PRESIDENT’S MESSAGE

By Snowdy Dodson

Many of you visited the LAX El Segundo Dunes Preserve last year attending a field trip or a restoration event. This year, our chapter sponsored a restoration visit in June and now has additional sessions scheduled for Saturday, July 12 and Sunday, August 24 (see page 2 for details). This is an excellent opportunity for you to see this largest remaining fragment of the El Segundo Dunes complex which provides habitat for over 600 species including the federally listed El Segundo Blue Butterfly. Due to security concerns and the ecological sensitivity of the area, access is limited. Peggy Nguyen who is the Dunes Preserve Manager, has invited CNPS to become involved in the LAX Adopt-a-Dune program. Although our CNPS Chapter Board thinks this is an excellent idea, our current volunteer leaders are already over taxed; we need someone to step up and take charge of leading volunteers at the Dunes. This would be an ideal project for someone who resides on the west side or in the south bay. Please contact Peggy at pnguyen3@lawa.org to volunteer. The South Coast Chapter of CNPS is also interested in being involved. Join us in July and August to experience the amazing views and cooler weather.

No Programs in July or August
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Event Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SAT 7/12</td>
<td>8:45am</td>
<td>Cold Creek Valley Preserve</td>
<td><strong>Be a Restorationist for a Day:</strong> Join the habitat repair team as we care for newly planted native plants that will energetically displace the invasive weeds that provide no food or shelter for the native animals and certainly do not please human sensibilities. Oak trees, shrubs and bunch grasses that feed and shelter wildlife are awaiting your help. Receive community service credit. Reservations required: 818-591-1701 or <a href="mailto:volunteer@treepeople.org">volunteer@treepeople.org</a>. Meet along the first 0.5 mile of Stunt Road after turning off Mulholland Hwy, Calabasas. 3.5hrs*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SAT 7/12</td>
<td>9am-noon</td>
<td>El Segundo Dunes</td>
<td><strong>LAX Dunes Volunteer Day</strong> Aside from its aesthetic beauty, this 307-acre area of contiguous coastal dunes is a rare landform in Southern California of major ecological importance, and is protected by the California Coastal Commission and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, because it provides habitat for endangered, threatened, and rare species such as the El Segundo Blue Butterfly. Help remove non-native plants. Free parking is available in the dunes. Enter through the gate across from Trask Triangle Park at the Trask and Waterview Streets intersection in Playa Del Rey, CA 90293. Please bring your own drinking water and snacks, and wear gloves, sun protection, closed-toe shoes, and long pants. Shelter and cold water refills will be provided. Please be on time and plan to stay until the end of the volunteer event as this is a secured area. Info: 818-782-9346</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SUN 7/13</td>
<td>8:45am</td>
<td>Santa Monica Mountains - White Oak Farms</td>
<td><strong>Weed Wars</strong> – an unending engagement started by CNPS in the early 1980s to wrestle with non-native invasive species. We clear the land and during the winter planting season in the Mediterranean ecosystem, we plant native species. We revisit previous planting sites, weed and plant. It's exciting to see the growth and speculate on what native critters now have a home, food, and shelter as the sites once a weed field becomes dynamically functional. Join us for a satisfying day of weeding and planting. Receive community service credit. Reservations required: 818-348-5910 or <a href="mailto:volunteer@treepeople.org">volunteer@treepeople.org</a>. Call or email for directions. 3.5hrs*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SAT 7/19</td>
<td>8:45am</td>
<td>Malibu Creek State Park</td>
<td><strong>Return of the Lost Oak Woodlands</strong> There once was a valley where giant oaks held an ecosystem together. Since 1992, volunteers have enjoyed a wonderful day in the park planting and caring for oak trees and their understory plants. The oaks still need your help to rebuild a native landscape. Receive community service credit. Reservations required: <a href="mailto:volunteer@treepeople.org">volunteer@treepeople.org</a> or Jo at 818-591-1701 x203. 3.5hrs*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SAT 7/26</td>
