Erica Spotswood is an Applied Ecologist in the Resilient Landscapes program at the San Francisco Estuary Institute. Her current projects address how regional planning can integrate with local project-scale design, and how urban greening efforts can be used to promote the use of this information to influence plant conservation in California.

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 is cofounder 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. 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 Program 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.
FIELD TRIPS

Members and non-members are encouraged to attend these FREE walks. Generally, advance signups are not required—just meet at the specified place and time. If rain or high wind is forecast, we recommend checking with the contact (listed at the end of the trip description) a couple of hours before the trip.

SEPTEMBER 9, SUNDAY, 10am to noon
Presidio Bluffs
Leader: Michael Chassé

The Presidio’s coastal bluffs are one of the largest natural areas in San Francisco. The serpentine soils there host several rare and endangered plants, including two extremely rare manzanitas: the Raven’s manzanita (Arctostaphylos montana ssp. ravenii) and the Franciscan manzanita (Arctostaphylos franciscana). On this hike we will explore the Presidio’s serpentine bluffs, with a focus on recent efforts to restore rare vegetation communities. We will meet at the the Langdon Ct. Parking Lot on September 9th at 10 AM. Expect a moderately strenuous 2-hour hike, which will follow the Batteries-to-Bluffs trail southward and loop back to Langdon Ct. along the Coastal Trail. The hike will be led by Michael Chassé, a biologist for the National Park Service. Michael has been involved with ecological restoration in San Francisco for over 20 years and currently coordinates natural areas stewardship and rare plant monitoring for the Golden Gate National Recreation Area. If there are any questions regarding the hike please contact Hannah at Hahhetokuno@gmail.com.

OCTOBER 20, SATURDAY 10am to 1pm
San Bruno Mountain: Dairy Ravine-Cable Ravine
Leader: Doug Allshouse

These two north-facing ravines form most of the area above the parking lot opposite the park entrance. Their names allude to dairy ranching and to cables that descend from the communication towers on the summit. The two ravines share similar plant communities that are dotted with eucalyptus plantings threatening endangered butterfly habitat. To explore both ravines we’ll walk the Eucalyptus Loop to the Dairy Ravine and Summit Trails ascending to the mountain’s summit. Then it’s on to Kamchatka Point to see four species in Ericaceae, the Heather family featuring three species that are endemic to San Bruno Mountain. The first two are San Bruno Mountain manzanita (Arctostaphylos imbricata) and a pretty form of bearberry manzanita (A. uva-ursi forma suborbiculata). We’ll see California huckleberry (Vaccinium ovatum), and a pending new endemic species. There is a $6 entry fee payable at the pay station. Meet at the parking lot on the other side of Guadalupe Canyon Parkway. Turn right at the stop sign just past the kiosk and follow the road under the parkway. Due to the marine influence the mountain offers box-of-chocolates weather so bring layers. Heavy rain cancels. Contact Doug at dougsr228@comcast.net, call or text 415-269-9967 if you have questions.

VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT

Susan Floore
by Linda Shaffer

How doth the Yerba Buena Chapter appreciate Susan Floore? Let us count the ways.

It all started in 1987. Susan was already living in San Francisco, having moved from Texas with her degree in biology years earlier, and was teaching science to middle school students (not a job for the faint-hearted!). After stints volunteering at the Exploratorium and then for the Oceanic Society, she found and joined the recently formed chapter of CNPS. Shortly thereafter, someone told her the chapter needed a Secretary. Instead of abiding by the old military adage “Never volunteer for anything!”, she said “I can do that!”

And she did, for the next twenty-five years (she thinks) until she finally said “Enough!” at the end of 2012. Folks, at 10 board meetings a year, that’s 250 board meetings, 250 sets of notes to take, and 250 minutes to write up, submit in draft form, make corrections to and finalize. All in the days when the idea that board members should submit written reports BEFORE the board meeting had not yet been thought of. This alone should qualify Susan for sainthood!

But there’s more!

