



# THE MCKINLEYVILLE LAND TRUST

SUMMER 2023

NUMBER 39

## Forest Mapping and Invasive Ivy Management at Mad River Bluffs

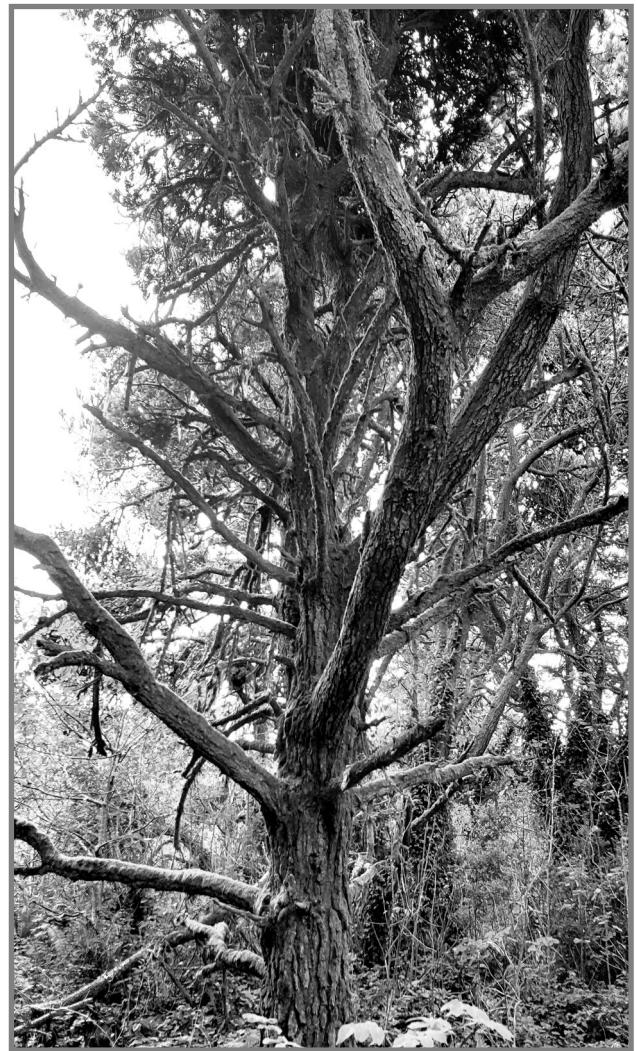
By Vicki Ozaki

Last fall, Cal Poly Humboldt students Kevin Christensen, Aaron DeBoever, and Nicole Muniz, mapped forest types and ivy infestations at Mad River Bluffs (MRB) and developed a management strategy for treating English Ivy (*Hedera helix*) areas for their Applied Ecological Restoration capstone project. Prior to their study, little was known about the overall distribution of forest types, and the location and extent of invasive ivy at MRB.

Their work identified and mapped three forest types based on the dominant tree species (Shore pine or Sitka spruce or mixed forest with both species represented). The locations of individual “old-growth” Sitka spruce trees were also identified. Old-growth spruce were defined as having secondary branches within the lower 30 feet of the tree, a complex structure, and/or snags within the tree.

English and Cape ivy are major invasive villains in coastal forests throughout California and the Pacific Northwest. The Mad River Bluffs is no exception and ivy is spreading throughout the property. Ivy grows as both ground cover and climbing vines along the bluffs and in the coastal forest. When established, ivy quickly outcompetes native vegetation by forming dense ground cover, blanketing brush, and engulfing trees. These dense mats eliminate native plants and wildlife habitat.

