

SPRING 2016

CATALINA ISLAND Conservancy Times



PROTECTING BIODIVERSITY

ENSURING ISLAND SPECIES' SURVIVAL

PAGE 2

Message from the President



Conservancy Times is a biannual publication of the Catalina Island Conservancy, a 501c(3) nonprofit organization established in 1972 to protect and restore Catalina Island for present and future generations to experience and enjoy.

One of California's oldest private land trusts, the Conservancy protects the magnificent natural and cultural heritage of Santa Catalina Island, stewarding approximately 42,000 acres of land and 62 miles of rugged shoreline. Twenty miles from the mainland, Catalina Island is home to more than 60 plant and animal species found nowhere else in the world. The Conservancy operates the Airport in the Sky, Wrigley Memorial & Botanic Garden, two nature centers and campgrounds. It provides 50 miles of biking and nearly 150 miles of hiking opportunities within its road and trail system.

For more information, please visit CatalinaConservancy.org



Biological diversity or biodiversity are terms we hear often in newspapers, in magazines, on television and on the web. Biodiversity is a measure of the variety of organisms found in different ecosystems. These tremendous variations of life and habitats are linked in ways that we are only beginning to understand. The decline or disappearance of biodiversity has consequences, and these consequences can ultimately disrupt entire ecosystems, if nothing is done.

Throughout its history, the Catalina Island Conservancy has been dedicated to protecting the biodiversity and all the precious resources on the Island we cherish. But as you will see in the cover story of this issue of *Conservancy Times*, Catalina and all islands face additional challenges in protecting biodiversity. Among those challenges, smaller populations of each island species and fewer mechanisms to protect against invasive species make extinction more likely.

The Conservancy has undertaken multiple initiatives to protect biodiversity, and this issue reports on just a few of those, including the collection of native plant seeds and the ongoing effort to document all the plant species on the Island. But much more remains to be done to ensure the survival of critical species on the Island.

The Conservancy stewards 42,000 acres or 88% of Catalina Island's land. Managing invasive and non-native species across this vast and rugged landscape represents one of the Conservancy's biggest challenges. This issue details the potential harm invasive species can have and provides a chart of the Conservancy's top 10 targets for invasive plant management.

Protecting Catalina's biodiversity would not be possible without the help of the hundreds of volunteers who donate their time. More than 900 volunteers donate over 24,000 hours a year to help the Conservancy fulfill its mission of conservation, recreation and education. In this issue, we honor one of the most enthusiastic volunteers, Phillip Dukes, who says serving the Conservancy is his "dream vacation."

Our members and their contributions are also essential to ensuring the health and enjoyment of Catalina Island, and one of the Conservancy's longest-serving members, Seymour Beek, is profiled in this issue. If you're not already a Conservancy member, please see the many benefits of membership included with his story on page 14 and consider joining us.

Join us too for the 21st Annual Conservancy Ball on April 9, at the historic Avalon Casino Ballroom. The 2016 Conservancy Ball will be the official launch of the Conservancy's capital campaign, IMAGINE CATALINA, our strategic long-term vision to secure the ecological health of the Island while enhancing the ability of future generations to enjoy its beauty and tranquility. You won't want to miss this very special evening!

As always, we thank all of you for your support for Catalina and the Conservancy. Please contact us if you have any questions or need additional information.

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Ann M. Muscat, PhD
President & CEO

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CONTENTS

FEATURES

Protecting Biodiversity

Home to more than 60 species found nowhere else, Catalina Island is among the many islands where conservation efforts are needed to protect native species.

PAGE 2



Invasive Species

One of the greatest threats to biodiversity, invasive species require active management.

PAGE 8



NatureWorks

Catalina Island Conservancy's educational program helps prepare Island youth for the workforce through job-shadowing and other offerings.

PAGE 10



On the cover:
Ceanothus megacarpus var. insularis, island ceanothus or Island big-pod ceanothus
by Jack Baldelli

BECOME A CONSERVANCY MEMBER

Not a member of the Catalina Island Conservancy?

Don't miss out on the opportunities and adventure.

Join today!

Help protect this great natural resource.

Go to: CatalinaConservancy.org or call 562-437-8555 ext. 224

DEPARTMENTS

CONSERVANCY CELEBRATION IMAGINE CATALINA at the 21st Annual Conservancy Ball	12
VOLUNTEERS The Joys of Vacationing and Volunteering	14
SUPPORTER SPOTLIGHT Seymour Beek has a Lifetime of Catalina Island Memories	16
CONSERVANCY EVENT <i>Catalina: The Wild Side Art Show & Sale</i>	18
Donor Honor Roll	20
Conservancy Calendar	21

SAVING ENDANGERED SPECIES,
REMOVING INVASIVE ONES

PROTECTING



Trekking through Catalina's canyons, his eyes trained on the ground, Peter Dixon is on a quest. The Catalina Island Conservancy's plant conservation manager is searching for one of 32 rare or endangered plants on Catalina, a tiny flowering annual known as the Thread-leaf rock cress (*Sibara filifolia*), which is pictured here.

BIODIVERSITY

AND RESTORING THE ISLAND

“BIODIVERSITY IS THE RICHNESS AND WONDER OF LIFE, AND THE LOSS OF ANY OF THE FLORA OR FAUNA, PARTICULARLY INSULAR ENDEMIC, IS A LOSS OF THE NATURAL HERITAGE OF THAT PLACE.”

PETER DIXON
Conservancy plant conservation manager

PHOTO: PETER DIXON

PROTECTING BIODIVERSITY

ONCE THOUGHT TO BE EXTINCT ON CATALINA, Dixon and others have documented the presence of the Thread-leaf rock cress, an elusive member of the mustard family, on Catalina through forays into the far reaches of the Island. This boots-on-the-ground approach, aided by the latest technology in habitat modeling, illustrates the importance biologists place on protecting biodiversity on Catalina and on islands around the globe.

