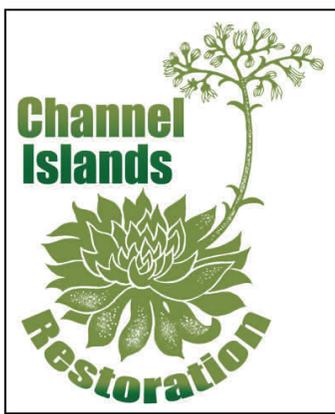


CHANNEL ISLANDS RESTORATION

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CIR Expands Work on San Nicolas Island



Channel Islands Restoration will grow at least 3,000 plants on San Nicolas Island in 2014, which will be used to restore habitat for the endangered island night lizard. We will also return to our ongoing project of removing invasive plants in sensitive habitat occupied by rare native plants.

In 2012, CIR constructed a native plant nursery on the island and grew and planted more than 1,200 plants for an erosion control project on the eastern side of the island. This year we continued working to eradicate several invasive plants, including Sahara mustard from habitat of *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. The U.S. Navy is committed to controlling or even eradicating the mustard from the island and to

supporting the recovery of the island night lizard. CIR donated much of our staff time to the eradication
(Continued on page 4)

OVER 6,000 VOLUNTEER FOR CIR SINCE 2002

Since Channel Islands Restoration regularly started working with volunteers in 2002, a total of 6,273 people have volunteered for our program on nearly fifty projects on the Channel Islands, and at many mainland locations. At a recent social event held in appreciation of CIR supporters, Executive Director, Ken Owen, reviewed CIR's history and directly attributed our success to the tremendous support of our volunteers.

CIR has grown from a two-person volunteer operation centered on an invasive tree removal program on Santa Cruz Island, to a full-service environmental restoration and education non-profit organization with ten employees. We have worked on all eight of the Channel Islands and have projects in dozens of mainland locations, from Orcutt in the north, to San Pedro in the south.

CIR founders Ken Owen and Duke McPherson met on Santa Cruz Island and quickly realized they shared a passion for the unique native habitat of the Channel Islands. Before there was a regular habitat restoration program on Santa Cruz, Duke and Ken made quarterly trips to Nature Conservancy property with the Restoration Club from U.C. Santa Barbara to remove invasive plants, particularly Eucalyptus trees. Later, Ken

joined Duke on his small speed boat to regularly visit the island on multiple volunteer trips that took place over several weekends a month.

This evolved into a larger program after Ken began recruiting volunteers for the project. The Nature Conservancy provided equipment, the National Park Service provided boat transportation and the U. C. Santa Barbara, Santa Cruz Island Reserve provided housing and pick-up trucks to help facilitate the volunteer work. Near the end of 2002, Kate Symonds with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service arranged for grant funding for the project. Duke and Ken initially formed CIR as a partnership, and it was at this time that the Santa Cruz Island project had

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Ventura REI employees volunteer on Anacapa Island

CIR Continues to Conserve Anacapa Island – Planting, Weeding, Watering!

By Linda Benedik

2013 was another busy year of habitat restoration on Anacapa Island! As in prior years, CIR volunteer workdays typically occurred on Wednesdays, when Channel Islands National Park (NPS) regularly transports supplies and personnel to the island and provides volunteers with round-trip transportation. CIR administrative staff recruits individuals and groups for the workdays, and then meets volunteers before departure at the Channel Islands National Park (NPS) headquarters to ensure paperwork is complete, and that everyone is prepared for boarding the park boat.



In late Summer, NPS initiated a pre-requisite briefing presented by Park Superintendent, Russell Galipeau, who discusses the purpose of self-assessment, and encourages volunteers to avoid “normalizing risk.” This presentation is being produced by NPS into an instructional video that volunteers will be required to view before travel on the park boat. NPS boat captains continue to brief volunteers on the day’s marine conditions and to give a comprehensive safety orientation for park boat travel. Once volunteers arrive on the island, their workday is led by CIR field staff and/or NPS personnel, assisted by volunteer work leaders, who are specially-trained to oversee the activities of less experienced volunteers.

