

CALIFORNIA NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY MARIN CHAPTER



Trametes versicolor - turkey tail fungus on coast live oak, Bayview Trail Point Reyes NS
Photo by Ann Elliott

February 2025 Newsletter

Marin Chapter Meeting

Four Easy Tools for Wildflower Restoration:

Unearthing Wildflowers from dormant wildflower seeds in the soil, sleeping underneath the weeds: Kite Hill Wildflower Preserve serpentine restoration in the Town of Woodside.

Guest Speaker: **Craig Dremann**

Monday, **February 10 at 7:30 pm**

Craig's talk is about four easy methods invented 30 years ago, able to restore California native grasslands and wildflower meadows back to 95% or better native cover and used to restore 800 acres of grasslands so far.



Mowing weed grasses monthly from February to June at 8-12 inches high, gets rid of the weeds and unearths buried dormant native seeds in the soil.
Photo by Craig Dremann

1. **Monthly mowing** at 8-12 inches high from February to June--stops weeds from producing more viable seeds to add to the soil seed bank. When the weed seedbank all sprouts and is then depleted, dormant native seeds can grow again.
2. **Check the levels** of nitrogen, phosphorus and organic matter. If below the threshold levels needed for native seedling survival, add fertilizers and mulch.
3. **Let native plant allelochemicals do the weeding for you.**
4. **Summertime Low-Mow, Blow and Go.** Cut and remove straw and their allelochemicals, so they will not interfere with native seeds sprouting in the future.

Craig Carlton Dremann is an Ecological Restoration professional and co-owner of The Reveg Edge in San Mateo County. Craig’s Native heritage is from the Tuscarora Nation of North Carolina and has been a “Grassland Land Doctor” since 1992.

Note: Craig’s entire ZOOM presentation is posted [here](#). Anyone can view the PowerPoint presentation now and then **email Craig your list of questions you have before or after the ZOOM meeting**. He will email answers to your questions directly.

[Read more...](#)

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



Waypoint Lab (Anaheim) A-01 soil tests from the top two inches of serpentine soil. Then, adding organic fertilizer with nitrogen, phosphorus and mulch, putting back nutrients to unearth a 99% weed-free wildflower meadow from dormant seeds still in the soil.



The results of 1/2 gram of native spineflower stem tea on mung beans in five days.

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). **NEW!!!** [2025 Marin CNPS WaiverSign Link](#).
- Contact the leader(s) with any questions.



Vegetation “mosaic” in San Geronimo Valley
Photo by Kurt Rademacher

Vegetation Time Traveling!

Exploring Plant Succession over the centuries at Loma Alta & Roy’s Redwoods Preserves.

Wednesday, **February 12, 10 to 2 pm**

Leader: **Kurt Rademacher**

Ever wondered what our natural vegetation looked like a century or two ago,.. or in the future? Though few wildflowers yet grace the February hillsides, come join us for an intriguing 2-mile stroll to piece together clues in today’s woodlands, meadows, chaparral, and forests which reveal the succession of these vegetation types, each modifying the conditions it initially found suitable, until they are

replaced in turn by other plant communities, and those by yet other plants. See the evidence of ancient events like fires or floods which set it all back to the earlier stages to start over yet again—or in some cases, have held one plant community in place for many centuries! [Read more...](#)

Winter Wonder Plant Walk in Samuel P. Taylor State Park

Thursday, February 13, 11 to 1:30 am

Leaders: **Stacey Pogorzelski and Caroline Christman**

Join us as we enjoy the wonders of winter at this beautiful park. We hope to see (and smell) Fetid Adder's Tongue, enjoy the ferns, or even see steelhead trout in Lagunitas Creek! We will definitely experience the beautiful redwood forest.

We will walk about 3 miles total; the trail has about 250 feet elevation gain. Trail conditions may change our planned route. Heavy rain cancels.

