

# THE RADICAL LAND PRACTICE OF ATTUNEMENT

INVASIVE PLANT MANAGEMENT ON A SAN FRANCISCO SERPENTINE  
OUTCROPPING AS AN ART PRACTICE



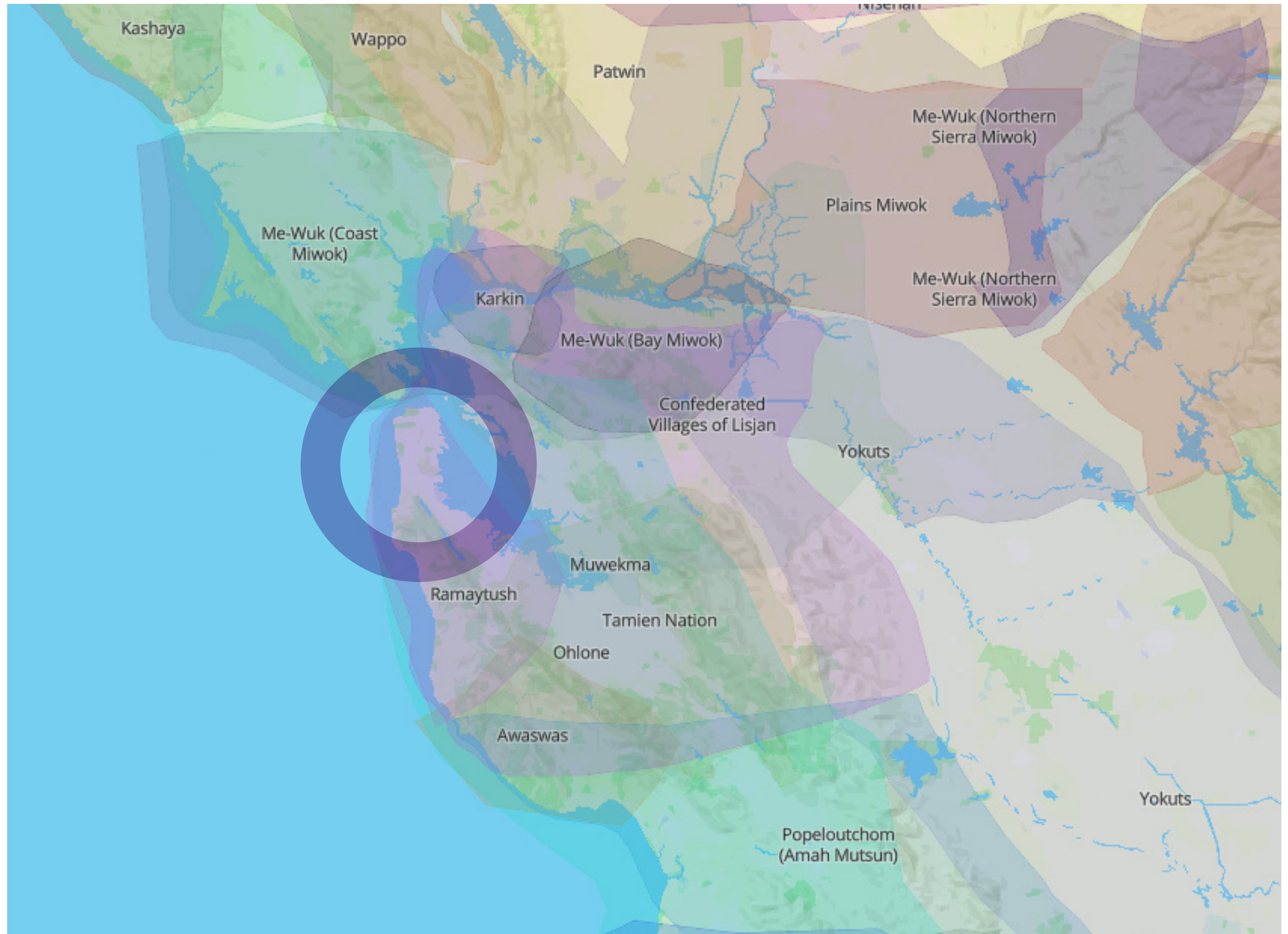
TERREMOTO acknowledges the Me-Wuk (Coast and Bay Miwok), the Karkin, the Ramaytush, the Muwekma, the Awaswas, the Tamien Nation, and the Ohlone as the ancestral caretakers of the landscapes of the San Francisco Bay Area, who are still here today, working to support their community through environmental programs and initiatives.

We acknowledge that we are able to live and work here in large part because of the injustices inflicted upon the tribes by the State.

We recognize our responsibility to reconcile these injustices through contributing towards collective healing and reparation for these tribes.

We pay our respects to the elders, past, present, and emerging; and we recognize that these communities are still here today, fighting to reclaim their rights to the land.

We are committed to lifting up their land-care practices — which are based in reciprocity, as opposed to simply sustainability — and strengthen both our communities through our collective work in landscape architecture.



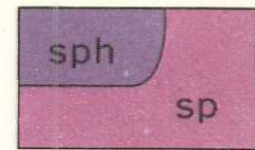
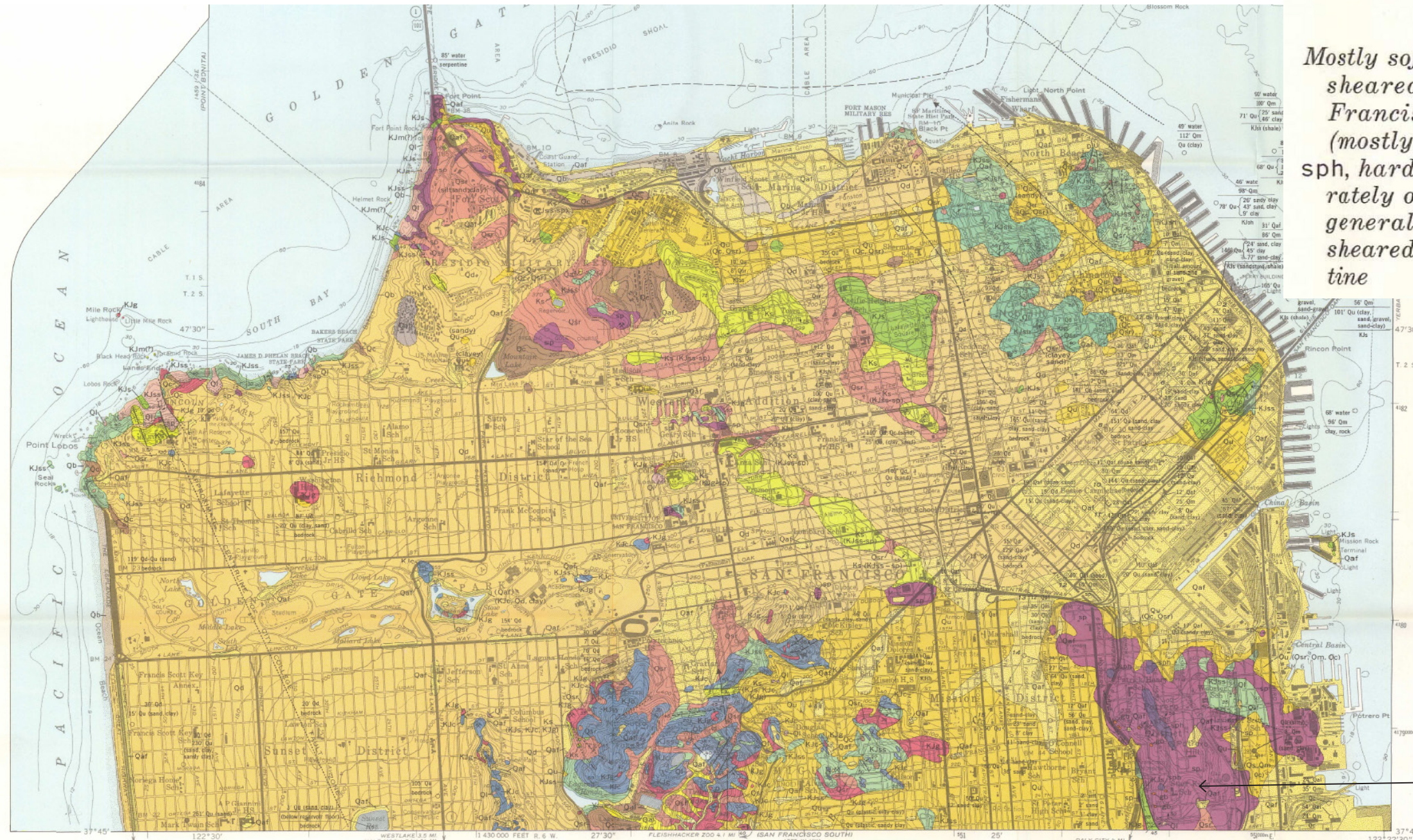


