PRESIDENT’S MESSAGE ON DROUGHT
By Snowdy Dodson
Well, it’s official. We are in a drought. I know because Gov. Brown told me so. No, I don’t think so. We all knew it before he had to admit it. The native plant community has been sending up that flag for several months. Recently, I received an email from CNPS member, Bill Richardson, who suggested that the next issue of the Toyon contain an article about our current drought and its effect on our native gardens adding that he has mostly native plants on his property that are all experiencing stress due to the drought. At a recent SoCalHort meeting, Carol Bornstein and others sent out an alert to the attendees to pay attention and not hesitate to take some action or risk losing established native shrubs and trees. Though I am hoping for another “miracle March,” I decided to poll the native plant horticulture tribal leaders and ask them for some pithy suggestions/solutions. So here is their wisdom...

Carol Bornstein (Director, Nature Gardens, Natural History Museum & co-author of California Native Plants for the Garden) urged SoCalHort attendees to begin immediate deep watering of native trees and shrubs. She encouraged gardeners to check the moisture level of their soil before turning on whatever irrigation system they have and not just set a time clock on automatic or water on a routine manual schedule, and that the interval between watering events should be dependent upon soil type, exposure, vegetation type and age, and of course the weather.

Ellen Mackey (Senior Ecologist, Council for Watershed Health & co-author Care & Maintenance of Southern California Native Plant Gardens) suggests that we water now to mimic the natural rainfall pattern that we would normally expect. Her mantra is: natives want winter water. As of the beginning of February she has been watering for the past month. She adds that we should not fertilize plants as they are stressed enough without giving them fertilizer that will cause more growth that will need to be supported this dry summer. She likes to add mulch to retain soil moisture, even out soil temperature, and discourage/starve weeds.

Betsey Landis (CNPS, LA/SMM Chapter Delegate & co-author Care & Maintenance of Southern California Native Plant Gardens) offers this advice for extremely dry winters: Water your oak trees and chaparral trees every week for at least an hour to keep their root systems healthy. That means using irrigation lines with rainbirds or spray heads on the lines or hoses turned down to a very low flow. Drip irrigation doesn’t work well in very dry soils or in clay soils. Usually, in winter, the rain-soaked roots are busy processing essential nutrients for the plants.

UPCOMING PROGRAMS
of the Los Angeles/Santa Monica Mountains Chapter

MARCH 11, 2014 – 7:30 - 9:30PM
SEPULVEDA GARDEN CENTER
16633 Magnolia Blvd. Encino

WONDROUS NATURAL ENVIRONMENT OF THE SIMI HILLS AND FIELD LAB CREST

Presenter: Christina Walsh
Christina Walsh is a professional nature and sports photographer and environmental advocate specializing in protection of natural resources and environmental policy. She a native of the West Valley and Sweden, based in West Hills at the foot of the Simi Hills.

Christina's images will share many views of the Simi's natural areas and habitats, both those not accessible to the public and of the expansive open space parks with their diverse flora, fauna, and Chumash art.

APRIL 8, 2014 – 7:30 - 9:00PM
FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH SANTA MONICA

THIRTY YEARS OF NATIVE PLANT GARDENING: WHY THE BEST NATIVE GARDENS ARE IN NATURE

Presenter: Doug Allan
Doug's talk will focus on his experiences in planting native gardens at Santa Monica College. Based on his experiences, he will have some recommendations for planting native gardens. Doug will discuss why the best native gardens will always be found in nature, perhaps including some images of plant community recovery following the "Spring Fire" of 2013 in Point Mugu State Park. See for yourself! Join Doug on a CNPS Plant Walk in Point Mugu State Park on April 27!

Programs are free to the public. Refreshments will be served. For directions, see CNPS Programs on page 3.
HIKES AND RESTORATION - MARCH & APRIL 2014

SAT 3/1 8:45am
Cold Creek Valley Preserve
Be a Restorationist for a Day: 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 trees, shrubs, penstemons, roses and bunch grasses that feed and shelter wildlife are awaiting your help. Receive community service credit. Reservations required: 818-591-1701 or volunteer@treepeople.org. Meet along the first 0.5 mile of Mulholland Highway, Calabasas. 3.5hrs *

SUN 3/16 8:45am
Santa Monica Mountains
Weed Wars – 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 volunteer@treepeople.org. Call or email for directions. 3.5hrs*

