

The Island Insider

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CSU Professor of Archeology Jennifer Perry gathers guests on Santa Rosa Island during CIR's second annual Autumn Equinox Cruise. The educational day-trip was attended by over 90 guests and included 7 distinct educational island programs to choose from.

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A view of CIR's 20th Anniversary Celebration held in Montecito at Manning Park, including the exquisite red-cedar handcrafted wooden kayak that was auctioned-off as part of the event. Guests were treated to food and drink in this beautiful outdoor location.

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A California Aster blooms along the Santa Clara River, where Channel Islands Restoration staff have been hard to work restoring habitat.

Reflecting on Twenty Years of Restoring Habitat and Educating the Public

KEN OWEN, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF CHANNEL ISLANDS RESTORATION



The CIR community listens to Ken Owen speak during CIR's 20th Anniversary Celebration in Manning Park, Montecito.

I have written in this newsletter before about how unexpected and quickly my career in ecology started more than 20 years ago. I asked an off-hand question to botanist Steve Junak about how someone could work on the Channel Islands, and he spent some time encouraging me to actually make the switch from a career in the IT industry to biology.

I was in my late 30s and gainfully employed at a software company, so I was not ready to take a chance on a new career, especially since I had no formal training in ecology. However, I did start studying the subject, plus botany, and habitat restoration at community college and elsewhere, and I had years of experience working for nonprofit organizations. About a year after my conversation with Steve, our software company had to close, a victim of the dot-com crash.

This initiated my career in habitat restoration and environmental education in 2001.

By the following year, arborist Duke McPherson and I were leading popular volunteer trips to Santa Cruz Island removing invasive plants. We formed Channel Islands Restoration and continued our work on that island for many years.

At the same time, we worked on some complicated projects on the mainland, like removing *Arundo donax* (giant reed) from Carpinteria Creek and removing invasive trees from Coal Oil Point Reserve (near UCSB) and at the Arroyo Hondo Preserve on the Gaviota Coast. We entered into a partnership with Channel Islands National Park, and soon we were doing projects on all the islands in the park, and

we started assisting the Navy on San Nicolas Island. In the following years, we worked on more than 100 projects including on more islands, more creeks, two national forests, two state beaches, and the Santa Clara River in an area spanning northern Santa Barbara County to the Ballona Wetlands by LAX. CIR provided service-learning field trips to the Channel Islands for 2,505 school kids and youth from mostly underserved communities.

We built native plant nurseries and grew at least 70,000 native plants. Together with plants we purchased from local growers, we have installed well over 100,000 in the last 20 years, and that's a low estimate!

I was asked recently what CIR has done over the last 20 years that has had the most impact, but it was too

hard to just name one project. I decided on two things: taking more than 2,500 kids to the islands (plus working with kids on the mainland) and working with a coalition to save 101-acres of grassland and beautiful open space from development in the San Marcos Foothills.

Most of the kids had never been on a boat before or visited a national park. On most trips, they saw sealions, dolphins and whales. On one trip, the Island Packers boat stayed in place for half an hour, while humpback whales beached in front of us dozens of times. I managed to catch some video of the whales, and of the of the kids shouting and squealing with delight. Not every trip was quite so dramatic, but all the trips offered a chance for kids to visit the ocean, the beautiful Channel Islands, and to have a great time helping the environment. Our long-term Board members, volunteers and staff know the great impact we had on these kids. We look forward to expanding this program in the future, especially for kids from disadvantaged communities.

Finally, most of our supporters know about the acquisition of the West Mesa of the San Marcos Foothills and how that campaign saved the property from imminent development of luxury homes. Over 5,000 donors contributed a total of \$18,600,000 in about 90 days to buy the property. Some of Santa Barbara's top fundraisers helped make the project happen, as did dozens of volunteers, especially from a grassroots organization called Save San Marcos Foothills. There had been attempts to prevent the development before, but because CIR and our partners stepped up at just the right time, we were able to convince the community we could do the impossible and buy the property.

CIR has been raising money for and restoring the San Marcos Foothills Preserve, which is the 200-acre open space next to the West Mesa, since 2010. Next year the properties will be joined together as the expanded San Marcos Foothills Preserve. CIR is already managing the West Mesa, applying for grants, and planning

to restore the grasslands with prescribed sheep grazing early next year. We are working with trail expert Ray Ford to redesign and improve the trails on the West Mesa to make them more user friendly and more compatible with our goals to restore the grassland for nesting birds.

CIR has volunteered to maintain the trails on the whole Preserve, and the County has given us permission to start a docent program there. Docents will be trained in all aspects of the natural and cultural history of the Preserve, including information provided by our Chumash partners.

Helping to manage a 301-acres preserve is a daunting task, but it means there will be many volunteer opportunities coming up in 2023! We hope that many of our volunteers will help us restore the property, maintain the trails and provide education about the environment and about the indigenous Chumash people who lived there. Please join us in this next adventure as we start the 21st year of CIR's work!