Many associate Susan with the chapter’s annual Garden Tour, a hugely successful event that she organized and coordinated for 5 consecutive years, from 2012 through 2016. Susan would like us to acknowledge the support provided by Sam Sapoznick in 2015 and Bob Hall in 2016. This alone is an undertaking that would scare off most. Susan, however, is one of those rare people who can both organize and delegate. Every year, she would find folks to serve on the committee, and divide up a seemingly endless list of jobs. Gardens were located and listed; volunteer hosts were found and assigned; forms to count visitors were distributed; insurance waivers were signed; … the list goes on. And every year the tour went like clockwork (even if the weather didn’t always cooperate). It says a lot that the chapter hasn’t had a garden tour in the 2 years since Susan stepped down as Coordinator. She’s willing to help if someone else will be in charge.

As if that weren’t enough, there are all her unsung volunteer activities. Need someone to help inventory the collection of plants that the chapter owns? Call Susan. Need someone to help at the annual Plant Sale? Call Susan. Need someone to help table at a public event? Call Susan. Need a place to meet? Just let Susan know, and she and Bella the dog will open their home to you.

You get the idea. Susan, thank you from the bottom of our hearts for all the work you’ve done for the chapter. The saying “We couldn’t have done it without you” was never more accurately applied!
24th ANNUAL FALL NATIVE PLANT SALE
Saturday, October 27
11am - 4pm

Miraloma Park Improvement Club
350 O'Shaughnessy Blvd, San Francisco, CA 94127

Fall is the BEST time to introduce native plants into your gardens
• Celebrate Bay Area Biodiversity
• Go Wild, Grow Wild in San Francisco
• Find the best Selection of San Francisco-area sourced
  native plants at great prices
• Take part in free 30-minute classes on the hour that
  can help you design YOUR Bay Area bird, pollinator
  and other wildlife-friendly native garden
• Get your complimentary CNPS Yerba Buena
  Chapter Planting Guide while they last
• Shop the fantastic local botanical artists show,
  featuring beautiful local flora and fauna themed art
• Receive expert native gardening advice to help you make best
  choices for your site
• Assist our unique local ecosystems by choosing native plants that
  co-evolved with our soils and climate
• Support your local Yerba Buena chapter with every purchase
• Minimize water and maintenance needs
• Provide food, shelter and hosting/nesting benefits for butterflies
  birds and other beautiful wildlife
• Help the City of San Francisco meet its Biodiversity Goals!
• Reduce the need for fertilizers or chemicals
• For more info, visit: cnps-yerbabuena.org

VOLUNTEER AT OUR FALL NATIVE PLANT SALE
Volunteering is fun at our annual fall native plant sale!
No plant knowledge is necessary (but if you have some, fantastic!)
This is a great opportunity to learn about our local natives while
supporting our chapter’s goal of re-wilding the San Francisco Bay
Area.

We need volunteers to help us with the following tasks:
• Setup tables and plants 8 – 11 AM
• Breakdown tables and plants 4 - 6 PM
• Assist member with plant selections and moving plants
• Help manage parking
• Give out brochures and table the event
• Document the event with photography and video

To volunteer for the sale contact Eddie Bartley – eddie@naturetrip.com

PLANT ID WORKSHOPS
The fall semester will bring us four exciting workshops on the second
Thursday of the month. If you are searching for a fascinating way to
spend an hour and a half once a month studying botany, this is the
place. We learn about plants, observe their distinguishing characteristics,
and usually dissect them. Botany graduate students give us a brief but
informative Powerpoint lecture on the plant family under discussion
and then help us to key out the plants that have been selected for that
evening’s workshop. Join us on September 13th, October 11th,
November 8th, and December 13th. The workshops begin at 6 pm and
run until 7:30 pm. Please bring Jepson Manual, 2nd edition, if you have
one. The location is San Francisco State University, Hensill Hall,
Botany Lab, Room 440. If you have any questions email Mila Stroganoff
at milastroganoff@sbcglobal.net.

BIO DIVERSECITY SUMMIT
Monday, September 10, 2018 1-8 pm
Fisher Bay Observatory Gallery & Terrace
Exploratorium, Pier 15

The Global Climate Action Summit is being held at the Moscone
Center in San Francisco, WE-FR Sept. 12-14, 2018. The SF
Department of the Environment, with financial support from your
Yerba Buena Chapter of CNPS, is sponsoring an official affiliate event
prior to the GCA Summit. The BiodiverseCity Summit is free and
open to the public; there will be panel discussions, short talks, keynote
speakers (including CNPS ED Dan Gluesenkamp) and a happy hour
reception. Join the global environmental community in
sharing urban nature conservation best practices and the
latest thinking from San Francisco and other pioneering
cities in the effort to achieve sustainable urban biodiversity
and climate resilience. For more information, see
BiodiverseCitySummit.eventbrite.com or contact Peter Brastow at
peter.brastow@sfgov.org.

