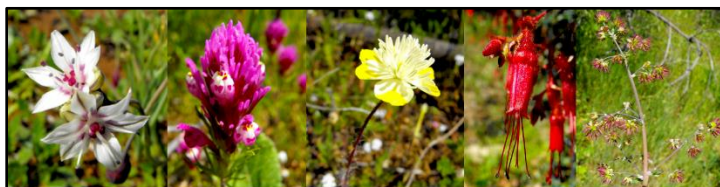




CALIFORNIA NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY

San Diego Chapter Newsletter



NATIVE PLANT WEEK

CNPS-San Diego Chapter

Friday, April 16-Saturday, April 24

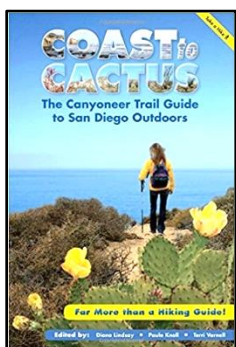
CNPS-SD Chapter NPW Events

Join the San Diego Chapter for its biggest Native Plant Week (NPW) ever with an event each day highlighting a number of our activities: Field Trips, Vegetation Study, Native Gardening, Propagation, and Rare Plants.

Visit: www.cnpssd.org/npw-2021 for details and registration for all events.

Friday, April 16, 7 pm

ONLINE WEBINAR: Using *Coast to Cactus* as a Field Guide to the San Diego Outdoors



SPEAKERS: Diana Lindsay, Author & Jim Varnell, Canyoneer Training Team.

The speakers, editors on the team of *Coast to Cactus: The Canyoneer Trail Guide to San Diego Outdoors*, will discuss using the book as it was designed: to teach appreciation and understanding of the great biodiversity found in San Diego County.

Saturday, April 17, 9 am

Vegetation Study Guided Walk at Barnett Ranch County Preserve

Join chapter VP and Field Trips Chair **Justin Daniel** for a botanic walk that will focus on floral foundations of the food web and emphasize wildlife commonly seen in the area. Group size is limited and everyone will follow all COVID safety guidelines.



Barnett Ranch. Photo: Justin Daniel.

Sunday, April 18, 10 am

Facebook Live Interview with a CNPS Member Garden Owner

Spring is in swing and you will follow a member throughout their California native plant garden to learn how they created it and what they found along the way.

Monday, April 19, 7 pm

Naming Contest for Chapter *Dudleya* Mascot (Online Meeting)

Bring your creative side to help the chapter name its new mascot (it's not a new logo), a *Dudleya pulverulenta*, and create a slogan for it as part of the CNPS *Dudleya* Legislation campaign (see p. 6).



Tuesday, April 20, 7 pm

ONLINE WEBINAR: A New Era of Plant Conservation at the SD Botanic Garden

SPEAKER: Tony Gurnoe, Director of Conservation Horticulture at the San Diego Botanic Garden.



After decades of showcasing endangered plant species from our region, the San Diego Botanic Garden is making significant institutional investments to dramatically elevate the garden's conservation and research programs. Learn about its long-term conservation storage in seed bank projects and how it is reintroducing and reinforcing threatened populations of plant species such as *Baccharis vanessae* and *Quercus dumosa*.

Wednesday, April 21, 11 am

**ONLINE PROPAGATION COMMITTEE MTG
Asclepias fascicularis Propagation from Seed and Rhizome Cuttings**

SPEAKER: Amy Huie, CNPS-San Diego Propagation Chair.
Join the Propagation Committee to learn about *Asclepias* propagation and the scope and projects of the committee.

Thursday, April 22, 7 pm

ONLINE WEBINAR: A Garden in Five Parts

SPEAKER: Don Rideout, Native Plant Gardener
Don will present a virtual tour of his garden that is arranged in five sections representing different geographic and habitat zones – Baja California, San Diego Chaparral, Channel Islands, Pond, and Shade.

Friday, April 23, 10 am

RECORDED PRESENTATION: 360° Virtual Native Garden Tour from the CNPS-San Diego Native Garden Committee

Follow this self-guided virtual tour of 5 gardens in East County. As a viewer, you can click on areas of the garden to learn about the plants, see before/after photos, and more. The recording will make its debut beginning at 10AM from the website link.

Saturday, April 24: TBD, check weblink

www.cnpssd.org/npw-2021

NATIVE GARDENING COMMITTEE

Did you notice the garden committee's new name? In February, the committee voted to add "*Native*" to our name to better reflect the nature of the garden committee or **NGC** for short. And we have been busy! See what we have been up to below...