The capstone team mapped the location, density, and extent of ivy as well as the presence of other invasive plants at the Mad River Bluffs. Not surprisingly, Ivy (English ivy, *Hedera helix*; Cape ivy, *Delairea odorata*) are the dominant invasive plant species on the site. The team also developed an ivy intensity scale



***Did you know that there are 41  
old-growth Sitka spruce trees at  
Mad River Bluffs?***

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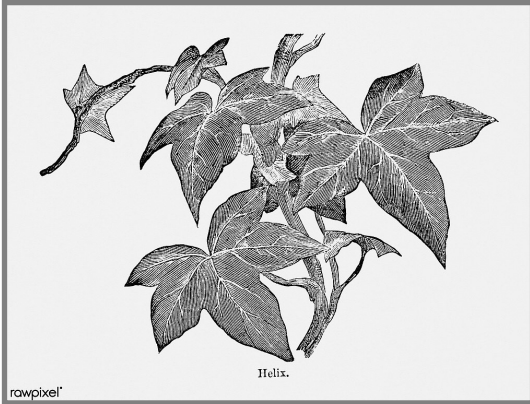


Illustration from: *Helix* from *The Ivy*, a Monograph (1872) by Shirley Hibberd (1825–1890). Digitally enhanced from our own original edition.

comprised of four classes which were based on the coverage and density of ivy, and the estimated amount of labor needed to remove it. Based on their trials, it takes one person between 5 to 15 minutes to remove 10 square meters (about 10 ft by 10 ft area) of ivy. Using this information, the group developed an ivy control strategy and treatment options. This mapping effort provides an excellent understanding of the broad extent of ivy on the property.

As a small all-volunteer land trust, we lack the capacity and funding to gather important scientific data to best manage our properties. This project and final report “*A study mapping forest types and developing an English Ivy (Hedera helix) management plan for the Mad River Bluffs*” provided invaluable maps, data and a beginning strategy for treating ivy at the Mad River Bluffs. This information also provides basic data MLT can use when we apply for natural resource management grants.

## Welcome to Our New Board Members

By Duncan McNeill

I would like to introduce two new members to the McKinleyville Land Trust Board of directors—Ethan Lawton and Kari Stockdale.

Ethan has lived in Humboldt County for 11 years and in McKinleyville for seven. He likes that our values align with the conservation of open spaces for ecological, historical, agricultural, educational, recreational, and scenic values. As a Native American, he is bringing a broader view to the board. He has worked with many of our local Tribes and land trusts and will be an asset to us.

Kari has lived in McKinleyville for two years and is a recent graduate of Cal Poly Humboldt with a degree in Geology. She found through volunteering at Chah-GAH-Cho that she likes our commitment to maintaining safe public access, health, diversity, and productivity to our local open spaces. Along with her desire to be more involved in our community, her communication,



fundraising, and past volunteer/ recruiting work will be a huge benefit to us.

We are thankful to both Ethan and Kari for joining our Board of Directors.

## WHAT'S HAPPENING AT CHAH-GAH-CHO

By Garry Rees

Over the last year, MLT has continued to work very closely on the oversight and maintenance of Chah-GAH-Cho (CGC) with John Shelter and his company, New Directions. For those who are not yet familiar, New Directions is a company that uses a non-adversarial and harm reduction approach to outreach to individuals experiencing homelessness and residing in illegal encampments. As part of their outreach efforts, the company offers resources, opportunities, and educates the campers on ecological impacts and appropriate environmental stewardship. New Directions monitors CGC on a regular basis to pick-up trash, clear illegal encampments, and maintain vegetation. If you wish to know more about John Shelter and the New Directions group, you can visit their Facebook site at <https://www.facebook.com/thepeopleofnewdirections/>.

In addition to the continued work with New Directions, MLT has reestablished its relationship with the Humboldt County Sheriff's Office to assist in

preventing illegal encampments and the deterioration of CGC. After clearing CGC of illegal campers in the fall of 2022, MLT and New Directions removed several tons of trash from encampments on the property. We have also widened the trails on the upper loop for better lines of sight and are opening up areas in the densely vegetated center of the upper loop to discourage illegal camping and use. These efforts have allowed MLT to continue to fulfill its mandate of managing CGC for recreational, aesthetic, and ecological values as well as improving safety and protecting natural resources.

This last year has also seen a number of community members continue to pitch in to help maintain CGC both on their own and during work events organized by MLT and the Humboldt Trails Council Volunteer Trail Stewards. We look forward to continuing our collaboration with the community to ensure that CGC remains a beautiful natural area for the public to enjoy.



