



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

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PROGRAMS

Everyone is welcome to attend membership meetings in the Recreation Room of the San Francisco County Fair Building (SFCFB) at 9th 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.

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

MARCH 5, THURSDAY, 7:30 PM

Botanizing Western North America: 160 Years at the California Academy of Sciences

Speaker: Debra Trock, Ph.D.

Native plant lovers and local history buffs may have heard the story of how botany curator Alice Eastwood climbed up the shattered staircase to the sixth floor of the California Academy of Sciences building after the 1906 earthquake and rescued the collection of botanical type specimens before the building burned. But there's more to this story and to other stories of botanical exploration and plant collection by Ms. Eastwood and the many botanists who have contributed to the academy's herbarium. Debra Trock will introduce us to the collection and share stories of some of the botanists and collectors whose work has made this repository of biodiversity information the largest collection of vascular plant specimens in the western U.S. and the sixth largest in the country. Debra Trock is Senior Collections Manager in the Botany Department at the California Academy of Sciences. She holds a Ph.D. in botany from Kansas State University, and her research focuses on the taxonomy of the tribe Senecioneae (Asteraceae), particularly the genus *Senecio* and its segregates. She is also involved with the Flora of North America project and serves as member-at-large on the board of the Society for the Preservation of Natural History Collections.

APRIL 2, THURSDAY, 7:30 PM

Pollination Biology of Selected California Plants

Speaker: Bob Stewart

Native plants are very important, but how do they reproduce? We will take a closer look at the color and structure of native plants and how these factors influence pollinators. The speaker will show us his close-up photographs, report on some of the most interesting studies that have been done, and discuss the need for more research.

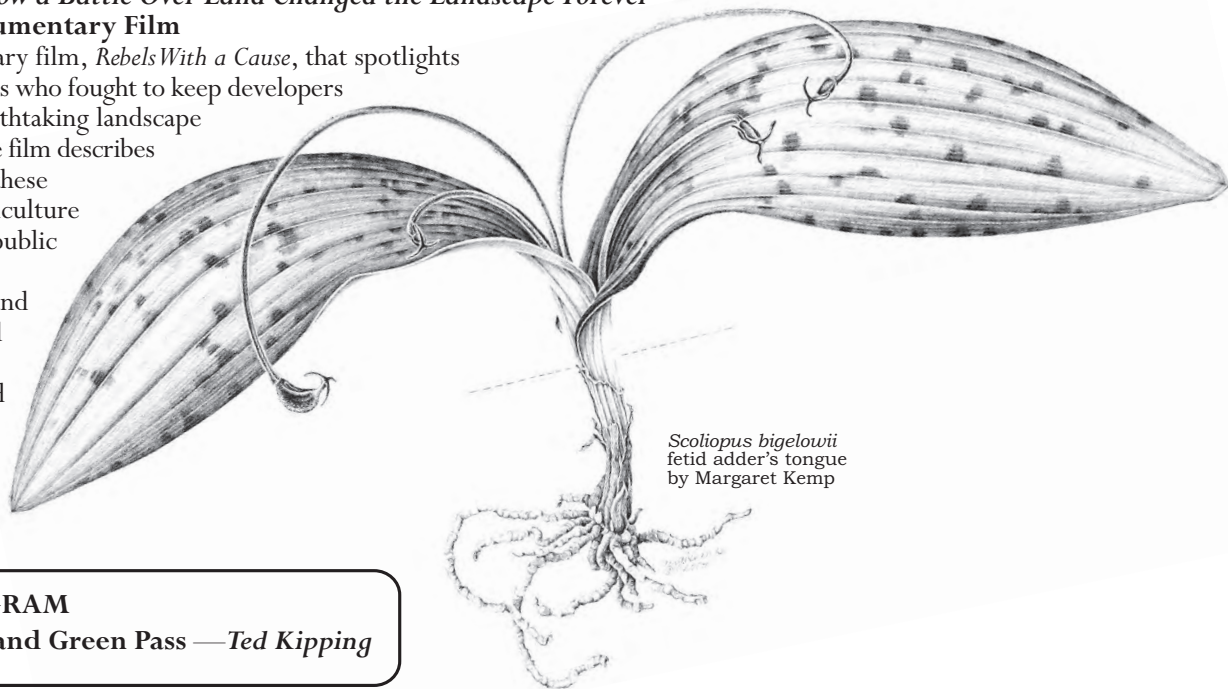
Bob Stewart has been a naturalist since 1962. His career includes teaching biology in the California public schools (Junior High, High School, Junior College), biologist/teacher at Point Reyes Bird Observatory (1968-1979), naturalist for Marin County Open Space District (1982-1997) where

he gave over 2,000 free walks to the public. He has led many outings to California, Arizona, Texas, Mexico, Costa Rica, and Trinidad and Tobago. He has also self-published two photographic butterfly books: *Common Butterflies of California* (1997) and *Butterflies of Arizona* (2001).

