Conserving California’s Rare Plants

General Meeting Speakers: Amy Patten and Christa Horn

CNPS and our partners California Plant Rescue (CaPR) are working to conserve California's rarest plants through the CNPS Rare Plant Program, citizen science, and long-term seed bank collections. Learn about how Rare Plant Treasure Hunt volunteers track down long-lost rare plant populations that haven’t been seen in decades and search for new populations in underexplored areas. We’ll discuss how CaPR, a collaborative with the goal of securing the entire California flora in conservation collections, is using seed bank collections as a management strategy for the persistence of wild plant populations and as an insurance policy against extinction. Enjoy photos of beautiful local rare plants and their habitats, and learn how to get involved!

Because the Chapter is still observing the COVID-19 directives to avoid large gatherings of people, we’ll have a presentation using Zoom in lieu of a regular chapter meeting at the Pacific Grove Museum. You can watch the lecture at home on your computer. The Zoom link will be posted on the website, https://chapters.cnps.org/montereybay/ and sent a day or two in advance in an eblast. The Zoom presentation will start at 7:30 and you’ll need to login to the web link with the instructions that will be available on the Chapter website and sent in the eblast. As there is a waiting room at our Zoom meeting, please come early!

Amy Patten works in the Rare Plant Program at the CNPS state office where she manages the Rare Plant Treasure Hunt project. Amy lives in Santa Cruz and is passionate about protecting the plants and wildlife of the Central Coast. Link: California Native Plant Society Staff

Christa Horn serves San Diego Zoo Global as a Conservation Program Specialist and is the coordinator for CaPR. She draws on her interdisciplinary background in ecology, botany, anthropology, and geography to carry out her research. Link: San Diego Zoo Institute for Conservation Research

Presentation will be Thursday, Jan. 14 at 7:30pm
Hello California Native Plant Advocates,  
My name is Chris Stearns, and I’m truly honored to be the editor of The Wallflower. I’d like to personally thank Lynn Bomberger, who helped me so much in getting this format and knowing who to talk to, and why. There’s so very much that goes into these newsletters, more than I was first aware of, but with her help, I can see why for over a decade, this publication was faithfully and punctually delivered in exceptional detail.

NOTE FROM THE EDITOR

Source/Author: Nikki Nedeff  
Plant Reserve 1 North Lawsuit: The Chapter was represented by Attorney Molly Erickson, President Brian LeNeve and former President Nikki Nedeff on November 5, 2020, during a mediation session with Del Rey Oaks Acting City Manager Jeff Hoyne, City Councilman John Gaglioti and City Attorney Alex Lorca. For months, the Chapter repeatedly requested mediation to resolve the lawsuit against Del Rey Oaks regarding the proposed realignment of South Boundary Road. The City has agreed to explore a new road alignment that reroutes S. Boundary Road to the north, however it remains unclear whether Reserve 1 North will remain entirely protected.

Although the November 5 all-day mediation session was constructive, there remains significant distance between the parties before a resolution is reached. At this time, the Chapter is waiting for the City to produce documents related to the litigation. In early June 2020, the Chapter sued the City and the now defunct Fort Ord Reuse Authority over their proposal to reroute South Boundary Road through a 4.63-acre City-owned Habitat Reserve that was identified by CNPS as a mitigation site when improvements were made back in 2000 to General Jim Moore Blvd. The Habitat Reserve supports high quality Maritime Chaparral, Oak Woodlands, a number of locally endemic manzanita and ceanothus species and the State Endangered Seaside bird’s beak.

