

THE CYPRESS CONE

CALIFORNIA NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY
SANTA CRUZ COUNTY CHAPTER



Volume 51, Number 1

chapters.cnps.org/santacruz

January 2026

Up and Down California, A Botanist's Life in the Field

Chapter Public Program

Monday, February 9, 2026

Speaker: Alex Hubner, Arboretum Garden Steward

Santa Cruz Museum of Natural History

1305 E. Cliff Dr., Santa Cruz

Plant ID Session 5:30 p.m.

Meeting/Presentation 7 p.m.

Native plant door prizes!

Come early for the plant identification session and follow along with a botanist. Learn how to use a plant key to identify selected plants or plant families, and be able to identify plants on your next nature adventure.

Alex Hubner, field botanist, horticulturist, and UCSC Arboretum Garden Steward, shares his journeys through California's native habitats, highlighting the value of good baseline data on the scope and diversity of California's native plants for conservation purposes. Join us in learning how botanists identify California's vegetation types, where they occur, and why it matters.



Alex Hubner with a one-seeded pussypaws (*Calyptidium monospermum*) in Eldorado National Forest. Photo: Lucy Ferneyhough.

Beginning in 2023, California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) funded the Vegetation Classification and Mapping Program (VegCAMP). Alex is part of the UCSC Arboretum team of botanists conducting surveys focusing primarily on three main geographic areas: the Northern Sierra Nevada, Central California Interior Coast Ranges, and Northern California Interior Coast Ranges. Alex will also describe their seed banking work, where they have been collecting seed from rare plants for long term storage as part of California Plant Rescue (CAPR) program. Because of this program, over one million seeds and over 200 rare species will be protected for the first time.

Upcoming Field Trips

The chapter offers field trips to learn and appreciate our local flora and natural areas. Trips are open to all, from beginners to experts, youthful to young-at-heart, and are led at a slow pace to appreciate plants. You will be asked to sign a waiver before our field trips; you can review it ahead of time at our website (chapters.cnps.org/santacruz). We will have a copy for you to sign when we meet. You may also visit our website for tips on trail etiquette: *Pocket Guide—Every Step Counts* and *Cleanliness Tips for Hikers*.

Fetid Adder's Tongue at Mt. Madonna County Park

Tuesday February 3, 2026, 9:30 a.m.–2:00 p.m.

Led by Andy Werner

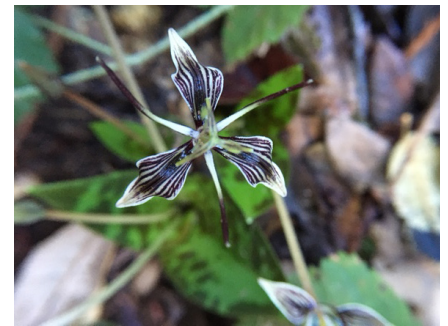
We'll see the most lovely patch of fetid adder's tongue (*Scoliopus bigelovii*) as well as other natives.

Mt. Madonna is our closest Eastern Santa Cruz Mountains park that also contains a lot of serpentine endemics. The hike is about five miles and is moderately strenuous, with a 1200' elevation gain, a few steep climbs, and a few slippery spots.

Hiking poles and good hiking boots recommended. Bring lunch, snacks, and water. Parking is free and there are porta-potties. The pace will be moderate with numerous plant ID stops, photo opportunities, etc.

Directions: Take Hwy 1 south from Santa Cruz to Hwy 152 (fastest to take Airport Blvd. in Watsonville to Holohan Rd, then left on 152). Continue past the summit, and go three miles down 152 towards Gilroy to the first parking lot to your left, Sprig Day Use Area. From Gilroy (about 5 miles) take Hwy 152, Sprig parking is on your right. Contact Andy at apwerner44@gmail.com. Group limit 10.

See page 3 for more field trips!

