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Upcoming Chapter Events

Sept 13  General meeting
Scot Pipkin will give a talk on birds and the native plants that attract them

Oct 4  General meeting
Nick Jensen will give a conservation update

Nov 8  General meeting
Ailors will talk about the Lunada Bay parkway project

Dec 6  General meeting
Holiday photo share and dessert potluck.

NATIVE PLANT SALE

South Coast CNPS will once again host its native plant sale with online only orders.

Orders will open on September 14th and will close on September 26th but you can browse our selection now at: https://california-native-plant-society.square.site/shop/south-coast/18

All orders will be available for pick up during your scheduled time slot

Saturday October 2nd from 10am to 2pm
Madrona Marsh Nature Center located at 3201 Plaza del Amo, Torrance

Fall is the best time to plant natives, find out why on page 3. Plants for birds, bees, and butterflies will be available; you can read about some of these plants on pages 4-5. Our plants will be locally grown for optimal growth within our chapter.
President’s Message

David Berman

Fall brings our chapter plant sale. Fall is a great time to plant California native plants. This year our plant sale will feature plants from our local area. This will be our second sale during the pandemic and will again include easy online ordering and convenient curbside pick-up at Madrona Marsh.

Our meetings continue to be virtual. See the front page for the great upcoming programs. In December, members are invited to present a 5 minute slide show featuring California Native Plants. Our chapter continues to do conservation work, support and maintain demonstration gardens, perform outreach, and do field trips. Please check out our new website for more information.

With the holidays coming, remember that CNPS memberships make great gifts. Please get involved. We are still looking for publicity and membership chairpersons. We need volunteers to help with our plant sale and an outreach event at The Landscape Expo October 13 and 14. Those interested in volunteering can reach out at info@sccnps.org or through our social media accounts listed down below.

Thank you for your support of our mission.

Online Connection

With in person gatherings restricted the whole world had to adapt and improvise. As disappointing as it has been to forgo our in person meetings, virtual meetings through Zoom have allowed the South Coast chapter to reach more people within our region and host more speakers than before. Distance is no longer an impediment to attend our meetings allowing more people to simply log in and enjoy our interesting and informational meetings.

This year we have had the pleasure of hosting a wide range of speakers who have given presentations on a wide range of topics. Joining us all the way from San Francisco we had Markos Major share the work Climate Action Now is doing by adding school and sidewalk gardens allowing water to permeate into the ground, reducing storm run off and adding ecological diversity. More locally we had Richard Rachman share how CSUN is investigating whether Oaks in the Santa Monica Mountains are in trouble using traditional field work and new technology.

We encourage everyone to join our last few meetings of the year which are sure to be just as stimulating and if you missed our previous meetings you can now watch them on your own time on our Youtube channel.
Native Planting Season

The South Coast Chapter’s native plant sale is just around the corner! If you’ve been thinking of starting a native garden or are looking to expand it, now is the perfect time to do so! There will be a large quantity of diverse plants that are beneficial to birds, bees, and butterflies. All of the plants sold will be locally grown and suited for gardens within the South Coast Chapter’s area.

Plants are sessile organisms, locked in place for their entire life cycle and as a result must adapt to their local climate. According to the California Coastal Commission our Mediterranean climate, with mild and rainy winters and hot summers is unique. Accordingly, California native plants have evolved over thousands of years to forgo the summer rain that is common in other parts of the world. As a result of their adaptations, California native plants do best when planted in late fall through early spring. Why is this?

There are many contributing factors at play that conventional wisdom and science both back up. Soil temperature is a big factor for optimal plant growth. Both the rate and thoroughness of root growth increase with increased soil temperature before declining at extremely elevated temperatures. (Kaspar & Bland, 1992) Fall is the perfect time to plant because the soil is still warm but not hot and roots have time to grow and establish before the soil gets too cold and hard.

Above the ground, temperature also plays a role in successful plant growth. Planting can be a stressful time for plants and ambient temperature can increase that stress. If you plant during the summer, plants are under constant stress from longer and hotter days that can be overwhelming. Bart O’Brien in his time as Horticulture Director of the Rancho Santa Ana Botanical Garden wrote a comprehensive planting guide that notes that cooler days and nights reduce heat stress and promote root growth as opposed to shoot growth. The importance of root growth cannot be understated as they are a plants’ foundation; they hold them in place and take in the water and nutrients needed to grow healthy.

