

UC Santa Barbara

Newsletters

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UC SANTA BARBARA North Campus Open Space Restoration Project

NCOS NEWS

May 2022

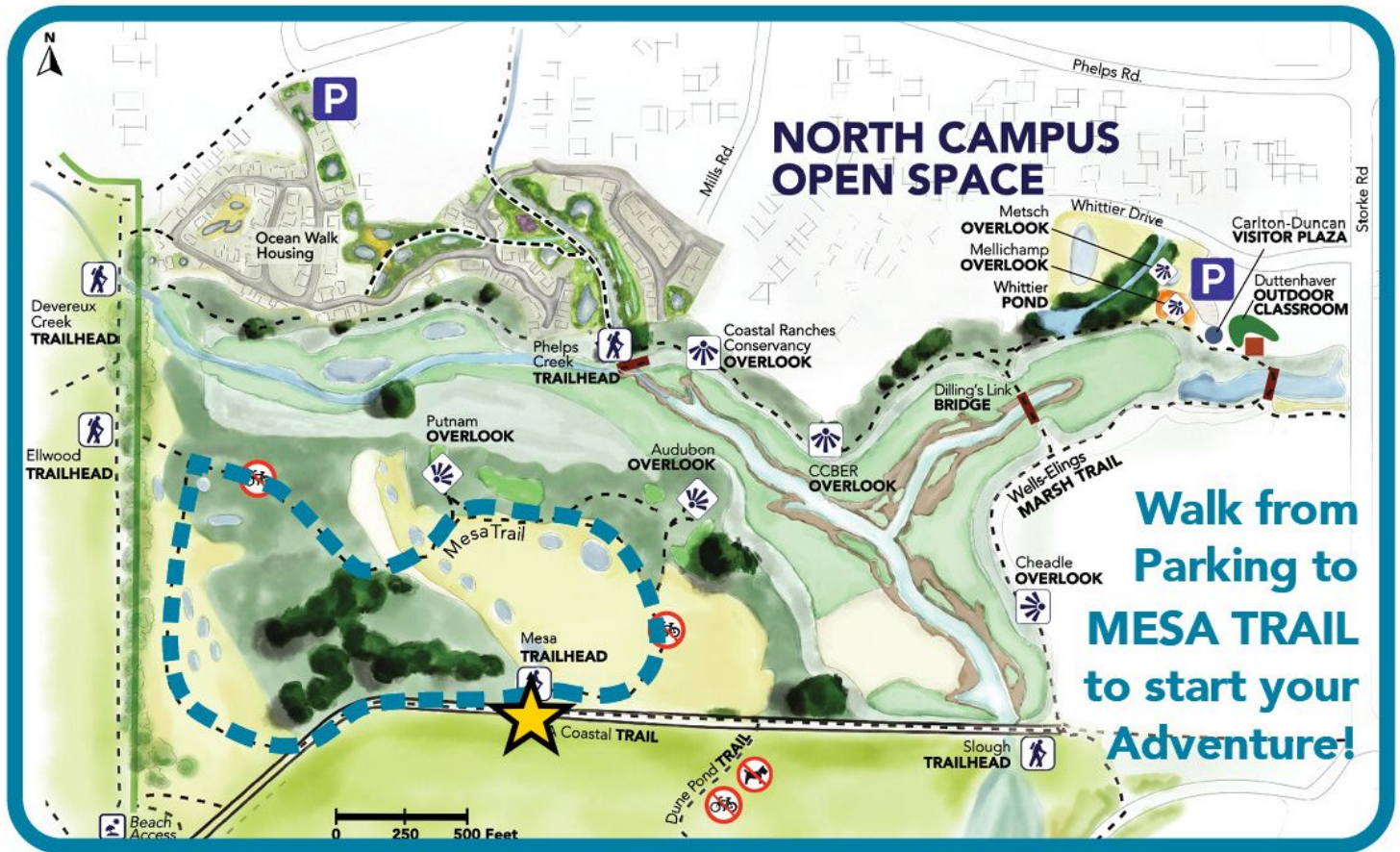


Canada goose with goslings. Photo by Susan Cook.