MAY 7, THURSDAY, 7:30 PM

Rebels With a Cause: How a Battle Over Land Changed the Landscape Forever
Award-Winning Documentary Film

Join us for the documentary film, *Rebels With a Cause*, that spotlights the schemers and dreamers who fought to keep developers from taking over the breathtaking landscape of the California coast. The film describes in fascinating detail how these individuals protected agriculture and wildlife, established public parks next to a densely populated urban center, and shaped the environmental movement as we know it today. This film is narrated by Frances McDormand and was produced by Nancy Kelly and Kenji Yamamoto. 72 minutes.



Scoliopus bigelowii
fetid adder's tongue
by Margaret Kemp

FUTURE PROGRAM

June 4—Cook and Green Pass—Ted Kipping

FIELD TRIPS

These walks are FREE to members and non-members. 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 15, SUNDAY, 1 pm–3 pm

Bayview Hill Wildflowers

Leader: Margo Bors

Though not known to many, Bayview Hill is one of San Francisco's best preserved natural areas. Many species that have been extirpated elsewhere in the City still thrive here in the hilltop grasslands and rocky outcrops. We may see shooting star (*Dodecatheon hendersonii*), elegant rein orchid (*Piperia elegans*), tomcat clover (*Trifolium willdenovii*), California buttercup (*Ranunculus californicus*), footsteps of spring (*Sanicula arctopoides*), hillside pea (*Lathyrus vestitus*), several lomatiums and lupines—and even some of the last remaining San Francisco collinsia (*C. multicolor*). There are great views, but the area is famously windy so be prepared. Meet at the end of Key Avenue, two blocks east of Third Street, very near the T streetcar line's LeConte station. Contact: Margo Bors, 415-824-0471 or mcbors@comcast.net.

APRIL 11, SATURDAY, 10 am–12:30 pm

Glen Canyon Spiders

Leader: Darrell Ubick

California Academy of Sciences arachnologist Darrell Ubick will again lead his popular spring trip to Glen Canyon Park in search of spiders. There are sure to be lots of them, from newly hatched spiderlings to adults, out and about searching for prey or mates. All told, there are probably hundreds of species here. Darrell knows where and how to look for them, and spidering with him can give you a new appreciation of plants as providers of microhabitats. This will be an easy walk and fun for all ages. **Wet weather postpones to April 18, and rain on the 18th cancels.** 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 18, SATURDAY, 10 am–1 pm

San Bruno Mountain: Owl Canyon

Leader: Doug Allshouse

Owl Canyon is a favorite spot on the eastern flank of San Bruno Mountain. It is less forested than adjacent Buckeye Canyon and has a bit more wildflower diversity. The pronounced central hump between the canyon's defining ridge lines makes the ascent interesting, as does the ongoing evidence of recovery from the 2008 wildfire. Populations of oaks (*Quercus* spp.), bay (*Umbellularia californica*), toyon (*Heteromeles arbutifolia*), hazelnut (*Corylus cornuta*), ocean spray (*Holodiscus discolor*), hollyleaf cherry (*Prunus ilicifolia*), coffeeberry (*Frangula californica*), and oso berry (*Oemleria cerasiformis*) have stump-sprouted, and seven years later prove how adapted these species are to a fire regime. The fire-reliant blueblossom (*Ceanothus thyrsiflorus*) seeds in the soil have developed into large, thick stands on the canyon walls. Wildflowers to look for include larkspur (*Delphinium californicum*), star lily (*Toxicoscordion fremontii*), hound's tongue (*Cynoglossum grande*), paintbrushes (*Castilleja* spp.), yerba santa (*Eriodictyon californicum*), lupines (*Lupinus* spp.), johnny jump up (*Viola pedunculata*), and blue eyed grass (*Sisyrinchium bellum*), plus there are many ferns.

We'll have lunch on the flowering, grassy ridge between Owl and Buckeye Canyons. **Heavy rain postpones to April 25.** Our meeting place is an industrial parking lot just below the canyon. From Bayshore Blvd in Brisbane, turn onto Valley Drive, proceed to the traffic light, and turn left onto South Hill Drive. Turn left at the Aircraft Technical Publishers sign at 101-111 South Hill, and park in the rear of the lot. Contact: Doug Allshouse, 415-584-5114 or dougsr228@comcast.net.

