



April 2007

The Bay Leaf

California Native Plant Society • East Bay Chapter • Alameda & Contra Costa Counties
www.ebcnps.org

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Native Here p. 3

Fridays, April 6, 13, 20, 27 Native Here Nursery open 9 am-noon

Saturdays, April 7, 14, 21, 28 nursery open 10 am-1 pm

Field Trips p. 2

Saturday, April 14, 10 am, Hampton Road area of East Bay MUD watershed

Saturday, April 21, 10 am, Warm Springs/Don Edwards SF Bay Refuge

Saturday, April 28, 9:30 am Mount Diablo, Falls Trail

Native Plant Restoration Team p. 6

Saturday, April 14, 9:30 am-1 pm, Restoration team work party, teasel and Harding grass removal, UC Field Station, Richmond.

BioBlitz of Irish Canyon p. 3

April 21 See article for times.

Regional Parks Botanic Garden California Native Plant Sale p. 6

Saturday, April 21, 2007, 10 am to 3 pm

Earth Day p. 3

Saturday, April 21, John Muir Birthday/Earth Day Festival at the John Muir National Historic Site in Martinez

Saturday, April 21, West County, Richmond, 11 am to 3 pm

Sunday, April 22, 2007, 12-5, Lafayette's second Earth Day

Membership Meeting see below

Wednesday, April 25, 2007, 7:30 pm

Bringing Back the Natives p. 5

Sunday, May 6, 2007, 10-5, Bringing Back the Natives Garden Tour

Saturday and Sunday May 5 and 6, Native Plant Sale Extravaganza

Saturdays, April 28 and May 5, Select Tours

Mother's Day Oakland Museum Wildflower Show p. 3

May 12 10 am to 5 pm, May 13 12 noon to 5 pm

MEMBERSHIP MEETING

The Plant Communities of Point Lobos: Beyond Wildflowers

Speaker: Rosemary Foster

Wednesday, April 25, 2007, 7:30 pm

Orinda Community Center, Room 7 (directions below)

Point Lobos, called "the greatest meeting of land and water in the world", is comprised of rich and diverse plant associates, some of which are quite rare and found in few other places on earth. This month's program will be a virtual walk through these communities—from northern coastal prairie in Hudson Meadow through Monterey pine forest, Monterey cypress forest, northern coastal scrub, coastal bluff, and intertidal zones. Our speaker will discuss and illustrate these communities' characteristics, their components, and the interdependence of species within them.

Rosemary Foster is a long-time member, past president, and current Chapter Council representative of the Monterey Bay

Chapter of CNPS. She has also been a Point Lobos docent for 19 years. In the 1980s, she studied horticulture and botany at Cal Poly San Luis Obispo. For the past twenty years, she has been researching the life and works of Lester Rowntree, and her 720-entry bibliography of Rowntree's periodical articles was recently published by UC Press in a reprint of Rowntree's *Hardy Californians*.

East Bay CNPS membership meetings are free of charge and open to everyone. This month's meeting will take place in Room 7 of the Orinda Community Center at 26 Orinda Way (in Orinda Village). The Orinda Community Center is the one-story building immediately north of the Orinda Library and connects to the library by a breezeway. Go up the library's main outside stairway next to the waterfall (or take the elevator near the parking garage) and then follow the breezeway north to the door of the Community Center. Room 7 is the first room on the left at the south end of the building.

continued from page 1

The meeting room will open at 7:00 pm and the meeting will begin at 7:30. Refreshments will be served after the presentation. Please contact Sue Rosenthal, 510-496-6016 or rosacalifornia@earthlink.net, if you have any questions.

Directions to Orinda Community Center at 26 Orinda Way:

From the west, take Highway 24 to the Orinda/Moraga exit. At the end of the off ramp, turn left on Camino Pablo (toward Orinda Village), right on Santa Maria Way (the signal after the BART station and freeway entrance), and left on Orinda Way.

From the east, take Highway 24 to the Orinda exit. Follow the ramp to Orinda Village. Turn right on Santa Maria way (the first signal) and left on Orinda Way.

Once on Orinda Way, go one block to the parking lot in front of the Community Center. You may also park in the park-

ing lot south of the Orinda Library, and there is additional free parking beneath the library building as well as on the street.