(Ed. note: Read an interview of Peter Brastow on page 6)
A Chronicle of Natural History on San Bruno Mountain  
by Doug Allshouse

Summer on the Mountain is a bit quiet and a time to catch one’s breath after a busy spring. But it is prime time on the Daly City Dunes where we find the rare and endangered San Francisco lessingia and spineflower in full bloom just as the dunes’ four species of sun cups or evening primroses (whatever you prefer) are winding down. The first two are Camissonia contorta, plains evening primrose, and sandy-soil sun cup, C. striigulosa). Both have flowers so small, 6-7 mm, that they are easily missed, and their leaves are thread-like. The only difference between them is the minute hairs on the stems. Are they perpendicular to the stem (contorta) or pressed to the stem (striigulosa)? The other two are now in the genus Camissoniopsis, C. microntha with a medium-sized flower, 6-9 mm, and California sun cup, C. bistorta) with a larger flower, 12-15mm. An astute botanist is thinking aloud that C. bistorta is a southern California plant, so what is it doing on an isolated, 125,000-year-old dune system? I don’t know how it got here, but it keys out to bistorta and until someone tells me differently, I’m going with it.

On MLK Day the County sponsored a volunteer work party and an area between the Old Guadalupe Trail and the upper Bog Trail was planted with native plants. Each plant species is assigned a color and pattern of field tape, which is tied to the top of a meter-long bamboo stick and stuck in the ground. One June morning, as I was walking by those markers a male Song Sparrow was climbing up the stick. Imagine this, he is perched sideways and leads up with his right foot and places his left foot a bit below it, and repeats this shimmery motion until, finally, he is perched atop the stick and above the tape. At this point he tilts his head skyward, utterly full of pride about his accomplishment and, like Caruso, belts out a beautiful song…..and then promptly flies to a wax myrtle and sings again. This is free entertainment and comedy at its best as only nature can provide.

As we endure our typical summer of fog, it’s a good time to remember that many plants on San Bruno Mountain depend on this summer regime for survival. Summer fog brings water in the absence of rain, contributes water to the ecosystem by fog drip, increases humidity and decreases evapotranspiration, increases foliar uptake, decreases air temperature, and reduces solar radiation and soil evaporation.

_Fog drip_ is caused by fog condensing on the leaves of trees, and even scrub, and dripping to the ground. The most significant example can be felt, seen, and heard in Fog Forest, the large plantation of eucalyptus trees and cypress trees encountered at the main parking lot and along the Day Camp Road and the Old Guadalupe Trail. The added moisture from drip supports epiphytic leather ferns (Polypodium), mosses, and creates boggy conditions to the delight of seep spring monkeyflower (Mimulus), forsetails (Equisetum), speedwell (Veronica), and water parsnip (Oenanthe). Near the summit of the mountain Monterey pine needles intercept moist fog and bathe mosses.

As strong winds blow fog over the summit ridge, a low-pressure area is created on the lee side causing fog to curl downward and back toward the ground, which moistens the mosses. Fog drip can add many inches of additional moisture to the measured annual rainfall. All our native members of the Ericaceae family (manzanitas, madrone, and huckleberries) live within a few hundred feet below the main ridge and take advantage of this added moisture.

Fog also increases the humidity and decreases _evapotranspiration_. Moisture is lost by plant and soil evaporation. The leaves lose water through surface pores called stomata and about 98% of the water uptake of roots exits through the stomata. The increased humidity slows this water loss. The presence of fog also decreases the ambient temperature, slowing evaporation. When you look west from Bayshore Boulevard and see the summit radio towers completely blanketed with marine fog and wind, there is good reason to believe that it’s darn cold and wet up there, and the sun is obscured. When it’s a chilly 55 degrees on the summit it can be a scorching 105 degrees in Livermore, or a balmy 70 in downtown Brisbane.

Many species of plants can absorb water directly into their leaves. Some species on San Bruno Mountain that are noted for their _foliar uptake_ are sword fern, leather fern, California polypody, evergreen huckleberry and madrone. Mosses and lichens also obtain all their water through _foliar uptake_, and one genus of lichens, Nielba, occurs only on rocky outcrops in full face of the foggy marine winds. The name of the powerful Piemontese red grape of Barolo and Barbaresco fame, Nebbiolo, is derived from the Italian word for fog, nebbia.

