

CHANNEL ISLANDS RESTORATION

Volume 8, Issue 1

December 2010



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CIR AND NPS BUILD NURSERY ON ANACAPA ISLAND

CIR and Channel Islands National Park (NPS) are close to completing construction of a native plant nursery on Anacapa Island as part of the iceplant eradication project for that island. CIR has provided funding for many aspects of the facility with the help of individual donors and the Patagonia store in

(Continued on page 3)



Constructing the Anacapa Island nursery from left:

CIR volunteer Dan Morgan, Special Projects Administrator Maeghan Owen, Operations Manager Kevin Thompson, NPS Restoration Biologist Sarah Chaney and CIR board member Gordon Hart.

Anacapa: Iceplant Free by 2016?

Channel Islands National Park has set a goal of removing iceplant from all of Anacapa Island by 2016, in time for the nationwide National Park Service Centennial. Iceplant was introduced to the island by the Coast Guard in the 1950s, and it now covers a large section of East Anacapa and a small portion of Middle Anacapa.

In response to this challenge, CIR has partnered with the NPS to bring adult volunteers, school groups and profes-

(Continued on page 4)



Iceplant is a fast-growing, mat-forming invasive plant that excludes most every other plant where it grows. CIR staff (above) show grade-school volunteers how to remove iceplant from adjacent to the ranger's residence.

RESULTS OF CIR WORK WITH ENDANGERED BEDSTRAW

According to counts recently made by USGS-Channel Island Field Station staff, the endangered sea-cliff bedstraw (*Galium buxifolium*) at Pelican Bay on Santa Cruz Island is producing a record number of new plants following invasive plant treatment at the site by CIR staff. CIR is working with USGS to protect the bedstraw population at Pelican Bay, where its survival and increase is threatened by periwinkle (*Vinca major*), an aggressive, non-native, escaped garden plant.

Sea-cliff bedstraw is an island endemic and only grows in a few small populations on San Miguel and Santa Cruz Island (it once grew on Santa Rosa, but has not been seen there since the 1930s). Grazing, trampling and loss of native habitat related to past ranching activities have decimated the species, and various invasive plants further threaten most of the remaining populations.

This is the second year that CIR has worked at the site and careful examination of the results show the number of bedstraw plants jumped from 131 before treatment to 506 plants after 95% of the periwinkle in the work area had been eradicated. Although the periwinkle eradication may not be solely responsible for the huge increase in the number of new bedstraw plants, CIR staffers have observed a flush of seedlings of other native plants sprout in other areas where groundcover plants like periwinkle and iceplant have been removed.

CIR is committed to following up on the treatment of the periwinkle at the site in 2011 and beyond. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service provided the funding for the periwinkle treatment, and CIR worked in close cooperation with USGS, the County of Santa Barbara and The Nature Conservancy on this project. For a complete list of project partners, please visit our web site:

www.cirweb.org/pelican1.htm

CIR'S YOUTH PROGRAMS

Nearly 400 school children joined CIR on Anacapa and Santa Cruz Islands in 2010 to help restore habitat and to learn about conservation and island ecology. Most of the kids live in low-income neighborhoods in Ventura County, and these trips allowed them to experience the marine sanctuary and islands for the first time. In addition to our island trips, young people of all ages volunteered with CIR at several locations on the mainland.

Anacapa Island

Thanks to a grant from Sempra Foundation, more than 300 children helped remove iceplant on Anacapa. CIR board member Carolyn Greene was instrumental in organizing this program, and you can read all about it in her article on page 4.

Santa Cruz Island

Around 100 students also joined CIR on restoration trips to Santa Cruz Island, both in the Central Valley and to Scorpion Canyon. At Scorpion, the kids removed invasives and planted native species

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Sea-cliff bedstraw (*Galium buxifolium*) surrounded by periwinkle (*Vinca major*) at Pelican Bay on Santa Cruz Island. The bedstraw is a federally listed endangered species that is dramatically recovering following invasive plant removal.



Fourth graders from Sheridan Way Elementary School volunteered on Anacapa Islands in March. Nearly 400 students participated in the CIR school program.

*CIR and NPS Build Nursery on Anacapa Island
(Continued from page 1)*

Ventura, with NPS funding the rest of the project. CIR board members, staff and volunteers along with NPS staff have provided the labor to construct the facility. All of the materials for the nursery were taken to the island by NPS boat and then lifted into place by helicopter. Helicopter delivery was necessary since both the access stairway and the cargo crane have been out of service for replacement since June 2010.