May 9, SATURDAY, 10 am–2 pm

San Bruno Mountain: Ridge Trail

Leader: Doug Allshouse

The Ridge Trail offers a long and interesting menu of plant species including the endemic SBM manzanita (*Arctostaphylos imbricata*), several paintbrushes (*Castilleja* spp.), Franciscan wallflower (*Erysimum franciscanum*, a 4.2 rare species), two wild cucumbers (*Marah fabacea* and *M. oregana*), three lupines (*Lupinus albifrons*, *L. variicolor*, *L. formosus*), stonecrop (*Sedum spathulifolium*), coast rock cress (*Arabis blepharophylla*, a 4.3 rare species), and more. On a very clear day, the vistas extend from Point Reyes to the South Bay, and from the Farallones to Mount Diablo. The trail is an undulating fire road that follows the ridge line and has one arduous dip. It begins in Franciscan Coastal Scrub, Blue Blossom Chaparral, and Coastal Terrace Prairie, then transitions to Needlegrass Grassland as we travel southeast. The wildflower show, while varied and spectacular, is just part of the allure. If weather permits, we will probably encounter the mountain's endangered mission blue butterfly (*Icaricia icariodes missionensis*), along with anise and pipevine swallowtails (*Papilio zelicaon*, *Battus philenor*) and green hairstreaks (*Callophrys dumetorum*). The entire out-and-back trip is about four miles, so **bring a lunch and water**. Be prepared to wander over grasslands covered with blossoms. The mountain offers box-of-chocolates weather, so bring layers. Pay the \$6 entry fee at the ranger's kiosk, turn right at the stop sign, and follow Radio Road up to the summit parking lot. **If there's heavy rain, we'll try again on May 16.**

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



Erysimum franciscanum
franciscan wallflower
by Margo Bors

ACTIVITIES

PLANT IDENTIFICATION WORKSHOPS

Second Thursday of the month 6 – 7:30 pm.

Next workshop is March 12, 2015.

San Francisco State University

1600 Holloway Avenue

Hensill Hall, Botany Lab, Room 440

Trust me -- you will never look at flowers and leaves in the same way again after attending these workshops. Take the opportunity, while it exists, to come and learn how to appreciate plants from a completely different perspective. It's fascinating! Talented and knowledgeable graduate botany students at San Francisco State University lead the plant ID workshops on the second Thursday of the month. The next workshops are March 12, April 9, and May 14. The atmosphere is relaxed and there are no tests to take.

If you have the old or new edition of the *Jepson Manual*, bring that along or *Plants of the San Francisco Bay Region: Mendocino to Monterey*, and a hand lens. If you have any further questions, please email Mila Stroganoff at milastroganoff@sbcglobal.net.

Getting to SFSU by public transit: MUNI's M-Ocean line and #28 bus both stop at 19th Ave & Holloway St. Via BART to Daly City, collect a free two-part ticket from a machine inside the station which can be used on the #28 SF Muni or board an SFSU shuttle which runs every 10 to 15 minutes.

If you drive, there is street parking on 19th Avenue as well as paid campus parking. Hensill Hall is located just off 19th Avenue, between Winston and Holloway.

CNPS WORKSHOPS

The CNPS Plant Science Training Program specializes in providing workshops for professional botanists, biologists, and ecologists to teach the skills and provide the tools and resources for conducting sound scientific surveys for rare plants, rare plant communities, vegetation, and wetlands. Discounted registration fees are offered to CNPS Members.

March 24-25

Rare Plant Survey Protocols: A Scientific Approach

Location: Borges Ranch, Walnut Creek

Instructors: Heath Bartosh & Aaron Sims

March 26

CNDDB & BIOS

Location: CDFW Office of Training & Development, Sacramento

Instructor: Roxanne Bittman

April 21-23

Measuring & Monitoring Plant Populations

Location: Sierra Foothills Research & Extension Center, Browns Valley

Instructor: John Willoughby

TBD

Vegetation Mapping

Location: Sacramento Area

Instructors: Julie Evens, Todd Keeler Wolf (others TBD)

