



What *SNOO* in the Park?

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

June has been a busy month for the Weed Watcher program here at Point Reyes! We have updated our Weed Watcher Priority Plant List, and are very pleased that two fabulous new interns have joined us, Natchi Conde-Farley and Claire Dedrick.

We started out the month with a hike on June 2nd down **Baldy Trail** in **Subwatersheds 3-7 and 3-8**. We had lunch with the trails crew, who were mowing the same route we took, and mapped some **Harding grass** (*Phalaris aquatica*), **eucalyptus** (*Eucalyptus globulus*), **sour clover** (*Melilotus indica*), **capeweed** (*Arctotheca calendula*), **tocalote** (*Centaurea melitensis*), and **foxglove** (*Digitalis purpurea*).

On June 4th, Weed Watchers hiked up Mt. Wittenburg in **Subwatersheds 4-1 and 4-2**. Along the way, we found some **foxglove**, which we removed, along with some **Harding grass**, before stopping for a picnic in a meadow on the top of the mountain.

When Weed Watchers arrived at the parking lot of the lighthouse in **Subwatershed 6-1** for a survey on June 5th, they were greeted by a chorus of seal calls! As usual for the morning, the area was enshrouded by fog, but it lifted before lunch, and during that time, we found and mapped some **panic veldt grass** (*Ehrharta erecta*).

Hiking on June 9th along the Estero trail in **Subwatersheds 5-5, 5-6 and 5-7**, Weed Watchers found several small patches each of **ox-eye daisy** (*Leucanthemum vulgare*) and **Harding grass**, along with a grove of **eucalyptus**.

The next day, June 10th, Weed Watchers found **Harding grass**, **foxglove**, and **ox-eye daisy**, with the sound of crashing waves in the background along the **Coast Trail** and **Laguna Trail** in **Subwatershed 5-4**.

We knew that the **Bayview trail** in **Subwatershed 5-4** would be full of weeds, because so many of them were mapped by Weed Watchers last year, but we still found more! On a survey on June 17th, we mapped new patches of **English ivy** (*Hedera helix*), **English holly** (*Ilex aquifolium*), and **ox-eye daisy**.

The next day, Weed Watchers went the other direction from the Sky Trail, past the Sky Camp and around the **Z Ranch Trail**, through **Subwatersheds 5-4, 5-2 and 4-4**. There, they found more **English ivy**, **English holly**, and **ox-eye daisy**, as well as a few individual **foxglove** plants.

Five Weed Watchers came out for a hike starting at the **Estero Trailhead**, and ending at the beach at the end of the **Sunset Trail**, in **Subwatersheds 5-8, 5-10, 5-11, and 5-12**. The Estero was gorgeous that day, showing up in a huge array of shades of blue. Unfortunately, the **ox-eye daisy** was also putting up a spectacular display, and we mapped many patches of it, along with **capeweed**, **Scotch broom** (*Cytissus scoparius*), **pennyroyal** (*Mentha pulegium*), and a small patch of **iceplant** (*Carpobrotus edulis*).

June 23rd was hot and sunny, perfect for a walk in the woods along the **Meadow Trail**, **Sky Trail**, and **Old Pine Trail** in **Subwatersheds 4-1, 5-2, 5-1, and 3-7**. On the Meadow trail, Weed Watchers found and mapped some **English holly**.

Weed Watchers surveyed some of the same subwatersheds (**Subwatersheds 3-7 and 4-1**) the next day, on a hike down the **Bear Valley Trail** to Arch Rock. The treacherous trail down to see the arch provided an idyllic picnic location. We found several Priority plants including **Harding grass**, **ox-eye daisy**, and **periwinkle** (*Vinca major*).

June 25th was another beautiful day in sunny California, and weedwatchers spent the morning on a hike to McLure's Beach in **Subwatershed 7-3**. Before the trail, we found some **Monterey cypress** (*Cupressus macrocarpa*), **Eucalyptus** (*Eucalyptus globosus*), and a tiny bit of **iceplant** in the parking lot, but iceplant was all along the trail and the bluffs by the time we reached the water.

On a survey of **Subwatershed 2-9**, on June 26th, Weed Watchers had many surprises. Walking along a **Waterside Trail**, we found (but did not disturb) a seal! We also found **Dallis Grass** (*Paspalum dilatatum*), a few individual **Himalayan blackberries** (*Rubus discolor*), several patches of **iceplant**, and some **Harding grass**.

Point Reyes Weed Watchers, including Don, a new volunteer, teamed up with the California Native Plant Society for a hike in idyllic weather at **Bull Point (Subwatershed 6-12)** on June 27th. It was sunny and warm with a cool breeze and we found many exciting native plants along with some **hyssop loostrife** (*Lythrum hyssopifolia*).

The last hike of the month was on June 30th along the **Limantour spit** in **Subwatersheds 5-5 and 5-9**. Weed Watchers found many small patches of **iceplant** and a larger patch of **Harding Grass**. Later that evening, on a hike along the **Morgan** and **Kule Loklo Trails** in **Subwatershed 4-1**, part of the Weed Watchers training, new Weed Watchers found another previously unmapped patch of **Harding grass**.

June Stats:

51.8 Miles Surveyed, 46 Volunteer Hours

If anyone would like more information please contact Natalie at 464-5201 or Natalie_Howe@nps.gov.

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Weed Watchers July 2009 Schedule

Monday, July 6th: Weed Watchers Training, 6pm

Administration building conference room at Bear Valley.

Directions: From Bear Valley Rd, follow signs to NPS Headquarters area. Turn into the first parking lot on the right, with a sign for “park administration”. The administration building is at the end of the parking lot, and the conference room is down the first set of stairs.

Wednesday, July 7th: Marshall Beach, 10:00am-2:00pm

Newly trained and veteran weed watchers can join us for a hike ending up with a picnic on the beach overlooking Tomales bay.

Directions from Point Reyes Station: Head south on CA 1 through town, and take a right onto Sir Francis Drake Blvd. Follow Sir Francis Drake north for 6.4 miles through Inverness Park and Inverness. Bear right onto Pierce Point Rd and after 1.3 miles, the road forks again. Take the right onto Marshall Beach Road (L Ranch Road) and you will see signs for the trailhead after about 2.6 miles.

Saturday, July 18th: Volunteer Training, 10-2:00,

Administration building conference room at Bear Valley.

Directions: From Bear Valley Rd, follow signs to NPS Headquarters area. Turn into the first parking lot on the right, with a sign for “park administration”. The administration building is at the end of the parking lot, and the conference room is down the first set of stairs.

Friday, July 24th: Laguna Trail, 10:00-2:00

Meet at the Laguna trailhead on the road to the Clem Miller Environmental Education Center.

Directions from Point Reyes Station: Head south through town on CA1, and turn right at Sir Francis Drake Blvd. Take the first left onto Bear Valley Rd., then the first right onto Limantour Rd. Follow Limantour for about 6 miles, and turn left at the signs for Clem Miller Environmental Education Center and hostel. The Laguna Trailhead is on the left.

Thursday, July 30th: Bucklin Trail, 10:00-2:00

Meet at the Muddy Hollow Road trailhead, on the right down Limantour Rd.

Directions from Point Reyes Station: Head south through town on CA1, and turn right at Sir Francis Drake Blvd. Take the first left onto Bear Valley Rd., then the first right onto Limantour Rd. Follow Limantour for about 6 miles, and turn right onto the dirt road with signs for Muddy Hollow Trailhead.

Make sure to bring: Lunch, plenty of water, Weed Watching supplies: binoculars, pen/pencils, 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.