

Community Restoration Network

Project Profile: Audubon Starr Ranch Sanctuary

Project Location:

Orange County, California, USA

Project Manager/Coordinator:

Sandy DeSimone, Director of Research and Education, Audubon Starr Ranch Sanctuary

Project Duration:

ongoing

Ecosystem to be Restored:

native grasslands; coastal sage-scrub

Area to be Restored:

75 acres of coastal sage have been restored to date, along with 286 acres of native grasslands.

Primary Cause of Degradation:

non-native artichoke thistle (*Cynara cardunculus*)

Restoration Treatments Used:

Defoliation and mechanical removal of artichoke thistle several times throughout the year and other non-chemical control methods for exotic species

Broadcasting of native seeds

Community Involvement:

Staff members of the Starr Ranch Sanctuary have designed and led the ongoing restoration but have been assisted by volunteers and student interns.

Benefits to Local Ecology:

Artichoke thistle was reduced by 95% after 1-2 years with repeated treatments.

Native California sage has begun to colonize the restored areas.

Restored areas are beginning to provide habitat for native wildlife (e.g. rodents, rabbits).



Directions for the Future:

Restoration experiments have been ongoing at the Starr Ranch Sanctuary, along with the management of non-native species. These activities are directed by Sandy DeSimone, with the assistance of several interns.

Funding/Support:

Student interns

References/Contacts:

Starr Ranch Sanctuary

<http://www.starranch.org>

Sandy DeSimone

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