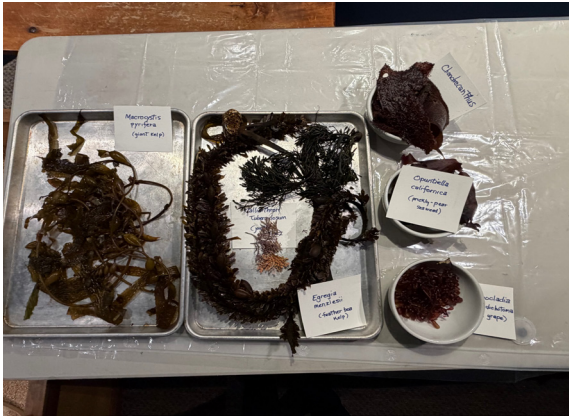


Fetid adder's tongue (*Scoliopus bigelovii*). See page 3 for a delightful description of this amazing native. Photo: Andrew Werner

Chapter Happenings

—Laurie Kiguchi, Chapter President

Our focus turned to the coast as the year ended. At the December public program, we explored seaweeds with Judith Connor (“Connor”), vicariously venturing to the intertidal and beyond. To begin, Connor brought the ocean to us by way of fresh algal specimens collected from the beach wrack. I gave a brief introduction to marine algae highlighting algal diversity and differences from terrestrial plants, setting the scene for a deeper dive. Attention shifted to identifying flowering



Monterey Bay seaweeds collected by presenter Connor at our December program, illustrating the diversity and beauty of local algae. Photo: Laurie Kiguchi

plants in small groups guided by plant identification leader Grace Brieger and her team of Maia Perry, Max Parsons, and Daniel Antonaccio.

A lengthy introduction was needed to cover even the highlights of Connor’s accomplishments and experiences. She lived up to everything her resumé foretold, entertaining the full-to-the-brim Museum of Natural History with her witty recounting of exploits while conveying facts and knowledge of seaweeds around the world, throughout the water column, and across the seasons.

Also in December, Andy Werner and Pat Kittle stepped up to handle the hands-on aspects of habitat restoration events since leader Linda Brodman was still recovering from a wrist injury. Big thanks to both of them as well as the dedicated crew members who showed up to wage a battle against the weeds.

After the outstanding Pescadero Marsh field trip in mid-November, led by Bill Henry of Groundswell and Ryan Diller of California State Parks, there were no field trips held in December but there was plenty of field trip activity. The chapter is thrilled to welcome Daniel Antonaccio as our field trip coordinator. An avid hiker and skilled amateur botanist, Dan has explored numerous areas on both sides of the Santa Cruz Mountains and posted over 10,000 observations on iNaturalist.

The year will start off with field trips to Mt. Madonna County Park and Glenwood Open Space Preserve; field trips to other areas are being planned for the near (and far) future!

With the Spring Plant Sale not until April 11, plants to purchase may not be top of mind for most of us, but that is not the case for our propagation and plant sale teams. Year-round propagation efforts led by Kari Olsen continue rain or shine and are now supported by two new storage sheds. Credit for the second storage shed must be shared with propagation volunteer Jill Baldwinson—bringing us to another change in chapter leadership.



Daniel Antonaccio, Chapter Field Trip Coordinator
Photo: Britni Crocker

Plant sale coordinator Laura Parker is sailing on to new adventures after doing a wonderful job organizing sales as their size and extent grew. We appreciate Laura’s efforts and wish her all the best. A moment of panic over the loss was thankfully short as longtime member Jill Baldwinson graciously stepped up to take on the role. Jill’s extensive experience with the propagation program, knowledge of native plants, and clear thinking make her a perfect choice.



Jill Baldwinson, our new Plant Sale Coordinator.

The chapter engages in other community endeavors, such as working with the Advocates for Nisene Marks on their plans for plantings around the new entrance sign and possible restoration. Members support the herbarium at the UCSC Norris Center for Natural History and are working with the UCSC Arboretum on permanent placement of a plaque to honor Randy Morgan, a leader in our understanding of the Santa Cruz flora. The chapter is a member of the Central Coast Regional Group of the 30x30 Power in Nature Coalition, and through this as well as other efforts led by the state CNPS, we support the conservation of California’s biodiversity.

As the days lengthen and buds start to swell, the chapter looks toward a busy spring. Check out upcoming public programs, field trips, habitat restoration events, and of course our April 11 Spring Plant Sale. We hope to see you there!



