

# CALIFORNIA NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY MARIN CHAPTER



Ring Mountain Open Space with backdrop of San Francisco, Angel Island, and Mt. Tamalpais Photo by Caroline Christman

## June 2025 Newsletter

### Marin Chapter Meeting

#### The Native Flora of Marin Islands National Wildlife Refuge

Guest Speaker: **Meg Marriott**, Wildlife Biologist

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

Rising 85 feet above water, [Marin Islands National Wildlife Refuge](#) supports the largest heron and egret rookery in the San Francisco Bay Area. Situated in a prime location along the Pacific flyway for migratory birds, the refuge provides submerged tidelands, mixed evergreen forest, coastal prairie, coastal salt marsh and northern coastal scrub habitat. Meg's talk will highlight the history (natural and cultural) of the Marin Islands NWR, the species that occur on the Refuge, and the management the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service are conducting today to protect the native species.

Meg Marriott has been a Wildlife Biologist with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service for over 20 years. For the past 14 years, she has worked at the San Pablo Bay National Wildlife Refuge and the Marin Islands National Wildlife Refuge - two of the seven Refuges in the San Francisco Bay National Wildlife Refuge Complex.

Meg is seeking stewardship volunteers for the Marin Islands NWR. Dates that she will be going to MINWR include: June 4, 5, 9, 10, 24, 25 and July 21, 22, 23, 24. [Click this link for more information.](#)

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



# Case Against Marin Water’s Bicycle “Pilot Programs” Settled

By David Long, CNPS Marin Chapter Board Member

In September 2024, CNPS, [Marin Conservation League](#) (MCL), and [Marin Audubon Society](#) brought an [action](#) against the [Marin Municipal Water District](#) (MMWD, aka Marin Water) for approving, without [CEQA](#)\* review, two pilot projects that would have dramatically expanded bicycle and e-bike access to the Mt. Tamalpais watershed, including use of singletrack trails. Marin Water had styled these recreational expansions as “pilot programs” and claimed they were exempt from CEQA review. Subsequent to our suit, the Marin Superior Court issued a Temporary Restraining Order and a Preliminary Injunction against these pilot programs based on inadequate CEQA review. Recently, Marin Water and plaintiffs have agreed to settle the case, and the terms of the settlement were adopted by the Marin Water board at its May 6, 2025 meeting.



One of a series of steps on Pumpkin Ridge Trail, Marin Watershed  
Photo by David Long

Under the terms of the settlement, Marin Water rescinded the resolution approving a Trail Share Pilot Program, which authorized nonmotorized bicycles on nine singletrack trails for two years. This pilot program had the potential for significant impact on sensitive native plant species and habitats. Because of these impacts most of the evidence we submitted in opposition to the pilot projects was directed at this Trail Share Pilot Program. Under the settlement, Marin Water cannot reinstate the Trail Share Pilot Program without CEQA review, including public engagement.



**Fig. 5 Madrone Trail**  
showing trench  
David Long



**Figure 7. Cliff formed by erosion around roots on Pumpkin Ridge Trail**  
David Long



**Figure 8. Series of steps formed by erosion around roots on Madrone Trail**  
David Long

Also under the settlement, Marin Water has rescinded the resolution authorizing the E-bike Class I Pilot Program and has adopted a Revised E-Bike Pilot Program. The original E-Bike Pilot Program authorized e-bikes to ride anywhere that conventional bikes could go including fire roads and the nine singletrack trails of the Trail Share Pilot Program.

The [Revised E-Bike Pilot Program](#) limits Class I (pedal assisted) e-bikes to fire roads. During this two-year pilot program, Marin Water will monitor the volume of bicycle use on the watershed at eight major access points. The District will also monitor for invasive plants along the fire roads on which e-bikes can ride. A

significant potential environmental impact of the Revised E-Bike Pilot Program is to bats from the high-pitched sound emitted by the electric motors of e-bikes. Other studies have shown that high-pitched sounds can disturb bat roosts. Marin Water has agreed to fund and conduct a study to examine the impact of e-bikes on bats.

