



CALENDAR 2023

Chapter meetings will be held at the **Norman Murray Center** in Mission Viejo unless otherwise specified.

- Mar 4** Chapter meeting: **Bob Allen**
- Mar 15**..... Zoom meeting: **Jon Rebman**
- Mar 25**..... **Wildflower Festival TOLN**
- Apr 1** **GARDEN TOUR**
- Apr 19** Chapter meeting
- Jun 21**..... Chapter meeting
- Field Trips**
- Feb 25** **Oak Canyon Field Trip**
- Mar 5** **O'Neill Park Field Trip**
- Mar 19**..... **Field Trip: Laguna Coast**
- Apr 2** **IRC Field Trip**

TWO SPECIAL PRESENTATIONS IN MARCH

Saturday, March 4, *Habitats and Habitat Gardening* with **Bob Allen, speaker**

7:30 PM at the Norman Murray Center in Mission Viejo

This event is limited to 85 people. RSVP at occnps.org to attend.

CNPS members have a shared love and respect for native plants. We even go to great lengths to visit them in habitat. Our need to be around native plants often brings us to include them in public and private gardens.

In the wild, habitats are to be conserved. In gardens, habitats are to be mimicked. Doing so requires us to study their ecology, which can be summarized as a five-step sequence of events: Geology → Geography → Plants → Habitats → All other life forms.

Understanding ecology and applying it to build and maintain gardens is known as habitat gardening.

Can we measure success

of such a garden? Yes, if mobile members of the wild habitat (birds, beetles, butterflies) come to join it.

Can we intentionally lure those mobile members to our space? Yes, if we provide the plants that meet their basic needs.

Can we instill in other people a love and respect for native plants? Yes, if we plan appropriately. Introduce them to an interesting native plant as cuttings in water, in a pot, or in a garden. Then take them to a habitat garden, next a simple trail, and later a more advanced trail if possible.

Join us as we take a lighthearted look at habitats, habitat gardening, and some of the native critters that enrich our biodiversity.

Bob Allen, a.k.a. Bug Bob, is a southern California botanist, entomologist, author, photographer, and educator.



Bob Allen and his wife Linnell

Wednesday, March 15: *The Flora of Camp Pendleton and Using iNaturalist to Improve Regional Floristics* Jon Rebman, Speaker. A Zoom meeting



Jon P. Rebman, Ph.D. has been the Mary and Dallas Clark Endowed Chair/Curator of Botany at the San Diego Natural History Museum (SDNHM) since 1996. Under Dr. Rebman’s direction, the San Diego Natural History Museum’s Botany Department has conducted field surveys and made plant specimen collections on Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton as part of various biological contracts to improve the knowledge of the plant diversity on the base. Camp Pendleton is a very restricted part of California, but with the museum’s efforts the San Diego Herbarium now contains over 10,000 plant specimens from the base and have increased the known flora by 83%!

Jon Rebman will take us on a virtual tour to learn how integrating museum specimens and vetted iNaturalist observations are improving the regional botanical knowledge in San Diego County. There will also be mention of the wonderful work being done on the San Diego Plant Atlas, a fascinating project that compiles all of the plant observations of vascular plants that are native or naturalized in San Diego County!

Register at <https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZAtceivrzloEtWAdZtqN2z7n03o9ksN2Vtb>

Orange County Chapter to Host CNPS Chapter Council Meeting

On the first weekend in March, OCCNPS will be hosting the quarterly CNPS Chapter Council meeting. Representatives from all 35 chapters are invited to meet for a weekend to discuss CNPS policies, share successes and lesson learned, and vote in organizational elections. These quarterly meetings and chapter council sessions are open to all CNPS members and friends. To learn more, go to cc.cnps.org. The March 4 meeting will take place at the Norman Murray Community Center in Mission Viejo. Orange County chapter members are invited to attend, with reservations, and can also join the O'Neill Regional Park hike on Sunday, March 5. Reserve a spot for the March 5 field trip and the March 4 Bob Allen presentation at occnps.org.

