

NATURE IN RICHMOND?

Richmond is rich in history and natural resources. Following a photos and brief descriptions of three events involving nature and cultural resources that took place in Richmond over the past week, attracting visitors from not only around the Bay Area but from all over the west coast and as far away as Dallas, Texas. Richmond not only can be but already is a destination city.



Last Sunday, a group of some 100 native plant enthusiasts ventured to coastal remnant prairies near Point Molate to see what California grasslands looked like before European immigration. These isolated pockets include a variety of native perennial grasses not found anywhere else in the East Bay. The event was sponsored by the Marin County Chapter of the California Native Plant Society and led by native grass expert by David Amme (right).

Prominently featured was Molate red fescue a local variety of *festuca rubra*, an ornamental and drought tolerant grass that is the most winter-active red fescue on planet earth. When the soil dries out in the late spring the gray waxy coat carries it into summer dormancy with dignity; it reappears green and succulent in the spring.



The biggest sailing race of the year features a thousand boats racing from Southhampton Shoals to Vallejo – then back the next day. [East Brother Island](#), with its 130-year old lighthouse offers prime viewing of the race, and the board of directors of East Brother Light Station, Inc., (the non-profit corporation that operates and maintains East Brother Island) use Race Day as an annual opportunity to thank volunteers, known as “Wickies,” and to entertain guests of board members. Attending this year’s Race Day were (left) Richmond City Manager Bill Lindsay and Richmond Redevelopment Director Steve Duran and his wife Chris.



On Sunday, May 1, over 4,500 people registered in advance to visit 55 gardens in Contra Costa and Alameda Counties to participate in the free Bringing Back the Natives Garden Tour and to learn how to attract butterflies, birds and bees, garden without using pesticides, lower water bills, design low-maintenance gardens, and select and care for California native plants. We had over 300 visitors for our garden in Point Richmond (see photos above). All the gardens, including those in Richmond, can be seen by visiting the Preview the Gardens section at www.BringingBackTheNatives.net.