Another potential impact of increased bicycle use is greater use of existing and the creation of additional social trails. Under the settlement, Marin Water will monitor and document the use and creation of social trails and share this information with the plaintiffs.

Marin Water will also establish an improved method of incident reporting at trailhead kiosks. Incidents might include creation and use of social trails, right-of-way conflicts, illegal e-bike use on trails, and excessive speed. In addition, Marin Water will provide information to the plaintiffs throughout the pilot program about the protection of the watershed's natural resources.

We are pleased that Marin Water has agreed to work with CNPS, MCL, Marin Audubon Society, to address the environmental impacts of new e-bike access to its watershed fire roads.

\* The California Environmental Quality Act ([CEQA](#)) generally requires state and local government agencies to inform decision makers and the public about the potential environmental impacts of proposed projects, and to reduce those environmental impacts to the extent feasible.

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## Marin Chapter Field Trips

- Sign up for most field trips using [Meetup.com](#) or the [Meetup app](#). Signups usually begin the first of each month at 8 am.
- Sign the [Waiver for Marin Chapter 2025](#), if you have not done so already. Tambien [Renuncia del participante](#) en Espanol.
- Practice clean trail etiquette. [Pocket Guide – Every Step Counts](#) and [Cleanliness Tips for Hikers](#).
- Contact the leader(s) with any questions.

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## Ring Mountain Field Trips

Join Ring Mountain Docents Alison Pence or Karen Madsen for short wildflower forays on Ring Mountain **Wednesdays 6/4, and 6/18 from 10 am to 12 or 12:30**. As the soil dries we will delight in the late blooming wildflowers, especially on serpentine outcrops.

[Read more. . .](#)

Please sign up for these trips on Meetup. Links:

[June 4 - The Phyllis Ellman Trailhead on Paradise Dr.](#)

[June 18 - The Taylor Road Trailhead off Paradise Dr.](#)



Calochortus tiburonensis - Tiburon Mariposa lily

Photo by Vernon Smith

# Abbotts Lagoon, Pt. Reyes National Seashore

Thursday, June 5, 10:30 am to 2 pm

Leaders: **Carolyn Longstreth, Stacey Pogorzelski, and Caroline Christman**

The gentle, flat two-mile long trail that leads out to Abbott's Lagoon is a year-round favorite for plant lovers and bird watchers. It passes through coastal scrub, dotted by two marshes, passes over a stream between the upper and lower lagoon, and ends in the dunes near the beach. In early June we will see the end of the spring blooms and the beginning of the summer flower display. In the coastal scrub, we are likely to see yellow bush lupine, coast angelica, seaside daisy, possibly California golden-eyed grass in the wet areas, and a profusion of California poppies.

[Read more...](#)      [Meetup Registration Link](#)

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*Lupinus arboreus* - coastal bush lupine & *Eschscholzia californica* California poppies along trail to Abbotts Lagoon  
Photo by Carolyn Longstreth

# Olompali Orchids and Other Plants & Flowers

Saturday, June 14, 9 am to noon

Leaders: **Clint & Madeline Kellner**

Come hike the Olompali Miwok Loop Trail (2.3 miles long) with Biologist & Entomologist Clint Kellner and Certified California Naturalist Madeline Kellner to look for the small delicate flowers of the summer-blooming rein orchid, *Piperia transversa*. We will see the rare Napa false indigo shrub, coyote mint, California fescue grasslands, and blue oaks. We will also gain a deeper appreciation for our local ecology and have a lot of fun along the way in this partnership of Friends of Olompali and California Native Plant Society Marin Chapter outing!