CIR provides a great deal of staff time to the Anacapa Project, both administratively with behind-the-scenes volunteer coordination, and out in the



field with management of volunteers and their activities. A familiar face on Anacapa is that of CIR field staff, Aaron Echols. This year, Aaron’s work on the island has revolved around invasive plant treatment, preparing planting sites, and working with volunteers to install and care for nursery-grown native plants.

Before volunteers arrive on the scene, Aaron locates areas of high iceplant (*Malephora crocea*) resurgence and seedling recruitment for removal. Other species of high concern that occasionally require his attention are: Cretan Lavatera, Crystalline Iceplant, and Small-flowered iceplant. Recently, a soil penetrant called “EZ-Wet” has been added to the planting water to enhance initial watering of the new plants, and a product called “Cloud Cover” has been applied to new plantings to reduce transpiration water loss in the first critical period after planting.

Aaron manages the island’s rudimentary but effective irrigation system to

facilitate watering of remote plantings. The system comprises a network of ¾ inch plastic tubing, plus strategically-located 55 gallon water storage drums along the lines. Installation of the water distribution system replaced backpacking of water, and is easily extended to additional areas as plantings are expanded.

Tending to the island’s nursery is also part of the regular maintenance Aaron provides. His work ranges from patching holes in the netting cover to prevent pesky sparrows from entering, to pricking out seedlings from flats to containers, transplanting plants to larger pots, organizing supplies and maintaining the nursery watering system.

In preparation for the arrival of volunteer groups, which have included CIR volunteers, as well as high school groups, Aaron can be found “scalping” through dead iceplant thatch, using a power weed trimmer, digging planting holes with a gas-powered soil auger, filling water storage drums, and bringing plants and tools to the worksites. Once volunteers arrive, Aaron provides an orientation and offers instruction while supervising their activities – weeding, planting, watering – until he waves goodbye as they depart the island. Aaron has worked with multiple volun-



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CIR Restoration Work on San Clemente Island Takes Root

By Jodi Simpson

Channel Islands Restoration is extremely gratified by the results of work begun three years ago on San Clemente Island. Working with both the Navy and San Diego State University's Soil Ecology and Restoration Group (SERG), volunteers and staff from CIR traveled three times since October 2012 to San Clemente Island to continue hand-removal of several pernicious non-native plants. CIR not only removed iceplant from approximately 55 acres of sensitive habitat, but also removed fennel (*Foeniculum vulgare*) from several remote cactus-covered canyons and watershed areas.

The fennel removal is a particularly tricky but exciting aspect of our work on San Clemente. CIR staff used ropes and specialized climbing gear to rappel down cliffs into canyons that were as much as 100 feet deep. The plants were located, then eradicated, and any seeds were bagged and removed from the canyons. Volunteers also worked with SERG staff to locate fennel plants in more accessible areas, where staff removed them.

With the removal of these non-native plants has come a wonderful re-

emergence of multiple island endemic and endangered plant species, those previously crowded out by the exotics. With iceplant on its way out, we now see native species such as boxthorn (*Lycium sp.*) beginning to thrive. Boxthorn is an example of an important native plant on San Clemente, as it provides a primary nesting habitat and cover for several threatened and vulnerable fauna including the San Clemente Island sage sparrow (*Amphispiza belli clementeae*) and the island night lizard (*Xantusia riversiana reticulata*).

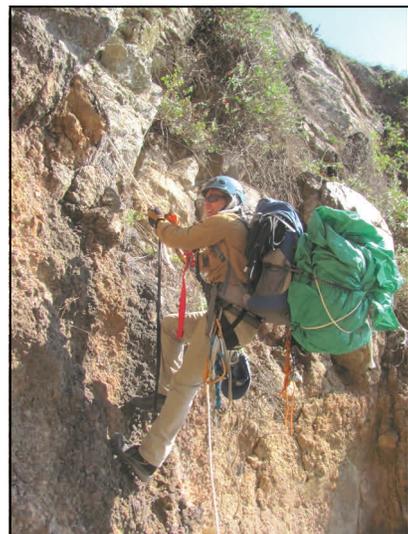
Additional endemic plant species have sprouted where the iceplant was removed, including San Clemente Island lotus (*Acmispon*

dendroideus var. traskiae), *Cryptantha traskiae* (a threatened plant in the Borage family), and the San Clemente Island evening primrose (*Camissoniopsis guadalupensis ssp. clementina*).

