

CALIFORNIA NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY
San Diego Chapter Newsletter

CHAPTER MEETING

October 17, 2023

In-person meeting

Casa del Prado Rm 101, Balboa Park

7:00 Browsing & socializing

7:30 Announcements & Presentation

Chapter meetings are free and open to the public.

Presentation

The Ewing & Arroyo Preserves

by Caitlin Kreutz

Rancho Santa Fe Association Reserve Manager

Invasive species are being removed and habitat restored in the lower San Dieguito River Valley. The project is a partnership between the Conservancy, the California Native Plant Society, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Services, the Fairbanks Ranch Association, the Rancho Santa Fe Association, Rancho Santa Fe Fire Department and local homeowners. With grants from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the Southern California Wetlands Recovery Project and the Patagonia Cardiff-by-the-Sea, the goal is to remove substantial stands of invasive species in the area for fire safety and to rehab the area with native plantings. Caitlin, who serves as a project liaison for the Association and local homeowners, said the plan is to remove all invasive palm trees, eucalyptus, pampas grass and *Arundo donax* (giant cane). They will restore the area with locally-occurring native plants that match the chaparral found in the area.



Caitlin Kreutz joined the Parks & Recreation Department in 2016 and was promoted to Environmental Resource Coordinator in 2019. Caitlin is a UCSB graduate and has a background in Biology

and Horticulture. She manages the Association's open spaces such as the Arroyo and Ewing preserves, and the historic Rancho Santa Fe trail system. Caitlin is also active in grant-funded restoration projects and Firewatch, the defensible space mapping initiative for members. Caitlin loves spending time hiking and exploring the outdoors.

Native
PLANT
Sale

Full Details:
www.cnpssd.org/fall-plant-sale

WHEN
OCTOBER 14TH
2023
9AM TO 3PM

WHERE
LIBERTY STATION
DEWEY RD. & CUSHING RD.

Proceeds support the California Native Plant Society, a 501(c)3 dedicated to the preservation of native flora

(More Plant Sale info on page 5)

Election of Chapter Board members occurs in November. If you are a Chapter member and wish to run for the board, please contact the Vice-President at vicepresident@cnpssd.org and submit a short description of your qualifications/goals to the newsletter at newsletter@cnpssd.org by Oct 10.

FIELD TRIPS

Fall colors in Mt. Laguna
Saturday, October 21; 9:00 am - noon
Wooded Hill Nature Trail

DIFFICULTY: EASY (Trail is uphill/short loop or longer to the top) 1.4 miles (2.3K). Redtail Roost is park and walkaround.

PLANT KNOWLEDGE: Beginner to Novice, Professionals always welcome

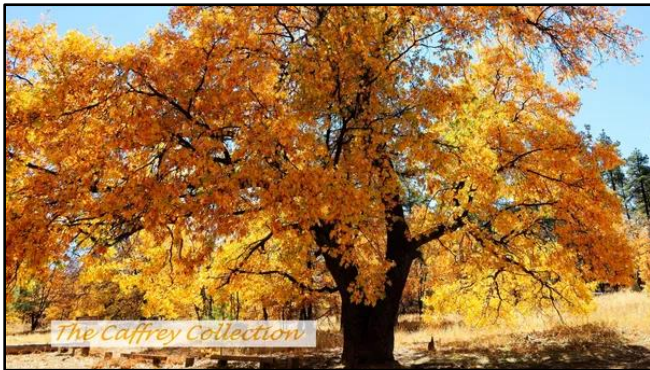
ACCESS: Open to all, no charge for field trip.

REQUIRED FEES: Adventure Pass required? Available online or REI/sporting goods stores/Ranger station/Alpine Liquor Store,,,, (very convenient that and my first stop on the way....LOL). One time or annual (\$5/\$30). They really shouldn't require this at Wooded Hill because the only facility is further down at the main parking area and is usually locked. Is there anything more disappointing when you need a bio break and the door is locked?

AMENITIES: Restrooms are available at Ranger station if open, or campgrounds for daily use fee; porta potties at Info Station just as you enter M.L. Rec Area.

DOGS: Dogs on leash OK.

[EXTREME TEMPS above 90F [32.2C] or forecast for Heavy Rain / flash floods Will Cancel



NATIVE GARDENING COMMITTEE

NGC Meeting
Saturday, October 7; 9 am – 12 pm
Native Plant Maintenance –
Fall Pruning
with Leo Hernandez
2275 Mendocino Blvd, 92107

Fall is in the air and now is a great time to prune and spruce up our native gardens. Not sure what or how to prune? Then join us at the **Pt Loma Native Garden** for a hands-on workshop with **Leo Hernandez**. He will share tips and tricks to keep your landscape healthy and looking its best. We will then put you to work so you can practice what you learned. This workshop is free and **open to homeowners and the landscape trade**.

