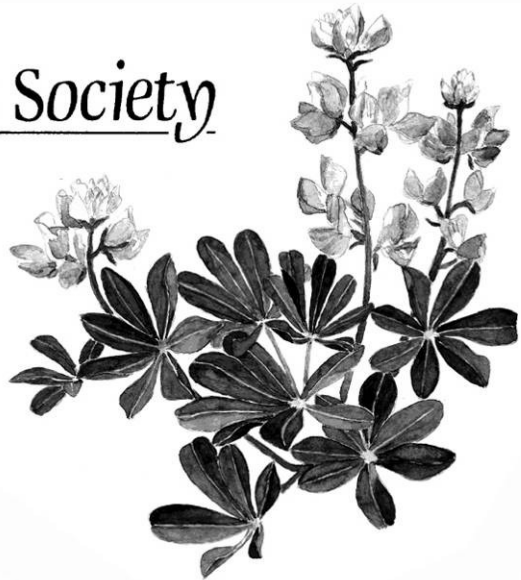


California Native Plant Society  
South Coast Chapter



**NEWSLETTER**  
December 2009 – February 2010

**Upcoming Monthly Programs**

**Monday, December 7** - Doors open **7:15** Program starts **7:30 PM**  
**Holiday Dessert Party**

Join us for a Holiday Potluck and bring your favorite dessert. Instead of a formal presentation, we'll share stories and pictures (slides, digital, etc.) This is always a fun gathering. Bring a friend.

**Monday, January 4** - Doors open **7:15** Program starts **7:30 PM**  
**Eradication of Fennel on Catalina Island**  
Speaker: **Hans Grellman**

Hans Grellman and his wife have been developing methods for eradicating invasive plants, primarily fennel, on Catalina Island since 2001. Their initial surveys found fennel was spread along the roads by vehicles. The discussion will include some of the methods used for eradication, which were most effective and the tools used in their efforts. This is an ongoing project and fennel free areas are still being patrolled to keep them that way.

**Monday, February 1** - Doors open **7:15** Program starts **7:30 PM**  
**Madrona Marsh Presentation**  
Speakers: To Be Announced

Check our website for an update to the February program.

**Location: South Coast Botanical Garden**, 26300 Crenshaw Boulevard, Palos Verdes Peninsula, Classroom closest to the garden entrance.

# Conservation Report

By David Sundstrom

## Machado Lake Ecosystem Rehabilitation Project

On November 2, 2004, the voters of Los Angeles overwhelmingly passed Proposition O, a \$500 million bond issue for open space improvement projects.

Out of the \$500 million authorized, a total of \$117 million has been committed to Machado Lake and the Wilmington Drain, which form an interconnected open space in and around the 241-acre Ken Malloy Harbor Regional Park near Wilmington and Harbor City.

Among other project components is habitat improvement, including removal of non-native invasive plants, and planting of appropriate native riparian species.

The **South Coast Chapter** provided input during the eight public meetings from September 2008 through July 1, 2009, and at a scoping session for the Environmental Impact Report on September 17, 2009. The Initial Study was released in August and the Draft EIR will be available for review in January 2010.

For additional information regarding Proposition O and the Machado Lake project, please see [www.sccnps.org](http://www.sccnps.org) / Conservation

## Marine Life Protection Act Initiative

The MLPA directs the state to reevaluate and redesign California's system of marine protected areas (MPAs) for more effective protection of the state's marine life and habitats.

The MLPA also requires that the best readily available science be used in the redesign process, as well as the advice and assistance of scientists, resource managers, experts, stakeholders and members of the public.

California is taking a regional approach to redesigning MPAs along its 1,100 mile coastline, and has divided the state into five study regions. The planning process for the South Coast Region (Point Conception to the Mexican border) is underway.

In a letter dated October 15, 2009, the **South Coast Chapter** recommended the highest level of protection for the Palos Verdes Peninsula. After studying the three competing proposals, we strongly favored Proposal 3, which creates by far the most protection for shoreline habitats such as beaches, rocky shores, and surf grass beds.

Proposal 3 is also the only proposal that satisfies the preferred science guidelines established by the Science Advisory Team.

Palos Verdes is one of the few places within the South Coast Region where one can find a huge diversity of habitats, including the rocky intertidal, sandy and gravel beaches, surf grass beds, kelp forest, underwater pinnacles, and submarine canyon walls. It also harbors marine mammal haul outs, and critical bird and marine mammal foraging areas.

Proposal 3 would protect over five miles of Palos Verdes shoreline and 16 square miles of submerged habitat.

The local Stakeholder Group will be considering public input prior to submitting its recommendations to the California Fish & Game Commission on December 10, 2009.