SAT 3/22 8:30am
La Sierra Preserve
Restoration of a Hidden Gem. You won’t find this beauty spot on any map, but after we meet at Peter Strauss Ranch the way will be shown. 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 you to help them through their first years. Bring water. Receive community service credit. Reservations required: volunteer@treepeople.org or Jo at 818-591-1701. From Kanan Road, Agoura Hills, turn onto Troutdale, then left on Mulholland Highway, then right into Peter Strauss parking lot. 3.5hrs*

SUN 3/23 8:30am
Topanga State Park
Lower Topanga Park Restoration Planting Native plants are working hard to bring a natural eco-balance to the lower Topanga Creek area of the park. But they need a boost – we’ll join TreePeople to plant natives after those noxious weeds are removed!! 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: volunteer@treepeople.org or 818-348-5910. 3.5hrs*

SAT 3/29 9am–4pm
Temescal Canyon Park
Temescal Canyon Pacific Palisades Native Plant Garden
Restoration 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 barbara.marinacci@verizon.net or Michael G. Terry at michaelgterry@hotmail.com.

SAT 4/5 8:45am
Cold Creek Valley Preserve
Be a Restorationist for a Day See March 1 write-up.

SAT 4/12 8:45am
Malibu Creek State Park 1925 Las Virgenes Road, Calabasas
Return of the Lost Oak Woodlands There once was a valley where giant oaks held an ecosystem together. The trees were harvested for fuel and lumber; the valley had many experiences; charcoal kilns, farming, cattle grazing, movie making. But a white knight rode in: State Parks acquired the property to provide a park for public enjoyment and to preserve an historic landscape. 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: volunteer@treepeople.org or Jo at 818-591-1701 x203. 3.5hrs*

SUN 4/13 8:45am
Santa Monica Mountains
Weed War See March 9 write-up.

SAT 4/26 8:30am
La Sierra Preserve
Restoration of a Hidden Gem. See March 22 write-up

SAT 4/26  9am–4pm
Temescal Canyon Park
Weeding in the City Park at Temescal Canyon
See write-up for March 22.

SUN 4/27  8:30am
Topanga State Park
Lower Topanga Park Restoration See March 23 write-up.

SUN 4/27 10 am
Point Mugu State Park - Ray Miller Trailhead
Fire-following Wildflower Walk Seeds of native plants and wildflowers have lain dormant since 1991 when the last wildfire swept through the western Santa Monica Mountains. Join leader Doug Allen for an up-close look at how native species recover from wildfires. Bring water, snack, lunch (if you want to linger after the walk). Meet at the Ray Miller Trail from the La Jolla Valley Trailhead parking lot; parking fee in the lot; park free on PCH and walk in. Info: 818-782-9346. 2-3hrs

SUN 4/27  Noon–4pm
Temescal Canyon Pacific Palisades Native Plant Garden
CNPS members Barbara Marinacci & Michael Terry will be leading tours as part of a garden club tour. ~700 Temescal Canyon Road, Pacific Palisades 90272 (between the Pacific Coast Highway & Sunset Boulevard, below Bowdoin Street, across from Palisades Charter High School’s stadium and Temescal Academy).

* Co-sponsored by LA/SMM CNPS, Mountains Restoration Trust, and TreePeople.

All Field Trips - Rain Cancels
**CNPS PROGRAMS**

**TUES 3/11  7:30-9:30PM**  
*Sepulveda Garden Center, Encino*

**SIMI HILLS AND FIELD LAB CREST**  
**Presenter:** Christina Walsh  
**Directions:** the Sepulveda Garden Center, 16633 Magnolia Blvd. in Encino, is on the north side of Magnolia between Balboa & Hayvenhurst. Park in the lighted lot at the east end of the garden, walk west along the path to the garden center building. Refreshments are served. A no-host dinner precedes the meeting at 6:00 pm at Tony Roma’s Restaurant, 16575 Ventura Blvd., Encino. (818-461-8400)

**TUES 4/8  7:30-9:00PM**  
*First United Methodist Church, Santa Monica*

**THIRTY YEARS OF NATIVE PLANT GARDENING**  
**Presenter:** Doug Allan  
Doug Allan earned a Masters degree in Biology at California State University, Fullerton in 1975. He taught biology courses at Fullerton College, Cypress College and for 34 years at Santa Monica City College. These courses ranged from field botany and field zoology to natural histories of the Santa Monica Mountains and many other areas of southern California to human biology and biology for the blind. Now that Doug is retired, he has time to hike, surf, study nature, garden, lead school and public walks for the Topanga Canyon Docents and plant walks for California Native Plant Society. Doug is coordinator for the Topanga Docents Field Ecology Weekend, April 12 and 13 at the group campsite in Malibu Creek State Park.

