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CALIFORNIA NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY  
*San Diego Chapter Newsletter*

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## CHAPTER MEETING

**Tuesday, September 25; 7 p.m.**  
**Room 101, Casa del Prado**  
**Balboa Park**

**Important Note:** the change in meeting date and room is for the September meeting only! In October, we will again meet on the third Tuesday in Room 104.

## Experience the Inaugural 2012 San Diego Native Garden Tour

by Susan Krzywicki

The California Native Plant Society (CNPS) San Diego County Chapter hosted the first annual CNPS San Diego Native Garden Tour, sponsored by Hunter Industries, on April 28 and 29, 2012. The two-day, self-guided tour offered exclusive access to 25 unique home gardens, private nature parks, art gardens, restoration landscapes, and public botanical gardens. The event was the region's largest public open house of native gardens and featured on-site lectures by native landscape designers as well as expert docents who interpreted each garden.

Gardens showcased in the 2012 CNPS San Diego Native Garden Tour extended from Fallbrook to Chula Vista and were designed by landscape architects, landscape designers, master gardeners, and garden enthusiasts. Over 550 registrants attended and the feedback was excellent.

Now you can see highlights from the tour and learn how the event was received in the press, the public and amongst professionals and homeowners. Join us for a virtual tour of the properties and the event.

Susan Krzywicki, Chair of the CNPS SD Chapter Gardening Committee, will present. The Gardening

Committee formed several years ago and the high-profile project they identified to pursue was a Native Garden Tour. The tour took a tremendous group effort and Susan looks forward to sharing her experiences with you.

**Pre-meeting Gardening with Natives, 6:30 to 7:00 p.m.:** Planting Natives in Clay Soil by Greg Rubin.  
**7:00 p.m.** – refreshments, book browsing, socializing.  
**7:30 p.m.** – presentation.

## *Thanks, Adrienne!*

**Who Knows All of Our 750 Chapter  
Members? Adrienne Does!**

Scattered around San Diego County are all of you 750 members - and Adrienne Heinzelman, our outgoing membership chair, is the one person who knows who you are and where you live. In 2009, past president Dave Flietner convinced Adrienne that she would be ideal to lead this committee, and she met the challenge. Every month she has reconciled the State CNPS membership records so your newsletters and journals are delivered, despite occasional computer snarl-ups. She persuaded a volunteer to help by calling lapsed members to remind them to stay with us. She asked another member to volunteer to help her host the membership table at meetings and plant sales. Adrienne says, "I was happy to help CNPS in whatever way I could, because I really believe in what CNPS is doing." Look for Adrienne on field trips, and thank her for her hard work that has kept us working together for our beautiful native flora these past three years. THANKS ADRIENNE!

Chapter meetings are free and open to the public. They are held in the Casa del Prado, just west of the San Diego Natural History Museum in Balboa Park.

# PREZ SEZ

Well, it is the time of year once again when we prepare for our largest fundraiser, the Annual Fall Native Plant Sale to take place on October 13 in Casa Del Prado. As our signature event, the sale is our opportunity to educate as well as raise funds for our yearly activities, such as this outstanding newsletter, mini grants, field trips, programs and special projects, including the San Diego Native Plant Atlas which we are pleased to announce that we have been able to contribute toward funding once again this year. In this edition of the newsletter, you will read more about the plant sale as well as gardening uses of plants, most of which may be purchased at the sale.

Along the lines of the importance of gardening with natives, our September program will be a discussion of the first Garden Tour from our chapter last spring with tremendous efforts by **Clayton Tschudy**, **Susan Kryzwicki**, and **Greg Rubin**, who also garnered substantial sponsorships. The September program will showcase the success of their efforts with the tour.

It is also the time of year to reflect again about the importance of volunteers. The California Native Plant Society is a community of volunteers. All of our major projects, including the plant sale, the newsletter editing, the field trip planning, organizing financing, selling books, reviewing environmental documents, as well as organizing the tremendously successful garden tour earlier this year, only occur due to participation of our members. Numerous committees and representatives, as well as Board members, support our chapter yet receive little recognition, but who put in long hours of work to enable our success. Please look at the back of the newsletter and think about any assistance you could provide for volunteers listed there. It is a challenging task to perform these activities and there is inevitable turnover of committee chairs and other volunteers. Recently, **Adrienne Heinzelman**, our Membership Chair stepped down from her chairmanship and **Peter St. Clair** withdrew from being the San Diego CNPS representative to the City of San Diego Open Space Canyons Advisory Committee. We thank Adrienne and Peter for the time they spent in these programs. We are fortunate that **Mike Evans** was able to step into the membership committee role and **Mike Gonzales** will take Peter's spot on the City advisory committee. **Frank Landis** has also indicated that he is working with new volunteers to assist in reviewing environmental documents as part of the Conservation Committee role he plays.

The San Diego Chapter of CNPS is a very active chapter with great success due to the input from the volunteers. We are only as strong as those who participate. We thank those who have volunteered in the past and those who continue to volunteer, and we look forward to new members and volunteers in the future.

~ **Tom Oberbauer**, Chapter President

# BOARD MEETING

The Board does not usually meet in August, but since there is business to conduct the Board voted at the July meeting to hold a meeting in August.