May 6-7

Introduction to Plant Family Identification

Location: Center for Earth Concerns, Taft Gardens, Ojai

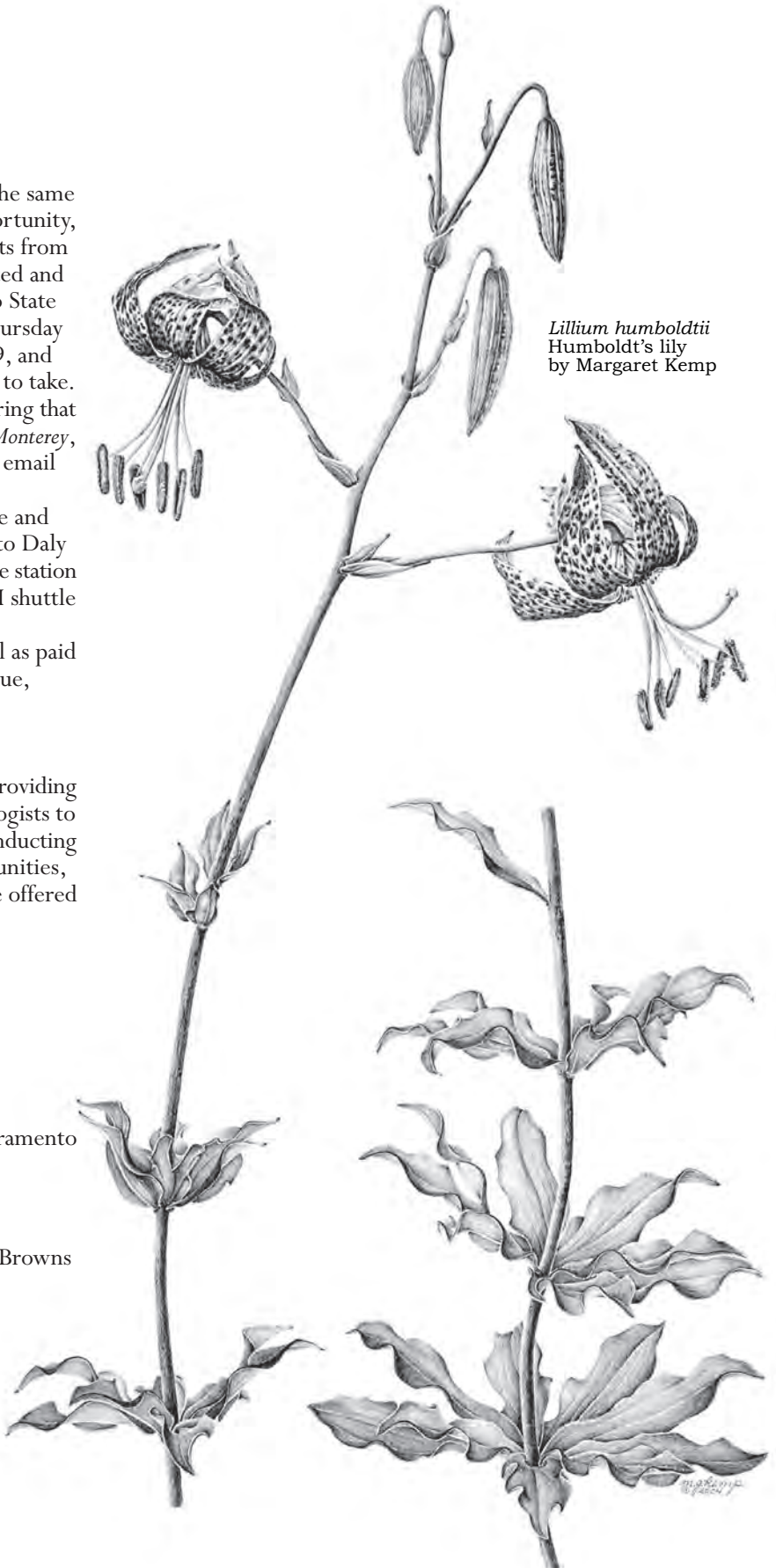
Instructor: David Magney

June 3-5

Vegetation Rapid Assessment/Releve

Location: El Portal Community Center, Yosemite National Park

Instructors: Jennifer Buck-Diaz (others TBD)



Lillium humboldtii
Humboldt's lily
by Margaret Kemp

FOCUS ON RARITIES

Tall *Stephanomeria* *Stephanomeria virgata* ssp. *pleurocarpa* by Michael Wood

The San Francisco Peninsula is host to a variety of plant taxa that are at or near the northern limits of their geographic range on the coast or are more widely distributed in the southern half of the state. Many of these, or close relatives, were quite familiar to me having had my botanical awakening in Southern California. Rediscovering these “southerners” in the Bay Area has always elicited in me a sense of nostalgia, sometimes remembering exactly where I saw them the first time. Some of these include deerweed (*Acmispon glaber* – formerly *Lotus scoparius*), strigose sun cup (*Camissonia strigulosa*), California mustard (*Caulanthus lasiophyllus* – formerly *Guillenia lasiophylla*), the spineflowers (*Chorizanthe* spp.), common sandaster (*Corethrogyne filaginifolia*), California croton (*Croton californicus*), mock heather (*Ericameria ericoides*), California cottonrose (*Logfia filaginoides* – formerly *Filago californica*), branching phacelia (*Phacelia ramosissima*), and fairy mist (*Pterostegia drymarioides*), among others.

