

# SCENE... & UNSEEN



February 2013

The images in this chapter are to demonstrate that a non-native seed bank has been cleansed at least sufficiently to attain nearly pure germination of post-disturbance native annual forbs. All of these areas are now manageable almost entirely by hand. These are a bit grainy for identification, even with a 15 megapixel camera, so you may have to take my word for it, but I wanted to show you the magnitude of this complexity and that it has worked. I don't know how else to get this across without good HD video and monstrously expensive camera support equipment. So I hope this series of photos works for you for now.

# WILDERGARTEN 4.0

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There is a reason for this. This is a dynamic work that will be updated over time. I have no intention of defending conditions that no longer exist or explanations that have since been relieved of unintentional ambiguity or error.

Please, use a link. Thank you.

**Revision History** This book was originally produced under the name *The Responsible Party* for which there were two revisions, [1.0](#) & [2.0](#). Major revisions are for complete rewrites. Decimal revisions are for revised chapters or navigational changes and are not archived. Back revs are viewable by the numbered links below.

[1.0](#) [2.0](#) [3.0](#) [3.1](#) [3.2](#) [3.3](#) [3.4](#) [3.5](#) [4.0](#)

Vande Pol, Mark Edward, 1954 –

Other writings by Mark Edward Vande Pol:

*Natural Process: That Environmental Laws May Serve the Laws of Nature*, ©Wildergarten Press, 2001, 454pp, ISBN: 0-9711793-0-1, LOC Control #2001092201.

*Shemitta: For the Land is Mine*: ©Wildergarten Press, 2009. Contains: 217pp text, 980pp overall, 14 picture books, 2 tables, 963 photographs, 9 maps, 2 drawings, 2 charts, 145 footnotes, 358 citations, and 216 other source references, not including external Internet links. ISBN 978-0-9711793-1-8

[Articles at Wildergarten Press](#): collected writings on Constitutional history and regulatory racketeering by tax-exempt “charitable” foundations

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February 2013



These photos are the most important in the whole book, because what you are seeing is, to my knowledge, unprecedented. This is what so many billions of public money to “preserve the environment” in principle should have achieved, but didn’t even attempt: Dominant germination of native annuals after a burn on a landscape long dominated by exotics. This is restoration of at least part of the native plant successional system, effectively this is REAL restoration.



W

February 2015

If you look carefully, there are two size classes of clovers here, the larger ones from the warm fall rains, and another group of smaller plants after a 7" dump in early February with 80° weather thereafter. This bimodal pattern of germination, typical of this region, can be VERY useful to ridding the seed bank of weeds as you will see later in the book. Monitoring the edges of burn piles is a great way to discover what might have once lived in this particular spot, but only if the term of overgrowth was short enough that the native seed is still viable. On this property, much of it was not. Hence, what you see growing here is from plants that colonized this spot since about 2002 when I first got serious about annuals. Up until then, it was broom and forestry, career, and then my first book, in that order.



January 2012, monitoring germination after a burn pile



The “Burn Area” above is only weeks after burning a brush pile. As long as one can distinguish juvenile weed seedlings from natives, this is the most productive time to weed because one can find them easily and remove them with so little damage to the natives. Weeding is usually unpleasant this time of year as it is often wet and cold, but with persistence comes immense reward. Reducing the front of the germination distribution buys much time later on when speed becomes of the essence.



January 2009

W  
Y

This is the real thing.



January 2009



Nearly pure germination of native post-disturbance annual forbs.



January 2009

W

I haven't even weeded it yet.



February 2015

W

Although weeding still takes considerable patience and endurance,



February 2015



In places, it is getting easier.



February 2015

W  
T

Here, with the exception of redwood forest (and that's in the plans), native forbs infuse every kind of habitat, from oak woodland...



February 2015

W  
P

....to rocky chaparral,



February 2015

....to sand hills,



February 2015



....to power-line rights of way,



February 2015

W  
C

....and even roads.



April 2009

W

Native annuals that are varied,



January 2009

W  
T

Complex,



March 2009

W

Intense,



February 2015

W

Multilayered.



January 2009

Detailed.



January 2009



Productive,



February 2015 The signs are subtle and may require zooming to see.

These plants were likely browsed by deer.

They tend to bite off the top and move on.

W

and even tasty!



February 2015

W  
T

I just want you to consider what this means:



April 2010

W

Achieving high purity native grasslands with small annual forbs **IS** possible.  
Believe me, there has been many an expert who remains convinced otherwise.



April 2012 – Drought takes its toll on seedlings on this sandy hilltop

W  
T

Unaffordable? It turns out, it may not be, although it won't be cheap. Reducing that cost is the next step.

Still, to show that it *is* possible is an accomplishment at this point, and an encouragement while we're working on that secondary goal.



February 2015

W  
3

Obviously, the Wildergarten today does not compare to the miles of wildflowers Starr King and Mayfield described as quoted in the [site history](#). Does that mean it ever did? Had I been asked that question five years ago, I would have said no because our soils are so poor and erosive that I doubt this area ever approached that degree of fertility. But from what I have seen happening recently, it may be that it occasionally once resembled it to a degree, albeit on a very different scale because this landscape is so steep and varied. What you see above is that patch of *Dichelostemma capitatum* mentioned in the site history, a bulb very similar to what Mayfield described and certainly thick enough to make a bloom of flowers similar to what enriched his life as the single most powerful experience in all his 85 years. As yet, these are too young to bloom. The broader flowers below them are annuals, *Sanicula crassula*, also grown by the tribes for food and very possibly a commercially valuable spice. But beneath them both may be the real key to what initiated their return.



February 2015

WP

This is the next ridge to the north. This meadow is recovering from an invasion of cudweed I had allowed because it was supposedly native and apparently successful at suppressing exotics. Unfortunately, it sucked the nitrate out of the soil and suppressed just about everything. So I burned and weeded it and the grasses are looking much better. As a bonus, blue dicks are coming up here too over a big area but not as dense, so they are hard to see in this photograph (trust me; they're all over). This patch is less well developed, gets more sun, and less runoff. This spot too first had native forbs for several years, but also grass. There are also soap lilies down-slope, just as there are on the patch to the south that first appeared. Unlike the other patch, these are lying flat on the ground like loose strings of dark green spaghetti, which makes me wonder about a possible lack of silicates, as both potassium and phosphorus are adequate for this system. The culprit is probably soil, as this ridge was once graded off with a bulldozer. Research continues on how to rehabilitate it.



March 2015



Does this mean that I want to make the property look like it once did? No, I want it more varied so as to develop more knowledge because that is my passion and my product. But big patches of wildflowers would be nice. After all, this is the Wildergarten.

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These are LARGE files; they do take time to load

Please offer suggestions and comments [HERE](#)

