

Problems in Paradise - Weed Invasion in the Bull Creek Restoration Project

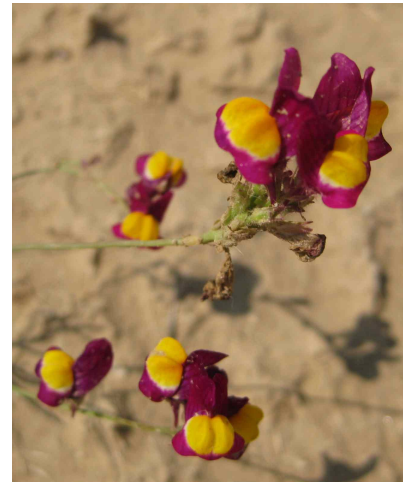
Report by Steve Hartman, California Native Plant Society, June 23, 2009



Giant reed grass (*Arundo*) sprouts at the top of one of the new hills. Bush mallow is the shrub at the left. California poppies and golden yarrow are native components of the hydromulch seed mix that unfortunately included non-natives as well. The project area is prime habitat for weeds that thrive on recently excavated and disturbed areas, especially when overhead irrigation is provided in late spring and summer months.

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The hills south of the island apparently have a different water regime than the upper hill; the flush of weeds is not apparent. However, numerous non-native wildflowers apparently have been included in the hydromulch solution, as shown below. In addition, giant reed grass is sprouting in some places.



Apparent non-native wildflowers blooming in June include allysum, gazania, figwort, unknown *Solanum* (tobacco), unknown pink flower, another freeway daisy.

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The view below is from the top of the upper hill, overlooking the oxbow and the island. The green swath on the left and middle portion is mostly non-native weeds with a smattering of poppies and phacelia, along with a few shrubs and small trees planted. Some areas (such as on the island and along the main channel) show evidence of herbicide application.



Weeds compete with native plants trying to get established. Above, puncture vine and tecolote. To the right, a sumac tries to grow in a sea of mustard. On the far right, a walnut sapling. Russian thistle grows thick along the project area's perimeter trail fenceline.

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Upper hillside hydromulched and then irrigated with overhead watering; while poppies and some other native are present, area is dominated by weeds (as of mid June 2009) and weeds are not being controlled.



Russian thistle is common throughout the Bull Creek area.

Wildlife Committee strongly opposed overhead watering based on 1986 experience. Why won't anyone listen?



Tremendous amounts of tree tobacco are sprouting.



Spiny cocklebur, while native, is a weedy and undesirable plant that has been controlled in the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve (north reserve).



Horehound is unwelcome anywhere in the Basin



Filaree is a common weed of disturbed areas.

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Significant areas not planted with natives and weeds not being controlled.



above, area at mouth of oxbow above checkdam being invaded by Russian thistle, ailanthus, tecolote, etc.



above, two areas opposite each other just south of north bridge are unmanaged weedy areas..