Ecological Concerns Incorporated
Central Coast Wilds
Restoring the habitats that sustain us

CCW-Newsletter **Fall 2012**

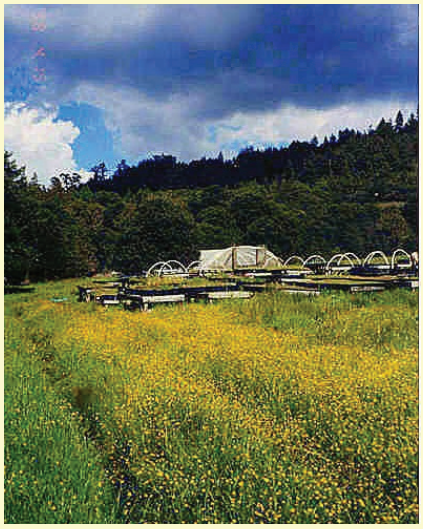
"Our mission is to nurture ecological relationships, cultivate community partnerships and build sustainable business practices in order to protect and restore biological diversity."

In This Issue

Fall Plant Sale

336A Golf Club Drive
Friday, September 28th
12 - 4 pm

Join Us in Celebrating Our 20th Anniversary!



Soquel 1995

Santa Cruz 2012

Central Coast Wilds 20 Year Anniversary Party!
Friday, September 28th
4-9 pm

CCW will provide BBQ items, snacks, beverages (incl beer, wine)
BYOB specialty items for the BBQ or to drink, as you wish

Bluegrass music by the Intangibillies

Juncus patens - What a Rush!

It's hard to overestimate the utility of this frequently overlooked plant. From its die-hard nature to its lovely blue-grey foliage, it's a local California native that deserves a spot in many more planting palettes. And speaking of "local", please skip to the last paragraph for a comparison of several Juncus patens cultivars vs. a local collection.

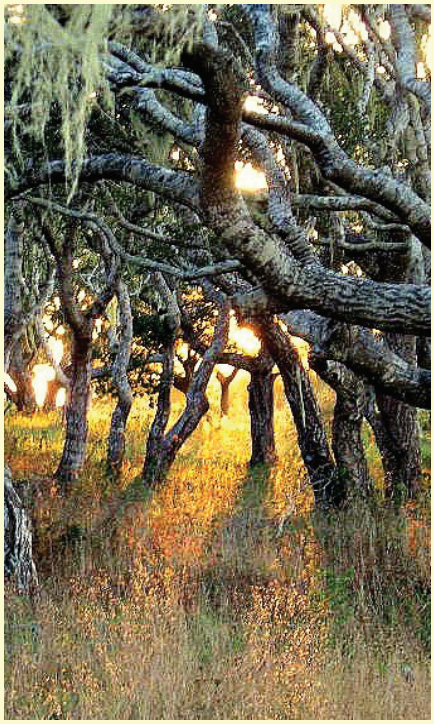
The Latin meaning of Juncus is "to join or bind", from the long history of its use in basketry, and other household structures. Patens may refer to the

Are you inspired by our local ecosystems? Want to design your own native garden?

Come get a jump-start on Fall Planting! We have a huge selection of local Native CA Plants, collected from a watershed near you. Check out our 'seasonal highlights,' offering special prices on plants from our stock of over 300 native species.

View Seasonal Plants
Native Plant Inventory

We deliver throughout the Monterey & SF Bay areas



Oak Woodland Sunrise
Photo by Ellen

Learn More About Us

Office: 831.459.0656
Nursery: 831.459.0655
Fax: 831.457.1606

Driving Directions

Online Native Plant Inventory (call to confirm availability)

spreading rush, blue rush, California rush, rush grass, wire grass, and my favorite, grey rush. On the Central Coast in a natural setting, one can usually separate it from the other round-leaved Juncus species by color alone, as the rest do not have the blue-grey caste to their foliage.

Grey rush forms dense evergreen grass-like clumps, with tough networks of roots that hold their own in weedy planting areas. In very rich moist soil in full sun they may get several feet tall, with an equal spread. Typically they average 1.5-2 feet tall, with a slightly arching form in fruit. They grow well in full sun to moderate shade, in many different plant communities. They naturally occur in meadows, stream banks, mixed evergreen forest, coast live oak forest, marshes, vernally moist areas, seeps, and even near the deepest shade of redwoods. In California Juncus patens may be found primarily along the coast, and in the coastal mountain ranges, from Baja to Oregon. It's also found in the foothills of both the northern Sierra Nevada and the Cascades, in the Klamath ranges, and on the Channel Islands.

