San Diego and the new Baja Chapter are collaborating to host Chapter Council on May 31 & June 1.
The San Diego Chapter and the new Baja California Chapter are co-hosting the upcoming Chapter Council meeting in Imperial Beach Saturday, May 31, and Sunday, June 1, 2014. Chapter Council meetings occur quarterly, and each chapter sends delegates to represent chapter interests and make decisions guiding the direction of CNPS. This Chapter Council meeting includes a Focus on Baja program, in which we can all learn more about the Baja flora and our new co-members’ conservation efforts. San Diego Chapter (and Orange County) members are encouraged to participate. Please join us on Saturday, May 31 for:

Morning fieldtrips to locations in southern San Diego and northern Baja; afternoon presentations from leaders in the Baja Chapter; and Evening Social and Banquet Dinner.

Members may also attend Chapter Council meeting on Sunday 8:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m. at the Tijuana River National Estuarine Research Reserve (TRNERR). There will be an afternoon field trip to Cabrillo National Monument after the meeting.

The more the merrier! Go to cnpssd.org for more information!

Please join us to make this a special occasion welcoming the Baja Chapter to CNPS!

A New Beginning: The Heritage Garden at Concordia University Irvine
I have been privileged to see a dream begin to come true this spring: the restoration of the mustard-and-hemlock-infested northeastern corner of the campus where I work. Since 1996 I have driven to work and parked in a lot bordered by some promising lemonade berry, prickly pear, and elderberry. Beyond these few natives, though, was a wasteland of mustard and other non-native invasives. After a rainy winter, the obnoxious yellow blossoms would tower overhead, leaving behind gray skeleton stalks that haunted this pre-historic Native American village site on the edge of our campus. (Nearby areas are listed on the National Register of Historic Places.)

After years of viewing this annual invasive spectacle with angst, I finally decided to “do something.” It turns out, several of my co-workers had similar ideas, and in March of this year we were able to break ground on the Heritage Garden—a place for people and plants to come together and grow. (Sorry . . . it’s really difficult to write about this place without making garden-related puns.)

The “tagline” for the Heritage Garden is “Cultivate Community” -and that’s what we have begun to do in the following ways:

−starting a community vegetable garden where students, faculty, and staff (and eventually community members) are learning to grow fruits and vegetables in a sustainable manner.
−making native plants the center of the community garden—literally. Thanks to a generous donation from the habitat restoration folks at the Irvine Ranch Conservancy, we already have a circle of native plants (grown from locally collected seed) that will provide shelter for a community of critters—lizards, butterflies, birds, and others—who will help with bug control and pollination of the edible plants.

I’d like to offer a big “thank you” to the CNPS-OC members who have already offered advice or donated labor in the Heritage Garden. Anyone who would like to be part of this project may email me at thea.gavin@cui.edu. For updates on workdays, please see the Heritage Garden blog at http://heritagegardenblogs.cui.edu/.

Thea Gavin

03-31-14 it’s the frosting on the cake you say it’s yellow mustard yellow swaying in the breeze a boon to the honey bee an assault to a naturalist a painful reminder of a painful past a competitor of space water & nutrients pull it out again & again frosting on the cake it is not
The Heritage Garden Concordia University Irvine chuck wright Honey Bee Apis mellifera Black Mustard Brassica nigra
Native Gardener’s Corner—Members’ Tips, Tricks, and Techniques

This column is a regular newsletter feature offering chapter members and local experts a chance to briefly share information on many things related to gardening with natives. Answers are listed in the order received.

Our question for this Newsletter is “During the current drought, which native plants have survived the best for you and which ones have given up the ghost?”

Greg Rubin—“I find that the plants that are straight species from my general area and plant community do the best with little water. In my garden that means Ceanothus cyanus, Salvia clevelandii, Salvia apiana, Salvia mellifera, Arctostaphylos glauca, Artemisia californica, Aristida purpurea, Xylococcus bicolor, Comarostaphylis diversifolia, and, to be a little different, Acalypha californica. Quercus agrifolia is still coming up like weeds. Most of the cultivars, hybrids, and more northern species need some supplemental irrigation.”

Celia Kutcher—“My best drought survivors include Eriogonum fasciculatum, Rhus integrifolia, Baccharis pilularis ssp. consanguinea & Salvia apiana—all hardly seem to have noticed that there’s a drought. Not looking good in the drought: Keckiiella cordifolia, Salvia mellifera (senescence is a factor), Eriogonum giganteum (senescence a factor). One hopes that these will revive with adequate rain, IF they make it through the summer.”