The County has given us permission to start a docent program at the San Marcos Foothills Preserve in Santa Barbara.

New Year, New Opportunities!

CIR is working to expand its capacity next year by providing more educational opportunities for communities of color, establishing a native plant garden in collaboration with local Chumash people, maintaining a trail system, protecting local land from wildfires, restoration work on the mainland, and maybe offering volunteer trips to San Clemente Island! However, to accomplish those goals CIR needs help to finish out this year on a sound financial footing. You can help us reach our year-end goal of raising \$75,000 by December 31st to directly support these programs. If every one of our supporters gave \$100, then we can reach our goal and ease CIR's fiscal burden.

We know not everyone can give that amount, and of course whatever you can give is appreciated. To offset those who can only give a small amount, we always appreciate a larger donation if that is within your means. Of course, all donations are tax-deductible and your giving level will correlate to CIR's tiered membership program. Make a gift today to support environmental conservation, education, and research!

Scan The QR Code
To Contribute Today



Ken Owen
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
& the Channel Islands Restoration Team



CIR is working to maintain a trail system, protect local land from wildfires and offer volunteer trips to San Clemente Island.

Thank You to Our Supporters!



Island Fox (\$1000+)

Karen Telleen-Lawton • Cindy Kimmick • Jeffrey Light And Christine Wong • Renee Longan • Peter Seaman • Eric Werner • Dave Anderson • Kathi Backus • John Benjamin • Peter Borneman • Bill Burke • Doug Campbell • Tim & Louise Casey • Darlene Chirman • Mark Connally • Beryl Feller • Irene Gilgoff • Greg Giloth • Jessica Goldstein • Frances Hellman • Dennis Houghton • Julie Kummel • Hank Mitchel • Richard Powell • Diane Quinn • Christopher Reed • Joel Shefflin • Elaine Sweet • Linda Ullman • Phil White • Michael Wondolowski • Christine Wong • John Woodard

Island Ironwood (\$500+)

Satie Airame • Mary Bucholtz • Leslie Edgerton • David Edwards • Joel Fithian • Patrick Marr • Bob Simon • Lawrence Wallin • Louise Andaloro • Marilyn Bachman • Anne Bittner • Charles Buchanan • Timothy Casey • Gwen Dawson • Tisha Ford • Mack Fuhrer • John Gherini • David Goldstein • Wf Hammond • Tanis Hammond • John Huber • Eric Hvolboll • Connie Jenkins • Tom Jenkins • Gudrun Kleist • Joan Kreiss • Donald Mills • Taylor Person • Richard Pisor • Barak Raviv • Eileen Read • Peter Schuyler & Lisa Stratton • Ann Steinmetz



Coastal Goldenbush (\$100+)

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Island Scrub Jay (\$40+)

William Dinino • Janice Levasheff • Frank Wheeler • Steve Alnwick • Jan Chytilo • Marylou Furrer • Knute T Garcken • Estelle Ichino • Donald Jack • Lyndal Laughrin • Paul Lerma • Scott Orlosky • Julie Stark • Sabina Thomas • Jamie Thompson • Marilyn Whitford • Sara Woodburn • Alan Zeleznikar • Kris And Alex Brodie • Carolyn Chaney • Keith Eshelman • Linda Fisher • Vale Laraia Frasch • Ben Kuo • Matthew Meyers • Carl Pecevich • Geoffrey Coster • Karen Cross • Owen Duncan • Arthur Hoyle • Cathy Karol-Crowther • Sue Masters • Burt Romotsky • Kate Symonds • Molly Troup • Lisa Acree • Dennis Arguelles • Jorgia Bordofsky • Nancy Callahan • Mardi Caruso • Morgan Coffey • Patrick Crooks • Vanessa Deluca • Daryn Dodge • Linda Dye • Anthony Gomez • Daniel Johnson • Christopher Leslie • David Levasheff • Jancie Levasheff • Sheri Linden • Kevin Mallon • Oscar Martinez • Jerry Mitcham • Pamela Petersen • Fiona Reidy • Linda Sitrling • Shiela Stevens • Greg Sweet • Sally Tannenbaum • Nancy Tobin • Christine Tran • Christopher Tull • Myra Masiel Zamora



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In addition to supporting habitat restoration, your donation will give you access to tiers of donor benefits, which include invitations to private events, merchandise, virtual talks, and of course our sincere gratitude.

A Story of Plants & Paintings with Connie Jenkins

Connie Jenkins
CIR Board Member

About five years ago, I decided to paint flowers. A popular hobby for old ladies, I was, after all, well-qualified. I wanted to make a "Book of Hours", a calendar of wildflowers as they came into bloom. Each month, I would photograph native plants in the landscape around me and choose one to paint.

Ten months and 4 paintings in, (it takes me longer to paint than it does Mother Nature,) the Woolsey and Hill fires blew through the western end of Los Angeles and Ventura counties from Thousand Oaks to Malibu and Topanga.

