



OAK LEAVES

A PUBLICATION OF THE LOS OSOS / MORRO BAY CHAPTER OF SMALL WILDERNESS AREA PRESERVATION
P.O. BOX 6442, LOS OSOS, CALIFORNIA 93412-6442 ❖ (805) 528-0392 ❖ AUGUST/SEPTEMBER 2015

Bob Isenberg to Speak at SWAP Annual Celebration



Bob Isenberg of Pacific Coast Peregrine Watch has outfitted his truck to contain photos and displays about Peregrine Falcons. Courtesy photo.

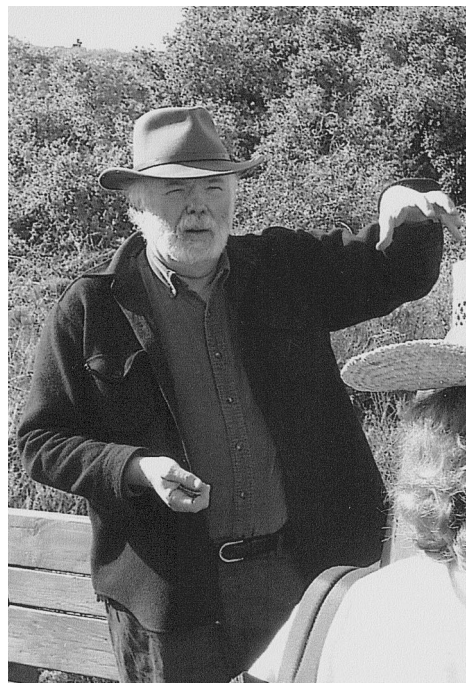
By Ron Rasmussen, SWAP Chair

This year SWAP's Annual Celebration will be held on **Saturday, October 10 from noon to 2:30 p.m. at the Morro Shores Mobile Home Park, 633 Ramona Avenue in Los Osos.** As our featured speaker we are fortunate to have Bob Isenberg who is well

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Au Revoir to Les Bowker

Text and Photo by Yolanda Waddell



Ecologist Les Bowker led dozens of nature walks in the Elfin Forest from the late 1980s to the present.

Photo by Yolanda Waddell.

One of SWAP's long-time active members, Dr. Les Bowker, has moved back across the United States to Massachusetts where he was born, grew up, went to college and worked before coming to Los Osos.

In 1985, shortly after the Los Osos/Morro Bay Chapter of SWAP was formed, our small group of board members realized that we needed help to accomplish our daunting goal – to purchase the

land that is now the Elfin Forest. Treasurer Larry Grimes and his wife Pat, both of whom worked at Cal Poly, invited Les and Rose Bowker for a walk in the Elfin Forest (so named by Pat Grimes). Les taught ecology and Rose was the computer specialist in the Cal Poly Biology Department. We took them on a long walk down into the large oak grove that is next to the estuary. Rose and Les were quickly won over by the beauty of the gnarled oaks in that wonderful grove, and joined our effort to save the Elfin Forest.

Rose became our Publications Chair and started producing newsletters. Eventually she became SWAP President. Les took on the task of Science Coordinator, collecting scientific facts about the Forest and contacting County, State and other government agencies.

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BOARD OF DIRECTORS

*of the Los Osos/Morro Bay Chapter of
Small Wilderness Area Preservation (SWAP)
consists of the following members:*

Ron Rasmussen, Chair

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The SWAP Board of Directors meets monthly at 7 p.m. at the Community Room, Morro Shores Mobile Home Park, 633 Ramona Ave., Los Osos.

The next meetings are

***Thursday, August 13,
and Thursday, September 10.***

All Board meetings are open to the public.

To confirm the date, time and location

(which are subject to change),

call (805) 528-0392.



CONTACT SWAP

If you have questions about SWAP activities or want to volunteer, please call

(805) 528-0392 and leave a message.

A recorded message will give information about our 3rd Saturday Walks, Work Saturdays, and other events.

If you have questions, concerns or comments about any problems in the Elfin Forest,

call or write: Mark Wagner

SLO County Parks Supervising Ranger

1087 Santa Rosa Street, SLO, CA 93408

(805) 781-1196

Owners of dogs off-leash can be cited. If you witness dogs off-leash, vandalism or obvious crimes, call the County Sheriff at 781-4550 or Mark Wagner at 781-1196.

