



Forest Stewardship Education Newsletter
March 2022
UC California Naturalist Program

Greetings from UC ANR

What is this plant growing in my forest understory? Where can I engage with others to learn more about my local, natural community? These are common questions from Forest Stewardship Workshop participants and one excellent resource I often direct people to is the [UC California Naturalist Program](#).

The UC California Naturalist Program (Cal Nat) is designed to introduce Californians to the wonders of our unique ecology, engage the public in study and stewardship of California's natural communities, and increase community and ecosystem resilience. [iNaturalist](#) is an online app that helps you identify and record your natural observations, connect with other naturalists across the globe, and participate in citizen science. We have begun introducing the UC California Naturalist Program and iNaturalist to our workshop participants during a few of our field days and have received a lot of positive feedback. It is a great resource to help forest landowners identify what is growing and living on their land, track its progression or regression, contribute to the wider body of scientific knowledge, and help you fill in parts of the 'Current Property Conditions' section of the California Cooperative Forest Management Plan!

There are many ways to engage in Cal Nat. and iNaturalist. Most recently, I used iNaturalist to identify plants while hiking in Montana! I hope you find these resources as helpful and engaging as I do.

Cheers,
Kim Ingram, Forest Stewardship Coordinator



Barberries
Genus *Berberis*

My photo and uploaded observation into iNaturalist

"I'm compelled to apply for a California Naturalist certificate so I can keep learning more about how to promote biodiversity and protect watersheds, in addition to fire safety, which has been a priority for us" - Workshop participant

The UC California Naturalist Program

Established in 2012, the mission of the California Naturalist Program is "to foster a diverse community of naturalists and promote stewardship of California's environment and natural resources through education and service."

There are two certification courses offered under the California Naturalist Program: UC Climate Stewards (new in 2021) and California Naturalists. The program collaborates with local partner organizations, such as community colleges, museums, and parks to deliver the courses. There are over 4000 certified naturalists and 250 climate stewards. Many are engaged in service in the areas of education and interpretation, stewardship, participatory science, environmental program support, community resilience, and environmental justice.



Learn more about the California Naturalist Program

To become certified, participants enroll in and complete a 40+ hour course with a partner organization. The course structure varies between organizations, and may include classroom, virtual or field based weekly sessions, weekends or a week-long immersion course. Subjects covered include ecology, geology, plant communities, forest, woodland and range resources and management, wildlife, communication and interpretation, participatory science, and energy and global environmental issues. Participants are required to engage in their co-horts participatory science project before final certification. Continuing education credits are also available through UC Davis Continuing and Professional Education after certification.

Certified California Naturalist and Climate Stewards are encouraged to volunteer in their local communities in activities ranging from participatory science, land and water stewardship, civic engagement, environmental justice, and education and interpretation activities. To date, certified California Naturalists and Climate Stewards have volunteered over 250,000 hours, worth over \$7 million dollars, in 52 of 58 counties in California.

The Forest Landowner and California Naturalist Connection

Curiosity and Stewardship

"What do we use our California forests for?" Forest Stewardship Workshop participants know the answer to this is, "It depends!" They know that how a forest is managed and what 'uses' it has depends on the goals and objectives of each landowner. They also know that forest stewardship covers more than the trees. The California Naturalist Program takes on this all-encompassing approach by providing participants sessions on soils, geology, water, plants, wildlife, and energy.

The goals of the Forest and Woodland Resources session include appreciation and understanding of:

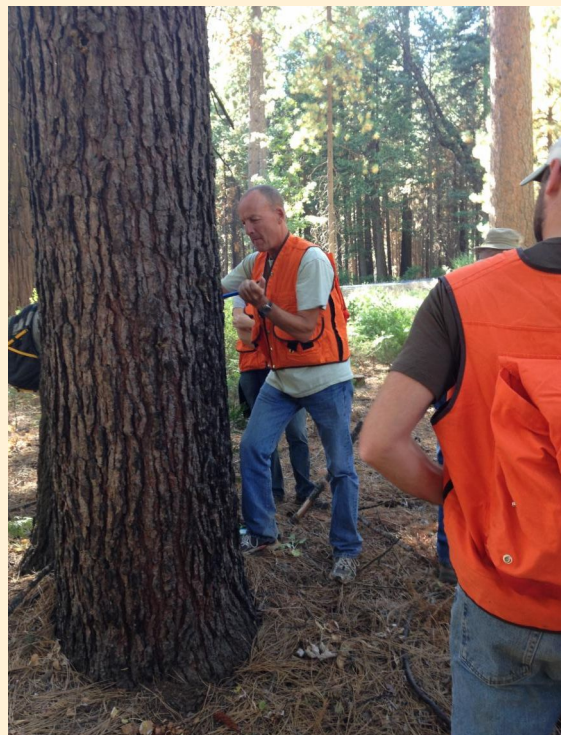
- The ecological and economic value of forests;
- Forest structure;
- The role of fire for forest health and regeneration;
- The various benefits that forests provide; and

- The challenges of balancing society's conflicting desires for forests.

