

Fall 2005

The mission of the
Catalina Island Conservancy
is to be a responsible steward
of its lands through a balance
of conservation, education
and recreation.



R. Pelouze

Malva rosa

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Conservancy Times

Have You Seen Them?

by Bob Rhein



Beach morning glory (*Calystegia soldanella*)

Photo by Paul Rebmann | www.wildflphoto.com

Historical records are all that's left for many vanished native species.

They once flourished on Catalina Island – but most exist today only in legend. Plants and animals have vanished from the landscape due to myriad pressures – most involving humans.

Pushy, non-native plants that grow faster than natives can compete for sunlight, water and nutrients in the soil and crowd natives out. One example is Flax leaf broom *Genista linisolia*, the bright yellow bushy plant that competes with endemic St. Catherine's lace, and other native plants all along Old Stage Coach Road and in other areas of the Island. Another is Fennel, *Foeniculum vulgare*, a licorice-scented invasive that is native to

the Mediterranean region. It's found along the roadsides on the channel side of the Island's West End. Fennel forms huge infestations, thereby lowering the habitat value for wildlife such as fox and birds of prey. In the fall, it is extremely flammable. Horehound *Marrubium vulgare*, native to Europe, likes to grow along trails and roadsides.

Grazing, browsing and trampling can be the death knell for native plants with no natural defenses against non-native animals introduced by humans. Good news is that recent rains, and the relief of grazing pressures in recent years, have coaxed *Dissanthelium californicum* (or simply, Catalina grass) back into bloom.

Denise Knapp, the Conservancy's Plant Ecologist, says there may be as many as

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LAST FREE
ISSUE FOR
NON-MEMBERS!
Become a member, p. 17



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From the President

Biodiversity: A Vision for the Future

This July I had the honor of being invited to present at the Annual Meeting of the Society of Conservation Biology. My topic was a survey we did recently to understand the concerns and perspectives of Island residents and visitors. One of the meeting speakers was Dr. Daniel Janzen, a preeminent evolution-ary ecologist and conservation-ist whose ideas have been shaped as he worked in the tropical forests of Costa Rica over the past 40 years.

When we talk about Catalina's degraded lands and some of our conservation efforts, I am often asked by friends of Catalina Island, "What is the Conservancy trying to restore the Island *to*?" Janzen believes that the goal of any restoration effort should be "to ensure that most of the biodiversity we have today will be here a thousand years from now." He is not talking about a snapshot of the past, but a *vision for the future*.

Janzen asked his audience of conservationists to reflect on future challenges to biodiversity. He noted that those challenges would be much bigger than acquiring land or saving species



manage wild lands in perpetuity

from poachers. Rather, he said, the key challenge of land managers will be to develop both the resources *and* community support to protect and

The Conservancy has stewarded Catalina's wild lands for the past 33 years. We work to restore lost biodiversity and to prevent future losses. In this issue, you will read about some of our successes. As Janzen suggested, we must diligently work to broaden Catalina Island's family of friends and supporters – not only for the sake of our special Island, but also as a model for other magnificent places of refuge for biodiversity on our Earth.

Kismet on Catalina

Fate brings Seaver Institute to the aid of the Island's oak woodlands.



Victoria Seaver Dean

"It was kismet!"

That's how Victoria Seaver Dean describes the harmonious chain of events that matched her with the Conservancy's Oak Woodland Ecosystem Restoration Project – a four-year endeavor to learn more about the Island's oak woodland community.

Victoria is the President of the Seaver Institute, a Los Angeles-based philanthropic organization specializing in providing seed money for innovative, high-risk projects across a number of disciplines that have the potential to significantly alter the direction of their fields.

Victoria, a long-time member of the Catalina Island Conservancy, and the Native Plant Society, said she was very interested in landscapes.

"I read how the oak woodlands of California were impacted by encroaching civilization and invasive plants. The oaks were having problems reproducing," she said.

Coincidentally, through Conservancy literature, she learned that the oak woodlands on Catalina were mysteriously dying off.

"At the time, I thought it would be a good match," Victoria recalled. "After all, it's the oaks on the hillsides that are quintessential California to me."

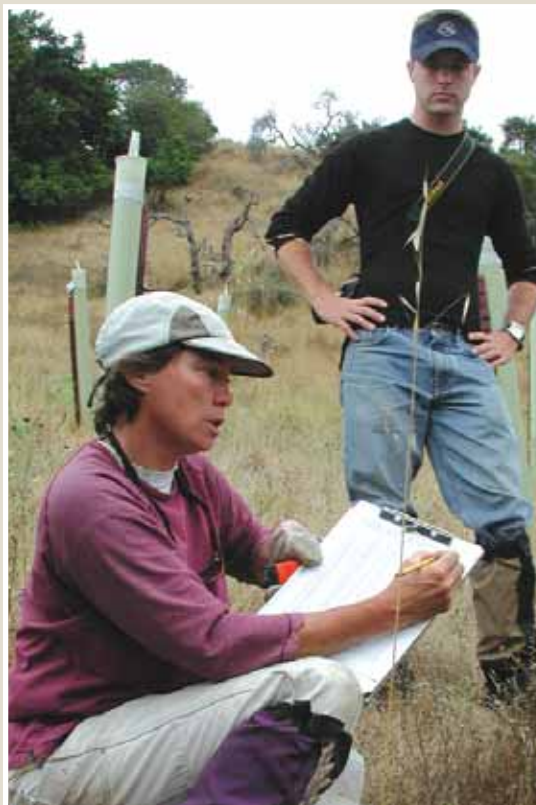
Just then, the Conservancy Development Department called, offering a Jeep® Eco-Tour of the Island, and a chance to help out with the oak restoration project.

"It was kismet!" Victoria exclaimed.