The nursery will support the Island restoration program, which has as a major goal the eradication of the introduced iceplant and re-establishment of native species. The nursery has an automated watering system that will minimize the need for daily staffing. Growing plants on the island is a necessity to avoid the accidental introduction of non-native species and to eliminate the need to transport plants to the island.

However, logistics will be challenging as all materials, including water, will need to be transported from the mainland to the nursery area. In addition to removing invasives, a nursery on Anacapa will provide additional benefits as volunteers will have the opportunity to participate in a full-circle restoration project, including collecting seeds, soil preparation, propagating plants and planting and maintaining endemic and native species on the Island.

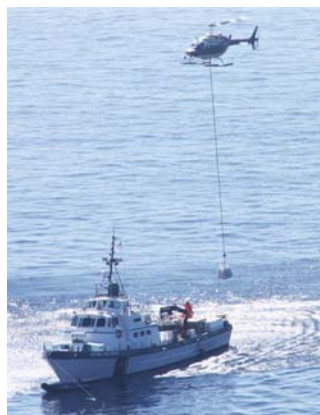
NPS Restoration biologist Sarah Chaney and CIR board member Gordon Hart have spearheaded the design and construction of the nursery with the help of CIR staff and volunteers.



A helicopter delivers construction materials to the nursery site on Anacapa Island.



Students from Ventura High School work with CIR board member Gordon Hart to prepare nursery site.



Constructing the shade house. Left: helicopter lifts construction materials off the Park Service boat anchored off Anacapa. Middle and right: CIR board members Gordon Hart and David Edwards, CIR Operations Manager Kevin Thompson, CIR Special Projects Administrator Maeghan Owen and Park Service maintenance mechanic Samuel Guerro assemble shade house frame and construct nursery benches.

Anacapa Iceplant Free by 2016?
(Continued from page 1)

sional restoration staff to the island to work on the project. Starting in January, CIR organized twice-monthly restoration trips to the island. These trips happened on Wednesdays when the NPS provides transportation to the island. Volunteers helped with many tasks including delicately pulling iceplant where it is growing around sensitive and fragile native plants. 141 adult volunteers gave more than 1,200 hours of service to the iceplant project since January. CIR staff and board members Cindy Kimmick and Carolyn Greene donated countless hours organizing these trips without the benefit of funding. The NPS contributed twice-monthly boat transportation and countless hours of logistical support to the project. The Anacapa stairway will be in service in December 2010, and we eagerly anticipate resumption of the Wednesday trips.

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE ANACAPA SCHOOL TRIPS

BY CAROLYN GREENE, CIR BOARD MEMBER

The happy cry of “Teacher, teacher, look at this!” echoed across the islands earlier this year, coming from many of the more than 300 very excited 4th and 5th graders who participated in restoration activities this spring, as part of the first ever “Environmental Champions” award given to CIR by the Sempra Energy Foundation.

Students, parents and teachers from two Title 1 schools – Cesar Chavez in Oxnard and Sheridan Way in Ventura – traveled by Island Packer boat across the Santa Barbara Channel to Anacapa and Santa Cruz islands, where they enjoyed an island ecology hike and then removed non-native iceplant. CIR’s Executive Director, Ken Owen, visited each school prior to trip day, presenting a multi-media island orientation, to prepare students for their day on the island. Few of the students had ever been on a boat, and most were unaware of a National Park practically in their own backyard.

CIR is most grateful to Michele Pettes of Sempra Foundation and each school’s teacher/coordinator - Janis Emhardt of Sheridan Way and Becky Compton from Cesar Chavez.

One highlight was a day when some 50 native slender salamanders were found and carefully relocated, under the watchful eye of NPS wildlife Biologist Helen Fitting. On another day, students completely cleared a large block of iceplant adjacent to the Ranger residence on Anacapa. Three months later, a carpet of native alkali heath (*Frankenia salina*) had sprouted naturally, filling the area where the iceplant was removed.

The Sempra program has been a great “kick-off” for volunteer restoration projects that CIR and Channel Islands National Park will co-sponsor in the future. Due to the temporary closure of Anacapa this past spring and summer, additional funds remain from the Sempra award to involve other schools and community groups in Anacapa restoration in 2011. Volunteer work leaders are needed to work with the students on the islands—**Carolyn Greene**

CIR Youth Programs
(Continued from page 2)

in the lower canyon. This is the second year that CIR has planted natives at Scorpion, and the plants are doing well.