TEST PLOT was founded in 2019 to support ongoing community landcare. We do this through stewardship programs, experimental restoration design and land-based research.

Our main work centers on building Test Plots, habitat gardens that volunteers steward themselves from initial planting through establishment and beyond. Because the complexities of our planet will not suit a one-size fits all approach, each plot looks different and responds to the site, community and resources.

Our ethos centers experimentation, trial and error, and asking questions. Our approach is simple: get your hands dirty. Together, we explore the routines, rituals and practices embedded in the dynamic relationships between people and plants. Together, we reimagine degraded ecologies and establish longer-term care based relationships between communities and landscapes.





Serpentine

*Mostly soft sheared rock containing hard knobs of un-sheared serpentine, rodingite, and rocks of the Franciscan Formation. Derived from peridotites (mostly harzburgite, some dunite).*

*sph, hard serpentine, slightly sheared. Shown separately on Potrero Hill only. Various colors, but generally greenish gray, blue, or brown. Includes sheared rocks (Ks) where that unit is mostly serpentine*

STARR KING OPEN SPACE

Base by U.S. Geological Survey, 1956  
 Polyconic projection, 1927 North American datum  
 10,000-foot grid based on California coordinate system, zone 3  
 1000-meter Universal Transverse Mercator grid ticks, zone 10  
 Include revision from aerial photograph taken 1968.



SCALE 1:24 000

1 1/2 1 MILE 1 KILOMETER

CONTOUR INTERVAL 25 FEET

DASHED LINES REPRESENT 5-FOOT CONTOURS

DATUM IS MEAN SEA LEVEL

DEPTH CURVES IN FEET—DATUM IS MEAN LOWER LOW WATER

SHORELINE SHOWN REPRESENTS THE APPROXIMATE LINE OF MEAN HIGH WATER

THE MEAN RANGE OF TIDE IS APPROXIMATELY 4 FEET



Geology mapped in 1948-61 by Julius Schloker, M. G. Bonilla, D. H. Radbruch, C. A. Kaye, and W. I. Konkoff

GEOLOGIC MAP OF THE SAN FRANCISCO NORTH QUADRANGLE,



POTRERO HILL

POTRERO HILL

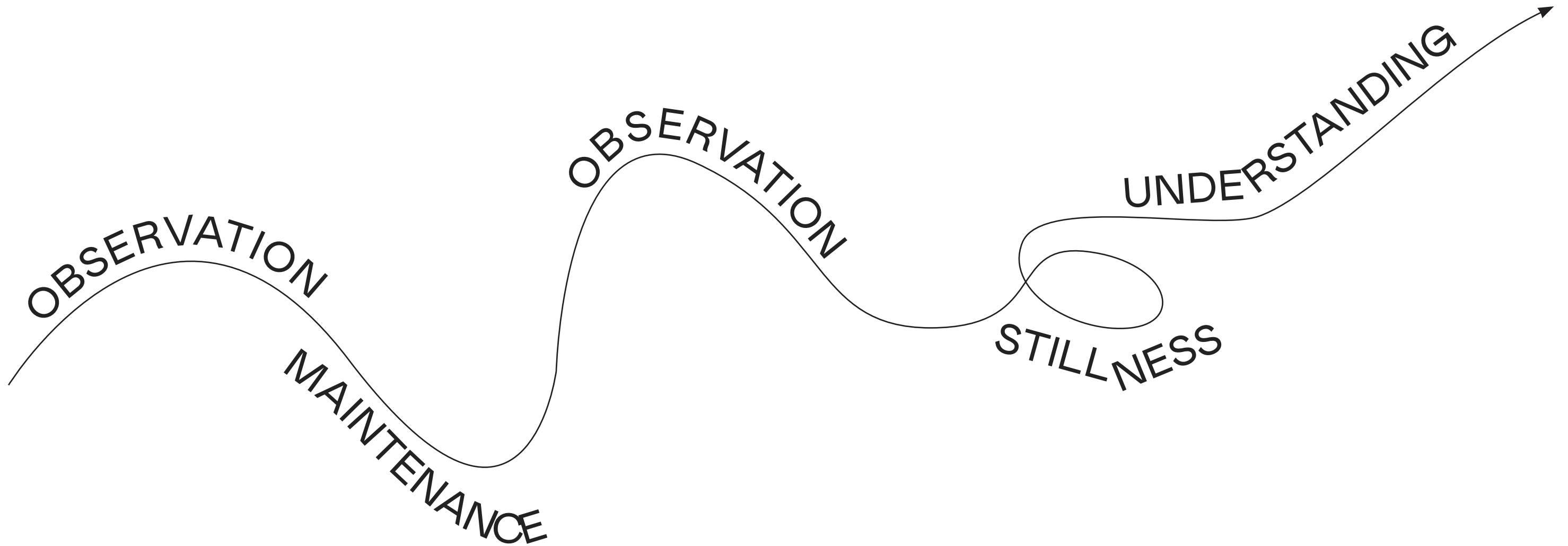
STARR KING OPEN SPACE

STARR KING ANNEX



SERPENTINE TEST PLOT is the site of an ongoing experimental "Test Plot" that seeks to remove invasive species in order to release the native seed bank.

Pushing back against the convention of immediate action, we are experimenting with the process of deliberate observation and minimal intervention for a year before initiating changes on the site.





Might mere observation and weeding be the entire intervention?  
Native plants are here, doggedly poking through the blanket of invasive  
European grasses.

## WHO ELSE IS HERE?



Can we coax forth latent ecologies from the soil?



By slowing down, we are attuning to place with the intention to deepen our relationship with the land and guide our management strategies for it.

