MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT
By Snowdy Dodson

For me this seemed to have been the busiest spring ever: Native Plant Week, hikes, the Chapter picnic, weed wars are all a blur of fun memories. It's time to take a breather, and as you notice we are changing our Chapter program schedule to take off the month of July as well as August. Though we are taking an evening program break, we still have some great things happening over the summer for your enjoyment: hikes, restorations, and a special invitation from Peggy Nguyen, an Environmental Specialist for LA World Airports Environmental Services Division, who has invited CNPS members to take a tour of the LAX El Segundo Dunes Restoration Project. She has also invited us to help gather native seed from the area so that it can be used for propagation. See Calendar of Events on page 2 for details on how to participate in this important effort on July 13 and August 23.

It is amazing how much we do as an all-volunteer CNPS Chapter. Much of what is accomplished is grassroots and ad hoc. For instance, the Chapter has no formal Conservation Committee or Chair. Individual board and chapter members take up the gauntlet and advocate for important issues. Betsey Landis and Christian Kiillkkaa have been involved in meetings and committees concerning the Santa Susana Field Lab (SSFL). Betsey has made enormous contributions to soil treatment studies at SSFL and has lobbyied for soil mitigation using native plants. She has also been involved in surveys of rare and endangered plants such as Braunton's milkvetch on the site. Christian is a community appointee to the SSFL Community Advisory Group of the California Dept. of Toxic Substances Control and is involved in issues concerning the Bell Creek watershed that drains out of the SSFL. Other CNPS members who have gotten involved with SSFL are Mark Osokow and Sharon Ford who are also members of the SFV Audubon. All of these individuals have been environmental advocates at the site and continue to make contributions as volunteers.

Restoration has long been a forte of our Chapter. Early efforts were pioneered by Doris Hoover, George Stevenson and Jo Kitz among others. Jo continues to lead superhuman weeding and restoration efforts in the Santa Monica Mountains in collaboration with the Mountains Restoration Trust and TreePeople. Halli Mason, Steve Hartman, Bill Neill and I have been working with weed removal in Caballero Canyon and have focused on removing target species such as yellow star thistle, mustard and horehound. Recently we met at this site with Paul Edelman, Chief of Natural Resources & Planning of the MRCA, to discuss restoration of the several acres at the Caballero Canyon trailhead. This entrance to a much traveled open space has a very weedy and unkempt appearance. We are investigating the possibility of removing weeds, planting suitable natives, and constructing water catchment basins to slow down erosion and keep runoff on site. More on this as planning progresses. The bottom line on this is that we all can make a difference as volunteers. Thanks for all that you and others do to champion the cause for native plants in California.

CHAPTER BOARD MEETINGS
No July Board meeting.
August 6, 7pm
6117 Reseda Blvd. Suite H, Tarzana
(north of Oxnard/Topham, on west side of Reseda), one block from the Orange Line Busway on Reseda Blvd. Steve Hartman’s office. Join board members for dinner at 5:45pm at Garden Wok Restaurant at same address. Members welcome!

There will be no programs during July and August. Programs will resume in September.

SAVE THESE DATES!
FRIDAY & SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 20 & 21
VEGETATION SURVEY OF THE LOS ANGELES RIVER, SEPUlvEDA BASIN
Julie Evens, CNPS state vegetation program director, will lead a two-day survey of the vegetation along the Los Angeles River in the Sepulveda Basin. This will be a great opportunity to learn the CNPS sampling methods applied to local riparian plants.

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 13
GEOLOGY TOUR OF SANTA MONICA MOUNTAINS
After meeting at King Gillette Ranch, this all-day geology tour will include a hike near Calabasas Peak and car caravan ending at Malibu Bluffs Park. We'll discuss the geology of the Santa Monica Mountains in relation to the formation of California and the San Andreas Fault. Bill Neill will lead.

Reservations required. See next issue of TOYON for details.
## Hikes and Restoration - July & August

