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.

The question for this newsletter is: “What are your three ‘Go-To’ native plants when designing or renovating your garden?”

Leon Baginski—“Malosma laurina, Rhus integrefolia, Rhamnus cultivars. Rhus is very drought friendly, Rhamnus grows fast and takes well to pruning and Malosma has interesting fragrance and when in bloom attracts multitudes of pollinators. Can’t go wrong with these three but Catalina Cherry is also so easy.”

Susan Krzywicki—“St. Catherine’s Lace (Eriogonum giganteum), Coyote bush (Baccharis pilularis ‘Pigeon Point’) for slopes and “wall-to-wall shag carpeting”, Verbenia lilacina ‘De la Mina’ for color.”

Laura Camp—“Buckwheat, Manzanita, and Dudleyas.”

Rama Nayeri—“My 3 ‘go to’ native plants that I have had lots of success with over the past year are Cleveland Sage, Catalina Silverlace, and Seaside Daisy.”

Greg Rubin—“Although I use hundreds of different species, selections, and cultivars, if I had to narrow it down to just a few plants that occur in almost all of my gardens, I would say Salvia ‘Pozo Blue’, Arctostaphylos ‘John Dourley’, and Baccharis ‘Pigeon Point’ are three of the most common. But I am also trying to call attention to a few native plants that are fantastic performers but are little used, such as Forestiere neomexicana (pubescens)—Desert olive; Ceanothus ‘Heart’s Desire’—groundcover wild lilac; Constancea nevinnii—Catalina silver lace; and Tetraneuris acaulis—Angelita daisy.”

Mary Arambula—“Just three? Sages (Cleveland and black), buckwheats (giant and “California”), Epilobium canum (spreads underground, handles neglect well, long bloom season), toyon, and Muhlenbergeria rigens…. Sorry, couldn’t limit the list to 3 plants! Can you tell that I want to water only once a month in the summer?”

Sima Bernstein—“Manzanita, I’ll take any or all of them. Love the Big Berry Manzanita (Arctostaphylos glauca).”

Chuck Wright—“We live in a coastal sage scrub area and the 2 main plants of that community are California sage and buckwheat. Buckwheat is such an important nectar source and larval food plant. Now I don’t know what is important about sage other than as cowboy cologne. Hmm.”

Jutta Buger—“Eriogonum fasciculatum (California buckwheat) because it is hardy, attractive and important to bees and butterflies; Solidago velutina (California goldenrod) because it too is hardy and attractive in the summer, and Dudleya (live forever) - pick your species - because everyone needs a Dudleya in their yard!”

Thea Gavin—“I am a huge fan of buckwheats; they are green (or silver, in the case of Eriogonum crocatum) year round, and have gobs of flowers that native insects go ga-ga over. ‘Dana Point’ is such a nice tidy mound (give it a 4-5’ wide spot), compared to its more "wild" relatives (straight Eriogonum fasciculatum) that create interesting sprawly thickets. E. fasciculatum takes pruning/shearing very well, though, and in one place in my yard it’s become a six-foot-high ‘wall.’”

Rob Moore—“My go-to’s are Arctostaphylos ‘Howard McMinn’—perfect aesthetic, adaptable, just the right size for any yard; nectar attracts insects for birds late winter; and again with berries in the fall. Then, Artemisia ‘Montara’, compact, adaptable, looks great year-round, aromatic, no maintenance required. And finally, Eriogonum fasciculatum, California Buckwheat—a local favorite, tons of long-lasting flowers, fast growth and a very important butterfly plant. A good reminder that all our Buckwheat species are pillars within their respective plant communities!”

John Gossett—“My first choice is Sphaeralcea ambigua—it comes in apricot, pink and
lavrander. A medium-sized, open bush with an upside-down chandelier shape and waving branches, it survives complete drought or light watering. All the California *Artemisia* work very well, but the lacy *A. pygmocephala* 'David’s Choice’ is low to the ground, and glitters from a thousand points after a light rain. There is a *Ceanothus* shaped for every landscaping need. Their evergreen ever-clean foliage provides a foil for the gray-green and soft silver foliage of other drought-tolerant natives.