**Directions:** The First United Methodist Church, 1008 11th Street, Santa Monica CA 90403, is one and a half blocks north of Wilshire Boulevard on 11th Street in Santa Monica. From the 10 freeway, exit at Lincoln. Go right, or north to Wilshire. Turn right. In three blocks turn left on 11th Street. The church is on the left, just past California. Church parking is on the right under an apartment complex. The Fireside Room is at the north end of the church's large patio, next to the Sanctuary. Refreshments are served. A no-host dinner precedes the meeting at 6:00 pm at El Cholo Mexican Restaurant in Santa Monica at 1025 Wilshire Blvd.

**FOR INFORMATION ABOUT THE ABOVE PROGRAM, PLEASE SEE “UPCOMING PROGRAMS” ON FRONT PAGE.**

**CHAPTER BOARD MEETINGS**

March 4 and April 1, 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 6:00pm at Garden Wok Restaurant at same address. Members welcome!

**ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**CNPS CHAPTER COUNCIL MEETING**  
March 8–9  
*Rancho Santa Ana Botanic Garden*

**Rancho Santa Ana Botanic Garden**  
Early March is a perfect time of the year to visit Rancho Santa Ana Botanic Garden and on March 8 and 9, the local CNPS chapters will be hosting the quarterly Chapter Council meeting at the Garden. If you would like to carpool there, please leave your name and phone number (or email) at the chapter phone 818-881-3706 or to lacnps@lacnps.org.

**POPPY DAY AT THEODORE PAYNE FOUNDATION**  
March 29  8:30 am  4:30 pm  
10459 Tuxford St., Sun Valley, 91352  
The annual spring celebration and sale. Members receive 15% off plants; non-members 10%. http://theodorepayne.org

**THEODORE PAYNE NATIVE FOUNDATION GARDEN TOUR**  
**Sat. & Sun. April 5 & 6, 10 am - 5 pm**  
A two-day self-guided tour through 35+ gardens in the greater LA area that feature California native plants and the wildlife they thrive on as well as water-saving landscaping practices. Tickets are $15 per TPF members; $20 non-members. See the tour website for details and online purchase http://www.nativeplantgardentour.org

**CHATSWORTH NATURE PRESERVE OPEN HOUSE**  
**April 6th  - 10 am  3 pm**  
23234 Valley Circle Blvd., Chatsworth, 91311  
Event will feature displays by local environmental groups and hikes around the ecology pond. The Preserve is open only once a year in case you’d like to see what lies behind the fences.

**NATIVE PLANT WEEK SYMPOSIUM, CHAPTER WILDFLOWER SHOW, AND PLANT SALE**  
**April 19, 2014 (Saturday); 9am-4pm**  
16633 Magnolia Blvd., Encino, 91436  
Our CNPS Chapter’s annual Wildflower Show is scheduled for April 19 at the Sepulveda Garden Center in conjunction with a simultaneous Native Plant Week Symposium, plant and book sale. The Symposium will feature speakers throughout the day. Plants for sale will be available courtesy of our co-sponsor the Theodore Payne Foundation. We welcome California native wildflower cuttings from your home gardens.

The Symposium will feature the following speakers:  
10:00-11:30am, Hartmut Wisch, An Introduction to California Native Bees  
Noon-1:30pm, Mickey Long, Botany for Birders: Merging Plant and Bird Study  
2:00-3:30pm, Allan Pollack, Restoring Habitat, One Yard at a Time

Contact Snowdy Dodson via email: snowdy.dodson@csun.edu or phone: 818-782-9346 for details. The cuttings need to be available for set up on Friday, April 18.
**President’s Message on Drought**  
*(continued from page 1)*

Cassy Aoyagi (President, Theodore Payne Foundation Board & President, FormLA Landscaping) points out that all natives aren’t equal so it is important to make sure that plant groupings and trees have similar watering needs so that you are not always watering to the wettest plant and place. She suggests that if you have drought stressed natives, consider ensuring the dry conditions are tolerable for more months of the year for those particular species. Get natives established early on with less water so they don’t become acclimated to conditions that won’t persist, and for city dwellers, nearby water sources may be undermining your plants ability to adapt to drought. Sometimes drainage, broken irrigation, run-off from neighbors and mysterious sources of water are countering your efforts to make your plants survive a very dry summer. She adds that drought tolerant natives be allowed to enter summer dormancy as they have been evolved to do.