[Read more...](#)



Scoliopus bigelovii - fetid adders tongue, slinkpod
Photo by Stacey Pogorzelski

Sugarloaf Ridge, a State Park 'gem' tucked back in the hills east of Kenwood in Sonoma County

Thursday, May 1, 10 am to 3 pm

Leader: **Kurt Rademacher**

Join us for a hike exploring the spring wildflowers, shrubs & trees of Sugarloaf Ridge State Park. Portions of our route through woodlands, chaparral, grasslands and riparian woods burnt in 2017, and it's interesting to see how these different plant communities have been regenerating. Just a few of the plants we hope to see are the golden fairy lantern, Oregon oak, coffee fern and, in keeping with your drive through the Sonoma Valley, the wine-cup clarkia.



Calochortus amabilis - golden fairy lantern
Sugarloaf Ridge SP Photo by Kurt Rademacher

State Park entry fee; \$10 per vehicle. If you want to camp the night before, after or both, reserve your sites and/or tent online: [Sugarloaf Ridge State Park](#)

[Read more...](#)

Spring Native Plant Sale

Mark your calendars! We're putting together a great collection that offers lots of summer color, including a number of annuals.

Online Sale: April 3 at 6 pm through April 7 at 6 pm

Plant Order Pickup and In-person Plant Sale of remaining plants:

Saturday, April 13 from 10 am to 1 pm. Bon Air Shopping Center, Greenbrae



Plants Growing Strong for the April Online Plant Sale
by Laura Lovett

Habitat Gardening Corner

Flowering Currant (*Ribes sanguineum*) in the Garden

Caroline Christman

If you have a shady spot in the garden to fill, look no further than the flowering currant. *Ribes sanguineum* and *R. sanguineum* var. *glutinosum* are wonderful plants for the Marin habitat garden; they are beautiful, easy to care for, and provide food for a wide variety of native birds and insects. They are also readily available at many nurseries and local plant sales.



Ribes sanguineum - pink-flowering currant
Photo by Caroline Christman

Although winter deciduous, flowering currants add interest to the garden all year round. They have an upright growth habit, creating an elegant form that gradually expands to create a vase-shaped shrub up to 10 ft high and 6 ft wide. They are great as a foundation plant along edges, fence lines, or in corners, providing a structural element and backdrop to lower growing plants. In winter, leaves drop to reveal delicate branches. Soon after, pendant pink flowers emerge like hanging chandeliers to brighten shady nooks and attract pollinators. Soft green foliage begins to grow in spring as the flowers fade.

Flowering currants are drought-tolerant in coastal zones. They do well in shade or part shade, such as under oaks or bay laurel, in north or east-facing areas of the garden, or along the outer edges of a riparian corridor (as long as their feet are not wet and soil drains well). They also can do well in more acidic soil under conifers. Once established in a shady spot, they will generally not need summer water. However, if planted in full sun or areas with hotter summer and fall conditions, summer water may be needed.

The entire flowering currant plant has habitat value for native wildlife. In winter and spring flowers provide nectar for hummingbirds and butterflies (including Monarchs). Later in the year berries are a food source for a variety of birds and small mammals and foliage is eaten by caterpillars. Deer will also browse on currant foliage, so netting or protection of some kind may help young plants get established.

In my walks around Sausalito, I visit this flowering currant in an east-facing garden under coast live oak



Ribes sanguineum bush
Photo by Caroline Christman

and bay laurel. It is on the boundary between two houses, and though both gardens have recently been redone, the flowering currant has been saved. I like to think it is an inspiration, as the houses on either side have added native plants to their gardens. In all seasons, it beckons to me; as I round the corner and catch my first glimpse of pink flowers or the smudge of distinctive green it brings a smile to my face. See more about [R. sanguineum](#) and [R. sanguineum var. glutinosum](#) at [Calscape](#).

Do you have stories, tips, or photos from your garden that you'd like to share? Please send these to [Ann Elliott](#) for inclusion in an upcoming Marin CNPS Newsletter.

Ring Mountain Wildflower Docents - Spring 2025

Join the Marin Chapter of CNPS and Marin County Parks for this fantastic opportunity to share your love of Ring Mountain's unique ecology, wildflowers, and unusual serpentine grassland habitat with the general public while also fostering stewardship of this Marin landmark.