Dan Songster—“Buckwheats and sages are good in any garden and grow to various sizes depending on the species chosen, have great habitat value, plenty of spring blooms, grow in most soils, and can be planted in “off” seasons. Throw in some summer/fall depending on the species chosen, have great habitat value, plenty of spring blooms, and soft silver foliage of other drought-tolerant natives.

OCCNPS sent a 6-page comment letter; our main points:

- Cutting the native vegetation back from road edges and property lines opens the cleared areas to invasion by fast-germinating, fast-growing annual non-natives, which quickly dry to form strips of flashy fuels threading throughout the District. This would seem to be contrary to the fuels-reduction purpose of a fuels management project.
- It’s not clear where the burn treatments called for will take place or what will be done with the burned remains. In a natural fire regime, the burning takes place in situ and the remains’ constituent atoms are in place, returned to the environment for re-use. If the slash piles are burned offsite, all the nutrients that the living plants took from the soil go with them and will not be there to contribute to the future vigor of that site. Burning slash offsite also short-circuits the fire-related stimuli that would trigger growth in the site’s native seed bank, geophytes, and burls. Masticating the slash and spreading it where the vegetation was removed would leave the constituent atoms onsite, but the fire-related stimuli would still be short-circuited.
- OCCNPS opposes the proposed new fuel break that would run roughly from Morrell Potrero, across the top of Elsinore Peak, to the junction of S. Main Divide Rd. and Wildomar Truck Trail. Recent research has shown that, in general, fuel breaks are important in controlling large fires ONLY when they facilitate fire management, primarily by providing access for firefighting activities. Fuel breaks by themselves, especially if remote from roads, do not stop or even slow down fires, especially if wind-driven. This suggests that the proposed new fuel break, which would be mostly isolated from roads, is likely to be ineffective at controlling fires, thus be a waste of time, effort and taxpayers’ money. It would open a strip, up to 300 ft. wide, to invasion by non-native weeds that would turn into a strip of flashy fuels

CONSERVATION

SANTA ANA MTS: The Trabuco District, Cleveland National Forest, (which encompasses our backyard Santa Ana Mts.) has issued a draft Environmental Assessment (EA) for the proposed South Main Divide and Greater El Cariso Fuels Management Project. The project calls for doing brush clearing (aka “fuel management”) on a total of 855 acres, in several sites along South and North Main Divide Rds. and Long Canyon Rd., extending from the intersection of Long Canyon and North Main Divide Rds. in the north to the La Cresta community in the south. The EA is at pains to point out that the entire fuel management area is about 0.06% of the total District acreage. Maps and details: www.fs.usda.gov/project/?project=23080 and click on TRD_SMDBGEC_FuelsManagement_DraftEA_03232017.

The project:
- Is a continuation of 3 decades of fuel management projects in the area. The District is obliged to act to protect the communities and infrastructure in the area. There is a long discussion of the fire effects and fire behavior that would be expected in the project area.
- Promises to be extra careful around the rare plants around Elsinore Peak. There is a long discussion of most of these rare species.
- Will use a suite of techniques to remove the “excess/unwanted vegetation” [sic]: cutting, crushing, mastication, herbicide. The resulting trimmings will mostly be stacked for eventual burning.
- Contains a long discussion of use of herbicide and the precautions, and Best Management Practices that will be used with it.
- Also includes long discussion of invasive non-natives in the project area and how their removal will be part of the project, and Best Management Practices to keep them from spreading.

Deadline for public comments was April 22.

When miles of orange-yellow-purple shimmer outnumber all words for “wow,” when acres of pink verbena are fancy scarves on the bajada, it is time to fly up to one shock of desert lily and land sideways under a perfume trumpet until the wind lifts or sphinx moths start the evening shift.

