

CALIFORNIA NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY MARIN CHAPTER



December 2024 Newsletter

Marin Chapter Meeting

"Flora of the Northern Sierra Nevada - Botanical encounters off the beaten path"

Guest Speaker: **Tanya Baxter M.S.**

Monday, **December 9 at 7:30 pm**

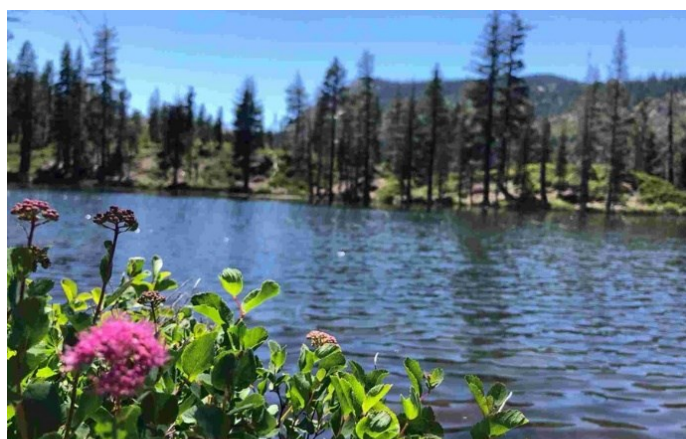
On over 1,146,000 acres of Plumas National Forest hosts some of the most diverse habitat in the northern Sierra Nevada range. Since 2023 Tanya Baxter and crews of consultant botanists have been documenting remote, rugged, and often unvisited portions of the national forest around the area of Quincy for a fuels reduction mitigation inventory.

Over the last few years several large fires have ravished the yellow pine forests of Plumas National Forest and drastically impacted the ecology and timber harvest. Numerous new rare plant populations were documented during these botanical surveys. This talk will cover an entertaining hour of plant communities, botanical highlights, scenic sections of the Feather River, and the unexpected field encounters.

Tanya Baxter M.S. is a botanist and ecologist. With over a decade of expertise in land management she has led landscape-scale restoration projects for the national park service and innovative collaborations with non-profit partners. She led a multi-year grant to eradicate the most invasive species on 75,000 acres in Marin County combined with a dedicated volunteer program.

Tanya conducts rare plant surveys in remote, rugged areas. She has roots in fire science and has served as a natural resource advisor on wildland fires in Yosemite National Park. With a specialty in riparian habitats, coastal fire fuels reductions, native plant revegetation design, and northern Sierra Nevada flora. She teaches a field course on plant taxonomy at San Francisco State University each June that is open to the public. See more at Baxterbotanical.net Join us!

[Register for this Zoom meeting here.](#)



Spiraea splendens - Rose meadowsweet at Lily Lake

Photo by Tanya Baxter

Marin Chapter Field Trips

- Sign up for most field trips using [Meetup.com](#) or the [Meetup app](#).
- Electronically sign the CNPS waiver (once per year). [2024 Marin CNPS WaiverSign Link](#).
- Contact the leader(s) with any questions.

Roy's Redwoods – Restoration of Its Forest and Trails

Saturday, December 21, 2024, 1:30 to 4 pm

Leaders: **Betsey Crawford & Ann Elliott**

Explore the newly opened trails through [Roy's Redwoods Preserve](#). Marin County Parks in cooperation with OneTam have restored and enhanced the health of the redwood forest and the hydrology of the site. Much of the understory trail through the redwoods is now accessible to ADA standards. We will start on the Meadow Trail, then walk the complete 2.5-mile Loop trail. Expect 300 ft elevation gain and drop. Be prepared for wet trail conditions.

[Roy's Redwoods Restoration Plan](#)

Directions: Meet at the park entrance on Nicasio Valley Road about 0.75 miles north of Sir Francis Drake Blvd.

Bring: Water, a snack/lunch. Dress in layers. **Rain cancels**

Email [Ann Elliott](#) **with any questions** **Text for day-of-trip questions or issues:** 530-521-4402

[Meetup Registration Link](#)

Indian Valley Open Space Preserve Winter Plant Walk

Saturday, January 4, 2024, 10 to 12:30 am (rain date Jan. 11)

