring are popping out of the ground to keep the horseweed company along the trails. In the weeks to come more company should be arriving and the party will get started.



See you on the mountain...

## HABITAT RESTORATION

Please help us update these listings. If you have corrections or additions, please send them to [kimnich@hotmail.com](mailto:kimnich@hotmail.com).

 **Bookmark the daily event calendar** at <http://cnps-yerbabuena.org/calendar>

### **Alemanys Natives at Alemany Farm.**

3rd Sundays, 1 to 4pm. Contact: [alemanynatives@gmail.com](mailto:alemanynatives@gmail.com)

### **Bayview Hill.**

2nd Saturdays

Contact Joe Grey [joe.grey@sfgov.org](mailto:joe.grey@sfgov.org)

### **Bernal Hilltop.**

3rd Saturdays, 10 am to 12 pm. Work party contact Rachel Kesel [rachel.kesel@sfgov.org](mailto:rachel.kesel@sfgov.org); Groups contact Joe Grey 415-831-6328.

### **Brooks Park.**

Contact Joe Grey [Joe.Grey@sfgov.org](mailto:Joe.Grey@sfgov.org)

### **Buena Vista Park.**

1st Saturdays, 9am to noon.

Contact [Joe.Grey@sfgov.org](mailto:Joe.Grey@sfgov.org) or 415-831-6328.

**Candlestick State Park Nursery.** 1150 Carroll Street. 1st Saturdays, 10am to 2pm. Bay Youth for the Environment. Contact Patrick Rump [bye@lejyouth.org](mailto:bye@lejyouth.org).

### **Castro-Duncan Open Space.**

Contact Dave Thompson or Gloria Koch-Gonzalez

415-821-7601.

### **CNPS Native Plant Restoration Team.**

Every Wednesday, noon to 3pm. Contact Jake Sigg

415-731-3028 or [jakesigg@earthlink.net](mailto:jakesigg@earthlink.net).

### **Corona Heights.**

Last Saturdays, 10 am to noon.

### **Golden Gate National Recreation Area.**

Weekdays and weekends around the Bay Area.

Contact [volunteer@parksconservancy.org](mailto:volunteer@parksconservancy.org) or

415-561-3044.

**Glen Canyon.** Wednesdays & 3rd Saturdays, 9am to noon. Friends of Glen Canyon. Contact [rachel.kesel@sfgov.org](mailto:rachel.kesel@sfgov.org)

### **Golden Gate Heights Sandy Dunes Native Plant Community Garden.**

Contact Barbara Kobayashi [okim1946@yahoo.com](mailto:okim1946@yahoo.com).

### **Golden Gate Park Oak Woodlands.**

2nd Saturdays, 10am to 12:30pm.

Contact Rob Bakewell 415-710-9617 or [rcbakewell@gmail.com](mailto:rcbakewell@gmail.com)

### **Green Hairstreak Butterfly Corridor.**

3rd Saturday, 10 am to noon. Contact Nature in the City [stewards@natureinthecity.org](mailto:stewards@natureinthecity.org)

### **Half Moon Bay State Beach.**

650-726-8801 or [hmbrestore@gmail.com](mailto:hmbrestore@gmail.com)

### **Heron's Head Park.**

2nd Saturdays, 9am to noon.

Contact Raynelle Rino 415-282-6840 or [raynelle.rino@lejyouth.org](mailto:raynelle.rino@lejyouth.org)

### **Lake Merced.**

3rd Saturdays, 10am to noon.

Contact Joe Grey [joegrey@sfgov.org](mailto:joegrey@sfgov.org)

### **Linda Mar State Beach**

4th Sundays, 10am to noon. Contact 650-451-1130 or

[94116bc@gmail.com](mailto:94116bc@gmail.com).

### **Marin Headlands Native Plant Nursery.**

Wednesday, 1 to 4 pm & Saturday, 9am to noon.

Contact 415-332-5193 or

[AShor@parksconservancy.org](mailto:AShor@parksconservancy.org).

### **McLaren Park.**

2nd Saturdays of even months,

10am to noon. Contact [Joe.Grey@sfgov.org](mailto:Joe.Grey@sfgov.org) or

415-831-6328.

### **McKinley Square Hillside.**

2nd Sundays, 10am to noon. [www.McKinleySquare.com](http://www.McKinleySquare.com) or

[chris@McKinleySquare.org](mailto:chris@McKinleySquare.org).