If you're familiar with these species, you might know that they all have something in common...an affinity for sandy sites. Since nearly one third of the land area of San Francisco was once covered with sand, as was just about the entire coastline between here and the Mexican border, it's not too surprising that many of our native coastal psammopytes (sand-loving plants) found suitable growing conditions across six degrees of latitude. And the fact that any of these plants can still be found in San Francisco is a source of wonder.

Another genus that falls into this category is *Stephanomeria*. Like other members of the tribe Cichorieae such as *Agoseris*, *Cichorium*,



Stephanomeria
seeds



Stephanomeria flowers

Lactuca, *Malacothrix*, *Rafinesquia*, *Sonchus*, and *Taraxacum*, *Stephanomeria* stems and petioles exude milky sap when cut. This group of taprooted annual and perennial herbs to subshrubs includes 16 species from western North America and northern Mexico. Ten species (plus seven subspecies) occur in California. Eight of these taxa have Southern California as the center of their range. Another three taxa reach their northern coast limits in the Bay Area. It's no wonder that when I come across a member of this genus I think of the southland.

Only one member of the genus, tall stephanomeria, is known from historic records as having occurred in San Francisco County. An annual herb, tall stephanomeria produces a single stalk with light green stems that are glabrous to tomentose. Basal leaves are 1-4 inches long, oblanceolate to spatulate with lobed margins; the cauline leaves are much reduced, appearing like bracts. The basal leaves wither and dry by the time flowering begins. The branched inflorescence produces abundant flowers with white to dark pink ligules. Flowering occurs June through November. The subspecies *pleurocarpa* is distinguished from ssp. *virgata* by having 5-6 ligules per inflorescence (versus 8-9) and appressed outer phyllaries (versus reflexed). Tall stephanomeria grows 1.5-6.5 feet high.

Tall stephanomeria (also sometimes called

wand wirelettuce for its superficial similarity to members of the genus *Lactuca*), is found below 6000 feet in elevation in chaparral openings and grasslands of the California Floristic Province and the Great Basin Floristic Province. It has been recorded from 47 of California's 58 counties, and reaches into Oregon, Nevada and Baja California, Mexico. In the East Bay, tall stephanomeria is known from the Berkeley Hills, Mt. Diablo, Mt. Hamilton and the Altamont Hills. It is known from four sites in Santa Clara County and in Marin County it is reported from the bay side to Point Reyes. In San Mateo County, it is reported from Edgewood Park and San Bruno Mountain.

Historically, tall stephanomeria was collected at Lake Merced, the Presidio, Golden Gate Park and southeastern San Francisco. Unfortunately, the subspecies appears to have been extirpated from the mainland of San Francisco. However, several years ago, I found a few plants of tall stephanomeria growing in sand on the steep western slope of Yerba Buena Island. I have not looked for this population in a long time and can't say whether or not it is persisting.

Because of its overall range, it might be difficult to imagine that tall stephanomeria is of particular interest here. In fact, it appears on neither the CNPS's Inventory of Rare and Endangered Plants nor the California Department of Fish and Wildlife's list of special plants. But it is certainly not as common in the Bay Area as counties south of Point Conception, perhaps because the habitats that could support it have been increasingly lost to development and habitat degradation as a result of the spread of invasive species. And it is rare if not extirpated in San Francisco County. For these reasons, tall stephanomeria is being considered for inclusion on our chapter's soon-to-be-released list of locally significant plants of San Francisco County.

Tall stephanomeria is an interesting plant and quite pretty when in flower. There is certainly plenty of suitable habitat where it could be reintroduced. I'd like to see it here again. It would remind me of home.



“I stuck my head out the window this morning and spring kissed me bang in the face.”