Other sessions include discussions on the role that nutrient cycles play in shaping plant communities; erosion and mitigation efforts; watersheds; water quality and quantity; native and invasive plant species; seed dispersal and adaptation; carbon sequestration; habitat fragmentation; food webs; climate change and pollution. "What do we use our California forests for?" Everything!

Advanced trainings beneficial to forest landowners

Certified naturalists have the opportunity to dive deeper into topics through Advanced Trainings. For example, several visited UC Berkeley's Blodgett Research Forest to attend an advanced training on fire ecology and history. Participants toured research sites that measured the effects of fuels treatments, monitored spotted owls and visited the nearby King Fire to see effects first hand. Guest speakers included fire scientists and forest managers. Additionally, a local Native American speaker discussed traditional ecological knowledge, and an artist helped participants explore fire visually through water color. 71% said the workshop was excellent and exceeded their expectations and 57% strongly agreed that the workshop enhanced knowledge of fire ecology and wildlife.



Calaveras Big Trees State Park CA Naturalist participant coring a tree

“This collaboration benefits the docent program at Calaveras Big Trees as many students are also active park docents. The park also benefits from increased knowledge and support of the park by other participants in the course.” Wendy Harrison, Retired Lead Interpreter, Calaveras Big Trees State Park

Meet the California
Naturalists: Participant
Story Map

California Naturalist:
Frequently Asked
Questions

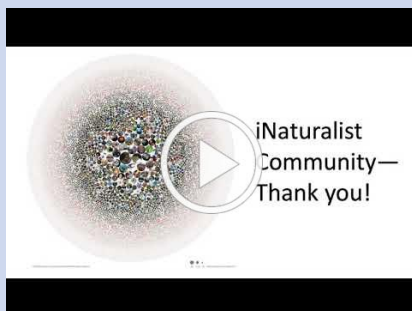
California Naturalist
Publications
(Including [Natural History
of the Sierra Nevada](#) by



iNaturalist

With over 2 million worldwide observers, iNaturalist connects you to a community of citizen scientists, organizations and researchers all committed to learning about and increasing stewardship of our natural landscapes.

Simply download the iNaturalist app on your smart phone, create an account and log in. If you do not have access to a smart phone, iNaturalist has a desktop version. The desktop version has many features that the app does not, including robust search features and the ability to batch load and archive all your old photos. Now you are ready to photograph your observations, upload them in to iNaturalist and learn all about that plant or critter! Learn how people around the globe are using iNaturalist for ecological research by watching this video:



iNaturalist also provides



In collaboration with partners, the UC Climate Stewards certification aims to:

- Increase access to up-to-date and locally relevant climate science to improve climate literacy;
- Establish a community of practice focused on stewardship, communication, and community solutions to advance resiliency; and
- Build statewide support for and capacity to effectively advance state and local climate goals.

Similar to the CA Naturalist program in course structure, the Climate Stewards training also includes an overview of state and local climate policies in an effort to become a catalyst for public participation in California's climate change initiatives. The initial results of the first year of the UC Climate Stewards course implementation was recently published in the journal Sustainability.

**Upcoming California
Naturalists or
Climate Stewards
Workshops**

resources to help you learn about flora and fauna taxa, biodiversity guides around the globe, assembled observations for places you might want to visit, and forums covering various topics. Explore the [iNaturalist YouTube channel](#) full of interesting and informative videos.



Sonoma workshop participant posting an iNaturalist observation



Current and Upcoming Forest Stewardship Workshops:

- March 16th - May 10th, Placer-Nevada Co-hort, Online and in-person field day (April 2nd) in Nevada County
- May 4th - June 29th, Lassen-Modoc Co-hort, Online and in-person field day (May 21st)

For more information on the workshop, and to share with a friend, please visit: <http://ucanr.edu/forestryworkshopregistration>



University of California Cooperative Extension | 137 Mulford Hall, #3114 | Berkeley, CA 94720-3114 US

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