Botany Blitz Finds Uncommon Plants in Whiting Ranch

On April 16, one-hundred OCCNPS members and friends joined our second Botany Blitz, this year at Whiting Ranch Wilderness Park. We were nearly overwhelmed by the enthusiasm and number of participants, which included a diverse selection of expert botanists, students, land managers, naturalist volunteers, friends, and nature lovers.

A Botany Blitz is a one-day coordinated effort to document as many plant species as possible at a given location, in this case the 2,500-acre Whiting Ranch Wilderness Park. The park was divided into seven survey areas and teams were assigned to each area. Each team was led by
expert botanists including Bob Allen, Rebecca Crowe, Joshua Der, Emile Fiesler, Amander Fisher, Sandy Leatherman, Fred Roberts, Michael Simpson, and Ron Vanderhoff.

Here are a few numbers from the day: Plant observations - 1,714. Individual plant taxa observed-- 299 (218 native, 81 non-native). New plants added to the Whiting Ranch Park Vascular Checklist--about 20. To learn more, click here.  Image by R.Vanderhoff

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**Sunday, June 11: 10am-2pm**

**2nd Annual Family & Friends Picnic**

Enjoy a picnic with family and friends. Bring your favorite dish for potluck. We will have a table with nature activities for kids and adults. Frisbees, spike ball, and other games will be available too. Rebecca Crowe will lead a child and parent walk at 10:30am. and Jonathan Frank will lead a nature hike on Horseshoe Loop Trail at 11am. Lunch will be at noon.

Bring your food, outdoor chairs, tables, and blankets to lay on the grass. No RSVP or registration is needed. Bring or rent bikes to ride through the park. The park has paddle boats, a zoo, pony rides, a nature center, and a railroad. Dogs on leashes are permitted in the park.

Enter the park where Jamboree Road turns into Irvine Park Lane. Weekend parking is $5 per car. Go to parking lot P at the east end of the park. (If that section is unavailable, other east side parking areas are the backup -- starting with O, then Q, M, and N). To learn more click here.  Image by B.Jenkins

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**Wednesday, June 21: 7pm**

**Chapter Meeting - Lightning Talks**

Southern California is home to exciting and relevant environmental research emerging from its colleges and universities. Many students are doing studies related to native plants, including floristics, population studies, restoration, genetics, climate change, etc.

Join us Wednesday, June 21, at 7pm as students from CSU Long Beach, CSU Fullerton, CSU San Diego, Concordia University and UC Irvine each present an 8-minute exploration of their projects and their passions. It will be a fun evening at the Norman Murray Center with fast-paced lightning talks and Native Milkweed for sale, an event not to be missed! To learn more click here. Photos provided by speakers
June 11, 15, July 9, 20, August 13, 17

Make Friends, Make Art, Help Science

Volunteer at the UCI Herbarium (IRVC) this summer. IRVC is preparing the plant vouchers for both the Whiting Ranch and Caspers Wilderness Parks projects. We need your help in preparing these plant specimens, which will be kept safe in perpetuity and serve as verifiable records of the plants at the park. This entails neatly attaching plant specimens and their data label to archival paper. Preparing herbarium specimens is fun and is sure to get the science and art parts of your brain active!

Herbarium sessions are planned for the second Sunday and third Thursdays of June, July, and August OR until we run out of specimens (June 11th, June 15th, July 9th, July 20th, August 13th, & August 17th)!

Please email Rebecca Crowe, rcrowe@uci.edu, for more info and to sign up for a session. Image by R.Crowe
OCCNPS Past, Present & Future - Insights from Board Members

OCCNPS presents a Q and A that highlights our Board Members' experiences and knowledge. We begin this monthly series with an interview arranged by Thea Gavin that features Dan Songster, member-at-large and past president of OCCNPS.

Dan Songster has been interested in California native plant horticulture since the 1970's, when native plants were almost unknown in the landscape business. He has been a member of CNPS since 1989, and an active member of the OCCNPS Board since 1992, holding every position except Vice President (and including two terms as co-president with Sarah Jayne).

To learn more, click here. Image by B. Jenkins

Native Gardener's Corner-Member's Tips, Tricks, and Techniques

Dan Songster offers chapter members and local experts a chance to share information related to gardening with natives.

The question for the June/July 2023 edition of the newsletter was: "Our native gardens are often inspired by nature. What is your favorite place/destination to experience and be inspired by nature in Southern California (and why)?"

Leon Baginski: "San Juan loop trail. It has different plant zones including chaparral, oak woodlands, riparian and mixes of the above. Gives a great lesson in how Mother Nature designs her yard and always motivates me to try to match."

Bob Allen: "I take garden inspiration from the local environs: coast, foothills, and slopes of the Santa Ana Mountains. But my plant choices cannot always match the wild, because of my soil, microclimate, and plant availability."

Read more from Rama Nayeri, Alan Lindsay, Ron Vanderhoff, Sarah Jayne, Nancy Harris, Laura Camp, J. Mark Sugars, and Dan Songster here. Image by R.Vanderhoff
Fiscal Year-End Financial Report

CNPS Orange County Chapter Balance Sheet As of Mar 31, 2023

ASSETS

- Checking, cash on hand, money market 153,336
- Inventory and other current assets 1,678

TOTAL ASSETS 155,014

LIABILITIES AND EQUITY

- Total Current Liabilities 820
- Equity 154,194

TOTAL LIABILITIES AND EQUITY 155,014

Footnote:

- Joan Hampton Funds held in Trust at March 31, 2023 186,073
- Celia Kutcher donation included in Money Market 125,000