What to bring: hats, sunscreen, gloves & hand pruners. **You must RSVP at this link:** [Native Plant Maintenance Workshop](#). For more information, contact gardening@cnpssd.org.

Our September meeting included a tour of the **Pt Loma Native Garden** followed by a presentation of the Water Wise rebate program by **Debby Dunn** from the **San Diego County Water**

Authority. The meeting ended with a raffle of native plants donated by **Lee Gordon**, artwork by **Susan Lewitt** and a copy of "A foot & A field" by **Jerry Schad** donated by **Holly McMillan**.



Left: **Al Field** talks about the history of the garden. Photo by **Silke Gathmann**.

Right: **Debby Dunn** speaking with **Greg Rubin**. Photo by **Silke Gathmann**.



Here are a few photos of what is blooming at the Pt Loma Native Garden now. Who said San Diego doesn't have fall color? Stop by for a visit to this 2-acre native garden, open 7 days a week at 2275 Mendocino Blvd, 92107.

Right: Pt. Loma Native Plant Garden seed library.



Below: St. Catherine's lace buckwheat (*Eriogonum giganteum*)





Summer holly (*Comarostaphylis diversifolia*)



Left: Bush sunflower (*Encelia californica*)

Goldenrod (*Solidago californica*).



Right: Monarch butterfly on seaside heliotrope (*Heliotropium curassavicum*)



Shaw's agave (*Agave shawii*).

Calling All Artists!



Matilija Poppies by **Molly Paulick**

Calling all artists to join us on the **CNPS San Diego 2024 Native Garden Tour on April 6th & 7th**. We're looking for talented individuals in various art forms, such as fine art painting, pottery, photography, textiles, mosaics, sculptures, and mixed media to be part of this exciting event.

This is an excellent opportunity to showcase your artwork, giving visitors a chance to appreciate your creative talents. Artwork must be native plant/garden related, original and unique. **Apply at this link: [2024 Garden Tour Artist Sign Up](#) by December 1st.**



Left: Painted Lady Butterfly on *Salvia* sp. Photo by **Dennis Mudd**.

Punta Banda Baja Bush Snapdragon (*Gambelia [Galvezia] juncea* 'Punta Banda').



CNPS San Diego 2024 Native Garden Tour Seeking Native Gardens in Poway & Coastal San Diego

We Can't Wait to See Your Garden on the tour!

We have a few great native gardens lined up, but we need more! If you live in **Poway** or **Coastal San Diego** and your garden is planted with 60% or more California native plants, please apply at this link: [2024 Native Garden Tour](https://www.cnpssd.org/2024-Native-Garden-Tour) . For more information, contact Silke Gathmann or Christine Hoey at gardentour@cnpssd.org

Doug Tallamy Visits San Diego!



Doug Tallamy. Photo by Christine Hoey

The **Mission Trails Visitor Center** recently hosted author and research entomologist **Doug Tallamy** on September 8th & 9th. He gave a very informative presentation based on his book "**Nature's Best Hope**" followed by a book signing. Tallamy described how we all can make a positive impact to reverse declining ecosystems, insect, and bird populations. This can be simply done in our own landscapes by removing invasive plants and replacing part or all of our lawns with water wise native trees and plants.

Sweat bee bedding down for the night in a Palmer's abutilon (*Abutilon palmeri*) flower. Photo by Christine Hoey



Protect our Denim!

Along those same lines, Christine saw this thoughtful **Natural History Museum** post recently on Instagram for biodiversity day:

"Biodiversity" is quite the buzzword. What's the big deal? It helps to think of life on our planet as one big piece of fabric, where each thread represents one species. If the fabric is densely packed with millions of fine threads, the fabric will be strong and resistant to anything that poles or pulls at it. Think of your sturdiest pair of denim jeans. If a few threads break, their neighbors might feel some strain, but the fabric remains durable and resilient. This is what it's like to have high biodiversity. Each species contributes to the resilience of its ecosystem.

Now imagine your most ragged, threadbare pair of jeans. They have holes. Threads are pulling apart at the seams. The hold-out strands are hanging on, but a deep squat could ruin the pants entirely. An ecosystem that has lost its biodiversity is equally unstable and vulnerable to damage. Without the diverse wildlife that makes up our home planet, our collective denim jeans would be unable to support us. And there is no second pair - we must take care of what we've got."



Join us at Moosa Creek Nursery "Sip & Shop" November 4th!

The Garden Committee and the CNPS Bookstore with Cindy Burrascano will be there at the "Sip & Shop" event. Stop by our booth to say hello and browse.

Fall Planning Events

Co-Chairs **Silke Gathmann** and **Christine Hoey** are not only busy planning next year's garden tour, but we are also working on offering more native garden maintenance workshops and nursery tours, developing native plant education materials and more. If you would like to be part of the planning team, we would love to have you! Contact us at gardening@cnpssd.org.

