

CNPS CHAPTER ANNUAL ACTIVITIES REPORT

CHAPTER NAME: Channel Islands

YEAR: 2009

NAME/POSITION OF PERSON PREPARING REPORT: Cher Batchelor, Chapter Secretary

WE ARE X /ARE NOT _____ REQUESTING A SUBVENTION

OVERVIEW OF CHAPTER - Please describe the main interests of your board and members. What are your chapter's special strengths and accomplishments?

Our main interests include conservation, horticulture, education, community outreach through programs, plant sales, fieldtrips, expanding our education outreach, coordination with the Ventura Hillside Conservancy, coordination with Ojai Valley Land Conservancy, and developing coordination efforts with other like-minded organizations. We also work to keep our website attractive and up-to-date.

CI Chapter members continue to represent CNPS as members of the Southern California Wetlands Recovery Project, Santa Clara River Project, Channel Islands Regional GIS Collaborative, Ventura Hillside Preservation Group, Ormond Beach Recovery Project, and Ojai Valley Land Conservancy. Several members participate in the Channel Islands National Park restoration project activities.

Our chapter's special strengths and accomplishments include: Conservation efforts, informative outreach programs and outing events (including restoration, seed collecting, and propagation events), as well as coordinating and participating with other conservation, preservation, and restoration groups in the Ventura and Santa Barbara areas. Volunteers continue to represent the Chapter as liaison with the Friends of the Santa Clara River; handle the plant sales; provide posters to the Santa Barbara Botanic Garden and other interested organizations; and update our website. We also have active members who are staff at the SBBG; and other members are staff with the Channel Islands National Park, and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Offices located in the Ventura and Santa Barbara areas. We also have members associated with other Government agencies and the Ventura County Planning Division.

CHAPTER ACTIVITIES - please describe the activities sponsored by your chapter, the number of people who attended (both members and non-members), and the approximate number of volunteer hours required to organize these activities.

1. Board Meetings: # of meetings/year/volunteer hours for officers, chairs

We try to hold Chapter board meetings monthly, but we had only seven (7) meetings held in 2009 (January, March, May, September, October, November, and December). Volunteer hours for each officer and chair to attend is 3 hours per meeting plus driving time. The total number of hours for board meetings was approximately 200 in 2009.

2. Field Trips: # of trips: Please list locations/destinations/participants per trip, volunteer hours

of trips: 4

of participants/trip: averaged 7 per event.

of volunteer hours to organize and lead trips: 14 hours per event, approximately 55 volunteer hours to organize and lead trips.

Hikes included:

- Howard Creek Trail, Los Padres National Forest, Rose Valley, Ventura County, March 21, 2009. Leader Lloyd Simpson, Los Padres National Forest Botanist led a hike up the Howard Creek Trail along an old Forest Service road (lower part) to the top of Nordhoff Ridge. Lloyd said the views from the trail would be outstanding; however, the weather didn't cooperate and the ridgetop was shrouded in clouds, and the Hoary Ceanothus (*Ceanothus oliganthus* var. *oliganthus*), Snowball Ceanothus (*Ceanothus crassifolius*), Eastwood Manzanita (*Arctostaphylos glandulosa*), and Chaparral Currant (*Ribes malvaceum*) were blooming, but not too much else. Exciting to see was the only occurrence in Ventura County of Sword Fern (*Polystichum munitum*). Lloyd pointed out the many native shrubs and wildflowers seen along the trail. Those that made it all the way to the top were rewarded with special commemorative lapel pins from the Forest Service.
- Ventura River/Rancho El Nido Preserve, Ojai Valley Land Conservancy, April 25, 2009
- Ballinger Canyon, near Ventucopa, Santa Barbara/Ventura County, May 16, 2009
- David Magney on Rare Plants of Ventura County, May 30, 2009. David led an easy hike to see a population of the newly described species, *Navarretia ojaiensis*, which was only formally described in 2007. David rediscovered some populations of this small annual in the Phlox family. Of course, we saw many, many other common and beautiful wildflowers along the way. At the end of the day, we fanned out and found three additional subpopulations along the Foothill Trail west of Stewart Canyon, on the Cozy Dell drainage side of the ridge. David identified plants and wildlife observed along the way, and discussed the ecology of the plant communities occurring on Nordhoff Ridge along the Foothill Trail.