Between November 8th and November 13th, 2018, the Woolsey fire incinerated 97,000 acres, including 88% of the Santa Monica Mts National Recreation area. 1,500 structures, mostly homes, were destroyed. It visited us, halfway up

the side of Boney Mt, on November 11th. Four of the twelve homes on the five miles of dirt track named Mipolomol Road burned to the ground. Our house survived largely intact—just a charred wall and a wee hole in the roof that only leaked when it rained. Our studios were unscathed, but 58 trees and countless shrubs, herbs and flowers that I had planted, watered, weeded, pruned and harvested over the past 25 years, not to mention the eight additional acres of natural chaparral that we claimed as ours, were now mostly charcoal.

As the ample rains of the new year brought life to the charred landscape, we realized that we were going to witness the amazing succession of regrowth that occurs here after fire.

We experienced it in 1994 following the Green Meadows fire and I knew we would see many plants that only germinate and grow after a burn. Over the next five years, I could

observe flowers around my Santa Monica Mountain home that may never reappear here in my lifetime.

Fire-followers are plants that are stimulated to germinate as the result of the heat of a fire, the caustic effect of rain filtering thru the ash, (think liquid smoke), or the removal of dense growth which prevents other plants from competing.

They occur in succession: nitrogen fixers and annuals the first year, biennials the second, with perennials eventually reasserting themselves to recreate the permanent landscape that we know as chaparral. I recognized this as a special opportunity to bear witness to this phenomenon in my art.

And so in February of 2019, I set aside my Book of Hours to begin a new series of fire-followers, recording each season of the flowers that would cover those thousands of acres, helping them to heal.



"Fire-followers." 2019-20. 27" x 60 1/2" oil on canvas.

More About Connie's Life & Work

Born in Texas in 1945, Connie Jenkins grew up in Illinois and attended the University of Colorado at Boulder.

There she met her husband, the artist Tom Jenkins. In 1972, the Jenkins moved to Venice CA to join the L.A. art scene.

Jenkins became an active part of the feminist art movement when she and her sister Colorado alumna Merion Estes made a pilgrimage to Cal Arts in hopes of meeting Judy Chicago or Miriam Schapiro.

Judy met them at the door of a darkened classroom and invited them to join her students who were watching a marathon slide show that Cal Arts Slide Librarian Vaughan Rachel had organized. During a break, Chicago invited the two to add their slides to a carousel along with those of the Feminist Art Project's recent landmark installation, Womanhouse.

The next month, reflecting the inclusive spirit embodied by the early feminist art movement, Jenkins was invited to show in the first Womanspace exhibit. (This storefront

cooperative gallery was the predecessor to the downtown Los Angeles Womens' Building.)

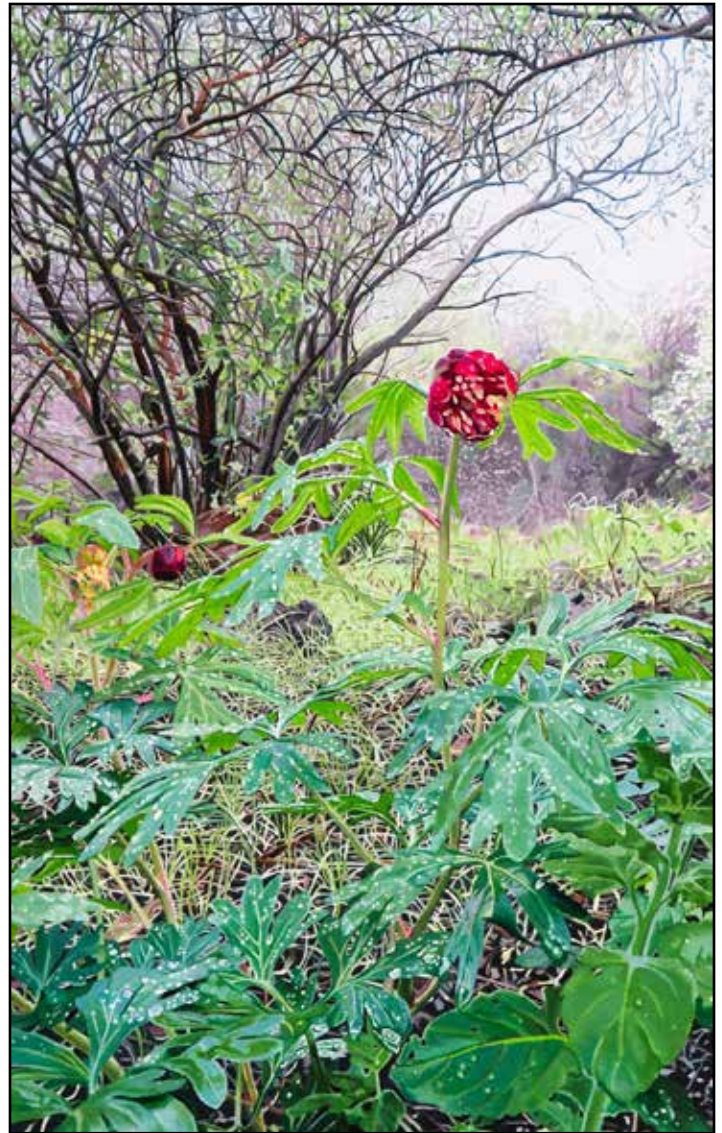
As a result of the influence of the women's movement, Jenkins paintings took a political turn. In the early 80's, she made paintings of rocks being buried by the ocean's tide, each painting commemorating a massacre in the conflict in El Salvador.

