

## **CHANNEL ISLANDS CHAPTER - 1999 Highlights**

### **Programs:**

Meeting Locations: Meeting locations of the Channel Island Chapter of CNPS, alternate between the *DUDLEY HOUSE, Ventura (DHVEN)* and the *SANTA BARBARA BOTANIC GARDENS (SBBG)*. All membership program meetings are held on the third Wednesday of each month beginning in September through July. Meetings are usually not held during August or December. The Dudley House, *located on the corner of Loma Vista and Ashwood*, is a restored historic building and one of the earliest homes in the Ventura area. As part of the agreement, the Chapter will assist the Dudley House with the grounds landscape design with California native plants. Both the Santa Barbara Botanic Gardens and the Dudley House provide a very friendly and pleasant atmosphere for our meetings.

The Chapter will continue its yearly program with a theme. The 1998-1999 (9/98-8/99) program theme focused on **The Channel Islands Flora** while the 1999-2000 (9/99-8/2000) program theme will be **THE CALIFORNIA NATIVE FLORA: WHAT DOES THE FUTURE HOLD?**

### **1998/1999 PROGRAM THEME: FLORA OF THE CHANNEL ISLANDS AREA**

**17 February 1999 (DH-VEN): Sarah Chaney, Plant Ecologist, Channel Islands National Park, Ventura, CA**

Title: **Good News for Native Plants on the Channel Islands**

Channel Islands National Park has been experiencing some far-reaching changes over the past few years. Cyclic weather patterns have affected rare plant populations, non-native animals are being reduced, additional land ownership and resource management responsibilities are developing, and restoration projects are underway. Sarah Chaney presented details of these developments.

**17 March 1999 (SBBG): Dan Richards, Marine Biologist, Channel Islands National Park, Ventura, CA**

Title: **All Things Cold and Slimy**

Marine algae are native plants, too. An illustrated talk presented perspectives and insights on the undersea plant world. Learn how they survive, reproduce, and thrive in their watery environment; how they are dispersed and distributed was discussed. Hear how the El Nino events affected the plants (and invertebrate animals) of the local waters and shores. Get the details on the first possible listing of an endangered marine species.

**21 April 1999 (SBBG): Peter Schulyer, Director of Ecological Restoration for the Catalina Island Conservancy, Catalina Island, CA**

Title: **Conservation Challenges on Santa Catalina Island**

The Catalina Island Conservancy faces a number of unique challenges in its preservation efforts. The indigenous flora and fauna, with at least seven endemic plant species, are

faced with threats from non-native plants and animals and a host of human pressures. This talk will highlight the natural history of the island and discuss both the challenges and opportunities facing the Conservancy.

**26 May, 1999 (SBBG): Cheris Bratt, Lichenologist at the Santa Barbara Botanic Garden, Santa Barbara, CA**

**Title: Lichens of the California Channel Islands**

Lichens are unique and extremely sensitive native plants. Lichens are a fungus, usually of the Class Ascomycetes, in close combination with certain kinds of green or glue-green algae. Environmental quality, especially air quality, can be very indicative of the lichen flora. The program will bring delight and a wealth of information about the Channel Islands' lichen flora.

**16 June, 1999 (DH-VEN): Lyndal Laughrin, Resident Director, University of California Santa Cruz Island Reserve, Santa Cruz Island, CA**

**Title: Santa Cruz Island Preserve: Now and Then, Now and When?**

The talk will profile the vegetation of Santa Cruz Island in the past, present and future. Lyndal will discuss habitats, exotic species, endemics and management issues.