From BART (four blocks): Exit the Orinda station, turn right and cross a pedestrian bridge, then cross a second pedestrian bridge on the left. Go one short block on the sidewalk to the third pedestrian bridge. Go two blocks on Orinda Way to the Orinda Library and Community Center.

Upcoming Programs

Wednesday, May 23, 2007, 7:30 pm (in the Conference Center of the UC Botanical Garden at Berkeley):

Lester B. Rowntree on *Hardy Californians*, the recently re-published and expanded classic of California native plant literature by pioneering plantswoman Lester Rowntree (his grandmother)

FIELD TRIPS

Saturday, April 14, 10 am, **Hampton Road area of East Bay MUD watershed**. Gregg Weber will lead this tour of the fog shadow side of the East Bay hills. Expect early spring flora here even in mid-April, as the plant communities in this open space definitely felt the chill this winter. Limit 20 people. To reserve email _janetg24@excite.com.

Saturday, April 21, 10 am, **Warm Springs/Don Edwards SF Bay Refuge**

Join Yvette Laredo of the US Fish & Wildlife Service on a tour of this small preserved area of one of California's most rapidly vanishing plant communities. We will see both vernal pool and coastal prairie flora. This will be a chance for those with the rare plant lists from the conservation committee meeting to meet its subjects in concentric rings of *Lasthenia*, and hopefully *Downingia* also. If you do not have a rare plant list you can access a species list for the site at www.calflora.org.

Directions: As in past years, meet at the visitor center parking lot for the San Francisco Bay National Wildlife Refuge in Fremont to consolidate and carpool to Warm Springs. From most points north of Fremont, take 880 South to the 880/84 junction (also marked for Dumbarton Bridge). Go west on 84 until you reach the Paseo Padre Parkway exit, which is the last exit before the Dumbarton Bridge toll plaza. At the end of the ramp, turn left over 84, and go straight past the stoplight at Gateway. Turn right at the sign for the refuge turnoff a short distance past Gateway and proceed to the main parking lot (not the first turnoff at the access road).

Mount Diablo, Falls Trail. Meet April 28 at 9:30 am at the end of Regency Drive in Clayton. Check out some interesting areas of Mount Diablo below North peak and above Donner Canyon. Most beautiful jewelflower may be flowering. This is a moderate round trip of 5 miles with 1200 feet elevation change and quite a few up and down sections. It will take

around 6 hours. Bring lunch and water. We will take Back Creek Trail, Tickwood Trail, Donner Road, Cardinet Oaks Trail, Falls Trail, Middle Trail.

Directions: Take 24 or 680 to Ignacio Valley Road. Continue on Ignacio Valley Road into City of Clayton, turn right on Clayton Road. Take Clayton road past first intersection with Marsh Creek Road. In about a mile, it becomes Marsh Creek Road. Continue straight on Marsh Creek Road. Turn right on Regency Drive. Go to the end of Regency Drive and park.

Saturday April 28, 1 pm, **Hillside Natural Area in El Cerrito**

Join Rudi Schmid on a tour of several remnant plant communities, including coastal prairie, northern coastal scrub, riparian and oak woodlands. Indigenous species compete with a number of prevalent weeds, including French broom, pampas grass, and *Eucalyptus*. On this late April field trip in an odd spring, we may find the rare and endangered Oakland star tulip (*Calochortus umbellatus*) in flower, along with the more common April blooms of blue elderberry, toyon, and possibly late snowberry. Be prepared for steep paths on short elevation gains, and take precautions for poison oak.

Directions: From UC campus and nearby, go north on Oxford Street to the stop sign at Los Angeles Avenue and turn left, going downhill to the traffic circle. Turn right at the traffic circle and go left onto Arlington Avenue about 1.3 miles into Kensington. Turn left at the intersection of Arlington and Moeser Lane (large, divided road at the top of the hill), and follow Moeser Lane downhill past three streets before turning right onto King Drive. Continue on King Drive until it intersects with Shevlin Court to the left and follow King Court ahead instead of turning right to continue on King Drive. Park at the end of the cul-de-sac on King Court and meet the field trip group here.