She exhibited regularly at Koplín Gallery and at numerous public institutions in Southern California.

During that time, as a mother of two, Jenkins served three terms on the Santa Monica-Malibu Board of Education.

Increasingly active in the community, she also participated on the boards of Heal the Bay and the Ocean Park Community Center as it developed programs for the homeless and victims of domestic violence.

She served, along with performance artist Rachel Rosenthal, as the first Co-chair of Double X, a non-profit group of women in the visual arts which organized exhibitions, performances, and lectures in Los



"Blood Moon" (Paeonia californica, February.) 2018. 24" x 15" oil on canvas.

Angeles. Jenkins taught nearly four decades at several universities and colleges in Southern California, including the Claremont Colleges, Cal State Long Beach, USC, Otis Art Institute and Ventura College. She has exhibited her photorealist paintings throughout the US and in Japan.

In 1994, with their children grown, Tom and Connie Jenkins moved to the Santa Monica mountains at the far western end of

Ventura County. Jenkins' paintings there reflected the natural landscape she found around her. In 2005, invited to work on a year-long project in the Channel Islands National Park, she began to photograph and paint the ocean landscape in intimate detail.

The resulting work was exhibited at the Ventura County Museum of History and Art and in four solo shows at Craig Krull Gallery at Bergamot Station in Santa Monica.

20 Years Of CIR...

We're celebrating 20 years of environmental restoration, education, and research. Thank you to all our supporters and partners for helping to save native habitat and remove invasive species across all 8 Channel Islands and along the mainland Central Coast. On the next two pages you'll see a brief retrospective timeline of our work over the last 20 years and here's to another 20 years of Channel Islands Restoration!

2002

Ken Owen and Duke McPherson organize a ragtag volunteer project into the organization called, "Channel Islands Restoration." Working with other volunteers, they organize six trips to remove invasive trees on Santa Cruz Island.



2005

CIR implements a community educational program about the island fox recovery program and other restoration projects on Santa Cruz Island. The public speaking event, brochures and signage CIR works to raise awareness about the near extinction of the island fox. Cir also creates a database of invasive plants on the island. Twenty four work trips were organized on Santa Cruz Island, with 197 volunteers.



2007

Since 2007, Channel Islands Restoration (CIR) has assisted Naval Base Ventura County by restoring habitat on San Nicolas Island and at Point Mugu Naval Air Station. The work on San Nicolas Island includes installing over 50,000 native plants grown from seed collected on the island in a nursery that CIR contracted in 2012. This work has benefited the animal population of the island, including the island night lizard, a species that lives exclusively on just three of the California Channel Islands. CIR also organized 19 work trips to Santa Cruz Island this year with 35 adult volunteers and 163 kids and faculty from local schools.



2010

CIR received a \$25,000 grant from the Sempra Energy Foundation, which paid for more than a dozen service-learning field trips from kids from underserved communities. Most of the trips were to Anacapa Island, but some occurred at Scorpion Harbor on Santa Cruz Island



2013

CIR was glad to send staff and a large group of volunteers to Santa Catalina to assist in eradicating several invasive plants, including Scotch broom (*Cytisus scoparius*) and fennel. Volunteers said at the Laura Stein volunteer camp and work in that part of the island searching for outlying broom, and they eradicated fennel from the area of Parson's Landing.

Our brief history of accomplishments continues on page 11...



2016

Starting in 2011, CIR worked closely with Channel Islands National Park to build a native plant nursery on East Anacapa Island. Many of the materials were flown to the island by helicopter, and CIR staff, volunteers and NPS build the shade structure and nursery tables. Tens of thousand of plants were grown in the nursery and planted in areas where invasive iceplant had been removed. The NPS entered into a contract with CIR to work on eradicating the the iceplant and recruiting volunteers to install them.



2017

Starting in 2017, CIR led natural history education trips annually to Death Valley National Park, the White Mountains in Inyo National Forest and other iconic and fascinating locations in our state. Recently, CIR has been leading similar trips to Santa Rosa Island.



2018

Channel Islands Restoration started a multiyear project to eradicate non-native invasive Tamarisk species in the Sisquoc River Manzanita Creek and the upper Santa Ynez River in the forest. The objective of the project is to restore and maintain habitat for riparian-dependent species such as the federally listed arroyo toad, California red-legged frog, and steelhead trout.