3. Programs: # of program meetings: Please list subjects and speakers/ # of attendees per meeting/expenses (i.e. room rental, speaker fees, hospitality supplies)

Evening programs are customarily held the third Wednesday of the month, quarterly (generally, but sometimes in between). They are scheduled for January, April, July, and October, in the Topping Room of the E.P. Foster Library in downtown Ventura.

of volunteer hours to organize and present programs: 24 hours per event, approximately 72 volunteer hours to organize. Program attendance by public and membership has been very low.

Programs included:

- Lloyd Simpson, Las Padres National Forest Botanist, "Wildflower Trails of the Los Padres National Forest", January 21, 2009. Lloyd told us all about the best places to see wildflowers on local Forest Service trails. We heard about the well-known and little-known trails in the Los Padres National Forest that offer great opportunities to see a wide variety of native wildflowers.
- Bob Sussman, Nurseryman & Owner of Matilija Nursery, "Using Native Plants in Your Garden", March, 18 2009. Matilija Bob will told about 40 attendees all about the best places to plant natives in your garden, including his favorite, native Iris. He has many years of experience cultivating plants native to Ventura County and southern California, and has been the supplier of plants for the chapter's plant sales for many years. He is very knowledgeable and those of you attending benefited from his experience.

- David Magney, David Magney Environmental Consulting, “Rare Plants of Ventura County”, May 30, 2009. David led an easy hike to see a population of the newly described species, *Navarretia ojaiensis*, which was only formally described in 2007. David rediscovered some populations of this small annual in the Phlox family. Of course, we saw many, many other common and beautiful wildflowers along the way. At the end of the day, we fanned out and found three additional subpopulations along the Foothill Trail west of Stewart Canyon, on the Cozy Dell drainage side of the ridge. David identified plants and wildlife observed along the way, and discussed the ecology of the plant communities occurring on Nordhoff Ridge along the Foothill Trail.
- Biologist David Brown on Exploring Our California Biodiversity Hotspot, December 2, 2009. California is considered to be a Biodiversity Hotspot, one of the Top 25 richest areas of biological diversity on Earth; however, much of this biological diversity is potentially imperiled if we do not make an effort to appreciate, understand, and take appropriate actions to conserve it. The CNPS Channel Islands Chapter is undertaking an initiative to inform the public about the globally significant hotspot of biodiversity that we all live in right here in the Ventura/Santa Barbara County Area, develop opportunities for people to directly contribute to the conservation of this hotspot, and provide local planning authorities and decision makers with data necessary to conserve overlooked but biologically important elements of the California Biodiversity Hotspot. David Brown described the proposed initiative and the opportunities for exploration, celebration, and conservation of our local part of the California Biodiversity Hotspot that it will hopefully provide.

4. Newsletter:

None, but 4 post cards with updates of upcoming walks, talks, and events (100 volunteer hours)

5. Public Outreach Events: # of events: Please describe the nature of events/volunteers hours/public contacts

The plant sales as described below in number 11, Ojai Valley Museum Open House and Plant Sale (April 18) where we had a table set up, and the Patagonia Salmon Run (November) with info table.

6. Education Efforts: special outreach to teachers or students, grants to grad students; in-service training for teachers; donation of education materials to schools; curriculum development/#volunteer hrs./project

Although we do not have an Education Program Coordinator, we still maintain a limited special outreach to teachers or students, grants to graduate students; in-service training for teachers; donation of education materials to schools; curriculum development. Prepared California Floristic Hot Spot Education/Monitoring proposal. (About 100 volunteer hours)

7. Conservation: # of volunteer hours/most important issues the chapter has worked on/types of conservation activities (review documents, attend hearings, etc.), coalitions/cooperators with whom you worked

Some of the most important issues the chapter has worked on include: County of Ventura Wetlands Recovery Projects, County of Ventura Vegetation Mapping Project, Ventura Marsh Milkvetch/North Shore Development, Newhall Ranch Development, Ormond Beach Specific Area Plan EIR review, Matilija Dam Removal, and Santa Barbara Botanic Garden expansion, Santa Barbara Ranch (Naples) housing development, and Diamond Rock Sand & Gravel Mine

project. Conservation activities include review of documents, attending hearings, meetings, and coordination with attorneys representing CNPS and other organizations, etc. CNPS members worked with local like-minded conservation organizations.

