

# CHANNEL ISLANDS RESTORATION

Volume 13, Issue 3

August 2015

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## CIR AWARDED GRANT FOR ANACAPA RESTORATION



**2** Volunteers on East Anacapa Island pose proudly with a mound of invasive iceplant that they helped to remove.

**3** volunteers and experienced NPS volunteer work leaders and CIR staff, who cleared large areas of 3 types of invasive iceplant. This year, volunteers will have the opportunity to plant native plant species grown in the on-island nursery. CIR staff will be busy this month preparing for these volunteer trips.

CIR has received a second annual grant award from recreational equipment retailer REI, as part of CIR's work on the Anacapa Island Restoration Project, undertaken in partnership with the National Park Service. REI awarded a generous amount of \$6,000 which will allow us to take volunteers to Anacapa Island on another series of restoration trips this fall. REI employees and members of the Santa Barbara and Oxnard stores will be among those invited to participate. We will also recruit volunteers from local conservation groups like the Surfrider Foundation, the Santa Barbara Audubon Society, and the Santa Barbara Zoo. Last year, REI trips were comprised of enthusiastic

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## SAN MARCOS FOOTHILLS PRESERVE KEEPING CIR BUSY!

Since 2010, in partnership with the San Marcos Foothills Coalition and the County of Santa Barbara, CIR has been proud to work on several restoration projects at the 200-acre San Marcos Foothills Preserve in Santa Barbara, one of the most ecologically significant open public spaces in the county. The Preserve is located in the foothills between Santa Barbara and Goleta, and is a County open space. Funding in recent years for these projects was provided by REI and the San Marcos Foothills Coalition. These projects were designed to improve the native plant communities that provide resources to the native animal species, as well as enhance the public experience along trails.

In the last six months at the Preserve, CIR has held 12 volunteer events and over 250 volunteers have donated their time and energy on this

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Volunteers pose after completing restoration work. Left: Via Gaitero entrance. Right: at the Spring near the Antone Road entrance to the Preserve

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The funding from REI will pay for round-trip boat transportation, plus the cost to organize and lead the trips. Volunteers will receive training on the identification of native and non-native plants and on proper techniques before work begins. CIR will also present volunteers with information on the impacts of non-native species in natural areas and the history of the introduction of invasive iceplant to Anacapa Island.

Through our partnership with REI, we intend to build a greater awareness of our efforts to care for and showcase Anacapa Island—part of the Channel Islands National Park, and a recreational paradise enjoyed by hikers, paddlers, birders, and campers. We are proud to partner with this sponsor and excited to share the news of their investment in our organization and mission. CIR is proud to work with the National Park Service and REI on this important restoration project.



Photo on right: Volunteers at Inspiration Point on East Anacapa Island.

## CIR TO OFFER FALL TRIPS TO SANTA ROSA ISLAND



CIR staff and volunteers remove iceplant on Santa Rosa Island

CIR is excited to offer a series of restoration trips to Santa Rosa Island this fall, in partnership with Channel Islands National Park. Supported by Channel Islands National Park, these 4- and 5-day trips are designed to accomplish important environmental restoration projects, while giving volunteers the opportunity to experience some of the most beautiful and remote sections of that vast island.

Volunteers will help restore the unique “Cloud Forest” habitat on Santa Rosa Island. “Cloud Forest” refers to the ability of the rare island oak trees and other vegetation that collect fog on their branches and leaves and naturally provide water for the island and its wildlife and ecosystem. A long history of grazing and browsing on the high ridges of the island stripped away vegetation and caused deep soil erosion. This project will start to restore these ridges, and therefore all of the island, by slowing erosion and replacing the lost fog-water-harvesting vegetation.

Volunteers learn about island conservation, history, geology and ecology while helping to restore Santa Rosa’s unique island habitat. The volunteer work adds to the enjoyment and understanding of the challenges

involved with managing such a large island. CIR’s Santa Rosa trips are structured to provide plenty of satisfying volunteer work, yet also include time to enjoy this vast and spectacular island. Volunteers will stay in indoor lodging at the Santa Rosa Island Field Station, operated by CSU Channel Islands. Watch for email announcements regarding trips this fall!



Top: CIR volunteers remove fencing near Soledad Peak on Santa Rosa Island. Bottom: Sarah Chaney (NPS) ecologist directs CIR volunteers.

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public trail enhancement project. CIR staff, board members, and volunteers have removed several invasive plant species at the Spring, a natural fresh water source, and at restoration sites along Atascadero and Cieneguitas Creeks. Over 50 native Purple Needlegrass plants have also been planted by CIR and volunteers by the Preserve trailhead at Via Gaitero Road. Four UC Santa Barbara organizations: Alpha Phi Omega Psi Chapter, Wildlife Society, Naked Voices, and the Hermanas Unidas brought groups of energetic and diligent students to battle these non-native plants. Groups from Stanford Alumni, the SB Rotaract Club, San Marcos High School AAPLE Program, and SB School of Squash have also joined in restoring this beautiful Preserve. REI provided free REI Stewardship 2015 t-shirts and REI store coupons to volunteers who participated in these habitat restoration events. In the near future, we will be spreading mulch in preparation for winter rains.

CIR has also held 3 educational tours since January. Biologist Mark Holmgren led two bird walks in January and February of 2015, and gave participants an opportunity to view resident and migratory birds and other wildlife, and how they use the land we are working to preserve. CIR's Executive Director Ken Owen led a plant walk in March of 2015, and participants experienced the many plant species of California native wildflowers in bloom. Wayne Ferren, CIR's Principal Ecologist, also led a walk for the California Naturalist program in November of 2014. These fun educational tours were offered free as a part of a developing docent program, and CIR hopes to offer more educational walks in the future!

Upcoming volunteer opportunities at the San Marcos Foothills

Preserve from 9AM–12:30PM:

**Saturday, August 22**

&

**Saturday, September 26**



## WRAP-UP AT MISSION CANYON: ACHIEVEMENTS



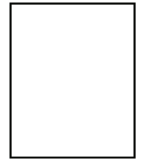
**Volunteer removes a mature *Euphorbia* plant.**

Since January, CIR has been involved in a mainland restoration project at Mission Canyon in Santa Barbara to help eradicate a growing population of an extremely invasive plant, Carnation Spurge (*Euphorbia terracina*). This plant was recently discovered spreading through this residential area, down the road from the Santa Barbara Botanic Gardens, and its proliferation has exploded with the late winter rains. With grant funding from the California Department of Food and Agriculture, the County of Santa Barbara partnered with CIR to stop Carnation Spurge in its tracks and to keep it from spreading even further.

CIR held four volunteer events at Mission Canyon with CIR staff, 64 volunteers, and 4 CIR Board Members who helped to remove this non-native plant species before the next season of rainfall. Much of the work was accomplished by basic hand removal and solarization (placing black plastic over the plants depriving them of light). This project could not have been completed without the hard work and dedication of our volunteers! We thank the Santa Barbara Botanic Garden for their support on this project by providing free admission at the end of the volunteer event to those who participated to help control this invasive plant population. We also thank the Mission Canyon Association for all their support throughout this restoration project. The California Invasive Plant Council is exploring possible future funding options to continue the efforts being made to purge this Spurge.



Channel Islands Restoration  
928 Carpinteria Street Ste. 3  
Santa Barbara, CA 93103



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**&**

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