San Clemente Island is an important Naval base with several hundred duty personnel and civilian workers regularly posted to the island. The island provides an important auxiliary landing field for the Navy which is used extensively for training. Navy Seals train on San Clemente, and the southern part of the island is used for ship board gunnery practice.

San Clemente has 14 plants unique to the island, plus several species of endemic animals. CIR arranges habitat restoration work trips for volunteers and staff of CIR. Funding for this kind of habitat restoration is limited, so CIR donates much of the staff time for the trips. SERG also reimburses CIR from some of our staff costs, and volunteers pay for their own housing and meals.

Volunteers first travel 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 are no charge for volunteers. Once on the island, the group checks in at one of the base guest housing complexes, reminiscent of a Motel 6. Low-cost meals are provided at the base commissary, and



the evening isn't complete without a visit to "The Salty Crab" for drinks, pool, and swapping stories of life on the island.

The Navy has been so impressed with CIR's work, particularly in helping to remove invasive non-native plants in areas difficult to access, that they have invited CIR to play an even larger role in native plant and habitat restoration on San Clemente Island in 2014. CIR will hold an iceplant removal trip to the island at the end of November 2013, and more volunteer trips are planned for the coming years. These kinds of trips are very rare, so San Clemente Island remains a very sought after volunteer opportunity. Experienced volunteers have been given priority on the trips that we have held so far. With our increasing role in the restoration program in 2014, we hope that more opportunities to volunteer on this remote Navy island will be offered to all CIR volunteers.

Top and right: CIR staff Kevin Thompson and Aaron Echols use climbing gear and great skill to remove fennel from remote canyons on San Clemente Island. Bottom: San Clemente Island evening primrose sprouting where iceplant was removed by CIR staff and volunteers.

(Continued from page 1)

project over the last several years.

The island night lizard, which is found on only three of the Channel Islands, thrives in native plants like prickly pear cactus and boxthorn. CIR will grow several species in the island nursery that are important to the recovery of the lizard habitat.

Volunteers will help remove the invasives and will help with growing the plants. These projects would not happen without the help of volunteers, but the logistics of taking volunteers to islands owned by the Navy are complicated. Each volunteer must undergo a background check and obtain a pass before they can enter the Point Mugu Naval Air Station, where we board flights to the island. Once on the island, volunteers stay at motel-like housing, at the volunteer's expense. Although this can add up to nearly \$200 per trip, for most volunteers the price is well worth it. Volunteer opportunities on the Navy islands are rare, and San Nicolas Island is a particularly interesting place to visit.



In 2013, CIR made several trips to the island to remove invasive plants. In addition to the mustard and other invasives, CIR staff and volunteers worked to remove carnation spurge (*Euphorbia terracina*) on the island. Carnation spurge is quickly spreading in California, and the Navy hopes to eradicate it from San Nicolas Island.

CIR is proud of our partnership with the U.S. Navy on San Nicolas Island. We also work closely with ACS Habitat Management and the Santa Barbara Botanic Gardens on the San Nicolas Island projects. Although CIR has received funding from the Navy to work on all of these projects, we have also donated many thousands of dollars in staff time when funding has not been available.



Various San Nicolas Island Scenes

Top: giant *Coreopsis* in bloom on eastern side of the island. San Nicolas has the largest stands of *Coreopsis* found anywhere.

Left: volunteers pose while removing Sahara mustard on the island.

Right: volunteers planting natives at the Thousands Springs restoration site.

Bottom: the native plant nursery constructed by CIR on San Nicolas Island



Over 6,000 Volunteer for CIR since 2002
 (Continued from page 1)

become a professional operation. Ken provided volunteer coordination and trip logistics, and Duke contributed his many skills as an arborist and professional contractor.



CIR volunteers on Santa Cruz Island in 2002

Although the program had expanded into regular monthly trips with large volunteer groups and grant funding, CIR was still very much the “Duke and Ken Show,” as some people began calling it. It would be several years before CIR needed to hire employees, because Duke and Ken could rely on the help of hundreds of volunteers a year. This made for a very economical operation, and the grant funding that was supposed to pay for twelve trips, lasting just a year, actually paid for almost double that.