Mainland Locations

About 140 students helped CIR plant natives at Refugio Creek on the Gaviota Coast and at Lake Los Carneros in Goleta. Their help was vital to our restoration work!

CIR will continue our school programs in 2011 on the islands and the mainland. Adult volunteer work leaders are needed to help escort schools on island trips.



NPS Wildlife Biologist Helen Fitting shows students how she carefully moves salamanders found in work areas to nearby safe habitats.



Santa Barbara High School students (left) and student from Laguna Blanca School (right) plant natives at Refugio Creek.

CIR Begins Project at San Marcos Foothills

After more than a decade of grassroots organizing, 200 acres were saved from development along the lower San Marcos Pass between Santa Barbara and Goleta. The San Marcos Foothills Preserve is operated as a county park, and CIR is helping to restore two sites on the preserve with project partners and the help of volunteers.



Volunteer Don Schroeder uses his tractor to spread mulch at the San Marcos Foothill along Atascadero Creek. The mulch helps control invasive weeds and protects container plants.

The plan calls for CIR to remove invasive weeds and plant more than 4,600 native species along Atascadero and Cieneguitas creeks with the help of volunteers. Last year much of the preserve was burned in the Jesusita fire, and invasive weeds have come back with a vengeance! A key aspect of the plan is controlling weeds with mulch and volunteer help, avoiding the need to use herbicide.

Once restored, both sites will make wonderful creek and

scrub habitat, but this will not happen without dedicated volunteer support. CIR will also be making public educational presentations about the preserve to schools and community groups. This will help us recruit volunteers and acquaint the community with the wonderful preserve in their own back yard.

Carpinteria State Beach Needs your Help!

Many CIR volunteers have joined us on Anacapa Island to remove non-native iceplant, but there is a



CIR staff and volunteers place black plastic over invasive iceplant at Carpinteria State Beach. The plastic will eradicate the iceplant, and volunteers will plant more than 1,000 native plants at the site.

beautiful mainland location that is also under threat from the invasive succulent. Our project at Carpinteria State Beach at the mouth of Carpinteria Creek is a case study on how to remove an invasive plant without using herbicide or disturbing a sensitive creek bank.

CIR has covered the iceplant with black plastic sheeting to desiccate the plants and deprive them of light. This technique is referred to as "solarization" and it has proved effective in eradicating iceplant at many restoration sites where CIR has worked previously. The plastic will soon be removed, and more than 1,000 native dune and

scrub species will be planted by volunteers on the site.

YOUR help is needed to plant the natives, keep them watered and weed free. So please volunteer at an upcoming volunteer day! Funding for this project is provided by the Southern California Wetland Recovery Project, and CIR is proud to be working in partnership with South Coast Habitat Restoration on this project.



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New Projects and Updates

Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area

CIR has teamed with the Santa Monica Mountains Trails Council and the Park Service to eradicate Spanish broom in the Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area. Spanish broom is a highly invasive weed that has spread out of control in the area of Saddle Peak on NPS property. The Trails Council obtained a grant to hire CIR, and we are providing volunteer and technical support to the project.



CIR staff provide training to volunteers at Saddle Peak in the Santa Monica National Recreation Area.

volunteer help is needed to care for the plantings in this sensitive natural area.

Oxnard Dune Restoration

CIR continues working with Arcadis International to restore dune habitat along Harbor Boulevard in Oxnard. CIR removed invasives during the spring and has planted natives this fall. CIR was assisted by the California Conservation Corps on this project.

Lookout Park

You can now "look out" from Lookout Park in Summerland! With the support of the County of Santa Barbara, CIR has completed a three-year project to eradicate giant reed (*Arundo donax*) from a steep hillside in the park. The *Arundo* is detrimental to the environment and promotes erosion, and it also obstructed the view from the park. CIR removed the *Arundo* and planted native scrub species at the site.



A "before" and "after" photo of giant reed (*Arundo donax*) removal at Lookout Park in Summerland. Much of the *Arundo* was more than 20 feet high, and was a technical challenge to remove (note person standing in top photo). The bottom photo (at center) shows native planting a few months after installation. CIR was assisted by the California Conservation Corps with planting and installation of the irrigation system at the site.

Santa Barbara Zoo

CIR will soon be starting a project at the Santa Barbara Zoo along the Andree Clark Bird Refuge. We will remove invasive plants and plant native species in an ecologically sensitive part of the refuge that is also seen by thousands of Zoo visitors every year. We will be relying on volunteer help for much of the project and we will work in partnership with the Zoo and the City of Santa Barbara. Funding for this project is provided by the Southern California Wetlands Recovery Project.