New storage sheds for propagation and plant sale materials at Cabrillo Horticulture. Photo: Kari Olsen

Upcoming Field Trips (cont. from page 1)

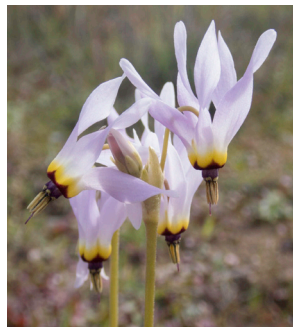
Two Early Spring East Glenwood Gallivants!

Saturday, February 7, Saturday March 7

9:30 a.m.–2 p.m.

Led by Dan Antonaccio, Chapter Field Trip Coordinator

Join us for a leisurely botanical stroll at East Glenwood Preserve to seek out the first blooms of spring! Early-bloomers we may encounter include padre's shooting star (*Primula clevelandii*), red maids (*Calandrinia menziesii*), sun cups (*Taraxia ovata*), milkmaids (*Cardamine californica*), California buttercup (*Ranunculus californicus*), and Pacific hound's tongue (*Adelinia grandis*).



Padre's shooting star
(*Primula clevelandii*)
Photo: Daniel Antonaccio

Total mileage will vary depending on how often we stop but expect roughly 3-5 miles total and 500 ft elevation gain. Bring sturdy shoes, water, and snack/lunch. Heavy rain cancels; an email will be sent by 7 p.m. the evening prior if trip is canceled. Questions and RSVP: daniel.antonaccio@gmail.com. Directions will be provided after RSVP. Text for day-of-trip questions or issues: (201) 874 6997.

T-shirts and Posters Available



We have T-shirts and sweatshirts featuring artwork by Liza Ferneyhough, and posters of native plants organized by habitat available at our public programs and plant sales. Take a look and embrace your body or living space with natives!

Habitat Restoration

Upcoming Dates

Two Saturdays, Jan. 24 and Feb. 7, 10 a.m.–1 p.m.

Quail Hollow Ranch County Park

We are a volunteer group working to restore native habitat in parks and protected lands in Santa Cruz County. Our program provides opportunities to learn about the natural systems that surround us while helping to restore special and wild places. No prior work experience necessary. We welcome individual volunteers as well as special group projects. Wear comfortable layered clothing; we work rain or shine. Bring something to drink and lots of enthusiasm! Tools provided; bring gloves. Contact Restoration Program Leader Linda Brodman for questions: (831) 334-3858, redwdrn@pacbell.net.

Plant Focus: Fetid Adder's Tongue

—Suzanne Schettler, Member-at-Large

Fetid adder's tongue (*Scoliopus bigelovii*) is one of the few flowers that bloom in the dead of winter, in shady redwood forests that are not a very flowery habitat. Fresh green foliage with purple spots gives a cue to look for its small flowers.



Fetid adder's tongue
(*Scoliopus bigelovii*)
Photo: Andy Werner

Shrink one's perspective down to that of an ant, and the flowers become showy at a small scale. The three striped flower segments are actually sepals (like the green things at the base of a rose). Three erect threadlike structures are the petals.

Not all pollinators and seed dispersers are charismatic! Upon learning the name fetid adder's tongue, an observer invariably bends down to sniff the rank smell. The odor of rotting meat attracts flies and fungus gnats who pollinate it. Another common name is slink pods, because after pollination, the pedicels of the seed capsules "slink" down and three-pronged hooks anchor it to the surface soil. There, ants harvest the seed for its nutritious fatty structures called elaiosomes or "ant handles," dispersing the seed in the process. Serious bulb growers grow slink pods by the dozens in pots where they can produce a showy display.

Chapter Board of Directors 2026-27 Upcoming Election

We welcome involvement from the membership, whether in a formal or informal role. There are opportunities for Board positions as well as committee participation. If you are interested in becoming more involved, please email the chapter at santacruzcounty@cnp.org. Election of the slate of officers for 2026-27 will be held at the February 8, 2026 meeting. The proposed slate is below.