I keep a professional rain gauge on my deck, which keeps track of the rainfall I tell you about throughout the year. The surface area of the collection funnel is about 9 square inches. The amount in my gauge that fog provides is not as striking as what falls to the ground from trees and scrub because they have thousands of leaves to catch more moisture. But on average, fog contributes about 2 inches of rain a year in my rain gauge. The months of July and August from the four rain seasons of 2014-15 to 2017-18 produced, in order, 0.65", 0.51", 0.91" and 0.72" all because of fog. Triple or quadruple those readings for what falls in Fog Forest. It truly is a coastal rain forest. This year from July 1 to August 2 we had 16 days of captured precipitation for 0.30 inches of fog rain.

The poison oak is turning red and exposing its greenish berries. The pink everlasting (Pseudognaphalium ramosissimum) has yet to show its gorgeous pink blooms in full color. Besides being my favorite cudweed, its minty-buttery aroma is seductive. It is also a larval host plant for the American Lady or Painted Lady (Vanessa virginiensis). The coffee berries are still green and a bit away from their mature black color. And I’m waiting to see the bright-white berries of snow berry fruits, which will come with the shorter days ahead when the bushes shed their leaves, exposing those tiny snowballs at the end of bare twigs. But, to my delight, the creek dogwood fruits are beginning their show. Autumn is coming, I can hear it calling, “Doug, don’t despair, Indian summer is right around the corner.”

See you on the mountain…
FOCUS ON RARITIES

Pacific Yew
Taxus brevifolia

by Michael Wood

Greetings from the southern Black Forest of Germany, my wife’s Heimat. This report comes to you from the farmhouse of a friend, built in 1599, in the tiny Dorf of Adelhausen, about 15 km north of the Rhine River and the border of Switzerland, elevation 1,500 feet. We are one month into our new nomadic life.

On the first stop of our travels, we visited southwestern Ireland where we explored a rare English yew woodland (Taxus baccata) in Killarney National Park. This semi-natural stand is one of the oldest and most intact yew forests left in Europe. A quick cross-reference with our chapter’s SF checklist and I see that we have a single location for our own native yew species, T. brevifolia. Thus, the subject for this edition of Focus on Rarities was conceived (actually, ill-conceived, as you will soon learn!)

The yew family (Taxaceae) is an interesting and curious group of gymnosperms (plants with “naked seeds” not enclosed in an ovary, in contrast to angiosperms, the so-called flowering plants.) Other gymnosperms include Ephedra, Ginkgo, Welwitschia of Namibia, the cycads, and the conifers. The family is believed to have arisen in Asia in the Eocene around 44 million years ago. Members of the yew family are primarily dioecious, meaning male and female reproductive parts (in this case, cones) are produced on separate plants. The male cones are very tiny (just 2–5 mm long), and shed pollen in the early spring. What makes the yews so unique are the female cones, which don’t look like cones at all. They are, in fact, highly reduced and modified, being comprised of a single scale and one seed. As the seed matures, the scale develops into a red, fleshy cup-shaped organ called an aril, which partially encloses the seed.

Appearing between August and October, the mature arils are bright, soft, juicy and sweet, appearing between August and October. The male cones are very tiny (just 2–5 mm long), and shed pollen in the early spring. What makes the yews so unique are the female cones, which don’t look like cones at all. They are, in fact, highly reduced and modified, being comprised of a single scale and one seed. As the seed matures, the scale develops into a red, fleshy cup-shaped organ called an aril, which partially encloses the seed.

Members of the genus Taxus are evergreen and highly shade tolerant, occurring as scattered individuals in the understory of forests with a closed canopy. They rarely become a dominant tree in any given woodland. They have attractive, scaly, reddish brown bark, flattened, flexible leaves that appear two-ranked (attached in pairs opposite one another on the stem). Four species are native to North America. These include T. globosa, a rare shrub found in a small number of locations in eastern Mexico, Guatemala, El Salvador and Honduras; T. floridana, a rare endemic shrub or tree reaching 10 meters tall (33’) and found only along the Appalachian River in northwestern Florida; T. canadensis, a 2 meter tall shrub (6.6’) found throughout eastern North America from Manitoba to Newfoundland, south to Missouri, Kentucky, and Virginia; and T. brevifolia, found in western North America from Alaska southward to northern California.