**Wednesday, September 5, 6:30 - 8:30 p.m.**, monthly CNPS San Diego Chapter board meeting to be held at 4010 Morena Blvd, Suite 100, San Diego (Thomas Guide 1248 C4). Exit I-5 to Balboa Dr. east and turn north on Morena Drive. Proceed 1/2 mile and make a u-turn at the Avati Street signal and turn into the driveway for 4010. Drive to the parking lot on the west side (away from Morena). Members are welcome to attend as observers. If you want to discuss an issue, please ask to get on the agenda by sending an email to [president@cnpsd.org](mailto:president@cnpsd.org).

## TECOLOTE CANYON NATURAL PARK



**September 2; 9 a.m. to noon.** A relaxed opportunity

to learn plant lore of this coastal natural reserve from a CNPS member. Meet at the Tecolote Nature Center. Wear sun protection and comfortable walking shoes, bring water. Rain at 8 a.m. cancels the walk. Directions: exit I-5 at Seaworld/Tecolote exit. Go east (away from Mission Bay) on Tecolote, past the ball fields, along the driveway to the very end. Free and open to the public, and parking is also free. The walk is repeated the first Sunday of each month. Remaining dates for 2012 are: Oct. 7, Nov. 4 and Dec. 2.

## Did you know .....

CNPS-SD has a library and you can check out books. You can also donate native plant books and ephemera and receive a tax deduction for doing so! (We can give you a tax deduction form.) We have many new donated newsletters of interest articles from the archives. If anyone wants to do native plant research or just easy reading, we may have the perfect book or article. Who wouldn't like a cleaner house, to be able to share information plus get a tax deduction! Come and browse our books and newsletters. You can get in touch with the "new librarian" Patricia Fishtein at [pfishtein@cox.net](mailto:pfishtein@cox.net)

# RARE PLANTS

## Sampling (Rare) Plants

I recently heard that a government agency somewhere in San Diego County had contracted with a major consulting company to come up with two protocols: one for surveying annual plants, and one for surveying perennials. I do wish them the best with this project, but I'll admit I suppressed an eye roll when I first heard the news.

Yes, I feel a little snarky here. In school, I was lucky enough to take a class in vegetation sampling methods, and the take-home lesson was that there is no one ideal technique for sampling plants. Different techniques have different strengths and weaknesses, and each one answers different questions at a different cost in money and effort. There's a good reason why I've got several books full of survey methods on my shelves.

Still, sampling with CNPS-SD volunteers is a different project than figuring out how to standardize agency sampling protocols across a wide sample of San Diego's diverse habitats. With our rare plant treasure hunt, we had a miniscule budget, limited time to sample, and many volunteers who were not botanists. On the other hand, we had an easy environment to sample: coastal dunes. They're open, there aren't too many plant species, and while the plants are tiny, it's easy to teach even novices to identify the sensitive species in the field. Our real challenge was surveying faster and figuring out a better way to deal with millions of tiny plants. That's where the sampling frames came in.

We used one foot by one foot sampling frames simply because you can buy two-foot long pieces of PVC in big box stores, and it takes a few minutes with a multi-tool to make a perfectly adequate sampling frame from two PVC pieces and a four right angled pipe elbows. With the sampling frames, all we had to do was throw the frame 20 or more times, count the plants inside the frame each time, average the counts to get an average count per square foot, and figure out how many square feet were in the patch we were sampling. While this produced a population estimate, it was a lot faster than counting fourteen million coast woollyheads, and arguably as accurate as trying to count that many without trampling any of them.

Because we were sampling tiny plants for the most part, the small frames were perfectly appropriate. If we were sampling scrub oaks, or prickly pears, or dudleyas on cliffs, or cattails, those little frames wouldn't have worked at all. If we have to count any of those in the future, I'll simply do something else.

What advice do I have for the agency and their dream protocol? Very little, actually, especially since they haven't asked me. I've had to come up with similar protocols for other agencies with dreams of standardization, and ultimately, it's a matter of educating

the person who wants the protocol after you find out what they truly need. Managing expectations, in other words.

I hope that the people who think that there can be a single sampling protocol will become more familiar with the complexities that San Diego botanists normally face in the field. That will be the best thing to come out of this. Researchers in San Diego have used a plethora of sampling protocols in the past, and I suspect that whatever the consultants deliver won't be the last protocol we use, either.

Isn't diversity a wonderful thing?

~ **Frank Landis**, Rare Plant Survey Committee Chair

*"...seasoned Californians love the chaparral at all times of the year - when it is brown and rusty in late summer, as well as when the winter rains have brought out the greens of the different foliages. ...there will be other things besides the growth of shrubs to amuse you. All day long you will have the alluring companionship and conversation of wren tits."*

- LESTER ROWNTREE  
Pioneering California botanist, 1939

## CONSERVATION

### Ex Situ Conservation

The fall plant sale is not for another month, but a recent adventure in weed collecting set me thinking about one of the more controversial methods of saving species: *ex situ* conservation. I know, more Latin. *Ex situ* conservation is what zoos do, getting animals out of their native habitats for conservation purposes. There's all sorts of grumbling, possibly even whining, about this process. It removes animals from their ecological context, it breaks up food webs, zoos are where species go to die in prison. As I said, it's controversial. It also saves species from extinction.