Since July 2003, the Conservancy has received \$235,000 from the Seaver Institute to fund the first two years of the Island's Oak Woodland Ecosystem Restoration Program. The Institute has just funded the project for a third year.


Seaver funding has allowed Conservancy ecologists Denise Knapp and Dr. Lisa Stratton to collaborate with a number of universities including the Desert Research Institute, Chapman College, Cal State Fullerton, UCI, and USC. Ancillary projects include soil and weather monitoring, study of growth rings, fire history, and the importance of fog to oaks.

Dr. Lisa Stratton in the field with oak seedlings



"There's a lot more that is being investigated than could ever have been imagined," Victoria said. "More data means better conclusions," she added. "And, I am very impressed with the volunteers who seem to make it all happen."

Victoria's first introduction to Catalina came as a little girl, when her parents, Richard and Sallie, members of the Newport Harbor Yacht Club, would take her to the Island during the summer.

"I'd have to read six books every summer," she said. "I would put it off until our last trip to the Island for the summer. I would sit for a week in Moonstone Cove, lie in the sun, swim and read. It was a magical time." 

CONSERVATION NEWS

AROUND THE WORLD

Borneo Lowland Forests Face Extinction

The lowland tropical rain forests in Indonesian Borneo could disappear in five years due to rampant logging and forest fires, endangering the survival of many exotic species, according to an international conservation group.

The world's third-largest island has lost forests equivalent to an area one-third the size of Switzerland every year, or at a rate of 1.3 million hectares. It is home to more than 210 mammal species, including 44 found only in Borneo.

In its report, "Treasure Island At Risk," the World Wildlife Fund (WWF) said the loss of forest would drastically affect the island's wildlife, endangering ecological wonders like the pygmy elephant and orangutan, whose long-term survival is already in doubt.

Source: Reuters Excerpt



Tropical rainforest

CATALINA FACT

Catalina Island is indeed a microcosm of ecology in the Pacific that can either be safeguarded or squandered. The Catalina Island Conservancy depends on its many volunteers to stand shoulder to shoulder to control invasive weeds, and to protect the Island's native and endemic plants and animals. Good stewardship is everyone's concern to keep our "treasured island" safe from risk.

International Shipping Line Fined for Dumping Waste Oil

One of the world's largest shipping lines, Evergreen International, pleaded guilty in Los Angeles earlier this year to secretly dumping waste oil from its massive container ships, and agreed to pay \$25 million, which United States' officials called "the largest fine ever in a federal case involving deliberate pollution from ships." Under U.S. and international law, ships cannot dump used oil at sea. Instead, they must send it through a device that separates oil from the water that may then be dumped at sea. However, investigators found that at least seven Evergreen ships bypassed the separator device and sent waste oil into the sea.

Source: Capitol Reports Environmental News Link Excerpt



CATALINA FACT

From the late 1940s to the early 1970s, millions of pounds of DDTs and PCBs were discharged from the Montrose Chemical Company in Torrance, among others, in wastewater dumped off the coast of Los Angeles. DDT has since been outlawed, and the polluters ordered by California state and Federal agencies to pay \$140.2 million in fines, plus interest. Catalina Island was hard-hit by the pollutants which fouled fisheries and impaired the ability to reproduce in American bald eagles, peregrine falcons, and other birds native to Catalina that depend on food from the sea. Through hands-on efforts of staff of the Institute for Wildlife Studies (IWS), nearly 100 bald eagle chicks have been reintroduced to Catalina. More than 20 have remained on the Island, including five nesting pairs. The work of IWS on Catalina has, since 2000, been funded by the Montrose settlement. However, this summer, trustees for the settlement money elected to redirect funds to restoration efforts in the Northern Channel Islands and islands off the coast of Mexico, leaving the fate of Catalina's bald eagles uncertain. For additional information and to weigh in on the issue, visit www.catalina-conservancy.org. Every voice counts; please take a few minutes to make yours heard.

Awarding bison management to Native American tribes hits outsourcing nerve

An 18-month contract that handed over responsibility for hundreds of Montana bison to nearby tribes is anything but a return to tradition, says wildlife professionals who oppose it.

Critics of the controversial deal between the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribal Council,

based in Pablo, Montana, as part of the current push to privatize federal land and jobs, jeopardizing wildlife by replacing scientists and experts with private contractors.

The Interior Department, which oversees the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, counters that the tribes will run the refuge well. "Indians at their very core are conservationists," says Paul Hoffman, deputy assistant secretary for fish, wildlife and parks in the Interior Department.

The 6,500-member Salish and Kootenai tribes will now direct the roundup, along with bird banding, visitor services, fire suppression and fence mending. The deal gives the tribes half the refuges nearly \$1-million budget and 10 staff positions.

Source: Ashley Powers, *Los Angeles Times* Excerpt



Catalina Island bison



CATALINA FACT

In December, 2004, 98 of Catalina's 250-head of bison were relocated to the plains of South Dakota, a portion of their original home range. The animals are in the care of the Lakota Tribe on the Rosebud Reservation. Bison are not native to the Island. Fourteen were brought to Catalina during the 1920s to appear in a motion picture. Several years ago, the Conservancy commissioned a study that determined for both the health of the bison and the native plant communities, the herd on the Island should be maintained at approximately 150 animals.

Through a unique partnership with the Morongo Band of Mission Indians of Banning, California; the Tongva Tribe, original inhabitants of Catalina; and the Lakota Tribe, the Catalina Conservancy was able to repatriate the bison.

Climbers Trash Mt. Everest – Cleanup Continues

About 100 Chinese volunteers have set out to collect some of the estimated 600 tons of abandoned tents, oxygen tanks, boxes, cans and plastic wrappers strewn



Mt. Everest

across the slopes of Mount Everest. The 29,035-foot peak lies on the border between China and Nepal.