Bowker *continued from page 1*

In 1987, the northern 51.6 acres of the Elfin Forest was in “inverse condemnation.” Owner Shirley Otto was suing the State for blocking her chance to sell the land. Les and Rose and other SWAP members made phone calls and wrote letters to ask Assemblyman Eric Seastrand for help in purchasing the land from Shirley Otto. Seastrand, a very skilled negotiator, found State funding and the land was purchased. That left the southern 38.7 acres of the “Otto Property” to be bought somehow.

There followed six years of extremely hard work to raise the \$3 million dollars that Shirley Otto was asking for the southern 38.7 acres. Rose Bowker became an excellent grant writer, raising over \$1 million in grants. Les wrote informative text for our prospectus and for the grants. Les and Larry Grimes did mapping of trails and the habitats of the Elfin Forest. Fortunately the State Appraiser reduced the price to \$1.6 million. In May, 1994 the money was raised and the Elfin Forest became a County Parks Natural Area.

During the years that followed Les was involved in the committee that wrote an Elfin Forest Management Plan for County Parks; planted Coast live oak trees, Morro Manzanita and other native plants; did erosion control; supervised Cal Poly senior projects in the Forest; acted as Recording Secretary for two or three years; and worked with the SWAP Boardwalk Committee when the boardwalk was being built in 1999.

In 2005, Rose Bowker lost her battle with cancer, but Les has continued volunteering for SWAP. In recent years Les has been a 3rd Saturday walk leader, a docent for school walks, and has written a chapter on Elfin Forest ecology for a yet-to-be completed book about the Forest. He has also been active with other organizations and parks projects, most recently heading the Morro Bay State Park Trails Committee. That group builds and improves trails throughout the Park.

I asked a few SWAP “old timers” for their thoughts about Les.

From Elsie Deitz:

I always think of Les as someone of tremendous physical strength - for any age. Always thoughtful, he would approach a difficult move, stop, say “Now wait a moment, I need to think about this.” That silent moment would pass with the words, “Now I know how to make this work,” and it always did, with seemingly little effort on his part.

From Pat Grimes:

He always answers yes when asked to do something to help someone out. If there was a project, Les was always there to do what needed to be done from giving walks to setting up displays. Generally speaking, and I know many who enjoy nature, I’d say Les enjoys being connected with the earth in a scholarly and physical way more than most.

Barbara and Rosey Rosenthal:

When you would call Les on the phone, his machine would announce, “Les and the elves are away right now. Please leave a message.” Of course you knew he meant the elves from our El Moro Elfin Forest. You also knew that he was likely enjoying some heavy labor work, like trail building or helping a friend remove an old fence set in heavy concrete (and hauling away the debris in his trailer). He has stayed in great shape not at the gym, but in the great outdoors that he loves. Yes, we will miss him, but we understand the pull of family back in Massachusetts and Maine.

SWAP will miss Les Bowker as well, and we thank him for his wonderful gift of knowledge, time and energy over a span of thirty years, from 1985 to 2015. It is a gift that is given not only to SWAP but to the future generations who will enjoy the Elfin Forest.

Sam Mednick – Our Centenarian SWAP Member

Text and photo by Yolanda Waddell

In March of this year, Sam Mednick celebrated his 100th birthday and became SWAP's centenarian member. Not only that, he and his wife Shirley have been supporters of SWAP and the Elfin Forest since 1992, when they learned about it from their friends Elsie and Jerry Deitz.

Sam and Shirley are the czar and czarina of international folk dancing in San Luis Obispo County. They moved to Los Osos from the San Fernando Valley in December 1980, and in January, 1981 they started a folk dance group. The group has continued to the present, meeting at the South Bay Community Center every Tuesday, and Sam and Shirley attend as often as they can.

There is a romantic aspect to Sam and Shirley's dancing. Shirley's sister brought her to Sam's folk dance group at Valley Cities Jewish Center in Sherman Oaks. After four years of dancing together, they decided to get married in 1980; it was a second marriage for each of them. Now they have been married for thirty-five years.

Sam's life has been full of changes. Born in New York City, he went to New York City College, studying drama and ballet in the 1930s. He became active in theater work in New York, and joined a company in Harlem, doing stage lighting. While with that company, he worked with actor Ossie Davis (starred in *Dr. Doolittle* and *Do the Right Thing*) and singer Julie Wilson in a production about Booker T. Washington. Then came World War II. Sam joined the army and fought in the Battle of the Bulge and D-Day.