What about plants? Yes, it's controversial with plants too, but it has, occasionally, been outstandingly successful. For example, marijuana doesn't have any truly wild populations, and though it does grow as a weed in some places, these are escapees from cultivation, feral plants rather than wild ones. If you prefer a less contentious plant, *Ginkgo biloba* has been saved for supposedly 2,000 years in Chinese temple courts, and the only place it grows "wild" is near the grounds of a monastery. It's even touted as a tough street tree, because all the pests that used to plague it supposedly disappeared with the Yangtze riparian forests that used to be its home.

There are many other examples, even in California. It's fairly common, though seldom publicized, for CNPS members to rush in ahead of bulldozers to salvage rare plants from development sites. Many botanist's yards still contain these plants, and they even end up at plant sales from time to time. Rancho Santa Ana has been known to sell surplus rare plants at plant sales, and there are certainly more of the highly endangered Catalina mountain-mahogany (*Cercocarpus traskiae*) growing around Pasadena than there are on the island. I should note that, if you plant an endangered species that you acquired legally from a garden, it is not covered by the endangered species act, and that CNPS plant salvagers typically have permission to do what they do.

Ex situ plant conservation can be controversial. While I was on Catalina Island, for example, the policy was to prohibit shipments of native plants onto or off the island, to maintain the genetic purity of the island's plant populations. That's a rational, if extreme, policy, and I'm still glad that there is an off-island stock of mountain mahoganies, given that there were only a handful of adult plants on the island. Similarly, some CNPS members worry about gardening with natives near wild areas, concerned that they may introduce foreign genes into the local population. It's not a silly concern—one can see St. Catherine's lace (*Eriogonum giganteum*) hybridizing with California buckwheat (*Eriogonum californicum*) in several places near the coast.

But ex situ conservation gets even more strange. Over the last few months, I collected *Limonium perezii* from eight locations, volunteer collections for a study in Zurich. It turns out that this plant, which is regarded as a weed along our coast, is down to one population of about 300 individuals in its native range in the Canary Islands. The Zurich researchers wanted genetic samples from our plants, to see if they could understand why it could be common here and rare in its home range. I suspect that the biggest population happens to be at the local garden centers, and it's weird to think that a local big box invasive source could actually be promoting ex situ conservation.

It was even weirder to learn that *Limonium perezii* grows at about 2,400 feet above sea level in the Canary Islands, and along the coast here. It certainly can grow away from the coast, so I'm not sure whether its coastal weediness here is due to its ecology, or simply because people along the coast like to plant it because it stands up to salt spray and sand. There's an important lesson there for anyone who is trying to model where plants will grow as the climate changes.

What do we do about *Limonium perezii* here: weed it or protect it? In fairness to the plant, *Limonium sinuatum* is a much worse weed, especially in salt marshes. Most of the *perezii* populations we collected were escapees from nearby plantings. While they are tough plants, they aren't nearly as much of a problem as, oh, sahara mustard, or even ice plant or blue gum. While it is a nuisance in places like Border Field State Park, I'm not against garden centers selling it.

Ultimately, given the choice between losing a species and keeping it in a garden, I think it deserves a space in our gardens. After all, it worked for ginkgo. Moreover, as people learn to grow and care for rare plants in their yards, they learn to care for it, and they can turn into a lobby to protect the remaining wild plants. When you go to the plant sale in October, realize that you could be doing a bit of conservation work too. If you don't mind the controversy.

~ Frank Landis, Conservation Committee Chair

## Habitat Conservation Plan Land Acquisition Grant Awarded to City of Carlsbad

The City of Carlsbad's Habitat Management Plan (HMP), a part of the northwest San Diego County's Multiple Habitat Conservation Program (MHCP), has received a land acquisition grant of \$2,000,000 from the USFWS. The grant will be used to purchase approximately 1,351 acres of important biological core habitat areas for the threatened coastal California gnatcatcher and will also benefit numerous other listed and unlisted species covered by the Carlsbad HMP, including several plant species (see list below). The proposed land acquisition supports a large, landscape-level conservation initiative that will greatly enhance the conservation goals of the Carlsbad HMP and the MHCP by securing key regional habitat linkages and preserving core habitat. The parcels proposed for acquisition support a mosaic of high quality, native riparian and upland habitats.