China began the cleanups last year, when 24 volunteers removed eight tons of garbage from the slopes at between 16,800 feet and 21,300 feet. Annual cleanups are planned through 2008, when Beijing will host the Summer Olympic Games.

The cleanup team includes members of the Tibetan Mountaineering Association as well as environmentalists.

Overcrowded routes and accumulations of garbage and human waste have led to some calls for the mountain to be temporarily closed to climbers, although neither China nor Nepal has taken action to do so.

Source: Associated Press Excerpt

Middle Ranch dump site unearthed



CATALINA FACT

In the past, it was a common practice in rural areas of the United States, including Catalina Island, to bury old vehicles, equipment, fencing, and household wastes among other things. This practice is now illegal. Working in conjunction with the Los Angeles County Fire Department's Hazardous Waste Division, the Conservancy identified nine sites in Middle Ranch where potentially hazardous wastes were buried. Starting in the fall of 2001, members of the Conservancy's Facilities Department have sorted and shipped 37 semi-truck loads, about 625,000 pounds of metal, to a recycling center on the mainland. The remaining sorted materials, totaling approximately 371,560 pounds, were also shipped to the proper facilities on the mainland, or to the local landfill in Avalon.



continued on page 6

CONSERVATION NEWS (continued from page 5)

FROM THE CONSERVANCY

Splendor in the Grass

On the heels of the rediscovery of the once extinct ivory-billed woodpecker in eastern Arkansas, and the Mount Diablo buckwheat near San Francisco earlier this year, a species of grass – considered extinct for almost a century – was rediscovered on Catalina Island by Assistant Plant Ecologist Jenny McCune of the Catalina Island Conservancy.

The grass, California dissanthelium (*Dissanthelium californicum*), was first discovered on Catalina in 1847 – well before the Civil War – and subsequently found on only two other islands: San Clemente, off the coast of Southern California, and Guadalupe, off the coast of Baja California. The last time the grass was seen at any location was in 1912.

McCune was surveying and sampling plant communities in a burn area more than 100 acres wide near Catalina's Airport-in-the-Sky when she spotted the "different-looking," inconspicuous short grass growing underneath shrubbery on a steep, highly inaccessible hillside.

"There are many species of grass on the Island," McCune said. "I've only been here a year, but when I saw it, I realized that this particular grass was very different from what I had seen before."



Dissanthelium californicum

Island," she added. "It's nice to think there is still hope for plants on Catalina thought to be extinct. It will be interesting to see if the *Dissanthelium* will reemerge as well on San Clemente and Guadalupe islands."

The only other types of *Dissanthelium* found in the world are at the 13,000- to 16,000-foot levels in the central Andes Mountains in South America or on high volcanoes in Central Mexico.

"This is such good news for rare plants on the

Ear Tumors Plague Catalina Island Fox

A rare ear tumor has shown up in a number of Catalina Island foxes, a species that is already on the federal endangered list, leaving more questions than answers with those monitoring their progress.

Winston Vickers, veterinarian with the Institute for Wildlife Studies, says the tumor, ceruminous gland adenocarcinoma, can kill a fox within six months to a year after the fox contracts the cancer. "It is a very aggressive tumor, and ultimately fatal," he added.

"We have not discovered this cancer in foxes on any of the other Channel Islands," Vickers said. "That suggests some unique set of factors on Catalina that could include genetics, the environment, or other influences." Vickers said the ear tumor is primarily seen in older foxes over five to six years of age. "Does this represent an old-age problem that doesn't affect total population numbers significantly, or is this a slowing factor in the population recovery? We suspect that it may have some effect



Jenny McCune (left) shows fellow botanists where she first rediscovered the *Dissanthelium*.

on the rate of recovery of the population," Vickers said. Additional research into potential causes of the tumor, and its effects on the population, are ongoing. Pathologist Dr. Linda Munson and



Catalina Island fox

epidemiologist Dr. Deanna Fritcher of the University of California, Davis (whose Ph.D. research was conducted on the Catalina Island fox) are collaborating with the Institute for Wildlife Studies and the Catalina Island Conservancy in this research effort which may ultimately determine the fate of foxes on Catalina Island.



IWS Veterinarian Winston Vickers examines a Catalina Island fox for ear tumors.

Your Ticket to the Wild... JEEP® ECO-TOUR

Discover the island paradise of Santa Catalina in an open-air vehicle. Your **Catalina Island Conservancy Naturalist Guide** will escort you through rugged landscapes and to breathtaking coves along the **route you choose**. Experience Southern California as few ever will and learn why scientists and naturalists alike consider Santa Catalina to be an ecological treasure.



Tours for up to six people:

Half-Day Chartered Tour (four hours) – *Explore!* \$495

- Includes beverages and light snacks.

Full-Day Chartered Tour (seven hours) – *Go Wild!* \$795

- Beverages and lunch are provided.

To schedule a tour, call: 310.510.2595, ext. 114 or visit our office Catalina Island Conservancy, 125 Claressa, Avalon.

You can become a member today and get discounts on Jeep® Eco-Tours and free admission all year long to the Wrigley Memorial and Botanical Garden for you and your family! See page 17 for details.

Relax, Renew... Wrigley Memorial and Botanical Garden



Stroll through the Garden's lush **37 acres** and magnificent memorial, built in 1933, with its **spectacular view of Avalon Bay**. Drink in sweet scents and enjoy the colorful blooms of myriad plants, including **island natives** and some that grow only on Catalina – including the rare Catalina mahogany.

Hours: 8 a.m.-5 p.m., 7 days a week, year-round

Admission

- *Individual* – Adult, \$5, Children under 12 free
- *Group* – Call to schedule tours: 310. 510-0954
- *Adventurer Members* – Free

The Garden is located 1 ¾ miles from the shore on Avalon Canyon Road.

Operation: “Mimic Nature”

by Bob Rhein



Volunteer Seed Seekers give Mother Nature a helping hand.

