



# CNPS

ORANGE  
COUNTY  
CHAPTER

California Native Plant Society

occnps.org

March/April 2018

## Bringing Nature Home to Orange County

On February 1, 2018, Doug Tallamy opened the triennial CNPS Conservation Conference as the honored plenary speaker, thanks to generous support from Susan Gottlieb. Doug Tallamy, entomologist and author of *Bringing Nature Home* and 3 related books, delivered an imperative: we must re-nature our developed areas with native plants.

I have been involved in this cause of planting natural habitats since 1996, and yet I was astounded by the power of Tallamy's message. His riveting presentation was filled with scientific research, compelling birds and other critters, and more caterpillars than you can shake a stick at. Tallamy has counted more than 700 species in his own yard in Pennsylvania.

Locally here at CNPS in Orange County, our leadership was challenged by member Elizabeth Wallace last summer to articulate "Why Natives" and to bring that message to the public. We talked about all the myriad reasons – natives are beautiful, they save water and resources, they are our California heritage, etc. We planned to highlight these reasons to give persuasion tools to our members and hopefully convert new people to plant natives.

But Doug Tallamy, and other speakers at the CNPS Conservation Conference, including Mike Evans, Dennis Mudd, Jodie Cook, Frederique Lavoipierre, distilled this confusing, diffuse message down to one important point: **California native plants are part of the food web, and non-natives are relatively inert.** Tallamy's research documents how infant birds, more than adult birds, depend for survival on caterpillars that live only on specific native plants and not on exotic plants. The populations of insects, and the birds that depend on them, are collapsing worldwide, and the wild areas remaining are not enough to support their sustainable existence.

2018 FEB 11, 8:50 a.m.(outside my window series.)

yesterday's taste of winter  
was digested overnight  
this morning: clear bright blue  
the remains of a previous  
chilly foggy cloud-cast day  
the "R" word continues to evade  
the new-normal winter is but a cloudy  
overcast &  
precipitation is deposited as dew by  
our seldom humid rich atmosphere  
cherish the cool dark days  
they too quickly become  
a faint memory  
in our new-normal drought-tolerant  
southern california habitat  
cherish the cool  
savor the overcast now  
this is the new now now

chuck wright

Woodbridge, Irvine, CA

Everyone understands how monarch butterfly populations depend on their caterpillar's access to milkweed plants. Multiply that example by thousands of different species of butterflies and moths, and then multiply again by the thousands of birds and other creatures that are part of the food web that depends on those caterpillars. I think we call that an exponential impact.

We all know this. Honestly I felt a little dumb, as this information is everywhere in our corner of the world. But somehow Doug's talk and other speakers at this conference renewed my focus. This is the message we need to take to heart, and to repeat wherever we have the privilege to speak to groups or write about native plants.

The motto of the CNPS Horticulture program is "Restoring Nature One Garden at a Time". Doug Tallamy's new slogan: "Make America Native Again"! Our messaging, our "elevator speech" needs work, and I'd love to hear your ideas. But in the meantime, talk to your friends, grow natives, take every opportunity to support the enhancement of our developed spaces. Our very lives depend on our success.

Tallamy's talk at the CNPS conference was taped and will be made available in the future for all. Stay tuned. We can be part of an important revolution in the way we landscape our homes and parks. We can spread the word in California and elsewhere. Here in Southern California, we are far, far away from significant penetration of natural gardening into the general consciousness. That needs to change,

—Laura Camp

## CONSERVATION

### OCCNPS AND THE NON-TOXIC MOVEMENT

**OCCNPS POSITION ON HERBICIDE USE:** OCCNPS has no opinion on which, or whether, herbicides may or may not be used in manicured parks, medians, school grounds or similar sites. Our concern is that synthetic herbicides (e.g. glyphosate, aka Roundup) remain available as a necessary option, a part of the Integrated Weed Management (IWM) tool kit for management of invasive plants in natural open spaces. (Both CNPS and Cal-IPC have relevant policies—see their websites.)