Janet Gawthrop

MEMBERSHIP ACTIVITIES

We will have a wonderful display at these events – we just need some people to help out!

On Saturday, April 21 the John Muir Association is hosting the **John Muir Birthday/Earth Day Festival at the John Muir National Historic Site** in Martinez. The theme of this year's festival is Accessing Nature: Tread Lightly and Create Memories. Allowing all to have access to nature is crucial to fostering and maintaining environmental awareness and appreciation. At the same time, it is equally important to cultivate an awareness of nature's fragility and the need to tread lightly. Contact: Elaine Jackson 925-372-0687 elainejx@mindspring.com

¿Habla español? It isn't essential but you will have an opportunity to speak Spanish with many attendees. On Saturday, April 21st, **West County** is having its annual celebration of the earth. The event is sponsored by the West Contra Costa Integrated Waste Management Authority and is at the Integrated Resource Recovery Facility (the recycling center) in Richmond from 11 am to 3 pm. Last year's event was a

huge success, thousands of people came together (in the rain!) to celebrate our diverse community and our commitment to recycle more. Contact: Delia Taylor 510-527-3912, deliataylor@mac.com

Lafayette's second Earth Day is being held on Sunday, April 22, 2007, at Acalanes High School from 12-5 pm. We're looking forward to a big event. Our presence made a big difference last year. Our wildflower posters will be for sale. There will be a membership raffle as well. Come on out and help, please. Contact: Susan D'Alcama 925-283-3302, dalcamo@mcn.org

Mother's Day Wildflower Show at the Oakland Museum
May 12 10 am to 5 pm
May 13 12 noon to 5 pm

We'll have a table with CNPS information, lists of the wildflowers, books and such. Free admission and parking for volunteers. Contact: Delia Taylor 510-527-3912, deliataylor@mac.com

NATIVE HERE NURSERY

During the last couple of months you may have noticed some spots empty of plants. We're in the process of moving plants around the nursery to take advantage of our expanded space. Plants that were getting too much shade and pine needles under the pine trees are being moved to sunnier areas. John has been busy making new cages to house our plants originating from east county areas, so we'll have more room to put plants from those areas when they mature.

We have some nice wildflowers for sunny meadows: pink checkerbloom, yellow buttercups, orange poppies, and several annuals, including *Clarkia*. We also have bulbs, including bluish-purple *Triteleia laxa* and *Dichelostemma capitatum*.

The Bringing Back the Natives Tour happens on Saturday May 5 and Sunday May 6, 2007. We'll be open from 10 am-5 pm both days, selling plants and showing people the nursery. If you want to help us staff the nursery, you can get more

information and register to volunteer at www.BringingBackTheNatives.net.

Just outside our top gate is a bin full of used pots that people have donated to us and that we haven't used in our operations. Feel free to take your pick from our pot selection. They are mainly one gallon or smaller and come in different colors: orange, black, green, purple, white. They're great for growing seedlings.

Native Here Nursery is located in Tilden Park at 101 Golf Course Drive, across the street from the entrance to the Tilden Golf Course, 510-549-0211, www.ebcnps.org, click on the Native Here link.

Margot Cunningham, Native Here Nursery

BIOBLITZ OF IRISH CANYON

The Bioblitz on April 21st is an opportunity to get a first look at a newly acquired 300-acre conservation property in the Mt. Diablo area. Save Mt. Diablo (SMD) has asked for 10 botanists from CNPS who can help participate in a 24-hour biological survey of Irish Canyon. This pristine landscape is dotted with blue oaks in its uplands and intact riparian running through the bottomlands. Come help inventory this important conservation parcel. Experts are invited to come anytime Friday April 20, 5 pm to Saturday April 22, 5pm. Everyone else is invited for Saturday April 21, 10 am to 4 pm. Registration is required.

For information or a registration form visit: www.save-mountdiablo.org. If you have questions call SMD at 925-947-3535.

Directions: Park at the Clayton Library, 6125 Clayton Road, Clayton or at the Peacock Creek Drive carpool lot. Follow signs for the two-mile walk to Irish Canyon base camp. BBQ lunch provided.

Lech Naumovich

NATIVE GRASSLANDS

Why “Native” Grasslands?