After the war, Sam joined the family business and became a furrier. Then he moved to Los Angeles, opening a fur store there, attending Valley College at night for a degree in mental health and working at the L.A. Veterans Hospital. After moving to Los Osos, Sam attended Cal Poly, earning a Bachelor's degree in Child Development and a Master's in Counseling at age 70. Following that he worked for San Luis Obispo County Mental Health in Atascadero until he retired.

In Los Angeles, Shirley worked as a cancer registrar for Los Angeles County. She would drive to the area hospitals to abstract data from hospital records for cancer research. In Los Osos, Shirley became a volunteer for their synagogue and for other causes. Though she does less volunteering these days, she still cooks food once a month to take to the Prado Day Center for the homeless.

Sam and Shirley have taken walks in the Elfin Forest for many years, from the days when there were only sand trails. Now they appreciate having a boardwalk for their twice-weekly walks. They enjoy the peace and quiet, sometimes sitting for awhile in Rose's Grove. Shirley said, "If it's not a good day, we'll go to the Elfin Forest." This inspiring couple provides encouragement to all of us to stay active and enjoy the natural world around us.



Centenarian Sam Mednick and his wife Shirley enjoy a stroll through the Elfin Forest twice a week. Photo by Yolanda Waddell.

Isenberg *continued from page 1*

known as an expert on the recovery of the Peregrine Falcon after years of exposure to DDT in its environment. The bird now is making a comeback along the Central Coast of California.

As a teenager in Southern California, Bob began watching birds, but always wondered why he did not see a Peregrine Falcon. At that time, there were only two breeding pairs in California due to environmental contamination with DDT. In 1969 he moved to Shell Beach and there saw his first Peregrine pair. For years, he watched them off and on. His work took him up and down the California coast where he spotted another pair at Morro Rock. He bought a spotting scope to follow the activity of this pair and shared the scope with friends and passers-by.

Bob has been a fixture at Morro Rock ever since. He is a self-

taught naturalist and bird behaviorist and, as of 2012, had accumulated 17,700 hours of observation.

Bob Isenberg and Heather O'Connor have created an educational, nonprofit 501(c)(3) all-volunteer organization. (www.pacificcoastpergrinewatch.org). Donations go for scholarships for students studying Wildlife Biology at California Polytechnic University.

Please join us on October 10th at Morro Shores for Bob's presentation, which is certain to be a very interesting story.

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Black Phoebe



Text and Photo by Jean Wheeler, Ph. D.

The Black Phoebe (*Sayornis nigricans*) is a passerine bird and a member of the Tyrant Flycatcher Family. That very large bird family (about 400 species) breeds only in North and South America. Included are all four flycatchers listed for the Elfin Forest. The other three are the Pacific Slope Flycatcher (*Empidonax difficilis*), Say's Phoebe (*Sayornis saya*, featured on this page in the February/March issue this year), and the Western Kingbird (*Tyrannus verticalis*). The family was probably named "Tyrant" because a number of well-known species display aggressive behavior, chasing even much larger birds away from their nests.

This species is easy to spot and identify. Up to 7 inches long and weighing about 2/3 of an ounce with a wingspan of about 11 inches, the bird has a large black head and is very dark gray on the upper chest, wings, back, and upper tail. This contrasts sharply with a very white belly, the white extending under the tail. The black bill is straight and thin. Another distinguishing characteristic is the way they fan and wag their tails up and down while perched on low bush tops.

The Black Phoebe has a large range, breeding near water southward from southern Oregon through western Mexico, Central America, and South America as far south as northwestern Argentina.

They sit on low perches, usually within about 7 feet of ground and always near water, darting out in short flights to catch bees, wasps, flies, beetles, grasshoppers, and moths. They may also snatch caterpillars or spiders from brush or the ground and even small fish near the surface of a stream or pond. Mainly diurnal feeders, they may occasionally take insects buzzing around lights soon after dusk.

A courting male may show off potential nest sites to his mate, but the female chooses her spot and constructs her nest of mud by herself sheltered on a cliff, bridge support, culvert, or eaves of a house. The nest is always close to a water body providing a supply of mud. She lays up to a half dozen eggs which she incubates alone for a little over two weeks. Both parents feed the young, who fledge in about 2-3 weeks after hatching. They often have two, occasionally 3 broods per year.

Black Phoebes tend to be monogamous, breeding together for five or so years and often re-furbishing the same nest. They jointly and aggressively defend their nest during nesting season from other members of their own species and even larger birds such as Western Scrub Jays (*Aphelocoma californica*) or Brewer's Blackbirds (*Euphagus cyanocephalus*). They may also dive-bomb foxes, coyotes, and ground squirrels. However, they apparently maintain separate feeding territories in winter. Most Black Phoebes are not migratory, but some of the most northern ones apparently do move somewhat south for the winter, and some may migrate up mountain sides in summer and down in winter.