Bob Sussman (Owner, Matilija Native Plant Nursery) indicates that though California native plants are used to our low rainfall, they will need gardeners to add some “man-made rain.” New plants should be getting a good watering once a week which is more or less “normal” for plants in the ground less than one year. Natives that have been in the ground more than that should get a good, deep supplemental twice a month through spring, not more. This will bring the irrigation to about the same as a low normal rainfall for the year. It’s important that the watering reaches all the way down to the roots and not just the surface. Mulches will help retain the moisture and provide some humidity as well as weed control. This is the general “standard normal” advice for native gardens in drought conditions.

Joanne Burger & Paul Jacobson (Owners, Tarweed Native Nursery) indicates that they would give the same advice they always give when planting native plants: Water the hole well before planting and pay attention to how fast the water drains giving you a clue as to how often you might need to water; cover with wood chip mulch to help keep the soil from drying out and keep it cool; check every few days and water if needed; use drip systems if possible, since they only water the actual plants with less waste; water in the early morning, not during the middle of the day; and finally, try to use water more than once, i.e., if you can catch water runoff and use that to water native plants, then you are getting more use of the same water.

Lisa Novick (Theodore Payne Foundation, Director of Outreach and K-12 Education) recommends deep but infrequent water around the root zone of all established plants; this means every two to three months, depending on the species (manzanita should not be watered at all during the summer). Lisa leaves the hose on a steady trickle and moves it around the root zone over the course of a day or two. The idea is to keep the plants alive, but keep them in “stasis” mode so that they aren’t getting bigger and consequently needing more water.

Steve Hartman (life member CNPS and Theodore Payne Foundation, current CNPS Chapter Treasurer & long time native gardener) has observed that native annuals are not surviving without additional water after they germinate; supplemental water is required to bring annuals to bloom.

And lastly I will chime in with some ideas. I think that we should begin thinking about using more locally native plants in our gardens. These are the plants that have adapted to our special conditions. At a recent hike where we were identifying Santa Monica Mountain manzanitas, Doug Allan (retired biology faculty at Santa Monica City College & Topanga Docent) pointed out that the manzanita that is most planted in native gardens is not local to southern California but comes from points north. It is interesting that some native nurseries such as Theodore Payne Foundation are beginning to indicate locally sourced native plants. This used to be an important issue for restoration projects and for those in the wildland urban interface, but now may be a consideration for our future native plant selections.

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**LAX Coastal Dunes Improvement Project**

Much thanks again to CNPS for your assistance with the seed collections in the LAX Dunes, and for your donations of container beach primrose (*Camissonia cheiranthifolia*). The LAX Coastal Dunes Improvement Project is proceeding on schedule. The road removal is complete, and the work on the sidewalk on Vista Del Mar and the trail connection on Napoleon should be completed by mid-February. The container plants will be installed once we have the irrigation system in place. Thanks to CNPS's assistance, the LAX Coastal Dunes Preserve was able to have enough seed for the project. We began broadcast seeding the collected seed into the northern dunes area the last week of January, and tamping the seeds into the soil, while crimping rice straw into the sand to provide the seeds with adequate contact with the soil, and cover and support during germination. The existing lupines, deerweed, beach primrose, and sand verbena are already blooming again in the LAX Coastal Dunes preserve thanks to the coastal fog. And of course the non-native mustards, annual grasses, and filaree are starting to come in as well. The preserve will begin an Adopt-A-Dune program this spring with various non-profit organizations helping to remove weeds, take plant inventories (surveys), and collect and spread seed from adopted restoration areas. We would be very happy to have CNPS's help with this endeavour on June 14th and July 12th. We need help removing iceplant, mustard, acacia, castor bean, radish, euphorbia, Russian thistle, and the occasional ornamental. And of course, we could always use your help gathering and scattering seeds and desired plant materials.

Peggy Nguyen (pnguyen3@lawa.org)
FIELD ECOLOGY WEEKEND
April 12-13 Malibu Creek State Park Group Campground
Sponsored by Topanga Creek Docents in association with the Malibu Creek Docents, the program will introduce attendees to the natural environment of the Santa Monica Mountains and surrounds. Docents and their friends and families from throughout the region are invited to attend. New and returning speakers will cover a variety of topics including California natural history, native uses of plants, Tongva culture, nature journaling, birds, mammals, insects, plants, astronomy, geology, weather and climate, nature awareness, material culture of the chaparral, and campfire stories and songs. The event will occur under the oaks at the group campsite in Malibu Creek State Park. Camping on Friday and Saturday nights will be possible. Registration information will be posted in late February at topangadocents.org.