Leaders: **Stacey Pogorzelski and Caroline Christman**

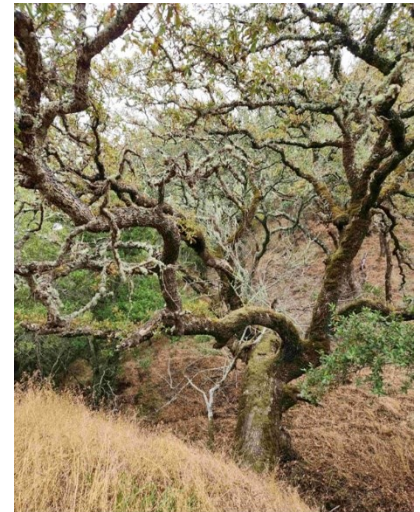
Join us for an approximately 2-mile meander through oak woodlands and seasonal streams of the [Indian Valley Preserve](#). We will encounter plants beginning their winter/spring growth. The area hosts valley, black, and coast live oak, madrone, bay laurel, California buckeye, understory shrubs, grasses, vines, geophytes, and annuals. We might even see some early-blooming manzanita! The trail has some steeper sections, so bring hiking poles if you use them. We will be starting out on the Pacheco Pond Fire Road, heading towards Pacheco Pond.

Directions: Meet at the College of Marin Indian Valley Campus. Go to the west entrance parking lot 5 (between Lot 5 and Lot 6). You can park in Lot 5 for free, or buy a permit for the other lots. From Lot 6, face the IVC Farm and walk to the left of the buildings. We will continue onto the Ken Harth Waterfall Trail. Accessible by Marin Transit #57.

See [INaturalist plant species list](#)

Limit of 15 attendees **Heavy rain postpones/cancels.**

[Meetup Registration Link](#)



Oak in Indian Valley OSP
Photo by Stacey Pogorzelski

We are looking for more field trip leaders.

Do you have natives you admire in your neighborhood? You too can lead a fun, low-key plant walk near where you live! Contact Field Trip Committee member [Ann Elliott](#) to find out how.

Some ideas: Trees of Gerstle Park, Mill Valley Redwood Valleys, Panoramic Wonders near Mt. Tam, Sleepy Hollow Ridge Rambles, Fairfax Forays, Marinwood's Secret Trails, Bird Habitat of Santa Venetia Marsh/McInnis Park. Short walks are very popular with our members.



Jackie Garcia at the Garden Party/Tour of her garden
Photo by Stacey Pogorzelski

Apply for a Micro Grant for 2025

CNPS Marin Micro Grants fund small projects and funding gaps for projects that benefit Marin’s native plants. Submissions due December 15, 2024.

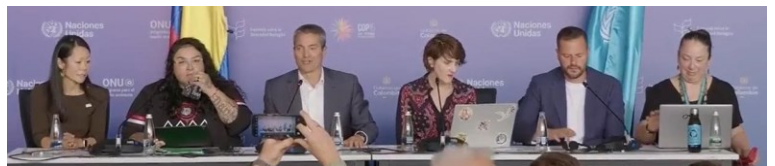
[Information and application process here.](#)



Glandularia lilacina ‘De la Mina’ Verbena and Monarch in Refugia Marin Photo by Ann Elliott

COP 16 - Cali to Cali

COP 16, the international biodiversity conference, convened in Cali, Colombia on October 20, 2024. The official goal was to implement the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework, approved at COP15 in 2022. It fell somewhat short of this goal. However, the slow progress of the high-level negotiations among national governments contrasted with much success reported at local levels. Especially significant in light of the fact that the United States is the only member of the United Nations that has not ratified the Convention on Biodiversity was the presence of the 100+ California delegation, within which both CNPS and Marin were well represented. A major goal of local organizations and governments going forward should be the development of local and regional biodiversity plans. A more detailed discussion of COP16 may be found at marinbiodiversity.org.



Here is a link to an inspiring press conference: [California's Progress Toward 30x30](#).

Change in Use Request for Trails in Olompali State Historic Park

Notes from Invited Meeting 11/18/2024

By Ann Elliott

Community members representing a variety of visitor groups to [Olompali SHP](#) attended an informational meeting and field trip with CA State Park Staff on Monday, November 18, 2024. A written request had been made for a change in use for the Loop and Burdell Trails to allow mountain bike access. The older Miwok Trail is not being considered for multiuse as it is too steep and erosive and near many sensitive cultural resources.

Deputy Superintendent Matthew Allen welcomed and reminded us of CA State Parks mission to “To provide for the health, inspiration, and education of the people of California by helping to preserve the state’s extraordinary biological diversity, protecting its most valued natural and cultural resources, and creating opportunities for high-quality outdoor recreation.” Mike Nelson, District Trails Manager, outlined the process that a trail change-in-use request goes through. See the [flow chart](#).