This species has adapted very well to the presence of humans. They are considered a species of least concern being numerous and steadily increasing in numbers since 1966, according to the North American Breeding Bird Survey. Originally nesting on rock faces, streamside boulders, and hollows in trees, they now tend to look for building eaves, irrigation culverts, and even abandoned wells.

Elfin Forest Visitors

By Yolanda Waddell



It's fun to chat with visitors to the Elfin Forest. On June 6th, a Saturday, I met Herb and Sharon Carbaugh (above) who drove from their home in Calimesa to spend time on the Central Coast and in the Elfin Forest. The town of Calimesa is in Riverside County on the I-10 between Redlands and Beaumont – about a six-hour drive from here. They said that they love the Elfin Forest and come for a visit four times each year.

What is even more impressive about this couple is that they drive to Upper Newport Bay, a preserve in Orange County, to volunteer for the Bayview Restoration Project. Like our Weed Warriors, they perform a variety of tasks including removal of non-native plants and grasses, re-vegetation with native plants, installing temporary fencing and doing erosion control. I told them that it is heartening to learn about volunteer work by people who care, taking care of other special places.

Bird's Foot Trefoil

By Dirk Walters, Ph.D.; Drawing by Bonnie Walters

Well, we're at it again. The plant discussed in this issue is NOT a native plant. It is probably rare if present at all in the Elfin Forest. But it's on the most recent Elfin Forest Plant list so we're considering it fair game. It is bird's foot trefoil (*Lotus corniculatus*) and it is native to Eurasia and North Africa. Bonnie's drawing is a combination of new and old. The leafy twig bearing an inflorescence and fruit along with the intact and expanded flower and the intact and split fruit were borrowed from Dr. David Keil's and my plant taxonomy text. The view of the plant growing flat on the ground is new.

I suspect most of you will immediately recognize from the drawings that the plant is a member of the bean, pea, or legume family (Fabaceae). The pea and bean names come from two of the many important economic crops found in the family. In fact Fabaceae is second only to grasses (Poaceae) in economic importance among families of plants. The last name 'legume family' is derived from the essentially unique fruit found in this family, the legume. Until the middle of the 20th century, this family was known as the Leguminosae after its fruit.

The name used commonly in our area (according to the internet, there are over 90 common names for it in England alone) is 'bird's foot trefoil'. The bird-foot can be imagined from Bonnie's drawing. Look at the arrangement of the flowers. Now imagine there are five of them and they have turned into fruits. The fruits are long (up to 4 in.) and thin and are arranged all in a single horizontal plane, just like the toes of bird's foot. This appearance is enhanced by the hard, sharp style base which resembles a claw.

Trefoil is actually a mistaken interpretation of the leaves. Note the three blades at the leaf's tip in Bonnie's drawing. These are the origin of the name trefoil for tre- (3) and foil (blades). The two blades next to the stem are also part of the leaf, but because there is no petiole (leaf stalk), they look like and are positioned like stipules. What looks like the leaf stalk is actually the axis (rachis) of a pinnately compound leaf. Remember, common names can't be rejected because they are misleading. One of the other common names might be worth mentioning because it relates to the bright yellow flowers. It is 'butter and eggs' which refers to their resemblance to a fried egg yolk. North American literature apparently prefers using the name 'bird's foot deer vetch.' Deer vetch may have fewer mistakes. But vetch can be and is often used for any pinnate compound leaf member of the legume family with vine-like spreading stems.

Most of the temperate members of the Fabaceae bear flowers that are variations on the flower in the drawing. The largest and uppermost petal which covers the entire flower in bud is the banner petal. As the flower matures, it often bends upward in the middle becoming conspicuous and easily seen by potential pollinators. The two petals to the side are known as the wings as they often flare outward and loosely resemble wings of a butterfly. In fact,



the technical name for a flower with this arrangement is *papilionaceous* which is derived from *papilio*, meaning butterfly. A group of common butterflies share that name. The bottom of the flower is made up of two petals termed the keel petals, fused along their distal bottom edges resembling the keel of a boat. The ten stamens and single pistil are usually totally hidden between the keel petals.