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Event Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SAT 7/13</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 planting 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 acorns, shrubs, penstemons, roses and bunch grasses that feed and shelter wildlife are awaiting your help. Receive community service credit. Reservations required: 818-591-1701 x203 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 Highway, Calabasas. 3.5hrs*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SUN 7/14</td>
<td>8:45am</td>
<td>Santa Monica Mountains</td>
<td><strong>Weed War</strong> an unending engagement started by CNPS in the early 1980s. This month we revisit restoration sites so beautifully planted by volunteers earlier in the year. It's exciting to see the growth and speculate on what native critters now have a home, food, and shelter at the sites as a weed field becomes fully functional. Join us for a satisfying day of planting and weeding. Receive community service credit. Reservations required: Jo at 818-591-1701 x203 or <a href="mailto:volunteer@treepeople.org">volunteer@treepeople.org</a>. Call or email for directions. 3.5hrs*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SAT 7/13</td>
<td>9:00AM</td>
<td>El Segundo Dunes</td>
<td><strong>Seed Collection and Tour</strong> Under the auspices of LA World Airports Environmental Services Division, Peggy Nguyen will lead volunteers on a tour of the LAX El Segundo Dunes Restoration Project to collect seeds to be used for propagation. Reservations required. Call Snowdy at 818-782-9346 or email to <a href="mailto:lacpns@lacpns.org">lacpns@lacpns.org</a>. Directions will be provided. 3.5hrs*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SAT 8/10</td>
<td>8:45am</td>
<td>Cold Creek Valley Preserve</td>
<td><strong>Be a Restorationist for a Day</strong> See July 13 write-up.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SUN 8/11</td>
<td>8:45am</td>
<td>Malibu Creek State Park</td>
<td><strong>Weed War</strong> an unending engagement started by CNPS in the early 1980s. Native grasses and groundcovers are rousting the weeds. Join us for a satisfying day of weeding and watering. Receive community service credit. Call for location. Reservations required: 818-348-5910 or <a href="mailto:volunteer@treepeople.org">volunteer@treepeople.org</a>. 3.5hrs*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SUN 8/18</td>
<td>8:45am</td>
<td>Malibu Creek State Park</td>
<td><strong>Return of the Lost Oak Woodlands</strong> See July 21 write-up.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FRI 8/23</td>
<td>10:00am</td>
<td>El Segundo Dunes</td>
<td><strong>Seed Collection and Tour</strong> See July 13 write-up.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SAT 7/27</td>
<td>8:45am</td>
<td>La Sierra Preserve</td>
<td><strong>Restoration of a Hidden Gem.</strong> Newly planted natives need you to help them through the drought. Bring snack, water. Receive community service credit. Reservations required: <a href="mailto:volunteer@treepeople.org">volunteer@treepeople.org</a> or 818-591-1701 x203. From Kanan Road, Agoura Hills, turn onto Troutdale, then left on Mulholland Highway, then right into Peter Strauss parking lot. 3.5hrs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SAT 7/27</td>
<td>9:00AM</td>
<td>Temescal Canyon Park</td>
<td><strong>Restoration of a Hidden Gem</strong> See write-up for July 27.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SAT 7/27</td>
<td>9:00AM</td>
<td>Temescal Canyon Pacific Palisades Native Plant Garden</td>
<td><strong>Restoration</strong> We're just a few steps east of ~700 Temescal Canyon Road, Pacific Palisades, CA 90272 (between the PCH and Sunset Blvd., below Bowdoin St.). Community Service Credit. Contact Michael G. Terry at <a href="mailto:michaelgterry@hotmail.com">michaelgterry@hotmail.com</a>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SUN 7/28</td>
<td>8:30pm</td>
<td>Topanga State Park</td>
<td><strong>Topanga State Park</strong>                                                                 Mutually髅lck restoration native plants are working hard (growing almost like Jack's beanstalk) to bring a natural eco-balance to the lower Topanga Creek area of the park. But they need a boost we'll water and remove those noxious weeds!! Bring water, and snack; wear sturdy footwear. Receive credit for community service. 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 818-591-1701 x203. 3.5hrs*</td>
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<td>El Segundo Dunes</td>
<td><strong>Seed Collection and Tour</strong> See July 13 write-up.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SAT 7/24</td>
<td>8:30am</td>
<td>La Sierra Preserve</td>
<td><strong>Restoration of a Hidden Gem</strong> See July 27 write-up.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SUN 8/25</td>
<td>8:00am</td>
<td>Solstice Canyon</td>
<td><strong>Canyon Ramble:</strong> Celebrate the summer while hiking the creek-side trail that is lined with sycamores and other native trees. Info: 818-782-9346. 2hrs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SUN 8/25</td>
<td>8:30am</td>
<td>Topanga State Park</td>
<td><strong>Lower Topanga Creek Restoration</strong> See Jan. 27 write-up.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SAT 8/31</td>
<td>9:00AM</td>
<td>Temescal Canyon Park</td>
<td><strong>Weeding in the City Park at Temescal Canyon</strong> See write-up for July 27.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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* Co-sponsored by LA/SMM CNPS, Mountains Restoration Trust, and TreePeople.

All Field Trips - Rain Cancels
Peninsula Plantings at Headwaters Corner

A native garden is blooming on Mulholland Highway at Old Topanga Road, where a “peninsula” and “island” have been planted with California natives around clusters of sandstone boulders. Personally, I don’t mind missing the stoplight to look over the landscape. The peninsula was once part of the roadway. When we (Mountains Restoration Trust or MRT) dug holes for the plantings, the ground was like brick, dense from years of road compaction. We added a little leftover potting mix and mulch and hoped for the best. The results have been very satisfying. Light weeding is needed in an area so vulnerable to invasion, because we do not allow non-natives to occur here.