<td>8:45am</td>
<td>La Sierra Preserve</td>
<td><strong>Restoration of a Hidden Gem.</strong> Unseemly land uses created great swaths of invasive weeds but have also created the perfect site for an endangered, very small sunflower. Newly planted natives need your help. Bring water. Receive community service credit. Reservations required: <a href="mailto:volunteer@treepeople.org">volunteer@treepeople.org</a> or Jo at 818-591-1701. From Kanan Road, Agoura Hills, turn onto Trousdale, then left on Mulholland Highway, then right into Peter Strauss parking lot. 3.5hrs*</td>
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<tr>
<td>SAT 7/26</td>
<td>9am–4pm</td>
<td>Temescal Canyon Park</td>
<td><strong>Temescal Canyon Pacific Palisades Native Plant Garden Restoration</strong> We're just a few steps east of ~700 Temescal Canyon Road, Pacific Palisades, 90272 (between the PCH and Sunset Blvd., below Bowdoin St.). Community Service Credit. Contact Barbara Marinacci at <a href="mailto:barbara.marinacci@verizon.net">barbara.marinacci@verizon.net</a> or Michael G. Terry at <a href="mailto:michaelgterry@hotmail.com">michaelgterry@hotmail.com</a>.</td>
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<tr>
<td>SUN 7/27</td>
<td>8:30am</td>
<td>Topanga State Park</td>
<td><strong>Lower Topanga Park Restoration</strong> Native plants are working hard to foil the drought to bring a natural eco-balance to the most recent addition to the park. But they need a boost a good soaking and someone to take out the would-be usurpers - invasive noxious weeds! Bring drinking water, wear sturdy footwear. Receive community service credit. Directions: entrance is a few hundred feet from Pacific Coast Highway on Topanga Canyon Road. Reservations required: <a href="mailto:volunteer@treepeople.org">volunteer@treepeople.org</a> or Jo at 818-348-5910. 3.5hrs*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SUN 7/27</td>
<td>9am–Noon</td>
<td>Cold Creek Preserve-Lower Stunt High Trail</td>
<td><strong>Creek-Side Hike</strong> From Mulholland Hwy in Calabasas turn onto Stunt Rd. and drive 1 mile to the wide shoulder of the road near the porta potty. Wear sturdy shoes; bring water and snack. Info: 818-782-9346</td>
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<tr>
<td>SAT 8/2</td>
<td>8:45am</td>
<td>Cold Creek Valley Preserve</td>
<td><strong>Be a Restorationist for a Day</strong> See 7/12 write-up.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SAT 8/9</td>
<td>8:45am</td>
<td>Malibu Creek State Park</td>
<td><strong>Return of the Lost Oak Woodlands</strong> See 7/19 write-up.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SUN 8/10</td>
<td>8:45am</td>
<td>Santa Monica Mountains - White Oak Farm</td>
<td><strong>Weed War</strong> See 7/13 write-up.</td>
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<tr>
<td>SAT 8/23</td>
<td>8:30am</td>
<td>La Sierra Preserve</td>
<td><strong>Restoration of a Hidden Gem.</strong> See 7/26 write-up</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SUN 8/24</td>
<td>8:30am</td>
<td>Topanga State Park</td>
<td><strong>Lower Topanga Park Restoration</strong> See 7/27 write-up.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SUN 8/24</td>
<td>9am-Noon</td>
<td>El Segundo Dunes</td>
<td><strong>LAX Dunes Volunteer Day</strong> See 7/12 write-up.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SAT 8/30</td>
<td>9am–4pm</td>
<td>Temescal Canyon Park</td>
<td><strong>Weeding in the City Park at Temescal Canyon</strong> See write-up for 7/26.</td>
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* Co-sponsored by LA/SMM CNPS, Mountains Restoration Trust, and TreePeople.
NATIVE PLANT WEEK SYMPOSIUM AND WILDFLOWER SHOW REPORT
By Snowdy Dodson

Our 4th Annual Native Plant Week Symposium co-sponsored with the Theodore Payne Foundation was an amazing experience due to the dedicated volunteers who made it all possible: Gwenn Albright, Doug Allan, Negeen Amirieh, Richard Andrade, Karin Benson, Julie Clark DeBlasio, David Ecklund, Daisy Guitierrez, Olga Hammer, David Hollombe, Cynthia Jackson, Christian Kullkka, Jo Kitz, Halli Mason, Sid Mendel, Mary Montes, Norma Morales, Grace Murayama, Jessie Salazar, Kitty Sarkission, Kaito Tahira, Mike Terry, Barbara Turner, Christine Walker, Dorothy Walker, & Henrietta & Bill Yuan.