“Mimic nature,” Mike Herrera tells his fledgling Seed Seekers.

As manager of the James H. Ackerman Native Plant Nursery, Mike knows that each step in collection to planting of native seeds is crucial to the conservation of Catalina Island.

When invasive plants – weeds, actually – are identified and removed, it’s up to Mike’s volunteers to give Mother Nature a helping hand to re-vegetate the land.

“We’re seeking to mimic nature, but in a way that speeds up the process,” he says. “Seed collection is the front end of that process.”

The Seed Seekers are the power behind the process. This dedicated cadre of volunteers helps guide a native seed’s journey from its mother plant to a new

home in the Catalina soil where the seedling will restore the land damaged most notably by invasive plants or overgrazing.

“Look for quality seeds from healthy plants,” Mike advises his volunteers. “Is the fruit fully developed, and not devoured by insects? And, is the seed ready to be collected?”

Mike tells the volunteers to check their plants several times before collecting. “Don’t pick green seed,” he warns. “Most species can’t ‘ripen’ once they are picked. Don’t pick a seed from the ground. It may be infested with pests, it may be diseased, or it may have begun decaying.”

“They may not look like much, but seeds are living things,” Mike reminds collectors. His advice is to collect a small amount of seeds from many individual plants – only 10 percent or less per plant. Leaving at least 90 percent of the seeds on the plant will ensure good genetic diversity at the collection site.

Once a seed is collected, it’s important to keep it dry and free of bacteria, pathogens and viruses. At the nursery, seeds are dried in the open air, or in the special seed-drying Quonset hut from two to six months, depending on the species.

Next comes cleaning the seed, meaning separating the pure seed from the unnecessary pulp or fruit parts (also called chaff). For example, a berry has pulp. Inside is the pit, or seed. Seeds are cleaned by hand; by using a “brush deawner,” a machine that scrubs the seed from the fruit; or by a blower that extracts the chaff from the heavier seeds.

Once the seed is cleaned, volunteers weigh their inventory to create seed mixes for future use. “In nature, you don’t find plant monocultures,” he said. “You always have a mix of species in plant communities.”

Taking into consideration the needs of local animals is another way of mimicking nature, Mike says. “If I know that Island foxes need a certain amount of area for cover, I can plant a lemonade berry patch equal to or greater than that size.”



Collection jars, collection bags, and labels are standard supplies for Seed Seekers



Seed handlers Robert Husted and Jeanie Shelton process collected lemonade berry seed.




A few of the dedicated Seed Seeker Club members: Back row, left to right: Melody Ross (with baby Jalina in backpack), Jani Hall, Deanna Stone. Front row: Doug Shelton, Jeanie Shelton, and Mary McKernan

To get the seeds back out onto the soil, they can be broadcast, or spread across large areas, mimicking the wide diversity of plants found in nature.

When specific shrubbery is needed, individual seeds are sown in flats, germinated, and grown to be repotted in larger containers as the plant matures into a shrub.

“When you put in a shrub, you have instant shade, roots to interact with the soil,” Mike said. “It’s older, less susceptible and will have a good chance to rebound after being stepped on or browsed.”

“When you grow things in a nursery, you know what you are getting,” Mike said. “You know when you put it out there it will have a very good chance of success.” 

The Catalina Island Conservancy could not accomplish its mission without the many volunteers who generously give of their time and talents. To help support Conservancy volunteer programs, or to become a volunteer yourself, please call (310) 510-2595 x109.

Become a Seed Seeker

Seed Seekers” is a group of dedicated stewards that seek out, collect, and process native seed on Catalina Island for use at the James H. Ackerman Native Plant Nursery. The native seed is then grown for restoration projects, for seeding projects, or stored for later use.

Participating Seed Seekers commit a minimum of 50 hours over one year and are able to attend workshops on topics related to seeds. Club members can also plan and organize social events such as potlucks, field trips, and group hikes.

Three different groups to fit your interests, skills, and abilities:

Seed Scouts

You’ll be trained to identify selected native species and electronically document your locations using GPS technology. This group is ideal for club members who like to hike or walk over a variety of terrains and landscapes.

Seed Gatherers

For those who prefer to specialize in a single area or species, you’ll be trained to track plants over time, notice when they’re ready to harvest, and how to collect the seed in an ecologically appropriate way.

Seed Handler

Once collected, the seeds are processed in a way that mimics Nature and prepares them for sowing. You’ll be trained in different cleaning techniques as you work with them in comfort at the James H. Ackerman Native Plant Nursery. This group is ideal for those wishing to learn more about the diversity and biology of our native seeds.



Have a green thumb? Like to volunteer?

Learn to grow healthy native plants to keep Catalina wild.

Join the new “Horticultural Hands” club at the James H. Ackerman Native Plant Nursery.

Activities: Growing from Seeds & Cuttings, Transplanting, Pruning, Nutrition, Integrated Pest Control Watering, Composting, Maintaining the Nursery

For more information, call (310) 510-2904.

Have You Seen Them?

(continued from page 1)

34 plants that have disappeared from Catalina in the last 40 years. Here are just a few of the plants that disappeared mostly due to human-use-related pressures and have eluded discovery through most of recent times (to see more of these, visit catalinaconservancy.org):

Beach morning glory (*Calystegia soldanella*)

Last seen early in the 20th century, beach morning glory is a low-growing perennial with inviting light pink flowers found on sandy seashores. It now appears to have vanished from the Island's beaches.

Pictured on page 1.

Brown dogwood (*Cornus glabrata*)

Last seen in the 1920s, brown dogwood (pictured below) is a gray-green shrub to 18 feet tall with white to bluish flowers, found in permanent water of canyon bottoms.



