

UC Santa Barbara

Newsletters

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Authors

Clark, Ryan
Stratton, Lisa

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UC SANTA BARBARA

North Campus Open Space Restoration Project

NCOS NEWS

March 2018



Aerial photo of NCOS on February 27, looking from east to west and showing the connection with Elwood Mesa.

UPDATES

Progress on the Bridges

The construction of the bridges and crossings by Granite has progressed rapidly over the last month, and we are beginning to see the structures take shape - exciting!



The boardwalk crossing at the northeast side of NCOS (near Whittier Drive) is nearly complete.

Keeping NCOS and our Creeks and Wetlands Trash free

Last week, ahead of the rain, we scoured Phelps Creek and removed 5 trash-can loads of rubbish that washed down from previous stormwater flows. We're working with the City of Goleta to help resolve current issues with urban trash getting into creeks and waterways, and subsequently transferring into wetlands such as NCOS.





Thumbs down on urban waste in our creeks and wetlands!

***Salicornia* Seed Spreading**

Just in time for last week's light rain, our restoration staff hand-spread 200 liters of locally collected seeds of pickleweed (*Salicornia pacifica*) on the islands and throughout the lower salt marsh area of NCOS. This will help increase the growth and establishment of this key salt marsh plant across the wetland areas of NCOS.



CCBER staff spreading pickleweed seeds to help establish this important salt marsh plant.

Second Saturday Planting

Come enjoy a beautiful Saturday morning outside and be a part of creating NCOS **THIS SATURDAY - MARCH 10th**. Meet at the parking lot on Whittier Drive at 9:30 am. Please RSVP to ncos@ccber.ucsb.edu. See the Volunteer Opportunities section of this newsletter for more information.

FEATURE STORY

Getting Kids into Nature at NCOS



Roosevelt Elementary students proudly show all of the pots of the many plants they installed during a Kids in Nature day at NCOS.

The NCOS Kids in Nature 2 program provides opportunities for K-12 students to expand their minds and get up close and personal with nature!

[This feature story is continued on page 11.](#)

Plus - check out this **[stylish video montage](#)** of the most recent KIN2 day at NCOS, created by an enthusiastic and talented parent (Albert DiPadova).

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES



Second Saturday Planting at NCOS

THIS SATURDAY - MARCH 10th

Meet at 6975 Whittier Drive at 9:30 am. Bring water, sunscreen, and wear a hat, clothes and shoes suitable for working with soil. Please

RSVP to ncos@ccber.ucsb.edu

This event may be canceled due to rain. If so, then we will send a cancellation email to all who RSVP on Saturday morning. Otherwise, we'll see you there!



Group Volunteer Opportunities

We gladly welcome local business, non-profit, school and other community groups to come out to NCOS to help with planting and other activities. For more information, please send an email to ncos@ccber.ucsb.edu.



Thursdays - 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.

COMMUNITY FORUM & PHOTOS

Q & A

We want to send out a big **THANK YOU** to the generous local community members that have handed checks over the fence to CCBER staff to donate to our restoration efforts at NCOS. Personal checks are certainly welcome, and for another, perhaps easier way to contribute funds for the long-term management and maintenance of the North Campus Open Space, UCSB now has a [webpage where](#)

[donations can be made.](#)

Photos

Have a plant, wildlife, or other photo of the NCOS project site you'd like to share? We welcome submissions of photos of the project site and/or the adjacent Ellwood-Devereux area to share with NCOS News readers. Please email a photo you would like to share along with a brief description to ncos@ccber.ucsb.edu.

This month we are delighted to feature recent pictures from local photographer, Callie Bowdish. Callie captured some lovely shots of the Greater white-fronted geese and sandpipers (Least and Western) that have become daily visitors at NCOS.





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

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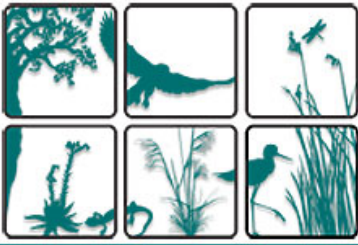
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GETTING KIDS INTO NATURE AT NCOS

Twelve classrooms, 300 students, 1500 plants, and lots of smiles and 'wow' moments for students describe, in a nutshell, the first three months of the NCOS Kids in Nature 2 program (KIN2). Funded by the [State Coastal Conservancy](#), these numbers represent just the beginning of a program that connects students to our coastal resources at NCOS.