In 2005, the first of many school groups began working with CIR on Santa Cruz Island. That same year, David Chang from the County of Santa Barbara, hired CIR to work on two important invasive plant removal projects. One was on Santa Rosa Island, where CIR led volunteer groups surveying for, and removing a thistle listed as a “noxious weed” by the State of California. This multi-year project marked the first time CIR worked outside of Santa Cruz Island. In later years, CIR led volunteers to plant natives on Santa Rosa and to install fencing around sensitive plants to protect them from grazing by non-native deer and elk. Recently, CIR has been removing this fencing now that the non-native animals are

gone. We also work in the island nursery, and we continue to plant natives.

With funding arranged by David Chang, CIR began a large project to supervise the removal of giant reed (“*Arundo*”) from three miles of the Carpinteria Creek watershed with the California Conservation Corps. This was the first time that CIR was hired to work on a mainland project.

In 2007, CIR was hired by the Land Trust of Santa Barbara County to remove *Arundo* from the Refugio Creek watershed. The following year, CIR hired employees to help with that project, including Kevin Thompson, who later became the CIR Operations Manager. The *Arundo* removal at the Carpinteria and Refugio watersheds (plus others that followed) were large-scale projects requiring equipment, paid personnel and expertise. CIR continued to work with hundreds of volunteers each year, on projects elsewhere, but the *Arundo* projects were not suited to volunteers.



Oak Grove School (Ojai) on Santa Cruz Island 2007

Also in 2007, CIR began taking volunteer school groups to Anacapa and East Santa Cruz Islands in partnership with the “Once Upon a Watershed” program in Ojai. The school program (later funded solely by grants raised by CIR) targeted fourth and fifth graders from schools in low income areas. The funding paid for the cost of bus and boat transportation, plus CIR personnel to lead the trips and to lead the volunteer work. Most of the kids had never been on a boat, or seen marine mammals or even visited a National Park, and they did all of these things on these school trips. Since the inception of the CIR school program, 2,137 students, accompanied by 368 adults have worked with CIR on the Channel Islands!

Around the same time, CIR held its first volunteer trip to work with the U.S. Navy on San Nicolas Island. We took a small volunteer group to the island to remove non-native plants. In the last two years CIR has built a nursery on the island, grown and installed native plants, and has expanded the invasive plant removal in cooperation with the Navy.

In 2008, David Chang helped CIR raise additional funding from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service for expanded work on Santa Cruz Island. The grant funded projects in more than twenty locations on the island and included specialized work with endangered plant species.

In 2010, CIR held our first natural history tours. These trips, which were purely educational in nature and did not include restoration work, were immediately popular and successful. We started with a trip to Death Valley National Park and then to the White Mountains of eastern California. Geologist Tanya Atwater and Botanist, Steve Junak have been leading CIR trips to these locations and to other amazing locations ever since.

That same year, CIR partnered with Channel Islands National Park (NPS) on an iceplant eradication project on East Anacapa Island. CIR worked with the NPS to build a native plant nursery on the Island, with initial funding from the Ventura Patagonia store and from CIR Board members. Gordon Hart (of the CIR Board) led the construction project with help from other CIR volunteers and NPS staff. Additional funding

(Continued on page 8)

CIR & VOLUNTEERS DONATE TO SANTA ROSA ISLAND PROJECTS

Channel Islands Restoration continued working on Santa Rosa Island this year, in a project funded mostly by CIR donors and our volunteers with support from the National Park Service (NPS). We held four trips in 2013 to remove fencing, plant natives, remove invasives and to work in the native plant nursery.



The fencing had been erected to protect sensitive plants and habitats from browsing and trampling by non-native grazing animals. Since these animals are no longer on the island, the fencing is now an unnecessary eyesore and a potential hazard to visitors and native animals, so it is now a priority to remove it. Often located in remote areas difficult to access, the fencing can be a challenge to remove. Volunteers also removed invasive fennel and iceplant in several island locations and planted island-grown *Dudleya* (a native succulent) at China Camp on the island's southwest side. Although volunteers put in long hours, they also had the opportunity to visit parts of the island that are not easily accessible.