2019

CIR started work with The Nature Conservancy and the University of California Santa Barbara on the removal of arundo on 250 acres of land along the Santa Clara River. In early 2022 the removal of arundo had been completed under budget and we were granted a continuation of work until 2024 to work on removing secondary target species along the river.



2021

Foothills Forever is a coalition between Channel Islands Restoration, Save San Marcos Foothills, Chumash communities, and a team with expertise in fundraising and organization. Together, the group raised \$18.6 million in 90 days from over 5,500 donors and saved 101 acres of native grassland and open space from imminent development of luxury homes so that the property could be added to the San Marcos Foothills Preserve.



Islands of California Botanical Collaborative

Aaron Kreisberg
Staff Ecologist

From October 10 to October 14, CIR's staff ecologist took part in the Islands of California Botanical Collaborative (ICBC). This year's ICBC meeting, the first in-person meeting since the COVID-19 pandemic, took place on Santa Rosa Island and was co-sponsored by the National Park Service (NPS) and California State University Channel Islands (CSUCI).

The Santa Rosa Island Research Station (SRIRS) served as the base of operations for presentations and flash talks and CSUCI was an excellent host for the many individuals visiting the island that week. Resource managers from all eight California Channel Islands and Guadalupe Island off Baja California met to discuss their ongoing management challenges and to collaborate with each other.

Some organizations represented as part of ICBC, beyond the hosting entities, included the United States Geological Survey (USGS), the Santa Barbara Botanic Garden (SBBG), The Nature Conservancy (TNC), Department of the Navy, Catalina Island Conservancy (CIC), and the

Grupo de Ecología y Conservación de Islas (GECI). The members of the collaborative discussed their ongoing work with the flora of the islands and participated in site visits to examine continued recovery of the island's vegetation and assess continuing active restoration projects on Santa Rosa Island. A particular focus was on the ongoing restoration of the island oak (*Quercus tomentella*) cloud forest around Soledad Peak.

CIR has previously supported restoration work of the Santa Rosa Island cloud forest and it was exciting to see the continued progress at this location as fog fencing and erosion preventing wattles along with other strategies result in continued recovery of the island's vegetation following the final removal of non-native ungulate grazers nearly ten years ago. Carrington Point was also visited to consider issues with managing the invasion of grasslands by exotic species.

Lastly, Lobo Canyon was explored to showcase a riparian recovery as Lobo Canyon was fenced off over 20 years ago in collaboration with the then private owners of the island to protect resources. The fencing of Lobo Canyon allowed for a flourishing of riparian vegetation such as



Black Mountain Island Oak Forest. Source: Aaron Kreisberg



Cloud Forest Restoration with Debris Dams, Fog Fences, and Wattles at Soledad Mountain

arroyo willow (*Salix lasiolepis*) and black cottonwood (*Populus balsamifera s. trichocarpa*) and the flora of the canyon is dramatically healthier than it was even a decade or two ago.

While the ICBC group is plant focused, this year's meeting greatly benefited from perspectives from outside the botanical realm, particularly the insights provided by Dr. Kevin Schmidt, a research geologist with USGS, and Dr. Jennifer Perry, a Professor of Anthropology at CSUCI. Some CIR members may recognize Dr. Perry's name from a presentation on The Human Story of California's Channel Islands she did for CIR's Environmental Experts Webinar Series, and she was also one of the leaders for the 2022 Vernal Equinox Cruise to Santa Rosa Island. The insights provided by Dr. Schmidt regarding geology and Dr. Perry regarding human history, particularly regarding Chumash presence on Santa Rosa and co-management of natural and cultural resources, were invaluable.

The ICBC is a dedicated, impressive group and many interesting topics were discussed and presented. Key topics of discussion included the Channel Islands National Park's update of their backcountry wilderness management plan, ongoing brainstorming regarding the accumulation topsoil to facilitate habitat restoration where historic land use has resulted in the exposure of bedrock, and an update from the SBBG regarding the California Islands Biodiversity Survey (Cal-IBS), the garden's rare plant program, and ongoing collections work.

An additional highlight was an update from GECI

representatives regarding the ongoing recovery of vegetation on Guadalupe Island. Goats were eradicated from Guadalupe Island in 2007 and both passive and active restoration of vegetation communities has occurred since then. Despite a fire in 2021 that was caused by lightning which then reignited from a burning underground root, GECI continues their restoration work on Guadalupe Island both expanding Guadalupe pine (*Pinus radiata var. binate*) populations and supporting nesting habitat for species such as black-footed albatross (*Phoebastria nigripes*).

On the final day of the ICBC meeting participants spent time rolling wattles to be used for erosion control as part of the restoration of the cloud forest. The wattles help prevent erosion and keep topsoil in place. USGS Research Ecologist Kathryn McEachern, who also celebrated her birthday on the final day of the ICBC meeting, not only led the wattle making but also is the primary driver of the cloud forest restoration.