Temperature aside, did you know plants can tell time? Yes! The Department of Agriculture has long been aware of the plants’ response to day length. Plants have developed a complex circadian rhythm that regulates their phytohormones on a daily and long term basis. According to Farre and Weise 2012 this means that day/night lengths and water availability prompt major reactions within plants’ metabolism allowing them to cope. This means that while plants can adapt to out of season planting it throws off their natural cycle hindering healthy development.

As the Department of Agriculture noted decades ago, plants “are successful in their natural regions”. Many in the native plant world are aware of this but it’s important to be aware that following the natural planting cycle is crucial to this success. Our native plant sale coincides with the beginning of the natural planting season and we hope you take the opportunity to grow a successful native garden.

–Angel Garcia

Did you know?

California native plants only account for 3% of nursery sales in the state.

California is facing many threats from prolonged droughts, wildfires, and poaching. Bloom! California is CNPS’ approach to improve biodiversity and climate resiliency through ecologically beneficial gardens. Bloom! is a three year campaign developed in conjunction with various agencies, nurseries and nonprofits that have expertly chosen 11 native plant species for their unique ability to benefit pollinators, wildlife, reduce water and pesticide use all while providing beautiful and easy landscaping. Bloom! is still a work in progress but it aims to provide nursery training, garden vignettes, and increase native plant sales by 20% over the next three years.
Garden Guide

With approximately 6,500 naturally occurring plant species in California, it can be hard to choose the right one for your garden. South Coast CNPS will have approximately 60 locally grown plant species suitable for gardens within the chapter’s area. Below are a few plants that will be available and their garden use.

Pollinator Magnets

Flowering plants are the stars in native gardens. Big beautiful blooms are most gardeners’ primary consideration when choosing a plant but you aren’t the only one drawn to our native flowers. Many of California’s native bees, butterflies, and other insects rely heavily on native plants and we rely on these insects to pollinate our food crops. By mass planting multiple plants of the same species, avoiding pesticides, and choosing multiple plants that bloom in succession throughout the year you can help our native pollinators while having a beautiful garden all year round.

- Narrowleaf milkweed is the host plant of the monarch butterfly, one of the most widely recognized butterflies in our area. It grows 1.5-3 feet, flowering spring and fall. Because it will be eaten by monarch caterpillars, has a propensity for aphids, and sometimes dies back in the winter, it’s best to give another pollinator plant the central garden spot.
- We will have multiple species of buckwheat, some of which are host plants for rare and endangered butterflies. All buckwheat are a coveted source nourishment for several insects due to its long blooming period. Because insects are so drawn to it, it attracts many birds who eat some of these insects as well as the seeds. These plants range in size and bloom periods but they’re all generally long blooming and their flower clusters turn a beautiful rust color in the fall adding a splash of color even after blooming.
- If you’ve missed our last super bloom consider adding coastal poppies to your garden to experience your very own mini super bloom! Coastal poppies’ compact and feathery foliage adds texture to your garden in the form of low growing mounds 6 inches wide and 1 foot tall. They are happy in full sun and while they are drought tolerant they will bloom more with some summer water.
- California has over 15 native sages and they are all beautiful bloomers that attract a large number of insects and hummingbirds. Black and purple sage are both aromatic species that generally grow about 2-6 feet tall and wide. With flowers ranging from white to blue arranged in whirls or clusters on tall stems, these flowers will stand out spring to summer. Black sage requires a bit more water than purple sage but both will look better with some additional water.

Need more information?

From complete plant characteristics and requirements visit Calscape to determine if a plant is right for your garden. For help with planting check out CNPS’ planting guide or Bart O’Brien’s planting guide.

Pollinator Superstars

- Narrowleaf Milkweed
- California Buckwheat
- Yellow Coast Poppy
- Black Sage
- Need more information?

Share your best blooms!

If you had a blooming season you’re particularly proud of or would like to share your garden’s progress after picking up some plants from our sale, let us know! You can share your pictures with us on social media where we can show them off or we can give you a spot in our next newsletter!
For the birds (and the insects)

If you missed the previous newsletter, wild bird populations in the western United States are experiencing larger than normal cases of salmonella. Wildlife experts believe that bird feeders and bird baths are ideal breeding grounds for bacteria and removing them can help mitigate the spread of disease. Hygiene aside, bird feeders only supplement a bird’s diet. If you really want to see and help birds (and insects) consider adding native plants that will provide wildlife with resources throughout their entire life. The following plants afford huge ecological benefits and they will all be available during our sale!