In the garden, Juncus patens' neat tight bunches of blue-green color provide year round interest and form. In a dry oak understory garden, combine it with yerba buena (Clinopodium/Satureja douglasii), wild strawberries (Fragaria vesca), wild Irises (Iris douglasiana or Iris fernaldii), sword fern (Polystichum munitum) and hummingbird sage (Salvia spathacea). Larger shrubs here might include toyon (Heteromeles arbutifolia) andcoffeeberry (Frangula californica). In a partly shady garden that receives some supplemental water, consider adding columbine (Aquilegia formosa), canyon sunflower (Venegasia carpesioides), foam flowers (Tiarella trifoliata), piggyback plant (Tolmiea menziesii), Lobelia spp., Heuchera spp., andthe larger cream bush (Holodiscus discolor). Grey rush is perfectly happy in full sun as well, and may be used in every design from a wild meadow to a formal entrance. The only situation I might not recommend it, (unless additional water and fertilizer are provided) would be a steep dry sunny bank with low fertility.

Juncus patens is arguably the best plant for use in bioswales (broad, shallow channels designed to convey, filter, and infiltrate stormwater runoff). It will tolerate flooding in the wet season, standing in several inches of water, followed by many months of total drought, when the mud around it dries and cracks.

For a simple erosion control palette in sun or shade, combine grey rush with equally sturdy and adaptable bunchgrasses: blue wild rye (Elymus glaucus) and California brome (Bromus carinatus). In a sunny situation, add the long-lived and deep-rooted needle grasses (Stipa/Nassella species)

Juncus patens can be mowed, which encourages it to form wider clumps, and also renews

Featured Products:

Native Sod: Six Drought Toler ant Blends from $1.99 SF

Custom Native Seed Blends for landscape, revegetation & erosion control

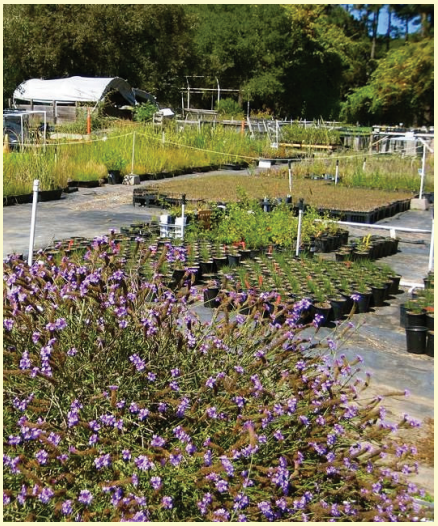
Root Guard: Gopher Protection

Plant Baskets: 1 - 15 Gallon Sizes

Organic Fertilizer and Mycorrhizal Packets $0.50/packet

Our Nursery is Growing!

Here are some current pictures of our grounds:



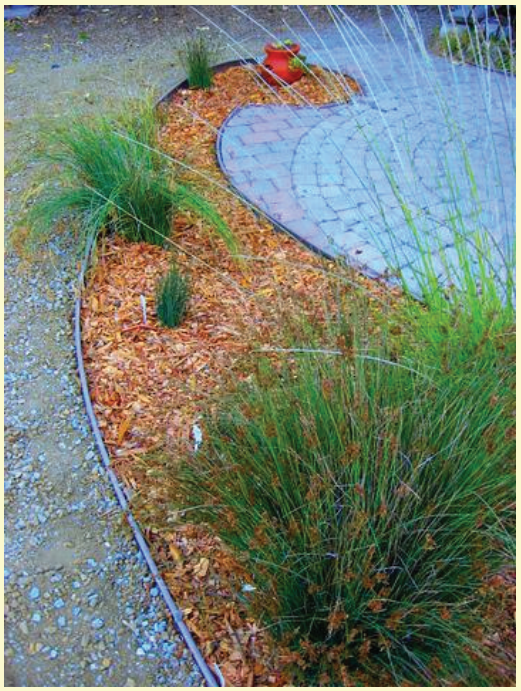
Lower Nursery and Verbena

ALBA 3M Wetland Plants

renews the leaves if they look tired at the end of summer. You may also dig and divide the clumps, at any time of year, if water is provided.