UPDATES

Mesa Trail Opening

You're invited! Come celebrate the Mesa trail opening on Saturday May 14 from 10am - 2pm. The event will take place at the Mesa Trailhead on Venoco Road with various activities occurring on the Mesa. Parking will be available at the Visitor Plaza parking lot at 6969 Whittier Drive as well as at the Coastal



List of Activities

- Scavenger Hunt
- Eyes in the Sky: Owls!
- Barbareno Blessing and Gratitude Circle @ 10:30
- Explore Food Webs: Scopes and Microscopes
- Rare Plant and Ethnobotany Tours
- Pollinator pop-up!

Help us sustain North Campus Open Space as a living laboratory and diverse natural area now and long into the future by contributing to the endowment ([donate here](#)). There are still important site and bridge naming opportunities available! The funding associated with these naming opportunities supports the NCOS endowment. We are one third of the way towards our \$6.4M goal.

NCOS Grand Opening Ceremony



The ribbon has been cut and NCOS is officially fully open!

On Thursday May 12, a wide variety of people involved with the NCOS project since its inception gathered at the ROOST and Visitor Plaza to celebrate the official grand opening of the site. Speakers included Carla D'Antonio, Chancellor Yang, and our very own Lisa Stratton.

More Rare Plants on the Mesa



Dwarf Brodiaea (*Brodiaea jolonensis*) flowering near the Mesa vernal pools.

We have added another rare plant to the array of species on the NCOS Mesa: Dwarf Brodiaea or *Brodiaea jolonensis*. This small flowering plant in the cluster lily genus occurs in coastal areas in the southern half of California and Northern Baja California. We are trying to expand its range locally as the species only occurs at one location at the South Parcel restoration site and one location in Isla Vista.

NCOS in the News

UCSB's The Current has released an article celebrating the full opening of NCOS. [Check it out here!](#)

FEATURE STORY

[***Student Perspectives on NCOS***](#)



From top left: Hazel, Marian, Lucas, and Kevin.

Student workers are an essential component of the NCOS restoration process and have been the bedrock of planting and weeding efforts since the beginning of the project. Through these intensive efforts they have gained an impressive understanding of the restoration process in a relatively short time span. We've interviewed four student workers to see how their work at NCOS has increased their awareness of the key successes of NCOS and the remaining challenges. [This feature story is continued on page 16.](#)

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

"Second Saturdays" is rescheduled for Mesa Trail Opening

This month: May 21, 9 -12

Help us restore and create NCOS with plants and more! Meet at 6969 Whittier Drive at 9am. Bring water, sunscreen, and wear a hat, clothes and shoes that are suitable for outdoor work.



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CCBER Greenhouse Associates

Come help transplant seedlings of native plants with the CCBER team from 9:00 - 12:00. To join, please send an email to ncos@ccber.ucsb.edu.



Nature Guide Tour

This month: May 21, 9:30 -11

Come take a walk around NCOS and learn about native plants and animals with a trained Nature Guide.

COMMUNITY FORUM & PHOTOS

We are interested in any observations of wildlife activity on NCOS, as well as plants and landscapes. Please send your observations, with or without photos, to ncos@ccber.ucsb.edu. Thank you!



Great Horned Owlets in the northwest of NCOS. Adults will often choose a nest that was built by another species, but will also use cavities in live trees, dead snags, and deserted buildings. Photo by Susan Cook.



Great Horned Owls have the most diverse diet of all North American raptors - their prey range in size from tiny rodents and scorpions to hares, skunks, geese, and even other raptors. Photo by Susan Cook.



Canada goslings near the seasonal pond. These young will likely remain with their parents for their entire first year of life. Photo by Jeremiah Bender.



Green Herons crouch patiently at the waters edge and wait for prey to swim near, sometimes using small items like twigs and insects for bait. Photo by Susan Cook.