I need to produce one last paragraph on the genus name, *Lotus*. Back in 2006, *Oakleaves* published an article entitled, *Lotus scoparius*, which is the scientific name for a very common Elfin Forest shrub. Its common name is shrubby deer weed or deervetch. The most recent edition of *The Jepson Manual* has a new genus name for that plant. Shrubby deer weed, has been moved to a different genus, *Acmispon*. All other native New World members of the old genus, *Lotus* have been moved to other genera as well. The genus *Lotus*, as now constituted is restricted to plants native to the old world.

A Visit From Land Trust Alliance

By Yolanda Waddell

In June, SWAP Chair Ron Rasmussen received an e-mail from Leslie Ratley-Beach, Conservation Defense Director of the Land Trust Alliance. She said that she enjoyed seeing our website and would like to visit the Elfin Forest. She had flown to Los Angeles from the Land Trust Alliance offices in Montpelier, Vermont to lead some seminars on land trust insurance, and to visit a few of the land trusts in the area. SWAP has been a member of the Land Trust Alliance for many years, buying our insurance through them at a very reasonable rate. The Elfin Forest is one of 1700 land trusts that belong to this alliance.

Ron e-mailed Leslie that he would be glad to give her a tour of the Elfin Forest. Board member Vicky Johnsen and I decided to go along as well. We met Leslie at the end of 15th Street on a Friday morning. Interestingly, a family of ten arrived shortly before Leslie did. Vicky, who is a superb docent, offered to give them a nature walk and off they went. Later Ron, Leslie and I came across Vicky and the family. They were all smiling, including Vicky. She was pleased that one of the children was so fascinated with the woodrat nests that he kept looking for sticks to help the woodrats make their nests larger.

Land Trust continued on page 6

Weed Warrior Report

Text and photos by Yolanda Waddell

May 2nd – Pulling and Pounding

Many of our usual Weed Warriors seemed to be away or busy on this particular workday. However, Pat Brown, Barrett Holland, Rich Johnson, Ron Rasmussen and Skip Rotstein did yeoman (and yeowoman) work in pulling weeds along South Bay Boulevard and also in replacing rusted screws in the boardwalk with new stainless steel screws.

June 6th – A Brush With Serendipity

On June 5th, SWAP work party leader Ron Rasmussen drove up to the 17th Street Elfin Forest entrance and happened on two men clearing brush in an empty lot near the street. A light bulb lit up in Ron's head, and he asked the men if SWAP could have the brush that they'd cleared. They said it was fine with them, so on Saturday, June 6th nine Weed Warriors gathered armloads of brush at the end of 17th Street and walked up the path to the boardwalk many times, filling a tarpaulin and a wagon. The brush was then used to fill the entrances of several "ad hoc" (unwanted) trails to remove the temptation to go off of designated trails or the boardwalk.

In the adjacent photos we see Dean Thompson, Ellen Nelson and Conservation Chair Skip Rotstein (top) hauling brush down the boardwalk; and Ron Rasmussen (at right) points to a former trail that has been closed off with brush. Thanks to Dave Bowlus, Jack Fanselow, Vicky Johnsen, Frances Leitch, new Weed Warrior Ellen Nelson, Ron Rasmussen, Skip Rotstein, Dean Thompson and Yolanda Waddell for working to take advantage of Ron's serendipitous find.



Let's all pull together

By Lannie Erickson

When the fog lies across the hills
And an early-morning Thrasher trills
We'll get together and pool our skills,
We're the Elfin Forest Weed Warriors.

Later when the sun is hot,
We'll be out here giving it all we've got
Pampering Nature's garden spot,
We're the Elfin Forest Weed Warriors.

When exotics are gone and trails are neat,
With trash bags full we'll stand in the heat,
Proud of our labors we'll happily meet
(And maybe Ron will give us a treat).
We're the Elfin Forest Weed Warriors.

SWAP First Saturday Work Parties

We invite you to join us on any first Saturday from 9 a.m. to noon at the north end of 15th Street in Los Osos to enjoy satisfying physical activity in fresh air amid lovely surroundings. Please dress for wind, fog, or sun. Layers work well. Long pants and long shirt sleeves are good. Sturdy shoes are a must. Take care not to park in front of driveways or mailboxes. To request more information, call (805) 528-0392.

Land Trust *continued from page 5*

Leslie was very interested in our native plants as well as the boardwalk and SWAP's activities. She gave us several creative suggestions to involve children and the community. After she returned to Montpelier, she wrote to us: "The wonder and joy on the faces of all the families we saw enjoying your preserve on Friday are still in my mind. It makes me smile. You have given your town and your visitors an extraordinary gift. Thank you for your dedication, enthusiasm, joy and skill in caring for the Elfin Forest – a treasure for us all."