This slow practice calls into question how we perceive “weeds”, and where the line is drawn in judging a plant based on its place of origin.



By removing the flowering oxalis and vetch, are we tinkering with some invisible equilibrium that may exist for neighboring plants and wildlife?

## HOW DO WE APPROACH THIS ENTANGLED LIFE?



A NATIVE BEE POLLINATING WILD RADISH (*RAPHANUS RAPHANISTRUM*)

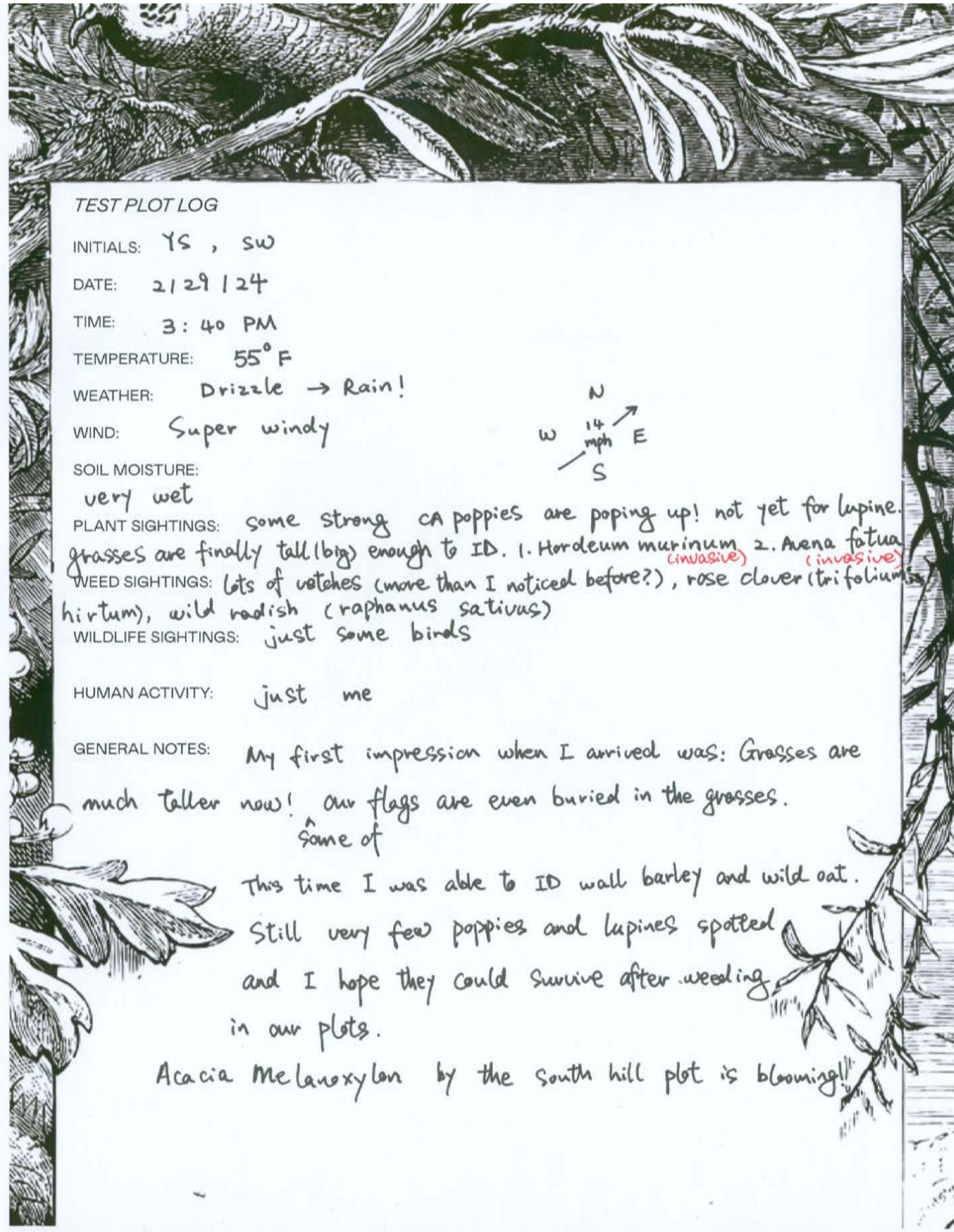


ARROYO LUPINE (*LUPINUS SUCCULENTUS*) INTERTWINED WITH COMMON WILD OAT (*AVENA FATUA*)



RUBY CHALICE CLARKIA (*CLARKIA RUBICUNDA*) IN A SEA OF *AVENA FATUA*





**TEST PLOT LOG**

INITIALS: YS, SW

DATE: 2/29/24

TIME: 3:40 PM

TEMPERATURE: 55° F

WEATHER: Drizzle → Rain!

WIND: Super windy

SOIL MOISTURE: very wet

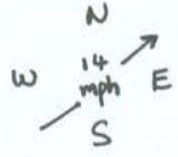
PLANT SIGHTINGS: some strong CA poppies are popping up! not yet for lupine. grasses are finally tall (big) enough to ID. 1. *Hordeum murinum* (invasive) 2. *Avena fatua* (invasive)

WEED SIGHTINGS: lots of vetches (more than I noticed before?), rose clover (*trifolium hirtum*), wild radish (*raphanus sativus*)

WILDLIFE SIGHTINGS: just some birds

HUMAN ACTIVITY: just me

GENERAL NOTES: My first impression when I arrived was: Grasses are much taller now! our flags are even buried in the grasses. Some of this time I was able to ID wall barley and wild oat. Still very few poppies and lupines spotted and I hope they could survive after weeding in our plots. Acacia *Melanoxylon* by the south hill plot is blooming!




WINTER

**TEST PLOT LOG**

INITIALS: SW - VS in China!

DATE: 4.25.24

TIME: 6:30 pm

TEMPERATURE: 57°

WEATHER: Windy, gloomy, tiny spits of rain

WIND: 11 mph / 28 mph gusts from the West

SOIL MOISTURE: dry

PLANT SIGHTINGS: The blue dicks are almost spent!

WEED SIGHTINGS:

WILDLIFE SIGHTINGS: a fat black bumble bee  
 mourning doves cov. little green bugs jump from in front  
 of my path - more bugs in branches @ edge of plot

HUMAN ACTIVITY: road work noises from the other side of the street  
 Kids playing across the street

GENERAL NOTES:

Plot I post weeding looks barren  
 + sad. Did we make a mistake?  
 maybe this rain will make something happen!  
 Made first audio recording.

Plot I:

Plot II: Stipa pulchra  
 has heading seed heads. Mystery bulb is budding. stay tuned!  
 clover has spread  
 dit seed still present in bloom  
 C.L. oak volunteer @ NW corner

Plot III: bicolor  
 lupine just outside bounds @ NW corner  
 explosion of veg + oat grass



SPRING

**TEST PLOT LOG**

INITIALS: ESTER

DATE: 7/23/24

TIME: 9AM

TEMPERATURE: 63°

WEATHER: sunny, hot!

WIND: still

SOIL MOISTURE: DRY!