FIELD TRIPS

Note: While participation in most field trips is free, all require signing a waiver. Please go to occnps.org for a link to the sign-in.

~~Saturday, February 25: Oak Canyon Nature Center~~ CANCELLED

Oak Canyon Nature Center is a 58-acre natural park in Anaheim Hills. It contains coast live oak woodlands, coastal sage scrub, and riparian habitats. This will be an easy to moderate hike of between 1.5 and 2 miles identifying all the native and non-native plant species in the Nature Center. This is a perfect field trip for students and those interested in learning the common native plants. No entrance fee is required though donations at the Nature Center are greatly appreciated. Physical Difficulty: Easy to moderate

Meet at 9 AM at the Oak Canyon Nature Center Parking Lot, 6700 E. Walnut Canyon Road, Anaheim, 92807.

Leader: Sandy Leatherman, sandyl@leathermanbio.com; approx. time 9 AM – 12 PM.

Sunday, March 5: O'Neill Regional Park

OCCNPS would like to welcome chapter members to one of the most beautiful parks in Orange County, O'Neill Regional Park. A splendid drive through a coast live oak forest leads to the entrance of the park, which encompasses lush woodland and coastal Sage scrub. We will take an easy walk on a series of trails on the eastern portion of the park, highlighting the extensive stands of chaparral nolina (*Nolina cismontana*) that are a highlight of the park. Early wildflowers such as wild cucumber (*Marah macrocarpa*), California peony (*Paeonia California*) and California bells (*Phacelia minor*) may be in peak bloom. The park has a \$5 entrance fee. We hope all who attend will enjoy one of the best natural parks among many in Orange County! The field trip begins at 8:30 AM. Go to occnps.org for more information and to register.



O'Neill Park, photo by Elizabeth Wallace

Sunday, March 19: Laguna Coast Wilderness with the Laguna Canyon Foundation

Celebrate Spring, with a morning of fresh air and flowers, hosted by Laguna Canyon Foundation. LCF is an amazing land management and educational organization doing restoration, conservation, interpretation and expert natural resource management throughout 22,000 acres of the San Joaquin Hills. Alan Kaufmann and/or Chris Gort, both excellent biologists, will show us the new LCF headquarters and adjacent native plantings as well as their wonderful restoration along Laguna Canyon Creek. We will then cross the road and hike 3-4 miles up Laurel Canyon and back down Willow Canyon, identifying and discussing the many plants and flowers along the way.

Free and open to all. Meet at 9 AM at the headquarters of the Laguna Canyon Foundation, 10 Phillips Street, Laguna Beach (one driveway South of the Anneliese School on Laguna Canyon Road, near El Toro Road.)

Bring trail shoes, hat, sunscreen, camera, water and lunch, if desired. Moderate difficulty on good, but uneven dirt trails. Plant intensity: Moderate to high.

Leaders: Alan Kaufmann and/or Chris Gort, Laguna Canyon Foundation

CONSERVATION NEWS

The following is a re-print of an article published by the Endangered Habitats League in the February 2023 newsletter. This article describes conservation work that OCCNPS is also monitoring and supporting.

Southern California “Greenprint” sidelined for now—“RAMP” moves forward

Biological mapping to better plan for development was temporarily blocked by the building industry, but an important mitigation program for infrastructure was initiated.

In 2020, the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) – comprised of jurisdictions in Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino, Los Angeles, and Ventura Counties – initiated a program to synthesize existing data on natural resources and make it available to local governments, developers, conservationists, and infrastructure providers. The goal of this “data tool” is to avoid conflicts and risks to development and infrastructure and guide protection of key lands to benefit the public and wildlife. The “Greenprint” was for informational purposes only, so that elected officials and agencies could make better planning decisions.