This volunteer opportunity will run weekends from April through June 2025. Participation in virtual and in-person training is required for all new volunteers. Virtual weeknight training will be held Tuesday evenings in March and early April. Two site visits to Ring Mountain will be on Saturday 3/22, and Sunday 4/6, from 10 am – 2 pm. A third optional site visit will be offered on 5/10. Some familiarity with native plants is helpful.

For additional details, questions, or to sign up, please contact [Amanda Magallanes](#)



Lupinus nanus - sky lupine &
Layia platyglossa - tidy tips
observed for Ring Mt. BioBlitz

The Martha Property Saved as Open Space

Eva Buxton, Conservation and Invasive Species Chair (retiring)

After half a century of preservation efforts, 110 acres of land at the tip of the Tiburon Peninsula is now public open space. Marin County, the San Francisco-based non-profit Trust for Public Land (TFPL), and the local grassroots group Tiburon Open Space (TOS), announced in September 2024 that they had completed the \$42.1 million deal to buy Easton Point, known as the Martha property, from the locally owned Martha Co. to be managed by the County. The purchase of the property prevented the building of 43 luxury mansions on the site.

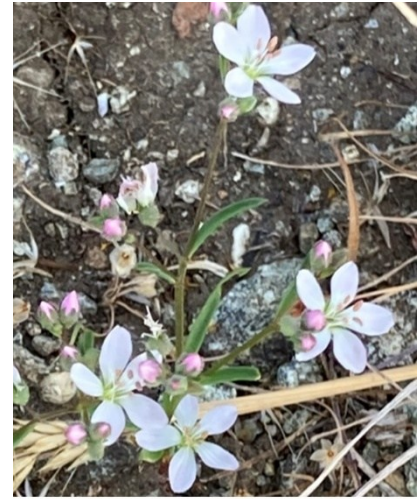


Martha Property - Tiburon Peninsula
By Jocelyn Knight

The property, which abuts Marin County's Old St. Hilary's Open Space Preserve (OSH), now creates a 232-acre parcel with hiking trails, rare species, and panoramic views of the Bay Area – from the Richmond Bridge, East Bay Hills, San Francisco skyline, Angel Island, the Golden Gate Bridge to Mt.

Tamalpais. The main trail on the property, the Ridge Fire Road, connects to the 5-mile Tiburon Ridge Trail that starts at the western portion of Ring Mountain to the north.

Part of the Martha property is a serpentine knoll, the most valuable portion both for the developer, who proposed building three houses on the knoll, and as native habitat, supporting serpentine bunchgrass grassland (Sensitive Plant Community, California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW)) and endemic serpentine plants. As a Tiburon resident and also having peer-reviewed an earlier document describing the site when working as an environmental consultant (around 2000), I was familiar with its vegetation. At the suggestion of TOS, I surveyed the property in 2013 and subsequently commented on the Final EIR (Environmental Impact Report) for the proposed development, the last one of many CEQA documents for the site, on behalf of CNPS, emphasizing the sensitivity of the habitat and the presence of Marin Dwarf Flax (*Hesperolinon congestum* (FT/ST/CNPS Rank 1B) and Serpentine Reedgrass (*Calamagrostis ophitidis*) (CNPS Rank 1B). Habitat for four other special-status species that grew within 100 – 200 feet of the boundary with OSH preserve – Tiburon Jewelflower (*Streptanthus glandulosus* ssp. *niger*) (FE/SE/CNPS Rank 1B), Tiburon Paintbrush (*Castilleja affinis* ssp. *neglecta*) (FE/ST/CNPS Rank 1B), Tiburon Buckwheat (*Eriogonum luteolum* ssp. *caninum*) (CNPS Rank 1B), and Carlotta Hall's Lace Fern (*Aspidotis carlotta-halliae*) (CNPS Rank 1B) – exists on the Martha property but were not observed during surveys.



Hesperolinon congestum - Marin dwarf flax Tiburon Middle Ridge photo by Ann Elliott

As a result of the presence of sensitive vegetation on the serpentine knoll and the lack of enough water pressure in case of a fire, the Marin County Board of Supervisors did not accept proposed mitigation and did not certify the Final EIR. According to Jerry Riessen, President of TOS, the three large, flat lots on the serpentine knoll with magnificent views went to being three cramped lots on sloping land with no views near Paradise Drive at the base of the property, making for a big decrease in valuation of the land. The Martha property went up for sale. My comments on behalf of CNPS were, therefore, to a great extent, the reason the Martha property was saved from development (J. Riessen, personal communication).