Thea Gavin
across the middle of chaparral and oak woodland, and require regular maintenance at more taxpayers’ expense.

**LITIGATION:** During the past few years, we have been the originating chapter for CNPS’ participation in one or another of 5 lawsuits.

1. **Saddle Crest:** Sadly, in 2015 the Appeals Court decided in favor of the developer. Development has recently begun on the site. On 3/28/2017, OCCNPS signed-on to a letter to Third District Supervisor Todd Spitzer, authored by the Specific Plans Coalition. The letter asks Spitzer to reverse the General Plan and FTSP amendments put in place by the 2015 Saddle Crest decision, so that no more “Saddle Crest”-type development can be done in the canyons. The Coalition is asking residents of the Third District to give Supervisor Spitzer, at todd.spitzer@hoa.ocgov.com, the same message. Supervisor Spitzer was not responsible for approving Saddle Crest, but he needs to act to stop other developments like it. He has the power to protect our canyons. Contact rtgomez@aol.com for a sample letter, see saddlebackcanyons.org/ for background.

2. **Esperanza Hills:** This proposed huge development abutting Chino Hills State Park was denied in Superior Court. The decision required the OC Board of Supervisors to rescind all project approvals and the environmental documents, due to its many problems, especially access and density.

3. **Orange Citizens:** Won in a unanimous decision at the State Supreme Court in Dec. 2016.

4. **Banning Ranch:** In a unanimous decision, the State Supreme Court ruled that the Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the proposed Banning Ranch development project, approved by the City of Newport Beach in 2012, did not adequately address Environmentally Sensitive Habitat Areas (ESHA) on the site. This means that any future developer will have to prepare a whole new EIR, which will have to adequately address ESHA.

5. **Madrona:** The project, approved by the City of Brea in June 2014, was overturned in Superior Court on 11/3/15. An Appeals Court decision is expected in summer 2017. Hills for Everyone is building a litigation fund for this appeal, contact info@HillsForEveryone.org to donate.

—Celia Kutcher, Conservation Chair

**The Elizabeth C. Schwartz Fund—help us extend the conservation mission of an incredible woman**

Elizabeth Schwartz was a Southern California native plant legend. After practicing law for fifteen years, she fell in love with native plants and became a certified horticulturist. In this second career, she engaged thousands of plant lovers as executive director of the Theodore Payne Foundation, board president of the Southern California Horticultural Society, staff of the Botanical Garden at UCLA, and via numerous lectures and articles on native plants. Liz died suddenly on August 12, 2015 while hiking in Arizona. She was 66.

Today, the California Native Plant Society is seeking your help to extend her work and passion through the Elizabeth C. Schwartz Fund.

Liz had named CNPS as a beneficiary of her IRA retirement account. After talking with her husband, UCLA astronomer Ben Schwartz, it was decided to apply a portion of Liz’s gift to create a fund that would honor her memory and dramatically increase CNPS conservation work in Southern California. This “Elizabeth C. Schwartz Fund” will support a new staff position focused on Southern California conservation work. There is a tremendous need for this position, which will increase with pending changes in federal policy. Now, we are working to match this initial seed money with support from others committed to native plant conservation in Southern California. Please go to www.cnps.org/schwartz-fund to learn more or to donate. You may also contact CNPS Executive Director Dan Gluesenkamp at dgluesenkamp@cnps.org.

—Dan Songster

**A further note from Snowdy Dodson, President, Los Angeles/Santa Monica Mountains Chapter, CNPS:**

“Once upon a time, over 10 years ago, a Southern California botanist worked for CNPS. This was a half time, paid position. If my memory serves, at least two botanists served in this capacity, Jan Scow and Ileen Anderson. Funding came from contributions from the various southern California CNPS Chapters – San Gabriel Mountains, South Coast, Orange County, San Diego, Los Angeles/Santa Monica Mountains – and from the CNPS treasury.