However, during 2021, in a show of political force, the building industry and its business allies launched an assault on the Greenprint, stating that the information assembled could be used in the CEQA process to oppose housing production. But what this really means is a rejection of good planning, which takes natural resources into account, and finds the best locations for new housing. The industry would prefer the status quo of controlling the information available to elected officials through environmental reports prepared by hired consultants rather than give them access to objective facts.

Friends of Harbors, Beaches and Parks organized a compelling defense of Greenprint. EHL and others groups testified at repeated hearings. But the response by the elected officials who govern SCAG was overwhelmingly to assent to the business interests and assign the program to the red tape of a new committee. While the future of the program is uncertain, we are hopeful that further technical analysis will help advance it, particularly as an environmental representative will be added to the committee as a result of our recommendation.

Faring much better, though, is a related effort – the Regional Advance Mitigation Program, or RAMP. Already used by transportation agencies in San Diego, Orange, and Riverside Counties, RAMP looks at infrastructure needs comprehensively rather than on an inefficient and time-consuming project-by-project basis. It then identifies meaningful conservation opportunities up front, achieving ecosystem-based mitigation. For example, the Orange County Transportation Authority has assembled many important conservation parcels using a RAMP for projects like freeway widening.

This time around, with support from both the business and conservation sectors – including EHL [and OCCNPS] – SCAG’s Energy & Environment Committee endorsed developing a RAMP for the region. It was then adopted and put in motion by the Regional Council. If properly structured and implemented, the RAMP will provide strategic mitigation benefitting wildlife when impacts cannot be avoided.

EHL [and OCCNPS] will continue to press for Greenprint and will help develop the RAMP.

—Dan Silva

OCCNPS has joined the efforts to support “Greenprint” and the “Regional Advance Mitigation Program” with formal letters of support, attending meetings, and joining group letters of support.

Environmental Impact Report for Disposal Operation Near Santiago Creek Recommended by OCCNPS

On February 9, OCCNPS sent a comment letter to the Santa Ana Regional Water Quality Control Board. The letter outlines document discrepancies and nature disruptions (including habitat of FESA listed birds) for the proposed Reclamation Inert Waste Disposal Operation near a section of Santiago Creek. We recommend a full Environmental Impact Report before the project proceeds.

GARDENING NEWS

A SAGE IN EVERY GARDEN distributes 2,000 white sage.

The *A Sage in Every Garden* campaign has almost completed its goal of distributing 2,000 free 4-inch white sage plants to gardens throughout Orange County.

With the help of CNPS’s *White Sage Flora* magazine, we also educated hundreds of residents about the threat to white sage from illegal poaching. Media and television have created an unsustainable demand for white sage “smudge sticks” for cleansing, based on the sacred practices of local indigenous peoples.

Unfortunately, many of the smudge sticks you find for sale at Walmart, Target and Amazon (worldwide) may be illegally poached from our wild lands.

We hope the *A Sage in Every Garden* giveaway leads to increased nature-beneficial gardening in every neighborhood, reduced water use in cities, and the protection of white sage in public wild lands.

Tree of Life Nursery Flower Festival Blooms Saturday, March 25

Celebrate the beauty of California natives! TOLN is hosting its first Native Flower Festival on **Saturday, March 25 from 10 AM until 2 PM.**

There will be lightning talks and wildflower displays, two potting workshops with Patti that can be reserved, and you can join the Native Flower Bouquet contest to win a prize., visit **TreeofLifeNursery** for more information!

The Flower Festival needs volunteers. If you would like to assist with questions about native plants, staff our chapter booth, help with parking or the coloring table for kids, please contact sage@occnps.org

Saturday, April 1—The Native Plant Garden Tour is Back!

Fifteen private gardens across the county will be open to the public **from 10 AM to 4 pm.** The gardens range in size from mini to quite big, 100% to at least 50% California native plants. Each garden offers a unique detail or concept that will inform and inspire! The tour is free, no tickets required. Go to occnps.org after March 1 for all the details.