The financial dealings of the acquisition of the Martha property were complicated. The final amount owed by Marin County was \$29.2 million to be collected from Belvedere and southern Tiburon taxpayers, who in the November 2022 election voted 79% in favor of a 30-year, \$335 Measure M parcel tax to fund a bond sale. Some of the funds came from the County's Measure A sales tax collected to support parks and open space, as well as from grants and private donations.



Castilleja affinis ssp. *neglecta* - Tiburon paintbrush on Middle Ridge by Ann Elliott

Some housing advocates have criticized the Martha property preservation efforts, saying that about 85% of Marin is protected for open space or agricultural uses, thus not agreeing with those that suggest that Marin is too “built out” to accommodate California’s regional assessment and mandate of about 14,000 new housing units countywide by 2031. Some voiced opposition, stating “there is a housing crisis, not an open-space crisis,” and expressing disappointment that the County’s last budget allocated more than twice as much money to open-space expenditures compared to affordable housing.

My personal concern is providing adequate public access to the property. Hopefully this beautiful and botanically valuable piece of land will be easily accessible to everyone, not only to Belvedere and Tiburon residents. If so, the collective dream of all who have worked so hard for several decades, especially Jerry Riessen, will come true: “Martha will be open to all and forever!”

Field Trip Reports

Indian Valley Open Space - 1/4/2025

Caroline Christman

Participants in the Indian Valley Open Space Preserve plant walk were treated to a misty morning that blossomed into a lovely, sunny day. Along the switch-backing trail to the ridgeline we were treated to a medley of ferns, sanicles, and irises beneath a canopy of oak and madrone. At the ridgeline the sun greeted us amidst the flowering manzanita and fruiting toyon.

[See our observations and plant list and read more. . .](#)



Arctostaphylos manzanita - common manzanita
Indian Valley OSP Photo by Caroline Christman

Point Reyes Mushroom Hike - 1/15/2025

Thanks to leadership by Lena Zentall and with many eyes and knowledgeable foragers we found and identified more mushrooms than we thought we might find including amanita: Yellow-veiled, Brushing Bride, Pinecone, and Panther. Check out our iNaturalist observations [here](#).



Amanita novinupta - blushing bride amanita
Photo by Lena Zentall

Roy's Redwoods - 1/19/2025

The improved trail system through [Roy's Redwoods Open Space Preserve](#) is beautiful and a family wonderland, including beautiful boardwalks, accessible trails, challenging plank and stump trails, and even a fort building area. Plan a visit to these majestic redwoods and the varied uplands with abundant spring wildflowers.



Admiring a fire-scarred mother tree at Roy's Redwoods - 1/19/2025 Photo by Ann Elliott



Arctostaphylos manzanita - common manzanita
Turtle Back Nature Tr. (no burl) By Paul Barnett

Turtle Back Nature Trail - 1/27/2025

Paul Barnett

A dozen enjoyed a gorgeous day at [China Camp State Park](#). Some challenges were recognizing the early sprouts of leafy plants without flowers and oaks without leaves, as well as mushrooms that were found. Here are some [iNaturalist observations](#) from the trip.

The survivors: the long consolation of ferns

Betsey Crawford, Field Trip Leader and Blogger

"...The ferns that we live among today, including some tropical tree forms, evolved around 160 million years ago. They took their present form at the time the first flowers appeared. Flower forms have proliferated over the eons. Petals, colors, leaf forms, stem length, and fruits have all continued to evolve. ...

Ferns developed a different method. They produce spores, usually along the undersides of their fronds, stored in sori. When the spores ripen, the sori open and the microscopic spores puff off in the wind. ...

Ferns can also reproduce by rhizomes, fibrous stems that also hold roots, traveling just under the ground. Fronds pop up along their length..."

Read more of this timely essay in her blog [The Soul of the Earth](#).