President	Laurie Kiguchi
Vice President	Open
Treasurer	Linda Brodman
Corresponding Secretary	Steve McCabe, Mona McCabe
Chapter Council Delegate	Lucy Ferneyhough
Conservation/Rare Plants	Mark Bibbo
Event Support/Hospitality	Jeremy Silberman
Field Trips	Daniel Antonaccio
Leadership Development	Linda Brodman, Julia Davenport, Laurie Kiguchi
Newsletter	Julia Davenport
Plant ID Specialist	Grace Brieger
Plant Sales	Jill Baldwinson
Propagation	Kari Olsen
Publicity	Mona McCabe, Steve McCabe
Habitat Restoration	Linda Brodman
Website	Judith Connor
Members-at-Large	Suzanne Schettler, Nicky Hughes

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

Address Service Requested



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

Upcoming Events

Check website (chapters.cnps.org/santacruz) for updates

Saturdays February 7 and March 7

Field Trips to East Glenwood Preserve (see page 3)

Saturday, April 11, 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Annual Spring Plant Sale

Location: Cabrillo Horticulture
Spring blooms abound! Much appreciation to Cabrillo Horticulture for their continuing partnership.

Monday, April 13, Public Program

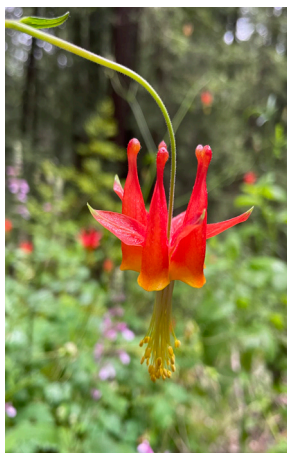
Plant ID 5:30 p.m.

Meeting and Program 7 p.m.

Speaker: Justen Whittall
(Department of Biology Santa Clara University)

Topic: Bird Nests as Botanical
Time Capsules

Location: UCSC Arboretum
Bird nests may seem ephemeral, but they can be timeless. Learn how nests represent a window to view plants from the specific place and time when the nests were built, unlocking information about the ecology of extinct habitats.



Western columbine (*Aquilegia formosa*), a member of the buttercup family (Ranunculaceae), blooms in early spring in moist places in a variety of habitats in Santa Cruz County.
Photo: Laurie Kiguchi.

CNPS Membership Benefits

Benefits included are *Artemisia* scientific journal filled with articles on all aspects of native plants, *Flora* magazine presenting statewide activities and schedules, and *The Cypress Cone* Santa Cruz County Chapter newsletter (paper and/or digital).

Individual and organizational membership levels are available. Join online at the state website (cnps.org/membership). Select Santa Cruz County Chapter as your affiliated chapter.

Find Us on Facebook

Contribute to our group! Search for "Santa Cruz County Chapter-California Native Plant Society." Ask questions about natives or post native plant photos from your yard or from your hikes.

Newsletter Preference

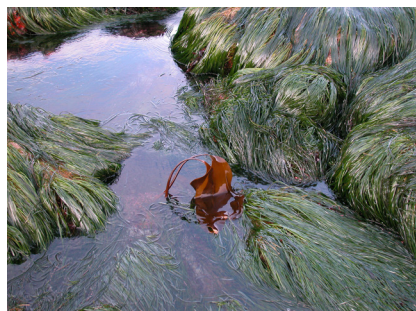
When you update your online CNPS profile or renew your membership at cnps.org **the default choice is digital newsletter**. If you prefer a paper newsletter, be sure to check the right box! You may also contact the state office (membership@cnps.org), or call them at 916-447-2677 to change your preference.

Members who choose the paper newsletter will still receive other chapter announcements (reminders and new events) via email. If members opt out of email communications altogether, they will not receive announcements of new events not included in the newsletter.

California Native Flora Preservation

CNPS is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization with 35 chapters throughout the state. Chapter donations are tax-deductible and may be earmarked for specific areas. Please make donation checks payable to CNPS. Send to: Santa Cruz County Chapter CNPS, P.O. Box 1622, Santa Cruz, CA 95061.

New Posts on Chapter Website!



Meadows of surfgrass (*Phyllospadix scouleri*) and a few *Laminaria setchellii* at extreme low tide. Photo: Judith Connor

Have you visited the chapter website lately? Check out recent posts following up on the seaweeds presentation in December including "Surfgrass, a Flowering Plant but Not a True Grass" and "Monterey Bay Seaweeds."