If you love gardening with California native plants and would like to join the Native Garden Committee (NGC), sign up here: [Join NGC](https://www.cnpssd.org/join-ngc). A separate monthly email is sent out to committee members with meeting announcements, volunteer activities, workshops and early bird sign-ups that don't always make it into the Chapter newsletter. We would love to see you!

Happy fall!

*Christine Hoey & Silke Gathmann
Garden Committee Co-chairs*

CNPS-SD BOARD NEWS

October Board Meeting

Wednesday, October 11, 6:30 – 9:00ish pm via Zoom. To add an item to the agenda, or to get the link to the meeting, please email president@cnpsd.org.

FALL PLANT SALE

Saturday, October 14

2701 Cushing Rd (Where Cushing Rd meets Dewey)
NTC Park - Liberty Station, San Diego, CA 92106

This year has been surprising in the native plant nursery trade and while it may seem like the big changes are the big move to an open field venue with farmer's market charm and the lovely sound of jets overhead every five minutes, the behind-the-scenes changes are in some ways bigger. Some things are happening for the better and some take some nuance to explain. This is more than an advertisement and call to spread word of the upcoming plant sale, this article is also a very brief insight into the looming issues in restoration and habitat horticulture and how volunteers and vocal advocates are going to be essential to meeting challenges and providing solutions in supporting a vibrant future for urban and adaptive wildland ecology.

Please share the PR media from the CNPSSD webpage at <https://www.cnpssd.org/fall-plant-sale> and our social media platforms with friends, family and like-minded neighbors!

Seeds of Change - Liberty Station

I'll start by saying that moving to Liberty Station at Cushing Rd and Dewey Rd is an experiment meant to open up our potential to nearly unlimited space. We can order more plants and more species/cultivars this year than last and we hope for beautiful weather and a robust turnout to make the sale a success. In addition to the seeds, books, merchandise, posters, and expert advice you already are familiar with, Liberty Station boasts a broader selection of nearby amenities to shop and eat. We'll have access to a dedicated parking lot and nearby overflow parking. The opportunity also opens up the chance to invite our favorite partners who can make it to the event. Get to know some of the most wonderful friends to have in San Diego with Mission Trails Regional Park Foundation, San Diego Audubon, Fred Roberts Designs, Earth Discovery Institute, and our fantastic City Parks - Open Space Rangers, to name just a few. The bet is that the increased expenses at Liberty Station will provide an easier time for volunteers and customers alike and the sale will still cover the additional thousands it takes to meet very specific standards required by the Park.

We can also make shopping easy for novice native plant lovers looking for companion plants that are appropriate to co-habitat with. These groups are: Good in Containers, Pollinator Plants (Wildlife / Plant Pairs), Coastal Rare Plants, Inland sunny slopes,

Long Bloom & Color, Water Loving Plants, and Groundcovers/Forbs/Native Meadow mixes.

Why Uproot from Balboa Park?

Breathing room is nice but the other reason is uncertainty about the facilities at Balboa Park and it's a fair time to let all our members know that in the coming months to years, Balboa Park's policies on scheduling and reservations are changing and we will need to be able to change with them. If Casa Del Prado goes through a renovation much like the Spreckels Theater and Botanical Building, we will need to be flexible enough to anticipate temporary or permanent disruptions to our events there. I hope this is an opportunity to bring events to other locations around the County, perhaps even closer to your home. **This means in 2024 we'll need volunteers with experience in planning, logistics, marketing, AV tech, sales / inventory, and administration / management as much as we need and appreciate people with a passion to grow, plant, tend, and research native plants and ecology.** Your ideas and contributions are valuable and we might see possible change as an opportunity to do new things in more neighborhoods to increase the reach of our mission and membership.

Growing Pains

This need for help and experience in all this uncertainty also applies to the nursery trade and the CNPS State policy goals to provide answers to a looming problem in California's wildlands and urban landscapes. Essentially how are nurseries going to meet the anticipated scale of restoring and maintaining native habitat locally and across the state? As importantly, how are landscape managers and maintenance crews going to equally meet these changes at scale? This opens up the Pandora's box of commercial scale thinking for growing, maintenance, contracts, equitable and sufficient labor pay, and seed harvesting native plants. We have wonderful sponsors and partners all seeing this issue every day, and every single one is finding labor shortage and many examples of institutional (see corporate influenced) reluctance to embrace ReWilding, or other economic barriers.

In our bubble, we're currently seeing limited selections or no availability of some common native plants at nurseries like Deerweed because they are selling out their inventory quickly to big projects or a particularly bad weather spell impacts saleable numbers of some plant species. This means very high prices are already here for popular, but hard to grow plants like Coulter's matilija poppy and Shaw's agave. We already know that some desirable plants like California bee plant and hummingbird sage and Incense cedar are just not available at all this year for the sale.