This year’s wildflower display was amazing in spite of the very dry and hot spring. The cuttings came from the gardens of the Theodore Payne Foundation, Doug Allan, Steve and Leslie Hartman, Karin Benson, Snowdy Dodson, Dorothy Walker, David Hollombe, Christine Walker, & Tarweed Nursery. Many thanks go out to these individuals and institutions that contributed the flowers. Special recognition goes to David Hollombe who does the plant identification and labeling.

Theodore Payne Foundation provided a great variety of high quality native plants for sale, and their skilled nursery people were there to provide thoughtful suggestions on plant selection. They also provided a special display on native plants that attract butterflies, pollinators, hummingbirds and other wildlife. Our Symposium speakers spoke to the theme of attracting wildlife to gardens using native plants: Hartmut Wisch’s presentation on “California Native Bees” gave us an insight into the tremendous diversity of this insect group; Mickey Long’s talk on “Botany for Birders” helped us to merge plant and bird study; and Alan Pollack gave the broad overview in “Restoring Habitat One Yard at a Time.” Our Chapter book store provided a quality selection of books for those needing further information in their home libraries. San Fernando Valley Audubon and the Gourd Society did displays and demonstrations. Our canteen provided refreshments thanks to the culinary skills of Henrietta & Bill Yuan. Trader Joe’s in Encino donated comestibles for our opportunity drawings at the Symposium talks.

Steve Hartman and I would like to recognize and send appreciation to the City of Los Angeles Recreation and Parks Dept. and the Sepulveda Garden Center and Paola Jaramillo & Carlos Cardona and other staff for making the venue available and giving logistical support. Last but not least, thanks are due to you who attended and made this important educational and outreach event a success. We are planning the 4th Annual Native Plant Week Symposium for April 2015, and we look forward to seeing your there.
The rebate required a lawn with an existing irrigation system (we had in ground sprinklers.) To qualify, we supplied photographs of our existing lawn, a recent water bill, a completed Metropolitan Water District of Southern California form, and a brief description of our proposed plant selections and irrigation plan. We submitted this in early July. To obtain the $2 square foot rebate, we needed to remove the lawn, convert our sprinkler system to a bubbler/drip system, replace the lawn area with at least 40% “California Friendly” planting, and add a layer of mulch. The rebate required we remove and replant our lawn within 3 months i.e., 120 days of the rebate plan approval.

While we waited, I continued to research and list plants that encourage the birds and insects we wished to attract. I longed for activity: butterflies, hummingbirds, and the plants to attract them. I wanted pollinators, and beneficial insects of all kinds: many kinds of bees, ladybugs, lacewings, spiders, praying mantis… I spent happy hours planning and dreaming about the small world we could create. By the end of August, when we received our rebate approval number, we had also found a simple, adaptable landscape plan on the CNPS website:

www.cnps.org/cnps/grownative/pdf/plan_habitat-meadow.pdf

We planned our turf replacement project as an eight step process:
1. Remove the front lawn.
2. Locate, and purchase reasonably priced (we used mostly 1-gallon) native plants, rocks, and mulch.
3. Lay out plants, dig holes, fill with water, note drainage.
4. Lay out and dig dry streambed, line with rocks and gravel.
5. Convert sprinkler system to drip system by connecting each plant with ¼” tubing to 6 way manifolds.
6. Add at least a 2” layer of mulch. (We increased the organic mulch layer to 4 inches.)
7. Adjust plants, rocks, mulch as required. Of the 100+ plants we planted, only 3 died.
8. Submit photos of our completed California friendly landscape.