Mike Grim, the Senior Planner who coordinates the Carlsbad's HMP, says the following native plants covered by the HMP could benefit from land acquisitions:

### Listed species benefited

Thread-leaved brodiaea (*Brodiaea filifolia*)  
San Diego thorn-mint (*Acanthomintha ilicifolia*)  
San Diego ambrosia (*Ambrosia pumila*)  
Del Mar manzanita (*Arctostaphylos glandulosa* ssp. *crassifolia*)  
Encinitas baccharis (*Baccharis vanessae*)

### Unlisted species benefited

Blochman's dudleya (*Dudleya blochmaniae*)  
Cliff spurge (*Euphorbia misera*)  
Orcutt's hazardia (*Hazardia orcuttii*)  
Wart-stemmed ceanothus (*Ceanothus verrucosus*)  
Del Mar Mesa sand aster (*Corethrogyne filaginifolia* var. *linifolia*)  
Nuttall's scrub oak (*Quercus dumosa*)  
Summer-holly (*Comarostaphylis diversifolia* ssp. *diversifolia*)  
San Diego barrel cactus (*Ferocactus viridescens*)  
Engelmann oak (*Quercus engelmannii*)

# GARDENING

## The Do's and Don'ts of Native Horticulture

It's been nearly 30 years since I planted my first native plant. It's also been nearly 30 years since I killed my first native plant. I was learning the hard way that being indigenous to our region did not guarantee success. In fact, it seemed I had more problems with native mortality than with exotics.

Although it makes perfect sense today, at the time this seemed counter-intuitive. How was it that I was losing the same plants that were so resilient in nature? The answer, of course, was that I was killing them with kindness. I was applying ornamental horticulture to native ecology and wondering why the plants were failing. Unfortunately, I still see the same mistakes being made today. This has led to many negative, misconceived notions about the use of natives in landscape design, to the point where they are often viewed as problematic and at best a "specialty" class of plants.

It was through this painful experience (and with the help of important mentors along the way) that I learned the key to success was in emulating natural ecology as much as possible in a landscape environment. Virtually everything we have been taught by ornamental horticulture seems specifically designed to KILL natives, not foster them. The areas of conflict are numerous and fundamental, including plant selection, soils, planting technique, irrigation, mulches, and maintenance. What follows is a brief overview of what has led to our best native landscape performance. This is not meant to be dogmatic, as there are always exceptions; however, I am sharing techniques which allow me to run a successful landscape business that is almost entirely natives based and where I can warranty my plants.

**Plant Selection** – Native landscape success starts at the design level. An important consideration is promoting the natural, fungal-based symbiosis that occurs with most native plants. Toward this end, my gardens tend to be plant community based. This is not as specific or as intimidating as it may seem. One really does not have to differentiate between say maritime and montane chaparral. Indeed, most of the coastal plant communities are quite compatible; coastal sage scrub, chaparral (all types), oak woodland (needs shade), and even riparian zones (need more water) are biologically compatible as long as their exposure and water needs are met. These all tolerate and/or need organic mulches, although CSS plants would prefer to have it pulled away from their base. Better yet, you can cheat with any of these plants by putting a few 6-12" boulders right on their roots. To get a stable plant community, you only need about 5 species from any of these groups.

Where the dividing line occurs is the desert. One does not see oaks growing in the desert, nor Joshua trees in the chaparral. Ironically, many coastal strand plants mix well

with desert varieties; these communities do not like organic mulches, preferring rock, gravel and sand. They also get much of their water during summer (fog or monsoons). Salt tolerance is higher, and soils should be well draining.

Beyond these simple groupings of plants, the other important design consideration is to select at least 70% evergreen type plants to create the foundation of your planting, at least if you want the landscape to look neat year round. This also lessens maintenance. Consider genera like *Ceanothus*, *Arctostaphylos*, *Rhamnus*, *Heteromeles*, *Dendromecon*, *Carpenteria*, etc. for your backbone. They come in all sorts of habits and foliar colors, let alone their seasonal flower appeal. Put the herbaceous perennial color spots along the edges for upfront viewing and easy maintenance. Mix perennials that bloom at different times of year for continuous color.

**Soils** – Do not amend your soil! I know this is a general statement, but adding organic matter when it does not exist in the wild (except in acidic or boggy northern forests where you might see Rhododendrons) virtually guarantees a short lived planting. Interestingly, the same plant community can occur in a variety of soils. The significant factors are drainage, moisture levels, and exposure. Bringing up the fertility of soil only causes the plants to slough off the beneficial mycorrhizal fungi, leading to a bacterial (often pathogenic) environment. The best mycorrhizal development occurs when the plants are slightly stressed. Got poorly draining clay? You would be amazed by the number of plants beautifully adapted to a clay environment (after all, what grew there before your parcel was developed?).

**Planting Technique** – We dig a hole and stick them in. However, there are important considerations. Try not to dig the hole any deeper than the root-ball; in fact, make it shallower by about 1/2 to 1" so that the root crown is above the surrounding soil. This is to ensure good drainage and allow for settling over time. If you have dug too deep, really pack the soil back in there and plant at least 1" high to make up for later settling. Then pack the backfill around the roots. You might do a "plant dance", compacting the soil by foot while circling the plant. Finally, water enormously – enough to remove any air pockets around the root-ball. Try to "float it out of the hole". This is an essential step. A temporary basin around each plant can assist infusion, but be prepared to break it down with a finger later on to prevent drowning as the plant establishes. Basins are usually required on slopes, by the way.

Immediately after planting, we usually put down a granular pre-emergent to help prevent that seed bank of 10-100,000 weed seeds per cubic foot from germinating. Corn gluten is an organic alternative.

A word about summer planting – it's absolutely fine! Just water more frequently, like any other garden you plant in summer. We don't need to kill native nurseries or contractors waiting for fall to arrive.