—Langston Hughes



DOUG'S MOUNTAIN JOURNAL

A Chronicle of Natural History on San Bruno Mountain by Doug Allshouse

Last year at this time we were facing a third consecutive dry year with 2.72 inches of rain from July through December 2013. This year has shown a dramatic improvement with 17.16 inches of rain over the same period. Granted it has yet to rain in January, but 2.84 more inches takes us near the “average” threshold for the mountain which is about 24 inches. And it finally got a bit chilly a couple of days after Christmas to break a monotonous but beautiful stretch of mildly warm winter days and nights. That is, perhaps, the most obvious trend of climate change here in the Bay Area.

Magic begins to happen at about the 15-inch mark when seeps begin to really erupt and water gushes from gopher holes. Colma Creek and April Brook swell so much that they can be heard before being seen and Cable Ravine Creek almost runs over the bridge on the Summit Trail. The lower bog fills and forms running puddles that nourish the tinker's penny, American speedwell, and water parsnip. There is a seep in Owl Canyon that is brimming with those same species plus duckweed (*Lemna*) and yellow-eyed grass; and nearby the coastal larkspur has begun sprouting new leaves. Along the banks of one of the creeks were giant horsetails almost waist high.

Mushrooms have been springing up after taking most of this decade off. Common species such as Almond-scented *Russula*, California *Agaricus*, Slimy *Lactarius*, Fly Agaric and Powder-cap *Amanita* have been popping up everywhere. Trouble is, with January showing not a drop of precipitation the show has really slowed down...just when it was getting interesting.

Kestrels, Kites and Red-tailed Hawks love to “hover-hunt.” By facing into the wind and flapping their wings just right they can suspend themselves in one spot to survey the landscape and look for food. The Northern Harrier is a raptor of a different feather preferring to constantly glide just above the tops of our coastal scrub. It relies on lightning fast reactions after spotting prey and quickly swooping down to grab it. One morning I spotted a kestrel sitting on a coyote brush, up go the binoculars for a better look then suddenly the kestrel disappears. Down go the binoculars and I see a female harrier flying over the bush where the kestrel was and *voila* a pecking order has been established. I guess size does matter...except for hummingbirds, but that's a story for another day.

Morning in the bog is a relaxing time. The sun has barely risen and is shining on the creek dogwoods and their scarlet bark is shouting “look at me” and I can't help not noticing it because it is so doggone bright. A large patch of arroyo willow nearby is awash in lichens clinging to the branches with the likes of *Ramalina*, *Parmotrema*, *Flavopunctelia*, *Evernia* and *Usnea* packed together like commuters on a muni bus. This riot of color and texture is exposed during

winter because the trees are bare except that occasional catkins are beginning to appear. Looking closely I see spots of green mixed in with the bare branches and I realize that the coast red elderberry bushes are waking up from their winter dormancy. Life is good in the bog and becoming more alive each day.

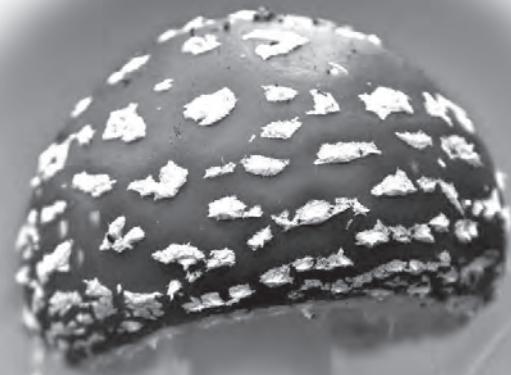
Mating season is practically a year-round exercise. The Great-horned Owls have been courting for over a month with their hooting back and forth. Sometimes I am lucky and see them in the tangle of eucalyptus branches, but most of the time I'm not. The female always hoots an extra note. If he hoots three, she hoots four; if he hoots four, she hoots five. (Guys, that's called getting the last word in!) Lately the sightings of Striped Skunks have increased dramatically. Not a morning goes by that I don't see several out foraging. Their mating season is in February so it's fair to say that the boys are out looking for love.

Spider webs become extremely visible if there was fog overnight. One web in particular has fascinated me for years, probably because I don't know what species spins it. I call them carpet spiders because their webs are flat and horizontal and are finely woven to resemble a carpet, not an orb. I never see the critter on or around it and I suspect that it is very small, but walking along the Bog Trail there are hundreds of them in the coyote brush and coffee berry. Out on the saddle amongst the gorse I never see a single web - which proves that this spider has evolved to eat insects that inhabit native shrubs.