[Read more...](#)      [Meetup Registration Link](#)



*Piperia transversa* - rein orchid  
Photo by Madeline Kellner

## Stewardship Opportunities

### Pollinator Partnership Mt. Burdell Native Seed Collecting

Leader: **James Hart**, Conservation Manager at Pollinator Partnership

Saturday, May 31, 10 am to 1:30 pm

James Hart who spoke at our meeting about Project Wingspan: Golden State, an initiative of Pollinator Partnership will be leading a collecting trip for local-ecotype native wildflower seed! We will be gathering seed from California poppy (*Eschscholzia californica*) at Mt. Burdell Open Space Preserve to help support the planting of native pollinator habitat in Marin County. We will also keep an eye out for any other species that are blooming on the mountain, including cobwebby thistles and winecup clarkia.

Please sign up for this event [here](#).



*Eschscholzia californica* - California poppy  
By Ann Elliott

# Point Blue Novato Baylands Nursery Workday

Leaders: **Stacey Pogorzelski**

Tuesday, **June 10, 9:30 am to noon**

Please join Point Blue Conservation Science staff at the Novato Baylands for a nursery workday! The Novato Baylands is a 2,600-acre restoration site consisting of a mosaic of tidal marsh, seasonal wetlands, and upland habitat. This is an amazing project, transforming/restoring a military airfield to a thriving wetland. Activities include potting up native plant seedlings and weeding within plant containers. Attendees will learn how their efforts will increase biodiversity, benefit wildlife and local communities, and make the landscape more resilient to climate change. Point Blue staff will also give a short overview of the history of the restoration.

[Read more. . .](#)     [Meetup Registration Link](#)



Point Blue Nursery and Facilities at Novato Baylands

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# Invasive Sea Lavender Removal with Marin Audubon Society

Leaders: Jude Stalker, Caroline Christman

Join Marin Audubon Society to protect native saltmarsh habitat along the beautiful Sausalito shoreline. We will be using hand tools to remove two species of the non-native, invasive sea lavender (*Limonium ramosissimum* and *Limonium duriusculum*) from a protected cove on Richardson Bay.

[Read more. . .](#)     [Meetup Registration Link](#)



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# Ring Mountain Wildflower Docents - Spring 2025

Want to know about Ring Mountain wildflowers and can't make the CNPS field trips, look for a Ring Mountain Wildflower Docent on Fridays, Saturdays, and Sundays running through June 22.

Some docents may set up tables near the Taylor Road entrance and some may rove the trails. You may encounter them from 8 am to 5 pm.

Self-guided explorations may be aided by the [iNaturalist Field Guide to Ring Mountain](#).



Ring Mountain Wildflower Docent shares flower identification cards with visitor.

## 2025 Howard-Kohn Memorial Scholarship Awarded

Katarina (Katie) Michel from the University of California, Davis, has been awarded our Chapter's 2025 Howard-Kohn Memorial Scholarship for her project "Climate adaptation and fire resilience of native tree species in the wildland-urban interface." We wish her all the best with her research and look forward to hearing news of the results when they are available.



## Field Trip & Outings Reports - May 2025

### Sugarloaf Ridge State Park May 1, 2025

A dozen plant enthusiasts joined us at the beginning of the Lower Bald Mountain Trail to rise gently through open grasslands peppered with Fernald's Iris (*Iris fernaldii*) with its yellowish blossoms and reddish-edged spathes, plus mounds of Hairy Vetch (*Vicia villosa*). Rising through oak and madrone woodlands robustly resprouting after the fires of 2017, we happened upon a delightful Striped Coralroot (*Corallorhiza striata*). Reaching the Bald Mountain Road, a steep several hundred yards through chaparral with [Musk Brush](#) (*Ceanothus jepsonii*) and Silver Bush Lupine (*Lupinus albifrons*) brought us up to the Vista Trail which contours its way in and out of open and shrubby side-valleys before descending through denser woodlands to Sonoma Creek. Highlights on the descent were the dainty Diogenes' Lanterns (*Calochortus amabilis*) and Chinese Houses (*Collinsia heterophylla*). Following Sonoma Creek among towering Red Alders, (*Alnus rubra*) with singing Lazuli Buntings and Black-headed Grosbeaks, and then through meadows graced with [Bird's-eye Gilia](#) (*Gilia tricolor*) and a creekside patch of Woolly Angelica (*Angelica tomentosa*) brought us back to our starting point, well pleased with the diversity of springtime species, colors, and sounds.



