



THE CYPRESS CONE

CALIFORNIA NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY
SANTA CRUZ COUNTY CHAPTER



Volume 49, Number 1

cruzcnp.org

Winter 2024

An Introduction to the UC Santa Cruz Arboretum Native Plant Program

Speaker: Lucy Ferneyhough

Chapter General Meeting

Monday, February 5, 2024

**Plant Keying Session with
Deanna Giuliano: 6:00 - 7:00 pm**

Winter is always a great time to study manzanitas. Several species are blooming right now!

General Meeting: 7:00 pm

Location: UCSC Arboretum and
Botanic Garden

Featured speaker Lucy

Ferneyhough will give an overview
of the UC Santa Cruz Arboretum

Native Plant Program and its current conservation projects. Lucy will highlight some of the challenges and successes of four years of rare plant seed banking with California Plant Rescue, and take us on a journey through some of the herbaceous communities of the San Joaquin Desert sampled during last years superbloom. *(cont. on page 3)*



Lucy Ferneyhough (middle) with Interactive Ecology interns learning field survey protocols in a coastal prairie habitat. Photo: Brett Hall

Prez Sez

Linda Brodman

New Year's—a time to be reflective about last year's memories and achievements; and at the same time look forward with a clean slate, refreshed and energized. All in one single moment.

We had phenomenal success at both our plant sales last year. In 2024, we look forward to solidifying our partnership with Cabrillo College's Horticulture Center and our propagation program currently housed there.

At our last Board meeting, those in attendance proposed a preliminary slate of Officers and Directors for our 2024 elections. The finalized slate will be put forth at our next annual business (general) meeting and voted on by those in attendance. All chapter members may run for office; nominations can be made from the floor and be accepted at the February general meeting.

Preliminary Slate of Officers and Directors (to be confirmed):

President	Linda Brodman
Vice President	Lucy Ferneyhough
Treasurer	Linda Brodman
Chapter Council Delegate	Lucy Ferneyhough
Secretary	Marisa Gomez
Grace Brieger	
Sylvie Childress	
Karen Laing	
Ramona McCabe	
Stephen McCabe	
Kari Olsen	
Suzanne Schettler	

(cont. on page 3)



Spring verdure in the Kettleman Hills. Photo: Lucy Ferneyhough

Conservation Report

Recent Management Actions at the Arana Gulch Population of the Rare Santa Cruz Tarplant

By Sylvie Childress

The story of the cheerful yellow flowering annual Santa Cruz tarplant (*Holocarpha macradenia*) has been well chronicled in the past by others and the aim of this article is not to retell that story. (Recommended read: search for “The saga of the Santa Cruz tarplant” [1998] by Grey Hayes.) Rather this article summarizes management actions over the last several years, as well as the current status of the tarplant at the Arana Gulch population.

Our local CNPS chapter holds a seat on the Arana Gulch Adaptive Management Working Group (AMWG), which serves as an advisory board to the City of Santa Cruz for their management strategies for this open space.



One of the friendly cows of Arana Gulch helping to manage coastal prairie habitat. Photo: Sylvie Childress

The Santa Cruz tarplant is listed as Endangered by the state of California, and as Threatened by the federal government. A decade ago, the Arana Gulch population was in dire straits. Decreasing numbers of the plant were seen each year, and a 2013 analysis found that the seed bank was depleted with poor likelihood of rejuvenating without intensive intervention.

For the last few years, the City of Santa Cruz management strategy has focused on using labor intensive efforts to increase the seed bank at the site. The project biologist collected seeds from the small remaining population, and these were used for *ex-situ* seed amplification. This large increase in seeds available meant that plants could be grown under nursery conditions and outplanted into the historic tarplant site as young seedlings.

For several years, the UC Santa Cruz Greenhouses have been contracted by the City to grow 1000 plants each winter for outplanting during volunteer planting days. Planting strategies have involved using various types of sheet mulch or planting straight into the ground. Plants planted into sheet mulch showed much higher fecundity and produced well-branched plants with many flower heads. Because of the AMWG's concerns about mulch inhibiting tarplant establishment, there have been attempts to remove the mulch each fall so that seeds that fall off of the plants have access to bare soil to germinate.