**Irrigation** – This has been a controversial subject for me, although opinions seem to be coming around. I started out using drip systems. Then plants started failing after 1-3 years, especially after being irrigated. Many

appeared over-watered, even on twice monthly intervals. I switched to overhead irrigation, and I stopped losing plants. This is consistent with a philosophy of emulating natural ecology, and it has worked consistently without exception since 1995. I discovered MP-Rotators around 2000, and the plants have been thanking me ever since! At 0.4 inches of equivalent precipitation per hour, they perform just like a gentle rain storm.

I recently was asked to consult on a professionally designed native landscape whose *Penstemon spectabilis* are dying, and you guessed it, they are all on drip. I see it over and over again. The *Trichostema* species are probably not far behind, unfortunately. Drip seems to emulate marshy conditions more than upland precipitation. That probably explains why I don't have any problems using drip on rushes, sedges, or *Carpenteria*.

**Mulches** – This is another area that can be a bit controversial; again, after many years of trying everything else, I have settled on shredded redwood bark as the most effective organic mulch, by far. Some of the reasons include: 1) It is very slow to break down, lasting 5-10 years while maintaining a nice color. Slow decay means that soils are not loaded up with organic amendment. 2) Excellent moisture retention while also being difficult to penetrate. Soil moisture is held much longer, while additional light irrigation is held in the mulch, which the mycorrhizal fungi can use as needed, rather than saturating the soil. It often prevents native landscapes from being over-watered (a way to cheat?). 3) Superior erosion control and slope adherence. Gorilla hair, as it is affectionately known, can stick to steep slopes, all the way to 1.5:1! And it is the closest thing to the natural duff layer that forms around chaparral, other than grinding up the chaparral. Do not use on desertscapes or veggies!

**Maintenance** – Although native landscapes, when properly designed, are lower in maintenance, all landscapes require some maintenance, at least if you want to impress people. On the other hand, where most landscapes benefit from occasional fertilizing, this is the worst thing you could do for a native planting. Weed control is essential, as they are dangerous in their ability to destroy the delicate ecology that supports these plants. Pre-emergents help control annual seed, but do nothing for rhizomatous plants like nut sedge, Bermuda grass, or oxalis. Fortunately, native plant communities have their own natural weed inhibition that kicks in at about 70% canopy coverage.

Dead-heading of herbaceous perennials is important, which is a good reason to limit their use to edge plantings. On the other hand evergreen plants, properly spaced apart, should require almost no attention.

I hope this information helps you experience the true potential of our native plants!

~ **Greg Rubin**, Board Member

**WANTED:** Photos, drawings or short articles of native plants for publishing in the newsletter. Send submittals to [newsletter@cnpssd.org](mailto:newsletter@cnpssd.org). THANKS!



Bush poppy (*Dendromecon rigida*) at Torrey Pines State Park. Photo by Bobbie Stephenson

## Natives in Public Gardens

Here is a list of some of the many places in San Diego County that inspire us to garden with natives. This is not an all-encompassing list, but the tip of the iceberg for places to see natives in a garden setting. Some of these gardens are private, some are public; some label their plants, others do not. Check the individual gardens for hours of operations and other considerations.

**Old Town Native Plant Garden Restoration** – Northwest corner of Old Town Historic Park. This volunteer effort shows San Diego as it was. A great introduction to ethnobotany - how indigenous people used plants directly in their lives. **Peter St. Clair** and **Kay Stewart** are the main champions for this garden. The plantings are along Taylor St. and Congress Ave.

**Lux Institute** – **Greg Rubin** won an “Orchid” award for this installation around an avant garde living artist residence program. A steep, narrow hillside is filled with natives and sculpture. Drive up to the garden, located at 1550 South El Camino Real, in Encinitas.

**Agua Hedionda Lagoon Discovery Center** – Around the center, the gardens were brought to a cultivated state with signage to point out species and short trails to lead the visitors to an overlook point. The Discovery Center's native garden contains over 750 plants, comprising over 50 different species. There are eight types of sage, five of manzanita, four species of wild lilac, and a variety of buckwheat, coffeeberry, currants, honeysuckle and hummingbird fuschia, plus many others. The Agua Hedionda Lagoon Discovery Center is located on the south side of the lagoon. The lagoon and surrounding wetlands are part of an Ecological Reserve under the care of the California Department of Fish and Game. The Visitor Center is at 1580 Cannon Road, Carlsbad.

**South Bay Botanical Garden** – The South Bay Botanic Garden at Southwestern College is a 4-acre gem. This college garden stresses education and sustainability, and provides a location for home gardeners to learn and get

ideas for their own landscapes. **Clayton Tschudy** and **Eliana Uretsky** were critical in the design and installation of the new California Native Garden and plant collection. Eddie Munguia is the field site manager and his hard work shows in garden's excellent shape. Open from Tues-Sat, 7:30 am to 4:00 pm – admission is free but parking passes must be obtained for \$3. The garden is along the western edge of the campus at 900 Otay Lakes Road, Chula Vista.