Our featured article this month, "**Baja Plants for San Diego Gardens**" by Native Garden Committee member **Don Rideout**



(see p.3) focuses on Baja California natives that will thrive and become more common in San Diego due to increasing warmer temperatures. Some of you may already be familiar with these hardy natives or you may have already included them in your landscape. They are all very drought tolerant ranging from cactus to beautiful Baja spurses.

(Above) Male monarch butterfly resting on purple sage (*Salvia leucophylla*). Photo: **Christine Hoey**.

Bird Park Update

The NGC has completed soil testing, perk test, irrigation and site evaluation for the proposed Balboa Park "Adopt A Plot" native plant garden. A final native plant list and landscape design is near completion. If you are interested in joining the Bird Park workgroup, please contact us at nativegardening@cnpssd.org.

Spring in the Native Garden

There is nothing like spring in a California native garden and the March rains were certainly a welcome site after a dry winter. Not only are the flowers blooming, but the birds are building their nests and pollinators are regular flower visitors. Now is the time to relax outdoors with your favorite beverage to enjoy the beautiful display of flowers and wildlife!

One thing **not** to do right now is trim your trees. According to **Jim Peugh** with the *San Diego Audubon Society*, trimming trees can cause a loss of wildlife (hidden bird nests) and it is also against the law. September through January is a better time to trim tree branches as the trees go into dormancy. It's also not too late to add new natives to your garden (or really anytime of the year) as long as you keep the root ball and surrounding soil moist until your new plants are established.

Spring Native Garden Tours

Due to Covid, there are no in-person spring native garden tours this year. The NGC is in the process (as we speak) of creating engaging and interactive 360° "virtual" garden tours from some of last year's (almost) garden tour. This virtual tour will allow you to take your time to "navigate" through the beautiful gardens in the comfort of your home. Once the editing is

complete, the tour of the gardens will be posted on the chapter website (<https://www.cnpsd.org/>) - so stay tuned!

Mark your calendars for these additional spring virtual native garden tours:

April 16-18, Theodore Payne Native Garden Tour - This will be an interactive 360 virtual garden tour including a keynote address with Doug Tallamy. For tickets and more information, go to: [Theodore Payne Native Garden Tour](#).

April 25 and May 2, 16, & 23, Bringing Back the Natives Garden Tour - virtual live tours on Sundays with keynote speaker, Doug Tallamy. For more information go to: [Bringing Back the Natives Garden Tour](#)

NGC March Meeting Summary

The March meeting presentation by **David Newsom**, “**Reconciliation Ecology and the Habitat Imperative**,” highlighted how urban communities can connect to isolated native habitat corridors via residential native gardens based on works by Doug Tallamy, Benjamin Voght and Mary Reynolds. With loss of habitat across the U.S., we are seeing a decline in migratory bird species and the critical decline of monarch butterflies (canary in the coal mine?). David presented ways we as individuals can make a difference to expand native habit one yard at a time. If you missed David’s talk, go to the [CNPS San Diego YouTube Channel](#) to view his presentation. Other resources: “*Nature’s Best Hope*” by Doug Tallamy, “*A New Garden Ethic*” by Benjamin Vogt, and “*We Are the Ark, the Garden Awakening*” by Mary Reynolds.



(Left) Narrow leaf milkweed (*Asclepias fascicularis*) with monarch caterpillar. Photo: Calscape.

Speaking of monarch butterflies, did you know that narrow leaf milkweed (*Asclepias fascicularis*) was one of our top 10 selling plants at the March CNPS-SD native plant sale? This is the only host plant for the monarch butterfly and if you would like to include narrow leaf milkweed in your garden, plants are available for sale through Moosa Creek and Native West nurseries. To read more about Western Monarch Butterfly Conservation, go to: [Xerces Society Monarch](#). (or <https://xerces.org/monarchs/western-monarch-conservation>) Also tune in to Bug Bob Allen’s recent talk: “[Meeting the Needs of Monarchs & Other Nectar Feeders](#)” (or <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gV482ks6Tdk>).

The Native Garden Committee welcomes new members from novices to “seasoned” native gardeners. If you would like to join our group, please drop us an email at: nativegardening@cnpsd.org.

Native Garden Committee (NGC) Zoom Meeting Title: TBD May 11, 6:30 - 8:00 pm

We will announce the meeting’s speaker on the CNPS-SD website under events and on the CNPS-SD Facebook page. This meeting is limited to 100 participants, but it will also be recorded for posting on the [CNPS San Diego YouTube Channel](#). Once you register, a Zoom link will be sent to you 3 days before the presentation.