Lake Los Carneros

CIR planted several hundred natives following invasive plant removal this year at Lake Los Carneros in Goleta. More than 100 volunteers helped us with this project that is funded by the Goleta Valley Land Trust. More

CIR Educational Field Trips are Quite a Success!

From the Big Sur coast to the majestic White Mountains, CIR's educational Field Trips have been a popular success. In the spring, Steve Junak, the renowned botanist and CIR board member, led a series of fire ecology walks in the foothills of the Santa Ynez range. More than 40 people had the opportunity to see firsthand how native (and invasive) plants react to wildfire, and we were treated to amazing displays of wildflowers.



A spectacular view of White Mountain as seen on the CIR trip there in July. At 14,252 feet, White Mountain is the third highest peak in California.

In July, we held a four-day sojourn in eastern California to the "ecological islands" which are the White Mountains. Thirty four people joined us on the trip that included Steve Junak, renowned geophysicist Dr. Tanya Atwater, author David Lukas and naturalist Mickey Long. We stayed at the picturesque Crooked Creek Research Station and enjoyed hikes to the ancient Bristlecone Pines and Mount Barcroft.

In September, Tanya Atwater led a trip along the San Andreas Fault and the Big Sur Coast. Participants camped in several spectacular spots along the way and learned about the geological history of California. We are very grateful for the support of the naturalists on all of these trips and to CIR board member Carolyn Greene for her organizational skills.

planning a series of daylong geology tours of the Santa Ynez Mountains, Figueroa Mountain and spots in Ventura County. Watch your email for more information on these and future educational trips with CIR.

What's coming up next? We will be exploring the natural history of Death Valley National Park March 31 to April 4, and there are still spots open! For more information on this trip, contact Carolyn Greene (cgnpark@yahoo.com). We are also



Thirty-four people attended the CIR trip to the White Mountains in July. This photo was taken at the Crooked Creek Research Station where the group stayed.



Central Coast geology trip participants pose along the San Andreas Fault near Parkfield, CA.



Left: Dr. Tanya Atwater highlights the geology of Point Lobos State Natural Reserve. Center: Dr. Steve Junak leads a fire ecology hike on West Camino Cielo in the Santa Ynez Mountains. Right: *Phacelia grandiflora* is a fire-following native that was quite common in the Santa Ynez Mountains following recent fires.

WHO PAYS FOR CIR PROGRAMS?

Although CIR staff and volunteer board members spend countless hours writing proposals 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 Anacapa and Santa Cruz islands. Contributions from CIR supporters help fund these types of projects.



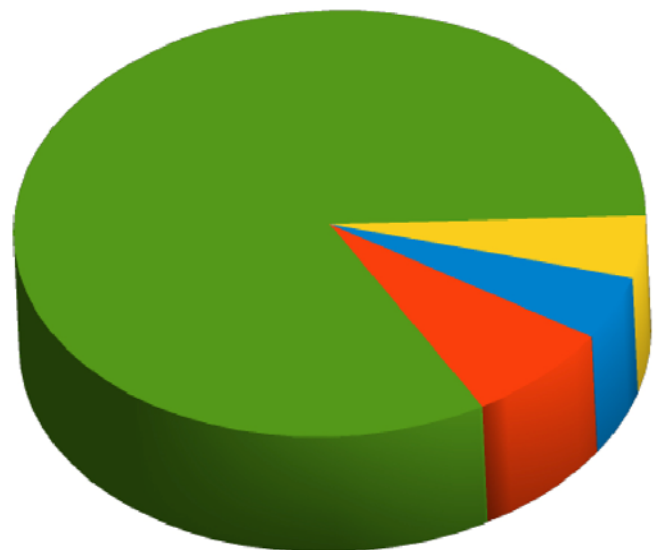
Funding is often available for targeted schools to work with us on the Channel Islands, but many other schools must raise the money for the boat and other costs. In those cases, CIR often donates the pay for our staff person to join the group and lead them in a restoration project.

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 breakeven 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 all of 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 a grant 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.

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Top: CIR volunteers pose by pulled iceplant on Anacapa Island. Left: CIR board member Julie Kummel leads teen volunteers at Lake Los Carneros in Goleta. Right: CIR expenses in 2010. 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



Donate through our web page:

www.cirweb.org/donate



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Channel Islands Restoration
P.O. Box 91414

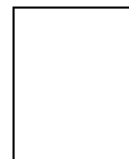


CIR Members will be invited to our annual appreciation event and will be invited to a local natural history tour!



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