In the January and March 2007 *Bay Leaf*, and throughout the complementary website documents, we’ve referred to “more native-like” grasslands, but have yet to really describe what we mean by the term or why we use it rather than, for example, “native grassland”.

In reality, both the meaning of the term and the reason for its use are simple to explain, and so we’ll do so briefly in this article.

What do we mean by “more native-like” grasslands?

Our remaining East Bay grasslands have a history that reaches back thousands of years (and much more). They have been subjected to changes of all sorts – daily, seasonal, interannual, and of longer cyclical and irregular periods – of decades, centuries, and millennia in duration. These include changes in climate, soil, biota, human manipulations, even topographic changes, among others.

Until “recently” (i.e., the past couple of hundred years), the local grasslands were composed almost exclusively of locally evolved species of plants and animals – biota like no other in the world, unique to our region (and some species perhaps of neighboring, mostly adjacent regions too) of California.

Not only do we have this ancient heritage of native biota, but we also have an exceptionally rich and diverse assemblage of it. We in the Bay Area are most fortunate in this regard.

The threats to East Bay Area native biodiversity

As fortunate as we may be to have inherited this treasure, we also are one of the primary culprits in bringing about the loss of our East Bay “jewels”, our native grasslands. Why?

Our native grasslands have been subjected to loss of acreage to intensive agriculture, to urban development, to occupation by exotic invasive weedy species, and to loss (caused by man) of various natural ecological “shaping” forces such as traditional fires and herd animals (grazers) under which these grasslands evolved. Thus, because of all these pressures, our current grasslands are mostly dim reflections of their richer historical condition.

The fact that we have any remnants of the native grasslands left to enjoy and to preserve is fortunate. This luxury will not last much longer unless we exert much more focused effort on protecting and improving (dare we say – making more native-like?) our grasslands – degraded as many of them may be at this juncture in time. The opportunity to salvage and improve the native character of our East Bay grasslands is still within reach, we believe, and CNPS urges its membership and the general public to demand a level of effort and allocation of resources sufficient to assure that such a goal can be pursued and achieved.

Why “more native-like”?

Weasel words, you say? Well yes. Our East Bay native grasslands were so diverse, varied, and indeed different from region to region (within the East Bay), and the recent two hundred year history of radical changes brought to these grasslands by modern society, has left us without a good understanding of exactly what was or is a native grassland”. Yes, we do know a lot about what these grasslands were probably composed of, but given the great variation of spatial and species makeup, it’s not a trivial task to know when we “have one”. So rather than getting into fights over “what is ‘native’”, the Conservation Committee of East Bay CNPS wonders if it may be more productive to see if we can simply settle for seeking less abundance of weedy exotics, more abundance of known natively-evolved grasslands species, and to measure in objective (some might say “arbitrary”) ways our progress towards these more relaxed goals.

What do you think? Do our East Bay native grasslands have a future? Is EBCNPS taking too gentle (or impractical, or unscientific) a position on setting a goal of improving the native-like quality of our grasslands? Tell us by email at grasslands@ebcnps.org.

See www.ebcnps.org/conservation/grasslands.html for previous *Bay Leaf* articles and related documents.

Peter Rauch, Conservation Committee member

BRINGING BACK THE NATIVES

Sunday, May 6, 2007, **Bringing Back the Natives Garden Tour**

Saturday and Sunday May 5 and 6, **Native Plant Sale Extravaganza**

Saturdays, April 28 and May 5, **Select Tours**

Registration for the third annual Bringing Back the Natives Garden Tour is now open. The 2007 Tour will take place on Sunday, May 6, from 10 am to 5 pm. This free, self-guided tour showcases 60 pesticide-free, water-conserving East Bay

gardens that provide habitat for wildlife and contain 30% or more native plants. Two new features will be offered for the first time this year.

The first, a series of Select Tours – exclusive, guided tours of inspirational native plant gardens – will take place on consecutive Saturdays, April 28 and May 5. Learn how to garden for birds, native bees, and butterflies, visit three delightful school gardens, or gain landscape design tips from the experts.

The second new Tour feature is the Native Plant Sale Extravaganza, which will take place on Saturday and Sunday, May 5 and 6. The Extravaganza sale features half a dozen native plant nurseries—many not normally open to the general public—which carry large quantities of hard-to-find California natives.