Antonio Sanchez—(Based off of observations at Rancho Santa Ana Botanic Gardens in Claremont) “This drought has been very kind to most of our buckwheats, as they seem to be happier with much less or even no water. Especially happy are Eriogonum cinereum and giganteum, and of course Eriogonum fasciculatum. The Penstemons are loving it too, and crazy coastal to desert plants like Isomeris arborea (Cléome peritoma) and Rhus ovata are doing better than the last Transformer movie. Among the plants that are unhappy with the drought are many of our larger shrubs and trees, like Arbutus menziesii, Pinus species, and some of the coastal Ceanothus species. Of course, we are expecting a bumper-crop of mustard!”

Dan Songster—“Based on the Golden West College Native Garden: In general our coastal sage scrub plants are doing well including almost all the sages and buckwheat—what durable and lovely plants! Also doing well are most of the Ceanothus, Encelia, chamise, bladderpod, Galvesia, and of course, all of the Rhus genus (lemonadeberry, sugarbush, etc). It goes without saying that the Yucca, Agave, and various cacti are doing excellent. Oh, and the California poppies are happy as can be. Some plants that are suffering include some of our monkeyflowers, coyote mint (for some reason), and any of our Ribes viburnifolium that is in the sun is now getting a burnt look. Creek dogwoods are having trouble but that is my fault for planting an almost riparian plant where it gets little water.”

Our Question for the Next Newsletter is: “What native plant has been successful in your garden, even though you planted it in the summer months?”

Email your responses to Dan Songster at sangster@cox.net. Please remember to keep replies brief so we can include most of the responses!

CONSERVATION NEWS

GOOD NEWS ON TWO LONG-TERM CAMPAIGNS!

1. On April 8, the Orange County Transportation Corridor Agency (TCA) formally withdrew its 13-year-old notices to the Federal Highway Administration for its intent to begin federal-level environmental reviews for its project to extend the 241 toll road 16 miles from its present terminus at Oso Parkway southward to I-5. South of Ortega highway, the proposed route ran along Cristianitos Creek and lower San Mateo Creek. One version or another of that alignment had been part of planning for the area for at least four decades. So the TCA’s decision ends a very long series of plans, EIRs, hearings—and an equally long enviro campaign to prevent the toll road’s extension through protected land: San Onofre State Park along lower San Mateo Creek. The toll-road extension route was denied by the California Coastal Commission in 2007 and the U.S. Dept. of Commerce in 2008. The TCA’s withdrawal finally acknowledges that the proposed route is dead, and effectively discards all the environmental reviews done on the route over the decades—reviews which would take years to do over. The TCA still wants to extend the toll road 5.5 miles from its present terminus to a planned Cow Camp Road, which would connect the toll road’s end to both Ortega Highway and Antonio Parkway. Suspension of the 241 alignment south of Ortega Highway removes a big threat to the integrity of Cristianitos Creek, which is a subwatershed of San Mateo Creek watershed. San Mateo Creek is the last wild—undammed, unchanneled—river south of Ventura. The San Mateo watershed is almost all protected by being within the San Mateo Wilderness of the Trabuco District, Cleveland National Forest. The lowest reach is protected by being within Camp Pendleton (USMC), which leases part of it to California State Parks for San

California Figwort, Bee-plant, Scrophullaria californica. Be sure to take along your hand lens and enjoy the depths of this tiny flower. Taken along Canyon Trail, James Dilley Preserve, in the Laguna Coast Wilderness Park by chuck wright.
Onofre State Park. Only the 12,160-acre Cristianitos Creek subwatershed is largely privately owned, by Rancho Mission Viejo. The Ranch’s plan calls for a 500-acre development within the watershed; the rest is to be preserved as part of the eventual 20,868-acre Reserve at Rancho Mission Viejo (which is mitigation for the 14,000 dwelling units to be built). If that 500-acre development were not done, the entire San Mateo watershed would remain truly wild.

2. The West Coyote Hills, a 510-acre swath of mostly natural open space in the northwesterly corner of Fullerton, are a big step closer to being preserved after decades of steadfast campaigning by the Friends of Coyote Hills. The campaign included a referendum in which Fullerton citizens voted to reject a measure that would have allowed Chevron to go ahead with its plans. On April 15, the Fullerton City Council announced that Chevron is now willing to talk with the Trust for Public Land (TPL), a national land-conservation group, about possibly selling some or all of the land to TPL. TPL would turn it over to a public agency—perhaps the City—on the condition that it forever be preserved as public open space. Discussion toward an acquisition agreement is planned to occur over the next few months. Stay tuned!