Even though our rain has disappeared in January we still have a few months left to hopefully quench our parched earth. On the bright side we have exceeded last year's total. Wallflower, footsteps-of-spring, wild cucumber, milkmaids, poppy, currant, violets, lomatiums, checkerbloom, blackberry and manzanitas are blooming. Coast and Douglas iris, soap plant, everlastings, paintbrushes, larkspurs, Yerba Santa, rock cress and many more will be appearing soon. With all the pretty days that keep appearing it's a good time to walk the trails and take in the spring eye candy.

See you on the mountain...


Doug



Amanita muscaria
fly agaric

HABITAT RESTORATION

Please help us update these listings. If you have corrections or additions, please send them to kimcmich@hotmail.com.

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

Alemanys Natives at Alemany Farm.

3rd Sundays, 1 to 4pm. Contact: Jim Cartan, jcartan@gmail.com or Craig Heckman, heckmanc@sbcglobal.net

Bayview Hill. 2nd Saturdays
Contact Joe Grey joe.grey@sfgov.org

Bernal Hilltop. 3rd Saturdays,
10 am to 12 pm. Work party contact Rachel Kesel rachel.kesel@sfgov.org; Groups contact Joe Grey 415-831-6328.

Brooks Park. Contact Joe Grey
Joe.Grey@sfgov.org

Buena Vista Park. 1st Saturdays, 9am to noon.
Contact 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.

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.

Corona Heights. Last Saturdays, 10 am to noon.
Contact Jim Houillion 415-552-3542.

Edgehill Mt. Park. 2nd Saturdays, 10am to noon.
Contact Stan Kaufman 415-681-4954 or sekfmn@pacbell.net

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

Glen Canyon. Wednesdays & 3rd Saturdays, 9am to noon. Friends of Glen Canyon. Contact rachel.kesel@sfgov.org

Golden Gate Heights Sandy Dunes Native Plant Community Garden. Contact Barbara Kobayashi okim1946@yahoo.com.

Golden Gate Park Oak Woodlands. 2nd Saturdays, 10am to 12:30pm.
Contact Rob Bakewell 415-710-9617 or rbakewell@gmail.com

Green Hairstreak Butterfly Corridor. 3rd Saturday, 10 am to noon. Contact Nature in the City stewards@natureinthecity.org

Half Moon Bay State Beach. 650-726-8801 or hmbrestore@gmail.com

Heron's Head Park. 2nd Saturdays, 9am to noon.
Contact Raynelle Rino 415-282-6840 or raynelle.rino@lejyouth.org

Lake Merced. 3rd Saturdays, 10am to noon.
Contact Joe Grey joe.grey@sfgov.org

Linda Mar State Beach 4th Sundays, 10am to noon. Contact 650-451-1130 or 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.

McLaren Park. 2nd Saturdays of even months, 10am to noon. Contact Joe.Grey@sfgov.org or 415-831-6328.

McKinley Square Hillside. 2nd Sundays, 10am to noon. www.McKinleySquare.com or chris@McKinleySquare.org.

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

Mt. Davidson. 1st Saturdays, 10am to noon. Friends of Mt. Davidson. Stan Kaufman 415-681-4954 or sekfmn@pacbell.net

Mt. Sutro. 1st Saturdays, 9 am - 1 pm
Contact Craig Dawson: craig@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, 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, or www.saveSFbay.org/volunteer.

Shields/Orizaba Rocky Outcrop. Contact Paul Koski at pkoski7@netscape.net.

Starr-King Open Space. Serpentine grassland on Potrero Hill. 2nd Saturdays, 9:30 am to noon. Contact Tom tphlip@yahoo.com.

Tennessee Valley Nursery and Stewards. Every Tuesday, 10am to noon & 1 to 4pm.
Contact 415-289-1860 or lponzini@parksconservancy.org

UCSF Mount Sutro Open Space Reserve. 1st & 3rd Saturdays, 9am to 12:30pm. Contact Craig@sutrostewards.org or 415-665-1077.

White-Crowned Sparrow 3rd Saturdays, 9am - noon
Contact sfrpd.volunteerprogram@sfgov.org



CONSERVATION

Yellow Oxalis: Bane of Coastal Grasslands

by Jake Sigg

Perhaps you are one of the increasing number of people who have taken notice that in winter and spring months yellow oxalis, *Oxalis pes-caprae*, is seemingly everywhere. If you see large yellow-spotted areas on Mt Davidson, Glen Canyon, Grandview Park or elsewhere, that is likely to be yellow oxalis. Twenty years ago it was not common but has been increasing stealthily every year since. That is truly odd, because the plant does not produce viable seed.

