

# Return of The Natives

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### Special Options:

- *CSUMB students available for school garden help*
- *Upcoming Planting Days*
- *Free busses available for school planting events*
- *Upcoming RON Workshop*

### CSUMB Service Learning Students to be Available to Implement School Site Demonstration Gardens

Applications are currently being accepted for school sites wishing to have CSUMB Service Learning students assigned to work with the school in implementing a demonstration native plant garden. Under the direction of RON Landscape Architect, Joni Janecki, and course instructor, Laura Lee Lienk, students will work with your school and students in planning, citing, and planting.



CSUMB involvement will be from early February through early May and should result in a completed planting project. In order to receive this student help, interested schools need to insure the following prior to applying:

- a. Commitment from school administration.
- b. Sufficient funding to pay for native plants (\$300-\$500), student tools, and possibly an irrigation system.
- c. A firm commitment (in writing) from your district's landscape maintenance director that they will assist in the maintenance and watering of the garden-especially during school vacations.

d. A teacher/mentor who will agree to work with both the student and RON in this process.

To place your name on the list to receive a CSUMB Service Learning Student call 582-3689. Schools already on the list include: Gavilan View Middle School, Chualar Elementary, and Amesti Elementary.

### FUNDING FOR BUSES AVAILABLE FOR SCHOOL PLANTING DAYS on Ft. Ord Public Lands

Throughout the rainy season we will be having a series of outplanting days for school students. Funding for student buses will be available to active RON teachers. Call Laura Lee at 582-3689 to reserve a time for:

**Thursday, Jan 22**

**Friday, Jan 23**

**Thursday, Feb. 12**

### **RON Introductory Teacher Training:**

*February 7&8. Friday 5-9 pm  
and Saturday 8:30-5:00.*

**Please share these dates with  
your friends and colleagues**

RON Teacher Trainings are offered twice annually (September and February). This introductory level workshop is the gateway into the RON Program. Included in the workshop will be; an introduction to the values of native plants by BLM botanist Bruce Delgado; a native plant exploration laboratory; Native American storyteller and educator, Linda Yamane; propagation and greenhouse techniques; schoolyard landscaping with Landscape Architect, Joni Janecki, and an afternoon of field studies. The cost for the two day training is \$55 which includes; dinner Friday, breakfast and lunch Saturday, and the large binder of RON materials. All sessions will take place at the Watershed Institute, CSUMB.

Last date to register is February 4. Advance registration is critical as we will cancel if we have fewer than 12 participants.

To register send a check, or purchase order for \$55 to RON, c/o Watershed Institute, 100 Campus Center, Seaside, CA 93955

### **PLANTING HELP NEEDED ON FORT ORD PUBLIC LAND SITES**

**Saturdays: January 10,  
January 24, and February 14  
9 am-12 and 1-4 pm**

Our goal this year is to plant 50,000 native plants in highly eroded areas on the Ft. Ord Lands. By the time this newsletter reaches you, three school and two community days will have already taken place in November and December and over 15,000 plants should be benefiting from the season's early rains. Lots of volunteer help is still needed so bring your friends, families, clubs, church groups, (just everybody) for a fun day in nature.

Come for just the morning or the afternoon or both. Bring a lunch, and dress in layers--we go out rain or shine. Call the RON office at 582-3689 the day before the planting for directions to the work sites. General directions are as follows:

*Directions to Planting Sites from Hwy 1.* From Hwy 1. Enter Ft. Ord through the Main Gate. You will be on Lighthouse Street. Turn right on to North South Rd. At Gigling turn left. Continue to where the roads are barricaded

and follow the "planting event" signs to the work area.

*From Salinas:* Take Blanco to Reservation Rd. Left on Imjin Rd. Left on Abrams. Right on Intergarrison Rd. Left on 8th Avenue to Gigling. Continue to where the roads are barricaded and follow the "planting event" signs to the work area.

RON is proud to be a partner with the BLM/Ft. Ord Public Lands on this huge community involvement process. The following folks have truly worked hard in helping prepare the sites and in making the planting days the successes that they have been: Bree Candilario, Qaren Jacklich, Drew Ready, Amanda Quintero, Bruce Delgado, Abi Huff, Emily, Ellen Holmes, Maya Kedzior, Zachary Knapp, Ben Rudd, Clara.