Loop Trail drainage needing extensive work
Photo by Ann Elliott



Loop Trailhead Olompali SHP
Photo by Woody Elliott



Mike Nelson explains modifications needed for multiuse trail
Photo by Ann Elliott

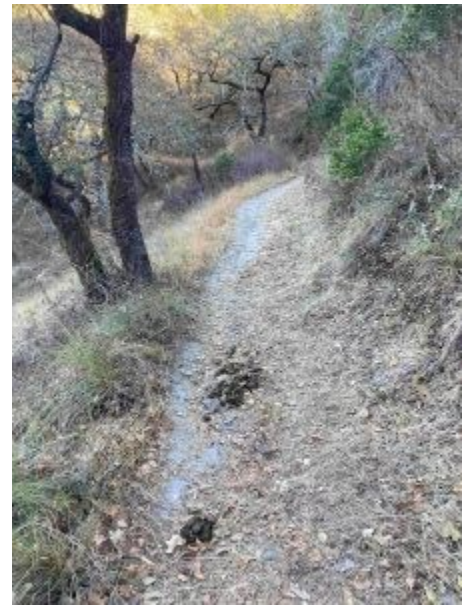
Mike and a CA Parks Service Center staffer have completed the second step in the process, an Inventory of the Existing Conditions (physical trail conditions only, no habitat or cultural resource evaluation). They distributed to attendees a limited number of trail maps noting those conditions. CA State Parks is interested in getting informal public comments before further evaluation by staff.

The next step is for Parks staff to evaluate the natural and cultural resources, public safety issues, and trail design and development as regards this change in use for compatibility, feasibility, sustainability, and safety. Their recommendations for approval, conditional approval, or rejection of the request will be published with an opportunity for official public comment before a final decision is made by the Parks Bay Area District Superintendent. All evaluations by Parks staff are done on a time-available basis. Consultation about all park development is done with the [Federated Indians of Graton Rancheria](#).

Following the meeting, many in the group hiked the Loop. Mike and trail planning staff identified trail features and problems. They described some modifications that would be needed to add another user group (bike riders) to the trail. Currently, the trails are open to pedestrians and horseback riders. I attended the meeting and hike: Below are snippets of comments and observations:

- Mountain bikers prefer to be identified as “visitors” with a different “activity” than pedestrians, not as “users.”
- Horses are spooked by fast-approaching bikes.

- Hikers and riders reduce their use of trails when mountain bike use increases. Safety for themselves and their children is their concern.
- Young mountain bike riders feel “excluded” from the park because they cannot do their preferred activity.
- CA State Park Rangers are spread thinly and report that tickets are often not effective deterrents for illegal trail use by visitors on bikes and e-bikes.
- Illegal mountain bike trail construction is ongoing in Olompali SHP and other parks in the area where historic stone walls have been dismantled.
- CA State Parks staff report that when mountain bikes are legally allowed in a park, the use and further construction of illegal mountain bike trails increase. This trend is contrary to arguments of mountain bike advocates that bikers will be content to stay on officially developed trails when they have legal access.
- When mountain biking is added as an activity in a State Park, calls for emergency medical assistance rise dramatically.
- The neighboring Buck Institute is having its fences repeatedly cut, facilitating illegal trail construction and use by bikers on their property



**Loop Trail narrowed due to slumping of cut into hill
Photo by Woody Elliott**



**Loop Trail repair-enhancement from 2012
Photo by Woody Elliott**

and causing cattle to escape their allotted grazing area.

- All State Park trails have a maintenance schedule (often delayed). Currently weeds are whipped most years at Olompali SHP. Trail maintenance by staff is insufficient but can be done by volunteers.
- The last extensive development/maintenance work on the Loop Trail was done in 2012/2013.
- Most sections of the Loop Trail could be made wide enough for the two physically largest users (horses and bikes) to pass safely by digging out the sloughed road-cut banks and filling in ruts in the path, so water drains off the trail. A few stream crossings and switchbacks may need extensive work.
- State Park biologists have surveyed and mapped all of the rare and sensitive species and habitats along the trails.

Some species of concern are Napa false indigo (*Amorpha californica var. napensis*, California Rare Plant Ranks, CNPS List 1B2), oval-leaved viburnum (*Viburnum ellipticum*), and northern spotted owl (*Strix occidentalis caurina*), federal and Calif. threatened species.

