Native Gardeners’ 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. The question for this newsletter is: “What is the best garden-related gift you have ever received?”

Sima Bernstein—“The best gift was a banner with the following: GARDENING IS THE SLOWEST OF THE PERFORMING ARTS.”

Jackie Brodsky—“For me (74), the best gift ever was “labor”. My grandson dug the holes and I planted each plant with TLC. Bazingal!”

Orchid Black—“Best gift ever: a British-made poacher’s spade. I never use a bigger shovel anymore. If I were a new gardener, I would want a pair of Felco pruners.”

John Gossett—“Long-sleeved Foxgloves, by far the best gift ever. They allow me to weed, dig, and transplant, and yet feel what I am doing almost as well as if my hands were bare. I wore garden gloves of all sorts for years, but for these tasks they always came off in the first few minutes, leading to hands dry enough to drain a lake. These won’t last a long time, but they work. I use leather gloves for the other garden tasks. I always replace them with red ones to make them easy to find, but then I am expert at misplacing things, so maybe you would like a less blatant color?”

Rama Nayeri—“Cow...[poop]. I have a friend who is a farmer and she takes her cow feces and turns it into manure tea.”

Bob Allen—“Help weeding!”

Terry LePage—“Gift certificates for native plant nurseries!”

Dan Songster—“My favorite “Gift” was the time given to me by plant legends such as John Dourley, Lee Lenz, Mike Evans, Dave Fross, and a young Bart O’Brien in the early days of my relationship with native plants. Even today I am impressed and thankful for the way native plant folks such as Glenn Keator, Lili Singer, Carol Bornstein, Greg Rubin, and Jeff Bohn respond to questions I have. Plant lovers make a wonderful giving community, that is for sure!

Our question for the next newsletter is: “Do you grow any native plants because they are especially entertaining, interesting, or just plain weird?” Email your responses to Dan Songster at songster@cox.net. Please remember to keep replies brief so we can include most of the responses!

EMERGENT INVASIVE REPORT: December 29, 2016

On Dec. 29: Ehrharta calycina - perennial veldt grass in Emerald Canyon, Laguna Coast Wilderness Park, was visited and mapped by OC CNPS.

Brassica tournefortii - Sahara mustard. A new colony was detected and mapped on Big Bend Trail, Laguna Coast Wilderness.

On Dec. 25: Brassica tournefortii - Sahara mustard. A new colony was detected and mapped just off Laguna Canyon Road, near the intersection of Forest Drive, Laguna Beach.

On Dec. 17: The OC CNPS Emergent Invasive Committee met. Among other business: a thorough species review, additions and deletions to the Emergent Invasive plant list for 2017, discussion of an Orange County Weed Management Area and possible collaboration with the Orange County Natural Communities Coalition.

On Dec 1: A second small colony of Chrysanthemoides off Nyes Place in Laguna Beach was re-examined by OC CNPS and determined to be the species C. incana, not the highly invasive C. monolifera.

On Nov. 13: Two additional colonies of Delairea odorata - cape ivy - were discovered and plotted by OC CNPS.

On Nov 10: The expanding colony of Senecio linearifolius - Australian linear-leaved fireweed along Pacific Island Drive in Laguna Niguel was accurately plotted and posted by Calflora by OC CNPS.
CONSERVATION

CNPS & CLIMATE CHANGE: Debate on why and how CNPS should work on climate change issues has been flowing for many weeks among the CNPS Conservation Committee members. The debate intensified when we became faced with the incoming anti-enviro federal government. It may seem a no-brainer: CNPS works to protect and enhance native plants and the habitats they form, and those plants and habitats are and will be affected by ongoing climate change, so of course CNPS works on climate change issues. But the particulars of climate change’s effects on native plants in relation to CNPS’ existing policies and practices has led to profound discussion of those policies and practices and the philosophy behind them.