Brown dogwoods (*Cornus glabrata*)

Photo by Charles E. Jones

Greene's dudleya (*Dudleya greenei*)

Last seen around 1920 (Avalon, Pebbly Beach), and in the 1960s (Little Harbor area). Greene's dudleya is a low, greyish succulent.

Island boxthorn (*Lycium brevipes* var. *hassei*)

Last seen in 1908, there was once a large growth of this species in Avalon 100 feet in circumference and 25 high with small bright green leaves.

Catalina Island monkeyflower (*Mimulus traskiae*)

Last seen around 1900, this small herb has white flowers stained with a wine color, and was found under the shade of a chamise shrub. It is presumed extinct.

Lyon's pentachaeta (*Pentachaeta lyonii*)

Last seen in 1930 in the Isthmus/Little Harbor area, this federally endangered plant is a small member of the sunflower family, with bright yellow flowers and narrow green leaves.

Blue oak (*Quercus douglasii*)

Only three specimens of this species have ever been collected on Catalina, from an unknown location on the Island. This large tree loses its leaves in the winter and has green-blue leaves with wavy edges.

Valley oak (*Quercus lobata*)

Only one valley oak tree has ever been recorded on the Island, in the Renton Mine area, but it is no longer found there.

And then there are the animals. Frank Starkey, Assistant Director of the Conservancy's Conservation Department, keeps a "rogues file" on the creatures that have been very successful eluding the eye of scientists.

Because of its diminutive size, the endemic Catalina shrew, or ornate shrew is rarely seen, unless you trap for it exclusively.

The mountain king snake (below) was



Mountain king snake




Desert night lizard (*Cornus glabrata*)

observed in 1910, but keeps a low profile. Santa Catalina Island Company employee Scott Panzer took a picture of one in 1999, but it was probably someone's escaped pet, Frank says.

Other rare reptiles include the two-striped garter snake, the Western ring-necked snake, and the Western skink. There was only one sighting of a desert night lizard (above) in 1952 at the Wrigley Botanical Garden, known for its extensive cacti collection. Frank thinks one of the cacti had a "hitchhiker."

Wild turkeys and black buck antelopes brought to the Island decades ago for hunting purposes are sometimes spotted up near the airport – but rarely. There was the one sighting of a pink flamingo that probably escaped from the old Marineland of the Pacific on the Palos Verdes Peninsula back in the 1960s.

So... have you seen them? Though elusive, like Catalina grass (*Dissanthelium californicum*), just rediscovered this year, some of these plants and animals may be poised to make a comeback.

You might want to carry a camera. 

To support the conservation and restoration of Catalina's native plants and animals, use the convenient envelope included in this issue, or call Chuck Wright at (562) 437-8555 x225.

To become a volunteer, call Scott Dennis at (310) 510-2595 x102.

SEPTEMBER

Saturday, September 3

The HIKE: Following the Island's Cultural Heritage
8:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m. Class III, moderate.

The Catalina Island Conservancy's Education Department would like you to come with us as we explore the human history of Santa Catalina Island. We will begin the hike at Black Jack Campground and discover the rich mining history of the Island. Later, as we hike into Cottonwood Canyon, we will look for clues left by the first island inhabitants. This hike will give us opportunities to understand the different people who have called this island their home. Please join us as we explore the history of Santa Catalina Island. Reservation must be made by August 27th. Space is a limiting factor on islands and on all HIKES so; please call the Education Office to reserve your spot at (310) 510-0954.

Wednesday, September 14

Evening Nature Program – Predators in the Sky, 8:00 p.m.

Come join the Education Department as we fly high in the sky in the last Island Predators series. These predators in the sky seem to soar above us as we explore this island. So, come learn all about the life history of eagles, hawks, and falcons that soar these island skies. Please call (310) 510-0954.

Monday – Friday, September 26 – 30

Volunteer Vacations 2005

Help Restore Catalina! Come for a weeklong stay at our Laura Stein Volunteer Camp. Take part in a variety of restoration projects aimed at maintaining a healthy ecological balance on Catalina Island. Cap off each day with a wonderful full-course meal prepared by Mary Hirst, our volunteer chef. Call: (310) 510-2595 x109.

OCTOBER

Saturday, October 1

The HIKE: Extreme Island Hiking, 8:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.
Class V, extremely strenuous.

The Catalina Island Conservancy's Education Department encourages you to join us on this challenging hike. This hike will at times be steep, on uneven ground, and off trail. So, come with your sense of adventure as we scramble our way to an infrequently experienced destination. We look forward to sharing this adventure with you. Reservation must be made by September 24th. Space is a limiting factor on islands and on all HIKES so; please call the Education Office to reserve your spot at (310) 510-0954.

Wednesday, October 12

Evening Nature Program – Island Mountain Biking, 7:00 p.m.

Join the Education Department as we learn all about bicycling on the Island in the Island Recreation series. Come learn about mountain biking opportunities on Catalina Island and one of our partners, the International Mountain Bicycling Association. Call the Education Office for more information at (310) 510-0954.

NOVEMBER

Wednesday, November 9

The HIKE: TransCatalina Trail, 8:00 a.m. – 2:30 p.m.
Class III, moderate.

The Catalina Island Conservancy plans to build a trail from one end of the Island to the other. Come hike a proposed section of this trail with the Catalina Island Conservancy's Education Department. Craig Bailes, Trails Project Coordinator, will explain the the various stages of this project as we hike. Craig will also teach us how trails are designed and built. Join us as we learn more about new hiking opportunities on Santa Catalina Island. Reservation must be made by October 29th. Space is a limiting factor on islands and on all HIKES so; please call the Education Office to reserve your spot at (310) 510-0954.

Wednesday, November 9

Evening Nature Program – TransCatalina Trail, 7:00 p.m.

Join Craig Bailes, Trails Project Coordinator, as we learn about hiking opportunities on the Island in the Island Recreation series. In the future, hikers will be able to hike from the Hermit Gulch Campground in Avalon to the West End's Starlight Beach via the TransCatalina Trail. Come learn all about this trail project and how you can be a part of its development. Please call (310) 510-0954.