Years ago when money was tight, interest rates for chapter savings accounts went from 9-10% a year to near zero, we entered a recession. Conservation issues in our region during those years did not go away but the Conservation position became vacant and was not filled. That hurt, and although we did great work with our volunteers there was no one person to tie them together, liaison with the State organization of CNPS, help with training our chapter conservation folks, or help tackle some of the more serious conservation issues.

Fast forward to 2016 when such a position was given a high priority at the CNPS Chapter Council meeting in June 2016 and with the kind donation of Liz Schwartz and the help of chapter members throughout our region we will reestablish a Southern California Conservation position. Once again, to donate or learn more please go to www.cnps.org/schwartz-fund, or contact CNPS Executive Director Dan Gluesenkamp at dgluesencamp@cnps.org.

I also suggest that you include CNPS as a beneficiary on accounts such as annuities and IRAs. See the Oct.-Dec. 2016 CNPS Bulletin for Steve Hartman's tribute to Liz’s life: http://cnps.org/cnpspublications/cnpsbulletin/v46.4_oct-dec2016.pdf.”
EMERGENT INVASIVES

Chrysanthemoides - boneseed:
It is a long and complex story, but we believe we discovered how the first Chrysanthemoides - boneseed plant arrived in Laguna Beach. It was apparently planted by legendary Laguna Beach gardener Hortense Miller. The original plant, by now quite old, was still growing in her garden. OC CNPS worked with the garden leadership and it was agreed that the plant would be removed.

Weed Management Area meeting:
The March WMA meeting was held in Riverside and attended by OC CNPS committee co-chair Jutta Burger. Jutta gave updates of OC CNPS invasive plant activities and relayed updates of other regional invasive plant activities back to our chapter committee.

Natural Communities Coalition:
The OC Coastal NCC has contracted with Robb Hamilton, who has in turn employed James Bailey, to survey about 150 miles of trails throughout the coastal NCC area. This includes lands within OC Parks, CA State Parks, the Irvine Ranch Natural Landmarks and others. Bailey has already begun the surveys and will be searching for and reporting on a specific list of priority invasive plants. He will also search for possibly invasive plants as yet new and unknown to the region.

Volutaria:
Volutaria management is continuing at UNB, both on the Big Canyon colony - with IRC, and on the Irvine Blvd. colony - with OC Parks. A possible volunteer pull for late March at the Irvine Blvd. colony was cancelled due to good management by OC Parks contractors and OC Parks/LCF (Laguna Canyon Foundation) volunteers. The feeling was that there was not enough Volutaria remaining for a separate volunteer event. Also regarding Volutaria, James Bailey, working under the coastal NCC, surveyed trails in both areas and communicated additional detections and a current status to the managing agencies.

New Species Detection:
On 3/31, Jonathan Frank, a CNPS member, detected a first OC occurrence of Galenia pubescens in the Laguna Coast Wilderness. His detection was reported to the OC CNPS Emergent Invasive Committee and others. The detection has been passed through to OC Parks and CA State Parks biologists and to the coastal NCC. OC CNPS is proceeding cautiously until we know the severity of the infestation and have adequately assessed the invasive threat of this species.

Other:
A few other random reports of non-native detections came in on various species, but mostly re "former" emergent species. Nothing significant.

FIELD TRIPS
Many trips remain in this year’s ambitious field trip schedule. Please visit occnps.org for full details and for the latest up-to-date information.