For additional information, please see [www.sccnps.org](http://www.sccnps.org) / Conservation

**Book Review:**  
**Animal, Vegetable, Miracle**  
**A Year of Food Life**

**By Barbara Kingsolver with Steven Hopp and Camille Kingsolver**

**Reviewed by Loretta Rose**

For an avid reader, devoted native gardener, and enthusiastic cook this book was a terrific read. (I'm not in the practice of reviewing books but I'd like to start.)

Barbara Kingsolver has a folksy yet smart way of urging us to eat our vegetables. With a background in biology she is insightful and illuminating on matters of nutrition, yet her instruction is so passionate and earthbound you can smell the compost. She describes a full supply of potatoes as "homeland security". Now that's fun reading.

Ms. Kingsolver and her family left their home in Tucson and moved to Virginia, where they already owned a farm. The plan was to change their way of life for one year by working the farm and living on local food only. This meant no snack food, no processed food, and no food that had to be flown or trucked in. With the exceptions of olive oil, grains and spices, everything they ate was local and in season.

Because most of us are used to the botanically outrageous condition of having everything, always, she thinks Americans are losing their awareness of what ought to be ripe when. These are not new ideas and what was fascinating about reading this book was the way Ms. Kingsolver suggests rethinking processes and outcomes. The basis tenets of Slow Food International and sustainable agriculture are explained thoughtfully. Accompanying articles by Steven Hopp are aimed at helping us to become better informed about and more active in these matters. Camille adds recipes and advice that's charming and informative. The book has the natural momentum of a calendar which adds to the reading experience while capturing the pulse of the farm and the deep gratification it provides.

Ms. Kingsolver says "no matter what else we do or believe, food remains at the center of every culture. Ours now runs on empty calories." I found reading "Animal, Vegetable, Miracle" filled a hole in my soul, altered my way of thinking about food, and ultimately brought me to a higher functioning conscience. Experiments in studied simplicity often come across as well, too simple. Not so with this book...a must read. I especially enjoyed the turkeys.

So you might be asking yourself ..."what vegetables can I plant in my garden in September?" Try these: beets, broccoli, carrots, cauliflower, chard, kale, leeks, lettuce, onions and peas. Happy, local, native gardening!

## **Local Sites and Activities**

Please note that due to space limitations we cannot list all local activities. Please visit their web sites:

George F Canyon: <http://www.pvplc.org/land/georgefcanyon/>

Madrona Marsh: <http://www.friendsofmadronamarsh.com/naturecenter.htm>

Gardena Willows Wetland Preserve: <http://gardenawillows.org/>

*Datura wrightii* – Photo by Ivan Snyder



## **Devil's Advocate, Sympathy for the Devil's Trumpet**

By Ivan Snyder

Native plant lovers appreciate the beauty of our common *Datura wrightii*, sometimes called Angel's Trumpet. Another name is Devil's Trumpet. Important to earlier people of the area, the plant is Sacred Datura. We have much safer, more pleasant medicine nowadays. Remember, most members of its family, the Nightshades, are highly toxic. However, respecting proper handling there is no real danger. I figure it was someone that feared the plant because of its toxicity that started calling it Devil's Trumpet. Angel/good, devil/evil. Besides the plant's beauty, it also has a curious place in nature in relation to two insects. I think more people would be interested in the plant if they know these things. It grows very well in a pot. I have made discoveries while growing the plant I'd like to share.

Jimson Weed, as I used to call it, was the first wildflower I identified myself as a kid. Easily done with those unmistakable large trumpet shaped flowers and spiny fruits. I also learned long ago the Hawkmoth (*Manduca sexta*) pollinates the flowers. I would see these humming bird size moths flying around the garden at night. My grandfather hated them as he knew their larvae, the hornworm, would eat the garden tomato plants. Before tomatoes came here the hornworm fed on *Datura* (see photo next page). Hawkmoth and *Datura* do not have a very mutual relationship. The moth clearly benefits more than *Datura*. Note in the photo the half eaten fruit. Spines on the fruits are apparently not a defense against these caterpillars.

*Datura wrightii* has a relationship with another insect which is certainly mutually beneficial. Seed of *D. wrightii* has a nutritious nub of tissue, called elaiosomes, which Red Harvester Ants (*Pogonomyrmex barbatus*) find very attractive. I placed some seed near an ant nest and the ants immediately carried them into the nest. Later I returned to find seed minus the elaiosome in the ant's waste heap outside the nest. Thus sown and fertilized, the plants are actually cultivated. "Ant farm" redefined. Everywhere I have seen *Datura* I find the farmers.