Pacific yew, also called western yew, Californian yew, Oregon yew, and American yew, is a shrub to small tree. Although specimens are most commonly 5-15 meters tall (16-50’), it can grow up to 25 meters tall (82’) with trunks as much as 1 meter across (3.3’). The Pacific yew is slow-growing and a tree 10 meters tall (33’) may be over 100 years old.

Pacific yew occurs in open to dense forests, along streams, moist flats, slopes, deep ravines, and coves, from sea level to 2,200 meters in elevation (7200’). Throughout most of its range, it occurs in the understory of closed canopies in late-successional forests dominated by large conifers such as Douglas fir (Pseudotsuga menziesii) and western hemlock (Tsuga heterophylla). In the southern parts of its range, Pacific yew can be found growing along seasonal streams beneath stands of coast redwood (Sequoia sempervirens), madrone (Arbutus menziesii), tan oak (Lithocarpus densiflorus), bay laurel (Umbellularia californica), and buckeye (Aesculus californica).

In both the New World and Old World, yew wood has been valued by indigenous peoples for its strength and durability, making it an excellent source material for bows, spears, harpoons, clubs, fish hooks, spoons, spring poles for animal traps, fish net frames, combs, paddles and ceremonial objects. Since colonization of the Pacific Northwest, however, yew trees were not considered to have any value as a lumber source and they were cut indiscriminately and cast aside in the course of commercial logging operations.

But then something interesting happened. Pacific yew has long been thought to have medicinal properties. As early as 1962, naturally occurring compounds found in the bark of Pacific yew became the focus of research into its potential for treating various cancers. And in 1977 the anti-tumor properties of yew bark were confirmed in the laboratory. This occurred at a time when the term biodiversity was entering the popular vernacular, and this discovery was commonly cited when arguing the case for the preservation of the Earth’s temperate and tropical rain forests and the plant and animal species yet to be discovered there. In 1992, the FDA approved the use of Taxol for the treatment of ovarian cancer and in 1994 for the treatment of breast cancer. In 2000, annual sales of Taxol peaked at $1.6 billion, making it the best-selling cancer drug ever manufactured. The downside (and there is always a downside) is that it took large quantities of Pacific yew bark to produce the drug, posing a risk to natural stands of the tree. Fortunately, manufacturers have figured out how to synthesize the drug from the leaves of English yew, a species that is easily and widely cultivated.

In California, Pacific yew is found from Marin and Lake counties northward along the coast and from Mariposa County northward in the Sierra Nevada. It is not known to occur in the Santa Cruz Mountains. Although collections have been made in the San Francisco Bay Area from Alameda, Santa Clara, San Mateo and San Francisco counties, these are suspected to have come from planted specimens. Griffin and Critchfield (1972) concluded that Marin County is likely its southernmost limit. Pacific yew was not included in Howell, et al. (1958). So, because you won’t be coming across Pacific yew in San Francisco, you could reasonably ask why I chose it as the subject of this column. Well, I just thought it was interesting. And I learned a bunch of things in the process. Maybe you did, too.

Literature Cited


HABITAT RESTORATION

Alemany Natives at Alemany Farms
Community workdays held from Noon to 5pm every 1st & 3rd Sunday of the month and the Saturdays in-between, plus every Monday afternoon from 1:00-5:00. Contact community.gardeners@gmail.com

Bayview Hill
2nd Saturday, every other month. Contact recparkvolunteer@sfgov.org

Bernal Hill
2nd Saturdays, every month. 10am-noon. Contact recparkvolunteer@sfgov.org

Buena Vista Park
1st Saturdays, every month. Contact recparkvolunteer@sfgov.org

Candlestick Point State Park Nursery
1st Saturdays, every month. 10am-1pm Contact Patrick Marley Rump at patrick.rump@lejyouth.org.

Candlestick Point Recreation Area
2nd Saturdays, every month Contact Patrick Marley Rump at patrick.rump@lejyouth.org.