California In My Garden 2017—another successful garden tour
Many thanks and hats off to the proprietors of the twenty gardens on the tour who worked long and hard to prepare their gardens. Our April 8 garden tour was a great success!
Special thanks also go to the Santa Margarita Water District and the Irvine Ranch Water District who both generously sponsored the tour. Without Tree of Life Nursery, we would all be at a loss to fill our gardens with California native plants. We thank them for being there and for their generous sponsorship of the event.
The garden tour would not happen with the help of many people. Thanks go to the Garden Tour Committee: Kristen Wernick who coordinated the joint tour with SMWD and brought us into the modern age with an interactive Google map on our website; Mabel Alazard who created all the maps in the booklet, a prodigious undertaking; Dori Ito and Jennifer Beatty, who assisted with garden selection; and Joan Hampton, Brad Jenkins, and Gabrielle Rau, who served as greeters in a couple of the very large gardens.
If you would like to offer your garden for the 2018 garden tour, please take pictures now! That way, when we post garden pictures in the bleak days of February, the tour gardens will shine in Spring radiance!

—Sarah Jayne, Garden Tour Chair

A special opportunity . . .
Mono Lake Committee Seminars presents...
High Country Plants & Habitats: How are they coping with climate change?
July 28-30, Friday-Sunday, 2017
Instructor: Ann Howald
Cost: $165 per person, $150 for Mono Lake Committee members
Limited to 15 participants
Taught in the Tioga Pass region of the Sierra Nevada, this field seminar visits subalpine meadows and forests, subalpine lakeshores and streams, and natural rock gardens. Field identification of common trees, shrubs, wildflowers, and ferns, resident birds, insects and other wildlife combines with discussions of how these plants and animals rely on each other for food, seed distribution, nesting sites, and other necessities. A special focus is how high elevation plants and animals are being affected by climate change, and how they are coping with “weird weather” and other new realities.
From a 2016 participant: “Ann seamlessly wove biology of plants, pollinating insects, seasonal/climate change impacts, history of the region, studies of the area and its ecology – past and present, birding behavior, etc. into our discussions. Overall experience: 10.”
For detailed information, please visit:
http://www.monolake.org/visit/seminars
CHAPTER MEETINGS

Thursday, May 18—The Natural Communities Coalition—Coordinating Science and Land Management across the Conserved Land Network of Central & Coastal Orange County
Speaker: Milan J. Mitrovich, Ph.D.

Orange County is the smallest county in southern California, yet it is one of the richest in public lands with over 55,000 acres of open space. Mountain slopes, rolling hills, coastal valleys, seaside terraces, and pristine beaches characterize the county. It is no accident that Orange County sets aside so much land for public access.

The natural and open spaces in Orange County such as Crystal Cove State Park, Irvine Ranch Open Space, the Laguna Greenbelt, and various regional parks make up a tapestry of land moved from private ownership, preserved by citizen groups, mandated by state and federal laws, and set aside as natural spaces for the protection of wildlife and the increased quality of life of its residents. This Reserve System is a permanently protected open space managed for the benefit of the plants and wildlife that define the character, uniqueness, and natural diversity of Orange County.

Dr. Mitrovich will present an overview of the Natural Communities Coalition and how it is striving to fulfill its main objective of facilitating good stewardship of the Reserve System by coordinating with OC’s many stakeholders to protect and enhance Orange County’s wildlands. Dr. Mitrovich will discuss priority land management initiatives now being addressed by the Coalition, with a focus on invasive species management, and share his thoughts on the challenges and opportunities presented when measuring and communicating about the health of the Reserve System.

Milan Mitrovich, Ph.D., is the Science Coordinator for the Natural Communities Coalition. His background is in conservation science, with an emphasis in landscape and wildlife ecology. Milan holds a B.S. in Ecology, Behavior, and Evolution from the University of California, San Diego, and a Ph.D. in Ecology from the University of California, Davis, and San Diego State University. He has been active in Orange County Conservation for well over a decade. With the Coalition, Milan works with the organization’s directors and officers as well as representatives from partnering organizations and the public to coordinate research and management activities associated with the protection and recovery of sensitive plant and animal species found within the 38,000-acre Reserve System.

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.
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.

Thursday, June 15—Exploring the Revillagigedo Archipelago
Speaker: Sula Vanderplank, Ph.D.