While this means the nurseries are doing well in one aspect and more projects are recognizing habitat initiatives as a real thing to actually act on, landscape architects and designers and nurseries still need incentive to provide increased diversity and take chances on species that are locally suitable and available. What happens when a species sells out entirely here in Southern California? Contractors may find technically

suitable plants in the Central Valley, Northern California, Oregon, Arizona or even further away. One solution is to take the chance and grow more and hope the trend holds and the difficult to stock plants grow (and sell) well in a quickly changing climate. For that, there needs to be more seed and more growers of native plants, but from *where and how much?* This introduces other issues on seed collection and support for local genetics in our watersheds that are their own lively debate currently.

Bearing Fruit & The Non Native Fruit Beetles

Thankfully, these problems have long been anticipated by CNPS leadership. For the nursery trade, we are going to have to form stronger partnerships with our native nursery suppliers. Perhaps we must even become suppliers ourselves - to our own Plant Sale and online seed store if nothing else.

In Sacramento, a soon to be unveiled [California Seed Strategy | California Native Plant Society \(cnps.org\)](#) is being ironed out that will aim to achieve four goals:

1. Identify the state's seed needs.
2. Identify research needs to define "genetically appropriate seed".
3. Develop decision making tools for seed users.
4. Communicate the strategy across the state.

These goals present no easy task to meet given the need to utilize hundreds of pounds of native seed in mitigation and post-disaster recovery. There are very few people that collect and process native seed and only one known company that does so at a scale to *mostly* meet the current demand. S&S seed does supply some of our seed in bulk when we can't get enough of your generous invitations to harvest non listed plants on private properties. To meet scale on seed collection we also are in need of people interested in seed collection, growing harvest populations, or donating seed from wild areas on their land. To contribute to the Seed Strategy implementation, now is the time to reach out as we are compiling a list of friends all across San Diego County and have a local plan in place already. Reach out to Cindy Hazuka at seedsandbulbs@cnpsd.org to inquire about helping in some fashion.

There are also big moves that are encouraging native plants into more commercial places and shared spaces. The County of San Diego & CNPS San Diego have been working to uniformly address suitable planting lists that include native plants as the emphasis for wildland adjacent areas and public buildings. The current timeline for a release and implementation is FY 2024/25. <https://www.sandiegocounty.gov/sustainability/projects/native-plants-policy> This is also a possibility at the City of Encinitas too though we may need more local representation there to make a native plant focus happen in a reasonable timeframe.

State CNPS has been working hard on legislation language on a larger scale and got within sight of the finish line with AB 1573 Water Conservation: Landscape Design: Model Ordinance that would require a 75% native plant palette for new commercial and public spaces by 2029. Unfortunately, there is

backlash in this move as Big Turf and Ornamental Nurseries like Monrovia, Monterey Lawn, and Green Thumb, among others, have derailed AB 1573 with influence on members of the California Senate Appropriations Committee. In September poison pill language was inserted into the bill to make a loophole around the focus on "CA native plants" to also allow any "drought tolerant plant from anywhere in the world". Read "[AB 1573 Reaches a Stopping Point](#)"

AB 1573 Reaches a Stopping Point at [AB 1573 Reaches a Stopping Point - California Native Plant Society \(cnps.org\)](#) by our own Liv O'Keefe from Sept 8. This is another issue where your voice matters when you call representatives and support or complain about important issues like this one and others.

Each issue above could be an article or presentation all on its own and this is just a glimpse into what our future is going to need from each other, our representatives, and industry to see our mission through. Thank you for being a member, thank you for being a volunteer, and finally thank you for keeping so much love of life in our corner of the world.

~ Justin Daniel, Chapter President

IN THE FIELD

Ranchita Mountains By Tom Oberbauer (Photos by the Author)

Ranchita seems like an underappreciated area. It is a high desert, low chaparral flatland with a line of mountains to its northwest, north and northeast. It is located at around 4,000 feet but the mountains are higher. The San Ysidro Mountains to the north are large enough and receive enough precipitation to support coniferous forest and *Quercus kelloggii* (California black oak) woodland, but access is very difficult. However, the west end of the mountains off of Old Mine Road is somewhat accessible to reach some pines and on the east end, the mountains rise within the boundary of the Anza-Borrego Desert State Park. The peaks are over 5,620 feet with rock piles and boulders. Ranchita itself is quite dry receiving 12.3 inches of precipitation including water equivalent from 6.8 inches of snow per season and the moisture drops off quickly as one passes down the Mountain Springs Grade. However, at the ridges on the top, the moisture factors, which range between winter snow and rain and summer monsoon, are quite complex. It sometimes gets summer rain such as the 7.38 inches it received in one day from tropical storm Hilary, the wettest spot in the County from that storm. Ranchita can also receive substantial snowfall like it did in February of 1979 when I traveled there a couple of days after a major storm and the snow was probably two and a half feet deep.