Although removing the fencing and the restoration work are priorities for the NPS, budgets are tight, so there is no funding to pay for these projects. Working with NPS Restoration Ecologist Sarah Chaney, CIR developed a program where volunteers paid for a portion of the needed funding, CIR paid for the rest, and the NPS provided staff support, on-island transportation and camp sites. While CIR spent more than \$5,000 on the four trips, this project would not have happened without the generous support of volunteers and CIR donors.

Volunteers camped at the NPS campground at Water Canyon, and on one occasion, stayed at the bunkhouse that housed island ranch hands when the island was privately owned. The bunkhouse is now part of a new research station run by California State University Channel Islands, and CIR is grateful that we received special permission to stay there.

Photos:

Top: CIR volunteers remove fennel (*Foeniculum vulgare*). Fennel, which has taken over large areas on Santa Cruz Island, is fortunately not common on Santa Rosa Island. It is a priority of the NPS to keep it from spreading.

Left: CIR volunteers work in the native plant nursery on Santa Rosa Island.

Bottom left: NPS Restoration Ecologist Sarah Chaney shows volunteers the work location near Carrington Point. Volunteers removed fencing at the work site, which was located several hundred feet below the pictured location.

Bottom right: CIR volunteers use special jacks to remove fence posts at East Point. Volunteers also remove invasive iceplant at East Point.



San Marcos Foothills: The Next Phase



CIR staff, Robert Kessler and Jared Logan demonstrate planting techniques to youth at the San Marcos Foothills

Since 2011, CIR has been proud to work on several projects at the San Marcos Foothills Preserve, one of the most ecologically significant open spaces in Santa Barbara County. Located between Goleta and Santa Barbara, the Preserve features hundreds of acres of grasslands, oak woodlands, and permanently flowing creeks. There are nearly 50 mammals found in the Foothills and 126 bird species. The Preserve has miles of hiking trails that provide spectacular views of Santa Barbara, Goleta, and the Santa Barbara Channel.

San Marcos Foothills Coalition (SMFC) and other organizations to restore habitat along two creeks at the Preserve and to remove invasive plants along trails. As we enter the rainy season, we will be calling on our volunteers to help nurture the thousands of native plants we have installed at the restoration sites. The work locations are easy to get to, kid friendly, and workdays are typically on Saturdays.

Starting in 2014, CIR will be training docents to lead public educational hikes at the Preserve. The SMFC has helped fund the docent program, and CIR has donated a tremendous amount of staff time to the project.

CIR has partnered with the

Private Groups, Individuals Support CIR School Programs

Since 2004, CIR has taken 2,137 school children on service school trips to the Channel Islands. These kids were accompanied by 368 adult chaperones, teachers and parents. The program targets schools



in low income areas and provides bus and boat transportation, a pre-trip presentation in the classroom, plus CIR personnel to lead the trips and to lead the volunteer work. Each trip, serving about 30 kids, costs about \$2,500.

Funding for school science curricula shrinks every year, and the expense of outdoor learning means these curricula suffer first. CIR provides one of the few outdoor experiences allowing students to actively engage in restoration work within

natural habitat. They see the results of their work year after year and their learning endures. Most of the kids had never been on a boat, or seen marine mammals or even visited a National Park, and they do all of these things on our school trips.

CIR received support from state and federal agencies for most of our school trips. Now with tight budgets government funding sources are becoming harder to find. So, CIR has turned to our corporate partners, individuals and others to support our school program.



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CIR personnel construct Anacapa Nursery 2010

Over 6,000 Volunteer for CIR since 2002
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(arranged by NPS Restoration Ecologist Sarah Chaney) enabled the nursery to be completed.

The following year, NPS received three years of funding (from highly-competitive NPS restoration project grants) and entered into a Cooperative Agreement with CIR under which CIR provided skilled staff and experienced volunteer leadership in support of iceplant eradication and restoration of native vegetation on the island. CIR recruited large numbers of volunteers from the general public, and also worked with established groups of volunteers recruited by NPS from local high schools. Regular CIR volunteer trips began on Wednesdays, the normal NPS transportation day for Anacapa. The ongoing work on the iceplant, plus the growing and installing of plants continues.