A comparison of local *Juncus patens* vs. several cultivars

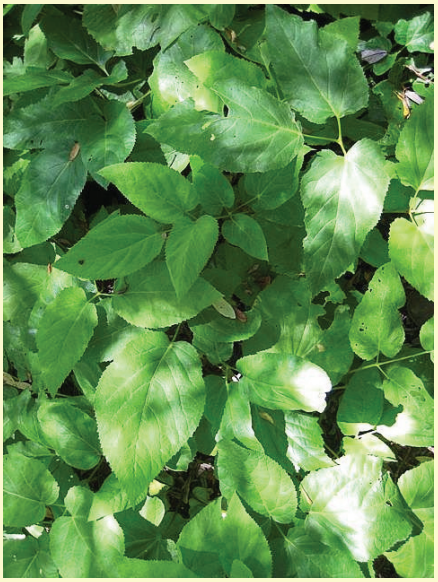
In front of our nursery offices at Central Coast Wilds, we planted a short row of Juncus patens, consisting of two plants of each of the following: a local collection, Elk Blue, Occidental Blue, and Carman's Grey. Two is a terrible sample size, but the results were unexpectedly dramatic, and hard to avoid noticing. One of the cultivars was dubbed "gophers' choice" and was repeatedly eaten. Two of the cultivars took a year to attain any size at all, and generally do not appear to be thriving. The third cultivar looks acceptable, although only one of the two plants actually looks good. The surprise here was how quickly and densely the locally collected plants filled in. They are vibrantly healthy, although the photos do not do them justice; stop by the nursery to see them for yourself! If you would like to be able to purchase locally collected plants, which have coevolved through time with the local conditions (diseases, gophers, insects, weather, soils, etc.) please consider supporting the nurseries that provide local native plant stock.



Juncus patens from bottom to top: native stock, Elk Blue, Occidental Blue, and Carmen's Grey

Juncus patens Local native grown from seed collected in this field!

Lots of Native Plants for Sale!



Aralia californica
Featured in the Winter Newsletter

Farmscaping with Native Plants

Farms worldwide have contributed greatly to the loss of native vegetation and wildlife habitat. Over the past twenty years native plants have begun to creep back in around the edges as the utility of 'farmscaping' has been documented.

Ceanothus Hedgerow (above) &
Yarrow Hedgerow (below)
Photos by Sam Earnshaw

Farmscaping is a whole-farm, ecological approach to pest management. It can be defined as the use of hedgerows, insectary plants, cover crops, and water reservoirs to attract and support populations of beneficial organisms such as insects, bats, and birds of prey.

Farmscaping with native plants provides for the habitat needs of beneficial organisms. The plants create shelter, nesting & overwintering sites, and sources of nectar and pollen. Native insect pollinators and native birds are two groups that benefit greatly from farmscaping and in turn provide great benefit to the farm production.

The pollination activity of native insect pollinators compares favorably to honey bees. In fact native pollinators are on the job earlier, work longer hours, are more active in colder and wetter weather and are more efficient in distributing pollen when compared with honey bees.

Native birds are effective at controlling insect pests including caterpillars, ants, Grubs, Leafhoppers, Aphids, Snails, Scale insects, and Codling Moth. One study found that insectivorous birds, including downy woodpeckers and chestnut-backed chickadees, ate 85% of the overwintering codling moths in CA apple orchards.

Planting a hedgerow is one farmscaping technique that is easy to install and provides many of the benefits outlined above. The chart on the following page shows that planting a diversity of native perennials, shrubs and trees ensures that there are pollen and nectar sources available throughout the year.