DECEMBER

Saturday, December 3

The HIKE: Learning Basic Birding Techniques
8:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m. Class I-II, easy to moderate.

Come join the Catalina Island Conservancy's Education Department as we look for birds and teach basic birding techniques. You will learn bird identification techniques, and what tools you need for bird watching. This hike will be at a leisurely pace so we can take our time identifying birds. We encourage you to please bring your own pair of binoculars and guide books for this hike. Reservations must be made by November 26th. Space is a limiting factor on islands and on all HIKES so; please call the Education Office to reserve your spot at (310) 510-0954.

Volunteer Program:

Get Down and Dirty at the Native Plant Nursery!

Join us any Thursday or Saturday for a drive through Middle Canyon and on to the James H. Ackerman Native Plant Nursery. Be a part of restoring Catalina's natural habitat by helping to plant, maintain and nurture a variety of native plant species. Transportation is available, leaving the Conservancy House at 8:00 a.m. and returning at noon. Call (310) 510-2595 x110.

Thursdays and Saturdays

September 1 and 3
September 8 and 10
September 15 and 17

September 22 and 24
September 29

October 1
October 6 and 8
October 13 and 15

October 19 and 20
October 27 and 29

November 3 and 5
November 10 and 12
November 17 and 19

November 17 and 19
November 24 and 26

December 1 and 3
December 8 and 10
December 15 and 17

December 22 and 24
December 29 and 31

“K.I.N.” Fills a Need for After-School Activities

Educator Rich Zanelli puts together a program available for all Avalon School kids.

Student learning doesn't stop after the final bell rings. Now a program for kids that provides them with a fresh new way to look at their world outside the confines of the conventional classroom has arrived in Avalon.

A new Conservancy-sponsored club called “K.I.N.” (Kids in Nature) will give all school-aged children in Avalon a chance to dabble in controlled science chaos, find beauty in a stack of rocks, practice their nature photography, go for a hike, and maintain a compost pile. The program runs from the first week in October, 2005 through the first week in June, 2006. The payoff for the stalwart students who stay with the program throughout the 2005-2006 school year is an extended weekend at Emerald Bay just before the school year ends.

K.I.N. is the brainchild of Rich Zanelli, the Conservancy's School Programs Specialist. “Ever since I arrived in Avalon two-and-a-half years ago, I always thought there should be a regularly scheduled program of after-school activities,” Rich said. “I received my inspiration from the Shakespeare quote: ‘One touch of nature makes the whole world kin.’ If Shakespeare used the stage to uplift and entertain, I'm using Catalina, one of the great stages of Nature, to help make a difference within the ranks of Avalon school kids.”

The Kids In Nature after-school program is actually a bundle of six themed activities that span science experiments and garden art to soil studies and nature photography.

Science Lunacy

Rich employs his famous alter ego, Dr. Lou Na'Zee, to kick-off the first K.I.N. educational component, “After-School

“One touch of nature makes the whole world kin.”

William Shakespeare
Troilus and Cressida, Act III



The Eagle Has Landed – Rich Zanelli, as his eagle makes a perfect two-point landing on the head of Conner Salk, 3, of Corte Madera, California, while sister Bin Lei, 6, looks on.

Science Lunacy with Mr. Z.” As the fright-wigged crazy professor, Rich will regale his students with wacky science experiments for safe, barely sane, fun.

“Science Lunacy” runs Wednesdays starting October 5 through October 26, 2005, with a second session beginning April 5 through April 24, 2006.

“Ephemeral Art Garden”

“Ephemeral Art Garden” will be a flexible-timed activity for people of all ages, where participants find objects from nature and create temporary art. This can include making small pieces of “art” out of twigs, and rocks. “Once they’ve made their artwork, they can come any time and add to it or create something

new,” Rich said. The ongoing “Ephemeral Art Garden” begins in October.

Riparian Studies

Riparian Studies allow students one to two hours of after school investigation into soil sampling, water testing, and plant monitoring in streambeds and surrounding terrain. “These activities can be done even on rainy days or days closely following the rain,” Rich said.

Riparian Studies will be held the first Tuesday of each month beginning in October.

The Hiking Club

The Hiking Club starts off with one to two hours of instruction and discussion

Clockwise from right:

Teaching Conservation – Students come in all ages. Here, the Blackwell kids from West Hills, CA, learn about the plight of the Bald eagle on Catalina. Listening to Rich are (from left): Rosie, 15, Eamon, 11, Andrea, 8, and Liam, 16.

Rich Zanelli is always learning.

Have you seen him? – Rich gives his students an up-close and personal view of the Catalina bald eagle. Pictured are the Gochnours of Hollady, UT (from left): Lucy, 8, Grace, 10, and Jake, 6.



one day a month after school. On the following Saturday, students will take what they've learned on a hike to a remote area of the interior to appreciate the wonderful Nature that only Catalina can provide.

The Hiking Club meets on the second Tuesday and following Saturday of each month beginning in November.

After-School Photography Hike


The After-School Photography Hike gives students an opportunity to hike the Hermit Gulch Trail, among others, and capture the essence of Catalina's beauty on film – or with a digital camera. Selected photographs will go on display in the Nature Center at Avalon Canyon

when it reopens. The Photography Hike will take place on the third Tuesday of each month beginning in October.

Composting and Organic Gardening

This activity is open for both students and adults in which they will maintain a small-scale compost pile and organic garden. This is a flexible-time program beginning in October.

"This new after-school program is a wonderful combination of learning and a whole lot of fun for the kids," Rich says. "And," he added, "the program culminates with an extended weekend at

Emerald Bay (contributed by the Western Los Angeles Council of the Boy Scouts of America) for all the kids who become K.I.N. core members. I can't think of a better way to wind up the school year before taking off on summer vacation." 