- Erosion along trails, roads, and creeks in Olompali SHP are often revealing burial remains of Native Americans.
- To allow bikes on Bills Trail in Samuel P. Taylor SP an EIR was developed. It took over 5 years to construct the trail once its design was approved. Delays were caused by construction being seasonally limited to protect habitat mostly for salmonids. Bills Trail is closed during the wet season to reduce erosion into the creek.
- CA State Parks has developed a programmatic EIR for Change-in-Use for trails: [California State Parks Road and Trail Change-in-Use Evaluation Process Program EIR \(CIU EIR\)](#) approved in 2013.
- [Easy Grade Trail Change-In-Use](#) in Mt. Tamalpais SP was approved with that programmatic EIR in 2019 and is still awaiting funding. [maps](#)



**Junction of Loop and Burdell Trails
Photo by Woody Elliott**

Calflora - Plant Distribution Maps and More



Calflora: the nonprofit wild plant database

Every wild plant species in the state has its own distribution map: that's 8,500+ distribution maps available to you via the Calflora website.

Calflora staff combine, or aggregate, wild plant data from many sources. One source is plant specimen records from Consortium of California Herbaria (CCH); another is iNaturalist records. Calflora staff also refresh the records from our aggregated sources regularly. That way, you see their new records reflected in [Calflora](#).

Calflora staff combine data from many sources to provide a more complete plant distribution picture:



Quiz: which *Atriplex* species distribution does this Calflora map reflect? Please email news@calflora.org with your response.

CNPS Marin Board Elections are During Dec. 9 Meeting

Our December membership meetings are also official annual meetings during which our members vote on a slate of officers for the Marin Chapter Board of Directors. We have space on the board for more members.

The proposed slate for 2025 is as follows:

Co-President: David Long

Co-President: Kristin Jakob

Treasurer: Bonnie Gosliner

Recording Secretary: Woody Elliott

Directors: Eva Buxton

Paul da Silva

Ann Elliott

Carolyn

Longstreth

Laura Lovett

Stacey

Pogorzelski

Eddie Robertson

Kate Wing



Rosa californica - wild rose
Pinnacles National Park
Photo by Ann Elliott

The Board usually meets the first Monday of each month via Zoom. All members are welcome. Contact [David Long](#) to attend.

Broom Service

There's little predictability to this cool, showery weather. While Broom Service has worked in weather like this before, the hillsides can be precarious even in light rains.

Broom Service volunteers remove invasive and flammable broom from natural areas in San Geronimo Valley and surrounding hills. Text Mel Wright to find out how to join their efforts: 415-999-4736



French Broom, San Geronimo Drive, Woodacre (since removed) Photo by Melvyn Wright

Northern California Botanists Symposium

January 13 & 14, 2025
California State University Chico
Chico, CA

[Information and Registration](#)



Upcoming Marin Chapter Events

- **12/2 7 pm** Marin Chapter Board Meets, contact [David Long](#) to attend via Zoom
- **12/9 7:30 pm** Chapter Meeting: "[Flora of the Northern Sierra Nevada - Botanical encounters off the beaten path](#)" Speaker: Tanya Baxter M.S.
- **12/21 1:30 - 4 pm** Field Trip: [Roy's Redwoods](#) Leaders: Betsey & Ann
- **1/4/2025 10 to 12:30 am** [Indian Valley Open Space Preserve Winter Plant Walk](#) Leaders: Stacey and Caroline



Bank with bryophytes and other fun plants - Indian Tree OSP
Photo by Ann Elliott

Other Activities in Marin and Nearby

- **12/1 11 am to 1 pm** [Habitat Restoration, Point Reyes National Seashore](#)
- **12/5 5:30 pm** [CNPS Naturehood Webinar](#): Textures of Autumn, Patricia Carpenter's habitat garden
- **1/13 & 1/14** [Northern California Botanists Symposium](#) Chico State



Oxalis oregana - redwood sorrel
in Samuel P. Taylor SP Photo by Ann Elliott

Be sure to periodically check [CNPS.org/events](https://www.cnps.org/events) for interesting talks and field trips sponsored by CNPS Chapters and staff throughout the state.

Also check the [Events Calendar for Marin County Parks](#). They host a variety of local hikes, service projects, and presentations.

It Is Fall - Time for Change

As we finish our 50th anniversary year, we look toward a future of plant exploration, learning, and advocacy.

Please send me information of related upcoming events, conservation issues, and native plant topics to include in the next edition.

Share your photos and experiences in the natural world.

Contact me: [Ann Elliott](#), Newsletter Editor



Heteromeles arbutifolia - toyon among madrone Trees in Indian Tree OSP Photo by Ann Elliott

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