The main threads of the discussion:

- All enviro groups have operated for decades under a superstructure of mature federal environmental laws and regulations like NEPA, ESA, and Clean Water Act, with accumulated case law and policy. We have used the courts to defend conservation against projects that violate these laws. Now, it is likely that the laws themselves will be changed.
- CNPS was a co-plaintiff in the Newhall Ranch ruling, so does have some standing to comment on climate change. (The ruling turned entirely on greenhouse gas issues.) But CNPS needs a clearer, stronger nexus between its core concern (native plants) and climate change. A well-considered statewide policy will be tremendously useful. The policy statement should clearly say:
  1. Climate change is a real problem
  2. We deal with native plants
  3. Therefore CNPS now deals with climate change.

A nexus between these three points may not be clear. The idea of “plants’ rights” was suggested as that nexus. There was considerable discussion on this idea, from strongly for to strongly against it being a part of a CNPS policy. For background on the idea of “plants’ rights,” see Should Trees Have Standing? Law, Morality, and the Environment (Christopher D. Stone, 3rd ed., 2010).

Is assisted plant migration a viable long-term solution to loss of habitat due to climate change leading to species’ extinction? A policy promoting such would be a fundamental change to CNPS’ long-term policy strongly advocating for locally native plants to stay in their places and against people moving in plants native to other parts of California. Opinions (backed up by anecdotal field experience as well as current research) ranged from assisted migration being the best solution for species preservation, to allowing extinction to proceed and genetic variability to give rise to evolution of new species that are better-adapted to new conditions.

The discussion has resulted in a draft CNPS policy on climate change. At this writing, the draft is being evaluated by the CNPS Conservation Committee.

LITIGATION: Some action on long-stalled lawsuits!

- Esperanza: The Board of Supervisors sent the project back to the Planning Commission for a redesign. CNPS is a member of the coalition opposing the project.
- Orange Citizens for Parks and Recreation et al: The State Supreme Court has ruled in favor of the Orange Citizens group. CNPS was among the amici curiae of the group.

—Celia Kutcher, Conservation Chair

GARDEN TOUR APRIL 8, 2017

We’re excited! With 14 gardens confirmed—and a few still to be considered—this year’s tour will showcase an exceptional variety of locations and concepts. There will be front-yard conversions as well as extensive front and backyard landscapes. Would you like to help? We need greeters. You have only to contact us at gardentour@ocnps.org and we will match you with a garden and time of your choice for a two-hour shift! The tour this year will be FREE of charge. Spread the word—we want lots of people to see the beauty of California native plants in Orange County landscapes.

After December rain

a blessing of green
fringes the trail:
moss-lichen-fern-grasses
plump, glow, unfurl, leap--
all our damp feet
are glad for the springing
of chaparral winter
and the promise
of wild February
flowerstorms.

Thea Gavin
CHAPTER MEETINGS

Thursday, January 19—Weeds or Wilds? Protecting OC Wildlands from Emergent Invasive Plants

Speakers: Jutta Burger and Ron Vanderhoff

Santa Maria feverfew, Australian fireweed, Canary Island St. John’s Wort and Bitou bush are not new exotic drinks at Starbucks, but some of the newest and most destructive weeds from around the world, and they have now arrived in Orange County and threaten our native plants. We know that other than development, the greatest threat to our local native plant communities is invasive plant species shouldering their way into our native ecosystems. What can be done to stop the spread of these wildland bullies? OC CNPS is hard at work coordinating the detection and eradication of these aggressive new "emergent invasives".

The Invasive Plant Committee Co-chairs Jutta Burger and Ron Vanderhoff will share weedy stories, highlight successes, and acknowledge local heroes in an entertaining and informative presentation. Colorful illustrated invasive Plant Profile packets will be distributed to all attendees.

Dr. Burger oversees the Science and Stewardship Department at the Irvine Ranch Conservancy. She has over fifteen years of experience working on conservation issues in southern California Mediterranean ecosystems that she applies to regional collaboration, planning, and leadership. Jutta completed post-doctoral work at University of Georgia, received her doctorate degree from UC Riverside, her Masters from University of Nebraska, and her undergraduate degree from Washington State University. Her areas of specialization include invasive plant species, restoration, and plant-insect interactions and her interests center around the preservation of native species’ diversity in our natural landscapes. She maintains research associate positions with both UC Riverside and UC Irvine and is currently serving on the Board of Directors of the California Invasive Plant Council and the Orange County Chapter of the California Native Plant Society.