PLANT SIGHTINGS: *via* poppies still blooming

WEED SIGHTINGS: dandelion, mustard

WILDLIFE SIGHTINGS: hummingbird, dog poop, lavender butterfly

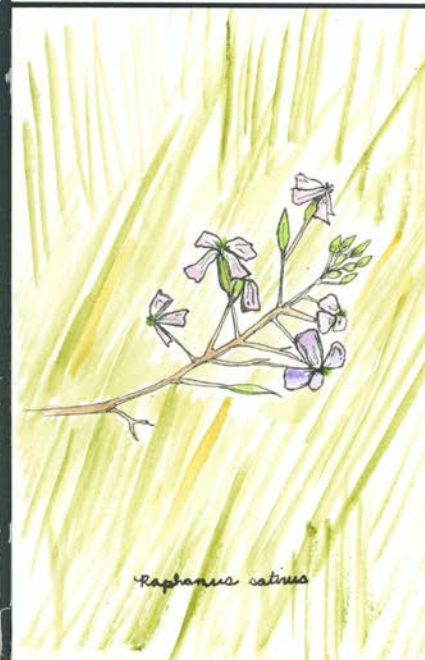
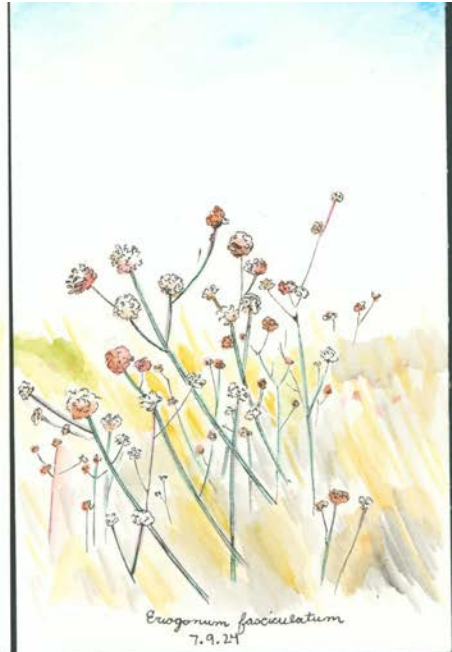
HUMAN ACTIVITY: NONE

GENERAL NOTES: we've never seen the site this still, windless.  
 WILD RADISH/MUSTARD IS MOST CONCENTRATED NEAR PLOT 1  
 WE ARE HAPPY TO SEE THE PEPPERING OF GREEN LEAVES IN THE  
 BUNCH GRASSES - DEEP, DEEP ROOTS!  
 AMAZED AT THE FLOWERING POPPIES.  
 THOUGHTS OF EXPANSION! WED LIKE TO INCLUDE THE STIPA PATCH IN PINE  
 PLOT  
 MAYBE ACACIA BIPINATIFOLIA UNDER EUCALYPTUS AT TOP OF HILL - SO GREEN,  
 LUSH - PHYCLOIDES ± BIPINNATE LEAVES  
 ITS HOT OUT HERE WITHOUT THE WIND!



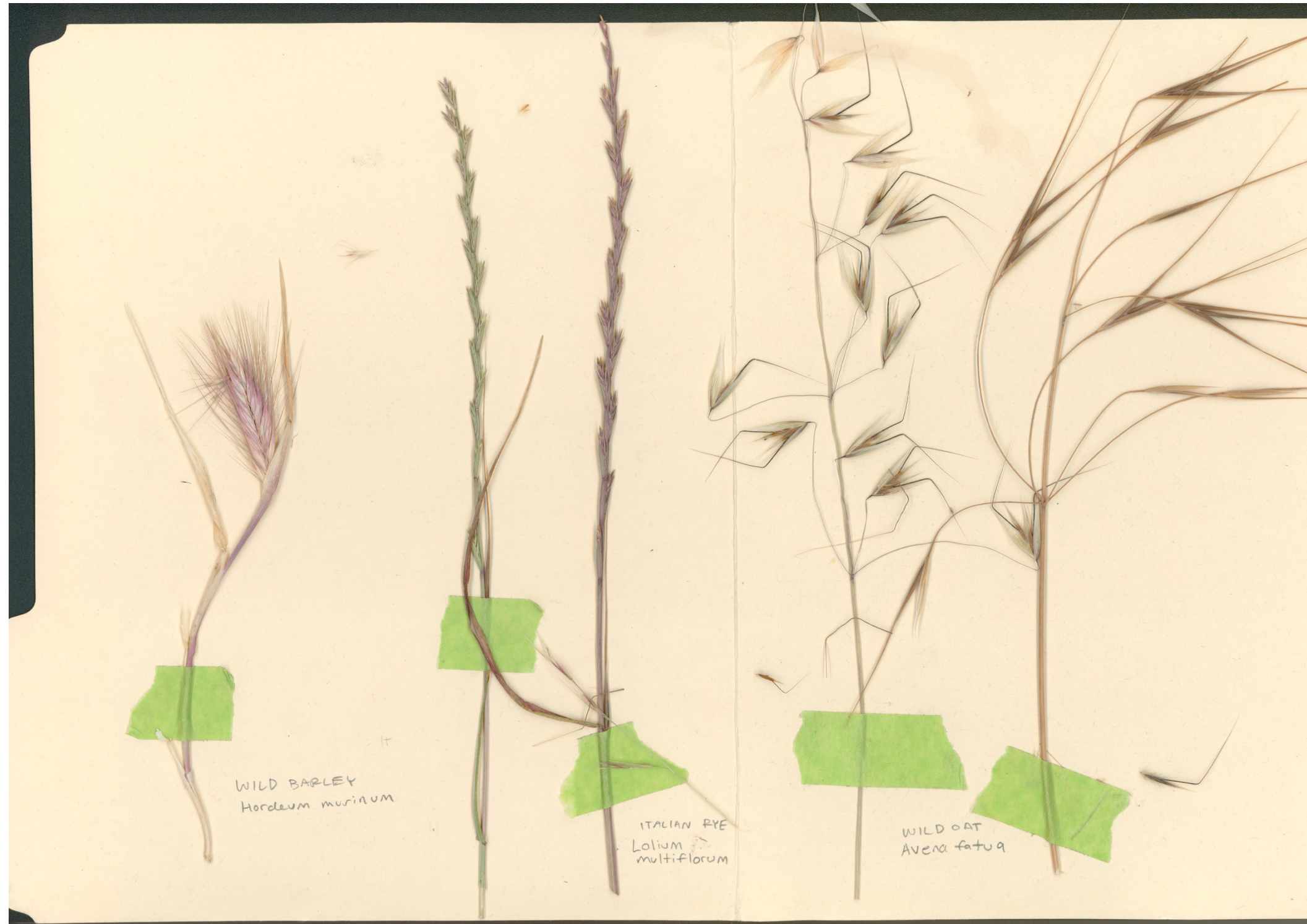
SUMMER















## january 2024 (first weeding day)

we know so little  
 vision blending into a green abyss  
 we play god  
 deciding who stays and who goes  
 what is a weed, i expect an ugly thing, easy to identify  
 but its ugliness is imperceptible in the ocean of verdancy

we clear the clovers  
 until we get too tired  
 what are we trying to do again?

knees wet  
 first date jitters  
 primary encounters filled with excitement and overwhelm  
 is there a word for the feeling of knowing  
 that eventually we will get to know someone somplace something  
 so intimately, but for now we are only strangers with curiosity



