Course Description
The Coastal Naturalist Training will introduce participants to wonders of our local ecology and engage them in stewardship of California’s natural communities. This course combines a junior college level introductory science course curriculum with classroom and field experiences, guest lecturers, and project based learning to immerse participants in the natural world of the Humboldt Bay region and coastal dune ecosystem.

UC California Naturalist Program Goals
● To promote environmental literacy and stewardship of California's natural resources
● To increase participation in resource conservation and participatory science projects throughout the state
● To develop a core constituency of committed and educated citizens motivated and trained to participate in resource conservation, preservation, and restoration efforts
● To provide participants with the knowledge, skills, and confidence they need to educate others and participate in many aspects of resource management, such as public education, resource planning and public decision-making
● To provide the communication experience and critical thinking skills necessary to grow a citizen base that supports environmental protection and sustainable growth in California

Participant Learning Outcomes
By the end of this course, participants will:
● Understand what it means to be a naturalist.
● Have increased knowledge of the natural history of the Humboldt Bay region.
● Have integrated knowledge of the interconnectedness of abiotic, biotic, and cultural factors and their influence on the natural history of the Humboldt Bay region and coastal ecosystems.
● Demonstrate skills in making and recording natural history observations in a field notebook and on iNaturalist.
● Demonstrate skills in communicating and interpreting natural science information.
● Be able to apply knowledge of the Humboldt Bay region and coastal ecosystems to local and global environmental issues.
● Be equipped and empowered to become active volunteers with Friends of the Dunes or other local environmental organizations. Naturalists might lead guided walks, participate in restoration projects, assist with school education programs, participate in community engagement at tabling events, help plan special events and fundraisers, provide visitor services at local nature centers, and more.

Course Requirements
Participants are expected to complete 40 hours of combined classroom and field training, complete and present a Capstone Project, take part in 10 hours of volunteer service, and upload at least 2 observations to iNaturalist. Upon fulfilling these graduation requirements, participants become certified as California Naturalists and are eligible for an optional four UC Davis Continuing and Professional Education academic credits.

Required Course Materials
● *The California Naturalist Handbook* by Greg Nevers, Deborah Stanger Edelman, & Adina Merenlender (Available at Northtown Books in Arcata)
● *Coastal Naturalist Manual* published by Friends of the Dunes (available at Humboldt Coastal Nature Center or as a PDF)
● Field notebook for nature observations (optional: colored pencils)
● An email account and internet access
Program Costs
- Program Fee: $375 or $350 for Friends of the Dunes members, students, & Samoa Peninsula Residents
- Kayak Rental (Optional): $26 single/$35 double (HSU Students: $22 single/$25 double)
- Academic Credits (Optional): $80 for four UC Davis Continuing and Professional Education academic credits upon course completion and certification. More information will be provided in class.

Scholarships are available. Please contact suzie@friendsofthedunes.org for more information.

Times and Locations
Course Dates: September 9 to October 28, 2021
Classroom Sessions: Thursday evenings from 6 to 8 p.m. at the Humboldt Coastal Nature Center, 220 Stamps Lane in Manila.
Field Sessions: Sunday mornings, typically from 8:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. with some small variations. Locations vary.

Field Sessions
Field notebooks- All participants are required to keep a field notebook during the course. Field notebooks will be checked periodically during the class. Participants will be using their notebooks during class on field trips and on their own time.

Participants must be able to walk in soft sand, up steep dunes, and along uneven trails while carrying their field supplies. Please bring lunch, drinking water, sunscreen/hat, comfortable walking shoes, layers, and note taking materials. Field sessions are rain or shine, only extreme weather conditions will cause a field session to be canceled. If any sessions are canceled, we will do our best to reschedule. Participants may not bring guests, children, or pets on any field sessions.

Homework
Reading is assigned for each class meeting, based on the topic to be covered that week. Participants are expected to read the assigned reading prior to coming to class. Other homework assignments include field notebook entries, registration with California Naturalist Volunteer Management System (VMS), downloading the iNaturalist app, and working on Capstone projects.

iNaturalist
Throughout the Coastal Naturalist Training, participants are expected to record at least 2 observations on iNaturalist. Mobile phone apps are available for free on both Android phones and iPhones. Observations can also be uploaded to iNaturalist.org. Having a smartphone is not required for this course, participants without a smartphone can share with others who do have one or upload their observations from a computer or tablet.

