

CHANNEL ISLANDS RESTORATION

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CIR Builds Nursery on San Nicolas Island, grows 1,100 Plants

Channel Islands Restoration staff and volunteers teamed up with the United States Navy in April on San Nicholas Island to completely rebuild and expand an old native plant nursery. More than 1,100 plants have been grown so far, and CIR staff and volunteers recently planted most of these at a restoration site on the island.

The nursery, which consisted of a shed and small planting benches, had fallen into disrepair over nearly two decades. CIR built new benches, erected a shade structure and installed an irrigation system. The three benches (each forty feet long and six feet wide) include custom designed “biosecurity” measures that prevent introduced pests like Argentine ants from infesting the plant pots. The nursery shed required major cleaning, and it will soon receive repairs to its roof and doors. Funding to build the new nursery and to grow the plants has been provided by the Navy. The nursery has an automated irrigation system, so CIR staff only needs to visit the island approximately once per week.

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1,100 plants have been grown at the nursery on San Nicolas Island so far. CIR built the nursery in partnership with the Navy, and most of these plants have been installed at a restoration site on the island.

CIR SCHOOL PROGRAM BRINGS 2,300 PEOPLE TO THE ISLANDS SINCE 2004

Channel Islands Restoration has brought 2,055 young people and 248 teachers and chaperones to Anacapa and Santa Cruz Islands as part of our school and youth program since its inception in 2004. CIR raised most of the funding to pay for boat transportation and other costs for these trips, which focused on involving students from underserved areas of Ventura and Santa Barbara Counties. These trips provided the first opportunity for most of these young people to travel on an ocean-going boat, to directly experience marine wildlife and to visit the Channel Islands. Funding was provided by a combination of public and private sources, including the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, the California Coastal Commission, Sempra Energy Foundation and Citrix Online.



Students from Carpinteria Family School volunteer at the Anacapa Island nursery on a class trip

Private schools able to pay for the trips contracted directly with CIR to provide them with these experiences.

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20,000 Plants Grown on Anacapa

Over 20,000 native plants of 30 species, were grown on East Anacapa Island since CIR and Channel Islands National Park (NPS) constructed a nursery there in 2010. During 2011-12, NPS and CIR staff eradicated non-native iceplant from 39 acres of the island, and volunteers hand-cleared a further 4 acres of iceplant. Native plants were planted on approximately 3 of the iceplant-free acres. Nearly 1,400 CIR volunteers contributed over 11,000 hours to this effort. A temporary system of irrigation tubing now delivers water to all planted areas, including Inspiration Point. This tremendous effort has been accomplished with the help of individual volunteers, school groups, corporations and community groups.

Anacapa Island provides critical habitat for seabirds, pinnipeds and endemic plants and animals. Sixteen of Anacapa's plants are endemic to the California Channel Islands; of these sixteen, two



are, unique to Anacapa. Anacapa's dense vegetation was once dominated by shrub-like plants such as giant coreopsis, which provide shelter, food, cover, perches and nesting habitat the native animals of the Island—deer mouse, salamander, lizards (2 species), endemic land snails, and many kinds of birds.

The island's stands of coreopsis, as well as plants of the other island plant communities, were devastated by sheep grazing, rabbit browsing, and by large-scale destruction of native vegetation during construction and manning of the Coast Guard Light Station. Only small patches of native plants remained. The Coast Guard planted two types of iceplant around their facilities, with the idea of erosion control and ornamentation, and it spread to cover almost 40 acres of the islet.

NPS staff started small-scale eradication of iceplant in the vicinity of the



buildings in the late 1980s. In 1993, Sarah Chaney, a restoration ecologist with the NPS, began working with volunteers and researchers to expand iceplant removal to the rest of the island, and by 2010, about 14 acres of iceplant had been cleared. October 2011 saw the beginning of intensive iceplant removal, with the receipt of 3 years of NPS project funding. In 2010, CIR helped fund and construct a native plant nursery on the island in partnership with the NPS, and the NPS has funded the improvements and upkeep since then. The Ventura County Master Gardeners, along with many other volunteers, have grown an impressive 20,000 plants in the nursery since that time.