People underestimate this showy plant with its brash yellow flowers that shout for attention. But, ironically, it isn't getting the attention it warrants, because it is muscling out our wildflowers and our wildlife-supporting plants. Every year there is more and more oxalis, fewer and fewer other plants. Who wants to walk through an acre of yellow oxalis, with no other plants around?

The plant has above-ground parts only in the rainy season, then dies down to the bulbous corm. If its spread is not checked, after rains stop in spring we will see barren, erosive hillsides without vegetation through the summer, because no plant can compete with it in favorable conditions. Sadly, the only effective weapon

we have is herbicides. The only other method--trying to kill the corms by digging them out, is much too destructive and labor-intensive. If action is not taken, we stand in grim prospect of losing nearly all our grasslands in San Francisco - and possibly other coastal areas in California.

Our chapter recently hosted a talk by Kat Anderson, who spoke of Native American practices in managing lands for food production. She mentioned the role of the gopher and scrub jay in moving around bulblets of geophytes such as blue dicks and Ithuriel's spear, thus increasing food sources for the native peoples. Present-day restorationists know that those same native-plant gardeners, the scrub jay and gopher, also move around the bulbils of yellow oxalis--presumably out of habit, not realizing that this pernicious weed is destroying the diversity, and thus the amount, of the food supply that their practices formerly promoted.

For a more extensive discussion of this and two other problem plants, see Triple Threat From South Africa in the October 2003 *Fremontia*, online at: http://cnps.org/cnps/publications/fremontia/Fremontia_Vol31-No4.pdf



"The violets in the mountains have broken the rocks."
—Tennessee Williams

CHAPTER NEWS

San Francisco State Students at the 2015 CNPS Conservation Conference

Several graduate students from San Francisco State went to the CNPS Conservation Conference with generous sponsorship from the Yerba Buena chapter. It was great to be able to attend the 50th anniversary celebrations!

One of the most important aspects for all of us was gaining some perspective on how *big* California botany is. We tend to be slightly myopic in our focus on our personal research – it was delightful to realize the scope of botany beyond all of our projects. In particular, we enjoyed the seminars on Climate Change, Botanical Illustration, Quality Environment, Pathogen Impacts, and Plant Science (it's important to keep up with changing plant names, but it's also dull; it's a gift to have witty people explain it to us over an afternoon.) The discussion of technological improvements was full of many new and interesting tools. From GoogleMaps and their work to make satellite imagery more accessible, to iNaturalist and their attempts to crowdsource and categorize plants and animals, to the continued innovation of the California Consortium of Herbaria in finding ways to digitize and share their collections; technology is providing exciting new tools for botany.

We also listened to talks closely related to our research interests and networked with the speakers. Jane Van Susteren and Barbara Wilson were able to renew their collaboration on California *Sedum* taxa with scintillating back-to-back talks that clarified many confusing issues – not just for the audience, but also for Jane. Lizette Guzman-Zaragoza was able to talk with Lee Rimpa about manzanita genomics.

It was also an important venue for socializing and networking – we reconnected with former co-workers and friends from our undergraduate days and made new friends based on our keen competition for items in the silent auction. There were great talks by two San Francisco State alumni who have helped at our campus keying workshops: Jessica Orozco, now at the Rancho Santa Ana Botanic Garden, gave a wonderful talk on her efforts to create a flora comprising the South Fork of the Tule River; and Genevieve Walden, now at UC Berkeley, gave an excellent talk on her work on taxonomic changes to the Hydrophyloideae.

Exposure to the breadth and depth of the interests of the California Native Plant Society renewed our enthusiasm for our own research. Our motivation has increased dramatically as a result of meeting other people excited about our research and results. Thank you for sending us!

-Jane Van Susteren, Rebecca Crowe, Lizette Guzman-Zaragoza, Leanne Feely, Haley Smith Henderson

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,

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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CT can no longer accept any children's items. CT is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. Your donations are tax-deductible, and produce more chapter income than you might think.

Spring Garden Tour on Hiatus for 2015

The CNPS–YB Chapter's Native Plant Garden Tour is on hiatus for 2015. Despite various pleas for more assistance made by the shrinking core of dedicated volunteers who organize the tour, not enough help was offered. We thank the folks who did express interest, and encourage you to sign up next fall to assist with the 2016 tour. If you would like to offer now to help with next year's tour, you can contact Susan Floore at 415.285.4692 or sfloore@att.net. In the meantime enjoy native plants in your own gardens, public gardens and natural areas!

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____ Yes, I'd like to join.

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Vitis californicus
wild grape

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