**Living Coast Discovery Center** (formerly Chula Vista Nature Center) – The Discovery Center, a “multi-media” learning experience, sits on the 316-acre Sweetwater Marsh National Wildlife Refuge. The Center has almost two miles of easy walking trails and native gardens on the edge of San Diego Bay. **Mark Valen**, our CNPS member on staff, has been very helpful in linking CNPS to the Discovery Center. The center is located at 1000 Gunpowder Point Drive, in Chula Vista.

**San Diego Zoo Safari Park** (formerly Wild Animal Park) – The 4-acre Nativescapes Garden shows off southern California's plant communities: chaparral, coastal sage scrub, cypress, desert transition, high desert, island, low desert, montane, palm oasis, and riparian. The entrance to the park is at 15500 San Pasqual Valley Road in Escondido.

**Balboa Park California Native Plant Garden** – This 5-acre demonstration garden, is adjacent to the 150-acre Florida Canyon Nature Preserve. An interpretive brochure describes 36 of over 100 plants on display, which are drought tolerant California native plants suitable for home and landscape use. The garden is located on the west side of the Balboa Park Tennis Club tennis courts at Morley Field on Balboa Park's East Mesa and is just south of the Upas and Alabama Street intersection. The address is 2201 Morley Field Drive.

**Point Loma Native Plant Garden** – Part of the San Diego River Park Foundation, the Point Loma Native Plant Garden houses many rare and endangered native plants. Some in the collection are not found naturally anywhere else in the world but in our region. Visit the garden and get a rare glimpse of what San Diego looked like over 100 years ago before palm trees and grass lawns became the norm. The Garden is located at Mendocino and Greene Street in Ocean Beach.

~ **Susan Krzywicki**, Garden Committee Chair

**WANTED: Photographs from the Inaugural San Diego Native Garden Tour in April 2012.** If you would like your photographs included in a slide presentation at the September chapter meeting, please call or email Susan Krzywicki at (619) 318-4590 or [gardening@cnpsd.org](mailto:gardening@cnpsd.org).



Mission Manzanita (*Xylococcus bicolor*) at the Hellhole Canyon Preserve. Photo by Bobbie Stephenson

## Happy Times with Torrey Pines

by **Chuck Curtis, 2011**  
(Edited for length by Kay Stewart)

Did you buy one of the large handsome 5-gallon Torrey pines at the 2011 CNPS plant sale? If so, here is the story of your tree's pedigree:

In 1895, a disciple of the Theosophical Society named Katherine Tingley purchased several hundred acres on Point Loma. Her dream was to form a Utopian community with a school and a university. By 1900 the site was a bustling community of 500 residents, including builders, craftsmen, musicians, engineers, and horticulturists. Orchards, vegetables, and exotic trees from all over the world were planted, with many conifers, including Pines, and among them, Torreys.

My grandmother's sister and her husband were among those who lived on the Point. I was born in Connecticut in 1922 and brought to San Diego by train in 1926 to live with them. I felt it was heaven on earth. All I had to do was attend school - where I learned the 3 Rs, Arts and Crafts, Ethics, Music, World Geography, Latin, plus how to grow flowers, fruits and vegetables. I had lots of time to roam, learn to swim in the Pacific, and had hundreds of trees to climb.

My favorites were the Torrey Pines, which, by the time I arrived, were 70'high. I was told they were planted around 1897 from the grove beyond La Jolla. I and my pre-teen friends built model airplanes, with propellers. We climbed to the very tops of the Torrey Pines and mounted the model planes above the treetops, to catch the strong westerly winds. They whirred with a very pleasant sound. I also remember one weekend when one of my teachers was baking a potato pie for lunch, and asked the monkeys among us to collect a pound of Torrey

pine nuts. He sprinkled them over the pie and rewarmed it, and it was very, very delicious!

After WW2, I was able to work at the Navy Electronics Lab at Point Loma, and to buy the very bungalow where I had grown up. My wife Margaret (the youngest daughter of Alfred D. Robinson, a renowned horticulturist) and I lived there for the next twenty years and raised five children. Before long all the vacant lots around us were built on by married veterans with children of all ages, so mine never lacked for playmates. I would take them hiking to the places I had fun as a child. On the way home I would show them all the Torreys we climbed, and we picked up fallen nuts. I told them to put the nuts in water. Those that floated were underdeveloped, but those that sank would germinate.

However, Pt. Loma was changing, so we planned to move to the back country. In 1962 we found a lot that had fifty oak trees, where we could see Mount Palomar. Often before starting the long drive home I would drive up to the kiosk for the University, which was at the time Cal Western University (now Point Loma Nazarene University). When the guard would ask for the purpose of my visit, I would point to the large Torrey and say, "I've come to say hello to my buddy there." He would smile and wave me in. I would search for cones, bring them back to Ramona, and harvest the seeds. By 1973 we had a dozen saplings and planted them on a ridge 100 yards west of the house.

They grew, and as time passed, Marg would gather their fallen seeds as she walked under them on her way to the mail box half a mile away. We planted those and gave them to friends and relatives who lived in other cities, and to our neighbors, and to the Native Plant Society. So, starting with 1897, these trees have a pedigree. These are the third generation from those I climbed in Point Loma so many years ago.