Several groups helped with planting, including nearly 1,400 CIR volunteers. Most of the work is done on Wednesdays, when the NPS makes regular visits to the island. CIR staff recruit the volunteers, meet them at the NPS headquarters, escort them to the island and direct the work. Several local companies have volunteered for the project, including REI, Deckers Outdoors, Amgen, Horny Toad and Citrix Online. Non-profit organizations have also participated. In addition to planting, volunteers removed iceplant from among native plants, collected seeds for propagation and cared for the plantings throughout their first year.

The water supply for the island is delivered by NPS boat once a year, at great expense, so water conservation is vital. NPS staff and CIR volunteers installed rain barrels to collect rainwater from the roofs of several of the buildings. The large concrete rainwater catchment basin installed by the Coast Guard in the 1930s is again collecting rainwater (now used for plant irrigation) thanks to the work of NPS staff.

Through inspired partnerships and lots of combined effort, the NPS, CIR and many, many volunteers have changed the face of East Anacapa Island. Formerly the bright red flowers of the non-native, invasive iceplant would color much of the landscape. This year, the landscape was colored bright yellow by the flowers of the native plants like giant coreopsis, gumplant and island tarweed. Western gull chicks that were formerly exposed to predators and the elements on a low, flat, open iceplant landscape, were instead able to find refuge among the varied structures of the taller native plants that were grown and planted by volunteers. Volunteers of all ages obtained a new understanding of this rare island habitat and gained a valuable education of the importance of habitat restoration. The work continues into 2013 and beyond.

Above: volunteers work in the Anacapa Island Nursery. Left: volunteers remove iceplant. Right: western gull chicks hide from predators and the elements under native gum plant grown and planted by volunteers. The gum plant replaced a carpet of iceplant, which did not offer shelter compared to the natives.

CIR Builds Nursery on San Nicolas Island
(Continued from page 1)

The plants were installed at a restoration site on the eastern side of the island to help prevent erosion along roadside dune habitat. More plants will be grown in the nursery to revegetate sites impacted by upcoming construction projects on the island. CIR Board Member Gordon Hart designed the nursery and led the construction project along with volunteers Dave Edwards (also a Board Member) Don Mills and John Reyes. The plants were grown by Norma Hogan, who recently joined the CIR team.

CIR has been working on the island for several years eradicating Sahara mustard from habitat of the threatened *Cryptantha traskiae* (a threatened plant in the Borage family). Sahara mustard is a highly invasive plant that has caused great ecological damage in the deserts. It has spread quickly on San Nicolas Island, and the Navy staff is committed to eradicating it from the island. CIR has donated the staff time on this project for several years, but the Navy has recently contracted with CIR to perform this service. Our staff and volunteers are trusted to work around these sensitive plants and around protected archeological sites. CIR greatly values our relationship with Naval Base Ventura County and the U.S. Navy as a whole.



Upper right: CIR Board member Gordon Hart builds benches in the new nursery constructed by CIR on San Nicolas Island. Middle left: shade structure under construction. Middle right: volunteer John Reyes (left) and CIR nursery manager Norma Hogan (right). Lower photos: CIR staff and volunteers plant natives at the Thousand Springs restoration site on the north east end of San Nicolas Island.

CIR School Program Brings 2,300 People to the Islands since 2004
 (Continued from page 1)

CIR worked with 36 schools and youth groups from all over Southern California and beyond. Participants performed many service tasks including removing invasive plants, collecting seed, growing plants in the Anacapa nursery and care of these plants once they were in the ground. CIR visited participating schools before each trip to make a presentation on island ecology and conservation biology. We particularly emphasized the connection between the pollution of mainland streets and watersheds and thereby of the ocean and island environments. Instruction was curriculum based, reinforcing lessons the students were already learning in the classroom.

Even with fares generously discounted by Island Packers (the official provider of transportation to Anacapa), transportation costs add up quickly. Boat transportation for an average-size class is \$1,500 to \$2,000, with additional costs incurred for bus transportation and for CIR staff to organize and lead each trip. As public sector budgets tighten, CIR is seeking corporate support to help fund these important service-learning programs for local schools.