Use of herbicides on non-native plants growing in natural-habitat open spaces has a fundamentally different purpose from cosmetic use of herbicides in urban/suburban settings. In natural areas, the purpose is to remove invasives so that the native ecosystem can fully function, with the full range of native plants and the animals that feed on and live in them.

In particular, non-native plants do not provide the food needed by most native insects. The absence of these insects in turn lessens the ability of native birds, reptiles, and small mammals to eat and reproduce, which in turn affects the rest of the ecosystem. An area grown with mostly non-native plants is often MUCH less biodiverse than a similar-sized area of native plants.

**THE NON-TOXIC MOVEMENT:** In the past few years a grass-roots movement, “Non-Toxic *cityname*,” in OC and elsewhere, has been urging jurisdictions to pass ordinances against the use of herbicides (and pesticides in general) in places accessible to and used by the public, especially by children.

To date, in OC, Irvine, San Juan Capistrano, Tustin, and Dana Point are known to have passed such ordinances. San Clemente, Huntington Beach, and Mission Viejo are known to be in process of studying the institution of such ordinances. This has had the general effect of tightening and clarifying the jurisdictions’ Integrated Pest Management (IPM) protocols, and greatly lessened cosmetic use of herbicides in publicly accessible areas.

In some cases (e.g., Irvine) the ordinance has been interpreted to prohibit the use of synthetic herbicides on ALL city-owned property, including for invasives control/eradication in natural areas undergoing restoration/management.

**SYNTHETIC VS. NON-SYNTHETIC HERBICIDES:**

Non-synthetic (= organic) herbicides (i.e. those derived from organic materials) and other control methods (e.g. mechanical/hand methods) are much less effective than synthetic herbicides, especially against vigorous invasives (e.g. Arundo, Castor Bean, Artichoke Thistle, Pampas Grass). And are significantly more expensive, and difficult to use. This puts those charged with maintaining city lands into a no-win situation: using more manpower and more funds while doing much less effective maintenance of community standards and/or mandated restoration and management.

**OCCNPS’ RESPONSE TO DATE:**

1. Comment letters and/or testimony to Irvine, San Clemente, Mission Viejo, and Huntington Beach City Councils stating our position on use of synthetic herbicides, and asking to be included in future deliberations on city IWM policies. So far, no response from the cities.
2. Shared these actions with the regional Weed Management Area group and with the CNPS Conservation Committee. At both, there was good discussion about how all can deal with threats of loss of this important part of the IWM tool box.

—Celia Kutcher, Conservation Chair

## Native Gardeners Corner—Tips, Tricks and Techniques

This regular newsletter feature offers chapter members and local experts a chance to briefly share information on many things related to gardening with natives. The question for this issue: **Which native culinary plants and edibles are your favorites?**

**J. Mark Sugars**—“*Fragaria vesca* (Woodland Strawberry) has been very successful in my yard, and is a dependable source of tasty little berries every year. For an intense and distinctive tea, there’s nothing quite like *Salvia apiana* (White Sage).”

**Rama Nayeri**—“My favorite edible California native plant is *Satureja douglasii* – Yerba Buena. Not only is this plant easy to grow, but you can use the leaves in herbal tea, cook with it like you would with mint and eat the leaf like a breath mint.”

**Brad Jenkins**—“For just eating reasons, Southern California Wild Grape, also known as the Desert Grape (*Vitis girdiana*) supplies tangy tendrils for snacking, leaves for cooking, and fruit for dessert. Water needs are somewhat high, so plant beside a fence bordering an HOA or neighbor that irrigates regularly. (Yes, this is said with a grin.) Growth is rampant, so I pulled one out after a few years, but the food production level is wonderful.”

