



What *SNOO* in the Park?

Golden Gate and Point Reyes Weed Watchers Invasive Species Early Detection Significant **N**ew **O**bservations and **O**ccurrences February/March 2009

Importance of Early Detection of Invasive Species

Aggressive non-native plants threaten to change the landscape of our national parks. These plants can alter entire ecosystems, reducing habitat for the unique plants and animals of the San Francisco Bay Area in the very places set aside to protect them. Often, by the time a plant is noticed as a problem it has spread throughout an area. The Weed Watchers help patrol the park for some of the newest invaders—and find them when they can still be prevented from becoming a permanent part of the landscape.

While a couple of surveys were performed in February, March kicked off the Weed Watchers official survey season. A new intern and five new volunteers helped get the program off to a strong start!

On February 10th and 20th targeted searches were conducted after receiving reports of **Bermuda buttercup** (*Oxalis pes-caprae*) being found in several areas of PORE. **Limantour Rd** and **Sir Francis Drake** from **Pierce Point Rd** to the Lighthouse were searched by car, including all driveable roads intersecting these main roads. In **Subwatershed 5-4**, five patches of **Bermuda buttercup**, three patches of **orange cotoneaster** (*Cotoneaster franchetii*), one patch of **English holly** (*Ilex aquifolium*), one patch of **tocalote** (*Centaurea melitensis*), and one patch of **French broom** (*Genista monspessulana*) were all mapped. Two patches of **Bermuda buttercup** were mapped in both **Subwatersheds 5-5** and **6-2**, and one patch of **Bermuda buttercup** was mapped in **6-1**. Along **Mt Vision Rd** four separate patches of **Bermuda buttercup** were mapped in **Subwatershed 5-13**. A survey of the **Bucklin Trail** was conducted by foot, resulting in five patches of **Bermuda buttercup**, one **plumeless thistle** (*Carduus acanthoides*), and one patch of **pennyroyal** (*Mentha pulegium*) getting mapped in **Subwatershed 5-6**.

Two volunteers joined the first official GOGA survey on March 12. They helped to survey the **Owl Trail** through **Subwatershed 15-3** from **Muir Beach** overlook parking lot north to **Slide Ranch**. Three patches of **licorice plant** (*Helichrysum petiolare*) were mapped in GeoWeed that appeared to have been treated previously but not yet

mapped. Four new **tocalote** patches were mapped, all of which were rosettes and immediately hand pulled. One small patch of **thoroughwort** (*Ageratina adenophora*) as well as a small patch of **Himalayan blackberry** (*Rubus discolor*) were also mapped.

The Weed Watchers headed south to Sweeney Ridge on March 19 to survey the **Mori Point Ridge Trail** along the border of [Subwatersheds 20-2 and 21-1](#). Starting from Shelldance nursery and heading east, **tocalote** was found scattered along the entire trail. One **purple starthistle** (*Centaurea calcitrapa*) was mapped and removed. Three patches of **Bermuda buttercup** were also mapped.

On March 18th, the Weed Watchers joined IPP for a hike up **Deer Park Fire Rd** and the **Dipsea Trail** through [Subwatersheds 12-3 and 12-2](#). One **licorice plant** patch, two **jubata grass** (*Cortaderia jubata*) patches and two **panic veldt grass** (*Ehrharta erecta*) patches were mapped in **12-3**. Two **licorice plant** and four **jubata grass** patches were mapped in **12-2**.

Five new volunteers were trained at the Weed Watchers training on March 21 in the Presidio. They learned how to identify the top priority plants, which luckily most of the volunteers are already familiar with. They also learned how to map and report any new infestations. Also on the 21st at Point Reyes, nearly 40 Harbor Seal Volunteers received an abbreviated Weed Watchers training. Many of them will be surveying along their monitoring routes, and we'll see several of them at the full trainings in April!

March 26th was the first survey for the new Weed Watcher/Invasive Plant Response Team intern, Jessica Chappelle. She joined a hike on the **Coastal Trail** through [Subwatersheds 3-5 and 3-1](#). Most of the priority plants found here had been mapped in previous years, but Jessica was able to help map seven patches of **Bermuda buttercup** (five in Subwatershed 3-1 and two in 3-5).

March Stats:
40 (31 by car) Miles Surveyed, 24 Volunteer Hours

If anyone would like more information or maps please contact Jen at 331-5023 or Jenn_Jordan@nps.gov.

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