Volunteers are needed and will be rewarded with free, private tours of beautiful native gardens. For more information visit the website at www.BringingBackTheNatives.net, email Kathy@KathyKramerConsulting.net or call 510-236-9558 between 9 am and 9 pm.

The free Bringing Back the Native Garden Tour showcases sixty beautiful gardens in nearly two dozen East Bay cities. (Alameda, Berkeley, Castro Valley, Clayton, Danville, El Cerrito, El Sobrante, Emeryville, Fremont, Hayward, Hercules,

Livermore, Martinez, Moraga, Oakland, Orinda, Pinole, Richmond, San Leandro, and Walnut Creek.)

The Bringing Back the Natives Garden Tour and the Native Plant Sale Extravaganza are both free. Tickets for the Select Tours will be available for \$30 per person, with a limit of 30 participants per group.

The registration deadline for both the Bringing Back the Natives Garden Tour and the Select Native Garden Tours is April 25 and can be done online at www.BringingBackTheNatives.net. Both Tours expected to fill up quickly. Early registration is suggested to ensure a place.

Questions? Contact Kathy Kramer, Bringing Back the Natives Garden Tour Coordinator, 510-236-9558, kathy@kathykramerconsulting.net.

MEMBERSHIP DRIVE AT BRINGING BACK THE NATIVES

We will be conducting a CNPS Membership Drive at the **Bringing Back the Natives Garden Tour** on May 6. We'll have membership tables with information about CNPS and, for new and renewing members, prizes that will include a raffle for a free consultation with a landscaper (one who knows about native plants, of course).

Native Here Nursery will be open to sell plants on May 5 and 6, and we'll have a membership table there too.

We will be in Contra Costa County at the Escobar Garden in Walnut Creek, the Hammond Garden in Martinez and

the Alatorre garden in Richmond. The locations in Alameda County will be the Fleming garden in Berkeley, the Schino garden in San Leandro and our own Native Here Nursery in Tilden Park, Berkeley. Photos, plant lists and descriptions of all the gardens are on the tour website, www.bringingbackthenatives.net.

Please contact: Delia Taylor to help out for a morning or afternoon. 510-527-3912 deliataylor@mac.com. If you have ideas for good prizes please let me know.

Delia Taylor

PLANT SALE AND NATIVE PLANT GARDENING ACTIVITIES



We are continuing our search for a plant sale location and are investigating a few possibilities. Thank you to our members who contacted us with suggestions. If you know of a possible site, please contact Roy West (650-906-1100 or rwest@monocot.com). Our basic need is for approximately 5,000 square feet, deer-proof or easily deer-proofable and with access to power and water, where we can build a small greenhouse and related structures and host a popular event once a year.

Several people responded to the announcement of the new "native plant growers" group in last month's *Bay Leaf*. The

group is open to anyone on a one-time or continuing basis. We'll focus on propagating and growing native plants—getting our hands in the dirt, sharing our knowledge and experience, and perhaps visiting native nurseries and gardens to learn from experts. If the group is so inclined, we might also grow plants for our chapter's next Native Plant Fair. If you would like to participate, please contact Sue Rosenthal at nativeplantgrowers@ebcnps.org or 510-496-6016.

Sue Rosenthal

BOTANIC GARDEN PLANT SALE



© Peg Steunenber

Saturday, April 21, 2007, 10 am to 3 pm, **California Native Plant Sale**, organized by the volunteers of the **Regional Parks Botanic Garden**

The Botanic Garden is located at the intersection of Wildcat Canyon Road and South Park Drive, near the Brazil Building at Tilden Regional Park in Berkeley. Free admission.

California shrubs, trees, perennials. Find many plants that are not available in a nursery. Horticultural advice gladly given. Come and explore the Garden.

Please bring boxes to carry home your treasures and an umbrella if it rains. Refreshments available. Proceeds directly benefit the Garden.

NATIVE PLANT RESTORATION TEAM

Restoration team work party, Saturday, April 14, 9:30 am-1 pm, teasel and harding grass removal, UC Field Station, Richmond.

April's work party is a real treat. We will be joining the efforts of our host, the Watershed Project and venture to a place where small wonders abound.

