



What **SNOO** in the Park?

Point Reyes National Seashore Weed Watchers Invasive Species Early Detection Significant **N**ew **O**bservations and **O**ccurrences September 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.

September was a busy month for the Weed Watcher program here at Point Reyes, thanks to all the volunteers who helped Melissa, Jenn and Andrea with the surveys.

On September 3, **Kehoe Beach** was surveyed (**Subwatershed 7-1**) which is a high priority subwatershed. **Cape ivy** (*Delairea odorata*) was found near the parking area along the road. Also, two small patches of **ice plant** (*Carpobrotus edulis*) were mapped.

Andrea, Melissa and one of our new volunteers, Christopher, surveyed **Sky Trail** on September 8. Sky Trail is within **Subwatershed 5-4**, which runs parallel to Limantour Road between Bayview trailhead and Sky trailhead. This area is exposed to a lot of vehicle traffic, foot traffic, and is also near private land, therefore, this area is rampant with invasive species. Very large areas of **orange cotoneaster** (*Cotoneaster franchetii*) were mapped. English holly (*Ilex aquifolia*), English ivy (*Hedera helix*), **sweet vernal grass** (*Anthoxanthum odoratum*), **blackwood acacia** (*Acacia melanoxylon*), **jubata grass** (*Cortaderia jubata*), and **panic veldt grass** (*Ehrharta erecta*) were also mapped. Even though most of these infestations are well-established, and not considered “early detection,” it is still important that they are identified and mapped.

Comment [g1]: Are the species well-established, or are the infestations? If the infestations are big, we're only taking points right? An important distinction to make.

Jennifer Jordan (from GOGA) joined Melissa on September 10 to survey **Bolinas Ridge Trail** which crosses several subwatersheds, managed by both PORE and GOGA. These include **PORE Subwatersheds 1-40, 1-42, 1-44 and 1-46** and **GOGA Subwatersheds 18-7, 18-8, 18-9**. **Woolly distaff thistle** (*Carthamus lanatus*) was

present throughout, including one large (approx. 5,000 m²) assessment within **GOGA Subwatershed 18-8**. Several small patches of **capeweed** (*Arctotheca calendula*) were mapped, as well as two small patches of **Himalayan blackberry** (*Rubus discolor*) and one small area of **French broom** (*Genista monspessulana*). **Velvet grass** (*Holcus lanatus*) was so abundant throughout the area that it could not be mapped.

Jennifer joined Melissa as well as two Weed Watcher volunteers, Eve and Alissa, on September 13 to hike **Cross Marin Trail**. This trail crosses Subwatersheds 1-44 and 1-46. In **Subwatershed 1-44** we mapped two separate occurrences of **English ivy** (*Hedera helix*), as well as two separate occurrences of **English holly**. A small amount of **periwinkle** (*Vinca major*) was mapped trailside. Also, an extensive area **periwinkle** was mapped in the Lagunitas creek drainage on the north side of the trail. Both subwatersheds had **silverleaf cotoneaster** (*Cotoneaster pannosus*) present, though most was found in **Subwatershed 1-46** near the Sir Francis Drake overpass. **French broom** was also mapped in the Lagunitas creek drainage in **Subwatershed 1-44**.

On September 16, Melissa surveyed both **Ridge Trail** and **Stewart Trail** in **Subwatershed 3-3**. Other than **panic veldt grass** and **velvet grass**, which were abundant throughout the subwatershed, the area was clear of all the other priority weed species.

Melissa also surveyed **Drakes Beach Road** and the surrounding area within **Subwatershed 6-8**. Some **Himalayan blackberry** was mapped near the BBQ pits at the picnic area. Many, small, manageable patches of **ice plant** were also mapped.

Melissa and Eve surveyed another section of **Subwatershed 5-4** by way of **Coast Trail**. **Periwinkle** was abundant around the trailhead on both sides of the road. A large area of **Himalayan blackberry** was mapped as well as a small patch of **ice plant**. A single **jubata grass** patch was also mapped in **Subwatershed 5-3**, however, it was mapped from a distance so the GPS location may not be exact.

If anyone would like more information or maps please contact Melissa at (415) 464-5201 or Melissa_Potter@nps.gov.

Weed Watchers October/November 2008 Schedule

**Level 1 Training:
October 14, 2008 1pm at the Red Barn!**

Volunteer Hikes:

Friday, October 17: Inverness Ridge 10:00am-2:00pm

Meet at trailhead at end of Mount Vision Road.

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).

Wednesday, October 22: Abbotts Lagoon 10:00am-2:00pm

Meet at trailhead on Pierce Point Road.

This is a beautiful hike with vistas including the lagoon and the ocean in the same frame.

Directions from Point Reyes Station: Take Hwy 1 through downtown Point Reyes Station. Turn Right to stay on Hwy 1. Turn Right on Sir Francis Drake (after you cross the bridge). Continue about 6 miles on Sir Francis Drake; you will pass through the town of Inverness. You will need to turn right onto Pierce Point Rd, and then stay left at the intersection with L Ranch Road. There will be a small parking area at the trailhead for Abbotts Lagoon on the left side of Pierce Point Road.

Saturday, November 1: Tomales Point 9:00am-3:00pm

Meet at the trailhead at the end of Pierce Point Road. This will be the last Weed Watcher volunteer hike for this year, so come join us and put those early detection skills to the test. We will be hiking out to the north end of the Point Reyes Peninsula. This trail travels through the Tule Elk Reserve so bring your binoculars and camera to see these beautiful animals!! This will be a pretty long hike so wear good hiking boots and bring plenty of water and food.

Directions from Point Reyes Station: Take Hwy 1 through downtown Point Reyes Station. Turn Right to stay on Hwy 1. Turn Right on Sir Francis Drake (after you cross the bridge). Continue about 6 miles on Sir Francis Drake; you will pass through the town of Inverness. You will need to turn right onto Pierce Point Road, and then stay left at the intersection with L Ranch Road. Continue on Pierce Point Road until it comes to a dead end. There is parking here and the trailhead is nearby.

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.