*Happy Spring and See You all at the
Next NGC Meeting!*
*Christine Hoey, Judie Lincer &
Nancy Levine,
Native Garden Committee Co-chairs*

Baja Plants for San Diego Gardens by Don Rideout

Our warming climate is expected to force a number of species to either adjust their ranges or face extinction. This could mean that plants from Baja that are currently uncommon in San Diego County may in the future be more appropriate for our region. Several Baja plants are already popular in many gardens for good reason: they tend to be extremely drought tolerant, hardy, and beautiful. There are lots to choose from. Some are well-known, while others are more obscure; some are found north of the border while others are Baja endemics. Not all of these are from the California Floristic Province, but all of them are good choices for San Diego gardens. There isn’t space to list them all or give too many details here, but if you’re interested in any of these, visit the Calscape links below. Here are a few to consider for your garden.

Shaw’s Agave (*Agave shawii*) is already in use in many gardens. Its garden value is in its great sculptural form. Don’t count on flowers—like other agaves, it can take decades to bloom. It spreads by growing new rosettes around the original one. A drawback of the plant is its lethal spines on the tips of the



leaves, so think carefully about where you plant it. I like to trim the tips off mine so I don’t impale myself while working around it. [Calscape: *Agave shawii*](#) (Left) Shaw’s agave (*Agave shawii*) Photo: **Christine Hoey**.

Golden Cereus (*Bergerocactus emoryi*)

is a cholla-type cactus often found with Shaw’s agave on the coast, starting around Rosarito in Baja. The spines are golden color and seem to glow in the sun. Like other chollas, it has nasty spines. If given room to spread, it will. For both of these reasons, use discretion about where you plant it. The flowers of this cactus are small and yellow-green and not very conspicuous, so its garden value is mainly in the color and sculptural form of the plant itself. Best near the coast. [Calscape: *Bergerocactus emoryi*](#) (Above) Golden Cereus (*Bergerocactus emoryi*). Photo: Calscape.



Elephant Tree (*Bursera* species). This is one of the most unique genera of Baja, with several species from different parts of the peninsula.

Bursera microphylla is probably the most commonly available. Anza-Borrego State Park is the northern limit of its range. Other interesting species are *B. fagaroides* and *B. hindsiana*. Any of these will do well in a container or in the ground. Use with boulders and gravel mulch. Best used inland—they like heat.

[Calscape: Elephant Tree](#)
(Left) Elephant Tree (*Bursera microphylla*) Photo: Don Rideout.



Baja Fairyduster (*Calliandra californica*)

Here’s one with no spines and terrific flowers! It blooms almost year-round. It is native to the central desert and also some islands, so it’s versatile for both coastal and inland gardens. Hummingbirds will thank you. (Right) Baja fairy duster (*Calliandra californica*). Photo: Christine Hoey.



Cliff Spurge (*Euphorbia misera*) is a great companion to cactus, dudleyas, and other succulents in a rock garden setting. When dry it looks like all stems, but when it gets a little water it produces small round leaves and tiny flowers. Best near the coast. [Calscape: *Euphorbia misera*](#)

Baja California Spurge (*Euphorbia xantii*) is a larger shrub to 10 feet tall, consisting of a tightly packed cluster of thin stems, green when young and becoming woody with age. The flowers,

which appear in spring, are pink and small but numerous. This one is very easy to start from cuttings. It takes pruning well to control the height or spread, but watch out for the white sap—it’s somewhat toxic.

Cardón Cactus (*Pachycereus pringlei*) is a columnar cactus that can eventually get quite large but is slow growing. Its upright form provides a nice contrast to lower shrubs. Best used inland with boulders and gravel mulch.

Baja Birdbush (*Ornithostaphylos oppositifolia*) is found in the border region where it is threatened by encroaching urbanization and border enforcement activities. A beautiful, rare shrub related to manzanitas, the Baja birdbush would be a wonderful addition to any San Diego garden. Its growth rate is slow, so be patient. [Calscape: *Ornithostaphylos oppositifolia*](#).

(Right) Baja Birdbush (*Ornithostaphylos oppositifolia*). Photo: Calscape.



Small Leaved Rose (*Rosa minutifolia*) is another really rare plant in the wild, found from the border down to around El Rosario. It is quite different from roses you may be used to — highly drought tolerant, remaining rather small, and preferring to associate with cacti

and succulents. It will drop its leaves when dry but will leaf out and even bloom at any time if given some water. [Calscape: *Rosa minutifolia*](#) (Above) Small Leaved Rose (*Rosa minutifolia*) Photo: Don Rideout. Inset photo: Calflora.

Tapertip Dudleya (*Dudleya attenuata*) is found from the border region down to around El Rosario. It has slender leaves with a



round cross-section, giving it a resemblance to other dudleyas such as *D. edulis* and *D. hassei*. Does great in a container or in the ground, and mixes well with other plants. [Calscape: *Dudleya attenuata*](#) (Left) Tapertip dudleya (*Dudleya attenuata*). Photo: Christine Hoey.