Corona Heights
Last Saturdays, every month. 10am-noon. Contact recparkvolunteer@sfgov.org

Friends of San Pedro Valley Park: Trail Restoration
2nd Saturdays 9am - 12pm, every month, meet in front of Visitor Center

Friends of San Pedro Valley Park: Habitat Restoration
3rd Saturdays 9am - noon, every month, meet in front of Visitor Center

Glen Canyon Park
Wednesdays & 3rd Saturdays, every month. 9am-noon. Contact recparkvolunteer@sfgov.org

Golden Gate Audubon Society
Various opportunities: https://goldengateaudubon.org/volunteer/

Golden Gate National Recreation Area
Weekdays and weekends around the Bay Area. Contact volunteer@parksconservancy.org or 415-561-3044

Golden Gate Park Oak Woodlands
2nd Saturdays, every month. 10:00am-12:30pm Contact recparkvolunteer@sfgov.org

Green Hairstreak Corridor, Golden Gate Heights
Periodically. Contact amber@natureinthecity.org

Half Moon Bay State Beach
Various restoration and nursery opportunities. Contact email HMBParksVolunteer@Parks.ca.gov

Herons’ Head Park
Various opportunities at http://sfport.com/herons-head-park

Lake Merced
1st Saturdays, every month 1:30pm-3:30pm Contact recparkvolunteer@sfgov.org

Linda Mar Beach, Pacifica
Visit pacificabeachcoalition.org

Marin Headlands Native Plant Nursery
Weekdays and weekends. Contact (415) 561-3044 or volunteer@parksconservancy.org

McLaren Park
3rd Saturdays of even months, 10am-noon. Contact recparkvolunteer@sfgov.org

McKinley Square Hillside
3rd Saturdays, 10am-12:30. Contact into@mckinleysquare.com

Mission Creek South Bank
Generally Saturday mornings. Contact Ginny Stearns for times. Call 415-552-4577 or ginnystearns@gmail.com

Mt. Sutro
Wednesdays 9:30am-12:30pm at the nursery; 1st and 3rd Saturdays 9:00am-1pm, visit sutrostewards.org

Pacifica’s Environmental Family
Various opportunities. See events calendar: http://www.pacificasenvironmentalfamily.org

San Bruno Mountain
Guadalupe Valley Stewards, Tuesdays 10am-12pm; Mission Blue Nursery, Wednesdays, 10am-12:30pm; Stewardship Saturdays, 10am-1pm; South San Francisco Weed Warriors, last Fridays and Saturdays of the month, 9am-noon. See events calendar mountainwatch.org

SF Recreation and Parks
Volunteer calendar: http://sfrpccpark.org/support-your-parks/volunteer-program/

San Mateo County Parks
Stewardship Core calendar http://parks.smcgov.org/smc-parks-stewardship-corps

Save the Bay
Various opportunities https://www.savesbay.org/volunteer

Starr-King Open Space
2nd Saturdays every month, 9:30am-noon. Visit starrkingspacereserves.org

Tennessee Valley Restoration
2nd, 4th & 5th Tuesdays, 10am-2pm. Visit parksconservancy.org

Yerba Buena Chapter Restoration Team
Wednesdays, noon-3pm. Contact Jake Sigg at jakesigg@earthlink.net

Biodiversity Reaches the Summit

Chapter Treasurer, Bob Hall, caught up with Peter Brastow to ask him about the upcoming BiodiverseCity Summit affiliate event at the Global Climate Action Summit. Peter is a longtime chapter board member and SF Department of the Environment’s Senior Environmental Specialist, Natural Ecosystems and Biodiversity. He’s working with non-profits, city agencies and the Yerba Buena chapter to sponsor the event.

Q. Biodiversity can be hard to explain. What’s the hook? Why is it important to protect biodiversity in urban areas?

Brastow: Basically, biodiversity is all of the flora, fauna, fungi etc. that coexist in a particular place on earth, and which characterizes that place as uniquely harboring that complex of life.