Roosevelt Elementary students proudly display stacks of pots showing how many plants they helped plant during a Kids in Nature 2 event.

So far, multiple classrooms from Isla Vista Elementary, Roosevelt Elementary in Santa Barbara, and Righetti High School in Santa Maria have visited NCOS to learn about wetland ecology and participate in restoration through planting. CCBER staff and UCSB interns led the K-12 students in group hands-on activities described below that enhanced their understanding and appreciation of the natural world, and empowered the students to see themselves as part of the solution to environmental challenges.

An enthusiastic and talented parent (Albert DiPadova) created a [stylish video montage](#) of the most recent KIN2 day at NCOS.

Bird Identification

Using binoculars, a spotting scope, and labeled photos, students are taught to observe color pattern, size, and calls of birds in the wetland. They learn to pick up clues about a bird's identity and decipher for themselves what they are seeing. Learning how to use the equipment and the opportunity to see details never seen before provide a new perspective on the natural world. Favorite birds include turkey vultures, red-tailed hawks, black phoebes, American coots, Anna's hummingbirds, great blue herons, and many more. Pictured on the right: Roosevelt Elementary 4th graders observing birds in Devereux Slough.



Wetland Food Webs

Students participate in an activity that teaches the different parts of a food web, including producers, primary consumers, secondary consumers, tertiary consumers, and decomposers in terrestrial and marine food chains and how organisms get the energy they need to survive. Through role playing, the students learn that each part of the food web has a unique place in a wetland ecosystem and that missing links can weaken the web. This experience helps students see the value in even the smallest component of the web.



Plant Adaptations

Why do plants that grow in certain areas tend to look similar to each other but different from plants growing in other areas? Students learn about the unique adaptations of some of the salt marsh and wetland plants at NCOS. By pointing out the different sizes, shapes and textures of plants, and drawing their attention to the different types of habitats and plant communities around them that make up an ecosystem, staff help the students develop the tools to observe the world around them. Plants include *Schoenoplectus californicus* (tule or bulrush) which is adapted to low soil oxygen, and *Salicornia pacifica*

(pickleweed) and *Distichlis spicata* (saltgrass) which are adapted to tolerate high salinity. Pictured on the left: Roosevelt Elementary students theorize about the adaptive significance of the tall and hollow nature of freshwater marsh plants. These experiences help students learn to look more closely at their environment because they have the tools to understand what they are seeing.

Coastal Ecosystem Services

Using watering cans to flood physical models with miniature buildings from board games set in natural and urban settings, students develop an understanding about basic hydrologic principles and wetland function. Through stories about the history of the golf course, a filled wetland, and the restoration of NCOS, they learn why wetlands are unique ecosystems that merit protection. Up to 90% of California wetlands have been lost or filled, and wetlands play a critical role in ecosystem stability, promote nutrient cycling, support biodiversity, filter water, serve as a natural buffer to flooding, and protect our coastlines and local infrastructure.

Hands-on Habitat Restoration

Students develop a sense of ownership and empowerment by helping to plant seedlings on the project site along side CCBER staff and UCSB students. Students learn the names of native wetland and coastal sage scrub plants as part of that process. So far this school year, KIN 2 participants have planted over 1500 native plants. These students feel connected physically to this place on the landscape and will be able to return over their lifetime to follow the fate of their plants! Pictured on the right: 4th graders from Roosevelt Elementary making a real difference at NCOS.



One of CCBER's goals in the NCOS restoration project is to offer opportunities for students and volunteers to gain experience in all aspects of restoration ecology. The Kids in Nature 2 program is an integral part of meeting that goal.



Excited about connecting with nature, Roosevelt Elementary students smile and jump for joy after learning and working at NCOS.

Date:

Tuesday, March 6, 2018 - 09:15

Tags:

[Kids in Nature](#)

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