CIR is grateful to have supported the cloud forest restoration project and looks forward to continuing to support the recovery and restoration of vegetation across California's islands through both ICBC and beyond.

By continuing to collaborate, resource managers and researchers can continue to support each other in their objectives and learn from each other. In uncertain times the work of dedicated professionals in preserving, protecting, and enhancing the biodiversity of islands of California can serve as a template for the environmental good a group of dedicated individuals can accomplish.



Channel Islands Restoration's 2nd Annual Autumn Equinox Cruise

Overlooking Bechers Bay Pier on Santa Rosa Island. Source: Greg Giloth

Dennis Houghton
CIR Board Member

On September 22 we conducted our 2nd Annual Fall Equinox Cruise to beautiful Santa Rosa Island. I am very proud of all the hard work the CIR staff put in to make this trip a success.

Three years ago, as a Board Member of Channel Islands Restoration, I was looking to create an event that we could repeat on a yearly basis.

Working with Island Packers and the National Park Service, we planned, organized, and conducted our first cruise on September 23, 2021.

This was a “beta” test, as it is a remarkable effort to first organize, communicate with members, process payments, recruit trail leader experts, and conduct the cruise in a safe manner where participants might learn something new and memorable about Santa Rosa Island. One of the key tenets

of Channel Islands Restoration is education.

For twenty years we have been bringing students to the islands and since our founding we have conducted educational & volunteer activities for over 2,500 students.

My desire was to take what we do for middle and high school students to... adults!

To accomplish this task, we needed to recruit leaders in their respective fields who would lead walking tours or hikes to nearby parts of the island.

Not an easy task as the trip to and from Santa Rosa Island can take

over three hours from Ventura and return at a reasonable hour.

That leaves about three hours maximum for each group to reach their destination, have lunch while discussing island geology, botany, archeology, and history.

On our 2nd Annual Equinox Cruise, we were able to improve our processes in recruiting leaders, processing payments and coordinating hikes for nearly one hundred participants.

We were very fortunate to have the following experts, professors, and island knowledgeable people to lead our groups:

Trip/hike Leader	Affiliation (includes past positions)	Hike
Steve Junak	Santa Barbara Botanic Garden	Botany
Sabina Thomas	SBCC & SB Natural History Museum	Geology
Jennifer Perry	Cal State University Channel Islands	Archeology-Chumash History
Dave Edwards	Santa Monica Mountains Trail Council	Torrey Pines
Greg Giloth	Channel Islands Restoration	Cherry Canyon
Rich Powell	Naturalist	Water Canyon
John Kuizenga	Naturalist	Coastal Walk

The Santa Cruz Channel / Bechers Bay was an explosion of tropical colors. Who needs the Caribbean when we have our Channel Islands?

CIR staff on board the Island Packer vessel explained the day's events following the safety instruction from the ship's crew. Upon arrival at the pier at Bechers Bay, Channel Islands Naturalist Corps Volunteers explained the rules of the island and then we formed seven groups for the pre-selected hikes. Immediately arriving at Bechers Bay, we were reminded why we love visiting Santa Rosa Island...

It seems everyone thoughtfully selected their hike based upon certain interests, trail leader or just wanted a day of incredible views with vigorous exercise.

The hikes or walks varied greatly. While the coastal walk started on the nearby Vail & Vickers Ranch with only two to three miles range, the hike led by Dave Edwards to the Torrey Pines was a seven-mile round trip. If you went on the Torrey Pines hike you would need to keep a steady pace and then climb perhaps 400 feet to the top elevation in the Torrey Pines Forest.

Torrey Pines is an amazing story of recovery. Only twenty five years ago there were only about one hundred Torrey Pines remaining. Thanks to the removal of feral pigs, deer and elk there are now more than 24,000. It was amazing to see hundreds of saplings growing on the northeastern slopes.

Jennifer Perry, Professor of Archeology at California State University – Channel Islands, shared how she loves being with groups of island lovers, as everyone has their own interesting reasons and oftentimes a wealth of past experiences that informs their feelings.

She enjoys connecting these interests and experiences to information about the human history of the islands and, in doing so, recognizes that we are all part of the island community, past, present, and future.

Dr. Perry was particularly moved by a family who traces part of their Chumash ancestry directly to Santa Rosa Island. They named the specific ancestor and the specific village, which is a known location. This was their first time on the

island, and they participated in the CIR hike specifically to connect with their heritage. How powerful and humbling it is to be a witness to people literally walking in the footsteps of their ancestors and honoring them in doing so!

Steve Junak's group was enthusiastic about seeing the Brandegees Sage and the Indian Paintbrush (*Castilleja affinis*). It was great for them to see the Santa Rosa Island Manzanita on the road to recovery.

John Kuizenga's Coastal Walk might have seen some of the greatest variety of flora and fauna for the day. The group of eighteen walked three to four miles on the east shore of the island (as far as Water Canyon) with some hikers going as far as Black Rock. An avid birder, John helped identify Brandt's and Pelagic Cormorants, Brown Pelicans, Black Phoebes, Western Gulls, Greater Yellowlegs...they heard song sparrows and meadowlarks in the chaparral!