Chapter Meetings

Chapter meetings are held on the third Thursday of the month, except in July and August. Unless otherwise stated, meetings take place at the Duck Club in Irvine. Doors open at 6:45 pm; the program begins at 7:30.

Thursday, May 15: CalFlora Plant Database—That Amazing Tool!

Speaker: Cynthia Powell

Whatever curiosity you have about our native plants (or invasive exotics), Cal Flora comes to the rescue with its huge digital library of over 10,000 native and introduced species with over 800,000 plant location observations. In total there are almost two million records including comprehensive habitat and distribution information for wild plants. The amount of information on this electronic database is incredible, with information from diverse sources, including public agencies, academic institutions, private organizations, and individuals like you. It is a much needed and useful tool serving scientific, conservation, and educational purposes for researchers, scientists, students, environmental consultants, landscapers, and amateur enthusiasts (like most of us!)

Cynthia Powell, Project Manager and GIS guru for Calflora, will guide us to the many practical uses for the native plant explorer as well as show off new projects, including Great Places and Observer Pro. Time and technology allowing, she will encourage audience participation as we go over Calflora-specific applications such as What Grows Here and polygon-drawing, Observation Hotline, and the new and gorgeous Taxon Report distribution maps.

Even if you are familiar with Calflora—prepare to be amazed!

Cynthia Powell graduated with her MS in GIS in 2010 forecasting Mokelumne River water supply based on MODIS remote sensing snow pack images. She’s been examining what was under that snow—plants—ever since. She conducted mapping and ecological modeling of current and future invasive plant ranges based on environmental variables and global climate models. She is an outdoor enthusiast: “You’ll find me backpacking, biking, hiking, and taking public transit to get there—and I strongly believe in Calflora’s mission to promote education, research, and conservation through wild plant information.”

Thursday, June 19: Chapter Celebration and Potluck

This meeting will take place at the Fullerton Arboretum. Meet at 6 PM for a guided walk of the native plant gardens. The program will begin around 7 in the Pavilion.

Celia Kucher needs your great photos/images of 2013-14 chapter activities— ooh-ahh plant shots from field trips, garden tour, people doing things at plant sales, field trips, outreach events, school gardens, etc Please ID event, date, people, plants, and send as plain jogs, 72 dpi, 1MB or less, to celia552@cox.net.

This year, we’re having a potluck. We’ll supply the drinks, utensils, and paper goods. If you’re coming early, bring an appetizer—if late (ie. not for the walk) bring a sweet. There will be silent auction items and an opportunity drawing.

Please feel free to contribute to this if you’d like. Chris Barnhill will be our speaker. Come and enjoy the special celebration of a year’s achievements.
CNPS Membership Application

☐ New member  ☐ Renewal

☐ Individual ............................................ $45
☐ Family .................................................... $75
☐ Plant Lover ............................................. $100
☐ Patron .................................................. $300
☐ Benefactor ............................................. $600
☐ Mariposa Lily ........................................ $1500
☐ Student/Limited Income ........................... $25

[Organizations, please go to CNPS.ORG]

Affiliate with the Orange County Chapter.
The chapter newsletter, CNPS Bulletin, and Fremontia are included. Membership is tax deductible, minus $12 for Fremontia. Make check payable to CNPS and send to: CNPS, 2707 K Street, Suite 1, Sacramento, CA 95816. Join or renew online: go to www.cnps.org click on Join CNPS.

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Outreach Coordinator: Jennifer Mabley
Hospitality: Sarah Jayne
Greeting: Dori Ito, Jennifer Beatty
Volunteer Recognition: Dan Songster
 Programs: Dan Songster
Audio-Visual: Bob Allen, Dan Songster

Horticulture Team (Grow Native OC):
Team Lead: Dan Songster
Plant Sale: Dan Songster
Garden Tour: Sarah Jayne, Cathie & Mike Field, Dori Ito, Jennifer Beatty, Rama Nayeri

Plant Science Team (Research OC):
Team Lead: Bob Allen
Rare Plants: Dave Bramlet, Fred Roberts
Interest Center: Bob Allen

Conservation Team (Protect OC):
Team Lead: Celia Kutcher
Invasive Plants: Henry DiRocco

Explore Team (Explore OC):
Team Lead: Ron Vanderhoff
Field Trips: Ron Vanderhoff
Field Trip Logistics: Rich Schilk

Communications Team:
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May/June 2014

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