Students from Sheridan Way Elementary School (Ventura) on Anacapa Island

School/Group	From	Trips	people
Besant Hill School	Ojai	1	21
California Institute of Technology	Pasadena	1	9
Carpinteria Family School	Carpinteria	2	84
Cesar Chavez Elementary School	Oxnard	1	336
Dunn Middle School	Los Olivos	1	28
E.P. Foster Elementary School	Ventura	3	141
Goleta Family School	Goleta	1	26
Holy Cross School	Ventura	2	32
Los Angeles Conservation Corps	Los Angeles	6	47
Meiners Oaks Elementary School	Meiners Oaks	9	354
Minnesota Waldorf Schools	Minnesota	2	21
Mira Monte Elementary School	Ojai	1	29
Monroe High School	Los Angeles	1	17
Nordhoff High School	Ojai	2	26
Oak Grove School	Ojai	6	149
Ojai Valley School	Ojai	1	10
Paso Robles High School	Paso Robles	3	52
San Antonio Elementary School	Ojai	3	116
Santa Barbara Charter School	Santa Barbara	1	50
Santa Barbara Home School Network	Santa Barbara	2	31
Santa Monica Mountains NRA Youth	Los Angeles	3	40
Santa Paula Boys and Girls Club	Santa Paula	1	23
Sheridan Way Elementary School	Ventura	7	296
Sun Valley HS	Los Angeles	1	35
Sunset Elementary School	Oak View	3	123
Topa Topa Elementary	Ojai	2	74
UC Irvine	Irvine	2	21
Ventura Charter School	Ventura	2	56
Ventura High School	Ventura	2	24

Partial list of school/youth groups participating in CIR island trips



Fifth graders from Meiners Oaks Elementary volunteer on Santa Cruz Island. 2055 students and adults participated in the CIR school program since 2004

CIR Works with Navy and SDSU on San Clemente Island

Twenty nine Channel Islands Restoration volunteers and staff worked on San Clemente Island in October of 2011 and 2012 in cooperation with the Navy and San Diego State University. We hand-removed non-native iceplant that was surrounding the San Clemente Island lotus (*Acmispon dendroideus* var. *traskiae*) a federally listed endangered species. We also removed patches of iceplant from about 50 acres of sensitive habitat of the endemic Island sage sparrow.



The iceplant crowds out native plants, including species of boxthorn (*Lycium* sp.) that the sparrows nest in. CIR volunteers kept up a rigorous and steady pace in order to accomplish such a large scale iceplant removal. Many species of native plants sprouted where the iceplant had been removed, including *Cryptantha traskiae* (a threatened plant in the Borage family).

San Clemente Island is owned by the U.S. Navy, and staff from the Navy and from San Diego State University worked with CIR to arrange the trips. The logistics of such trips are almost as daunting as eradicating the iceplant, but the results were well worth the effort. CIR donated most of our staff time for the trips, and volunteers paid for their own housing and meals.

San Clemente Island is an important base for the Navy, and several hundred duty personnel and civilian workers are regularly posted to the island. The island provides an important auxiliary landing field for the Navy, and it is used extensively for training. Navy Seals train on San Clemente, and the southern part of the island is used for air bombardment and ship board gunnery practice. San Clemente has 14 plants that are unique to the island, plus several species of endemic animals. The Navy funds a large restoration program for many of these species. The primary restoration staff are from the Soil Ecology & Restoration Group at San Diego State University.



The groups of volunteers first traveled to San Diego (most staying the first evening at the same motel) before departing for the island by plane from the North Island Naval Air Station on Coronado Island. The Navy contracts with a civilian airline to transport personnel to the island, so the flights were free for the volunteers. Once on the island, the group checked in at one of the base guest housing complexes, which is reminiscent of a Motel 6. Low-cost meals were provided at the base commissary.

CIR volunteers then traveled by van to the western side of the island to begin work. Every volunteer worked hard hand-pulling the iceplant and placing it in large piles. This technique was quite successful at eradicating iceplant with only minimal re-sprouting. The restoration site is 55 acres in size, and the volunteers cleared most of it. At lunch time, island personnel took the volunteers to interesting view spots and even lead the group on a hike featuring endemic plants!

We are very proud of our volunteer trips to the San Clemente Island, and we hope to follow up with more trips, perhaps starting this spring. CIR is also working with the Navy on San Nicolas Island, and we are glad to be working on both of these islands that are not normally accessible to the general public.