John pointed out that the Santa Cruz Passage is seeing more activity with Gray Whales hunting in the shallow "Potato Patch", feeding on mole crabs. Sea Lions were seen sunning



Groups forming up to receive instructions on the day's events during our second annual Autumn Equinox Cruise. Source: Dennis Houghton



The Torrey Pines are the rarest pine in North America, occurring only on Santa Rosa Island and in San Diego County. Source: Dennis Houghton

on the beach.

A walk with John includes some coastal geomorphology. He explained how the four Northern Channel Islands were once a single island known today as Santarosea. The group found the discussion interesting, particularly on how marine terraces form across the passage at Frazier Point on Santa Cruz Island. An island walk with John Kuizenga is always educational and memorable!

Dr. Sabina Thomas, Nature Education Manager & Nature Collection Librarian at the Santa Barbara Museum of Natural History led the Geology hike... they discussed the fascinating geology of the Channel Islands. Later, they explored the complicated and contorted sedimentary structures of the Bechers Bay Formation which were laid down in submarine deep-sea fans.

On their walk along the coast, Sabina pointed out much younger

river deposits that were laid down after the older Bechers Bay Formation got uplifted as a result of the compression that the area experienced.

With our focus on organization and communication and with trip leaders on portable radios, all participants returned to the pier on time to return to Ventura. One additional treat on our way home was a stop at one of the largest Sea Caves in the world – Painted Cave

Painted Cave is a sea cave on the north shore of Santa Cruz Island, thought to be the fourth largest sea cave in length in the world and second largest in volume in the US.

With weather and tides permitting, Island Packers Captains can make the decision to immerse the boat completely within the cave. The entrance is over 130 feet high, over 100 feet wide and over 1200 feet in length. Naturally occurring algae and lichens give Painted Cave its artist's palate appearance.

We have already started planning the 3rd Annual CIR Fall Equinox Cruise! First step will be to submit our Supplemental Use Permit to the National Park Service – Channel Islands National Park offices in Ventura then confirm the availability of a vessel and crew near the 2023 date of the Autumn Equinox.

We invite suggestions from Santa Rosa Island aficionados for future hikes and leaders. Next year I have already confirmed a noteworthy Coastal Geomorphologist – Dr. Alana Radar from Cal State University Northridge - Geography and Environmental Studies. On a final note, a big thank you to Cheryl and Mark Connally for their special consideration in making the crew of the Island Adventure ship available at a reasonable fare.

Thanks as well to Mark Hnat and Karen Cromwell of the Chief Rangers Office at Channel Islands National Park HQ in Ventura for processing our Supplemental Use Permit.

Adopt-a-Park Volunteer Day

Morey Spellman
Marketing Manager

In August 2022, Channel Islands Restoration partnered with the City of Goleta for its Adopt-A-Park program to promote camaraderie and a commitment to cleanliness in our community.

Alongside a group of regular Adopt-A-Park volunteers, CIR volunteers and staff went to (the appropriately) named Evergreen Park, to help keep Goleta clean! The Adopt-A-Park program originally started as a way for The City of Goleta to further restore 28 parks and open spaces in “The Goodland.” Typically, the Public Works Department handles the maintenance of these locations, and the City of Goleta aims to keep these areas well-maintained and accessible to the community.

However, due to time and resource constraints, the City of Goleta could not provide deep cleans for some

of the more popular areas. Thanks to The Adopt-A-Park program, supplemental maintenance of these locations was now possible. Our partnership with the City of Goleta helped to provide additional volunteer support for the Adopt-A-Park program on August 8th. The City of Goleta provided all of the necessary equipment for volunteers. The August clean-up location was Evergreen Acres Park, a large natural area tucked away in a quiet residential neighborhood in Goleta. The park is also a multi-use recreational space that includes a green grassy lawn for dogs, a series of tennis courts, and a sprawling disc-golf course that twists through a Eucalyptus grove.

Our volunteer mission for the morning was to remove trash from the park and sanitize recreational equipment. Volunteers trickled in from 8:30 am - 9:00 am until our mighty group of 20 trash picker-uppers were ready to clean! For over two hours we scavenged the several

acres of park for trash and debris that included the remnants of a traffic cone and potentially harmful waste that had sullied the environment.

Overall, Channel Islands Restoration volunteers and Adopt-A-Park staff were able to remove 12 buckets full of trash. As the event ended, volunteers expressed their sense of accomplishment and satisfaction from their direct impact in helping to clean Goleta’s green spaces and maintaining the pristine condition of local land. If you would like to become a part of Channel Islands Restoration’s next volunteer event, please contact volunteer@cirweb.org or sign up on the CIR website at www.cirweb.org/volunteer

For more information about the Adopt-A-Park Program, visit the webpage at <https://www.cityofgoleta.org/community/goleta-parks-recreation-open-spaces/recreation-services-and-opportunities/adopt-a-park-program>



Volunteers check-in during the Adopt-A-Park Day at Evergreen Acres Park in Goleta, California on August 8th.