Trees:

Trees are keystone plants that according to the Good News Network support far more species of caterpillars that will then become moths and butterflies. Trees attract many other insects and as a result attract many native birds. Native birds are attracted to native trees because they provide them with nourishment and a place to nest.

- Arroyo Willow is a widespread tree in our region that grows in riparian area so it needs lots of moisture. It is a multi-trunked tree that generally grows less than 30 feet tall. It loses its leaves in the winter that return after it flowers in dense creamy catkins from February to May.
- Blue elderberry is an extremely fast growing tree that reaches similar heights of about 30 feet tall. Blue elderberry can handle varying soil moisture levels from regularly watered areas to dry areas but it can be deciduous in dry spots. It produces creamy yellow flowers in the spring and purple berries in the fall that birds love.

Hedges and bushes

California natives make great hedges! Most species only require a fraction of the water and maintenance of traditional non-native hedges. Moreover, our native hedges attract a multitude of birds and other wildlife.

- Toyon was selected as the official native plant of Los Angeles in 2012 and rightfully so. It thrives in a variety of soils, in full sun or part shade, and has low water needs. It flowers in the summer and produces berries in the fall/winter giving it its nickname of Christmas berry. It attracts bees and is a host plant for a few butterflies and moths. Birds and other wildlife will flock to it for its berries too!
- Lemonade berry and sugar bush are both members of the Sumac family and are equally great plants for your garden. Calscape notes that lemonade berry is more suited for gardens within 5-10 miles of the coast, while sugar bush will do better inland. Both handle full sun to part shade and require little water after establishing. Both are evergreen shrubs that can grow up to 30' but handle pruning well making them great hedges.
After a year of lockdowns, closures, and social distancing 2021 held the promise of things getting back to normal. While things aren’t completely back to normal, they’ve certainly improved to the point where South Coast CNPS was able to host their first in-person event. With everyone masked, members were led on a wonderful tour through Willow Springs Park led by Larry and Blanca from the Long Beach Sustainability Department. After the informative zoom presentation they gave the chapter on the history of the park, it was a great experience to explore the park and see all the work that has gone into restoring it.

For some members it was a great way to get back out and resume in-person events; for others it was their first in-person CNPS event. Among those in attendance was Joan Greenwood, an analytical chemist by training who has worked in environmental remediation for some time. She’s a member of the Wrigley Area Neighborhood Alliance, a community organization dedicated to promoting community pride through various activities including maintaining our environment. She was happy to be back out on Willow Springs with other members like Dino. Dino, an IT professional, is new to the native plant world and was excited to attend his first CNPS event. He began gardening during the pandemic and was inspired by native buckwheat to restore his home with native plants and has shared his journey through the California buckwheat sanctuary. Longstanding or new, every member in attendance seemed to enjoy the fresh air, the informative tour, and most of all the connection with each other and the land around us.

The tour brought together people from all walks of life and allowed them to meet and connect through our shared interest in restoring our environment. As we learned, large restoration projects like Willow Springs are huge undertakings that take years of research, planning, work and support. Through membership with your local CNPS chapter and your public support, CNPS, Long Beach Sustainability and various other organizations are making it possible for communities to experience nature as it once was.

Whether they are supporting large restoration projects or simply adding native plants to their garden, south coast members are taking an important step in mitigating further land degradation and improving our ecosystem. Members who attended the tour told us they can wait for the next in-person event. South Coast CNPS is eager to resume in-person monthly meetings as soon as it can ensure the health and safety of everyone. In the meantime we can connect through our gardens! We encourage everyone to share their native plant experiences with friends and family be it in person or through social media.

Willow Springs Park
Located at 2745 Orange Ave Long Beach, CA 90806
Open daily from dawn to dusk.
Please be respectful of the land and the work that has gone into and continues to be done on the park.
Point Vicente Interpretive Center

One of the many native gardens within our chapter is along the coast in beautiful Palos Verdes. With stunning coast views, whale watching, picnic areas, and a native garden this is a great place to visit! The native garden at PVIC is teeming with wildlife including: rabbits, foxes, and many types of bees and butterflies, including the rare and endangered Palos Verdes blue butterfly. This is a great demonstration garden for you to draw inspiration from for your home garden. If you already enjoy the garden consider volunteering to help keep it flourishing! Full information in the brochure below, created by Megan Wolff.