CIR removing iceplant on San Clemente Island 2011

CIR began working with the U.S. Navy on San Clemente Island in 2011. On our first trip, twenty volunteers spent five days pulling iceplant from sensitive habitat on the island. We removed hundreds of patches of iceplant over forty acres, which highly impressed the personnel we were working with from the U.S. Navy and San Diego State University. Since then, CIR has returned to the island to remove iceplant and other invasive plants. We remove some of these invasive plants where they are smothering endangered plant species. CIR staff have also used climbing gear to rappel down steep canyons to remove invasive plants in very remote sections of the island. We plan to increase our work on San Clemente Island in 2014 and beyond.

Also in 2011, CIR started working on three important invasive removal and planting projects on the mainland. One was at the San Marcos Foothills Preserve (at two different sites) with funding from the Goleta Valley Land Trust and the San Marcos Foothills Coalition (SMFC). We planted several thousand native plants at the sites, and we continue to work on this project with our volunteers. On one workday, more than 150 people from several outdoor companies volunteered at the Preserve for CIR. Last year we received grants from Patagonia and REI to work in other sections of the Foot-

hills. Recently CIR has started developing a docent program for the Foothills in partnership with the SMFC. By Spring we will be training volunteers to lead hikes at the Foothills that will highlight the ecology and history of this important open space.

Another of the mainland projects CIR started in 2011 was along the Andree Clark Bird Refuge at the Santa Barbara Zoo. CIR removed many dozens of invasive trees that were crowding out native habitat along the refuge, which is an important bird nesting area. We also planted several thousand native plants. This ended up being one our most popular volunteer projects, since it is a beautiful place to work and participants were offered free admission to the Zoo after volunteering. On one Saturday, over 100 people volunteered!

The third mainland project started in 2011 was along the Santa Clara River near Santa Paula. Working with BioResource Consultants, CIR



CIR mainland projects, from Orcutt in the north to San Pedro in the south

removed *Arundo* from about five acres in breeding habitat for several threatened and endangered species. We also installed native plants, spread seed and installed a large irrigation system. CIR has removed *Arundo* from several locations on the Santa Clara River, but this is the largest site we have worked on there.

In 2012 and 2013, CIR continued work on many of the projects discussed above and on many others. We held our first large volunteer trip to Catalina Island, and we plan more trips there in the coming years. In 2014 we look forward to improving our outreach to our many friends who support CIR behind the scenes. This article is based on a PowerPoint presentation shown to our supporters at a recent "CIR Social" designed to thank those who help CIR financially. We present it here, so that the many thousands of people who have volunteered for CIR can also appreciate the journey we have all taken together since Duke and Ken started removing invasive trees on Santa Cruz Island, nearly thirteen years ago.

CIR to Offer Additional Mainland Educational Tours

CIR will again offer our popular educational tours to fabulous mainland locations in 2014. Led by Geologist Tanya Atwater, Botanist Steve Junak and birding experts, these trips have become very popular and often sell out early!

Death Valley National Park (March 12 - 16, 2014)

This will be our third tour to the park. The five day adventure begins with a visit to the Maturango Museum in Ridgecrest. 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 we enjoy many botany and geology stops and a spectacular view of Death Valley from Aguerberry Point. We stay three nights at Furnace Creek in the floor of the valley. We stay in the campground, or participants can stay in their own RVs or in the nearby hotel (at their own cost) 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. Even though 2013 was a dry year, we still found some stands of lovely desert wildflowers, so we will be looking for those again! We even got a close-up look at big-horned sheep near Aguerberry Point! For more information on the Death Valley trip, visit the trip web site: cirweb.org/dv.



White Mountains (July 4–7, 2014)

This will be our fifth tour of the fascinating White Mountains of Eastern California. Last summer 25 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 Escruceria, our local birding expert. 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. July is spring time in the high mountains! Each day we take auto tours and short to medium length hikes to the pines and many great views 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. For more information about the CIR White Mountains trip, visit the trip web site: cirweb.org/whites

Central Coast Natural History Tour (May 31–June 3, 2014)



This will be our third 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 Park, and Pfeiffer-Big Sur State Park.