“Biodiversity is the richness and wonder of life, and the loss of any of the flora or fauna, particularly insular endemics, is a loss of the natural heritage of that place,” said Dixon. “Discovering and documenting rare and endangered species, like the Thread-leaf rock cress, help us understand the habitats they need so that we can protect those species and the biological diversity that is so critical to understanding the past and our future.”

Catalina and the other California Channel Islands are often referred to as the “Galapagos of North America” because they harbor a tremendous diversity of plants and animals, including a disproportionately high number of species that are unique to the islands, called endemic species. Catalina alone has more than 60 endemic species identified so far, with surveys, like the one Dixon is conducting, seeking to document more.

ISLAND SPECIES AT GREATER RISK

Island species face a greater risk of extinction because of the unique evolution of island ecosystems. The Global Island Partnership reports that about half of the 724 recorded animal extinctions in the last 400 years were island species, and at least 90% of the bird species that have become extinct in that period were island-dwellers.

The causes for the demise of these species are similar to those on the mainland: invasive plants and animals, human activities, climate change, pollution and other pressures. But islands are more vulnerable because species may be present in relatively small numbers, making extinction more likely. Island species also may have evolved free of predation and competition from other species, so they haven’t developed protective mechanisms.

The population of the Catalina Island fox, for instance, was about 1,300 before a stowaway raccoon brought canine distemper virus to the Island. The foxes had no natural immunity to the illness, and their numbers dropped to about 100 in 1999. The Conservancy, working in partnership with the Institute for Wildlife Studies, was able to bring the fox back from the brink of extinction.

NATIVE PLANTS LACK PROTECTIVE MECHANISMS

On Catalina, many native plants haven’t developed the protective mechanisms of mainland plants because they evolved at a time when the Island’s largest grazer was the endemic Catalina California ground squirrel (*Spermophilus beecheyi nesioticus*), an animal with a head the size of a walnut. When tens of thousands of ranching and hunting-era herbivores were introduced in the 19th and 20th centuries to Catalina, the Island’s plants became severely overgrazed.

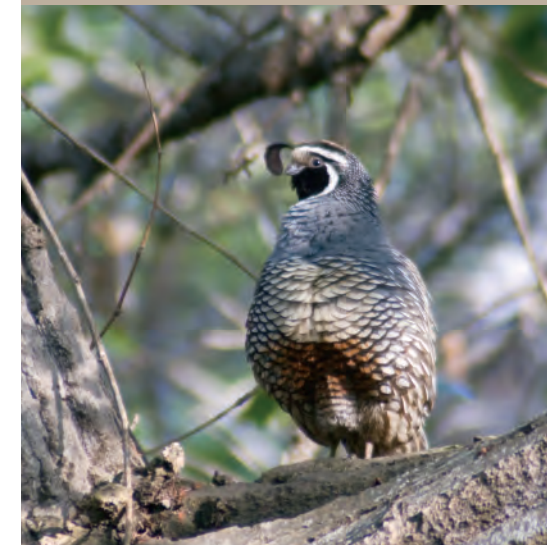
Many native plants were significantly reduced. Others survived only in protective cages, on isolated rocks or on inaccessible cliffs. Some were eliminated completely, like the Trask’s monkeyflower (*Mimulus traskiae*), which is presumed extinct.

“Protecting biodiversity is essential to all our futures, and islands, like Catalina, pose a special challenge and significant opportunity to determine how to ensure the survival of native plants and animals so that these precious and fragile ecosystems can continue to thrive,” said Ann M. Muscat, PhD, Conservancy president and CEO. “Through the Conservancy’s work and its collaboration with many others who study life on Catalina, we can better determine what is needed to protect biodiversity on the Island and serve as a living laboratory for islands and mainland species around the world.”

The population of the Catalina Island fox (*Urocyon littoralis catalinae*) was so small that it was almost wiped out by canine distemper. The plant in the photo below is the big pod ceanothus (*ceanothus metacarpus var. insularis*), which is considered a rare plant and at risk. Bottom, the Propst or Catalina shieldback katydid (*Neduba propsti*) became extinct on the mainland because of the loss of coastal habitat. It is named after Doug Propst, former Conservancy president and CEO.



Below: The Catalina California quail (*Callipepla californica catalinensis*) is a subspecies that is endemic to Catalina Island and is listed by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife as a Bird Species of Special Concern. It is abundant on Catalina and has also been introduced to Santa Rosa and Santa Cruz Islands.



HOW DO INVASIVE SPECIES THREATEN BIODIVERSITY?

Invasive species are plants or animals that people have introduced to an environment and that cause harm to that environment. They displace native species, altering ecosystem structures and functions. They also reduce crop yield, increase fire risk, clog waterways and decrease recreational value.

In the U.S. alone, invasive species cause an estimated \$138 billion in damages annually. Their impact is so severe that the Department of Homeland Security has declared invasive species to be a threat to national security.

PHOTO: JACK BALDELLI, TYLER DVORAK AND CONSERVANCY STAFF

DOCUMENTING CATALINA'S PLANTS

“A FLORA OF SANTA CATALINA ISLAND”

Knowing what plants are growing on Catalina is essential to protecting the Island's biodiversity. The Catalina Island Conservancy is working with the Santa Barbara Botanic Garden on a book, entitled “A Flora of Santa Catalina Island,” that will present a detailed account of the Island's more than 700 different kinds of plants.

“It is a huge effort, and it's difficult to stress how important this type of work is to protecting the plants that occur on the Island,” said Matt Guilliams, who is writing the book. He is the Tucker Plant Systematist and curator of the Clifton F. Smith Herbarium at the Santa Barbara Botanic Garden. “I think the world of the Conservancy for the work it has done and for the opportunity to work on a book like this.”

With funding from The Seaver Institute and the Conservancy's Wrigley Fund Endowment, the book will document the Island's rich and often unique botanical heritage.

HISTORICAL ACCOUNTS OF CATALINA PLANTS

Charles Frederick Millspaugh and Lawrence William Nuttall published the first manual on Catalina's flora in 1923. In 1967, Robert F. Thorne published a revised version. Dedicated Catalina plant hunters have included Blanche Trask in the early 1900s and, more recently, Stephen Junak of the Santa Barbara Botanic Garden and former Conservancy employees Mark L. Hoefs and Sarah Ratay.