I have two favorite natural populations of *D. wrightii* I enjoy visiting, both of which are sites of archaeological villages. If these plants could speak, imagine the stories they could tell. I can understand why the people whose ancestors used these plants still consider them sacred even though we no longer have the use for them as long ago. I have never found any for-sure archaeological relics myself such as arrow heads. But to me these culture plants are just as interesting. For whatever reason, at both locations

I witnessed the plants had been intentionally ripped out. This troubles me, and is my sympathy for the Devil's Trumpet. So far, the plants continue to hang on and grow back from tubers. Yet one day I foresee they will inevitably be wiped out where they are.

I bought a packet of seed from Armstrong Gardens which is labeled Angel's Trumpet (*D. meteloides*). See what I mean? It's not Devil's Trumpet to growers. Anyway, this seed produced by Botanical Interests proved to be different from our local variety of *D. wrightii*. *D. meteloides* is now considered a synonym. I think this garden variety is from Mexico. Seed of our local variety did not germinate well for me whereas this one I purchased sprouted as easily as tomato seed. Our local has larger leaves of a bit different shape. Ours is also overall a larger plant and seems to have more fragrant flowers. I grew one of ours before in a pot and it did not flower in the first season, but this other flowers quickly. I was not convinced these should be the same species, so I did an experiment: I cross pollinated them. I took pollen from a plant in a local population and pollinated a castrated flower of the other variety I had growing in a pot. The resulting seed planted on 8/19/09 began germinating in 11 days. I raised up the fastest growing seedling which looks more like our local variety. The first flower, which was powerfully fragrant with the odor of roses, opened on 10/20/09. That's right, just two months after sowing! And it was huge and beautiful (see photo). I'm hooked!



## **Chapter Elections are Coming Up**

Elections for the Chapter Board of Directors will be coming up early in 2010. Board members meet approximately monthly and make all of the decisions for the Chapter. The Board meetings are open to all members of the South Coast Chapter of CNPS and are usually scheduled at 6 P.M. immediately preceding the Program meetings. If you would be interested in serving on the Board, please let one of our current Board members know by mid December.

## Point Vicente Native Plant Garden

### Scenic Gardening Day

**Dates to be Determined – 9:30 AM - noon**

Point Vicente Interpretive Center - 31501 Palos Verdes Dr. W., Rancho Palos Verdes

Our native plant garden at the Point Vicente Native Plant Garden in Rancho Palos Verdes is maintained by volunteers. Join us in sprucing up this lovely garden overlooking the ocean with other members of our chapter. Bring your gloves and a sun hat. If you have hand pruners or small loppers they can be helpful. A large container to hold trimmings is helpful too.

We are waiting for rain before we schedule any more work days. After we get a few good days of rain, we'll need help installing signs and replanting. And as always, the rain will bring weeds. We will need help removing the non-native weeds as our natives get established. Check our website for future volunteer dates.

If you are interested in volunteering at this garden overlooking the ocean and would like to be on our email distribution list please contact Barbara Sattler.

## South Coast CNPS Website Has Been Redesigned

Have you visited our website recently? It had been completely redesigned and updated. Please visit at: <http://www.sccnps.org>. There are many items that do not fit into our newsletter and are available on our website. Pictures are in color! The website will be updated frequently so please check it often. Previous newsletters can also be found on the website. Thank you to David Sundstrum for his help in making our website a useful resource for all plant lovers.

## Do we have your Current Email Address?

Please make sure we have your current email address. Please contact our Membership Chair Cindy Kondon with your current email address so you don't miss any important updates and announcements.

## Renew Online

Renew your CNPS membership online using a credit card. As an option, set it up to **renew automatically** year after year. It is quick, easy, convenient, and reduces renewal mailing costs. <http://www.cnps.org>. Click on the JOIN button

## **Electronic Newsletter**

Due to printing and distribution costs, the paper newsletter that gets mailed to your home will be limited in size and will only be in black and white. The electronic version will include more information and color pictures. It also includes direct links.

To continue to receive your expanded electronic copy and to save the chapter printing costs, be sure to send your current email address to our Membership Chair Cindy Kondon. Newsletters are also available on our local web site: <http://www.sccnps.org>.

Please send any announcement requests, any other articles of interest, comments and suggestions to the newsletter editor: Christine Martin.

## **South Coast CNPS Chapter Officers**

### **Board Members**

President: David Berman  
Vice President / Webmaster: David Sundstrom  
Secretary/Treasurer : Lynn McLeod  
Horticulture/Plant Sale Coordinator: Ric Dykzeul  
Horticulture / Point Vicente Garden: Tony Baker  
Spring Garden Tour / Board Member at Large: Loretta Rose  
Chapter Council Delegate: Barbara Sattler  
Membership: Cindy Kondon  
Outreach Chair: Griselda Sasayama  
Program Chair / Newsletter : Christine Martin  
Conservation Committee: Tony Baker, David Sundstrom

### **Chairs**

Publicity / Madrona Marsh: Carol Roelen  
Rare Plants, Ethnobotany: Ivan Snyder