**Greg Rubin**—“My all time favorite native edible is woodland strawberry (*Fragaria vesca/californica*) with berries as flavorful as any store-bought strawberry 3 times their size. Close behind is *Ribes aureum gracillimum*, which is as good as any European currant, followed by *Sambucus* and *Berberis* ‘Golden abundance’ (recently tried to make jam but over-heated it and created yummy hard candy). I’ll use *Salvia clevelandii* & *mellifera* for seasoning. And I love *Prunus illicifolia/lyonii* for the thin Bing-cherry flavored meat; I’ve tried the cherry marzipan made by the Luiseno’s from the pits and it’s delicious. *Prunus virginiana demissa* makes a wonderful compote or jam. Custard-like acorn mush mixed with native chia is actually pretty tasty (I believe they prefer *Q. kelloggii*). Torrey pine nuts are as tasty as any pine nut, but nearly the size of almonds. Probably the most surprising culinary delight was roasted *Agave deserti* root - OMG, it was like the most delicious, sweet candied fruit you could imagine. Slightly reminiscent of candied camote, but the flavor was more complex. They roast the Agave in a pit oven for like 2 days, after having harvested it with digging sticks. The native people have described old California as a cornucopia of food.”

**Chuck Wright**—“Sarah Jayne told me the best is Cleveland sage. The first plant barely grew and the painters stepped on it and I planted another and it is doing fantastic and is a great spice for almost everything. The critters love my little native

### Chapter Meetings



**Thursday, March 15, 2018: Rare Places and Rare Plants**  
**Speaker: Ron Vanderhoff**

The title says it all! This program will show some of the odd or rare habitats that exist in and around Orange County and the plants that occur there. In essence, unusual habitats mean unusual plants. We will

discuss and show photos of local vernal pools, waterfalls, mima mounds, serpentine outcrops, rock cliffs, maritime chaparral, San Onofre breccia, mountain peaks and more. We will profile a few of the rare plants that occur in these places, emphasizing the strong connection between habitat and plants.

Who else to show us some of the unusual plants growing in unusual spots in OC but our intrepid adventurer, Ron Vanderhoff! Ron has been hunting the normal and unusual plants of our region for decades and is certainly a native plant expert as anyone who follows his exploits on Facebook knows. He is an OC CNPS board member and actively involved in Chapter Field Trips, Invasive Plants, Conservation and the Rare Plant Committee. He serves on several regional and state Native Plant and conservation committees and is a contributor to *The Wildflowers of Orange County and the Santa Ana Mountains* and other publications. He is the Vice President of Roger's Gardens in Newport Beach.

**Thursday, April 19, 2018: Kumeyaay Ethnobotany: Shared Heritage of the Californias**

**Speaker: Michael Wilken**

For thousands of years, the Kumeyaay people of northern Baja California and southern California made their homes in the diverse landscapes of the region, interacting with native plants and continuously refining their botanical knowledge. Today, many Kumeyaay Indians in the far-flung ranches of Baja California carry on the traditional knowledge and skills for transforming native plants into food, medicine, arts, tools, regalia, construction materials, and ceremonial items.

This talk is *not to be missed* as well as the book, *Kumeyaay Ethnobotany*, which explores the remarkable interdependence between native peoples and native plants of the Californias. Through in-depth descriptions of 47 native plants and their uses, with lively narratives and vivid photographs, the book connects the archaeological and historical record with living cultures and native plant specialists who share their ever relevant wisdom for future generations.

Anthropologist Michael Wilken-Robertson's lifelong collaborative relationships with Native Baja Californians have allowed him to



explore traditional indigenous uses of plants in the diverse habitats of their territory, from the ancient past into the present. He currently teaches in the department of anthropology at California State University San Marcos.

**Michael's Book will be for sale and can be signed by the author!**

**Chapter meetings** are held on the third Thursday of the month **except in July and August**. Unless otherwise noted, meetings take place at the Duck Club in Irvine. Doors open at 6:45 pm; the program begins at 7:30. **Directions:** The Duck Club is located in the San Joaquin Wildlife Sanctuary next to the IRWD water treatment facility.

**From the Jamboree exit of the 405:** Heading west, turn south (left) on Michelson. Turn right on Harvard. At University Drive, turn right and stay in the far right lane. At Campus, turn right and stay to the right. Take the next right into the wildlife sanctuary. At the closed gates, turn left into the parking lot. The Duck Club is in the center, restrooms on the left, Audubon House on the right.