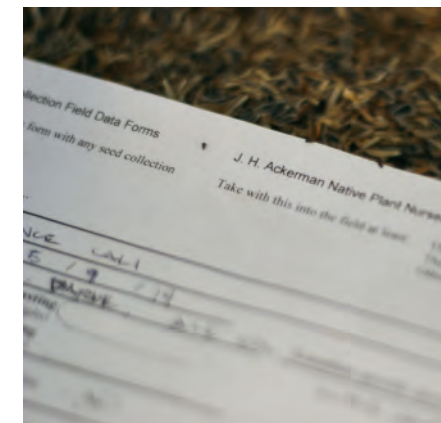
Listing and describing all the plants that grow in a particular region is a critical first step toward understanding how nature works in a specific ecological system. Armed with that list, botanists and plant ecologists can study how and where certain plants grow together.

“This type of work is fundamental to our understanding of nature, and it gains new importance and prominence, especially on islands, as we try to understand the potential effects of a changing climate,” said Guilliams. “Because the plants that grow on Catalina are surrounded on all sides by water, they have limited options for shifting to new areas suitable for their growth and survival. Therefore, islands can serve as a sort of ‘canary in a coal mine’ for rare plants by providing an early measure of the impacts of climate change.”

THE CONSERVANCY'S SEED COLLECTION

PROTECTING NATIVE PLANTS FOR FUTURE GENERATIONS

To ensure native plants survive, the Catalina Island Conservancy has collected more than 240 million plant seeds, many of them from rare and endemic species. Here's how the Conservancy's staff and volunteers collect and store the seeds:



- 1 Identify the target species: rare plants for conservation or common “workhorse” species for restoration projects.
- 2 Collect data relevant to location, phenology, etc. Collect fruit, seed or vegetative material when optimal.
- 3 Process seed (according to protocol) to remove floral material or pulp to optimize storage.
- 4 Dry seed in small vacuum chamber using desiccant. This removes moisture that can cause decomposition.
- 5 Place the seeds in cold storage for future use.

To protect biodiversity for future generations, the Conservancy also ships seeds to mainland botanic gardens for storage. This ensures the seeds will be preserved in case of fire or other calamities at the Conservancy's James H. Ackerman Native Plant Nursery on Catalina Island.

Help protect Catalina's biodiversity by donating to the publication of “A Flora of Santa Catalina Island.”

Please contact Elizabeth Whitted-Dawson Development Manager, Institutional Giving 562-437-8555 ext. 238 EDawson@CatalinaConservancy.org

INVASIVE PLANT SPECIES

One of the Greatest Threats to Biodiversity

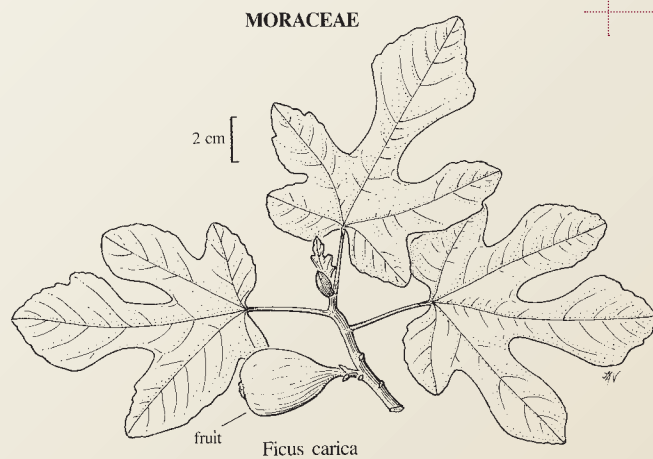
Non-native invasive species are one of the greatest threats to biodiversity worldwide — second only to habitat destruction.

The Catalina Island Conservancy, through its Catalina Habitat Improvement and Restoration Program (CHIRP), manages more than 60 invasive plant species. It has removed several species altogether, such as the yellow star thistle, and is close to eliminating several other species, including tamarisk and pampas grass.

THE CONSERVANCY'S TOP 10 INVASIVE TARGETS

Common Fig (*Ficus carica*)

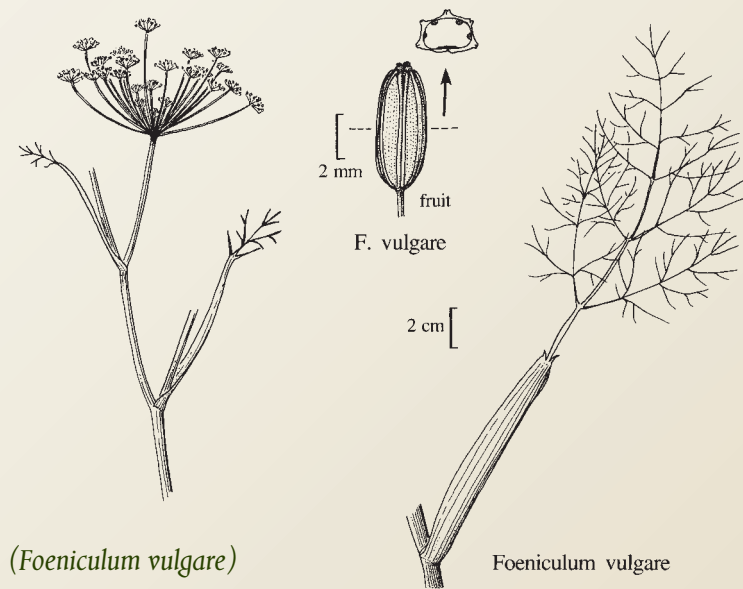
The common fig crowds out native trees and understory shrubs in riparian areas. It destroys sidewalks, parking lots and foundations. It also provides food for non-native invasive animals. Many years may pass before the fig behaves as an invasive plant. But once a population becomes established, the figs' growth and spread can be exponential.