The good news: last year, there were 942 plants that recruited naturally in areas where plants were planted the years before. Planted plants also had a high rate of survivorship: 91% of plants successfully made it to flowering time! This is a huge improvement over the ~13 plants that occurred in the years before these outplantings began.

This year represents a bit of a shift in strategy: in addition to continuing with the seedling planting methods, the AMWG group has determined there may be “enough” seed in the soil to experimentally transition from intensive human-management strategies (planting, mowing, raking, and even hand-weeding around tarplants) to a more hands-off method: the reintroduction of grazing to a portion of the tarplant area! That's right, this year the beloved cattle of Arana Gulch will be mingling with the tarplants for at least a *portion* of the growing season. Many thanks are owed to Theresa and Frank Locatelli for their nimble management and devoted care of these animals. It will be exciting to learn whether these grazers can help us restore a healthy population of this rare plant at Arana Gulch!

Field Trips

San Vicente Redwoods with Deanna Giuliano Saturday, February 3, 10:00 am to 3:00 pm

Hike one of our newest trail systems, managed by a partnership with Land Trust of Santa Cruz, Save the Redwoods League, Sempervirens Fund and Peninsula Open Space. The area burned in the CZU fire in 2020; see the recovery happening! Hike will be easy to moderate, about 5 to 6 miles. Bring water, layers, sunscreen, and a lunch.

Meet at the parking lot of San Vicente Redwoods on Empire Grade. Heavy rain cancels. Limit to 20 people, please RSVP. If you have questions about the trip or directions, contact Deanna Giuliano at 831-278-2699 or drosegiuliano@yahoo.com.

Mt. Madonna County Park with Andy Werner Thursday, February 8, 9:30 am to 2:00 pm

Mt. Madonna is a serpentine area with a very rich and varied chaparral. The views from the serpentine plateau are beautiful, nearing the southern end of the Santa Cruz Mountains and have some subtle differences from the more northerly parts we are used to seeing. Andy has been visiting Mt. Madonna since the 1960s. Enjoy a moderate paced hike which includes some fairly steep hills and a few slippery spots. Elevation change is about 800 feet. We will have time to talk about plants, ask questions, and take pics. The distance is 4.5 miles, includes sun and shade.

Meet at Mt. Madonna County Park at the Sprig Trail parking area on Hwy 152 at 9:30 am. We will return to the parking lot before 2:00 pm. Bring a lunch, sturdy hiking shoes, a hiking pole and water. Dress in layers. Rain will cancel. Limit 10 people. No dogs please. To sign up and ask questions, contact Andy at apwerner44@gmail.com.

Winter in the Nursery



Clumps of California native iris can be divided in wintertime. Look for the big white fleshy roots supporting new foliage growing at the crown. This *Iris innominata* has an unusual purple bloom.

Photo: Melinda Kralj

Locally native *Dipterostemon capitatus*, syn. *Dichelostemma capitatum*. Known by the common name blue dicks, this bulb pokes its new growth toward the weak winter sun after the first rains.

Photo: Kari Olsen



Spring-blooming California native wildflowers are sown in plug trays in early January. Germination rates and times vary between species; most of these annuals will be blooming in April.

Photo: Kari Olsen

Habitat Restoration Projects

Restoring native habitats in the parks and protected lands in Santa Cruz County.

Saturday, February 10, 2024 10 am to 1 pm

Saturday, February 17, 2024 10 am to 1 pm

Saturday, February 24, 2024 10 am to 1 pm

Location to be determined closer to the time. Please contact Restoration Program Leader Linda Brodman for questions at redwdrn@pacbell.net.

Prez Sez *(cont. from page 1)*

I want to acknowledge two members who are not running for office this year due to personal reasons, however will continue to help us. Deanna Giuliano will lead field trips and be a resource for rare plants and conservation. Ariel Hunter will continue to assist us with our graphic designs and events.