Top: CIR volunteers take in the view on San Clemente Island. **Bottom:** volunteers remove iceplant on the Island. CIR has completed two trips there with a total of 29 volunteers in 2011 and 2012.



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CIR Teams with Local Companies to Restore Mainland and Island Sites



More than 150 people from six local companies volunteered for Channel Islands Restoration on a single day in April at the San Marcos Foothills Preserve. Taking part in an annual corporate volunteer day, employees from Deckers, Patagonia, REI, Horny Toad, Vapur and Channel Islands Outfitters planted natives and pulled weeds at the Preserve located between Santa Barbara and Goleta.

CIR is promoting partnerships with local companies, particularly those with an outdoor focus, to raise money for restoration projects and to recruit volunteers. Employees from many of these same companies, plus Amgen and Citrix Online, have also volunteered for CIR on many island trips. All of these companies encourage their employees to volunteer, and some even pay their employee's wages while volunteering.

In addition to volunteer help, Patagonia, REI (Santa Barbara store and the new Oxnard store) and Citrix Online have all contributed grant funding to CIR. This funding will support a new project in the San Marcos Foothills, help pay for school field trips to the Channel Islands and more. With public sector

budgets continuing to tighten, CIR seeks to diversify our funding base, and we are very grateful for the support of our corporate partners.

New CIR Project in the San Marcos Foothills

CIR will start a third restoration project in December at the San Marcos Foothills Preserve, an open space located between Santa Barbara and Goleta. Funding for the project will be provided by the REI Santa Barbara store, the Ventura Patagonia store and the San Marcos Foothills Coalition. We will focus on removing invasive plants along in the most sensitive habitats, and we will plant several species of



natives at the main entrance to the Preserve. This project will rely heavily on the support of volunteers!

The San Marcos Foothills is one of the most ecologically valuable sites on the South Coast, with hundreds of acres of grasslands, oak woodlands, and permanently flowing creeks. There are nearly 50 mammals found and the Preserve and 126 bird species. The Preserve has miles of hiking trails that provide spectacular 360 degree views of Santa Barbara, Goleta, and the Santa Barbara Channel.

For the last three years CIR has been working with project partners and volunteers to restore habitat along Atascadero and Cieneguitas on the Preserve. We will be doing some additional planting at those sites as well, so there is ample opportunity for the public to get involved in these highly successful restoration projects.

Santa Rosa Island Volunteer Project

Channel Islands Restoration and Channel Islands National Park worked together to organize and lead three volunteer trips to Santa Rosa Island in July and October to remove fencing that had been erected to protect sensitive plants from non-native grazing animals. Removing the fencing was difficult, but the hardy volunteers put in long hours and were able to visit some remote parts of the island that few visitors have a chance to see. Volunteers camped at Johnson's Lee (with special permission) on the south side of the island on two of the trips.



The fencing was originally installed by mostly volunteer labor (including CIR volunteers) under the direction of the National Park Service. Non-native deer and elk were present on the island as part of a commercial hunting operation run by the island's previous owners in an agreement with the NPS. The fencing protected rare plants from grazing by the animals and protected sensitive environments threatened by erosion. With the expiration of the hunting agreement at the end of 2011, all non-native animals are now gone from the island and the protective fencing is no longer needed.

No funding was available for the trips, so CIR and the NPS needed to come up with creative ways to finance the project. Volunteers paid for the cost of the boat transportation and the wages of one CIR staff person. CIR donated the wages of a second staff person and the cost of coordinating volunteers. The NPS provided vehicles, logistical and staff support and campsite use.

Top: employees from outdoor corporations volunteer for CIR at the San Marcos Foothills Preserve. Middle: restoration plantings installed by CIR volunteers at the San Marcos Foothills Preserve. Bottom: CIR volunteers receive instruction on Santa Rosa Island from NPS restoration biologist Sarah Chaney.

CIR to Offer Additional Mainland Educational Trips

CIR will offer three educational fieldtrips to fabulous mainland locations in 2013, led by geologist Tanya Atwater, botanist Steve Junak, and bird expert Santiago Escruceria. We will tour Death Valley National Park (March 14 - 18) and the White Mountains of Eastern California (July 13 - 16). CIR will offer our Central Coast Geology tour at a date yet to be determined.