Contact Us

Volunteer days are every third Sunday from 10am-noon. To sign up for Garden Volunteer Days, email Megan Wolff at megan@sccnps.org.

To contact California Native Plant Society, South Coast Chapter, find us on facebook or email us:

facebook.com/California-Native-Plant-Society-South-Coast-Chapter

info@sccnps.org

For the City contact, email parks@rpv.gov

Volunteer

Volunteers have enhanced the garden through monthly volunteer programming led by Garden Manager, Megan Wolff. Recently, volunteers planted over 500 new native shrubs and wildflowers in the garden, they added mulch to the base of plants to suppress weeds and increase soil moisture, and a temporary irrigation system was installed.

You too can contribute to the enhancement of this oceanside garden by volunteering at events available every third Sunday. Email megan@sccnps.org to RSVP.

California Poppy, the state flower
Interested in exploring other native gardens?

Willow Springs Park and PVIC are beautiful native plant oases within the chapter’s area but they’re not the only ones! There are lots of gardens you can visit to draw inspiration from in our native garden map. Stay tuned for video tours of these gardens!

Building a Garden

The Point Vicente Interpretive Center Native Plant Garden was designed by Ric Dykzeul in 1988. It was planted in January 1989 through the joint efforts of the City of Rancho Palos Verdes and the South Coast Chapter of the California Native Plant Society (SCCNPS). The interpretive center and garden were closed in 1999 for cleanup of lead contamination from the WWII rifle range. Ric Dykzeul, Angelica Birkmann-Bus and Tony Baker redesigned the garden and it was replanted in November 2005 with the help of the Sunset Rotary Club, which contributed funding for plants, tools and bark. The Grand Re-Opening was held in July 2006.

Garden Maintenance

Since the installation of the garden, SCCNPS has been actively involved in maintenance and care. Following the establishment of the Vincent Cozzi Grant Program in 2009, the chapter created a Garden Management program for the PVIC garden funded jointly by SCCNPS and the City of Rancho Palos Verdes. Through the new program, SCCNPS has been able to realize its mission of increasing citizen understanding of California’s native flora and the impact of native plants on the state’s ecosystems, including home gardens. The partnership between SCCNPS and the City has helped to build volunteer programming and consequently has restored overall health and aesthetic value to the garden.

Education

The demonstration garden is an important teaching tool used by Los Serenos docents to educate school groups about the many uses for native plants, especially by local Native Americans, the Tongva, in the pre-colonial era. For example, lemonadeberry was used to make a refreshing drink by mixing the sour berries in water. Most plants in the coastal sage scrub habitat were used extensively by the Tongva, often for medicinal or ritual purposes.

Special Events

Our program is consistently growing and developing. Please direct special event or project inquiries to our Garden Manager, Megan Wolff. Groups such as service clubs or corporate parties are encouraged to join our regularly scheduled volunteer events. Advanced learning opportunities are also available upon request.

California Native Plant Gardens

This map was made with Google My Maps. Create your own.
Artemisia is the membership newsletter of the South Coast Chapter of the California Native Plant Society, a nonprofit organization.

South Coast Chapter CNPS, 23600 Telo Ave, Suite 130, Torrance CA 90505. Website www.sccnps.org Our chapter encompasses South Los Angeles County, ranging from LAX in the north, Long Beach in the south, and to Whittier in the east. We have members in more than 30 cities.

If you wish to be removed from our mailing list, please email membership@sccnps.org

The mission of CNPS is to conserve California native plants and their natural habitats and increase understanding, appreciation, and horticultural use of native plants.

California Native Plant Society, 2701 K St., Suite 1, Sacramento CA 95816-5113. Phone 916-447-2677 Email cnps@cnps.org Website www.cnps.org

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Make your check out to “CNPS” and mail with this form to: CNPS, 2707 K St, Suite 1, Sacramento CA 95816-5113

Affiliation: South Coast Chapter

Name__________________________________________________________
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If you have questions, comments, or would like to submit an article, announcement, or event to the newsletter please email Angel Garcia at angel.garcia.144@my.csun.edu

Check out the South Coast CNPS YouTube channel for recordings of our general meetings and other chapter related events.

Stay up to date and connect with us on our Instagram and Facebook accounts.