The original landscape design used white sage, showy penstemon and chaparral yucca, over a groundcover of silvery California aster, a prostrate selection by Tree of Life Nursery from Big Sur. Crimson-flowered pitcher sage (crimson-red flowers) and California goldenrod (yellow flowers) were planted around the meager shade provided by a transplanted coast live oak, with coffeeberry and Canyon Prince wildrye, loved for its mass of gray leaves, planted in the background. In bloom now: white sage, with many stalks of white flowers, showy penstemon with purple throated flowers and a favorite of hummingbirds and bumblebees, and chaparral yucca, with its edible cream flowers. Chia sage has almost finished blooming, and now has browned seed pods that contain one of nature’s most nutritious seed.

On the island, we planted yarrow, with its yellow blooms offering a pleasing contrast to the brown sandstone boulders, along with showy penstemon, California aster and California fuchsia, which will bloom orange-red in the late summer and fall.

But what is particularly amazing to us at MRT is the profusion of natives that have germinated on the peninsula: masses of wand buckwheat, white sage, willow weed and chia sage, coast goldenbush, scarlet bugler (in bloom), coffeeberry (in the perfect spot), coyote brush, California everlasting, cliff aster, golden yarrow and woolly blue curls (also in the perfect spot). There is so much natural regeneration that we will need to thin the crop, which may result in more white sage and wand buckwheat transplanted to containers at the MRT Restoration Nursery.

Where did all this seed come from? Well, I do recall spreading seed in years past here, just the debris leftover from the cleaning of seed collections from our project sites. Did some blow in with the wind? Whatever the source, it shows what magic can occur when you choose the native path.

Tom Hayduk
Restoration Manager
Mountains Restoration Trust

Visit www.lacnps.org for a color version of this newsletter
MALIBU BLUFFS PARK/CHARMLEE LAND TRADE
A LOSE–LOSE PROPOSITION FOR THE ENVIRONMENT
by Snowdy Dodson

The City of Malibu and the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy (SMMC) have been at work on a land trade that would result in a no-win for those who are advocates of passive recreation and protection of open space and the flora and fauna that depend on it for survival. Malibu officials would like to trade the City’s 535 acre Charmlee Wilderness Park for the SMMC’s 83 acre Malibu Bluffs Park. Why you might ask? At the Bluff’s Park, the City of Malibu plans call for constructing over 200 parking spaces, a skatepark, a BMX course, soccer fields, baseball diamonds, and tennis courts on a portion of the Park that is currently designated as an environmentally sensitive habitat area (ESHA) in the City’s Local Coastal Program. This area is a mix of coastal sage scrub and native perennial grassland which are increasingly rare habitats along our coasts. It is also home to species of concern such as the Catalina mariposa lily and Coulter’s saltbrush. Currently the area is used for passive recreation i.e., hiking and is much needed habitat for native flora and fauna. And though there is much community opposition to the idea, SMMC proposes building eight campsites at Charmlee should the land trade become a reality. The land at the Bluffs Park was acquired with State bond funds by the Calif. Dept. of Parks and Recreation in 1979 and is zoned for open space and recreation. Deed restrictions at Charmlee preclude building recreation facilities such as ball fields there. This proposed land trade would require CEQA review. For further information and a map of the proposed development at Malibu Bluffs Park see the archived article written by Suzanne Guldiman in the Malibu Surfside News: http://www.malibursfsidecenews.com/archives/02212013.pdf; also see the blog by the same author http://malibursfsidecenews-blog.blogspot.com/2013_02_01_archive.html.

Our CNPS Chapter has hosted hikes and weed wars for many years at the Malibu Bluffs Park. It is a lovely spot with much to offer to birders, botanizers, hikers and others who just need open space with sweeping ocean views and a chance to hike down to the beach. The area should be afforded all possible protections from development. I cannot speak knowledgeably about the Charmlee campsite idea; however, community activists are alarmed about the fire safety of campsites in this area. If you have concerns about this proposed land trade, please voice them to the City of Malibu and the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy.

MALIBU CREEK WATERSHED REPORT

Heal the Bay has published a report entitled “Malibu Creek Watershed: an Ecosystem on the Brink” which details the threats to one of the last relatively undeveloped spots in the Los Angeles urban area. Many years of the organization’s Stream Team documentation has shown the major concerns to be hardened stream banks, polluted waterways, and invasive plants and animals. The report presents the data and outlines possible solutions for individuals and institutions. See the Heal the Bay website for the complete report, appendices, and a summary: http://www.healthebay.org/about-bay/current-issues/keeping-ocean-healthy/malibu-creek-watershed.