Plant illustrations by Linda Ann Vorobik
To see more, please visit VorobikBotanicalArt.com

Fennel (*Foeniculum vulgare*)

As one of Catalina's most prolific and destructive plants, fennel can quickly crowd out native plant species. One of the ways it does this is through negative allelopathy, which means it produces a chemical that leaches into the soil and impedes the growth of other plants.



Flax-leaf Broom (*Genista linifolia*)

First introduced to Catalina as a landscape plant more than 100 years ago, it is now considered to be Catalina's most highly invasive plant. CHIRP currently maintains a tight containment zone around Avalon and any plants growing outside the line are removed each year.



Help protect California's biodiversity by removing these weeds from your yard, community parks or school yards. For assistance with removal on Catalina Island, please contact:

Julia Parish
Conservancy Plant Conservation Manager
310-510-1299 ext. 229
JParish@CatalinaConservancy.org

Fountain Grass (*Pennisetum setaceum*)

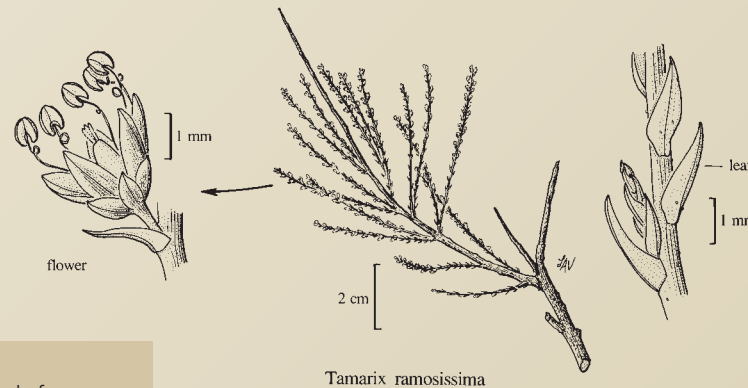
Commonly used in California landscaping because of its tolerance to drought, fountain grass is becoming one of the state's most dangerous invasive escaped ornamentals. It grows rapidly; competes with other plants for resources, like water and space; worsens erosion during storm events, and significantly increases fire frequency and temperature.



Tamarisk (*Tamarix ramosissima*)

A shrub-like plant, tamarisk grows in riparian areas and can cause narrowing of streams. It's been associated with lowered water tables because of its high use of water, and it can input salt into the soil, which inhibits the growth and germination of native riparian species.

TAMARICACEAE



Harding Grass (*Phalaris aquatica*)

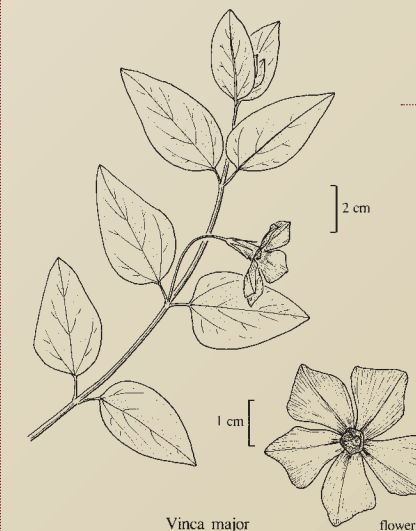
A stout perennial grass, this Mediterranean native grass is becoming one of the world because of its use for animal forage. In conservation areas, like Catalina, it outcompetes and displaces native plant species. Tall stands of its dry foliage also present a fire hazard.



Milk Thistle (*Silybum marianum*)

An essential monarch butterfly habitat on the mainland, milk thistle develops large rosettes that block light to nearby vegetation and suppress germination and growth. It is prolific, and it remains standing for several months after it dies out, blocking other vegetation.

APOCYNACEAE

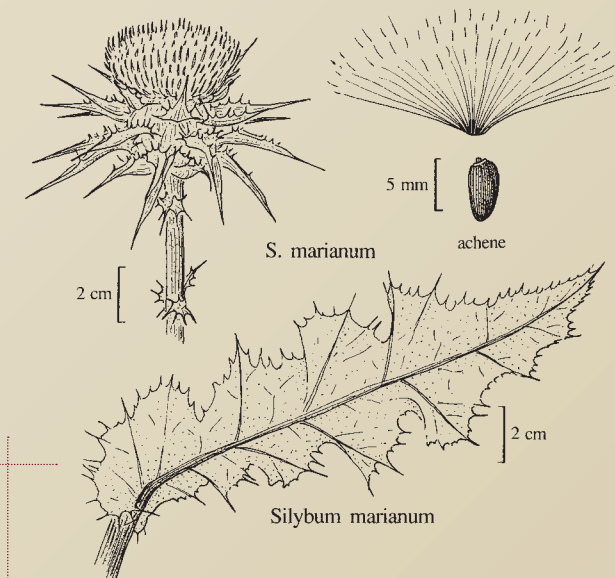
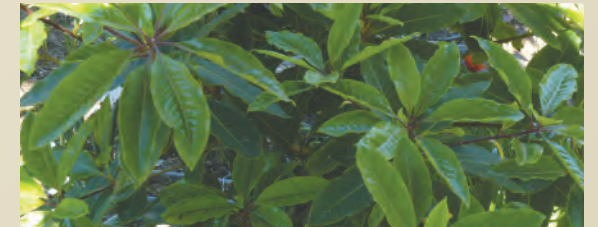


Periwinkle (*Vinca major*)

A spreading perennial vine, periwinkle forms a dense cover that prevents the growth and establishment of other plant species. Periwinkle lowers species diversity and disrupts native plant communities, especially in riparian zones. It also contributes to more frequent wildfires because it is more flammable than native species.

Mock Orange (*Pittosporum undulatum*)

Widely cultivated as a garden and hedging plant, mock orange is not considered an invasive on the mainland in California. However, the State of Hawaii, the Conservancy and others consider this prolific and fast-growing plant to be an invasive because it crowds out native plants.