## Alarm Bell for Species

By Joyce King

Last December, the United Nations Biodiversity Conference, along with the Intergovernmental Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services, delivered what should have been headline news for the world - **the current rate of biodiversity loss is unprecedented in human history, up to 10,000 times faster than natural background, leading toward the disappearance of an eighth of the world's species within decades.** This alarm should have been followed by continuous, high-profile media coverage to illustrate the magnitude of threat to humanity, but how many of us heard?

Some coverage was excellent but short-lived.

### Habitat loss:

<https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2022/12/09/climate/biodiversity-habitat-loss-climate.html> or <https://www.half-earthproject.org/ny-times-reports-animals-are-running-out-of-places-to-live/>

### Imperiled biodiversity:

<https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2022/03/03/climate/biodiversity-map.html?smid=url-share>

### California has the most imperiled biodiversity of any state in the contiguous United States.

In much of Humboldt, habitats of imperiled species are outside of conservation zones.

Because human conversion of natural landscapes is the top driver of biodiversity loss, land trusts have an important role to play, and are among strategies listed in both federal and state initiatives for protection of areas of high biodiversity and climate value. But while we wait for the bureaucracies, we can also help by restoring native species, removing alien invasives, avoiding herbicide & pesticide use, and educating ourselves and others.

## Himalayan Blackberry – A Love/Hate Relationship

By Leonel Arguello

Who hasn't had jam or a pie made from the delicious Himalayan blackberry or walked past a field and picked the luscious, large black berries carrying nature's full complement of natural sugar? Yet who hasn't been scratched and snagged from the plants innumerable thorns? It is probably one of the few plants that are both loved and loathed in equal measure.

Himalayan Berry is not native to the Himalayan region of Asia. It is in fact native to the Middle East, and the Caucasus Mountains of Eurasia. Introduced to western Europe in 1835, it quickly invaded many areas and habitats. Luther Burbank introduced this plant to Oregon in 1885 and named these berries Himalayan Giants. The moniker stuck. Almost immediately the plant escaped the confinement of gardens and quickly became the dominant shrub in many areas of the western US. Today, it can be found everywhere



except Antarctica. The fruit are a great source of many vitamins and nutrients, provide food for many bird and wildlife species and the canes provides cover for some nesting birds and small mammals.

This invasive plant significantly reduces native shrub and tree cover, reduces habitat diversity, creates

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impenetrable thickets for larger wildlife, and can be flammable. The plant has stems, that arch and trail along the ground up to 25 ft, and flowering stems, that branch out in all directions. The canes are ridged and fully armed with thick, large thorns. The roots of the plant can grow down to 6 ft and extend up to 35 ft away. Control can be very difficult and generally requires a mix of strategies. It is well worth the effort

to help restore native plant species and wildlife habitat.

So come to our properties at Mad River Bluffs and Chah-GAH-Cho where you can indulge in your love for these plump delicious summertime treats, or firmly resolve to help wipe out these invading plants to benefit native ecosystems...or feel the tug of both.

## What's Happening at Mad River Bluffs

By Vicki Ozaki

The trails at Mad River Bluffs are well used and loved by our local community. Over the last year, the trails at MRB have been maintained through a wonderful partnership with the Humboldt Trails Council Volunteer Trail Stewards.

For the first time, MLT hosted a school field trip with the Kneeland Elementary School (K-8 grade). Students went on a hike and learned about MRB's ecological importance, picnicked, enjoyed a scavenger hunt, and pulled invasive ivy with us. It was a wonderful experience sharing MRB with the students. We hope they will bring their families back to explore the Mad River Bluffs together.

Last fall, students from Cal Poly Humboldt completed an excellent capstone project at MRB. See article on "*Forest Mapping and Invasive Ivy Management at Mad River Bluffs*." Their work will help the MLT manage invasive species.

