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# THE CYPRESS CONE

CALIFORNIA NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY  
SANTA CRUZ COUNTY CHAPTER



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## Plants, Insects, and Field Notes: the Legacy and Future of Randy Morgan's Collections

Speaker: **Chris Lay, Administrative Director, Kenneth S. Norris Center for Natural History**

Chapter General Meeting:  
**Monday, September 11, 2017, 7:30 pm**  
UCSC Arboretum Horticulture Building  
Keying Club: 5:00 pm



In addition to being a past president and helping found the Santa Cruz County CNPS Chapter, Randy Morgan (who passed away in June 2017) was one of Santa Cruz's great naturalists and conservationists.

Central to his success as a mentor and advocate for local biodiversity were his extensive local natural history collections and voluminous field notes. With over 100,000 specimens and thousands of pages of field notes, Randy created a vital comprehensive resource for our community now and far into the future. Embedded in his work are detailed glimpses of our diverse plant and insect communities, inspiring stories about discovery and change, philosophical musings both humorous and prophetic, and countless projects for our community to continue to work on. Come and learn more about his collections and how you can get involved.

Chris Lay is the Administrative Director of the Kenneth S. Norris Center for Natural History at UC Santa Cruz where Randy's collections are held. Chris splits his time teaching field-based natural history classes and managing the center's natural history collections. He worked closely with Randy for the last eight years to continue curation of his collections and help publicize the important information associated with each of them.

In the months before Randy died, Chris worked with Randy and a small group of his friends to develop the "Randall Morgan Collections and Santa Cruz Natural History Initiative." This program outlines the Norris Center's goals of long term stewardship of Randy's collections and a commitment to engage young naturalists to continue working on his collections to inform the conservation community now and into the future.

### Randy Morgan Memorial September 3rd, 4-8:00 pm

The UCSC Arboretum will be hosting "A Gathering to Remember and Celebrate Randy Morgan." It will be held at the Horticultural Building from 4-8:00 pm on Sunday, September 3rd and the public is invited to attend. Please bring a potluck item to share and personal eating utensils. For more information, please contact Chris Lay at [cml@ucsc.edu](mailto:cml@ucsc.edu) or go to [norriscenter.ucsc.edu](http://norriscenter.ucsc.edu).

If you would like to help with parking before or after the event, please contact Ruthe at [ruthejsmith55@gmail.com](mailto:ruthejsmith55@gmail.com).



# In Memoriam: Denise Polk, Longtime Santa Cruz County Chapter Propagation Group Leader and Volunteer



Our propagation team was saddened to learn of the death of Denise Polk on August 17. She had been living with cancer for five years. Marie Beckham voices a feeling we all share: “Denise was a remarkable human being who deserved to live her life for many more years.”

Mike relayed some memories that Nancy Jones shared about the early days and Denise’s career: “Denise worked for Barbara Coe at Saratoga Horticultural Foundation, probably fresh from UCSC. She started volunteering with our propagation group, which was then led by Kurt Ellison, when we were meeting at Wintergreen Nursery. We moved to Suncrest Nursery late 1991 when Nevin Smith sold Wintergreen to Suncrest. Soon after the move Kurt moved on and Denise took over leading the group. Sometime after that, Denise left the Saratoga Horticultural Foundation and worked at Native Revival Nursery, and when Linda Locatelli retired from supervision of the UCSC greenhouses, Denise took her place there.”

In addition to running the propagation group, Denise also organized a CNPS booth at the annual Scotts Valley Garden Faire, beginning in 2006. She handled set-up, tear-down, scheduling volunteers—and welcomed visitors with great advice about gardening with natives.

In 2013, when Denise stepped down from leadership of our propagation group, she was honored by our chapter and at the state level of CNPS with volunteer recognition awards. Since then Denise maintained an interest in our group’s success, sometimes visiting the nursery with Mike, and contributing seedlings for us to grow out. We only realized fully how much Denise was doing for the group when we tried to fill her shoes. It took us a while to sort it all out. But we are now ably led by Mike Luther, and we are a strong team together.

Of course, we all learned propagation techniques from Denise. I remember: cover seedlings up to their first leaves when transplanting them, but don’t cover the root crown on cuttings. Ann Garside recalls Denise showing her how to open a whole row in a flat with a single stroke rather than poking individual holes.

But more than that, we remember Denise’s thoughtfulness and generosity of spirit. Denise went about her life in an intelligent, cheerful, and down-to-earth way, and that’s how she dealt with her illness too: with grace, fortitude, and, whenever possible, good cheer. Her longtime friend and colleague Barbara Coe called her “the most courageous woman I know.”

After her diagnosis, Denise began matter-of-factly giving people things they might be able to use. Knowing I do a lot of home propagation, she gave me propagation books—and some tee-shirts from the wildflower shows, which I love gardening in. To Ann Garside it was books on spreadsheets; Denise saying simply that she “would no longer need them.” “I knew then, without a doubt,” Ann said, “that I was in the presence of a remarkable woman.”

Mike says, “I miss her friendship, our lunches after every propagation session, and her always being there with a thoughtful answer to any propagation question I might come up with.”

And we remember that smile. Julia Davenport remembers “her welcoming smile and brilliant mind,” and Paul Fewel remarks, “what a lovely person she was.” Ann Garside said, “I never saw Denise with anything less than a smile on her face; I never heard her utter anything but friendly words.”

by Jackie Pascoe



# Save the Dates !

## CNPS Santa Cruz County Chapter's Fall Native Plant Sale October 14, 2017

The CNPS Fall Plant Sale will be held in the same location as the spring sale, by the Horticulture building. It is open for Members of CNPS and the Arboretum from 10:00 am to noon, then opens for everyone from noon to 4:00 pm. Signs will direct attendees to special locations for parking at the Arboretum.