Over the years, there have also been reports of Pinyon pines (*Pinus quadrifolia*) growing in the eastern ridges (Eric Curry Calflora 2017). The oddly shaped rock formations in those ridges are reflected in location names like Chimney Rock and "the Thimble". However, while the ridge east of Chimney Rock

itself does not have a name, its north extension is often referred to as the White Benchmark 5326 feet.

Since I have been obsessed lately with Pinyon pines and their mortality, I made a couple of attempts to find a route to climb up on the leeward, northeast facing side of the main peak. From aerial photos, it appeared that a woodland was growing just to the east of the ridge and I convinced myself that the trees appeared to be Pinyon pines. I also convinced myself that it looked like a little sloping valley that may have supported a number of trees. I had a route figured out that involved parking my car and walking up some dirt roads and then cutting across to the east up the west side of the ridge. However, when I drove out to try it one day, it became very clear that the cut across was not permitted since it was private land. What was not fenced was clearly posted No Trespassing. The last thing I would ever want to do is cause a conflict with a private owner in a backcountry area of San Diego County for a large number of reasons.

Since the area I wanted to visit is actually in Anza-Borrego State Park, I figured out a route to walk inside the park boundary by parking on the south side of the top of Montezuma Grade and walking up some shallow drainages and open slopes to the north to eventually get to the slope to climb up onto the ridge.

On February 18, 2022, several days after a light snowfall, it was a cool day in the 50°F range with east winds. I headed north and after a few false starts, I came across an area with open habitat and interesting rock formations. One to me looked very much like an Easter Island statue or Mr. Eagle of the Muppets television and movie fame. While the boulders in the Valley of the Moon in the Jacumba Mountains are rounded, many of these are angular.



On the route up, the vegetation begins as a Chaparral scrub mix with *Cylindropuntia ganderi* (Gander's cholla) in open areas but also with *Adenostoma fasciculata* (Chamise), *Rhus ovata* (Sugarbush) and *Quercus cornelius-mulleri* (Desert scrub oak), the dominant scrub oak here. The oaks appeared variable in general but were quite common. In many locations the oaks supported *Phoradendron leucarpum* ssp. *tomentosum* (Oak mistletoe), a pale green mistletoe with oval leaves like the ones that people use for Christmas. Occasionally, *Ceanothus*

perplexans (Cupped leaf ceanothus) was present. *Cercocarpus betuloides* (Mountain mahogany) was here as well.

Ribes quercetorum (Rock or Oak gooseberry) was quite common as compact shrubs with many leaves and small yellow flowers that were blooming profusely. It does not appear like other *Ribes* because it is such a densely vegetated shrub. The profuse flowers were semi-tube shaped and yellow, with the yellow calyx folded back, and small petals. Bees were swarming on them. The leaves are typical *Ribes* leaves, shaped a bit like a maple leaf but with more lobes and they are small, a bit leathery looking, and deciduous.



Ribes quercetorum (Rock or Oak gooseberry). Closeup photo from American Southwest.



Annual plants were also visible, including some that were just dried skeletons of *Bromus*

tectorum (Cheatgrass), and *Erodium cicutarium* (Red stemmed filaree). *Plagiobothrys arizonica* (Arizona popcorn flower) had generated its characteristically distinct leaves that form a starlike rosette of leaves with visible hairs on little bumps. They occasionally flower at this stage almost as though it is an emergency backup for reproduction before the plant grows larger.

Senegalia greggii (Catclaw) also grew with the chaparral shrubs and, even without leaves, it makes its presence known by grabbing on with its hooked spines to one's clothing. There is a reason that it is called the "wait a minute" plant. *Hesperoyucca whipplei* (Chaparral candle) and *Yucca schidigera* (Mojave yucca) grew on the way north from Montezuma Road.

Other major shrubs included *Prunus ilicifolia* (Holly leaf cherry), and *Salvia apiana* (White sage). At this time, orange-tip butterflies were visible, one of the first butterflies of the season and with larvae that feed on members of the mustard family (Brassicaceae). There are quite a few native and non-native mustards in the area which will be discussed later.

Farther up, it was necessary to pass through a zone of Chaparral that was dominated by *Adenostoma fasciculatum* and the oaks but also *Arctostaphylos glauca* (Bigberry manzanita), which were of average sizes though it can grow large. It is noteworthy that the *Arctostaphylos* had many dead branches and skeletons that likely represented shrublands affected by the 20-year drought in which precipitation, especially in the montane areas,

has been 25% below normal. The desert areas were affected even more severely.

After passing through the narrow, shrubby section, while some sidestepping over rocks and rigid *Arctostaphylos* was necessary, the route opened up to a semi-grassy, herb covered slope with scattered shrubs rather than dense cover. The breeze from the east was quite cool as it hit my back that had a build-up of perspiration from the climb. The mixture of shrubs and cacti was the same with the exception that the *Arctostaphylos* was not present in this area.