## april 2024 (weeding day)

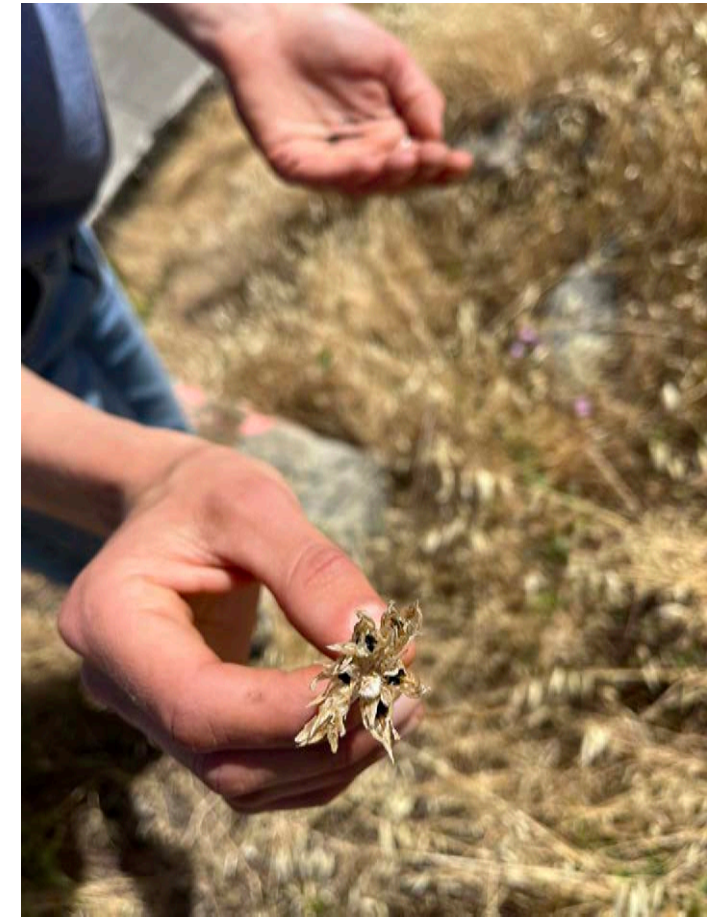
poppies and lupines and blue dicks  
orange and purple and blue  
the evening skies start to take inspiration from below

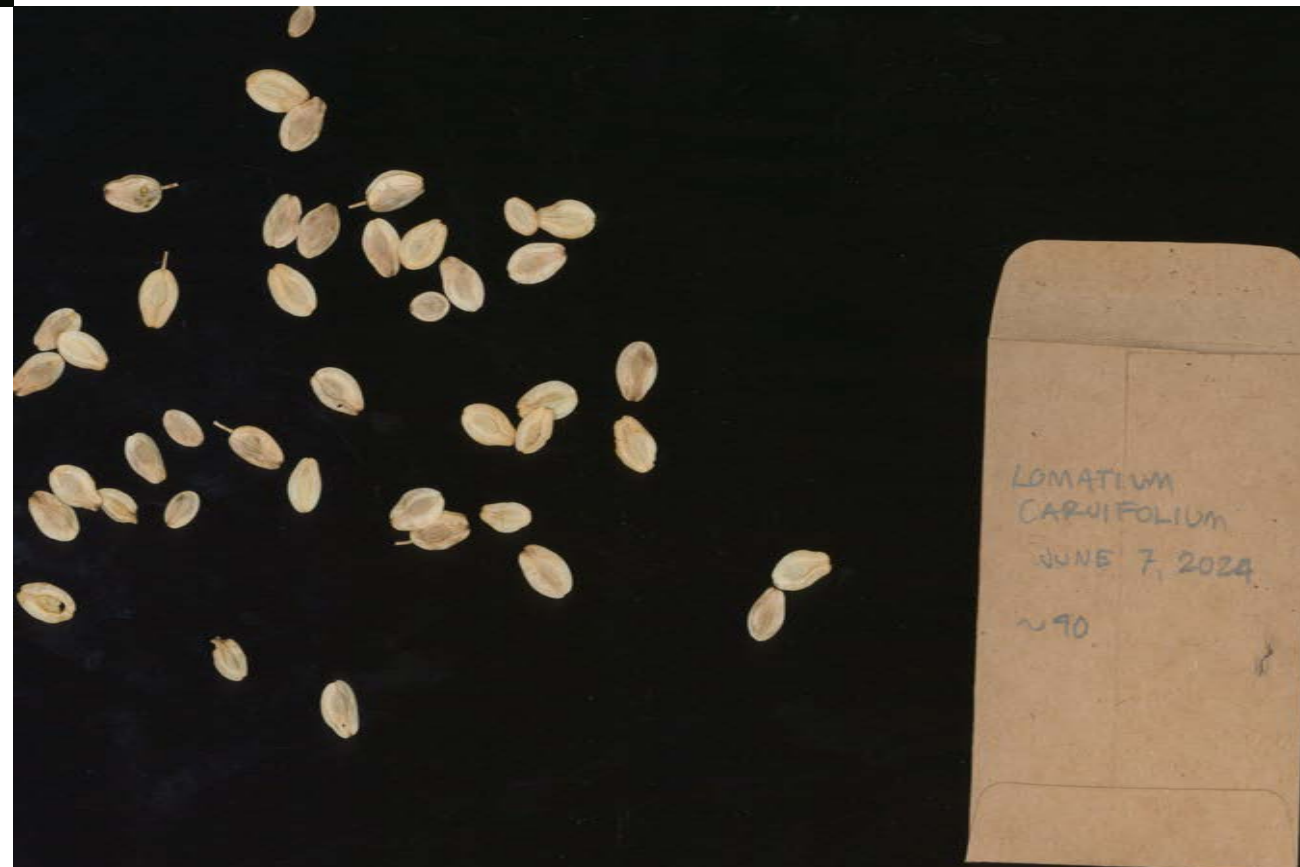
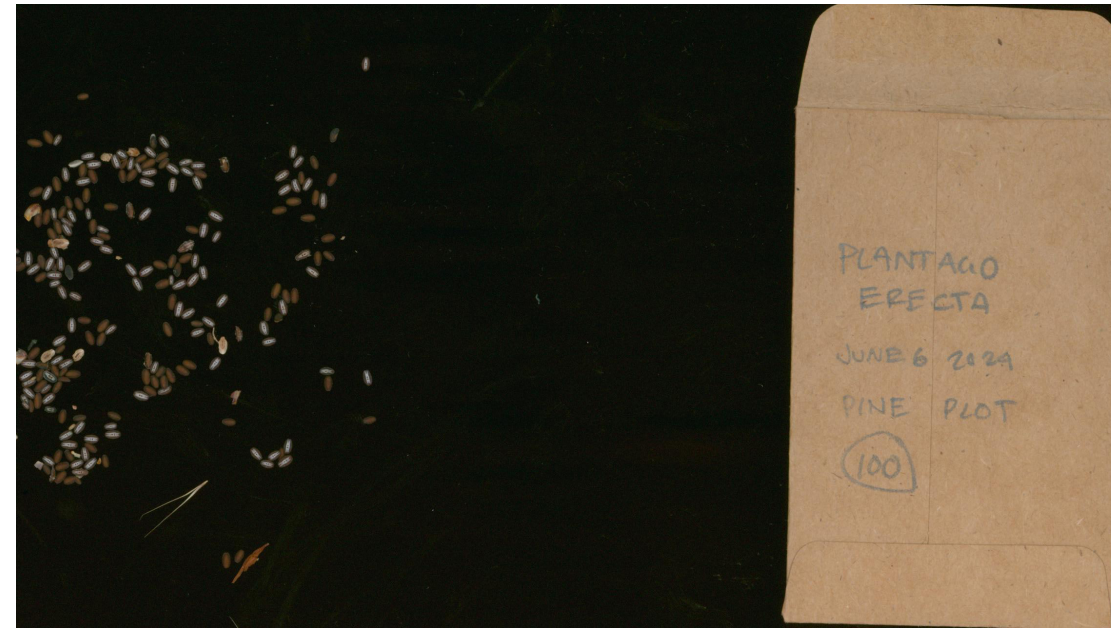
pent up energy  
well-intentioned desperation for results  
an urge to do what is right