Baja Bush Snapdragon (*Gambelia juncea*) has showy red, tubular flowers that hummingbirds love. There are two horticultural varieties to choose from: 'Gran Cañon' (selected from Cedros Island by Santa Barbara Botanical Garden) and 'Punta Banda' (selected from its namesake location south of Ensenada by Tree of Life Nursery). [Calscape: Baja Bush Snapdragon](#)

References:

Baja California Plant Field Guide (3rd edition); Rebman and Roberts; (2012) Sunbelt Publications.

Plant Guide: Maritime Succulent Scrub Region, Northwest Baja California, Mexico; Riley, Rebman, and Vanderplank; (2015) Botanical Research Institute of Texas.

Don Rideout is a native plant gardener and CNPS volunteer.

CNPS-SD BOARD NEWS

April Board Meeting

Wednesday, April 7, 6:30 – 9:00ish p.m. The meeting will be via Zoom. To add an issue to the agenda, or to get the link to the meeting, please email president@cnpsd.org.

March Board Meeting Summary

Two members have volunteered: **Jasmine Duran** will be the new volunteer coordinator and **Kendra Saad** will help Joseph with sending out the MailChimp twice a month and with technical issues for programs.

The following motion was approved:

- to increase our MailChimp account level from an Essentials Plan to a Standard Plan for an additional \$23 per month to allow volunteers to author email campaigns without allowing access to mailing list personal data.

Discussion items included Winter Plant Sale results, events for Native Plant Week, "Name the Dudleya Mascot" competition, update on outdoor gatherings (we will follow local, state and federal guidelines about getting together), whether we should develop a sponsorship policy, potential seed storage and packaging locations, and publicizing Propagation Committee presentations.

~ **Bobbie Stephenson**, Chapter Secretary

Thanks to Neel's Nursery

I would like to thank **Torrey Neel** of Neel's Nursery for kindly selling books for the Chapter at her native plant nursery (Neel's Nursery) in Encinitas on Coast Highway 101 since last year. She carries a variety of titles and the book inventory takes up space that she could be using to sell other items, so it isn't a trivial thing for her to do this for the chapter. She has *Dudleya* planted in cute whale pots that tempted me but, so far, I have restricted myself to only buying plants to diversify a restoration area and



some of the other items she carries in the little indoor area that houses the books. She has a variety of native plant species for sale so stop by **Sat-Mon (9 am – 5 pm)** and buy some native plants and CNPS-SD books. Address: **466 N. Coast Hwy 101, Encinitas, CA.** <https://neelnursery.com/>

~ **Cindy Burrascano**, Book Sales Chair

Tree of Life Nursery to Host CNPS Sponsorship Week

At 40 years old this year, Tree of Life Nursery in San Juan Capistrano will host another CNPS sponsorship week that will coincide with **Native Plant Week, April 19 - 24**. During this week 10% of their proceeds from plant sales will be donated to local, participating chapters of CNPS, including the San Diego Chapter. Retail hours are **Monday – Saturday, 9:00 am - 3:30 pm**, except only a half day April 2 in observance of Good Friday. Address: **33201 Ortega Highway, San Juan Capistrano, CA.** <https://californianativeplants.com/> (Photo from Tree of Life's website.)



CONSERVATION

Conservation Committee Meeting

Contact conservation@cnpsd.org for information regarding the April meeting.

One Year Later

In a sense, this is a dual column, because in addition to conservation I will be talking about one of my other roles, which is as our chapter delegate to the CNPS Chapter Council (CC). But mostly it's about one year into the pandemic and climate change.

As I write this, I'm getting deluged with media stories about how "life will be getting back to normal soon," how dealing with the pandemic was "like everyone being in prison," and so forth. And I get it. A lot of businesses will do better, and a lot of people will do better, if we get out more, drive more, and spend a lot more. And I have no intention of belittling the very real pain many people went through, especially those who are suffering lingering effects of Covid-19 or who lost loved ones to the virus.

But I have to be the person who points out that pre-pandemic "normal" wasn't very good. As I sit here, looking at less than four inches of rain this year, I'm reminded, as hopefully we all are, that we've got maybe nine years to get our greenhouse gas

emissions well down towards zero, or things start getting a lot worse than they are now.

In April 2020, when the pandemic started, global greenhouse gas emissions crashed. You may remember how quiet it was, how many birds there were, pictures of coyotes wandering through San Francisco? That's all gone now, of course, but there was a brief time when we got a chance to see what a more carbon-neutral life was like. Some of it was pretty nice, amidst the shortages and the fear. The good parts are what we really need to aim for going forward, hopefully with fewer of the bad parts.