Our days include explorations of Avila Beach, Morro Rock, Parkfield and the San Andreas fault experiment, Pinnacles and fault offsets through old-town Hollister. Steve Junak joins us for tours of Point Lobos State Park and other sites on the Big Sur coast. We also receive a special tour of the Point Piedras Blancas lighthouse. Both the lighthouse and the surrounding grounds have been beautifully restored. We then visit the nearby elephant seal rookery. This is an excellent way to learn about the geological history of California, while visiting spectacular natural history sites along the way. For more information on the CIR Central Coast Natural History tour, visit the trip web site: cirweb.org/ccg



(Continued from page 2)

teer groups on the same day, and may supervise several consecutive days of volunteers on the island. He is truly an asset to the various volunteer programs engaged on the island, and to the restoration of Anacapa's natural habitat.

Ventura County Master Gardener, Kelle Green reveals that, in the past year, a total of 25,000 native plants were grown in the island's nursery, which was constructed by CIR and the NPS in 2010. The volunteer nursery crew grows all the plants used in island restoration from seed collected on the island. As planting season resumed in late Fall 2013, volunteer groups on Anacapa are planting 150-250 plants per workday, depending on their group size.

In addition to the many individual volunteers that CIR recruits from a variety of sources, this year we were also joined by employees of several local businesses who arranged for a group volunteer workday, including REI, Deckers Outdoors, The North Face, Amgen, Citrix Online, and the Santa Barbara Zoo. There were also student groups from Buena, Oxnard, Ventura, Rio Mesa and Pacifica High Schools, as well as UCSB, who arranged service days on the island. In the spring of 2013, REI sponsored two very special weekend day trips to Anacapa, and volunteers signed up for these trips at the CIR booth during the REI Oxnard Grand Opening festivities. Anacapa Island and the NPS welcomed two REI-funded volunteer groups of 30 strong, who traveled to the Park on an Island Packers boat for two great days of habitat restoration.

During the month of June, CIR volunteer trips paused while the Island's large breeding population of Western Gulls produced and raised this year's 'crop' of chicks. We were gratified to see young chicks enjoying the all-important shade of newly-established native plants. As CIR trips resumed in July, volunteers continued



their work troweling and removing invasive plant species. Throughout the dry summer months into early fall, watering became a huge priority.

In September, Kelle Green reports that the Master Gardeners were "really cooking" in the nursery, transplanting seedlings to 4x6 tree pots, and preparing for a productive volunteer planting season. Suddenly, the government shutdown closed Channel Islands National Park, and restoration activities came to a halt. The island was closed to visitors, including nursery crew and volunteers. The shutdown threw the nursery's plant production off-stride, and set back nursery plant production for this season. By mid-November, the nursery was just starting to recover from the disruption that had been caused by the shutdown.



The nursery currently has many plants to go out, including giant coreopsis, island buckwheat, seablite, alkali heath, seaside daisy, island lotus, golden yarrow, salt-grass, cliff aster and, California aster.

Volunteer Work Leader, Ron Nichols, has made many trips to Anacapa Island throughout the year. He has supervised volunteers in the winter rainy season, when planting was the focus, and worked with volunteers during the dry summer season, when watering and removing invasives like crystalline iceplant were the primary tasks. On a personal level, he's enjoyed seeing Anacapa's Western Gulls go through their annual island nesting rituals, as chicks hatch and scurry around their renovated native habitat, and then fledge. In describing his volunteer experiences, the most valuable benefit Ron receives from his frequent service on Anacapa Island is that he can keep his eye on the plants that he's put into the ground himself, and

watch them mature. This gives him a feeling that he has become a part of these plants, and subsequently, "a part of the island." This gives him a sense of great personal satisfaction and "ownership," which are rewards shared by other volunteers, as well.

Frequent CIR volunteer and recently trained Work Leader, Mike Buratti, echoed Ron's feelings of pride for his work on Anacapa and is grateful to have participated in the island's habitat restoration. As we enter the fall season, Mike reports he's been doing a lot more planting than pulling – which is a good thing, he says, as there is simply a lot less iceplant to pull! With volunteer watering efforts increasing, he believes that native plantings are having a much better rate of success presently. When asked what keeps bringing him back to Anacapa, Mike heartily responded, "Progress!" To work in an area previously covered with an iceplant carpet, which he helped to pull with his own hands, and to see that area now thriving with natives that he planted, Mike describes it a personally gratifying experience, to be able to witness such progress.

Through inspired partnerships, and a great deal of combined effort, the NPS, CIR and many, many volunteers have been a part of this progress that continues to change the face of East Anacapa Island, and return the island habitat to its natural state.