Pampas Grass (*Cortaderia selloana*)

An ornamental grass, this invasive plant competes with native vegetation and increases the fire potential because of its excessive build-up of dry leaves and stalks. The massive size of each plant reduces wildlife habitat.



Sources: California Invasive Plant Council and the Catalina Island Conservancy



NatureWorks

PREPARING YOUTH FOR FUTURE EMPLOYMENT

At the age of 18, Blanca Alvarez had lived on Catalina her entire life and believed she knew the Island well. Then she was introduced to NatureWorks, the Catalina Island Conservancy’s educational program, and she discovered there was much more to learn about the very special place she calls home.

“I saw so many places I had never seen and learned so many things I didn’t know,” she said.

NatureWorks is an innovative partnership with the Avalon School that expanded the Conservancy’s kindergarten through middle school educational programs into an integrated program that extends through 12th grade.

“NatureWorks is an invaluable supplement to our education because it connects strong academics to field experiences on Catalina so that students can see for themselves how they could work in ecotourism or other jobs related to conservation,” said Avalon School Principal Angie Gonzalez. “It is a strong partnership with the school district’s Linked Learning Program, which is designed to make learning exciting, challenging and relevant to students.”

CREATING A MODEL FOR STEM EDUCATION

NatureWorks is also building a model for how school systems and conservation organizations can collaborate to expand environmental stewardship training and Science, Technology, Engineering & Mathematics (STEM) education, with a particular focus on underserved youth. This past school year, for instance, the curriculum focused on drought and water conservation on the Island, including an in-depth look at desalination, a source of water for Catalina.

Near the end of the school year, the Conservancy and the Avalon School partnered in the “NatureWorks Job Shadow Week,” a unique opportunity for Blanca and 43 other high school seniors to focus on job preparedness by spending two days following professionals from local businesses.

While other students spent their days in the offices of the Catalina Island Chamber of Commerce, U.S. Bank or one of the other businesses in Avalon, Blanca and some of her classmates headed to the wildlands to learn about working for the Conservancy.



“I saw so many places I had never seen and learned so many things I didn’t know.”

Blanca Alvarez

NatureWorks student Michaela Edwards working with GIS consultant Ben Coleman.



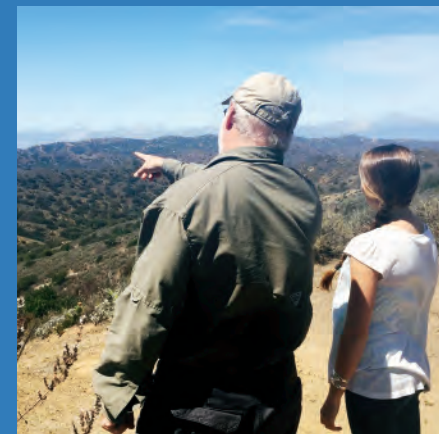
STUDENTS GAIN INSIGHT INTO FUTURE CAREERS

They spent two days with Conservancy conservation and mapping staff members, learning about the Island’s geology, native plants, biology and mapping tools and techniques. They helped perform maintenance work on a weather station, and they asked lots of questions about educational and personal requirements for each position.

The high school seniors then delivered presentations about their shadowing experiences to the younger students, educating them to the professional possibilities on the Island. Eight of the students who participated in the job shadowing program received job offers from their shadowing assignments. Blanca signed up for a Rose Ellen Gardner Internship with the Conservancy and spent her summer learning more about the Conservancy’s important work and her Island home.

“Job shadowing gave me insight into what people do and what kind of person you have to be to do that,” she said. “I wasn’t really sure what I was going to do. But after working with the Conservancy, I know I want to work in the environmental field.”

At the top of the page, students gathered in the Avalon School gymnasium to hear presentations from NatureWorks students who participated in the job shadowing program. Above, Blanca Alvarez gets a hands-on lesson in Conservancy work.



John J. Mack, Conservancy chief conservation and education officer, described the geology of the Island to NatureWorks students.

Thanks to our NatureWorks supporters, including:

- W.M. Keck Foundation, Founding Grant
- Boeing Employee Community Fund
- Edison International
- Erickson Family Foundation
- Jiji Foundation
- Wrigley Fund Endowment
- US Bank

Join us in making this vital educational program a continued success!

Please contact Elizabeth Whitted-Dawson
Development Manager, Institutional Giving
562-437-8555 ext. 238
EDawson@CatalinaConservancy.org

“It is a strong partnership with the school district’s Linked Learning Program, which is designed to make learning exciting, challenging and relevant to students.”

Angie Gonzalez
Avalon School Principal

IMAGINE CATALINA

2016 Catalina Island Conservancy Ball

SATURDAY, APRIL 9

AVALON CASINO BALLROOM
CATALINA ISLAND

6:00 p.m. to 11:00 p.m.

DINNER AND DANCING TO THE SOUNDS OF SOCIETY BEAT

SILENT AND LIVE AUCTIONS

For event details, to purchase tickets or sponsorships and preview auction items, please visit CatalinaConservancy.org

Catalina Express will offer a late-night return boat at 11:58 p.m.

QUESTIONS?

Please call 562-437-8555 ext. 239 or

Email Ball@CatalinaConservancy.org



The 21st Annual Conservancy Ball will encourage guests to imagine the future of Catalina Island by officially launching the capital campaign for IMAGINE CATALINA, the Catalina Island Conservancy's strategic long-term vision to secure the ecological health of the Island while enhancing the ability of future generations to enjoy its beauty and tranquility.

"Imagine Catalina builds on the successful work of the Conservancy's past four decades and imagines how this vitally important organization can evolve and advance its expertise, experience and resources to serve not only this beautiful Island, but a greater good that goes beyond its shores," said Hank Hilty, Conservancy Board member and Development Committee chair.

The 21st Annual Conservancy Ball also will honor the 13 years of service of the Conservancy's president and CEO, Ann M. Muscat, PhD, as she looks toward her retirement at the end of 2016.