Now there's the drumbeat to buy more cars, get back on the roads, fly again, take cruises, and so forth. How many of you are going to give in to this pervasive peer pressure? I know I feel it, and I assume everyone else does, too.

Someone estimated, and I can't find the article now, that we could hit our emissions reduction goals if we had a pandemic every other year. I think any sane person would hope that doesn't happen. But I also hope every sane person realizes that changes that drastic need to happen, voluntarily or not. I also hope that every sane person looks at what we're being urged to do now and realize that blowing huge amounts of greenhouse gas in an effort to get out and be "normal" has its own grim price, one we'll pay for a lot longer than we'll deal with the pandemic's toll.

But it wasn't just one month of lowered emissions and being stuck inside. There were some good changes in 2020 and 2021. CNPS actually changed quite a lot, and for the better. Many organizations did. And this gets to both the CC and what other organizations can do as we move toward opening up.

Chapter Council, like all CNPS meetings, went virtual. So instead of 18-25 people driving and flying in to some rural part of California, far more of us met online. Now, as the CC starts thinking about post-pandemic operations, the question seems to be whether to have one or two in-person meetings per year, and how many virtual meetings we want. Back in 2019, the people running the CC insisted that it was critically important that everyone get together, even though most times we barely made quorum. Now, with us getting more work done and more people participating in shorter meetings, it's obvious that former assumption wasn't true.

That's the common theme of CNPS 2020. Instead of chapters hosting small general meetings for their local members, online CNPS virtual meetings are drawing hundreds of people, often from around the state. Chapter board and conservation committee meetings are going faster, if only because no one has to drive to and from them.

In a telling example, my old chapter, LA/Santa Monica Mountains Chapter in West LA, probably won't go back to in-person meetings. The problem the chapter has is that it covers the western San Fernando Valley, Malibu, and West LA. Ever heard of traffic in the Sepulveda Pass? Most of the chapter board members live in the Valley, but some live in West LA.

Going to board meetings or chapter meetings in the Valley from West LA (or vice versa) took two hours of driving in gridlock at rush hour, even for a 20-mile drive. LA/SMM had adapted by alternating general meetings between the Valley and the West LA, but only a few dozen people attended the meetings, and getting speakers was hard. When they went virtual, meeting attendance soared, and they're probably not going back to live meetings. I suspect they're not the only chapter making this decision, either.

As Conservation Chair, I've been more active giving testimony this last year. Partly it's because everyone's trying to finally deal with climate change (in San Diego's own, very special way). But pre-pandemic I'd pull on a suit and tie and blow two gallons of gas driving downtown to testify for a minute or three. Now I can sit at home and do the same testimony. And as with CNPS activities, my impression is that participation in City Council and Board of Supervisor meetings has soared. I hope they continue this.

Of course, there are downsides: few book sales, no garden tours, no hikes, few in person events. And those are important, too. But we hopefully won't lose sight of the fact that in the CNPS activities that continued through 2020, participation grew without a growth in greenhouse gas emissions.

That's one thing we're going to try to capture this year and hopefully in years to come. Last year CNPS as an organization pledged to try to go carbon neutral by 2030. The pandemic then gave us a chance to see what it was like to cut emissions by some huge fraction, and it turned out...well, that's the question we now get to answer.

The CNPS financial year runs from April 1 to March 31, and each chapter files a report. This year, the Chapter Council directed staff to add questions about how the pandemic helped us to cut our greenhouse gas emissions. Probably that means we'll be asked about miles driven on chapter activities, but they're still working it out as I write this. The important part is that, due to the pandemic, we actually got an important chance to find out what we can and cannot do as an organization. While I'm quite sure that CNPS won't continue in its pandemic shutdown mode, it's important that we remember, celebrate, and continue our 2020 accomplishments.

~ Frank Landis, Conservation Chair

Stop Illegal Poaching of Dudleya: Support AB 223

State and federal wildlife agents have identified a surge in *Dudleya* plant poaching along California coastlines. Poachers have been caught stealing thousands of these succulent plants, shipping them internationally, and selling them as trendy houseplants for top dollar. Investigators now estimate that poachers have stolen several hundreds of thousands of *Dudleya*, worth tens of millions of dollars, from California. Assembly Member Christopher Ward of San Diego has introduced [AB 223](#) that makes *Dudleya* poaching illegal. Visit

[Dudleya Protection | California Native Plant Society \(cncps.org\)](https://www.cncps.org/) for more info.

Star Ranch to be Preserved

Star Ranch, previously proposed for development, is being purchased for conservation by the County of San Diego County and the U.S. Navy as part of the County's future East County Multiple Species Conservation Plan (MSCP). The 2,151-acre Star Ranch property in Campo is a mix of chaparral, 100+ acres of wetlands, and stream-side habitat that support endangered species, including the arroyo toad and least Bell's vireo (left). This new conservation area will also create a buffer for Naval Base Coronado's Camp Michael Monsoor, which conducts exercises in Naval special warfare training.



