



## News from Watsonville Wetlands Watch

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## Another Successful Native Plant Sale!



### Thank you for coming to our 5th Annual Native Plant Sale!

Attendees and volunteers were able to enjoy a beautiful and sunny day while they browsed for native plants for their gardens. These events are always a great way to support the community in planting drought tolerant and native habitat landscapes and gardens. Our classroom was full of a display of the flowering plants of the Watsonville Slough System and our nursery was filled with native plants for sale and a wealth of information on growing native plants, cultural and medical uses, and habitat gardening. All told, we sold over 600 plants and know that they are all being well taken care of in their new homes.

We would like to give special thanks to Suncrest, Aladdin, Sierra Azul and Soquel Growers Nurseries for their generous donations, to Cabrillo College for allowing use of their transport carts, and to the volunteers who diligently and expertly tend our nursery, native plant demonstration gardens, and helped on the day of the sale. This event wouldn't have been possible without them!

## Introducing our New Restoration Technician



Anthony Fuentes

Please join us in welcoming our new Restoration Technician, **Anthony Fuentes**! Originally from Hollister, he is a recent graduate of the University of California, Santa Cruz with a major in Environmental Studies. He comes to us with a wealth of restoration experience through the form of internships. While at UCSC, Anthony's favorite internship was with the Vicente Redwoods for Sempervirens Fund. When not out in the field, Anthony can be found looking for new travel destinations and playing variety of different sports.

*"My favorite part about restoration work is getting to eventually revisit the areas I work in and see the gradual change that I was an instrumental part of. I've enjoyed the last month working at the Wetlands Watch and look forward to jumping into even more exciting projects." - Anthony*

**Want to Join Us? Decent Training is Right Around the Corner**



Our **2018 Docent Training** Program will be **starting up in mid-January**. While there are a variety of ways to volunteer with us here at the Watsonville Wetlands Watch, becoming a docent is a fantastic way to make an incredibly meaningful contribution towards environmental education and restoration work while inspiring those around you on behalf of the Watsonville wetlands.

Docent training is a fun and interesting way to learn about the natural and cultural history of the wetlands from experts and to receive training for becoming a field trip facilitator. These interactive sessions include Wednesday evening presentations and Saturday morning field trips, visiting sites not normally seen by the public. Join our dedicated team of trained docent volunteers who help with field trips, lead tours, participate in special events, work in the greenhouse and native plant demonstration garden and a whole host of other projects. The wetlands are calling!

For more information, contact Volunteer and Outreach Coordinator Ria Mukerji at 909-680-9872 or email at [ria@watsonvillewetlandswatch.org](mailto:ria@watsonvillewetlandswatch.org).

## Restoration Update: Bryant Habert Property





Students from the Monterey Bay Academy helping to plant native grasses, sedges, rushes, and herbaceous plants

Our restoration staff just finished installing 5,500 native plants on the Bryant Habert Property. The project is part of an effort to improve wetland habitat around the section of Watsonville Slough between Highway 1 and the ocean. Students from the Monterey Bay Academy (pictured) helped plant almost 4,000 plants in one day, as part of their annual community service day, Project Blitz.

The project is a partnership with the Resource Conservation District of Santa Cruz County and the Land Trust of Santa Cruz County and is designed to improve native habitat and water quality while serving as a demonstration project for effective restoration of wetland habitat on former agricultural lands in a manner compatible with and beneficial for the surrounding farms and watershed.

In the last week we've seen burrowing owls on the property that are wintering in the area. We also hope to create a refuge for red-legged frogs, tri-color black birds, nesting American bitterns, and a whole host of other threatened, rare, and endangered wildlife species who call the sloughs home.

## Saturday Community Restoration at Pinto Lake





The project site at Pinto Lake Park. Volunteers will help us plant the hillside on the left.

On **Saturday, November 18th**, we invite you to help with a restoration project at Pinto Lake County Park.

On this day, volunteers will work alongside staff to plant a riparian corridor surrounding a newly constructed sediment catchment basin upstream of Pinto Lake. The catchment basin is designed to slow water flow during winter storms and reduce sediment accumulation in the lake from the surrounding watershed.

Project activities are being conducted in partnership with the Resource Conservation District of Santa Cruz County, the Santa Cruz County Parks Department, and surrounding neighbors. It is a part of the large and critically important effort to improve water quality and reduce the toxic algae blooms in the lake by several partners working on this, including those mentioned above, the City of Watsonville, the County of Santa Cruz, and the Friends of Pinto Lake.

You don't have to be a scientist or field biologist to help! Come join the Watsonville Wetlands Watch and be a part of this exciting project! We will work from 9:30 a.m. to noon and enjoy a walk down to the lake after our plants have been planted. We supply the gloves, tools, and a snack. Meet at the northern end of the Pinto Lake County Park parking area. The project site is just below the disc golf hole #1. ([map/directions](#))

For questions, please contact Mary Paul at [mary@watsonvillewetlandswatch.org](mailto:mary@watsonvillewetlandswatch.org) or 831-566-4938.

## Wetland Fun Fact: What's that sound?





Cackling Geese courtesy of Hugo Ceja

Have you been hearing a new bird sound lately? Something that you can almost place, but not quite? You may be hearing a flock of visiting cackling geese! These cackling geese have been seen in large flocks around the sloughs and are the smaller cousins of the more commonly known Canada Goose. While they mostly nest in marshy areas near streams and ponds, the ones that spend their time in colder areas like in the Aluetians often nest on steep cliff faces and rock slopes. How adaptable! Keep an eye out for these visitors on your next birding trip!

## A Time to Be Thankful



This is the time of year when we look back and reflect on all of the good things in our lives and how lucky we are to be able to enjoy them. The beauty of nature, the love of family and friends, and the satisfaction of doing all we can to support the things we believe in.

We at Watsonville Wetlands Watch are deeply thankful for your support. With your help we've made dramatic improvements to our precious coastal freshwater wetlands, introduced thousands of youth to nature and science through our educational programs, and raised awareness and appreciation for this magnificent ecosystem throughout our community.

Help us continue to do this good work. Your tax deductible gift will support our mission to protect, restore, and foster appreciation of the wetlands of the Pajaro Valley well into the future. Please consider making a donation today.

[Donate](#)

*Thank you!*

restores degraded habitats, preserves what remains whole, and teaches appreciation for the unique beauty and life of the Pajaro Valley wetlands. In cooperation with numerous other agencies, we support studies of and planning for these sites.

Watsonville Wetlands Watch is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization, federal tax i.d. #77-0519882.