**21 July, 1999 (SBBG): Dieter Wilken, Director of Research, Santa Barbara Botanic Garden, Santa Barbara, CA**

**Title: Rare Plant Recovery on Santa Cruz Island - Bringing Them Back**

The SBBG has, for 5 years, been conducting studies on the reproductive biology and ecology of some of the rare plants on Santa Cruz Island in cooperation with The Nature Conservancy, the National Park Service, the State Dept. of Fish and Game and the Center for Plant Conservation. These studies have included experimental approaches to developing recovery strategies for such endangered species as Island Bush Mallow, Hoffmann's Rock Cress and Island Barberry. Some have been successful and some are considered temporary failures. The project represents an example of the problems faced in recovering endangered species and why recovery projects need to be developed on a case-by-case basis.

**1999/2000 PROGRAM THEME: THE FUTURE OF THE CALIFORNIA NATIVE FLORA: WHAT DOES THE FUTURE HOLD?**

**15 SEPTEMBER 1998 (SBBG): Dr. Robert Thorne, Emeritus Taxonomist and Herbarium Curator, Rancho Santa Ana Botanic Gardens, Claremont, CA**

**Title: Floristic's of Southern California**

The Channel Islands Chapter is extremely honored to have the distinguished Dr. Robert Thorne to be the vanguard our 1999-2000 program season. With Kodachrome images, Bob will immerse us into the realm of California's vast and diverse floristics of the San Gabriel,

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San Bernardino, and Santa Ana Mountain Ranges, the East Mojave as well as the California Channel Island archipelago.

Bob most import contribution to botany is his highly acclaimed Classification of the Angiosperms (Flower Plants) of the World. Dr. Thorne has many floral publications: Flora of Catalina Island, Flora of the East Mojave, Flora of the San Gabriel Mountains, and Flora of the San Bernardino Mountains. Recently, Bob published the Bibliography of Floristics of Southern California in Crossosoma. He also has written floras for Virginia, Iowa, and Florida. Bob Thorne was at the University of Iowa for 13 years before coming to Rancho Santa Ana Botanic Gardens (RSABG). Dr. Thorne was taxonomist and Herbarium Curator at RSABG from 1962-1987.

**20 October 1998 (DH VEN): Deborah Hillyard, Botanist, California Department of Fish and Game and Vice-President for Vegetation, California Native Plant Society**

**Title: The biological treasures of the Central Coast: how do we value them?**

As most folks know, the California's Central Coast is a marvelous and exquisite location. It is a place that I have often visited not only for its spectacular beauty but also for its inherent ecological species richness as well as unique and rare flora. At the Chapter's Annual Dinner in Ojai, Deborah Hillyard will discuss the biotic diversity of the Central Coast and the pressure exerted by California's increasing population. She will illustrate some of the rarest habitats in the area, as well as the most threatened. Deb will speak about the unique species associated with these habitats and the kinds of threats we face in attempting to conserve these limited resources. Deborah will focus primarily on about Santa Cruz (coastal prairie, sand hills), Monterey (dunes, maritime chaparral and Monterey pine forest) and San Luis Obispo (serpentines, maritime chaparral, and Carrizo Plain) counties, maybe Santa Clara serpentines.

Deborah Hillyard is a graduate of UC Santa Cruz in biology. She matriculated her graduate studies at UC Berkeley in grassland ecology. Deb has been employed as a field botanist, restorationist, and rare plant conservationist for the last 20 years (oh my gosh, she that old?) in Arizona, Alaska and California. Her preferred habitat seems to trend to tree-less types, like prairie, desert and tundra, though she is able to be able to tolerate some shrubs and/or small trees. Currently, Deborah Hillyard is the Plant Ecologist for the Central Coast Region of the California Department of Fish & Game, where I am responsible for conservation and regulation of rare and endangered plant species and their habitats.

**17 NOVEMBER 1998 (DH VEN): Ileene Anderson, Desert Issues Program Manager, California Native Plant Society, Sacramento and Los Angeles, CA**

**Title: Desert Survival: Vegetation Challenges into the new Millenium**

The delicate, peerless California deserts are under siege by planning efforts that will likely direct land management for many decades to come. What are the rare flora and

vegetation type issues? What is the California Native Plant Society (CNPS) doing to advocate plant conservation? Ileene will present synoptic overviews of the plans and answers to these questions. She will also review several CNPS-initiated projects dealing with sensitive plant species, dunes and rock-climbing habitat. Ileene Anderson has been working on desert issues for CNPS for the last 3 years. She is trained as a botanist and has worked on a variety of projects throughout southern California. Please join us for an exciting evening about the desert!