Special Evening of Dining and Dancing

The Conservancy's first-ever Host Committee—comprised of a variety of Conservancy partners—is on board to help the Conservancy exceed its fundraising goal of \$600,000. As always, the Conservancy Ball proceeds will support the Conservancy's annual conservation, education and recreation programs. Over the past 20 years, the Conservancy Ball has raised more than \$5.3 million for these vital programs.

Plans are underway for a very special evening of dining and dancing to the big band sounds of Society Beat on April 9, in the historic Avalon Casino. Many one-of-a-kind auction items will be available for purchase during the silent and live auctions. Several popular items will be returning this year, including a Catalina Island fox trapping tour and a hand-etched balthazar of Rusack Vineyards wine.

"The Conservancy Ball promises to be another memorable evening of elegance, enjoyment and enthusiasm for the mission we all share," said Hilty. "Please reserve your seats today and help the Conservancy chart its course for the future with your support."

Ball Checklist

- Purchase sponsorship or tickets
- Preview auction online and watch favorites
- Make boat reservations. Special 11:58 p.m. return!
- Invite friends!!

Vacationing and Volunteering

NO BETTER WAY TO SPEND A HOLIDAY



From left, AmeriCorps volunteers Angela Ziogas, Dana Nichols, Adenola Ademiluyi, Abby Rosen, Katherine Berna, Nicole Giusti, Lauren Brown (team leader in green), Phillip Dukes, Ryan Antolick and Grant Blair. Below, Phillip Dukes (left) and Robert Robles on the Island.



"It's extremely fun, so even though you're working part of the time that you're visiting the Island, it doesn't feel like work. It feels like a total vacation."

Phillip Dukes
Conservancy volunteer

Weed whacking, road patching and trail building don't sound like fun vacation activities.

But they are for Phillip Dukes, a 27-year-old high school teacher from Tucson who volunteers to spend his vacations performing these tasks and much more for the Catalina Island Conservancy.

Dukes has volunteered on the Island once or twice every year for the last four years, and he said there's no better way to spend a holiday.

"It's extremely fun, so even though you're working part of the time that you're visiting the Island, it doesn't feel like work," he said. "It feels like a total vacation."

More than 900 Volunteers Annually

Dukes is one of the more than 900 Catalina Island Conservancy volunteers who donate over 24,000 hours a year to comb the windward beaches for trash, maintain

wildlands trails and fix fences. They help with driving, office work, invasive plant removal, native plant restoration, maintenance work, biologists' studies, marathons and other events.

"We work with individuals and groups to match their skills and abilities with positions or projects that will best satisfy their interests and aid in the fulfillment of the Conservancy's mission," said Lesly Lieberman, Conservancy volunteer coordinator. "With Phillip, it's easy to find a job because he embraces just about any task we have and does it with great enthusiasm."

Dukes first came to Catalina in 2012 as a member of AmeriCorps, the national service program that provides teams of volunteers to the Conservancy for several weeks every year. He said the beauty of the Island, the important work of the Conservancy and the support

of Lieberman and Cindy Lazaris, the Conservancy's volunteer coordinators at the time, "just blew me away. It was just like in a dream world. I couldn't believe how lucky we were to be partnered with the Conservancy."

Falling in Love with Catalina

"The second we left Catalina, our AmeriCorps team began scheming how we were going to come back because we realized the Island is a really special, once-in-a-lifetime place," Dukes said. "All of us had fallen in love with it."

After completing his volunteer service with AmeriCorps, Dukes and some of his former AmeriCorps teammates enjoyed reuniting on the Island in 2012, 2013 and 2014 to volunteer at the Conservancy Ball and the Catalina Island Film Festival. They also worked on trail restoration and other maintenance projects.

"It was just a total dream vacation to come back and work with those guys and see all our friends," Dukes said.

Creating the Next Generation of Conservationists

This past summer, he introduced the next generation to Catalina conservation and volunteering. Dukes is a "Big Brother," through the Big Brother mentoring program, and he brought his "Little Brother," a 17-year-old mentee, Robert Robles, with him to the Island for a week-long volunteer vacation.

They helped the Conservancy's facilities crew and worked on several different projects. They also enjoyed ocean swims, hikes and other recreation.

"It was such a meaningful experience because the work the Conservancy does is so special," Dukes said. "For Robert to get a chance to be a part of this amazing organization and see this very special place is extraordinary."



Two photos above depict AmeriCorps volunteers in the Avalon Casino Ballroom, preparing for the Conservancy Ball. On the right, Robert Robles takes his first ocean swim and works on the Island as part of his volunteer adventure.



More than **900**
VOLUNTEERS DONATE
OVER 24,000 HOURS
a year to help the
Conservancy fulfill
its mission.

INTERESTED IN VOLUNTEERING?

Please contact Lesly Lieberman
Volunteer Coordinator
310-510-2595 ext. 112
LLieberman@CatalinaConservancy.org
Or visit the "Volunteer" page on the
website, CatalinaConservancy.org

Seymour Beek

More than Four Decades of Membership

At 82, Seymour Beek has a lifetime of Catalina Island memories. He first came to the Island at the age of five with his father, who owned the historic Balboa Island Ferry that transports vehicles and passengers between Newport Beach and the popular island getaway.

He remembers kids diving for coins tossed into Avalon Bay by passengers on the old steamboat. He recalls returning to Catalina's Moonstone Beach after World War II and finding it littered with debris from military training operations, and he reminisces about endless days of enjoyment aboard his father's boat and his own boat with his five children.

"I have so many memories of fishing, swimming, diving, snorkeling and hiking on Catalina Island," he said. "I must have hiked up Whitley's Peak 50 times."



Long-time Conservancy member Seymour Beek, right, with his son, Clark Beek, and grandchildren, Henry, 3, and Lena, 1, on the stern of his boat, Vamos, at Moonstone Cove.

Ensuring Future Generations Enjoy the Island

Beek wants his grandchildren and great-grandchildren to have their own memories of idyllic summers on Catalina. So he became one of the earliest members of the Catalina Island Conservancy after it was formed in 1972 to protect and restore 88% of the Island.