Coming Events:

September - October 2012 - Randall Morgan Nature Walk Series
Location: Sites through Santa Cruz County

An unusual opportunity to spend time in the field with local naturalist Randy Morgan. Field trips throughout Santa Cruz County will cover botany, birds, and interesting insects! RSVPs required. More information can be found at : http://www.cruzcnps.org/events2.html

September 8, 2012 - Ohlone Day
Location: Henry Cowell Redwoods State Park

Learn about the people indigenous to the central coast, from the people who are indigenous to the central coast! Fire-making, dancing, native plant walk, music, and games. More at : http://mountainparks.org/news/press-releases/

Known Pollen and Nectar Sources for Beneficial Insects

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
Willow spp.												
Ceanothus spp.												
Yarrow												
Elderberry												
Coffeeberry												
Hollyleaf Cherry												
Toyon												
Buckwheat spp.												
Deergrass												
Saltbush, Fourwing												
Milkweed												
Goldenrod												
Coyote Brush												

Two good sources of information about farmscaping for pest control and wildlife habitat are:

Agricultural Cropping Patterns: Integrating Wild Margins
A Wild Farm Alliance Briefing Paper

Hedgerows for California Agriculture: A Resource Guide

California Native Plants for Erosion Control: An Opportunity to Restore Local Biodiversity

California native plants are an excellent choice for erosion control projects. There are thousands of native plants indigenous to the Monterey & San Francisco Bay areas and hundreds of native varieties that are now available in the nursery trade. With advanced planning you can assure that the native plants selected are available in the variety, size and quantities required for your project.

There are several basic questions to answer when planning to use native plants for erosion control: Is it better to distribute seed over the site, or to plant container stock? What is the existing plant cover, soil type, slope steepness, and sun exposure of the project site? These details about the qualities of the site are required to determine the plant species that might be used.

For example, the project site may be within a live oak woodland vegetation type on a south-facing slope with clay soil and full exposure to the sun. Although many oak woodland understory species are appropriate for erosion control, the exposure to full sun limits the compatible choices for that site. Sun tolerant species such as Idahoe fescue, common yarrow, California fushia or annual lupine would be used rather than shade requiring species such as iris, snowberry and honeysuckle.

For large project sites, seeding native species may be a better choice than

Coming Events:

September 7-9, 2012 - CNPS Conservation Symposium and Chapter Council
Location: UCSC Arboretum

Field trips to explore local Santa Cruz flora led by CNPS members on Friday and Sunday are sure to be a treat! The Conservation Symposium on Saturday will provide a variety of case studies of CNPS' work in the conservation of plant communities and plant species throughout the state. Schedules and details at : https://sites.google.com/site/cnpschaptercouncilsept2012/

November 8, 2012 - 14th Annual Central California Invasive Weeds Symposium
Location: Felton Community Hall in Felton, California.

"It's Not Just the Weeds - Land Stewardship and Weed Management"
Registration and details at : http://ag.co.monterey.ca.us/pages/14th-annual-central--california-invasive-weeds-symp

planting container stock. There are many different native grass and wildflower species available to choose from. One versatile mix includes blue wild rye, meadow barley, California brome, three-weeks fescue and tomcat clover. This mix performs well in many soil types, sun or part shade and without irrigation.

If the long-term plan is to restore a natural vegetation type, do not apply a seed mix that will introduce aggressive species such as annual rye or rose clover to the site. These species are a serious hindrance to the development of natural plant communities. Even a commercial native grass seed mix could be in conflict with the genetic site-specificity goal of a true habitat restoration project. If this is the case, nonnative, non-invasive annual barley can be applied to the site for temporary cover as it is fast growing, even with late season application, and it will not typically persist on the site.

Native plants provide abundant habitat for native birds, butterflies and other beneficial organisms so that by integrating native plants into our erosion control projects we can help to restore local biodiversity.

Community Environmental Project

Agriculture and Land-Based Training Association: Triple M Wetland Restoration Project

Central Coast Wilds is working with the Agriculture and Land-Based Training Association (ALBA) and many others to design and implement a large-scale wetland restoration project at the Triple M Ranch in the Upper Elkhorn Slough watershed. The implementation of this project will contribute to ALBA's mission to provide for a just and sustainable food system as well as the enhancement of biological diversity and protection of natural resources.