CNPS plant sales are the main source of income for our group, and book sales are increasing. Due to the efforts of Board member Ken Kellman, we now have an extensive selection of books and posters for sale—perfect for yourself or the native plant enthusiast on your gift list. Books are ten percent off for members.

Here are some highlights of what will be available:

*Salvia* - an assortment of species of different colors and sizes

*Sisyrinchium bellum* - both light and dark blue varieties of the blue-eyed grass

*Eriogonum latifolium* - our locally-wild coastal buckwheat

*Lotus formosissimus* - becomes covered with small bright yellow flowers, reseeds willingly in the garden

*Erysimum concinnum* - coast wallflower, a rare native plant

For a more complete list of plants that will be available, check the [cruzcnps.org](http://cruzcnps.org) website as the date gets closer.

You can help us, too. We need help unloading the truck, setting out plants and descriptions, selling plants, helping customers, and cleaning up. Please contact Julia Davenport at [juliad@cruzio.com](mailto:juliad@cruzio.com) if you would like to volunteer.



## Habitat Restoration Team

We have one work day scheduled for **September 23, 10:00 am to 1:00 pm, at Sand Hill Bluff, Wilder Ranch State Park**. More days will be scheduled for September and October so please check our website for details, or contact our **Program Leader, Linda Brodman**, at 831-462-4041 or [redwdrn@pacbell.net](mailto:redwdrn@pacbell.net).

We are a volunteer group working to restore native habitat in the parks and protected lands in Santa Cruz County. Our program provides an opportunity for people to learn about the natural systems that surround them while helping to restore special and wild places. No prior work experience is necessary, just show up at the park. We welcome individual volunteers from 8 to 80 years, as well as special groups. Wear comfortable layered clothing, bring something to drink, and lots of enthusiasm! We work rain or shine, but if things get particularly unpleasant, we call it a day. Tools are provided, but please bring your own gloves.



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## CNPS Southern California Conservation Analyst Position

Recently CNPS received a generous bequest from Elizabeth C. Schwartz that provides the opportunity to increase our conservation efforts. Others are making donations to match Elizabeth's gift so that CNPS can expand conservation staffing to better serve SoCal. A new CNPS Southern California Conservation Analyst position will support SoCal CNPS Chapters and conservation volunteers, helping grow their capacity to engage in important local conservation work. They will also engage in strategic work when plant conservation needs span multiple CNPS Chapters, advance CNPS conservation policies, bring together partners, and act as CNPS's lead representative in these regional initiatives and processes.

You can help secure the future of plant conservation in Southern California by pledging your support today. Please consider making a gift to support the SoCal conservation position, share your thoughts with CNPS staff and your chapter leadership, and most importantly lend your voice when important, urgent conservation issues come to your attention.

For more information about this position and how it will help CNPS maintain a strong voice for native plant conservation, see the CNPS website at <http://www.cnps.org/>.

**California Native Plant Society**  
**Santa Cruz County Chapter**  
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## Welcome New Members

**Ileana Betancourt     Patti Jazanoski**  
**Sara Lummis         Michael Millsop**  
**Michael Vickers**

Have a wonderful Fall Equinox.

**Ann Garside, Membership Coordinator**

## Chapter Secretary Position Open

Have you been wondering about how you can be more involved in our chapter's activities? The position of Secretary is open and is a way for you to get more familiar with the Board and how we get things done. As Secretary, you will take the minutes at each Board meeting (once every two months). You are welcome to become a Board member, but are not required to do so.

If interested, contact any board member, or  
**Linda Brodman, redwdrn@pacbell.net.**

## Join the California Native Plant Society

Your membership includes *Fremontia*, a journal with articles on all aspects of native plants; the *Bulletin*, a statewide report of activities and schedules; and *The Cypress Cone*.

**Fill out the form below, or go to [www.cnps.org](http://www.cnps.org) and join or renew your membership online.**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Chapter Affiliation: \_\_\_\_\_

- Student/Limited Income \$25
- Individual \$45
- Family or Library \$75
- Plant Lover \$100
- Patron \$300
- Benefactor \$600
- Mariposa Lily \$1500

Make your check payable to CNPS and send to:

**Membership Chair, CNPS,**  
**2707 K Street, Suite 1,**  
**Sacramento, CA 95816**

## Newsletter contributions welcomed!

The next deadline is October 16, 2017. Please send any pictures or stories you would like to be considered for the newsletter to Ruthe at [ruthejsmith55@gmail.com](mailto:ruthejsmith55@gmail.com)

## Like us on Facebook

Contribute to our group! Search for "Santa Cruz County Chapter - California Native Plant Society"

## Opt for email

If you would like to receive your newsletter via email only, please contact Ann at [aegrdwds@calcentral.com](mailto:aegrdwds@calcentral.com) and let her know your preference.

**CNPS is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization**  
**dedicated to the preservation of California native flora.**

CNPS has 34 chapters throughout the state and membership is open to all persons – professional and amateur – with an interest in California's native plants such as: natural history, botany, ecology, conservation, photography, drawing, hiking, and gardening.

**Donations are tax-deductible** and support special projects such as publication of the county Checklist, and conservation activities that preserve important habitats and species in our area. You may earmark gifts for specific areas. (Your membership is also tax deductible, minus \$12 for the journal *Fremontia*, three issues per year.) Make checks payable to CNPS and send to: CNPS, P.O. Box 1622, Santa Cruz, CA 95061.