*Gilia tricolor* - bird's eye gilia  
Photo by Kurt Rademacher

*Kurt Rademacher*

### Ring Mountain Morning Wildflower Walks May 7 and 14, 2025

There were so many treats – masses of wildflowers, magical serpentine outcrops, majestic views to the east and south, and out of the way populations of rare species. Join Karen & Allison, Ring Mountain docents, for two more excursions June 4 & 18, or stop by on a weekend to see this jewel.

### Introduction to Grasses in Lagunitas May 7, 2025

12 people ambled along Lagunitas Rd to observe and learn a few identification tips about a rich assortment of grasses (and a few sedges and rushes), both native and introduced. Amongst the native species were vanilla grass (*Hierochloa occidentalis*, an early bloomer), several species of melic grass (incl. *Melica torreyana*), blue wild rye (*Elymus glaucus*) and both California brome (*Bromus carinatus* var. *sitchensis*) and the elegantly drooping Chinook, or woodland brome (*Bromus laevipes*).

*Kristin Jakob*

## CNPS Stewardship at Ring Mountain May 13, 2025

We had a great stewardship day on Ring Mountain! We worked with Amanda Magallanes, Ring Mountain Stewardship Coordinator with Marin County Parks, to remove tocalote ([Centaurea melitensis](#)), false brome ([Brachypodium distachyon](#)), Italian thistle ([Carduus pycnocephalus](#)), and other non-native invasive plants. These invasive species compete with native bunch grasses and wildflowers for space, moisture, and nutrients. False brome also builds up a thick layer of thatch which inhibits native seed germination. We worked to clear areas around buckwheat ([Eriogonum nudum var. nudum](#)), serpentine monardella ([Monardella purpurea](#)), and hill morning glory ([Calystegia subacaulis ssp. subacaulis](#)), and created openings for next year's annual wildflowers, such as sky lupine ([Lupinus nanus](#)). Amanda then led a walk to look for the elusive Tiburon mariposa lily ([Calochortus tiburonensis](#)), only found on Ring Mountain – it wasn't flowering, but we did see its telltale long, straplike leaves rising from between serpentine rocks. For more information on the unique assemblage of plants on Ring Mountain see the [CNPS Ring Mountain Plant List](#) and the new book [Serpentine Grassland Plants of Ring Mountain](#).



Caroline Christman

**Gravity Car Fire Road Walk** May 14, 2025 We had a clear, gorgeous day to enjoy a stroll through the varied ecosystems along this path. Starting in the shade of coast redwoods ([Sequoia sempervirens](#)), we wound in and out of forest overstory and sunny clearings resplendent with sticky monkey flower ([Diplacus aurantiacus](#)), finally ending with majestic views and a unique assemblage of chaparral vegetation at the Double Bow Knot. In the sunny spots we were treated to a flurry of bees and butterflies, such as the anise swallowtail ([Papilio zelicaon](#)), enjoying late spring blooms. One highlight was watching several species of bee exploring flowers of thin-lobed horkelia ([Horkelia tenuiloba](#); California Rare Plant Rank: [1B.2](#)). Another was finding a faded flower stalk on beargrass ([Xerophyllum tenax](#)), so that our “mystery grass” could be identified as a member of the bunchflower or corn lily family ([Melanthiaceae](#))!