### Have you been to the river lately?

The river access trails at MRB were built two decades ago and the continual impacts of time, weather and use have degraded the stairs. The middle section of the south stairs was rebuilt in 2021 and the upper section was rebuilt in 2022. The rebuild of the upper section included installing a wooden handrail to protect the bluff. We were fortunate to receive a grant from the McKinleyville Area Fund (MAF) to help cover a portion of the repairs last year.

**Many thanks to the MAF for helping us create a safer river access and to Steffen Allen for all his work on this project.**

With this project completed, we are now looking to repair/rebuild the access to the Mad River on the north end of the property. We lost a section of the handrails last winter which needs replacement and to rebuild the upper portion of the stairs. This will be an expensive project but we are currently applying for community grants and looking for community donations to support our repair efforts.



## McKinleyville Land Trust - Volunteer Trail Stewards

By Julie Neander

Volunteering for the MLT this past year has been one of my favorite activities. It's been great to work with and get to know many wonderful folks while helping maintain two of McKinleyville's best natural areas, Mad River Bluffs and Chah-GAH-Cho.

During 2022, the MLT and the Humboldt Trails Council's Volunteer Trails Stewards began co-sponsoring quarterly workdays at both Mad River Bluffs and Cha GAH Cho. Volunteers helped maintain trails and removed invasive plants at Mad River Bluffs. At Chah-GAH-Cho, volunteers removed ivy, maintained trails, and removed tree seedlings from the meadow area. Additional workdays were held twice with the Cal Poly Humboldt Men's soccer team, Kneeland School students, and the Cal Poly Humboldt Women's Volleyball team at Mad River Bluffs.

Thank you to the Humboldt Trails Council for supporting our volunteer workdays and providing outreach for our events on their website. Their efforts



connected us with the Cal Poly Humboldt Men's Soccer Team and Kneeland School!

MLT would love to have you and local organizations join us to learn more about Mad River Bluffs and Chah-GAH-Cho. Help us build our community of volunteers who maintain and protect these special places during one of our regularly scheduled workdays on the third Sunday of January, April, July, and October from 10am -12pm. Learn more about these places and scheduled workdays on our website [mckinleyvillelandtrust.org](http://mckinleyvillelandtrust.org).

Please contact us at [volunteer.mlt@gmail.com](mailto:volunteer.mlt@gmail.com) or to call **707-839-LAND** if you want to receive workday notifications or you and your organization have questions and/or would like to arrange a specific work event with us.

*Thank you to the over 100 volunteers who put in more than 200 hours to help us care for these special places.*

## Dow's Prairie Wetland

By Nanette Kelly and Emily Teraoka

The Dow's Prairie Educational Wetland hosted a cool group of Pathmakers high school students this spring. Wetland team leader Nanette Kelley taught the students about the plants and animals typically found at a seasonal wetland as they all worked together in stewardship of the land.

The winter rains filled up the pond for the first time in several years and the frogs were in full swing. The

students brought an instrument to measure sound level. At rest, when the frogs were quiet, about 40 decibels were measured, and when the frogs were singing up a storm, about 80 decibels were recorded. It was quite deafening to the humans standing on the edge of the pond! The students also noted that noise pollution seemed to dramatically affect the frogs'

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vocalization. The frogs stopped calling when a car passed or a plane from the nearby airport flew over.

Pathmakers is a 4-year demonstration grant-funded program developed by the Center for Tribal Innovation and Entrepreneurship (C-TIE). It is a consortium of the Blue Lake Rancheria, the Northern Humboldt Union High School District, the Humboldt County Office of Education, College of the Redwoods, and Eureka City Schools. The program provides multi-tiered curricular and financial resources to Native students, families, and educators.