Ready for a fun and educational evening? Join the adventure that Ms. Vanderplank and her group of researchers and citizen scientists recently experienced on an 18-day boat trip to the Revillagigedo Archipelago. Only 250 miles off the tip of Baja California peninsula, it is often referred to as Mexico’s Galapagos Islands. Rich in plant and animal endemism, these volcanic islands seem to hark back to the beginning of time. One has a flora of just a handful of species and on another, steaming vents and fumaroles rise above a tropical forest near the summit!

The effervescent Ms. Vanderplank will provide an overview of the natural history of the three of the six main islands, their floras, and doubtless some interesting insights on her travels. It is always an enjoyable evening when Sula speaks to the chapter!

As a field botanist, Ms. Vanderplank focuses on natural history, floristics, and conservation science in Baja California. She actively collaborates on both sides of the US/MX border and serves as adjunct faculty at Centro de Investigación Científica y de Educación Superior de Ensenada (CICESE) and San Diego State University. She is an active research associate at the San Diego Natural History Museum and Rancho Santa Ana Botanic Garden. For the last 12 years Sula has published broadly on the flora of this region including a field guide to the endemic plants and animals of the Baja California Pacific Islands, a book on quail-friendly plants, and a coauthored a field guide to the Maritime Succulent Scrub of Baja California. She received her Ph.D. from the University of California, Riverside, where she studied under Dr. Exequiel Ezcurra, one of Mexico’s leading conservation scientists.

This evening in June is also our annual chapter celebration. For anyone who can arrive a little early, Rich Schilk will lead a bird walk in the preserve starting at 6 PM. The Duck Club will open at 6:45 for potluck refreshments. Early comers may bring something savory while later arrivals might bring something dessertish. (Or just bring a friend.) The chapter will supply drinks, utensils, and paper goods. Celia Kucher wants your great photos of 2016-17 chapter activities for our year-end picture show. Send them to at celia552@cox.net.

Enjoy with us a great speaker and this special celebration of the year’s achievements.
CNPS Membership Application
☐ New member  ☐ Renewal
☐ Individual ........................................ $45
☐ Family ........................................ $75
☐ Plant Lover ........................................ $100
☐ Patron ........................................ $300
☐ Benefactor ........................................ $600
☐ 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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Vice-President Laura Camp  949 370-3303  laura@treeoflifenuery.com
Secretary  Sarah Jayne  949 552-0691  sbjayne@cox.net
Treasurer  Brad Jenkins  jenkinsbrad@gmail.com

Board Members
Chapter Council Reps
Thea Gavin  David Pryor  Bob Hutter  Celia Kutchter  Jennifer Mabley  Ron Vanderhoff  Kristen Wernick  Rachel Whitt

Contact Information and Teams

Membership Team
Team Leader: Laura Camp (interim)
Outreach Coordinator: Jennifer Mabley
Hospitality: Sarah Jayne
Greeters: Dori Ito, Jennifer Beatty
Volunteer Recognition: Dan Songster
Programs: Dan Songster
Audio-Visual: Bob Allen, Thea Gavin, Bob Hutter

Conservation Team (Protect OC)
Team Leader: Celia Kutchter
Members: open

Horticulture Team (Grow Native OC)
Team Co-leads: Dan Songster, Kristen Wernick
Plant Sale: Dan Songster, Laura Camp
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, Ron Vanderhoff

Invasives Team
Team Co-leads: Ron Vanderhoff, Jutta Burger
Members: Bob Allen, Thea Gavin, Celia Kutcher, David Pryor, Dan Songster

Explore Team (Explore OC)
Team Lead: Ron Vanderhoff
Field Trips: Diane Etchison, Jonathon Frank, Rachel Whitt

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

Grants Team
O’Neill Grant: Jutta Burger
Reviewers: Bob Allen, Celia Kutcher, Fred Roberts, Ron Vanderhoff
Acorn Grant: Sarah Jayne
Reviewers: the Board of Directors

May/June 2017

CONTACT INFORMATION AND TEAMS

FIRST CLASS MAIL