Ron Vanderhoff is a local native plant expert. With Jutta, he is co-chair of the OC CNPS Emergent Invasive Plant Program, is currently reviewing candidate species for the CA Invasive Plant Council, is a participant in the PlantRight program and is the principal OC CNPS contact for new invasive reports and plant status data. He is a member of our chapter’s Board of Directors and the chair of the chapter’s field trip program.

Thursday, February 16—Two Devastating Pests in Orange County wildlands and urban forests

Speaker: John Kabashima

Thousands of trees across Southern California are dying because of invasive beetles. There are currently no remedies. The polyphagus shot hole borer (PSHB) is attacking some of the trees most favored by gardeners, city landscape designers, and universities—maples, elders, cottonwoods, sycamores, walnut, and oaks. Obviously many of our wildland trees are included. Add to this the goldspotted oak borer, originally from southeast Arizona. Already rampant across San Diego County where it was discovered in 2008, it soon made its way to coastal San Diego County and then Orange County in 2014. In 2015, it showed up in northeast Los Angeles County. What is being done to understand these two insects and how to control them? What is the eventual damage likely to be? What can we do individually? Dr. Kabashima, one of Orange County’s leading experts on these pests, will provide a thorough update.

A native of Los Angeles, John Kabashima started working in his family’s nursery business as soon as he was tall enough to water 1-gallon nursery plants. He received his bachelor’s degree in agricultural biology from Cal Poly Pomona, master’s degree in pest management from UC Riverside, an MBA from Pepperdine University, and a doctorate in Entomology from UC Riverside.

Dr. Kabashima retired after 28 years with University of California Agriculture and Natural Resources, having run the UC Master Gardener Program in Orange County, serving as the UC Cooperative Extension environmental horticulture advisor for OC, and in many other posts. His cutting edge research on invasive species such as the red imported fire ant, the glassy winged sharp shooter, lerp psyllid, and ash whitefly has led to effective management plans. He retains emeritus status conducting further research on both the polyphagus shot hole borer and the goldspotted oak borer and other invasive pests.

John’s achievements in education and research have been recognized by various organizations and in 2014, he and his friend Gary Hayakawa were inducted into the Green Industry Hall of Fame.

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

Directions: The Duck Club is located in the San Joaquin Wildlife Sanctuary next to the IRWD water treatment facility.

From the Jamboree exit of the 405: Head toward Newport Beach. Go south (left) on Michelson to Harvard Avenue. Turn right on Harvard. At University Drive, turn right and stay in the far right lane. At Campus, turn right and stay to the right. The entrance to wildlife sanctuary is the next right. Turn left into the parking lot. The Duck Club is in the center, restrooms on the left, Audubon House on the right.

From the Culver exit: Heading toward UCI, pass Michelson and continue on to University Drive. Turn right on University. Turn right onto Campus and turn right into the wildlife sanctuary.
CNPS Membership Application

☐ New member  ☐ Renewal

☐ Individual ............................................... $45
☐ Family .................................................... $75
☐ Plant Lover ............................................. $100
☐ Patron ................................................... $300
☐ Benefactor ............................................... $600
☐ Mariposa Lily ......................................... $1,500
☐ 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

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Contact Information and Teams

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Membership Team:
Team Leaders: Laura Camp, Interim
Volunteer Coordinator: Diane Wollenberg
Outreach Coordinator: Jennifer Mabley
Hospitality: Sarah Jayne
Greeters: 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: Mabel Alazard, Jennifer Beatty, Dori Ito, Sarah Jayne, Kristen Wernick

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: Rachel Whitt

Communications Team:
Team Lead: open
Publicity: Bob Huttar
Newsletter: Sarah Jayne
eNews: Laura Camp & Rachel Whitt
Publications: Jennifer Mabley
Website: Rich Schilk

Education Team:
Team Lead: Sarah Jayne
Educational Grants: Jutta Burger
School Gardens: Sarah Jayne

January/February 2017

FIRST CLASS MAIL