Photo by: Nanette Kelley

## Dogs on Trails

By Emily Teraoka

The Hiller Dog Park, managed by the McKinleyville Community Service District, recently posted signs limiting where dogs can be off leash to the grass area near the park entrance. This has created confusion about leashing dogs on the trails. The McKinleyville Land Trust has not changed our dog rules. The Mad River Bluffs and Chah-GAH-Cho trails both **allow dog owners to walk their dogs off leash only if they are under strict voice control**. But what does under voice control mean? It means that your dog will heel immediately on command, continue to heel, and refrain from barking. Your dog must be able to ignore other dogs, people, and wildlife, and listen and obey you. **You are responsible for your dog at all times.**

The trails managed by the McKinleyville Land Trust are multi-use. Many are narrow forested trails with high use and limited visibility. This means you might encounter joggers, walkers, children, strollers, people with limited mobility, bikes and even horses on any given day. If you are on the trails with your dogs, please remember the following:

**Be respectful of other trail users** – Keep your dog from jumping on people or strollers and approaching people without dogs. If another dog is on a leash, reflect what you see—leash your dog or have them heel.

**Keep our trails clean** – Pick up your dog's waste and deposit in trash cans.

**Your dog must be under voice control** – Off leash does not mean out of control.

**Maintain visual sight of your dog** – If you can't see your dog, how can keep them under control or if there is poop you need to pick up?

**Not all dogs are as friendly as yours** – When passing non-dog walkers on the trail or another dog on a leash, reign in your dog or put them on leash.

**Protect wildlife** – Keep dogs on trails close to you. Don't let them run off trail or out of your sight.

**The McKinleyville Land Trust properties are for everyone in our community. Please help us keep them a safe and an enjoyable place for the entire community.**



## THANK YOU TO OUR GENEROUS DONORS & VOLUNTEERS

Leonel Arguello, Gail and Julian Barbash, Don Barry, Mason Blair, Jaimie Bellerman, Frank Bickner, Richard and Sally Botzler, Laura Bridy, Lynne & Bruce Bryan, Claudia Brugaletta, Greg & Teri Bundros, Page Burlison, Cal Poly Humboldt Capstone students (Kevin Christensen, Aaron DeBoever, and Nicole Muniz), Alan Compher, Maya Conrad, Nancy Correll, Nancy Cowell, Neal and Suzanne Crothers, Bob Earl, Lori Dengler, Diane Des Marets, Sasha Dronkers, Richard Dunning, Dave Erickson, Bob and Ginny Felter, Robert and Joanne Fornes, Greg Freer, Freshwater Elementary School, Dan Gale, Rachel and Elinor Garcia, Sylvia and Don Garlick, Kelly Garrett (for Seaforth Montessori), Zach Gigone, Judy and Pete Haggard, Nancy Henley, Chris Heppie, Sandi and Steven Henry, Irene & Hugh Holt, Rees Hughes, Humboldt Men's Soccer, Humboldt Women's Volleyball, Bailey Ives, Linda Ives, Greg Jaso, Elijah Joachim, Jennifer Kalt, Nannette Kelley, Sapna Khandwala (Stillwaters Sciences), Joyce King, John Kulstad, Madeline and Tony LaBlanca, Ethan Lawton, Leandra, Gordon Leppig, Tom Lisle, Nadia Lynn, Sarah Maninger, Debbie Marshall, Alan McCann-Sayles, Davita McGoldrich, McKinleyville Area Foundation, the McLean Foundation, David & Madeline McMurray, Duncan McNeill, Ken Miller (Trees Foundation), Julie Neander, Adele & Lois Nipkau, Felicia Oldfather, Vicki Ozaki, Evan Padilla, John Palmquist, Michael Proulx, Garry Rees, Richard Ridenhour, Gina Rimson, Rebecca Rimson, Diane Ryerson, Sarah Scher, Selina, Emily Sinkhorn, Sherry Skillwoman, Kari Stockdale, Emily, Jason, Amaya & Orion Teraoka, Sage Urbaez, Rob Thompson, Kurt & Cynthia Werner, Cindy Wilcox, Forrest Wilcox, Mark Wilson, Drake Winkle-Bueno, Linda Wright, Allegra Wrocklage, and those that we may have missed.

**A special thank you to Julie Neander** for all her amazing work coordinating the MLT Volunteer Trail Stewards workdays, working with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to borrow equipment for trail work, applying for grants, organizing and leading the Kneeland School field trip at MRB, and for her incredible commitment to the protection and conservation of the natural resources of the coastal forest and ecosystem at our Mad River Bluffs and Chah-GAH-Cho properties.