Caroline Christman

## Regional Parks Botanic Garden May 21, 2025

We strolled through EBRP Botanic Garden taking in the richness and diversity of plant life from different regions of California. In the Klamath-Shasta section, we stopped to admire the towering and stately Port Orford cedar (*Chamisyres Lawsoniana*), with its deep, blue-green, scaly leaves arranged in pendulous, flat, lacey sprays on the branches. We looked closely at a rare and endangered species of marbled ginger (*Asarum marmoratum*), and the carnivorous cobra lily (*Darlingtonia californica*). In the Sierra section, we were treated to a view of a Bristlecone pine (*Pinus longaeva*), a grove of quaking Aspen (*Populus tremuloides*) and many different, architecturally stunning species of buckwheats in bloom, including Wright's buckwheat (*Eriogonum wright II*), lava buckwheat (*Eriogonum prattenianum*) and Donner buckwheat (*Eriogonum ursine*). In the Santa Lucia section, we visited the majestic grove of Santa Lucia fir (*Abies bracteata*). In the Channel Island section we compared the smooth-margined, simple leaf of the Santa Catalina ironwood (*Lyonothamnus floribundus ssp. floribundus*), to the toothed-margined, pinnately compound, fern-like leaves of the Santa Cruz ironwood (*Lyonothamnus floribundus ssp. aspleniifolius*. See photo. We were regaled by blooms throughout the Botanic Garden, including *Iris*, *Penstemon*, flannel bush (*Fremontodendron californicum*), *Silene*, woolly bluecurls (*Trichostema lanatum*), creek dogwood (*Cornus sericea ssp. sericea*), bush anemone (*Carpenteria californica*) and more. Even though we spent hours at the Botanic Garden, there was so much more to see in this 10-acre botanic gem nestled in Wildcat Canyon. Anna Gil



*Lyonothamnus floribundus ssp. aspleniifolius* - Santa Cruz Island ironwood at Regional Parks Botanic Garden Photo by Anna Gil

[Read an full version of each trip with photographs.](#)

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## Marin Chapter Native Plant Gardening Group

Native plant enthusiasts toured two San Anselmo gardens on Saturday, May 24. Less than one mile apart, the gardens were quite different in location, plants, and topography. The tour was organized by subscribers to the native plant email group of Marin CNPS. Read more about the gardens [here](#).

Tours of native plant gardens in Marin are ongoing. To enroll in the Marin native gardening email group, send an email message to

<mailto:marinnativegardening+subscribe@groups.io>.

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## Broom Service

Edgewood Trail is one of several access paths to San Geronimo Ridge, or a destination itself. It is not well known or heavily travelled, though residents in the neighborhood make good use of it. The trailhead is on Edgewood Road, an unimproved link between Madrone and Redwood Avenues. People who drive to the vicinity must park around 100 yards or so from the trailhead as there is tight space for one or two vehicles. This is a good destination for persons desiring a quiet outdoor experience.

There are several sites in the vicinity of the trail that are infested with invasive broom. Over the past one and a half decades, Broom Service has addressed these sites with considerable success, finding the native vegetation freer from broom with each visit. This past week we concentrated our efforts right at the trailhead.

[Contact Mel Wright](#) for more information and to join their Thursday work days.



Broom Service volunteers head out on Edgewood Trail in San Geronimo Valley Photo by Mel Wright

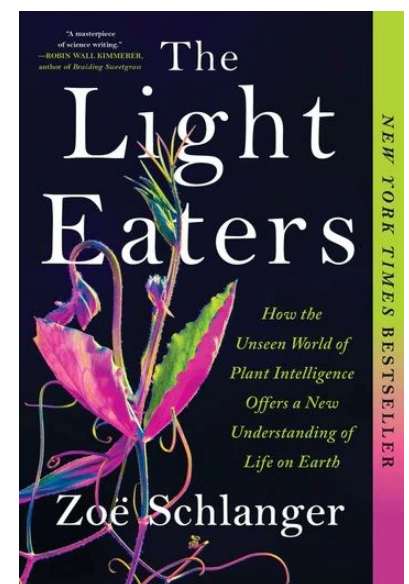
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## A New Book About Plant Intelligence Highlights the Messiness of Scientific Change

In “The Light Eaters,” by Zoë Schlanger, the field of botany itself functions as a character—one in the process of undergoing a potentially radical transformation.