Death Valley National Park (March 14 - 18, 2013)

This will be our second trip to the park. The five day adventure begins with a visit to the Maturango Museum in Ridgecrest. While hunting for wildflowers in route, we then head for camp at the Trona Pinnacles, which has some of the most unusual geological features in the California Deserts. The next day features many botany and geology stops and a spectacular view of Death Valley from Aguerberry Point. We camp three nights at Furnace Creek campground in the floor of the valley. Over the next two days we enjoy a spectacular drive through Titus Canyon, a hike up Mosaic Canyon, and visits to Ubehebe Crater, Dante's View, Zabriskie Point, Badwater, the Salt Creek pupfish ponds, and various botanical and birding sites.



View of Death Valley from Aguerberry Point

White Mountains (August 4–7, 2013)

This will be our fourth trip to the fascinating White Mountains of Eastern California. Last summer 30 participants joined us from all over California as we spent four days visiting ancient trees, spectacular vistas and exceptional geology. We stay at the Crooked Creek research station, which is set in a bristlecone and limber pine forest at 10,200 feet in altitude. Station staff cook all of our meals, and we are treated to evening presentations by Tanya Atwater and Santiago ###. The ancient bristlecone pines are one of the most exotic and interesting features of the White Mountains. These are the oldest trees in the world; one of them has been dated at nearly 5,000 years old! We hike in two of these groves in guided explorations of the trees, wildflowers, birds and other animals that inhabit these high-altitude ecosystems. Each day we take auto tours and short to medium length hikes to the pines and several great view and wildflower spots. We also visit Barcroft Station, a unique facility for high-altitude research, and we offer an optional hike up nearby Mount Barcroft, at just over 13,000 feet.



2011 CIR White Mountains Trip

Central Coast Geology Tour (date to be announced)

This will be our second tour of Central Coast natural history sites, with special emphasis on the geological history of California with Dr. Tanya Atwater. This is a travelling, four day camping trip, with the option to stay in hotels. We camp at Morro Bay state park, Pinnacles National Monument, and Pfeiffer-Big Sur state park. Our days include explorations of Avila Beach, Morro Rock, Parkfield and the San Andreas fault experiment, Pinnacles, fault offsets through old-town Hollister, Point Lobos, Big Sur, Point Piedras Blancas lighthouse, the elephant seal rookery and various other geologic, wildflower and cultural stops along the route. Stay tuned for announcements about the dates for this trip.

Prominent Ecologist Wayne R. Ferren Jr. Joins CIR Staff



Wayne R. Ferren Jr. has joined the Channel Islands Restoration team as Principal Ecologist and head of the newly formed Research Program, which will expand the scope of CIR to include a broad array of ecological and environmental functions.

Wayne brings over 40 years of experience with institutional, non-profit and for-profit botanical, ecological, and environmental programs including employment with the Academy of Natural Sciences of Philadelphia (ANSP), the University of California Santa Barbara (UCSB), and Maser Consulting and the Rancocas Conservancy in New Jersey.

Wayne has extensive experience in environmental and programmatic management and oversight. He was Botanical Collections Manager at ANSP, Curator and Executive Director of the UCSB Museum of Systematics and Ecology, Assistance Director of the UCSB Natural Reserve System, Director of Carpinteria Salt Marsh Reserve, Project Manager at Maser Consulting and Trustee at the Rancocas Conservancy.

Wayne also has served as President of the California Botanical Society and Editor of *Madrono*. He has authored over 90 technical papers, reports, and chapters, provided numerous classes, workshops, and presentations; and is the recipient of eleven environmental awards for his work and projects.

At CIR Wayne will oversee research elements of restoration projects, environmental monitoring, and field experiments. He will oversee project design; manage the production of technical reports; manage project permitting; and assist with marketing and business development. Wayne also will assist with the development and execution of the Education Program including lectures and field trips. Wayne's technical focus will include restoration ecology, wetland ecology, plant sciences, and environmental review and planning.

WHO PAYS FOR CIR PROGRAMS?