It took a couple of hours to get where I wanted to go. On the way, I had climbed up in elevation and I could see down below that new greenhouses had been constructed on the private land. I hiked up the slope, which was just a bit steeper than it looked on Google Earth. After I passed the ridgetop, I was disappointed by several things but the first was that I did not look carefully enough at the vegetation signature to identify the pines because they were not growing right behind the ridge like I had envisioned and the slope behind was very steep downward. I could see pines far down below, at least a few really good-sized ones. Not only was the slope much steeper than it looked on Google earth on this back side of the ridge, it was really quite steeper than the windward side. Small remnant patches of snow remained from the storm earlier in the week.



I decided to hike and look for trees throughout the entire area below the ridge, not going into the valley to the north that I could not see from my low vantage point. I saw several pines on a piece of terrain that formed a ridge a bit lower on the east. The interesting thing about hikes around here is that the ground is decomposed granite. Here, the soil was uncharacteristically fluffy, which made it very difficult to walk on the steep slope. I could have easily tumbled.

I worked my way over to the rocky knoll that had the pines and was able to get close to them. One was growing on the top of a little rocky peak and a couple more were at the north base of a large rock formation that provided shade most of the time. They appeared in fine shape but did not have any cones and the cones that were on the ground were several years old. However, other shrubs, such as the *Arctostaphylos*, had half of their trunks consisting of dead wood with only strips of the red

live parts supporting the upper branches. Numerous dead skeletons exist of what was probably *Cercocarpus betuloides*.

From that vantage point, the terrain dropped very abruptly to the desert below. This is the headwaters for Hell Hole Canyon. It was like being present on a floating cloud land high over the lowlands.



Overlooking Hell Hole Canyon.

I looked around a bit more and decided it was time to head back. Time really races by when you are in a place like this because it takes so much time to move around. The breeze was picking up a bit as I was heading back and I had on multilayers of clothing with a fleeced jacket as it was so cool.

However, later, I convinced myself that there was another cluster of Pinyon pines that was accessible in the mountains east of Ranchita. I even convinced myself that there might be another road to access the northern group from the northwest, but after I examined it more, I also convinced myself that the road was all private. Therefore, I would have to hike from the same location that I did before but go farther north before cutting to the east.

On March 24, 2022, I began that walk. The vegetation appeared to be in pretty good shape as I started. The *Ceanothus perplexans* was in flower now where I parked (below).



The *Adenostoma fasciculatum* was not yet in flower. The *Bromus tectorum* and *Erodium cicutarium* were growing for the new season now. Scrub jays, California thrashers, California quail, and White winged doves were calling. It was projected to be a warm day but I estimated that this area was high enough that it still would not be too bad. Interesting annuals included

Lasthenia gracilis (Needle goldfields), *Amsinckia* sp. (Fiddleneck), *Lupinus concinus* (Bajada lupine), *Phacelia distans* (Wild heliotrope), the fern *Myriopteris covillei* (Coville's lip fern), *Chaenactis glabriuscula* (Yellow pincushion) and *Cammissoniopsis* sp. (Suncup) that was just beginning to grow but also *Bromus madritensis* (Red brome) and *Bromus hordeaceus* (Soft chess). *Yucca schidigera* was present and *Nolina parryi* (Parry's bear-grass) was nearby. Gopher diggings left dirt track rills on the surface that indicated that snow stood for a while as they excavated.

I was able to navigate going northward in a more direct manner than last time, however, the route through the heavily vegetated narrow canyon still gave me trouble where I had to push my way through the large shrubs on the way to the more open slopes.



Left: *Mentzelia veatchiana* (Veatch's stickleaf)

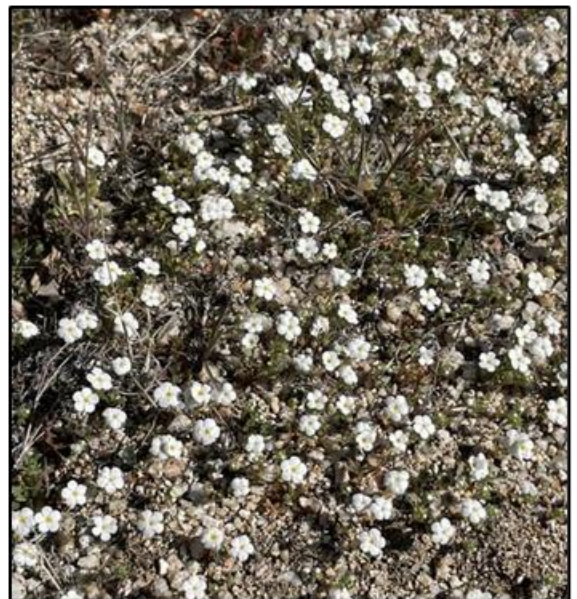
Other annuals appeared, including *Descurania pinnata* (Tansy mustard), bright orange *Mentzelia veatchiana* (Veatch's stickleaf), *Salvia columbariae* (Chia), *Thysanocarpus curvipes* (Lacepod), *Cryptantha* spp. (Popcorn flowers), *Nemophila menziesii* (Baby blue eyes; right). The butterflies included the orange tip again, Behr's metalmark, and a small blue that I caught out of the corner of my eye.



