



What ***SNOO*** in the Park?

Point Reyes National Seashore Weed Watchers Invasive Species Early Detection Significant **N**ew **O**bservations and **O**ccurrences July/August 2008

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.

In July we kicked off the Weed Watcher 2008 program here at Point Reyes! With the help of Andrea Williams, Jennifer Jordan and her interns, Melissa Potter was able to get the program off to a swift start. For Melissa's introduction to the program, the whole group surveyed **Subwatershed 5-5**. Priority plants were mapped along the **Inverness Ridge, Drakes View, and Bayview trails**; including **jubata grass** (*Cortaderia jubata*), **cotoneaster** (*Cotoneaster* species), and **English holly** (*Ilex aquifolium*).

The Weed Watcher crew from GOGA joined Melissa at PORE once again on July 22 to lead a group of 15 high school students on a survey of the dunes between **South and North Beach**. While the **iceplant** (*Carpobrotus edulis*) was too abundant to map, the crew was able to map the **European beachgrass** (*Ammophila arenaria*) and the **European searocket** (*Cakile maritima*) in **Subwatersheds 6-7, 6-11, and 6-13**.



On July 24, Andrea and Melissa surveyed **Muddy Hollow trail (south)**. This rarely used trail falls within **Subwatershed 5-5**; a high-priority area. Luckily, there were no high-priority invasive species along the trail, only some **shortpod mustard** (*Hirschfeldia incana*) at the parking area.

On July 31, Melissa surveyed **Laguna Trail** from the Education Center to Sky Trail, in **Subwatershed 5-4**. Overall, the area was in good shape, except for a single **English holly** (*Ilex aquifolium*) shrub that was growing trailside.

Subwatershed 5-4 was also surveyed by way of **Muddy Hollow (north) and Bucklin trails** on August 5. Bucklin trail had a small patch of **butter and eggs** (*Linaria vulgaris*) in bloom, as well as some **pennyroyal** (*Mentha pulegium*) that was mapped. It is a shame that such pretty flowers are invasive!!

Limantour Spit (Subwatershed 5-9) was surveyed on Aug 12. Unfortunately, **iceplant** (*C. edulis*) was the star of the show there, with four separate occurrences. However, there were also many large piles of dead **iceplant** that had already been treated, so progress is being made. Some **sweet fennel** (*Foeniculum vulgare*) was also mapped near the parking lot.

On August 18, Melissa surveyed **Coast trail** from the Palo Marin Trailhead, which included **Subwatersheds 3-1 and 3-3**. Here, two more occurrences of **iceplant** (*C. edulis*) were mapped along with a large amount of **broom** (*Genista monpessulana*). **Tocalote** (*Centaurea melitensis*) was mapped on **Palo Marin trail**, also within **Subwatershed 3-1**.

The section of **Mount Vision Rd** that crosses **Subwatershed 5-10** was surveyed by Andrea and Melissa on August 21. Several **orange cotoneaster** (*Cotoneaster franchetii*) were mapped and treated on the north end of the subwatershed. Also, two occurrences, including one small patch and one large area (about 1,700 m²) of **sweet vernalgrass** (*Anthoxanthum odoratum*) were mapped.

Melissa also surveyed **Horse trail** in **Subwatershed 4-2**. Most of the weeds were found within the first mile from the Limantour Rd and Bear Valley Rd intersection. A large **Himalayan blackberry** (*Rubus discolor*) shrub was mapped and then snacked on!! Also, present were **periwinkle** (*Vinca major*), **shortpod mustard** (*Hirschfeldia incana*), and **pennyroyal**. Further up the trail, **purple foxglove** (*Digitalis purpurea*) was found and mapped, unfortunately, it had already dropped its seeds.



If anyone would like more information or maps please contact Melissa at 464-5201 or Melissa_Potter@nps.gov.

Weed Watchers September 2008 Schedule

Monday, September 8: Inverness Ridge 10:00am-2:00pm

Meet at trailhead at end of Mount Vision Road.

Let's put your new training to work!! Come and enjoy the beautiful views from the top of Mount Vision during your drive to the trailhead. From there we will hike along Inverness Ridge trail looking for the Priority 1 species.

Directions from Point Reyes Station: Take Hwy 1 through downtown. Turn Right to stay on Hwy 1. Turn Right on Sir Francis Drake (after you cross the bridge). Continue about 7 miles on Sir Francis Drake; you will pass through the town of Inverness and past Pierce Point Road on the right. After you pass Pierce Point Road, look for Mount Vision Road on the left. Turn left and travel up the hill until the road comes to a dead end (about 4 miles).

Saturday, September 13: Cross Marin Trail, 10:00am-2:00pm

Meet at the trailhead on Platform Bridge Road

Directions from the North (Petaluma): Take Point Reyes-Petaluma Rd South toward Point Reyes Station. At the purple bridge (three-way stop) you will go straight. This puts you on Platform Bridge Rd. Just before Platform Bridge Rd intersects Sir Francis Drake there is a gravel pull-out where you can park. If you get to Sir Francis Drake you will have to find a safe spot to turn around and go back.

Directions from the South: From Hwy 101 take the Sir Francis Drake exit. Follow Sir Francis Drake for several miles until you are out of the main towns and past Samuel P Taylor State Park. Then, keep your eyes out for Platform Bridge Rd on the right. Make a right there and you will see a gravel pull out on the left where you can park.

Thursday, September 18: Coast Trail, 9:00am-2:00pm

Meet at the trailhead near the Education Center.

Directions from Point Reyes Station: Take Hwy 1 through downtown. Turn Right to stay on Hwy 1. Turn Right on Sir Francis Drake (after you cross the bridge). Next take a left on Limantour Rd. Follow Limantour Rd for several miles until you see a sign the directs you to the Education Center. Take that left and follow the road to the Coast trailhead (at the first parking area on the right).

Make sure to bring: Lunch, plenty of water, Weed Watching supplies: binoculars, pen/pencils, colored marker, weed identification cards, field notebook and/or blank paper

Can't make one of the hikes? Find out how you can adopt a corner of the park and Weed Watch on your own time. All it takes is a willingness to learn to identify a few new weeds and a commitment to visit your adopted trail regularly over a six month period. It's a great way to learn in depth about a section of the park and make a difference at the same time.