**From the Culver exit:** Heading toward UCI, pass Michelson and continue on to University Drive. Turn right on University. Turn right onto Campus and turn right into the wildlife sanctuary.

### CALENDAR

- Mar 1 ..... Board Meeting
- Mar 4 ..... Portuguese Bend Field Trip
- Mar 9-11 ..... Chapter Council Meeting, Anza Borrego
- Mar 11 ..... Casper's Park Field Trip
- Mar 15 ..... Chapter Meeting: Ron Vanderhoff, speaker
- Mar 17 ..... Wildflower Showcase, IRC
- Mar 18 ..... Celebration at Panhe
- Mar 25 ..... Chino Hills Field Trip
- Apr 1 ..... Whitewater Preserve Field Trip
- Apr 5 ..... Board Meeting
- Apr 7 ..... Garden Tour**
- Apr 8 ..... Scenic Landmarks Field Trip
- Apr 15 ..... Audubon Starr Ranch Field
- Apr 15 - 21 ..... California Native Plant Week
- Apr 19 ..... Chapter Meeting, Michael Wilken, speaker
- Apr 22 ..... San Onofre Field Trip
- Apr 28-29 ..... Catalina Island Field Trip
- May 3 ..... Board Meeting
- May 5 ..... Fossil Reef, Sheep Hills Field Trip

### MARCH/APRIL FIELD TRIPS

There are nine field trips in April and May. Go to [occnps.org/explore](http://occnps.org/explore) for listing and complete details.

### California In My Garden 2018 Saturday, April 7, 10 AM until 4 PM

**Twelve** inspiring landscapes from Mission Viejo to San Clemente featuring California natives!

**New this year:** pre-order a box lunch to pick up at **Reata Park** in San Juan Capistrano.

**Mike Evans** of Tree of Life Nursery will lead a tour of the gardens at Reata Park at 1 PM

**Registration begins March 10**

**Get all the details at**  
[occnps.org/gardentour](http://occnps.org/gardentour)

**Help!** Spend two hours hosting a garden. and earn a **free lunch!** Contact Sarah Jayne at [gardentour@occnps.org](mailto:gardentour@occnps.org) to reserve your shift.

strawberries: nice bloom for me and pollinators but the fruit is gone in a blink.”

**Leon Baginski**—“*Ribes speciosum*. Prickly but very tasty.”

**Greta Helphry**—“ Love using *Salvia clevelandii* whenever a recipe calls for culinary sage, but our native sage is potent so it's important to adjust quantities to taste. I use it in soups, roasts, herb butters and sweet baked goods. The same principle applies when substituting our California bay (*Umbellularia californica*) for *Laurus nobilis*. Take care to "start low and go slow" when substituting these natives for common grocery store items.”

Linda Southwell—“Pesto made with Cleveland Sage and Wild Onion is delicious!”

**Dan Songster**—“Of course, Miners lettuce for salad and the various mints for teas come to mind. Golden currant and the small ‘Montana de Oro’ strawberries are very tasty as well. Cleveland Sage leaves for making a California beer-batter sage leaf fried quickly in olive oil. I need to enjoy a couple *Dichelostemma* bulbs next!”

**Our question for the next newsletter is: “What is your favorite native for foliage fragrance?”** Email your responses to Dan Songster at [songster@cox.net](mailto:songster@cox.net). Please remember to keep replies brief so we can include most of the responses!

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*Team Leader:* Laura Camp (interim)  
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*Volunteer Activities:* Elizabeth Wallace  
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*Team Lead:* Celia Kutcher  
*Members:* open

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*Team Lead:* Dan Songster  
*Plant Sale:* Dan Songster, Laura Camp  
*Garden Tour:* Mabel Alazard, Jennifer Beatty, Dori Ito, Sarah Jayne

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##### Invasives Team

*Team Co-leads:* Ron Vanderhoff, Jutta Burger  
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##### Explore Team (Explore OC)

*Team Lead:* Ron Vanderhoff  
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*Publicity:* open  
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