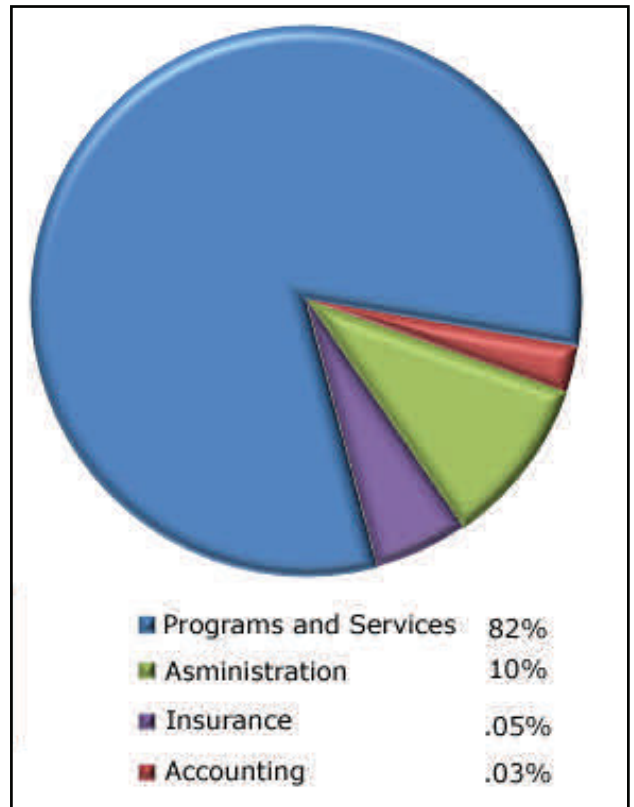
Although CIR staff and volunteer board members spend countless hours writing grants to many different funding agencies, much of the work that we do is completely unfunded by any agency. In these cases, CIR relies on individual contributions to help carry out these important projects. As an example, CIR board members and other individual donors raised a big portion of the funding needed to purchase and construct a shade house on Anacapa Island as part of the nursery project there. Although we are glad to work with our partners in the Park Service and Patagonia to help fund the nursery, individual donors helped make that project possible. Also, CIR regularly contributes staff time (and the associated wages) so that adults can volunteer on the Channel islands. Contributions from CIR supporters help fund these types of projects.

Funding is often available for targeted schools to work with us on the Channel Islands, but many other schools must raise the money for the boat and other costs. In those cases, CIR often donates the pay for our staff person to join the group and lead them in a restoration project.

Although CIR is a non-profit organization, we still need to pay the costs of doing "business" like for-profit companies. The difference is, we operate on a near break-even basis, and we work on many projects because of their ecological or educational value and not their monetary value.

CIR is required to pay considerable overhead expenses in order to work on our restoration projects. These include workers compensation and liability insurance, accounting fees, rent for equipment storage and an administrative office, equipment purchases and maintenance, and staff time to administer a wide-ranging and busy organization. As a percentage of our budget, these expenses are relatively low, but there is no funding available to pay for these costs other than contributions from our supporters.

We are always proud to announce that we have received grants from foundations or other agencies, but it is important to remember that CIR must raise a great deal of our funding from individuals to keep operating. That is why we ask for contributions, and we hope that people who support our work will also support us financially. Please join CIR today!



Top: CIR volunteers at the San Marcos Foothills Preserve. Left: CIR board member Julie Kummel leads teen volunteers at Lake Los Carneros in Goleta. Right: CIR expenses in 2011. Eighty-three percent of our budget goes directly to support our restoration and educational programs, but we must raise the funds from individual donors to pay for many of those programs and to cover other necessary costs.

PLEASE JOIN CIR AT THESE SUGGESTED MEMBERSHIP LEVELS:

\$35.00 - Dolphin

\$125.00 - Goldenbush

\$75.00 - Silver Lotus

\$175.00 - Island Fox



Each membership entitles you to:

One CIR organic-cotton T-Shirt
(island fox, Coreopsis, heron, or island)
Fox shirt colors: green goldenrod or gray

Members will be invited to our
appreciation event
at Carpinteria State Park (in March)
including natural history hikes with
Tanya Atwater and Wayne Ferren!

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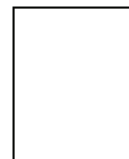
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