Q. Why is it important to protect biodiversity in urban areas?

Brastow: There are many, many reasons.

a. Cities often have remnant patches of the natural landscape, and this non-human nature has a right to exist. In fact, there is a global movement for the rights of nature.

b. Some cities’ biodiversity is indeed unique to that location. SF is a great example, in that we have plant assemblages that exist nowhere else on the planet.

c. Cities can sometimes even be oases of biodiversity among a more sprawling suburban or totally transformed agricultural/monocultural landscape. SF is not a good example of this case, of course. That would apply more to a Midwestern or even Central Valley community.

d. More than 50% of the world’s people live in urban areas now, and so cities and towns are where most Earthlings would connect with nature, which is critical for mental, physical, and ultimately, planetary health.

e. Many folks who live in cities can’t afford to experience, or don’t have access to, nature in faraway places, and so conserving and restoring nature in the city is part of restoring environmental justice.

f. Cities can be important in a global context, e.g., the Pacific Flyway along which hundreds of species of birds are travelling twice per year, and they depend on the food and roosting resources all along their routes.

g. Restoring nature in the city is foundational to the urban environmental sustainability movement. Local, indigenous nature must be the fabric of our future green, extremely livable cities.
Q. Why did you decide to have a forum about biodiversity during the Global Climate Action Summit?

Brastow: To share urban nature conservation best practices and the latest thinking from San Francisco and other cities. And, to showcase the critical role of urban biodiversity for climate resilience and human connection to nature.

Q. Is there a link between biodiversity and climate?

Brastow: The climate crisis is rivaled by the global biodiversity crisis, and their solutions are interdependent. Cities have in large part generated the climate and biodiversity crisis. And as with climate solutions, cities and their biodiversity are increasingly recognized as critical players for global species and ecosystem conservation and restoration. Since over half of the human population lives in cities, restoring urban biodiversity is critical for connecting everyone to nature where they live, and of course, fundamental for climate resilience!

Q. What’s the biodiversity event going to be like? Is it only for scientists and scholars?

Brastow: The BiodivereCity Summit is designed to appeal to professionals in the field as well as the general public.

Q. What’s the best way for the public to get involved in protecting biodiversity?

Brastow: Get involved with restoring and advocating for nature in the city: https://sfenvironment.org/biodiversity

(Ed. note: See event details on page 3)

CHAPTER NEWS

Community Thrift
Thank you to all who have donated furniture, clothing, books, CDs, and housewares to Community Thrift and designated CNPS as the beneficiary. Donating is easy. Simply drop off clean and saleable items at the CT donation door, open from 10 am to 5 pm every day, and ask them to list CNPS (charity #152) as the beneficiary. The donation door is located on the south side of the building on Sycamore Alley, parallel to 18th Street and perpendicular to Mission and Valencia Streets. Sycamore runs one way from Mission toward Valencia. Please note that, because of the February 2009 Consumer Product Safety Improvement Act, CT can no longer accept any children’s items.

Make the switch to the Electronic Newsletter!

If you prefer electronic delivery:
Send an email indicating your wish to:
yerbabuenacnps@gmail.com
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

Membership Category

_____ $1,500 Mariposa Lily
_____ $ 600 Benefactor
_____ $ 300 Patron
_____ $ 100 Plant Lover
_____ $ 75 Family
_____ $ 45 Individual
_____ $ 25 Limited Income/Student

Make your check out to “CNPS”
and mail with this form to:
California Native Plant Society
2707 K Street, Suite 1
Sacramento, CA 95816-5113

Name ________________________________
Address _______________________________
City __________________ State _______
Zip _______ Telephone __________________
email ________________________________

Dues above the $12 for publications are tax deductible. You will receive the Yerba Buena News, the informative triannual journal Fremontia, and a statewide news bulletin. Members of other chapters may subscribe to the Yerba Buena News alone for $10 per year, renewable annually. Send a check made out to “CNPS” to 1946 Grove St. Apt. 6, San Francisco, CA 94117.

Visit: www.cnps-yerbabuena.org

YERBA BUENA NEWS
Volume 32, number 3 (September 2018)
Published quarterly by the Yerba Buena Chapter
California Native Plant Society
Design & Production – Kipp McMichael
Proofreading – Linda Shaffer
Masthead design – Barry Deutsch
Chapter logo – Nancy Baron

DEADLINES FOR DECEMBER NEWSLETTER
Articles & general copy – October 25
Time-dependent material – November 5
Late-breaking news – By arrangement

Calvin R. Miller, President
Jackie Poffenbarger, Secretary
Linda Shaffer, Treasurer

California Native Plant Society
Yerba Buena Chapter
338 Ortega Street
San Francisco, CA 94122

Printed on recycled paper

ALL ADDRESS CHANGES TO: cnps@cnps.org - subject: Member Address Change