Source/Author: Nikki Nedeff  
This fall, graduate students in the Professional Environmental Studies 660 class at California State University Monterey Bay embarked on a challenging 8-week class project to map vegetation communities, invasive plants and sensitive species at Garrapata State Park. Under the guidance of Prof. Fred Watson in the Department of Applied Environmental Science, twelve students conducted extensive field work in the 2866-acre park to ground truth high-resolution satellite imagery. The students identified vegetation communities, the location of rare and uncommon plant species, and hotspots of invasive plants. The students mapped vegetation at the “Alliance” scale according to the U.S. National Vegetation Classification system. Although much of California’s vegetation has already been mapped at this fine scale, the students prepared the very first map of this kind for the Central Coastal region. State Parks has already used the data and mapping provided by the graduate students to target invasive acacia removal in areas of rare Maritime Chaparral. The ENVS-660 report, map and geodatabase can be reviewed at this link: http://ccows.csumb.edu/pubs/proj_pubs/2020/ENVS660_GarrapataSP/index.htm. The work of the ENVS-660 grad students during Fall 2020 is another fine example of the excellent research and applied ecology promoted at CSUMB.
Plant of the month, by Patrick Regan

*Arctostaphylos hookeri ssp. hookeri*

**Hooker’s manzanita**

One of our “Local Heroes”, Hooker’s manzanita is perhaps the most widely “used” native manzanita from our local Monterey Bay region.

Blooming now in maritime chaparral and Pine woodlands on the Monterey peninsula and from the Carmel highlands to the hills above Santa Cruz, this is one to provide precious nectar for Bees and Hummingbirds in the short days of winter. Like so many of our endemic manzanita species, this is a rare plant of limited distribution, listed on the CNPS rare plant rank list 1B.2 (Rare, Threatened, or Endangered in California and elsewhere. Fairly endangered in California) it is found only in Monterey and Santa Cruz Counties close to Monterey Bay. It can be found mixed with other local endemic manzanita species in the Prunedale hills and is most common nearby in the Monterey Pine forest of the Monterey peninsula. Horticulturists have long admired this sturdy, glossy leaved species and multiple selections have come and gone from the nursery trade over the last century. Some still widely available include ‘Monterey carpet’ (photo above) a groundcover form from 6-24” tall by up to 10 feet wide, ‘Ken Taylor’ (photo at left), a more compact form up to 18” tall and 5 feet wide, and smaller still, ‘Buxifolia’, a tightly branched, small leaved form that gets to no more than 4 feet wide and 2 feet high. At the other end of the spectrum ‘Wayside’ and ‘Bright beauty’ reach heights near 5 feet and spread to 8 feet or more.

One of the few manzanita species to appear to thrive in partial shade, it forms large dense mats under the canopy of the Monterey Pine forest (And is often referred to as Monterey pine manzanita) where it often gets partially buried by fallen pine needles. It makes an excellent pathway edge, courtyard ground cover or even container subject. And it is equally content in full open sun as a small specimen or mixed into a mosaic of other native species.

Propagation is easiest from cuttings taken from just matured new growth. A. hookeri branches are rarely very thick and robust, so end cuttings can be on the spindly side, but will strike root with a strong hormone dip, bottom heat and patience. Rooting can take place in 8 to 16 weeks depending on the variables. Once rooted and transferred into a container it can be slow to fill out, but once planted out in the ground will spread and fill more quickly.

If you garden anywhere along the Monterey County coastline (aka the epicenter of manzanita distribution), this is one of the manzanita selections you really should find a place for.

The hummers and buzzers will thank you.

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1 Where it occasionally hybridizes with Arctostaphylos pajaroensis. One such naturally occurring hybrid was selected in the wild near Prunedale and introduced to the horticultural world as Arctostaphylos ‘Sunset’ in 1973 commemorating Sunset magazine’s 75th anniversary.
Helpful CNPS Information Page

CNPS is dedicated to Preserving and Protecting California Native Plants and Their Habitats

You must register for field trips online at:
www.meetup.com/The-Monterey-Bay-Area-Hiking-Group
Meeting times, locations, and more details are on Meetup.
DUE TO THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC AND LACK OF A FIELD TRIP CHAIR, MEETUP EVENTS ARE LIMITED.

The Next Publication of The Wallflower Newsletter: March/April
Deadline: January 21st
-Articles submitted after deadline will NOT be published!

Check Out Our Websites
Monterey Bay Chapter:
https://chapters.cnps.org/montereybay/
State Organization: www.cnps.org

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