### **Mission Creek Bank.**

Generally Saturday mornings. Contact Ginny Stearns for times 415-

552-4577 or [GinnyStearns@gmail.com](mailto:GinnyStearns@gmail.com).

### **Mt. Sutro.**

Wednesdays 9:30am-12:30pm at the nursery; 1st and 3rd Saturdays 9am to 1pm Visit

<http://sutrostewards.org>

**Pacifica's Environmental Family.** 4th Sundays, 10 am. Contact Lynn Adams 650-355-1668.

**Pigeon Point Lighthouse.** Contact Restoration Coordinator 650-726-8801.

### **San Bruno Mountain.**

Tuesdays, 10:30 am to

12:30 pm: Earthcare Wetlands Project;

Wednesdays, 10am to 12:30pm: Greenhouse

volunteers-Mission Blue Nursery;

Saturdays, 10am to 12:30pm: Weed Rangers

Stewardship Outing; Saturdays, 10am to noon: Bog

Restoration; 4th Fridays & Saturdays, 9am to noon:

South San Francisco Weed Rangers

[www.mountainwatch.org](http://www.mountainwatch.org), 415-467-6631.

### **SF Recreation & Parks Department. Natural Areas Program.**

Joe.Grey@sfgov.org or 415-

831-6328.

### **San Pedro Valley County Park, Pacifica.**

3rd Saturdays, 9am. Contact Carolyn Pankow

650-355-7466.

### **Save the Bay.**

Tidal marsh habitats. Saturdays,

9 am to noon. Native Plant Nursery work on the

first two Wednesdays of the month. Contact Casey

Ogden 510-452-6850 [cogden@saveSFbay.org](mailto:cogden@saveSFbay.org), or

[www.saveSFbay.org/volunteer](http://www.saveSFbay.org/volunteer).

### **Shields/Orizaba Rocky Outcrop.**

Contact Paul Koski at [pkoski7@netscape.net](mailto:pkoski7@netscape.net).

### **Starr-King Open Space.**

Serpentine grassland on Potrero Hill. 2nd Saturdays, 9:30 am to noon.

Contact Tom tphilip@yahoo.com.

### **Tennessee Valley Nursery and Stewards.**

Every Tuesday, 10am to noon & 1 to 4pm.

Contact 415-289-1860 or

[lponzini@parksconservancy.org](mailto:lponzini@parksconservancy.org)

### **UCSF Mount Sutro Open Space Reserve.**

1st & 3rd Saturdays, 9am to 12:30pm. Contact

[Craig@sutrostewards.org](mailto:Craig@sutrostewards.org) or 415-665-1077.

### **White-Crowned Sparrow**

3rd Saturdays, 9am - noon

Contact [sfrpd.volunteerprogram@sfgov.org](mailto:sfrpd.volunteerprogram@sfgov.org)

## CHAPTER NEWS

### PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

by Ellen Edelson

As this Spring 2016 edition of Yerba Buena News is so wonderfully filled with spring activities and great articles, I will limit my message to this: 2016 marks Yerba Buena Chapter's 30th Anniversary! Our chapter was established in 1986, after the original "Bay Area Group" gave way, over time, to the local geographic chapters we have long been familiar with. The Bay Area Group, based in Berkeley, gave birth to the California Native Plant Society! CNPS celebrated it's 50th Anniversary last year. (See Fremontia: Vol. 43, No. 3, September 2015)

Throughout the year, we plan to highlight Yerba Buena Chapter's history: it's origins, developments, growth, challenges, and accomplishments. In doing so, we will also feature some of the many members who contributed to our chapter's success, and, of course, some of the plants and open spaces we have been working hard to care for. We will also take a look ahead to the work still before us—with the same dedication, determination, and enthusiasm that guided us these past 30 years!

Whether you're a relatively new member, a 30 year (or longer) CNPS veteran, or joined anywhere in between, we welcome your help and input! Photos, newsletters, articles, info, stories-

-for sharing in our newsletter, on our website and/or for display at our monthly programs are welcome. Stay tuned!

I cannot close without announcing that Eddie Bartley and Noreen Weeden have joined the Board! Despite sitting in on their first YB Board meeting only last fall, our chapter has already benefitted from their gentle passion, broad knowledge, and willingness to help! Thanks and welcome!



"Nature never blunders; when she makes a fool she means it."