WHO HELPS CIR WHEN WE DONATE OUR TIME?

Time and time again, CIR donates our services to worthy restoration



and educational projects, when there is no funding to cover our costs. We pay our restoration field staff, our Volunteer Coordinator, and we donate our Executive Director's time because the cause is worthwhile, and it is the right thing to do. Donating time and services is what being a non-profit organization is all about, and it sets us apart from the for-profit corporate world.

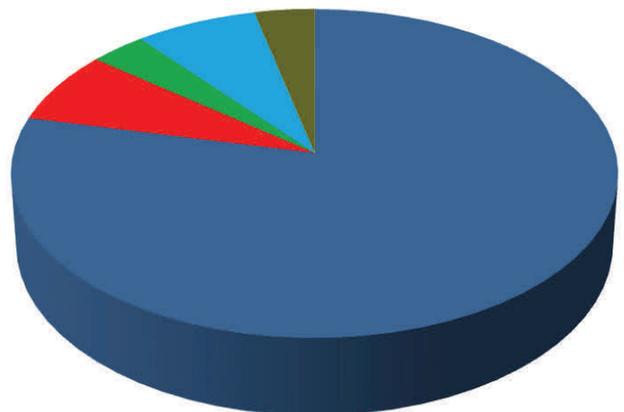
Throughout our history, CIR has helped kick-off restoration projects by volunteering our time, and we have also kept working on many projects even after the funding ran out. We started as volunteers on Santa Cruz Island when there was no funding for habitat restoration. We continue to work there every year protecting an endangered species, even though funding ended several years ago.

Long before there was funding to pull the dreaded Sahara Mustard on San Nicolas Island, CIR paid our staff to conduct trips there to remove the mustard where it was threatening rare plants. Every time it rains on the island, the mustard germinates, and CIR removes it, whether the Navy has funding or not. In 2013, CIR spent over \$5,000 organizing and staffing trips to Santa Rosa Island to work on several important

projects with the National Park Service.

In mid-November, CIR held a workday at Lake Los Carneros, even though grants ran out for that project last year. CIR paid our staff to organize and conduct the workday to prevent highly invasive cape ivy spreading into our restoration site. CIR donates a great deal of our staff time on educational projects, like the development of a docent program at the San Marcos Foothills.

CIR relies on our friends, supporters and members to fund the un-fundable projects, the orphan projects and the important work even when the money runs out. There is rarely enough funding to keep the mustard from sprouting, to hold back the cape ivy and to protect the rare plants on the edge of extinction. Contributions make this kind of pro bono, charity work possible. CIR IS a public benefit charity after all, and we rely on the public to help support our work!



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 2013. Seventy-nine 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.



Join Channel Islands Restoration!

~BECOME A MEMBER TODAY~

YOU will receive the satisfaction of doing your part to help restore native habitat on the mainland and on CALIFORNIA'S CHANNEL ISLANDS!

	Annual Memberships		Valuable Benefits
	Island Scrub Jay (Member)	\$35 Year	Individual Invitation to Spring Membership Pot-Luck & CIR Walking Tour with Natural History Experts scheduled for March 2014 at Rincon Beach Park. 15% Discount on CIR Merchandise. CIR e-Newsletter and CIR Decal
	Silver Lotus (Contributor)	\$75 Year	All Island Scrub Jay benefits plus a Channel Islands Flora & Fauna Laminated Field Guide. \$15 Discount on one Select Natural History Tour of choice
	Goldenbush (Supporter)	\$100 Year	All Silver Lotus benefits plus an invitation for two to the 2nd Annual CIR Social. Personalized CIR Name Badge. Your choice of a CIR Embroidered Cap or a 100% Organic Cotton T-shirt, including new Anacapa design.
	Island Ironwood (Patron)	\$500 Year	All Goldenbush benefits plus two spaces on an invitation-only CIR Special Natural History Day-Trip.
	Island Fox (Benefactor)	\$1,000+ Year	All Island Ironwood benefits plus an invitation for two to a VIP Banquet with special guests. A Complimentary Space on your choice of a Select CIR Natural History Trip.

Donate through our web page: www.cirweb.org/donate

Donate by check payable to: **Channel Island Restoration**

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