NATIVE PLANT WEEK SYMPOSIUM AND WILDFLOWER SHOW KUDOS
By Snowdy Dodson

Our 3rd Annual Native Plant Week Symposium co-sponsored with the Theodore Payne Foundation was a resounding success due to the dedicated volunteers who made it all possible: Gwenn Albright, Doug Allan, Karin Benson, Sheila & Harvey Bjornlie, Henry Carlton, David Ecklund, Olga Hammer, Mary Harrington, Leslie Hartman, David Hollombe, Christian Kiiilkkaa, Jo Kitz, Betsy Landis, Halli Mason, Sid Mendel, Mary Montes, Grace Murayama, Pamela Perkins, Kitty Sarkisian, Joondeuk Seo, 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, Tarweed Nursery, and Sheila Bjornlie. Many thanks go out to these individuals and institutions that contributed the flowers. Special thanks go out to David Hollombe who does our 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. Our Symposium speakers represented a varied perspective: Kat High’s presentation on “Native American Land Management” gave us an insight into traditional and holistic approaches to native plant propagation practices; Lili Singer gave a mini-symposium on gardening with natives and edibles; and Dan Cooper showed us that there are “Urban Wildlands in Los Angeles” in crazy, unexpected places. 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 (the brains behind the event) 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 Vel Lauterio and her 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 2014, and we look forward to seeing you there.
SEPULVEDA BASIN WILDLIFE AREA SAGA - PART 2

By Steve Hartman

On June 5, I took Congressman Brad Sherman’s aide John Alford on a tour of the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Area, where last December the Army Corps of Engineers (ACE) began implementing a “Vegetation Management Plan” that was previously not disclosed to any of the local environmental groups, in particular, the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Areas Steering Committee that has been meeting since 1990. Under the guise of a plan that called for removing non-native plants, ACE actually bull-dozed over 40 acres of native vegetation primarily consisting of Baccharis scrubland (coyote bush and mule fat, B. pilularis and B. salicifolia). What John and I saw in the South Reserve was an open space where the previously bull-dozed native plants were coming up from the roots, already repopulating the habitat with the same plants that the ACE considered “weeds.” If left alone, in 30 some years the area would look like it did before the destruction. The problem is that the Army Corp’s “secret” vegetation management plan called for creating an oak savannah with an understory of salt grass. In order to do so they would have to suppress the native plants that are the natural plant community for a floodplain.

After the Corp halted its project, then City Councilperson Jan Perry authored a motion to have the LA Bureau of Sanitation be the agency to write a report about what happened (the nexus is that the Bureau provides the reclaimed water in Haskell Creek). Also, the Regional Water Quality Control Board got involved and required some mitigation for the way the creek was denuded where Haskell Creek enters the L.A. River. The Bureau asked for a side meeting with the concerned parties (Audubon, Sierra Club, Resource Conservation District, CNPS to name the most active). At the meeting the Bureau asked about a 1985 plan that was approved by the ACE that included not only the pothole pond (destroyed by ACE in December although no mention of its planned demise was mentioned in the Vegetation Plan), but another pond with an island, and a marsh, all utilizing reclaimed water that would flow back into Haskell Creek before entering the LA River.

At a next meeting with ACE, led by Kris Ohlenkamp of the San Fernando Valley Audubon Society, the environmentalists proposed that the above plan be considered by the ACE as it satisfied a number of their objectives, in particular the “line of sight” argument that justified the removal of so much brush; nothing quite so open as open water. The Bureau of Sanitation staff also attended this meeting and stated that the Bureau would provide the reclaimed water to the proposed new wetlands. However, at the subsequent meeting, the ACE explained that they would not consider the expanded wetland proposal as it was too expensive (would require an EIR), that they felt permanent water behind the dam would be a problem (?!), and that they were advised by their lawyers not to create habitat that would bring additional regulators in (i.e. wetlands).

Of further concern is that over the last few months, when responding to letters from the public, Colonel Toy insists that the vegetation plan is proceeding on course! The groups have decided to postpone meetings until the current Colonel Toy retires in June, and is replaced by a new Colonel. Hopefully Congressman Sherman’s office can arrange a meeting with Colonel Toy’s replacement with assurances that the naturally occurring native plants will be given priority and the non-native trees will be removed and an effective long-term weed control program can be established. What will happen with the pothole pond (that previously was filled with potable water provided by the City) is unknown. The report from the Bureau of Sanitation has not been released as of this writing.

[See Vol. 33, number 2 (March-April 2013) issue to read part 1 of this article.]