[Read this review by Rachel Riederer in the New Yorker.](#)

[Read excerpts of the book.](#)



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## Columbine

John Burroughs

I strolled along the beaten way,  
Where hoary cliffs uprear their heads,  
And all the firstlings of the May  
Were peeping from their leafy beds,  
When, dancing in its rocky frame,  
I saw th' columbine's flower of flame. . .

[Read more. . .](#)



*Aquilegia formosa* - western columbine  
Kent Pump Road By Susan Schlosser

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## Upcoming Marin Chapter Events

- **6/4 10 am to 12:30** Field Trip: [Ring Mt. - Phyllis Ellman Trailhead](#), Leader: Karen Madsen
- **6/5 10:30 am to 2 pm** Field Trip: [Abbotts Lagoon, Pt. Reyes National Seashore](#) Leaders: Carolyn Longstreth, Stacey Pogorzelski, Caroline Christman
- **6/9 7:30 pm** Chapter Meeting: [The Native Flora of Marin Islands National Wildlife Refuge](#), Speaker: Meg Marriott
- **6/10 9:30 am to noon** [Point Blue Novato Baylands Nursery Workday](#)
- **6/14 9 am to noon** Field Trip: [Olompali Orchids and Other Plants & Flowers](#), Leaders: Clint & Madeline Kellner
- **6/14 9:30 am to 12:30 pm** [Invasive Sea Lavender Removal with Marin Audubon](#)
- **6/18 10 am to noon** Field Trip: [Ring Mt. - Taylor Road Trailhead](#), Leader: Allison Pence



*Clarkia rubicunda* – ruby-chalice  
clarkia on Ring Mountain  
Photo by Ann Elliott

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## Other Native Plant Activities in Marin, Nearby, or Virtual

- **5/29 10 am to 2 pm** [Thursday Weeders at Abbotts Lagoon](#)
- **5/31 10 am to 1:30 pm** [Mt. Burdell Native Seed Collecting with Pollinator Partnership](#)
- **6/7** Field Trip: [Jack London State Park](#), Napa Valley Chapter
- **6/12 10 am to 2 pm** [Thursday Weeders at Abbotts Lagoon](#)
- **6/12 7:30 pm** [The Calochortus of California](#), Speaker: Kip McMichael
- **6/21** Field Trip: [Abbotts Lagoon](#), Napa Valley Chapter
- **6/26 10 am to 2 pm** [Thursday Weeders at Abbotts Lagoon](#)



*Monardella villosa ssp. franciscana*  
– San Francisco coyote mint  
Abbotts Lagoon trail  
Photo by Ann Elliott

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**Napa Valley Chapter** has scheduled Wildflower Walks most Saturdays, March through June. [See the schedule here.](#)

Milo Baker Chapter [Plant Walks are listed here](#). Sign up for email alerts.

East Bay Chapter [Field Trip Listings on Meetup](#).

Yerba Buena Chapter [Field Trip Listings](#)

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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.
- [Point Reyes Nature](#) has great ideas for exploring the Point Reyes National Seashore.
- [The Soul of the Earth](#), exploring the world flower by flower, Betsey Crawford's monthly essay series.



*Calochortus umbellatus* - Oakland star tulip (mariposa lily)  
Cascade Canyon OSP Ann Elliott

## Last Blooms of Spring

As the grasses begin to brown in patches on shallow soil, some late bloomers pop out for our enjoyment. Join one of our field trips, one offered by a nearby chapter, or head out on your own to enjoy the last blooms of spring.

Send me some of your photos or write a short story about your explorations. Post your discoveries on our Facebook group [Marin Native Plants](#). Check out news and events at our Facebook group [California Native Plant Society - Marin Chapter](#). Follow us on Instagram [marincnps](#) and post anywhere with the hashtag #marinnativeplants

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



*Silene laciniata* ssp. *californica*  
California Indian pink  
Cascade Canyon OSP Ann Elliott



2707 K Street, Suite 1, Sacramento, CA 95816-5130 | Tel: (916) 447-2677  
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