Take a Nature Tour of Elings Park..

Doug Morgan
Operations Manager

What's CIR doing that I can actually see? (Or, thanks Doug, this is a great place for a date!) A lot!

CIR has gotten a reputation of working in places most people don't regularly get to, we're sort of like 'Restoration Hotshots'. We are usually working so far off the beaten path that it takes some logistical effort to see us in action.

Well, that is no longer the case in Santa Barbara!

What follows is a brief auto tour and includes an easy walk to see some of CIR's awesomeness. It is a great place to take a date, a dog, and a snack. It would all be best during a late afternoon because the tour ends in an epic sunset view!

(Disclaimer: You'll be driving, in a car, so pay attention to what you are doing. Even though what you will see is so awesome you might want to take the drive a few times. I recommend switching drivers so both of you can gawk better.)

The tour begins at the intersection of Los Positas and Modoc Road. Head south toward the beach and for the entire 2.5 miles to the roundabout on the west side of the road, you will see a CIR managed 'Native Landscaping' project nicely located along the new bike path.

Generally, this is not the kind of project that CIR seeks, but this one was included in a package deal of several other mitigation projects



A CIR Field Technician hard at work on one of the restoration sites at Elings Park.

much more suited to our specific niche. There is another mile or so along Modoc heading West so if you are coming from Goleta you will see 74 Coast Live Oaks and more native landscaping.

Once at the roundabout, you will be next to Mesa Creek, where the 'CIR Hotshots' will be removing invasive plants, along about a mile of a riparian mitigation site associated with the bike path construction.

You will not be able to see this work area without risk of a serious poison oak exposure so do not stop and stay in your car.

Go all the way around and head back north on Los Positas to the new traffic signal at Jerry Harwin drive, the entrance to Elings Park.

(On weekends and special occasions there may be restricted access but I

would totally recommend you check the website below and you might see a concert!)

There are very good maps of the park at www.elingspark.org. Head up the hill into the park to pull off and park a minute near the entrance to the large soccer field on the north side of the drive.

This is a wonderful place for your dog to socialize off a leash. Be sure to purchase an EPDOG Membership to support the park and keep this awesome dog social area open.

I have never met so many well-behaved dogs in one place in my life, they obviously know this is a special place for dogs and respect the privilege.

Looking across the field to the northeast you will see on the highest hillside our restoration site

peppered with colorful pin flags and literally thousands of new native Coastal Sage Scrub plants installed by CIR in 2022.

Compare this hillside to the area below it, which is filled with invasive plants and non-native annuals, and you can get an idea of what our restoration site looked like before we began work. A short walk up the drive and across the street puts you at the Sierra Club Trailhead.

A short 200 meter hike will put you under the canopy of mature Island Oaks. Look up and you will see two red barn owl nesting boxes, built and installed by CIR early last year. Be sure to let us know if you see any baby owls! (We haven't yet, but owls like to wait a few years to move in). There is a super cool video of the installation produced by the teenage daughter of the Elings Park Executive Director on our website.

After getting back in your car, continue up the drive to George Bliss Drive and turn left heading up a steep hill to the parking area.

To your West you will see benches and dedicated trees along the top of our restoration site. This is a very steep hill with loose footing, so do not venture down the slope. It is bad for the plants and may embarrass you when you have to explain to the ER staff how you got hurt falling in a very safe park. This will also not impress your date.

Each pin flag color or combination designates a species of Coastal Sage Scrub plant. There was a guide created by local high school kids to help understand what you are looking at, but the plants are now thriving so most

of you will know what is in there.

If you time it right, the sun will be low in the western sky and the long shadows will be filling the Godric Grove of mature oak trees. You will walk past dozens of dedication plaques, take a moment to read them and know that this is indeed a very treasured place for many people of the past and present.

As you follow the concrete path down some gentle stairs you may see to the North where we installed 104 baby Island Oak trees, grown from acorns we collected onsite. This area is shaded and protected by the 'Grand Mother' oaks still thriving there and we figured that would be an excellent nursery for our new generation of baby oaks to grow.

As you follow the concrete path down you enter the area known as the "Veterans Walk." This also places you between our restoration site uphill from you and the unaltered area you viewed from the road, that is full of non-native and invasive plants below you.

I personally like this juxtaposed view as it gives a good practical example of the power and beauty of what native plants can bring to an area. You do not have to be a biologist to see the dramatic increase in animals living in the restored area, especially pollinators.

Continue walking South along the Veterans Walk and then back to your car. Grab your snacks and sit on a park bench to watch the sunset from one of the best locations around town. If you 'forget' to bring a jacket I guarantee your date will snuggle against you in the darkening chill.



Elings Park is a beautiful place to gather and enjoy the view! We recommend both an auto and walking tour to see the complete landscape.



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