We NEED folks to join our leadership team and we NEED your help! Many of us have volunteered for years in leadership positions, and are ready for change. Can we count on you? If interested, please email me at redwdrn@pacbell.net.

Nevertheless, we will continue to persevere, and promote the mission of CNPS: to protect California's native plants and their natural habitats, today and into the future, through science, education, stewardship, gardening, and advocacy.

Chapter General Meeting *(cont. from page 1)*

Lucy grew up exploring the mountains and lakes around Truckee with her cross-country ski team. She has lived in Santa Cruz since 2008 where she completed her degree from the UCSC Environmental Studies Department and then started a small gardening business focused on locally native and regionally appropriate plants. Lucy has done ecological garden design, perennial landscape management, and cared for orchards, roses, and vegetable gardens.

After completing the UC Naturalist Program, Lucy volunteered with Brett Hall in support of the Student Internship Program "Interactive Ecology" doing vegetation sampling, plant and seed collection and propagation, and rare species monitoring. Lucy has served as a Board Member since 2019 for the State California Native Plant Society and as Vice President of the local chapter since 2018.

In her role as Project Manager of the UCSC Arboretum Native Plant Program, Lucy's current work focuses on conservation seed banking, vegetation ecology and mapping, post-fire monitoring, and native plant horticulture.

California Native Plant Society
Santa Cruz County Chapter
P.O. Box 1622
Santa Cruz, CA 95061
Address Service Requested



First Class
U.S. Postage
PAID
Santa Cruz CA
Permit # 200

Hiking • Propagation • Keying Club • Conservation • Habitat Restoration • Field Trips • Herbarium Work • Talks

Welcome New Members!

We hope to meet you at our next General Meeting on Monday, February 5, 2024. Keying session 6:00 pm, Meeting 7:00 pm. Location: UCSC Arboretum and Botanic Garden.



Arctostaphylos silvicola
(Bonny Doon manzanita)

Photo: Linda Brodman

Join the California Native Plant Society!

Your membership includes: *Artemisia* scientific journal filled with articles on all aspects of native plants, *Flora* magazine presenting statewide activities and schedules, and Santa Cruz County Chapter newsletter *The Cypress Cone*.

Fill out the form below or visit the state CNPS website (www.cnps.org) to join or renew your membership online. State your chapter affiliation as the Santa Cruz County Chapter.

Name: _____

Address: _____

City, State, Zip: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Chapter affiliation: _____

Choose One:

Student/Fixed Income \$25

Individual \$50

Plant Lover \$120 (two members)

Supporter \$500 (two members)

Patron \$1,000 (two members, plus Special Updates)

Benefactor \$2,500 same as above

Steward \$5,000 same as above

Guardian \$10,000 same as above

Please make your check payable to CNPS and send to:
California Native Plant Society, Attn: Membership, 2707 K Street,
Suite 1, Sacramento, CA 95816-5130

Like us on Facebook

Contribute to our group! Search for "Santa Cruz County Chapter - California Native Plant Society." Ask a question about native plants or post your own photos of native plants in your yard or on your hikes.

Opt for Email

If you would like to receive your newsletter via email only, please contact Ann at annng@calcentral.com or log onto your CNPS account (cnps.org) to make the switch.

CNPS is a 501(c)(3) Non-profit Organization dedicated to the preservation of California native flora

CNPS has thirty-five chapters throughout the state, and membership is open to all persons, professional and amateur, with an interest in California's native plants and other activities such as natural history, botany, ecology, conservation, photography, drawing, hiking, and gardening.

Donations are tax-deductible and support locally special projects such as publication of the *County Checklist* and conservation activities that preserve important habitats and rare species in our area. You may earmark gifts for specific areas. Please make donation checks payable to CNPS and send to: Santa Cruz County Chapter CNPS, P.O. Box 1622, Santa Cruz, CA 95061.

Website: www.cruzcnps.org. For inquiries email: santacruzcounty@cnps.org