Upcoming Marin Chapter Events

- **2/3 7 pm** Marin Chapter Board Meets, contact [David Long](#) to attend via Zoom
- **2/10 7:30 pm** Chapter Meeting: "[Four Easy Tools for Wildflower Restoration](#)" Speaker: Craig Dremann
- **2/12 10 am to 2 pm** Field Trip: [Vegetation Time Traveling](#), Leader: Kurt Rademacher
- **2/13 11 am to 1:30 pm** Field Trip: [Winter Wonder Plant Walk](#). SP Taylor SP, Leaders: Caroline & Stacey
- **4/1** [Howard-Kohn Scholarships for 2025-2026](#) application deadline
- **4/3 to 4/7** Online Plant Sale
- **4/12** Plant Order Pickup and In-Person Plant Sale
- **5/1 10 am to 3:00 pm** FieldTrip: [Sugarloaf Ridge SP](#), Leader: Kurt Rademacher



Arctostaphylos manzanita - common manzanita on North San Pedro Rd By Stacey Pogorzelski

Other Activities in Marin and Nearby

- 2/4 10:30 am [Updating Your Estate Plan](#) (and making sure it works), [CNPS Development Team](#)
- 2/13 7:30 pm [Serpentine Ecology in Northern California and Southern Oregon](#), Speaker: Susan Harrison, Yerba Buena Chapter
- 2/20 7:10 pm [An Introduction to the Biology and Ecology of the Bryophytes](#), Speaker: Kirsten Fisher, Orange County and South Coast Chapters
- 2/26 1 - 2 pm [Calscape office hours](#) every 4th Wednesday
- 3/13 7:30 pm [Native American Foods](#), Speaker: Sara Calvosa Olson
- 3/24 9 am [Fresh Air and Flowers in 2025](#): Spring Treasures of the East Bay Parks for CNPS East Bay Chapter, Field Trip



Sanicula laciniata - laceleaf sanicle
Turtle Back Nature Trail Photo by Paul Barnett

[Native Plant Extravaganza](#)

Shop for native plants and garden art and a percentage of your purchases will support the [Bringing Back the Natives Garden Tour](#).

In person on Saturday, February 22 from 10 am – 4 pm

[Down by the Bay Native Plant Nursery](#) in Hayward

[East Bay Wilds](#) in Oakland

[The Watershed Nursery](#) in Richmond

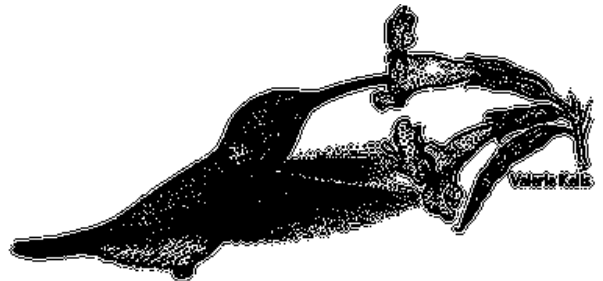
[Curious Flora](#) in Richmond

Online on Saturday and Sunday, February 22 and 23

[Green Thumb Works](#)

[Down by the Bay](#)

[Read more...](#)



Also checkout:

- [CNPS.org/events](#) for interesting talks and field trips sponsored by CNPS Chapters and staff throughout the state.
- [Events Calendar for Marin County Parks](#). They host a variety of local hikes, service projects, and presentations.
- [Regional Parks Botanic Garden](#) hosts talks (some online), workshops, tours and plant sales.

Replenishing Rains Return

Our dry January was great for visiting natural areas in the area with warm weather and dry trails. However, we know that these upcoming storms bring the moisture our trees, bushes, and flowers need to thrive and reproduce.

If you are homebound, **consider writing about your native plant gardening experiences or planning a Marin Chapter Field Trip** to place you want to explore. Knowledgeable plant identifiers can be supplied.

On your excursions in between showers, document what you see and **send photos and stories** to include in upcoming newsletters.



Arctostaphylos glandulosa ssp. cushingiana - Cushing's manzanita Pt. Reyes NS by Ann Elliott

Thanks,
[Ann Elliott](#), Newsletter Editor & Field Trip Committee

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