To ease the strain of maintaining this haven, I often walk up to Torrey Pines Flat and lie down on a clean, sloping mat of dried needles. With eyes closed and the sound of the wind whistling through the open boughs, the Sandman is not too far away. I tell people that the singing sound of the wind through the Torrey needles are the Angels sighing. When they hear for themselves, they agree.

(To read the unedited essay, please contact [fieldtrips@cnpsd.org](mailto:fieldtrips@cnpsd.org))

# VOLUNTEERS NEEDED FOR THE FALL PLANT SALE



October 13

- 1. To post flyers in public places** like libraries and coffee shops, we will supply the flyers or you can download and print it from the CNPS website: <http://www.cnpsd.org/2012fallplantsale.pdf>.
- 2. Someone to lead the plant tagging at Tree of Life Nursery** in San Juan Capistrano. This is usually done the Wednesday or Thursday before the sale. Volunteers usually carpool to the nursery. You need to be able to use Excel and review the list and the tags before the sale, check to see that all plants are there, and be able to direct a 2 or 3 volunteers. It's really not hard, and you could probably do this in about a half day.
- 3. Need two vehicles to pick up plants from Las Pilitas Nursery** in Escondido the Friday before the sale and deliver them to the sale at 8:30 a.m. Saturday. Plants must be covered when transported, so minivans and trucks with camper shells are preferred rather than open pick-up trucks.
- 4. Collect boxes:** Need someone to hit up Costco or the grocery store to collect boxes that plant sale customers can put their plants in at the sale. During the weeks before the sale you gather the boxes, then bring them to the sale. You do the collecting whenever it is convenient for you.
- 5. Pick up our plant signs**, which are being stored near San Diego, before the sale and deliver them to the sale at 6 a.m. on Saturday. This requires someone with a big truck or van and a very strong back, and a strong helper. A flat cart with wheels works well but you still need to lift them a bit to get them into the truck or van.
- 6. Volunteering on Sale Day:** We need lots of help unloading the trucks and setting up the sale, people to write sale tickets during the sale, volunteers to help customers load their plants, security - help make sure nobody walks away without paying, and then lots of cleaning up.

**Please e-mail so that we can get a list of volunteers started!** If you volunteered last year, let us know what you did and if you liked your job or want to try something different this year.

**Contact Plant Sale Committee Chairs  
Carolyn Martus & Mary Kelly at  
[plantsale@cnpsd.org](mailto:plantsale@cnpsd.org) if you can help.**

## RECEIVE YOUR NEWSLETTER ONLINE

To receive your newsletter via email, please contact us at:

[enewsletter@cnpsd.org](mailto:enewsletter@cnpsd.org)

Save the environment by not receiving a paper copy. AND your newsletter will be in **COLOR** and have embedded links!



The Seed and Bulb Work Group will meet on the following dates to clean and package seeds and bulbs for the fall plant sale:

Sunday, **September 30, 2012**, 8:30-11:30 a.m.

Sunday, **October 7, 2012**, 8:30-11:30 a.m.

We hope to see you at Tecolote Nature Center, 5180 Tecolote Road, San Diego, CA 92110, to help!

~ Amy Huie

## Native Garden Work Parties

### Old Town Historic State Park Native Garden: September 8 (Saturday), 1:00 to 3:00 p.m.

The fall equinox is a good time to shape up the smaller shrubs in a native landscape. By pruning now, after the plants have finished flowering and seeding or fruiting, the plants will have plenty of time to form buds for next year's flowers and fruit. When the rains come, they will start to develop.

The half-acre native plant landscape in Old Town State Historic Park illustrates the California native plants that grew near the San Diego River when Europeans arrived. The landscape includes trees, shrubs, grasses, and herbs that were used to make tools, shelter, weapons, clothing, ornaments, toys, food, medicine, or were foraged by animals hunted by the original Native American people who lived here, in a village named Kosoy. The McCoy House Museum, next to the landscape, is built on the site where Kosoy stood.

This teaching landscape is at the far west end of Old Town State Historic Park, at the corner of Congress and Taylor Streets, opposite the train/bus/trolley station building. Take public transit and you are there - cross at the corner and meet under the sycamore trees. If you drive, park in the lot next to the Garden off Calhoun and Taylor streets, or park in the CalTrans lot across Taylor and Juan Streets.

Bring your own gloves and personal pruning saw, hand pruners, or loppers, if you have them, because we have limited numbers of pruning tools. The landscape will also need some weeding if you would rather do that - the group has weeding tools and gloves to share. Have sun protection - and bring water if you don't want to use the drinking fountain. Restrooms are nearby.

~ Kay Stewart

**Point Loma Native Plant Garden: September 1 and 16, 9:00 – noon.** Rain cancels; bring water; no facilities; tools/supplies provided. Usually the first Saturday & third Sunday of each month. Contact [Richard@sandiegoriver.org](mailto:Richard@sandiegoriver.org) for more info.