Sphaeralcea ambigua (Apricot mallow) was flowering with its orange blossoms on gray-green fuzzy leaves and, also with fuzzy leaves, *Eriodictyon crassifolia* (Felt leaf yerba santa) plants were also there. Farther up, *Adenostoma sparsifolia* (Red shank) and *Eriogonum wrightii* (Foothill buckwheat) were present, as well as *Ericameria linearifolia* (Interior goldenbush), below.



Purple *Astragalus palmeri* (Palmer's milkvetch), *Chaenactis glabriuscula*, and *Eriophyllum wallacei* (Wallace's woolly daisy), with flowers that were not open yet, also grew. A few white flowered *Layia glandulosa* (White layia) could be seen as well. *Eremocarya lepida* (Mountain eremocarya), a popcorn flower that used to be in the genus *Cryptantha* (below), was growing in dense patches in some places with little white flowers low and near the coarse sand surface.

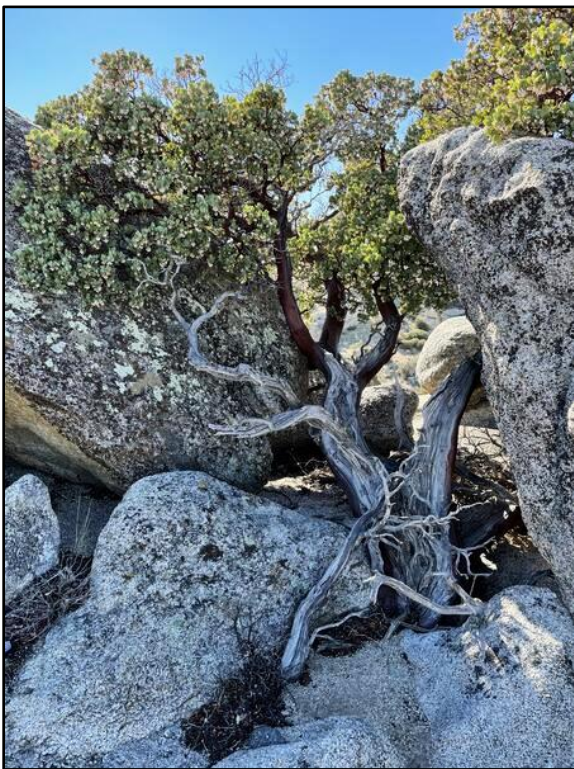




Caulanthus simulans (Payson's caulanthus; left), a small slender Mustard family annual with yellow flowers that have a vase-shaped calyx and curved-back petals, occurred in a number of locations on the route. It is a sensitive plant with a low level of sensitivity.

The route I was taking passed the Easter Island head-shaped rock again but I kept going farther north, actually passing the high point of the White Benchmark, but on the west side, and then turned east. Then, the route climbed farther until it passed through a saddle into the view over what I surmised to be an area with another group of Pinyon pines. Once again, I was in an area that I misinterpreted Google Earth in spite of the fact that I have great familiarity with it. After passing through a gap

between large boulders and the White Benchmark, I had expected to see at least a few Pinyon pine trees nearby. Well, there were a couple, but again, most were far down a very steep slope. *Arctostaphylos glauca* was here as well and also displaying the apparent damage from drought.



The area was almost an exact parallel of the area I visited last time, but one rocky hill formation to the north of that one. On the north slope of a rock pile grew a few pines and several oaks. The pines here appeared more stressed with some major dead branches. Again, more trees were far below on the very steep slope of unstable, fluffy decomposed granite based sandy material.

However, farther up the slope, not far below the actual White Benchmark formation that was to the west, a healthy, grown tree with a trunk about ten inches in diameter, maybe more, was standing. It was not a tall tree but more of a squat shape. On its southwest corner, a young seedling-sapling about a half a meter tall grew with no sign of water stress.



It is interesting that the larger tree had two-needle leaf bundles as indicated by Curry. It was exciting to see a new generation of tree actually growing. Cones were on the ground beneath the adult tree but most were old and the few that appeared younger seemed like they may never have had seeds among their scales. Old pines standing long dead also existed in a few places.

From that tree, one can look to the east to see other trees on the north side of rock formation and beyond into the deep chasm of Hell Hole Canyon, over Borrego Springs and the Salton Sea beyond with low mountains to the east of the sea.