Call for Articles on Members Native Plant Gardens
The CNPS Horticulture Program has begun running a series of articles in the CNPS Bulletin on native plant gardens of CNPS members. The first one appeared in the Oct.-Dec. 2013 issue on page 7. Depending on the response, this series could become a regular feature in the state newsletter. The purpose of the series is to inspire others to create their own native plant gardens, or to add natives to an already existing garden.

If you have a native plant garden you feel is special and beautiful, and if you would like to share it with others in CNPS, send us an inspiring article draft of 575-600 words. We hope you'll include your experiences with the garden, as well as just describing what's there. Also include two high-quality photos (in jpg format, not close-ups) that show off your garden, and one-sentence captions for each. Send your submission to Susan Krzywicki, CNPS Horticulture Program Director, at skrzywicki@cnps.org. If we feel your article can be published, we will work with you through the editing process until it's in a final form. We look forward to hearing from a number of CNPS members!

Regards,

Susan Krzywicki
Horticulture Program Director
California Native Plant Society
619.318.4590

Brentwood Update
Brentwood is one of the largest geographic areas within the City of Los Angeles. Its boundaries range from Mulholland Drive to Wilshire Boulevard and the 405 freeway; west to include Mandeville Canyon. The community hosts open space of the Santa Monica Mountains, single family homes, and high-density urban infill. The Brentwood Community Council (BCC) expanded their environmental focus for 2014. CNPS Los Angeles/Santa Monica Mountains Chapter member and Brentwood resident Julie Clark De Blasio will serve along with the chair and alternate.

Current priority is the protection and maintenance of the community's iconic non-native coral trees that line the meridian of San Vicente Boulevard. Loss of the species along the parkway is due to a combination of factors. Reasons include mature age class and trauma from irrigation and pedestrian traffic to the tree root systems that grow close to soil surface. The Council offered a meridian planning meeting on February 18 to request public input of landscaping ideas researched to date. Local native plant materials will be a considered design option.

The epic statewide drought continues to challenge both native habitat functions and domestic water supply. Vernal annual species normally grace the hillsides this time of year; sage scrub and chaparral communities teem with the resonance of birds and other wildlife. The verdant landscaped neighborhoods of Brentwood are in stark contrast to the still and stark monotone brown of the rain-starved Santa Monica Mountains. Angelenos are some of the most water-secure residents of the state. The seeming abundance of this increasingly precious resource fosters high use. 'English garden' style designs prevail in Brentwood. A few homes and businesses are landscaped with drought tolerant and native species. Incorporation of xeriphytic types increasingly are evident yet often remain in combination with plants that have high water requirements. The environmental committee of the Council may consider creating a 'water wise' native plant education and landscaping project in 2014.

There is expressed interest, especially in Mandeville Canyon, for establishment of a Fire Safe Council. Los Angeles City Fire Department Station 59 Captain Tyrone Davis recently spoke at the February Los Angeles Police Department Community Police Advisory Board meeting. He discussed the importance of community organizing and hazard reduction with emphasis on structural and landscaping maintenance, especially by controlling or not planting flammable non-native ornamentals. Captain Davis' message is consistent with both CNPS Wildland-Urban Interface wildfire preparedness guidelines and current fire science 'house out' prevention strategies.

Sullivan Canyon native vegetation restoration will continue indefinitely as part of Southern California Gas Company mitigation requirements for the pipeline project in the area. Success rate for plantings the last three years is low due to the drought and expected to remain so until creek ground flows return.

Julie is a contractor with Mountains Restoration Trust currently collaborating on a community wildfire preparedness and prevention project in Monte Nido. She also contributes to water quality improvement and habitat restoration projects in the region.

Julie Clark De Blasio - sweetgrass.environmental@gmail.com
RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

NATIVE PLANT WEEK SYMPOSIUM,
CHAPTER WILDFLOWER SHOW,
AND PLANT SALE
April 19, 2014 (Saturday); 9am-4pm
Sepulveda Garden Center, Encino
(see page 3 for details).

TIME VALUE

Volume 34 Number 2
March – April 2014

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or to CNPS, 2707 K Street, Suite 1,
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