**8 DECEMBER 1999 (DH VEN): Bob Bister, Outreach Coordinator for the Sierra Nevada Forest Protection Campaign**

**Title: The Sierra Nevada Forest Ecosystem: The Current and The Future**

Bob Bister of the Sierra Nevada Forest Protection Campaign, examines the problems facing the Sierra Nevada forest ecosystem and recommends new management practices that protect the ancient forests, forested watersheds, and biologically sensitive areas of the Sierra Nevada. This is especially timely in light of the Forest Service regional Sierra Nevada management plan revision process currently underway. This process will affect logging and forest protection in the Sierra Nevada for years to come.

Bob Brister, is the Outreach Coordinator for the Sierra Nevada Forest Protection Campaign. Bob is very active in this effort and takes the Kodachrome show to environmental and campus groups around California and western Nevada. He previously served in Texas as regional organizer for the National Wildlife Federation on endangered species legislation, regional organizer for the Western Ancient Forest Campaign (now American Lands) to cut funding for new logging roads, and Arizona outreach coordinator for the Southwest Forest Alliance.

The Sierra Nevada Forest Protection Campaign is a coalition of 66 local, regional, and national groups working to permanently protect the remaining ancient forests, wild lands, wild rivers, and other biologically important areas of the Sierra Nevada. They organize conservationists to get involved in the Forest Service's regional planning process for the national forests of the Sierra Nevada.

**FIELD TRIPS**

16 January 1999: Camarillo Regional Park Tour (subject of successful CNPS CEQA challenge), Leader, Dave Magney, Chapter Conservation and Legislation Committees Chairperson.

20 February 1999: Cold Creek Preserve, Leader - Carl Wishner, Principle Biologist at Envicom Corp. in Agoura Hills.

27 March 1999: Walk to Nineteen Oaks (Upper Oso Campground), Leader - Liz Mason, Cachuma Lake Assistant Naturalist.

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10 April 1999: Mishe Mokwa-Split Rock Trail (Santa Monica Mountains), Leader - Tim Thomas, Botanist with Fish & Wildlife Service.

15 May 1999: Gaviota Peak, Leader Robert Turtle.

19 June 1999: Carpinteria Salt Marsh Nature Park, Leader-Wayne Ferren, UCSB wetland authority and preserve manager.

17-18 July 1999 (weekend overnight): Cerro Noroeste (Mt. Abel-Mt. Pinos area), Leaders-Dieter Wilken and Rick Burgess.

21 August 1999: Nordhoff Ridge to Hines Peak (4-wheel-drive-only) along the ridgetop road, Leader-Dave Magney, Ventura County botanist.

25 September 1999: Cold Springs Trail (emphasis-edible, medicinal and useful plants), Leader-Sue Reinhart, SBBG Botanist

23 October 1999: Lichen Foray - Camarillo Regional Park, Leader-Charis (Cherie) Bratt, SBBG lichenologist.

6 November 1999: Fall Color Hike-Sisar Canyon, Leader-Rick Burgess, Ventura County Botanist.

### **NATIVE PLANT SALES:**

Spring and Fall Plant sales were held. The Spring sale was held at the Plaza Park in downtown Ventura. The Fall sale was held in conjunction with the Patagonia/Cheap Sports Annual Salmon Run 99, a 5K Run & 3K Walk. Patagonia sponsors this annual event to benefit a local conservation organization. This year, the event benefited the Channel Island Chapter of CNPS. The event took place at the Patagonia facility in Ventura, so the Fall Plant sale was held in the parking lot area next to the start/finish line for the Salmon Run. Chapter members advertised and recruited event participants, participated in the event as either runners or walkers, and also held the very successful plant sale.