I hiked back around the White Benchmark, passing some sort of old stone wall which may have been very old, and some more modern swirly rock design that somebody laid on the ground.

Seeing the dead branches on some of the older trees and the long dead stumps was a bit disconcerting about the future of Pinyon pines here, but the vigorous tree and the young seedling pre-sapling stage was a good sign for the future.

RECENT RELEVANT PUBLICATIONS

Nature's great survivors: Flowering plants survived the mass extinction that killed the dinosaurs

New study tracks how 'flower power' survived mass extinction 66 million years ago to become the dominant plant type. A new study by researchers from the University of Bath (UK) and Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México (Mexico) shows that flowering plants escaped relatively unscathed from the mass extinction that killed the dinosaurs 66 million years ago. Whilst they suffered some species loss, the devastating event helped flowering plants become the dominant type of plant today.

<https://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2023/09/230912192432.htm>

RELATED ACTIVITIES

California State Parks Foundation Volunteer Opportunities!

Volunteer Core Leader Training
Saturday, October 14, 2023
9:00 - 11:00 am

Contact: volunteer@calparks.org

Silver Strand State Beach

Saturday, October 7, 9:00 am – 1:00 pm

Help pull and remove invasive iceplant (*Carpobrotus*) to enhance coastal strand habitat on the Silver Strand bayside! Volunteers will use hand tools to complete this work. Iceplant covered much of the bayside until the mid-2000's when a removal effort began and to our delight, native plants flourished where the iceplant once dominated. Today, the effort continues to remove invasive weeds to make space for beach evening-primrose and other native dune plants to grow. Ages 12 and older are welcome (minors must be accompanied by an adult and bring a signed waiver by their guardian). Lunch will be provided.

Registration required to make sure you receive important meeting location details. Sign up on our calendar of events: <https://volunteer.calparks.org/>

Border Field State Park

Saturday, October 14, 2023 From 9:00 am - 12:00 pm

As part of Tijuana River Action Month, help restore native habitat! We will be pulling invasive weeds to maintain the area

for park visitors and improve habitat for wildlife. This event requires all participants to be ages 18 and older.

Registration required to make sure you receive important meeting location details. Sign up on our calendar of events: <https://volunteer.calparks.org/>

Southern California Botanists

49th Annual Symposium!

I'll Take My Plants Rare

Saturday, October 21, 2023

Pomona College, Seaver Auditorium

<https://socalbot.org/symposia/>

SCB supports botanical research by its members through grants given on an annual basis. Completed grant proposals must be turned in by Friday, November 17, 2023. For more info visit: <https://socalbot.org/grants/>

CNPS Bryophyte Chapter

2024 Spring Foray

March 29 - April 1, 2024 — Santa Rita Mountains, south of Tucson, Arizona.

<https://bryophyte.cnps.org/>

The CNPS-SD Newsletter is generally published 12 times a year. The newsletter is not peer reviewed and any opinions expressed are those of the author identified at the end of each notice or article. The newsletter editor may edit the submittal to improve accuracy, improve readability, shorten articles to fit the space, and reduce the potential for legal challenges against CNPS. If an article, as edited, is not satisfactory to the author, the author can appeal to the board. The author has the final say on whether the article, as edited, is printed in the newsletter. Submissions are due by the 10th of the month preceding the newsletter; that is October 10 for the November newsletter, etc. Please submit items to newsletter@cnpsd.org

CNPS-SD Activities Calendar October 2023

10/7: Native Garden Committee Mtg, p.2

10/11: Board Meeting, via Zoom, p.4

10/14: Native Plant Sale, p.1

10/17: Chapter Meeting, in person, p.1

10/21: Field Trip, p.1-2

(<https://www.meetup.com/San-Diego-County-Native-Plant-Discoverers-Meetup/>)

Please check www.cnpsd.org for activities that may have been scheduled after this newsletter was prepared.

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

<https://www.cnps.org/membership>

___ Student/Limited Income \$25; ___ Individual \$50; ___ Plant Lover \$120; ___ Supporter \$500; ___ Patron \$1,000; ___ Benefactor \$2,500; ___ Perennial Monthly Sustainer Memberships starting at \$5/mo. provide much needed predictable income for our programs. Your indicated gift will be automatically repeated each month. Pls see <https://www.cnps.org/membership> to sign up for this membership level.

Name(s): _____

Address: _____

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Mail check payable to "CNPS" and send to: CNPS, 2707 K Street, Ste 1, Sacramento, CA 95816-5113.

CALIFORNIA NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY

San Diego Chapter
C/o San Diego Natural History Museum
P. O. Box 121390
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October 2023 Newsletter

Dedicated to the preservation of the California native flora
CALIFORNIA NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY – SAN DIEGO

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