The East County MSCP Plan is part of the County's regional conservation program that began in 1998 as a way to manage conservation, recreation, and agricultural lands in a coordinated and connected system, while also allowing for development in other areas. The Star Ranch property will link nearby reserves and wildlife corridors.

CNPS-SD IN OUR COMMUNITIES

Torrey Neel City of Encinitas Environmental Hero

The City of Encinitas' Environmental Commission announced winners of its prestigious **Environmental Award Program (EAP)**, now in its 6th year. The EAP seeks to recognize deserving individuals, businesses, and non-profits for their commitment to environmental stewardship and outstanding environmental achievements in the city. In addition to two Excellence in Environmental Stewardship awards that have been historically granted to a for-profit business and a non-profit organization each year, a new Environmental Hero category was created in 2019 to recognize both an adult and a youth who are not necessarily affiliated with a business or non-profit organization.



The 2020 winner of the City of Encinitas' **Environmental Hero, Adult** category is **Torrey Neel**. Torrey is on our CNPS-SD chapter board and is our Programs Chairperson. She demonstrates an increased awareness on the importance of native plants to our California ecosystems. Prior to starting Neel's Nursery, a California native plant nursery in Encinitas, Torrey would start seeds and place them out for members of the Encinitas

community to plant for free. She has also volunteered at the San Diego Botanic Garden, and her inspiration has meant much to both people and the all-important natural environment. **Her award will be presented at the City Council meeting on April 14, 2021 in honor of Earth Day, April 25.** (Info for this article is from <https://encinitasca.gov/Home/City-News/ArticleID/373>)

Urban Corps Rooftop Garden CNPS-SD Mini Grant Project

Urban Corps and the Urban Corps Charter School have had a rooftop garden on their campus for many years. The rooftop garden needed an overhaul to give Corpsmembers new species to learn about so they applied for, and were granted, a CNPS-SD mini grant for \$500 to purchase California native plants. Corpsmembers, through the Urban Corps program, get the chance to earn their high school diplomas while gaining valuable work experience.

Urban Corps, as a dual work-learn program for disconnected young adults, promotes the mission of CNPS throughout the County on environmental conservation projects, including the removal of nonnative plants and revegetation with native plants. This project will specifically promote the mission through furthering the Corpsmembers' work with native plants from conservation to education and how to care for native plants. All the species planted will be labeled so the Corpsmembers can learn the names so they can communicate in the field about which species they are seeing and planting, and which not to remove.



Photos: Before (above) and after (below) planting California native plant species.



EarthLab Demo Garden

In March, three CNPS members pruned and shaped a lot of CA native plants in the EarthLab Demo Garden area on the garden’s March grooming day. The Earthlab is an environmental education site adjacent to Millennial Tech Middle School, just south of SR-94 and west of Euclid Avenue. This is at the boundary of the Chollas Creek and Lincoln Park neighborhoods of San Diego. Earthlab is being developed under the guidance of

Groundwork San Diego-Chollas Creek, and includes a ½-acre Water Conservation Demonstration Garden



with many California native plants. CNPS-SD has funded purchase of a number of the native plants in the Demo Garden, which is maintained by volunteers.

Being March, it was easy to see dead wood and stems vs. re-leafing stems, and remove the dead wood. Lively plants now glow with green. Oaks (*Quercus* spp.) and elderberries (*Sambucus* spp.) are blooming, and buds are forming on Ceanothus and Atriplex.

EarthLab Grooming Day is the **first Saturday of each month from 8:30 a.m. to noon**. On April 3, succulents and California native plants will be pruned and weeds will be controlled. We’ll hand water fruit trees and assess the need to run the irrigation system for the entire Demo Garden as part of its monthly care, based on rainfall in March.



A cobblestone “landscape art project” may be completed if we have time.

Volunteers should have sun protection, a mask that may be pocketed while gardening but be available if we are in close proximity at any time. Volunteers may bring their own gardening tools or share the tools provided by EarthLab on site.

We look forward to another day communing with nature and helping the plants and flowers ‘spring’ forward!

– Kay Stewart, info@kaylarch.com

IN THE FIELD

Mira Mesa Vernal Pool Areas

by Jürgen Schrenk

During our last field trips we did not see much in bloom – so this in March we went to check on two of our favorite local places for early spring wildflowers, remnant vernal pool areas in nearby Mira Mesa. Shooting Stars (*Dodecatheon clevelandii*) were

just beginning to show. Most of them were white.