### MCKINLEYVILLE LAND TRUST BOARD OF DIRECTORS

President: Duncan McNeill  
 Vice President: Emily Teraoka  
 Treasurer: Cindy Wilcox  
 Secretary: Garry Rees  
 Board Members: Judy Haggard  
 Joyce King  
 Ethan Lawton  
 Kari Stockdale  
 Vicki Ozaki

### MISSION STATEMENT

*The purpose of the  
 McKinleyville Land Trust is to  
 conserve local open spaces for  
 ecological, historical,  
 agricultural, educational,  
 recreational and  
 scenic values.*

*For Everyone—Forever.*

This newsletter is published on 100% recycled post consumer waste paper by the McKinleyville Land Trust, a 501(c)(3) non-profit corporation.

Phone: 707-839-LAND

E-mail:

[info@mckinleyvillelandtrust.org](mailto:info@mckinleyvillelandtrust.org)

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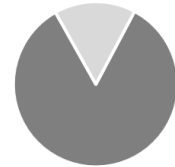
## TREASURER’S UPDATE

By Cindy Wilcox

We would like to thank all of our donators once again for helping out during another trying COVID year in 2022. We canceled our annual dinner for another year, but were able to have one of our most successful North Country Fair gyros booth sales. We appreciate those who came by and supported our booth, despite a very rainy and windy weekend. Because we have decided to pass one more year on the spring annual dinner, we will have another “Dinner To Go”. Our pulled-pork “Dinner To Go” helped raise much needed cash last year. Be sure to keep tabs on our website—[www.mckinleyvillelandtrust.org](http://www.mckinleyvillelandtrust.org) or follow us on Facebook and Instagram to find out the date and menu later this year.

These funds help with a large part going towards our property maintenance (see chart below). It has been a year since we hired John Shelter and his company New Directions to help keep our Chah-GAH-Cho property (near U-Haul) clean and to open up some of the vegetation understory for wider trail systems. We also hired Morgan Allan Landscaping to complete rebuilding the south river stairway on our Mad River Bluff property. We are now concentrating efforts for our northern stairway. And as always, taxes and insurance are another significant portion of our costs. Our 2022 donors provided funding this year to cover our annual expenses. Our all-volunteer board members are truly appreciative!

### Income

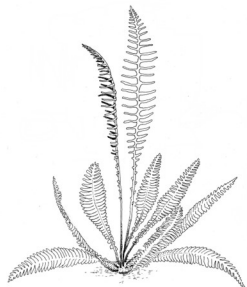


- Donations
- North Country Fair

### Expenses



- Property Maintenance
- Insurance
- General Management



### How can you donate?

**Donate online** via the PayPal button on our website [www.mckinleyvillelandtrust.org](http://www.mckinleyvillelandtrust.org)

**Send checks to** McKinleyville Land Trust, P.O. Box 2723  
McKinleyville, CA 95519.



Photo By Mark Larson



MCKINLEYVILLE  
LAND TRUST

P.O. Box 2723  
McKinleyville, CA 95519

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## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

I am sad to report that Leonel Arguello has resigned as a Board Member and President. We will miss his wisdom and extensive knowledge of all things related to the McKinleyville Land Trust. We also congratulate Leonel on his promotion back in the real job world. We know he will be back, and that he will continue to assist us behind the scenes.

With the lingering effect of the pandemic, inflation, and economic uncertainty, we are blessed with an amazing community of supporters; both financial and volunteerism. This support keeps us going. Donating on our website is super easy. Please consider setting up a recurring monthly donation. A \$10/month donation can make a big difference to the land trust and help us protect these places. Thank you all for your continued support.

Yet again, we are not doing our annual fundraising dinner. Keep your eyes peeled for a fun "Dinner To Go" fundraiser late summer. Have a great time at our two beautiful properties at Chah-GAH-Cho and Mad River Bluffs. Remember to use them gently as they are being conserved for both humans and our native flora and fauna. We strive to achieve a balance.

Thank you, New Board President – Duncan McNeill

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