# INVASIVE SPECIES

## Weed Warriors! Seeking Volunteers!

A two-year invasive plant control effort will begin in Rose and San Clemente Canyons this month (September). Together, these canyons make up the Rose Creek Watershed, the 36-square mile geographic area that drains into Rose Creek and Mission Bay. This watershed is severely degraded as a result of urbanization, impacts to stream channels, and continuous invasion and destruction from invasive plants. The Wildlife Conservation Board has provided a \$330,000 grant to control at least 90% of the two most invasive plants: pampas grass (*Cortaderia jubata*, *C. selloana*) and giant reed (*Arundo donax*) in this watershed. These funds will primarily be used to address infestations on public lands. While these numbers represent a promising start, many additional invasive species have been identified and mapped on private properties, which cannot be addressed with this grant's limited budget. The invasive plants growing on these private properties cannot be ignored because their seeds may cause reinfestations.

If you'd like to help us tackle and control more invaders to help the native plants in these canyons grow and thrive, please consider joining our new *Weed Warriors* volunteer group. These volunteers will provide invasive plant control assistance to homeowners within the watershed, specifically the critical homes with yards that border the canyons' rims. Previous experience with herbicide application is desirable, but training will be provided. Please contact Kelly Makley, the Rose Creek Watershed Coordinator, for more information at [Kelly@rosecreekwatershed.org](mailto:Kelly@rosecreekwatershed.org) or 858-220-2556. Please visit [www.rosecreekwatershed.org](http://www.rosecreekwatershed.org) to learn more about our watershed.

The CNPS-SD Newsletter is 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 10<sup>th</sup> of the month preceding the newsletter; that is, March 10 for the April newsletter, etc. Please send submittals to [newsletter@cnpsd.org](mailto:newsletter@cnpsd.org).

## Calendar for September 2012

- 9/1: Point Loma Native Garden Work Party (p.4)
- 9/2: Tecolote Canyon Plant Walk (p. 2)
- 9/5: **Board Meeting (p. 2)**
- 9/8: Old Town Work Party (p.9)
- 9/16: Point Loma Native Garden Work Party (p.4)
- 9/25: **Chapter Meeting (p. 1)**
- 9/30: Seed and Bulb Packaging (p.9)

**MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION**

\_\_\_ Student or Limited Income \$25; \_\_\_ Individual \$45; \_\_\_ Family or Library \$75  
\_\_\_ Plant Lover \$100; \_\_\_ Patron \$300; \_\_\_ Benefactor \$600; \_\_\_ Mariposa Lily \$1,500

Name(s): \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ e-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

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

**CALIFORNIA NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY**

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September 2012 Newsletter

Dedicated to the preservation of California native flora

**CALIFORNIA NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY – SAN DIEGO**

www.cnpssd.org

info@cnpssd.org

**BOARD MEMBERS**

Tom Oberbauer.....president@cnpssd.org  
Jonathan Dunn.....vicepresident@cnpssd.org  
Tom Beltran.....secretary@cnpssd.org  
Connie di Girolamo .....treasurer@cnpssd.org  
BOOK SALES: Cindy Burrascano.....booksales@cnpssd.org  
(858) 578-8040  
FIELD TRIPS (MEMBERS): Kay Stewart...fieldtrips@cnpssd.org  
(619) 234-2668  
NATIVE GARDENING: Susan Krzywicki....gardening@cnpssd.org  
NEWSLETTER: Bobbie Stephenson.....newsletter@cnpssd.org  
(619) 269-0055  
RARE PLANT SURVEYS: Frank Landis...raresurvey@cnpssd.org  
(310) 883-8569  
MEMBERSHIP: Mike Evans.....mikeevans@cnpssd.org  
MEMBER-AT-LARGE: Greg Rubin.....gregrubin@cnpssd.org

**CHAPTER COUNCIL DELEGATE**

Dave Varner.....chaptercouncil@cnpssd.org  
(619) 630-4591

**RARE PLANT BOTANIST**

Fred Roberts.....rarebotanist@cnpssd.org  
(760) 439-6244

**APPOINTED COMMITTEE CHAIRPERSONS**

CONSERVATION: Frank Landis.....conservation@cnpssd.org  
(310) 883-8569  
FIELD TRIPS (PUBLIC): Paul Hormick.....fieldtrips@cnpssd.org  
HOSPITALITY: Betsy Cory.....hospitality@cnpssd.org  
(619) 656-8669  
INVASIVE PLANTS: Arne Johanson.....invasiveplants@cnpssd.org  
(858) 759-4769  
LIBRARIAN: Pat Fishtein.....pfitstein@cox.net  
PLANT PROPAGATION: Connie Beck.....propagation@cnpssd.org  
(619) 749-4059  
PLANT SALE-FALL: Carolyn Martus.....plantsale@cnpssd.org  
PLANT SALE-SPR: Kristen Olafson....springplantsale@cnpssd.org  
POSTER SALES: James Rader.....postersales@cnpssd.org  
PROGRAMS: Claude Edwards.....programs@cnpssd.org  
(619) 282-8687  
PUBLICITY: Pat Fishtein.....publicity@cnpssd.org  
(619) 280-8234  
PUBLIC OUTREACH: OPEN.....publicoutreach@cnpssd.org  
VEGETATION: Anna Bennett.....vegetation@cnpssd.org  
(559) 443-9233  
WEBSITE: Mary Alice Kessler.....webmaster@cnpssd.org