For more information on "Kids In Nature" (K.I.N.), please call Rich Zanelli at (310) 510-0954 or (310) 510-2595 x138.

Thanks to Our Donors

The Conservancy wishes to thank all of its supporters who make it possible to undertake the important efforts to keep Catalina wild, some of which are detailed in this issue of the *Conservancy Times*. Due to space considerations, donors of \$500 or more are listed here.

February 1, 2005 – June 30, 2005

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2005 Conservancy Ball Auction Purchases Generate More Than \$162,000

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Palmieri, Tyler, Wiener, Wilhelm
and Waldron, LLP
Tom and Debra Parsons
Warren Person
Carl and Mary Raymond
Remax College Park Realty
Renix Corporation
Lynn Ring
Ryan Family Charitable Foundation
Michael and Valinda Vaughn
Lewis and Pat Whitney
Ken and Patti Wolf

The Conservancy would like to thank all attendees of the 2005 Conservancy Ball. Due to space considerations, auction purchases of \$500 or more are listed here.

\$10,000 and Above

G.T. and Shannon Frost
David Parker
Bill and Bobbitt Williams

\$5,000 – \$9,999

Richard and Lisa Mulvania
Bob Kreidel
Glenn Highland
Paxson H. and Susan Offield
Geoff and Alison Rusack

\$2,500 – \$4,999

Simple Green
Bud and Diana Elam
Dan and Gail Huston
John and Cheryl Ambrecht
Tom and Debra Parsons

\$1,000 – \$2,499

Doug and Judy Levi
James Miller
John and Serena Padian
William and Deborah Seals
Steve and Laura Sharpe
Karin Hague
C.J. Torre Construction
Dana and Randee Arnold
Roger and Debora Buffington
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Cliff Hague

Doug and Patty Simpson
Randy and K.C. Boelsems
Robert and Mary Longpre
Jim and Cathy Taylor
Cliff and Pat Pratt
John and Nancy Celick
Robert and Brigitte Jennison
Gary and Jeanne Herberger

\$500 – \$999

Jeff Glenning
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Dave and Renee Clay
Joe and Rita Dlugokecki
Rick and Lindsay Du Fresne
Michael and Elizabeth Lonnes
Pat and Janet O'Leary
Hal and Carolyn Weed



Leadership Circle Members Toast Catalina at El Rancho Escondido



*Tony Michaels and
Scott Bice*

*Leadership Circle Member Carl
Lambert outlines his table's
ideas for Catalina's future.*

*Alison and Geoff Rusack welcome
guests to El Rancho Escondido.*



Nearly 70 Leaders from the Conservancy's Leadership Circle enjoyed a wonderful June evening at El Rancho Escondido – the "Hidden Ranch." With spectacular views, the ranch has been a favorite spot for five generations of the Wrigley family.

Alison Wrigley Rusack, and her husband, Geoff Rusack, Chairman of the Conservancy Board, welcomed guests with a demonstration of the Arabian horses for which the ranch is famous. Alison recounted the history of the ranch and her childhood experiences with her family. The group also had a tour of the priceless collection of saddles and equestrian memorabilia.

Everyone enjoyed a wine tasting of fine wines from the Rusack vineyard in the Santa Ynez Valley. Geoff discussed the history of the winery and described each of the wines tasted. Supporters qualify to become part of the Leadership Circle by contributing a minimum of \$2,500 annually, or at least \$5,000 for a special event such as the Conservancy Ball. Members of the Leadership Circle have opportunities to meet with nationally renowned scientists, learn firsthand about Catalina conservation projects, attend special events, and discuss with Conservancy leadership issues of importance to Catalina Island. For more information, please call (562) 437-8555, and talk to Jackie McDougall at extension 228, or to Chuck Wright at extension 225.

The following supporters have been welcomed to the Leadership Circle between January and June of 2005

Don and Lisa Beaumont
Scott and Barbara Bice
Marilyn Bordessa
Tom and Jane Fetter
Ted Griffith
John and Dana Hagenah
Rick and Wendy Harp
Glenn Highland
Tony and Claire Michaels

Charles and Nancy Munger
Tom and Lucia Neilsen
Dave Parker
James and Helen Rosburg
Roy Rose
Mrs. Richard Steele
Mrs. Barbara Stevens
Jim and Vicki Warmington

Welcome New Conservancy Members

New members are the lifeblood of any organization. As a part of the Conservancy family, our members know their ongoing support is an important factor in helping to restore and protect the magnificent wildlands and beautiful shorelines of Catalina.

The Conservancy is aware that each new member has many opportunities to help support important causes and truly appreciates the fact that they choose to invest in the Island's future.

The Conservancy urges all members to take advantage of the many benefits each level of membership offers – from receiving the *Conservancy Times*; to admissions to the Wrigley Memorial and Botanical Gardens; to visits to the Catalina Museum; to discounts on bike permits, airport landings, Jeep® Eco-Tours; staff-led hikes into the Island's interior; and other exciting

opportunities – including participation in one of the Island's support groups including the Marineros, Caballeros, Divers and Pilots.

If you are reading this and are still not a member, join us by visiting the membership page of our Web site: www.catalinaconservancy.org, or by calling our office at (310) 510-2595 x114.

Don't forget: By being a member, you are not only supporting the work of the Conservancy, but because the Conservancy is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization, most membership dues qualify for a federal and state income-tax charitable deduction.

New Members February 1, 2005 to June 30, 2005

Bill and Sharon Allen
David and Melissa Arnold
Edmund and Judith Baumgarten
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Yoli Hernandez
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Charlie Munoz and
Dianne Chapanar
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Carroll and Jane Ramseyer
Rhonda Read Turner
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Mark and Tracy Widder
Alan Wood
Charlie Wright
Steve and Carol Writer

Become a Member and Save!