### **Where Did all Those Plants Come From???**

About half of the 50,000 native plants being planted this rainy season have been grown in school greenhouses. From early September to December is enough time to grow many natives to a size suitable for planting. For obvious reasons quick germinating and quick growing plants such as grasses or the

hardy pioneer wildflower, Horkelia, have been favorites at the schools. The Los Padres school greenhouse had especially good luck with black sage--far surpassing the productivity of the Watershed Institute greenhouse for that species. No one can quite explain the Los Padres success. Other participating schools include: Central Coast High, North Monterey County High, Alisal High, Seaside High, Sherwood, Jesse Sanchez, Frank Paul, and Boronda Elementary Schools. Millions of thanks go out to these schools, the teachers, students, and parents whose countless hours of watering and gentle nurturing allowed so many seedlings to make it back to nature. Special thanks go to Qaren Jacklich who took charge of the greenhouses and all the training associated with the project. Though we no longer have funds to construct school site greenhouses, several schools have inquired about using special finds to purchase their own. We hope that by next year we will have even more schools growing native plants for the planet.

### **First Annual War on Weeds Symposium Big Success**

#### **War on Weeds Program Initiated**

On November 15, the Return of the Natives in partnership with the BLM officially launched a "War on Weeds" education and outreach campaign. Weed experts from around the area came together to share their knowledge and most effective management techniques against a host of green alien invaders. Sessions were held on combating Pampas Grass, Iceplant, and French Broom, the top three pests in our area. Tools in the arsenal against these noxious invaders include: manually digging or bashing in the case of pampas grass, a regime of mowing and application of herbicides for broom, and aggressive application of herbicides against the iceplant. Other control methods include short-term introduction of grazing animals, introduction of species specific insect control vectors, controlled burning, and planting of native plants to combat the aliens. In addition to the Monterey area's three worst enemies, other local species of concern include: European Beach Grass (on area dunes), German Ivy (along stream corridors), Yellow Star Thistle (in

rangeland and disturbed areas), Giant Reed (in Salinas River channel). Besides eradication measures to kill off these invaders, symposium participants expressed concern that some of these same species are being introduced by landscapers or nurseries. Education of these groups was declared a goal for the future.

RON has received funding from the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation in support of our involvement in the War on Weeds. Other RON weed projects include production of a local weed brochure and a weed slide show. We are hoping to have a Broom Bash on February 28 somewhere on Ft. Ord. A postcard will be sent out calling for volunteer bashers.

### **RON Gossip**

•••RON's biggest personal news is that RON Director, Bruce Stewart, his wife Roberta Dean, and daughter Jessica will receive a special Christmas gift in the form of a baby boy. Congratulations!!

•••Amanda Quintero leaves for a semester in Mexico. Laura Lee's most wonderful student assistant will be sorely missed as she journeys to Mexico for the semester. Amanda will be back to coordinate the Summer Internship program in June.

## RON Starts Restoration in Cesar Chavez Park

Perfectly anticipating the start of this season's rains, RON coordinated two planting days in Salinas' new Cesar Chavez Park. About three hundred students from Alisal and Salinas High Schools planted hundreds of large trees (sycamore, alder, willow, cottonwood, buckeye, oak) and shrubs (coyote bush) on Friday, November 7. The next day, Saturday, many neighbors joined the RON staff to plant over 1200 rushes and sedges in the wet area. And then, best of all, that night the rains started giving the plants a great start in their newly restored seasonal wetland home.

Another planting will take place in Chavez Park sometime early in the new year.

To see the restoration, turn north off of North Market Street onto Hebborn. At the end of the street, continue down into the park.

### RON / ADOPT-A-WATERSHED WORKSHOP BIG SUCCESS

On October 25, RON hosted an all day Adopt-A-Watershed Workshop at the Virginia Rocca Barton School and

Natividad Creek Park in Salinas. About 20 preservice (from CSUMB), and inservice teachers participated in four grade level workshops presented by four of Adopt-A-Watershed's (AAW) national trainers. The AAW curriculum units presented were all on the themes of creeks/streams/water quality monitoring/etc. RON and AAW share the following philosophical tenants:

- Science Concepts Applied to Local Environments
- Long-term Field Studies
- Watershed Restoration
- Community Involvement
- Reflection

Debi Delatour and Mike Stevenson of El Gabilan School and Penny Immel of Laurelwood are piloting AAW materials this year with their classes. In addition, many of the AAW units are on loan in the RON Resource Library at CSUMB's Watershed Institute.

### RON RESOURCE LIBRARY

Located in Laura Lee's office at the Watershed Institute, CSUMB, the RON Resource Library has a loan collection of environmental and science ed curricula available to all RON teachers in addition to CSUMB students.

Newer acquisitions include: Corky (Mary Ann) Matthews', "The Flowering Plants of Monterey County," the immense "Weed Identification Handbook" from the University of California Extension, and Kenny Ausubel's "Restoring the Earth". Previous acquisitions included the entire set of "A Child's Place in the Environment" (including literature selections), the Life Lab materials, Adopt-A-Watershed units, California Science Implementation Network (CSIN) units, water quality monitoring test kits, a soil profile demonstration model, etc. All materials are available on a two week loan basis.

Happy Holidays from the RON network of folks.  
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