At first glance the site may appear to be a vast, humble lot in a remote somewhat industrial location. But don't let appearances fool you. Stop and take a closer look and take it all in—the place absolutely abounds with rare, local native plant species in one of the last remaining coastal terrace prairie ecosystems in the East Bay.

This coastal prairie is highly atypical in that it floods in the wet season and is dry in the summer, conditions that allow for a variety of native plants to thrive, including: *Castilleja exserta* (purple owl's clover), *Triteleia hyacinthina* (white brodiaea), *Camissonia ovata* (sun cup), *Ranunculus californica* (california buttercup), *Sisyrinchium bellum* (blue-eyed grass, with the white-flowered form) and several species of *Carex*, *Juncus* and grasses (including a variety of *Carex densa* once thought to be extinct in the East Bay).

Part of what makes this particular work party so much fun is the soggy situation (rain willing!) Those who like their

work a bit on the messy side will have a field day at the field station. Rain boots and gear will be provided as will great, healthful treats to keep you going. The carrot-like root of the teasel comes up easily when the ground is wet—last year we pulled a small mountain of it. We can do even better this year.

Come on out and join us at this significant location and let your imagination roam—while weeding, of course—as you spend a day on the Bay doing some good in a small patch of prairie that has held on through it all, allowing us a glimpse of a wonderful ecosystem that once thrived but now barely remains.

Directions: From I-80 in El Cerrito: Take the Carlson exit west (towards San Rafael). Turn left at Bayview Avenue, which is the second signal, and go over I-580. *Follow the road as it curves, and turn left on South 47th, then take an immediate right into the U.C. Richmond Field Station. Take the side road to the left, to gate #2.*

From I-580 in Richmond, take the Bayview exit and turn south towards the Bay. Follow the directions in italics above.

Greg Wolford

ACTIVITIES OF OTHERS

Sunday, April 29 2007 from 10am to 4pm
4th Annual Bay-Friendly Garden Tour
Showcasing Natural Gardening Techniques

Visit a wide assortment of Bay-Friendly Gardens on this free, self-guided tour. Over 40 public and private gardens will be featured throughout Alameda County, including an entirely new crop of gardens! Several of the garden clusters are walkable and/or bikeable.

Registration for the tour is required. Registrants will receive a tour guidebook with garden directions and descriptions by mail. Native plants, vegetable starts and Mediterranean perennials can be purchased at select sites on the tour.

Online registration and a sneak preview of the 2007 gardens are available at www.BayFriendly.org. Please register by April 19th so that you can receive a tour guide book.

Volunteers are needed for the day of the tour. In just a 3.5 hour shift, volunteers will help the host gardeners by greeting guests, distributing information and answering questions. We will do our best to match volunteers to the gardens and/or location of their choice.

For more information or to register for a volunteer slot, please visit our website recycle.stopwaste.org/gardentour/gtvolunteer.asp.

You can also contact
Lawrence Grodeska, lgrodeska@stopwaste.org,
510-614-1699.



Nemophila menziesii (baby blue eyes), Fremont Peak, San Benito County, March 16, 2003



Quercus kelloggii (black oak), Regional Parks Botanic Garden, Berkeley, March 16, 2003



Allium triquetrum (three-cornered leek), Berkeley, May 5, 2002. *A. triquetrum* is a noxious weed. Know your enemy!



Calochortus albus (white globe lily), Nacimiento Road, Monterey County, May 15, 2003

Photos by Tony Morosco

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Roy West
rwest@monocot.com
650-906-1100

Membership Application

Name _____

Address _____

Zip _____ Telephone _____

I wish to affiliate with:

East Bay Chapter (Alameda and Contra Costa Counties)

Other _____

E-mail _____
(optional)

Membership category:

- Student, limited income, \$25
- Individual, Library, \$45
- Household, Family, or Group, \$75
- Supporting, \$75
- Plant lover, \$100
- Patron, \$300
- Benefactor, \$600
- Mariposa Lily, \$1500

Mail application and check to: California Native Plant Society, 2707 K Street, Suite 1, Sacramento CA 95816

**California Native Plant Society
East Bay Chapter
P.O. Box 5597, Elmwood Station
Berkeley CA 94705**

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