### **CONSERVATION:**

**Camarillo Regional Park Lawsuit:** The Chapter CEQA Challenge to the County's EIR was successful. The developer subsequently dropped the proposed amphitheater component of the combined golf course/16,000 seat amphitheater project. The County is considering a major redesign of the golf course portion of the project. This revised project will be carefully watched to ensure the riparian, wetland and endangered species habitats will not be impacted by the pared down project.

**Ventura Marsh Milkvetch (North Shore Development) Lawsuit:** The Chapter Conservation Chair and the Environmental Defense Center attorney (representing CIGNPS) are currently involved with the mandatory settlement phase of the lawsuit. The Chapter prepared and submitted listing petition to the California Fish and Game Commission. The Commission approved the endangered species listing petition.

**Hill Canyon Golf Course:** The City of Thousand Oaks, faced with significant local opposition, as well as Fish & Game and Army Corps issues prepared a revised draft EIR but did not release the document. Instead, faced with the major opposition to the project, has, at this time, withdrawn the project. Continued monitoring of the area will be required to ensure the project does not come back in some other form.

**Bureau of Reclamation/Casitas Dam Retrofit NEPA Compliance:** A letter was sent to the BOR and U.S. Dept. of Interior on behalf of CNPS and the Friends of the Ventura River of our intent to file suit in Federal Court over the inadequate NEPS compliance. We gave BOR 60 days to respond, and they did. CNPS has been negotiating with BOR and developing a Memorandum of Agreement on actions the BOR should do to avoid, minimize and properly mitigate for project-related impacts to the environment. CNPS will not have to file suit, but will remain vigilant with the BOR to ensure they actually do what they said they will do.

**Calleguas Creek Watershed Management Plan:** CNPS is participating in this project, on both the Habitat Subcommittee and the Stakeholder's Committee. A new Planning Subcommittee is also being formed and CNPS will have a member attending these meetings as well.

**Another Presumed Extinct Plant Species Rediscovered in Ventura County:**

In May another plant species botanists thought was extinct was rediscovered in Ventura County. The San Fernando Valley Spineflower (*Chorizanthe parryi* var. *fernandina*) was discovered on Lasky Mesa near Calabasas in the very southeastern corner of Ventura County, on the Ahmanson Ranch development site. The San Fernando Valley Spineflower has not been seen previously for 60 years. Also found during the field surveys conducted last spring was the endangered Red-legged Frog, Arroyo Toad and Brauton's Milkvetch (*Astragalus brauntonii*), none of which were found or considered present onsite when the project EIR was prepared in the 1980's (during a drought period). Continued monitoring of the progress toward protecting the species will be needed.

**Santa Clara River Watershed Planning & Newhall Development Project:**

The Chapter continues to monitor the watershed planning efforts. The Chapter is also supporting the efforts of the Los Angeles/Santa Monica Mountains Chapter with respect to the lawsuit filed against the County of Los Angeles for the Newhall Ranch Project in Los

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Angeles County - this project would have significant impacts to Ventura County, especially the Santa Clara River.

### **Lang Dam (Thousand Oaks):**

The Chapter is closely monitoring the proposed dam project since the project includes the destruction of mature oaks as well as a recently rediscovered population of the Brauton's Milkvetch.

### **Oak Park Project:**

This project is being monitored by the Los Angeles/Santa Monica Mountains Chapter.

### **CHAPTER BYLAWS:**

Chapter Bylaws were submitted to the chapter membership along with the Nominating Committee's Chapter Officers slate. The Bylaws and new Chapter officers were approved by the membership in October. The Chapter now has a Vegetation Committee and the Rare Plant, Invasive Exotics, and Periodic Plant Watch Committees are part of the Vegetation Committee.