so we pull up the grasses and make space for new  
what are we trying to do again?





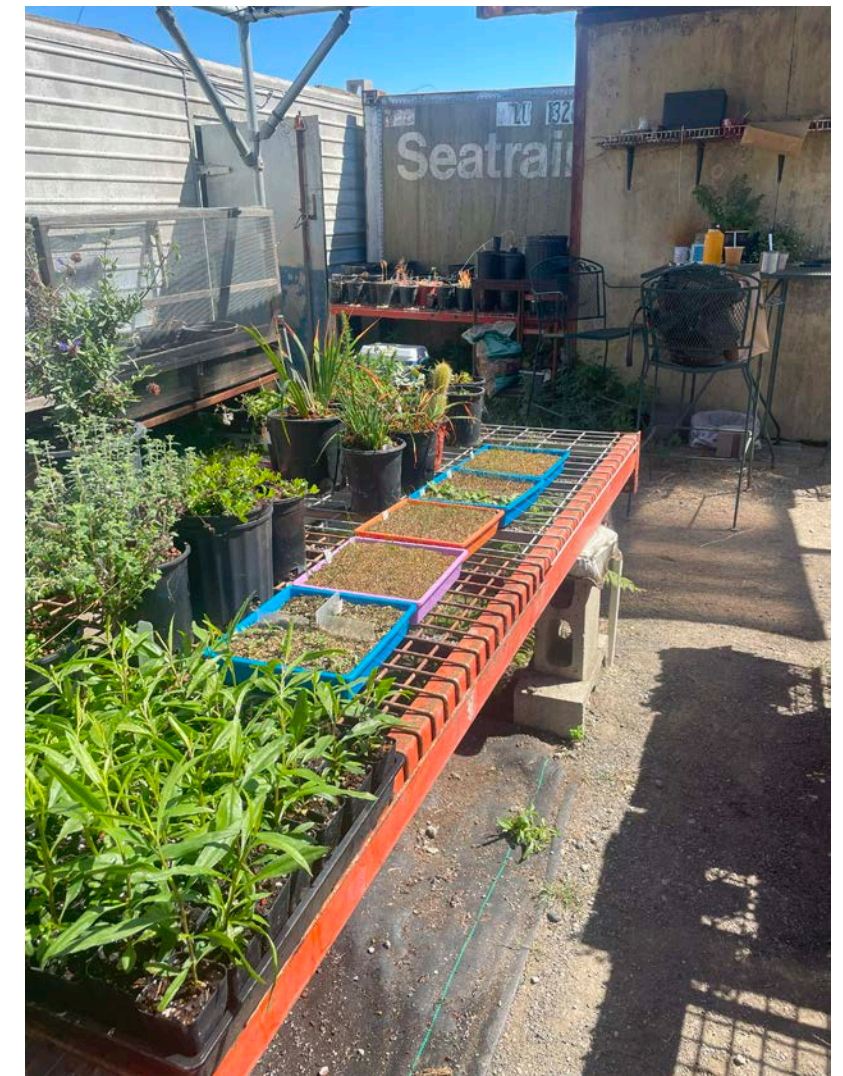






SPECIES	Starr King	PGE	pot size	total	timeline (susan let me know if any of this is off)
Bridaiae terrestris	15	0	D16	15*	1 yr in nursery
Dichelostemma capitatum	50	0	D16	50	1 yr in nursery
Lomatium caruifolium	50	0	D16	50	spring 2025?
Lupinus succulentus	50	0	D16	50	spring 2025?
Plantago erecta	20	0	stubby	20	?
Stipa pulchra	40	0	D16	40*	ready winter 2024/2025
Triteleia laxa	0	30	D16	30	1 yr in nursery
Chalochortus luteus	0	20	D16	20*	2-3 years in nursery; transition to terremoto care after 1 yr
				200	

\*or as many as possible





MEDITATION AS OBSERVATION

## TEST PLOT MEDITATION / July 12, 2024

*How can we come to know a place more deeply by creating with it?*

### ONE / ARRIVAL [10 minutes]

- Take three long breaths
- What do you smell? What do you hear?
- Write down a single sentence / phrase / word on the large piece of paper

### TWO / WALK + SIT – NEAR SIGHTED [20 minutes]

- Start walking, where do you end up? Find a seat
- Take a moment to settle in.
- What do you feel? What do your feet feel? What do your hands feel? What does your face feel?
- Find a plant near you and spend a few minutes with it
- Draw the plant – sketch it / blind contour line draw / watercolor / on the large piece of paper

### THREE / WALK + SIT – FAR SIGHTED [20 minutes]

- Find a new spot and look out beyond. Change your medium (for example: if you were working in pencil, switch to watercolor)
- What do you see? What do you hear?
- Draw what you're looking at on the large piece of paper, allow the new lines to overlap with the work you've already created
- Write a sentence about the sky. Write a sentence about the earth.