—Josh Billings

*(especially apropos for this election year - Ed.)*

# CONSERVATION

## The Threat of Oxalis

by Jake Sigg

It's spring, and the hills are filled with the sounds of oxalis. The brash yellow of *Oxalis pes-caprae* can almost break the sound barrier. And--have you noticed?--there is more and more of it every year?

Perhaps I shouldn't open a a serious article in a flippant way. The damage yellow oxalis is doing to our wildflower fields is huge and increasing.

First, a few remarks about the marvels of the plant--for it is an ingenious combination of factors that promote its ability to thrive. The *Oxalis pes-caprae* plants that have invaded all the Mediterranean-type climates of the world don't produce seed! That seems a disadvantage, but fruiting costs plants a lot of energy, energy that oxalis can devote to vegetative reproduction. It is photosynthetically active only in the rainy season--again, a seeming disadvantage in competing with plants that capture the sun's energy year-round. But those plants have to make it through tough times when water is hard come-by, and that eats into a plant's energy budget. Whatever the techniques, I know of no plants that can stand up to oxalis; where it invades it comes out on top. I have seen even the short-lived coyote bush yield ground to it; when coyote bush dies of age it is unable to regenerate from seed, because the oxalis has ways of preventing seed germination.

This short article is an attempt to draw attention to the consequences of the massive takeover of our land by this pest plant. Where it grows, the public may see masses of pretty yellow, but perhaps doesn't think of what until very recently occupied that same space. Lacking any natural controls--it left those controls in its native South Africa--there is nothing to stop oxalis here. To boot, it is apparently allelopathic; that is, it appears to prevent germination of seeds and to inhibit growth of existing plants. At time of writing I am unaware of research on this, but observation clearly indicates allelopathy, and no other explanation accounts for what is seen. Advent of oxalis in a given area is followed by decline and elimination of other plant species in a short time. The endgame is a monoculture.

This is a more serious situation than people credit. If it kills off all competitors, what is to clothe the ground during oxalis's dormant period during the summer and autumn months? Nothing; you will be looking at bare soil.

If this tap-rooted plant, lacking a network of fibrous roots, takes over and excludes soil-binding perennial grasses and forbs, that means there is nothing to hold the soil against erosion. Worse, it means there will be nothing for wildlife, nothing for foragers such as hawks, owls, and coyotes, nothing for bees and butterflies to pollinate or lay their eggs on. It will be an ecological tragedy: the ecosystem, once gone, cannot be recreated. What was once a rich and diverse area sustaining wildflowers and a large and various wildlife community now becomes a biological wasteland. That cannot be allowed to happen.

There is still time to save it, but it will require immediate public attention and support for the Natural Areas Program.

How can we prevent this loss of grassy hillsides? We don't have many tools in our toolbox. It is necessary to kill the bulb, which

## BOARD MEETINGS

Board meetings are open to all Chapter members. They are held on the second Monday of every month (except August and December) at 350 Amber Drive (SF Police Academy) and start at 7 pm. Contact Ellen Edelson (e.edelson@sbcglobal.net) for more information.

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otherwise continues to send up new shoots. The only means of killing the bulb is by herbicide. For reasons not clear to me-- who has used herbicides to advantage for many decades--some members of the public have exaggerated fears regarding their use. For those experienced in their use, they are cleverly designed to work along specific pathways in plants, pathways that don't exist in animals. Fear of their use may be little more than a generalized, misplaced anxiety.



# JOIN THE CALIFORNIA NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY

Learn to understand California's unique flora and help to preserve this rich heritage for future generations.

\_\_\_\_ Yes, I'd like to join.

Affiliation: **Yerba Buena Chapter**

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Make your check out to "CNPS" and mail with this form to:

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2707 K Street, Suite 1  
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## YERBA BUENA NEWS

Volume 30, number 1 (March 2016)

Published quarterly by the Yerba Buena Chapter  
California Native Plant Society

Design & Production – Kipp McMichael

Proofreading – Linda Shaffer and Sara Greenwald

Masthead design – Barry Deutsch

Chapter logo – Nancy Baron

## DEADLINES FOR JUNE NEWSLETTER

Articles & general copy – April 25

Time-dependent material – May 5

Late-breaking news – By arrangement

Visit: [www.cnps-yerbabuena.org](http://www.cnps-yerbabuena.org)

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