Bushrue (*Cneoridium dumosum*) was plentiful and in full bloom (below),

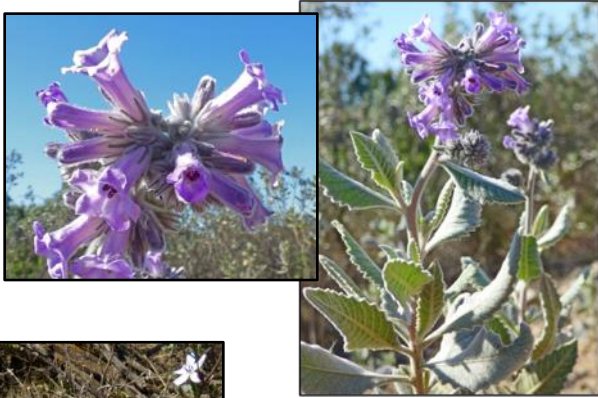


as was of course Wild Cucumber (*Marah macrocarpa*).



Spring was also in the air for these Red-shouldered Hawks, who had just been mating.

In the second area we visited, the first Thicketleaf Yerba Santa (*Eriodictyon crassifolium*) was flowering,



and a single Brownplume Wirelettuce (*Stephanomeria pauciflora*, left), and several Peak Rushroses (*Helianthemum scoparium*, recently renamed *Crocantemum scoparium*) joined in (below).

Mission Manzanita was scarce in these locations, but also flowering – so spring was really just around the corner.



(Inset photo from Calflora)

A Walk on the First Day of Spring by Jürgen Schrenk

This walk took us to Rainbow Canyon in the Anza-Borrego Desert. The drive from Santa Ysabel via Julian and the Banner Grade already had flowering shrubs (white and blue *Ceanothus* as well as Bush Poppy and Brittlebush), but the real show began in the desert with Fiddlenecks and Lupines along county road S2.



Ceanothus perplexans, those of Shelter Valley with Goldfields (*Lasthenia* sp., right).

The roadsides of Banner Grade were decorated with Cup-leaved



The way to the mouth of the canyon led along Pink Teddy bear Cholla (*Cylindropuntia fosbergii*, right),



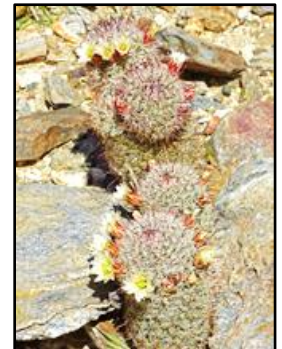
lots of Desert Agave (*Agave deserti*), with a first one flowering (left), and California Barrel Cactus (*Ferocactus cylindraceus*), one of the 8 cactus species common in the area (below),



and in full bloom (left).

The same was true for

Fishhook Cactus (*Mammillaria dioica*), present in its large-flowered bisexual (monecious) form and small-flowered female form (right), the latter on its evolutionary way to true dioecy.



Also in bloom was Chuparosa (*Justicia californica*),

and Desert Lavender (*Hyptis emoryi*, right), usually one of our first desert shrubs to announce spring.





and Desert Chicory (*Rafinesquia neomexicana*, left) was just opening its first flowers. You had to stoop to appreciate small ground covers like Pale Suncup (*Camissoniopsis pallida*, below)



and Hairy Lotus (*Acmispon strigosus*, below), and even



normally larger plants like Wild Canterbury Bells (*Phacelia minor*, below)



and Purple Mat (*Nama demissum*, below) were mainly represented by diminutive specimens;



Chia (*Salvia columbariae*) flowers are of course always tiny (right).



On our way back to the car we admired spectacular Arizona Dudleya (*Dudleya arizonica*)

and the beautiful pattern on Agave stalks -



or simply enjoyed the scenery and views. All this splendor was the result of a few local showers; Blair Valley just east of the ridge crossed by Rainbow Canyon looked dry and bleak by comparison.

PLANT SCIENCE

More Clues for How the Monkeyflower Got Its Spots

The monkeyflower, or *Mimulus*, though possessing a relatively simple genome is able to produce a stunning array of pigmentation patterns. A team of researchers is one step closer to understanding exactly how this genus of wildflowers is able to achieve such remarkable diversity. Read more at: <https://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2020/02/200220141750.htm>

RELATED ACTIVITIES

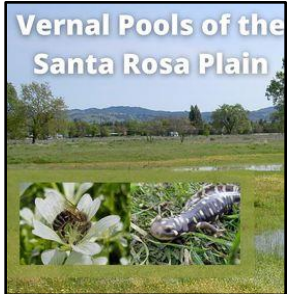
Calflora Needs Photos Please Help!