Our roughly rectangular front lawn slopes and faces due east. The local landscape contractor we consulted suggested that we retain the existing walnut and plum tree and listed 5-7 “must have” plants to plant in groups to establish the garden structure. Using the CNPS habitat meadow planting plan as a template, we planted a front row of ceanothus (Yankee Point) with curves of salvias (including Pozo Blue,) yarrow, deer grass, buckwheat, blue-eyed grass, yellow monkey flowers and western columbine. We replaced the path shown on the plan with a dry streambed, lined with blue rocks to suggest water. As a last step, we added desert mallow, California fuchsia, galvezia, and California wildflower seeds as accents.

Above, lawn replaced November 2013

We completed this project in November and received our $2000 rebate check in February. Neighbors, strangers and friends stop to ask about and admire our yard and ask the names of the plants. Checking the steady growth of the garden and watching the increasing bees and hummingbirds has become a daily pleasure. This fall, we plan to sprinkle more wildflower seeds to add even more spring surprises. In the midst of the drought we replaced our lawn with an exciting, sustainable world of discovery.

At right, habitat as of April 2014
For years, hikers have been banned from Malibu's Puerco Canyon Trail and the rest of a stunningly scenic 703-acre property in the Santa Monica Mountains, mostly owned by film director James Cameron. According to Paul Edelman, chief of natural resources and planning for the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy, visitors were met with Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy barbed wire and security teams until a few years ago, when they were finally allowed to walk through the oak-studded property, home to a variety of wildlife.

Still, access has stopped short of the end of the trail. At one point along the way, hikers are met with a chain link fence that keeps them from connecting to the adjacent Corral Canyon Trail. And hikers on that popular 2.5-mile loop have been stymied by that same fence, which prevents them from heading into Puerco Canyon.

But that final barrier is about to fall: Recently, the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors approved a $6 million allocation to help purchase Cameron’s acreage. Also contributing to the purchase: $4.5 million from the Wildlife Conservation Board and $1.5 million from the California State Coastal Conservancy.

The new owner, the Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority, will oversee the property with the goal of preserving open space, habitat and resources. Once escrow closes, a date for public access will be set.

The collective 24 parcels of land known as the Puerco Canyon Properties, formerly slated for housing development, represents a major piece of the geographic puzzle in Supervisor Zev Yaroslavsky’s longstanding effort to foster preservation and public access in the Santa Monica Mountains.

The property will dramatically increase access between 1000-acre Corral Canyon Park and the 7,000-plus-acre Malibu Creek State Park, Edelman said. “It’s the last big piece in the Malibu State Park core habitat areas,” Edelman continued. “There aren’t too many big ownerships left in the Santa Monica Mountains. This is the last big sucker in L.A. County.” (The remaining large private properties in Ventura County are the 1000-acre Deer Creek Canyon property owned by the Mansdorf Family Trust and the even larger Broome Ranch).

The “last big sucker” is significant for more than its size. Contained within its borders are major sections of the new Coastal Slope Trail. This project-in-development includes a small portion of the existing Puerco Canyon Trail and will eventually run about 65 miles from Point Mugu State Park on the coast to Topanga State Park in Topanga Canyon.

Not only does the parcel facilitate new trails—its acquisition serves to preserve a delicate ecosystem. According to the coastal conservancy's project summary for the purchase, the Santa Monica Mountains “encompass a rare biome that can be found in only four other locations on the planet.”

Vegetation and wildlife include native grassland, chaparral, coastal sage scrub, sycamore-willow woodland, oak trees and a wealth of animals, including mountain lions, bobcats, and gray foxes. Said Edelman: “You could say that it probably has one of everything, animal-wise, with the exception of maybe salamanders. My guess would be 15 of the 19 snakes in the Santa Monica Mountains are down there, just because it’s so big.” The acquisition will also protect drainage areas that play an important role in the movement of wildlife in the area.

Not bad for a former pig farm. Along with its small enclave of luxury houses, Puerco Canyon was once home to a sprawling pig farm that existed into the 1980s.

That's good for hikers too, Edelman said. “There's a portion that has not been accessible to the public that has a whole system of neat little trails that were carved for the pig farm,” he said. While the trails were created for farm vehicles, they're trail-ready for hikers and their dogs — or any pet pig that might choose to tag along.

Posted 5/30/14
Save the Dates:
Oct. 25 & 26
Plant Sale