### FOUR / SPACIOUSNESS [30 minutes]

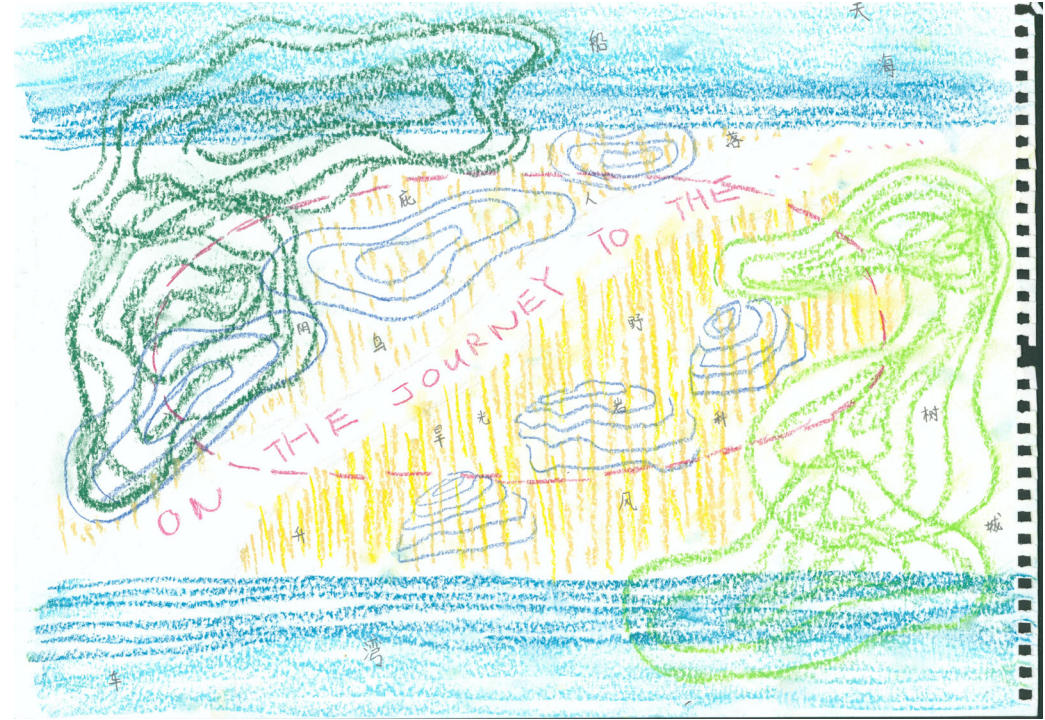
- Once you've found yourself in a position of spaciousness, settle into the earth.
- Who else is here with you?
- Draw something you cannot see but can feel, hear or smell. Is there a message being transmitted? Interpret it in one sentence or gesture. Again, allow the new lines to overlap with the old.

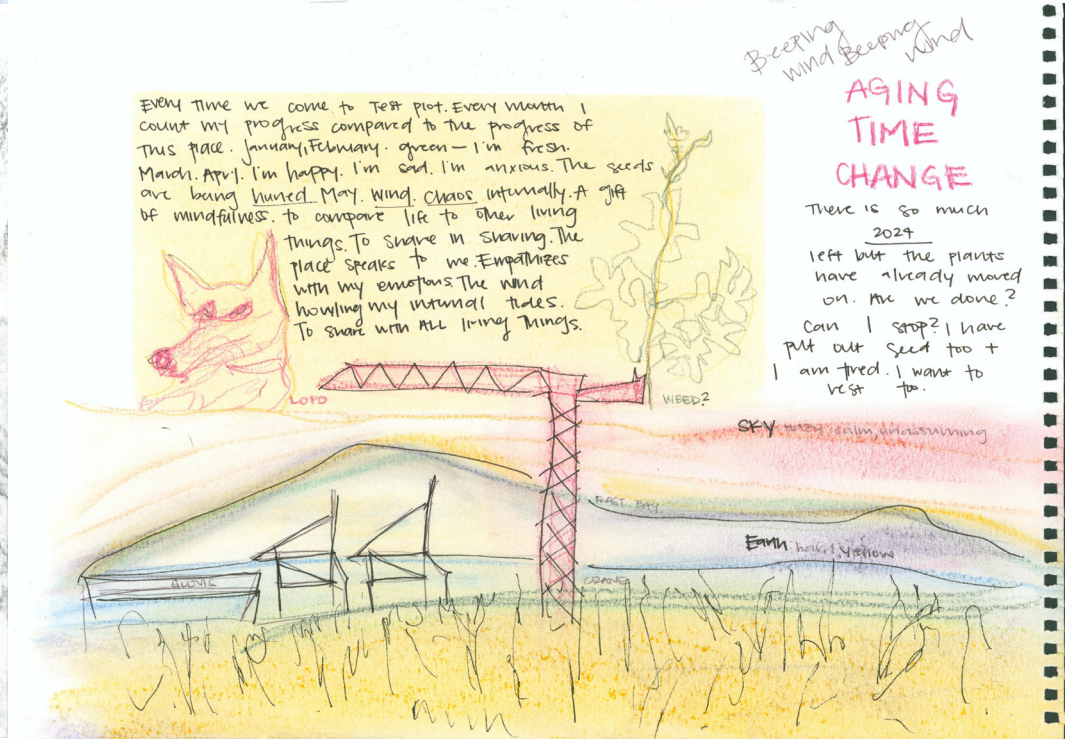
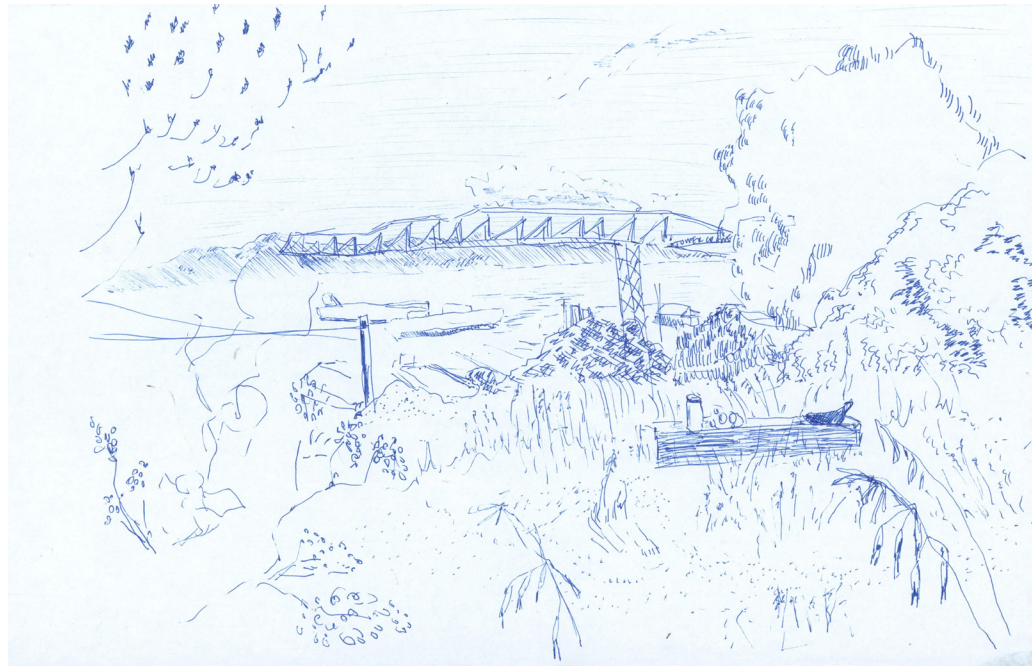
### FIVE / CLOSING [as long as it takes]