The work on the Species of Local Concern (Locally Rare Plants) for Ventura County is complete, but updates occur about every 6 months. Work is now progressing on conversion of the word document to an Access Database with fields for latitude and longitude locations so the data can be converted into a GIS data set. Two separate efforts to document and write flora for Ventura County are still in progress and the species of local concern for Santa Barbara County was updated. (About 250 volunteer hours.)

8. Work Parties: # of work parties/nature of project(s)/ # participants/ volunteer hours

None

9. Legislative Activity: what issues or bills did your chapter work on/type of contact; legislative contacts with reps and staff/#volunteer hours.

None

10. Plant Science – Rare Plant Program

Our chapter has Rare Plant Activities in both Santa Barbara and Ventura Counties, as well as the Santa Clarita/Liebre Mountains area of northwestern Los Angeles County. We have continued ongoing weeding at the Carpinteria Salt Marsh Reserve under the leadership of Andrea Adams-Morden. Approximately 120 volunteer hours in Santa Barbara County and 40 hours in Ventura County.

11. Plant Sales: #volunteer hrs./ how many people attended each event/do you grow your own plants, if so %/any interesting/useful ideas to share

The Channel Islands Chapter has two plant sales per year with approximately 120 volunteer hours/event for 220 hours total. This year the spring plant sale was on April 19 at the City of Ventura's San Jon facilities in conjunction with the Midtown Community Council Green Home and Garden event, in downtown Ventura providing outreach to hundreds. The fall sale was on November 14, and included a landscape speaker, Carol Borenstein. The number of public attending: 200/event. Plants provided by Matilija Nursery and Nopalito Native Plant Nursery, both Chapter members.

12. Other Activities

Several CNPS CI Chapter Board members and chapter members attended the CNPS Conservation Conference in Sacramento in January 2009. Our Chapter President, David Magney describes what he experienced: "It was CNPS' second statewide conservation conference at the Sacramento Convention Center. The last Conservation Conference was way back in 1986. There were many interesting, invigorating, and informative presentations and posters, all about the California flora and how to conserve it. This was a great way to see and learn what is happening in CNPS, conservation botany, and meet lots of professional and amateur botanists from all over California and other states too. This conference was very exciting." Mr. Magney gave five separate presentations (ethics of the professional botanists, Ventura County flora, Ventura County locally rare plants, Status of *Naverretia ojaiensis*: a newly described Ventura County endemic, and Ventura County Planning Division's Biological Assessment CEQA procedures).

Our Chapter also started planning for our Native Plant Landscape Symposium, which was held in February 2010. More details on the successful and informative event will be presented in the 2010 annual report.

David Magney continues to work on the flora of Ventura County manuscript. He periodically adds plant checklists for a trail in Ventura County, posting it on the chapter website (www.cnpsci.org) and on his Ventura County Flora website (www.venturaflora.com).

Additionally, three chapter members have been very active at the State level, attending Board and CC meetings as well as conservation and plant science program meetings (David Magney, Lynne Kada, and Patt McDaniel). Volunteer hours for these efforts are more than 400 hours each when travel time, coordination time (teleconferences and email), meetings and document preparation is included.

Please share your main concerns for your chapter. What are the major challenges or problems facing your chapter? Is this an ongoing situation?

A major challenge is recruiting more active members from our membership base. We still need to fill existing vacant Chapter positions; identifying people interested in and able to fill upcoming vacant positions including Education Chair, Program Coordinator, Volunteer Coordinator, and also positions where individuals are filling in for two positions. Volunteers interested in coordinating Chapter efforts in the areas of legislation, conservation, and invasive plants are also needed. Additionally, existing active members are involved in major conservation and plant science (both rare plant and vegetation) projects and activities, and there is a real need to find time to identify existing and/or new members who are interested in filling vacant positions as well as work on ongoing projects. Finally, publicity of our event information is always a challenge, but we have new volunteers to start organizing advertisements and to list events in local newspapers and distribute handouts.