

"Extinct" Shrub Unearthed in San Francisco

Franciscan manzanita not seen in nearly 70 years

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Wild Equity Institute

A Bay Area plant expert got the thrill of his career last month when he discovered a plant near the Golden Gate Bridge that was supposed to be extinct.

Botanist [Daniel Gluesenkamp](#) spotted the wild Franciscan manzanita as he was driving through the Presidio, a federal park overseen by the [National Park Service](#).

The shrub, also known as the [San Francisco](#) manzanita, has not been seen in the wild since the 1940s, when it was moved from city cemeteries to allow for that time's urban sprawl. But when construction crews recently cleared eucalyptus trees in the area, it exposed the only specimen known to exist in the wild.

Specimens first used to identify the plant were rescued from the [California Academy of Sciences](#) in 1906 as fire driven by the San Francisco earthquake [moved in and destroyed the Academy's collection](#), according to the Wild Equity Institute.

"Finding this wild plant under our noses gives us a fantastic opportunity to protect this indigenous plant and to restore it," said [Brent Plater](#), executive director of the [Wild Equity Institute](#).

State law doesn't protect extinct species, so papers are being filed now with the federal government to take action.

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