When you become a member you not only support the vital work of the Catalina Island Conservancy, dedicated to keeping Catalina wild and beautiful for today and for future generations to enjoy, but you also receive valuable discounts and updates on Conservancy recreation and merchandise. Become a member by calling (310) 510-2595 x114, or by visiting www.catalinaconservancy.org for these and other membership opportunities:

All members receive a 50% discount on Island campsite fees.

- | | |
|------------------|--|
| \$35 Friend | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Free subscription to the redesigned and expanded <i>Conservancy Times</i> • Opportunities to participate in special Island conservation projects |
| \$65 Explorer | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All of the benefits of the Friend level, plus: • Free note cards of Santa Catalina Island for new members • Members-only discounts for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 10% off The Hike, a Conservancy experience for budding naturalists - 10% discount on a bike permit - 10% discount on Conservancy merchandise • Unlimited admission for two to the Conservancy's Wrigley Memorial & Botanical Garden |
| \$125 Adventurer | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All of the benefits of the Explorer level, plus: • Free Conservancy baseball cap (or Burgee for Marineros) for new members • A free, one-time family pass to the Catalina Island Museum for new members • Members-only discounts for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - An additional 10% off a bike permit (20% total) - 20% off airport landings - 20% off airport shuttle service • Unlimited admission for up to five members of your family to the Conservancy's Wrigley Memorial & Botanical Garden • Free hiking trail map of the Island's interior • Opportunity to join one support group and receive invitations to social and special events: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Marineros - Divers - Caballeros - Pilots |


*Last free
issue for
non-members.
Join now!*

Discover Catalina's Boat-in Campsites

Story and Photos by Bob Rhein

Like Robinson Crusoe,
they're primitive as can be.

This is the wild side of Catalina camping: campgrounds with no water, no mooring, no sanitation facilities, no open campfires allowed – and no roads to get you there. However, the Catalina Island Conservancy's boat-in campgrounds remain the ultimate getaway. Their remote locations provide visitors with spectacular experiences in nature, as well as a deepened appreciation of the ecology of our beautiful Island.

You'll have to boat in from the mainland, or paddle a kayak from Avalon or Two Harbors – but the experience is worth it. 



Ripper's Cove is the closest campsite to Two Harbors.



All boat-in campsites are well marked.



Goat Harbor

For more information about the Catalina Island Conservancy boat-in campsites, visit www.CampingCatalinaIsland.com.
For kayak rentals, call Descanso Beach Ocean Sports at (310) 510-1588, or visit www.kayakcatalinaisland.com.
For kayak rentals on the West End, call Two Harbors Dive & Recreation at (310) 510-4272, or visit www.visitwoharbors.com.
There are no overnight powerboat or sailboat rentals on the Island.

And remember ... Conservancy members get a 50% discount on campsite fees!

CATALINA ISLAND'S BOAT-IN CAMPSITES		Number of campsites	Miles from Avalon	Miles to Two Harbors
Ripper's Cove	Ripper's Cove boasts a protected anchorage, a great reef for snorkeling, and accessible hiking.	3 A not available during high tide B and C have picnic tables	8.6	4
Paradise Cove	Also known as "Cave Beach," this site faces more east than north, and is tucked in under a protective bluff.	1 No picnic tables	8.4	4
Lava Wall Beach	A spectacular vertical wall is the backdrop for this campsite.	2 Two picnic tables	8.1	4.5
Gibraltar Beach	The lava area to the west is pocked with sea caves.	2 Two picnic tables	7	9.9
Cabrillo (formerly Steadman's)	This is the largest of the boat-in campsites and a favorite of families and youth groups.	4 Each has a picnic table	6.9	5.8
Goat Harbor	Goat Harbor has great snorkeling, diving and steep hiking.	3 Each has a picnic table	5.3	7.4
Italian Gardens A	Today's fishermen still love this area, named for early Italian fishermen who would dry their nets on the large beach.	2 Each has a picnic table	5.3	7.4
Italian Gardens B	This campsite is a favorite destination for paddlers, with some limited hiking up the seasonal creek.	1 One picnic table	5.5	7.2
Italian Gardens C	Since it faces more east than north, this cove has a bit more protection from the northwest winds.	1 No picnic table	5.6	7
Long Point Beach	This is a popular picnic spot for Avalon residents and visitors. Hiking is possible, but it's steep.	2 Two picnic tables	4.9	7.8


"Fire Followers"

by Jeanne McKay

The Earth has known fire for more than 500 million years. In some ecosystems, when fire happens, living systems adjust, overcome and survive.

At the Catalina Island Conservancy's James H. Ackerman Native Plant Nursery, seed germination for "fire followers" (plants that need the heat, chemicals, or both from a fire in order to germinate) involves using a "fire treatment." This process gives the seeds the environmental cue they need to germinate. Sometimes a botanist may actually set fire to pine needles above the buried seeds. Other methods include using a wood smoker, heating the seeds in an oven, or simply using a common kitchen essential, Liquid Smoke, to

simulate the chemicals in the soil after a brush fire, thereby stimulating the environmental cues needed for the seedlings to regenerate.

Three shrubs known to require fire for optimal seed germination are Catalina manzanita (*Arctostaphylos catalinae*), a Catalina endemic; felt leaf (*Canothus arboreus*) a Channel Island endemic; and, mission manzanita (*Xylococcus bicolor*). These plants have hard seed coats that are scarified by fire and thereby "activated." 

Some botanists actually set fire to pine needles above the buried seeds to stimulate their germination.



**CATALINA ISLAND
CONSERVANCY**

P.O. Box 2739
Avalon, California 90704
www.catalinaconservancy.org

*The mission of the Catalina Island
Conservancy is to be a responsible steward
of its lands through a balance of
conservation, education and recreation.*

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