Every photo you add informs the database as a whole, thus helping users develop a deeper regional understanding. Photos of any wild plant species are welcome. Photos document that a particular taxon occurred at a particular place and time, providing baseline knowledge for which to track change. Some photos document the plant phenology —when it was budding, flowering, fruiting, senescent. Your photos help educate other plant enthusiasts and encourage them to botanize. They may also provide locations for researchers seeking voucher specimens. Here is the link for how to upload and publish your photos in Calflora: <https://conta.cc/3pF5sbC>

Laguna de Santa Rosa Foundation

Vernal Pools of the Santa Rosa Plain (Sonoma County) Virtual Panel Presentation

Thursday, April 8, 2021; 4:00 – 5:30 pm Dive into the unique biology of vernal pools of Sonoma County with



this presentation by local experts. Why are vernal pools so special and what is being done to protect them? Where can you see them in the Laguna de Santa Rosa? The speakers will highlight the endemic pollinators, native flora, and the endangered California Tiger Salamander found in vernal pools of the Santa Rosa plain in Sonoma

County. The presentation will end by discussing land protections and conservation of vernal pools in the Laguna watershed.

There is no charge for this virtual presentation. To register, go to: [Vernal Pools of the Santa Rosa Plain Virtual Panel Presentation Registration, Thu, Apr 8, 2021 at 4:00 PM | Eventbrite](#)

or

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/vernal-pools-of-the-santa-rosa-plain-virtual-panel-presentation-registration-142977600853>

California Botanical Society

2021 Botany Speaker Series!

Friday, April 30, and Saturday, May 1, 2021

28th Graduate Student Symposium
Virtual Meeting via Zoom

Students of all levels engaged in any aspect of western North America plant sciences are encouraged to participate.

Info at: www.calbotsoc.org

California Wildlands Grassroots Fund Applications

The [California Wildlands Grassroots Fund](#) was established to support the efforts of activists working to preserve California's wildlands. The fund focuses on small nonprofit organizations and individual activists who show a demonstrated ability and commitment to conserve California's natural

landscapes. **Application Deadlines are quarterly: May 15, August 15.** Learn more at: <https://rosefdn.org/calwildlands>.

ESA 2021

Vital Connections in Ecology August 1-6, Long Beach, California

If public health conditions allow, the 2021 Annual Meeting will be a hybrid meeting in Long Beach that combines in-person and virtual elements. If in-person elements are not possible, the meeting will be virtual (with all sessions online). Contributed presentations will be entirely virtual in both scenarios with an on-demand presentation (uploaded talk or e-poster) and a live virtual discussion scheduled for the session during the week of the meeting. For more information visit www.esa.org/longbeach.

The CNPS-SD Newsletter is generally published 12 times a year. The newsletter is not peer reviewed and any opinions expressed are those of the author identified at the end of each notice or article. The newsletter editor may edit the submittal to improve accuracy, improve readability, shorten articles to fit the space, and reduce the potential for legal challenges against CNPS. If an article, as edited, is not satisfactory to the author, the author can appeal to the board. The author has the final say on whether the article, as edited, is printed in the newsletter. Submissions are due by the 10th of the month preceding the newsletter; that is April 10 for the May newsletter, etc. Please submit items to newsletter@cnpsd.org.

CNPS-SD Activities Calendar April 2021

- 4/7: Board Meeting via Zoom, p.5
- 4/16: ONLINE WEBINAR: Using Coast to Cactus as a Field Guide to the San Diego Outdoors, p.1
- 4/17: Vegetation Study Guided Walk at Barnett Ranch County Preserve, p.1
- 4/18: Facebook Live Interview with a CNPS Member Garden Owner, p.1
- 4/19: Online Mtg, Naming Contest for Dudleya Mascot, p.1
- 4/20: ONLINE WEBINAR: A New Era of Plant Conservation at the SD Botanic Garden, p.2
- 4/21: ONLINE PROPAGATION COMMITTEE MTG, *Asclepias fascicularis* Propagation from Seed and Rhizome Cuttings, p.2
- 4/22: ONLINE WEBINAR: A Garden in Five Parts, p.2
- 4/23: RECORDED PRESENTATION: 360° Virtual Native Garden Tour from the CNPS-SD NGC, p.2
- 4/24: TBD, check weblink, www.cnpsd.org/npw-2021

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

<https://www.cnps.org/membership>

___ Student/Limited Income \$25; ___ Individual \$50; ___ Plant Lover \$120; ___ Supporter \$500; ___ Patron \$1,000; ___ Benefactor \$2,500; ___ Perennial Monthly Sustainer Memberships starting at \$5/mo provide much needed predictable income for our programs. Your indicated gift will be automatically repeated each month. Pls see <https://www.cnps.org/membership> to sign up for this membership level.

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April 2021 Newsletter

Dedicated to the preservation of the California native flora
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