He said he'd witnessed the growth in Avalon and Two Harbors and heard about plans to develop other parts of the Island. He'd also seen the goat trails carved into Catalina's hillside and the damage to its vegetation caused by the grazing of non-native animals that roamed the Island before the 21st century.

"It was obvious there were certain things about the Island that were deteriorating," he said. "There was a general consensus that if someone took care of Catalina, it would be better."

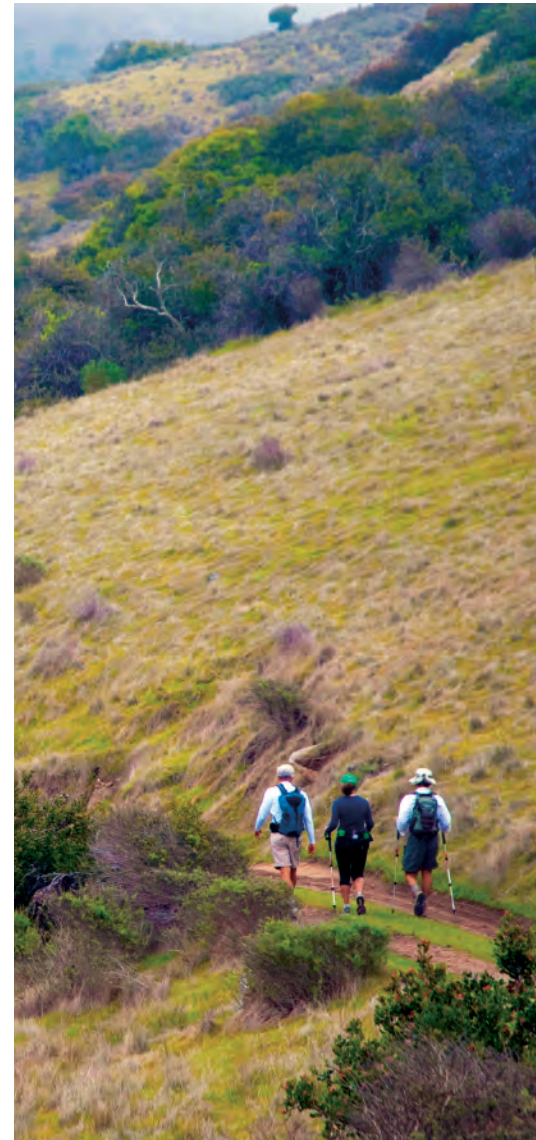
Membership Supports Conservancy's Mission

Beek lives on Balboa Island, where he operates the Balboa Island Ferry, a

family-owned business his father founded in 1919. But he still travels often to Catalina, and he credits the Conservancy with important improvements in the landscape and protection for the Island's open space.

"The Conservancy does good things, and it takes care of the Island," he said. "Membership in the Conservancy is important for anyone who cares about the Island. It's a worthy cause and a good thing to belong to and support."

Members' dues help save animal and plant species on the verge of extinction and maintain unique habitats for all to enjoy. Members also have access to Conservancy venues, like the Wrigley Memorial & Botanic Gardens; discounts on a number of services, like the Wildlands Express and popular Jeep Eco Tours, and information about the Conservancy's popular events and the opportunities it sponsors to explore and experience Catalina and the other Channel Islands.



"A Lot of Fun to be a Member"

Beek said he's attended the Annual Conservancy Ball twice and considers it a rare chance to dine and dance in the historic Avalon Casino ballroom. He also participated in several Conservancy events, including a boat trip to Santa Cruz and two of the BZ Jones hikes across Catalina.

"I do a fair amount of hiking," he said. "But on the BZ Jones Hike, I saw parts of the Island I had never seen before, and the Conservancy treated us like royalty. It's been a lot of fun to be a member."

JOIN THE CONSERVANCY

ENJOY THE BENEFITS OF MEMBERSHIP

Starting at \$35, membership offers the following benefits for the member:

- ▶ Unlimited admission to the Wrigley Memorial & Botanic Garden
- ▶ 50% off camping for the member's household at Conservancy campsites
- ▶ Annual bike pass to the wild side
- ▶ 20% discount on the Wildlands Express shuttle to the Airport in the Sky and Little Harbor
- ▶ Discounts at the Explore Store, local Avalon businesses and Conservancy events
- ▶ Subscription to *Conservancy Times*

At the **\$65 EXPLORER LEVEL**, member benefits apply for two in the same household

At the **\$125 ADVENTURER LEVEL**, member benefits apply to up to five people in the member's household, plus Adventurers receive:

- ▶ The chance to join a Conservancy support group, either Marineros or Caballeros
- ▶ 50% off a round-trip ticket on the Catalina Flyer for the cardholder
- ▶ Camping privileges at White's Landing

ISLAND KEEPERS are members who are dedicated to protecting Catalina Island. In addition to all the other membership benefits, they receive:

At the **\$250 CONSERVATIONIST LEVEL**, four gift passes to the Wrigley Memorial & Botanic Garden

At the **\$500 DISCOVERER LEVEL**, all of the above, plus \$50 off a Jeep Eco Tour

At the **\$1,000 NATURALIST LEVEL**, all of the above plus \$50 more off a Jeep Eco Tour, recognition on the Nature Center Donor Window and a behind-the-scenes tour

To become a member, please visit: CatalinaConservancy.org
Or please call: 562-437-8555 ext. 224
Or email: SCampbell@CatalinaConservancy.org

Catalina: The Wild Side Art Show & Sale

Artist "Hooked" on the Island's Beauty



"It seemed every corner I turned, there was another subject waiting to be painted."

Andy Evansen
Plein air artist

Andy Evansen says he first came to Catalina to study with another plein air painter, Joe Paquet, and was "hooked" by the beautiful quality of light, the dramatic landscapes and the Island's unique history.

"It seemed every corner I turned, there was another subject waiting to be painted," Evansen said. "Subsequent trips have allowed me to spend more time exploring the land the Catalina Island Conservancy stewards on the rest of the Island, and I'm never disappointed."