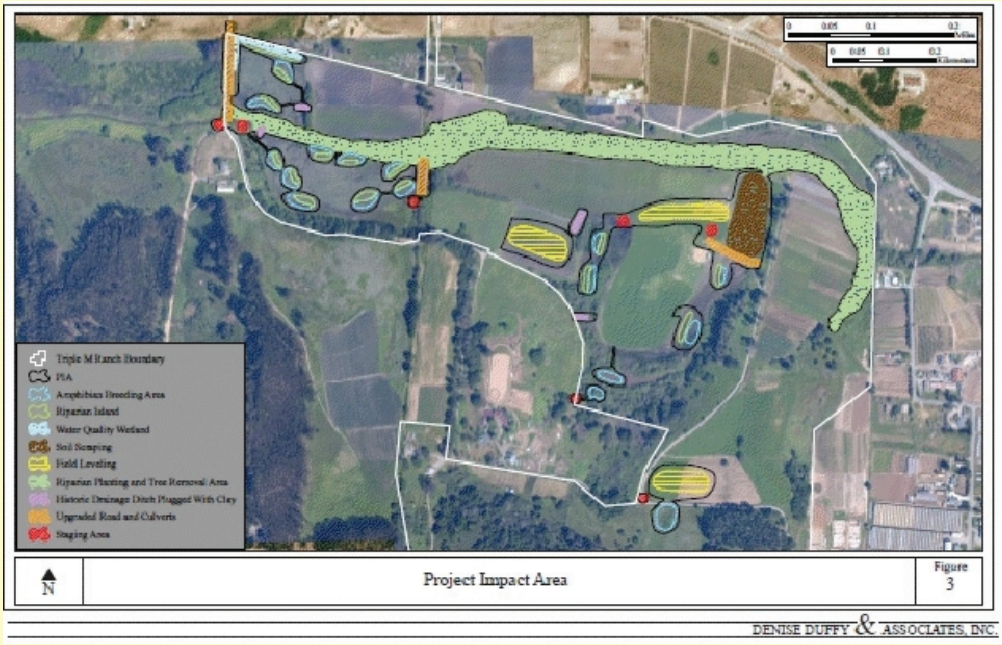
The project will restore wetlands on a portion of the 195-acre Ranch along Carneros Creek in northern Monterey County, California. Three federally listed amphibians are known to occur within or immediately adjacent to the project area: the federally Threatened California red-legged frog (Rana draytonii, CRLF) and California tiger salamander (Ambystoma californiense, CTS) and the federally and state Endangered and fully protected Santa Cruz long-toed salamander (A. macrodactylum croceum, SCLTS).

The project entails excavating a series of depressions within wetlands that are deep enough (between two and five feet) to hold water into August and using the spoils to create rises or islands between the wetland and the adjacent farmland. These features will provide breeding resources and upland refugia for the amphibian species.

Central Coast Wilds prepared the detailed restoration planting plan and the long-term vegetation management guidelines. CCW is currently growing more than 50,000 wetland plants that will be used to revegetate the wetland pools and upland areas. These plants are being propagated from seeds and cuttings collected from within the Elkhorn Slough watershed.

Other Services Available From Ecological Concerns Incorporated:

- **Complete Landscape Design & Installation Services**
- **Irrigation System Design, Installation & Service**
- **Erosion Control Plans: CPESC on Staff**
- **Grey Water Treatment Systems: Certified Installers on Staff**
- **Sustainable Landscape Maintenance Service**



ALBA Site Map

The overall project has involved the collaboration of a large group of scientist, engineers, planners, contractors and public agencies. ALBA as the lead has partnered with the Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS), the Resource Conservation District of Monterey County (RCDMC), and the Elkhorn Slough Foundation (ESF). Consultants Bryan Largay and Dawn Reis were hired to develop conceptual designs for restoration, focusing on hydrology and physical systems and special status amphibians. Fall Creek Engineering prepared the project construction documents. Denise Duffy and Associates prepare the Biological Assessment and lead the effort to acquire all of the required environmental permits. The project Technical Advisory Committee included members from CSUMB, ESF, UCSC, NRCS, RCDMC in particluar Melanie Beretti, Cheryl Lambert, Glen Wilcox, Kim Hayes, Marc Los Huertos, Peter Haase, Grey Hayes, Doug Smith, Antonia D'Amore, Jacob Martin, Mary Root and Gage Dayton.

Contact Central Coast Wilds

Come visit us!

Nursery: Open 10am - 3pm M-F or by appointment
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Driving Directions