Capstone Project
Participants are required to complete a project in one of four areas: Stewardship, Education/Interpretation, Participatory Science, or Program Support. The Capstone provides an opportunity for participants to integrate the course content with an applied work project that is done in conjunction with a natural resource agency or organization. Capstone projects should be completed in a relatively short time (not to exceed 8 hours). Participants are encouraged to work in teams when appropriate. On graduation day, all participants will present their capstone projects. Presentations will be approximately 5 minutes in length. The course instructor will provide a Capstone Project proposal form, project ideas and feedback as necessary.

Making-up Missed Sessions
Missing sessions is discouraged, but we understand that life happens. Participants can miss up to 4 sessions and still qualify for graduation if those learning hours are made up. Missed sessions can be made up by attending any special topic walk, workshop, lecture, or service learning opportunity that is relevant to the course, and writing up a brief description for the course instructor. These make-up sessions can be, but do not need to be through Friends of the Dunes. Please check with the instructor ahead of time to confirm the make-up session will be acceptable.
Volunteering
Participants are expected to participate in **at least 10 hours of volunteer service** with Friends of the Dunes or other local group while enrolled in this course. Volunteer hours should be completed before graduation day (October 28, 2021), hours can be incorporated into capstone project with instructor approval. Please note that although we are only requiring 10 volunteer hours for this course, the California Naturalist program recommends at least 40 hours of volunteering per year and offers incentives to reach this goal, including a California Naturalist pin with a new design each year. Examples of volunteer service include, but are not limited to: restoration or trail maintenance, coastal clean-ups, visitor services in the Nature Center, leading field trips for school groups, assisting at special events such as Wine by the Sea, and leading or assisting with guided walks, workshops, and lectures. Examples of other organizations that offer coastal education programs and volunteer opportunities include: Friends of the Arcata Marsh, Humboldt Baykeeper, California Native Plant Society, Northcoast Regional Land Trust, Trinidad Coastal Land Trust, Sequoia Park Zoo, Redwood Region Audubon Society, PacOut Green Team, Humboldt Fish Action Council, Humboldt Surfrider, Northcoast Environmental Center, Humboldt Trail Stewards, California State Parks, HSU Natural History Museum, and HSU Natural Resources Club.

Volunteer Management System (VMS)
Participants will be provided an online account to track their volunteer hours, including hours spent on their Capstone project. Tracking volunteer hours is an essential way to show need and impact of a program like California Naturalist Program.

Graduation
Graduation will be a potluck with Capstone Presentations on Thursday, October 28 from 5:30-8:30 p.m. at the Humboldt Coastal Nature Center. *Participants are encouraged to invite friends and family to celebrate!*

Zero-Waste/Leave No Trace
This is, as best we can manage, a zero waste class. Participants may wish to take turns bringing snacks to evening class meetings. Please bring reusable cups, plates, silverware, and cloth napkins to avoid single use items or excessive packaging. When packing lunches, snacks, and water for field sessions, participants are encouraged to avoid single-use packaging. Any waste created during lunch breaks must be packed out and disposed of properly.

Meet your instructor
Jennifer Ortega has a variety of environmental education experiences acquired from working as a middle school science teacher, an education ranger for Redwood National & State Parks, and coordinator of education programs at Humboldt State University's Natural History Museum. Currently, Jen is a faculty member at Humboldt State University teaching Environmental Education and Interpretation. She is a Master Certified Environmental Educator and Project Learning Tree, WET and WILD facilitator. Her favorite place to be is in the outdoors with family and friends.

Contact information
Jennifer Ortega (Course Instructor)
jen@friendsofthedunes.org

“Office Hours”: On Tuesdays & Thursdays Jen will be available to answer emails for this course. In person meetings will need to be arranged in advance.

Suzie Fortner (FOD Programs & Operations Director/Course Admin)
suzie@friendsofthedunes.org
Office: (707) 444-1397

Cell numbers will be distributed in class