© Susan T Cook

Western Bluebirds forage for insects by scanning the ground from a perch, then abruptly dropping to seize some unlucky prey. Photo by Susan Cook.



Red-tailed Hawk with snake prey. These raptors occupy most types of open habitat on the continent. Photo by Karen Lunsford.



Yellow-headed blackbirds breed in shallow areas of marshes, ponds, and rivers, and are often found nesting alongside Red-winged Blackbirds. Photo by Jeremiah Bender.



Long-tailed Weasel at the ROOST parking lot. Video by Oliver Fahrner.



A sleepy family of Canada geese. Video by Jeremiah Bender.

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**For more information on the
North Campus Open Space Restoration Project, [Click here](#), or email ncos@ccber.ucsb.edu**

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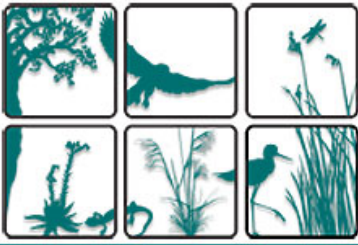
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STUDENT PERSPECTIVES ON NCOS

Student workers are an essential component of the North Campus Open Space restoration process and have been the bedrock of planting and weeding efforts since the beginning of the project. Through these intensive efforts they have gained an impressive understanding of ecological restoration in a relatively short time span. We've interviewed four student workers to see how their fieldwork has increased their awareness of the key successes and the remaining challenges at the North Campus Open Space.



Hazel is a third year Environmental Studies major at UCSB who has been working with the Cheadle Center since fall quarter. One of the major successes Hazel sees is the number of young student groups that are conducting field trips at NCOS. Hazel has worked with the Kids in Nature program and sees the integration of teaching and restoration as a central component. Through her work, Hazel has come to recognize the importance of a realistic invasive plant management plan. With a site as large as the North Campus Open Space, it is impossible to eradicate all invasive species so a management plan that prioritizes certain target weeds is essential. Additionally, the plant identification knowledge she's learned from her fieldwork has helped her recognize other native plants in environments around California, and she's excited to learn even more plant species.



Lucas is a third year Environmental Studies and Geography double major who has been working at the North Campus Open Space since winter quarter. Before his work with the Cheadle Center, Lucas was unfamiliar with NCOS and ecological restoration but has rapidly learned about the project itself as well as useful management practices, and finds the hydrological modeling associated with erosion control particularly interesting. For Lucas, the greatest success of the project so far is the increased flood control and improved water quality that resulted from the reestablishment of the historic slough channel and planting of salt marsh species. Lucas sees the remaining challenge as the sheer size of the site in terms of managing invasive plant species and controlling erosion.



Marian is a third year Environmental Studies major with a minor in Science and Math Education. Marian has been working at NCOS for nearly two years now on a research project with coastal sage scrub, as well as assisting with planting and weeding duties. Marian recognizes the site's many available human uses as one of its major successes - opportunities for recreation, botanizing, birdwatching, teaching, and research are all available to students and community members alike. In agreement with the other students, Marian sees invasive plant management as the greatest challenge for the project.



Kevin is a third year Environmental Studies major who has worked at NCOS maintaining oak plantings for Your Children's Trees as well as a student worker for the Cheadle Center. For Kevin, the most impressive success of the project is the accurate realization of the project plan. Having seen the complexity of the planned planting zones with the specific species selections, Kevin was impressed with the ability of the Cheadle Center staff and students groups to take these planning elements and turn them into reality. In terms of challenges, Kevin's on board with the rest in agreeing that invasive plant management on such a large site is the number one concern.

Hazel, Lucas, Marian, and Kevin all agreed that working in the field has opened their eyes to recognizing both native and non-native plant species in other local environments, and they're excited to continue learning through their work at the North Campus Open Space. Thanks for all your hard work!

Date:

Wednesday, May 11, 2022 - 15:00

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