A resident of Minnesota, Evansen has returned to Catalina several times to create the watercolors that have made him one of the favorite artists at the Conservancy's Annual *Catalina: The Wild Side Art Show & Sale*. Evansen was among eight nationally recognized plein air artists at the Fifth Annual *Catalina: The Wild Side Art Show & Sale* which was held at the Newport Harbor Yacht Club this past October.

He joined John Cosby, Kim Lordier, Joe Paquet, Jesse Powell, Ron Rencher, Brian Stewart and Matt Smith at the event. As it has since its inception in 2011, the Fifth Annual *Catalina: The Wild Side Art Show & Sale* only featured art that depicted Catalina Island, and many works had a special focus on the "wild side," the 42,000 acres of lands stewarded by the Catalina Island Conservancy.

"*Catalina: The Wild Side* is an exciting event where you can see in one place paintings representing the unique visions of Catalina by nationally recognized plein air artists," said Victoria Seaver Dean, chair of this event. "You have the unique opportunity to talk with artists about their work while enjoying their varied portraits of Catalina and the land the Conservancy stewards."

Each of the artists who participated in the event visited the Island to paint *en plein air*, which is a French term for painting nature while being in nature. Their works captured the Island's wild side, its quiet coves, secluded beaches and the quaint streets and shops of Avalon.

In a unique use of art for conservation's sake, proceeds from the show benefit the Conservancy and support its conservation, education and recreation programs, as well as the Conservancy's permanent collection of plein air art that documents the organization's conservation efforts and progress in habitat restoration. Selections of paintings acquired during previous shows are on display for the public in the Conservancy's Nature Center in Avalon Canyon.

"Participating in this show is such an honor for me," said Evansen. "I am well aware of the quality of the show and the wonderful artists that take part each year. The time spent with friends painting, as well as the weekend of the show itself, are always highlights of the year for me."



Guests at the Fifth Annual *Catalina: The Wild Side Art Show & Sale* enjoyed speaking to the artists, admiring their works and purchasing paintings depicting Catalina Island.



Some of the artists participating in *Catalina: The Wild Side Art Show & Sale* described unusual experiences while painting on the Island—from encountering some of Catalina's famous wildlife while on the wild side to meeting some fascinating fellow travelers in Avalon and Two Harbors.

Artist Andy Evansen, for instance, met a young man who was planning to propose to his girlfriend while on the Island. He asked Evansen to create a painting of his proposal.

"I let him know that I planned on doing an evening painting at the Avalon Casino," said Evansen. "I didn't really expect him to show up. But that night he came by and proposed right by my easel. I took some great photos of the scene with the lit casino behind them, and he got his painting."

Gifts listed in order of amount. Listing includes annual support exclusive of auction items donated to or purchased at the Conservancy Ball and Catalina: The Wild Side art purchases. Does not include gifts to the IMAGINE CATALINA campaign.

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CONSERVANCY CALENDAR

MARK YOUR CALENDAR FOR ADVENTURE

FOR MORE INFORMATION ON ANY OF THESE EVENTS, GO TO
CATALINACONSERVANCY.ORG OR CALL 562-437-8555

Catalina Island Marathon

March 19

This event will feature the exciting marathon course used historically on Catalina's wildlands, including much of the rugged terrain, spectacular vistas and special challenges enjoyed by noted runner Hans Albrecht and friends in the earliest days of the event. For more information, please visit RunCatalina.com.



21st Annual Conservancy Ball

April 9

Join us for one of the biggest events of the year on Catalina Island. The 21st Annual Conservancy Ball promises to be another exciting and elegant evening of dining, dancing and fun benefitting the Conservancy. For more information, please visit the Conservancy's website or call 562-437-8555 ext. 239. To ensure you receive a formal invitation to the ball, please send your mailing address to Ball@CatalinaConservancy.org

BZ Jones and Thad Jones Hike

April 15–16

Join the Marineros support group for one of two exciting hikes taking place in the Catalina wildlands. The hikes honor the legacies of two dedicated Conservancy supporters and volunteers, the late Graham "BZ" Jones and his brother, Thad Jones III. The BZ Jones Hike is an annual, one-day trek across the width of Catalina Island that covers about 12 miles. The biennial Thad Jones Hike is an end-to-end Catalina Island hike that takes two days along the Trans-Catalina Trail. Food and transportation are included in the registration price for both hikes, and participants in the two hikes will meet for a catered lunch midway through the BZ Jones Hike and a celebration dinner in Avalon. For more information, please contact Spencer Campbell at 562-437-8555 ext. 224 or SCampbell@CatalinaConservancy.org.

Explore the Channel Islands

Summer/Fall

Join the Conservancy later this year for a boat trip to one of the Channel Islands and a hike. This annual tour gives participants a rare chance to learn more about the other islands. Lunch will be provided. Keep an eye out for additional details and a date.

Los Caballeros Catalina Trek

September 21–25

Members of Los Caballeros, accomplished horsemen who are also members of the Conservancy's Catalina Caballeros support group, will enjoy the 67th annual Catalina Trek. For more information, please visit LosCaballeros.org.



Las Caballeras Catalina Ride

September 30–October 4

Las Caballeras will celebrate their 22nd annual Island week of camping, camaraderie and cowgirl fun on this year's ride. Las Caballeras are all enthusiastic members of the Catalina Conservancy. For more information, please visit LasCaballeras.com.

Sixth Annual Catalina: The Wild Side Art Show & Sale at Newport Harbor Yacht Club

October 23

Don't miss the annual art show and sale featuring plein air artists who have captured the Island's restoration on canvas. A favorite event for those who love art and the Island, the proceeds from the sale of these unique works of art support the Conservancy's programs and a permanent plein air collection documenting Catalina's wild side and the restoration of the Island.

Annual Conservation and Education Symposium

November 18

Get an insider's view of the significant research and education underway on Catalina Island at the Annual Conservation and Education Symposium. Join the Conservancy's biologists and educators, as well as invited researchers and scientists, for a day-long series of presentations in Long Beach.



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