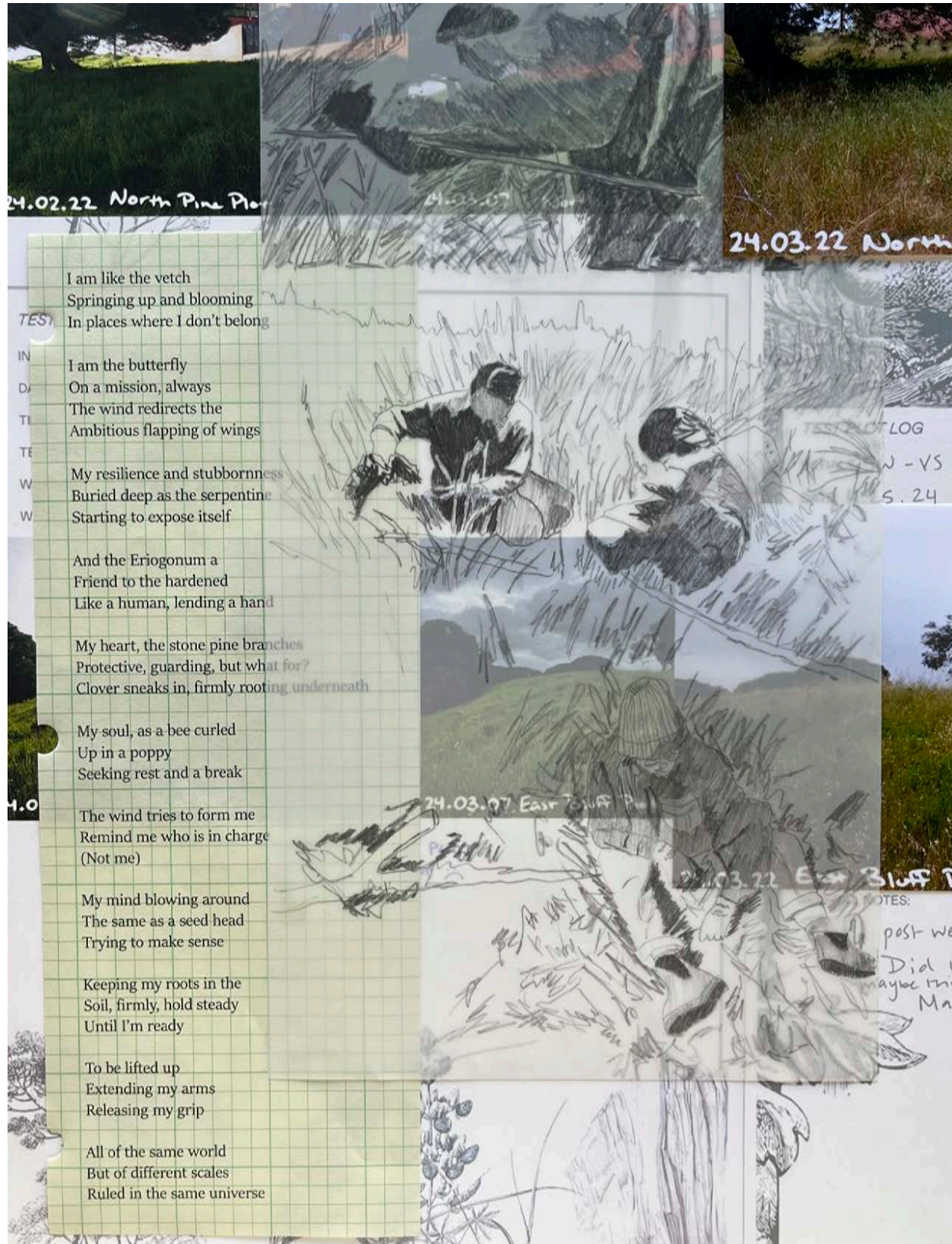
- Once everyone is through, we'll get back together and talk about what we might have learned/seen/witnessed from our time alone. What came up for you during this experience? Was it difficult or easy to enter a position of spaciousness? What hindered or helped you become present with the site?
- Did you have other ideas about other ways to interpret the site? (nothing is too crazy)
- Look for and collect (5% of) any remaining Stipa seeds, or other seeds still visible.
- Take standard photographs and observations for this week.

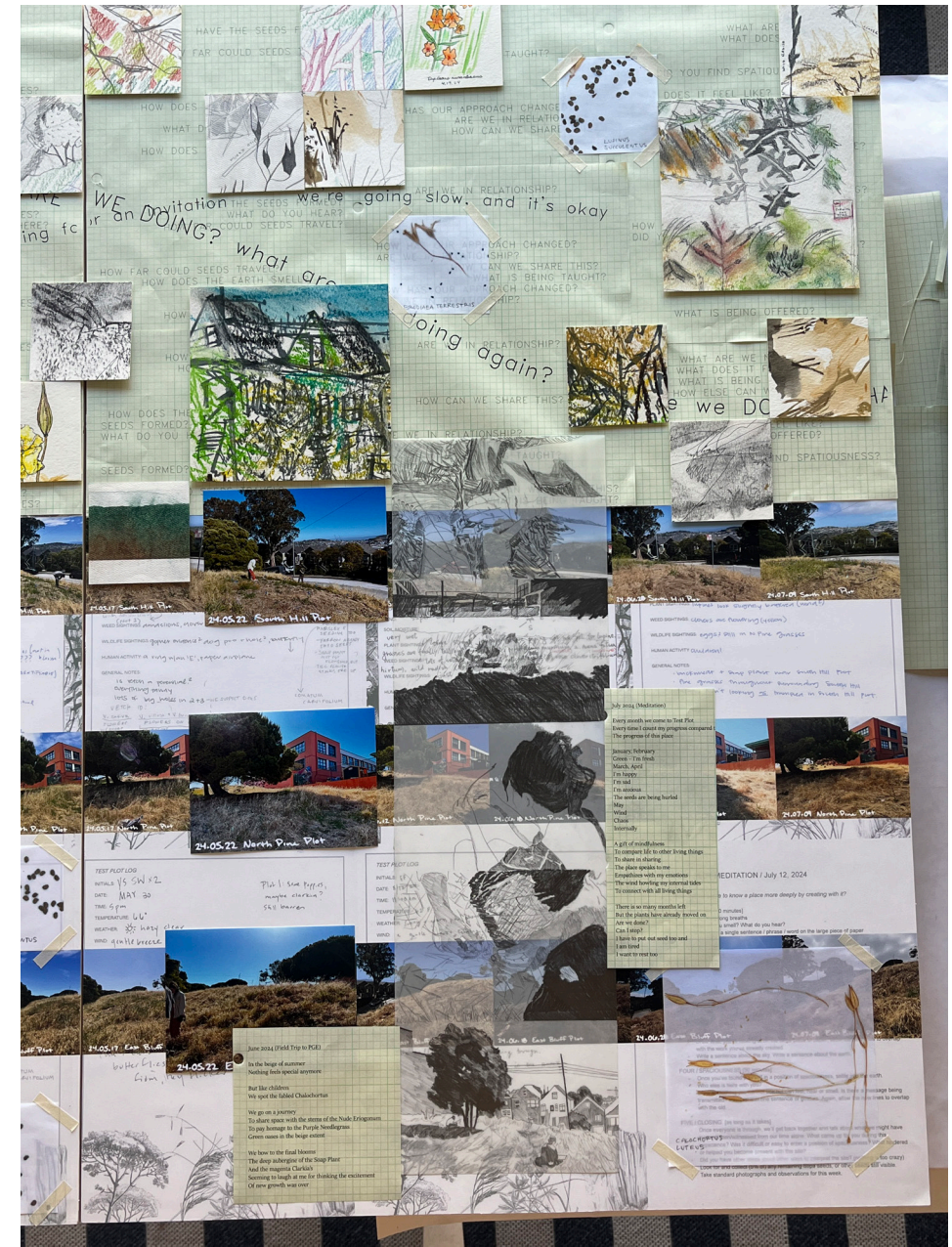


THROUGH STILLNESS WE  
CULTIVATE UNDERSTANDING















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THANK YOU