Ron Rasmussen points out young berries on a Coffeeberry bush to Leslie Ratley-Beach, visiting from the Land Trust Alliance in Vermont.

Leslie gave us contact names and mentioned some services provided by the Land Trust Alliance for its members. We were very pleased to have this delightful and positive person visit us, and look forward to using the LTA electronic forum for ideas from other land trusts on how to solve problems as they arise.

Elfin Forest Sightings

In April, SWAP's butterfly enthusiast and expert, **Pat Brown**, saw and photographed five butterflies that she hadn't previously seen in the Elfin Forest. In the June/July *Oakleaves*, we included her photo of the Funereal Duskywing butterfly in Elfin Forest Sightings. In this issue you can see her photo of the Painted Lady butterfly (at left), showing both its upper and under wings. This orange and black butterfly has a white rectangle (three spots run together) on the outer leading edge of the front wing and black spots on its hind wing.

Painted Lady butterfly adults can be seen flying all year long, probably because their caterpillars feed on several different host plants that bloom at different times. Painted Lady host plants that can be found in the Elfin Forest are Cobweb Thistle, Pearly Everlasting, Cheeseweed and English Plantain.

In May, during Dirk Walters' wildflower walk, **Vicky Johnsen** used her camera to shoot an excellent closeup of a Western Fence Lizard (below) sunning itself on the boardwalk. It is rare that one can get close enough to a fence lizard to see the spines on its tail, visible in this photo.

Later in Dirk's walk, Vicky came upon a Cobwebby thistle (bottom left), a native thistle that doesn't spread invasively like other thistles. Her closeup of the flower head shows the webbing between the spines under the flower, the reason for calling it "cobwebby."



*Painted Lady Butterfly showing both the upper and lower wings.
Photo by Pat Brown.*



*Close-up of a Cobwebby thistle (Cirsium occidentale)
by Vicky Johnsen.*



*Western Fence Lizard seen from up close.
Photo by Vicky Johnsen.*

Please Report Elfin Forest Sightings

Have you observed any unusual birds in the Elfin Forest? Mammals? Reptiles? Amphibians? Insects? Interesting activities or footprints of wildlife in our Elfin Forest? Unusual plants? Taken a good photo? Please report any interesting sightings to your *Oakleaves* editors at: oakleaves@elfin-forest.org for inclusion in future issues under "Elfin Forest Sightings." You can also leave a message on SWAP's answering machine, (805) 528-0392.

Thinking of Switching to Online *Oakleaves*?

Tired of looking at that pile of newsletters and magazines waiting to be read? If you use your computer a lot, we encourage you to take a look at the online *Oakleaves* at www.elfin-forest.org. Being able to see the 20 or so photos in full color makes it a very attractive alternative to the black-and-white printed copy. If you miss an issue for some reason, it is there, waiting for you. Simply click on "Forest Library," then "Oakleaves Index" and finally the year and month of the issue that you want to read. Just e-mail us at oakleaves@elfin-forest.org with the subject: Switch me to online.

Coming Up in the Elfin Forest

Text and photos by Jean Wheeler



White Pelicans



Mock Heather



In these driest two months of the year during a prolonged drought, white and yellow flowers dominate the shrubs in the Elfin Forest. The signature flower of this season is the bright yellow of Mock Heather, which is widespread in the Elfin Forest and blooms almost exclusively in August and September. Low to the ground is California Croton with pale green leaves with small white flowers. Dune Buckwheat flowers started out white, but are now aging to pink and ultimately to a dark rust color. Pink flowers that may be seen are Pink Everlastings, California Asters, and California Hedge Nettle.

This is also the season to look for fruit. That of the California Coffeeberry is especially attractive in these months along the boardwalk between Bush Lupine Point and Siena's View. The colorful berries appear yellow at first, darken to red and finally turn a rich ebony black. Another bright red berry growing in the same area is Hollyleaf Cherry.

Reptiles are most active in these warm months, so look for Garter, Gopher, and California King Snakes. Enjoy the amusing pushups by the Western Fence Lizards along the toe rails of the boardwalk. And look for tracks of animals in the sand next to the boardwalk, especially in early mornings, when raccoon tracks are very commonly seen.

Among our resident birds active now are White-crowned, Chipping, Lark, Savannah, and Song Sparrows; House and Purple Finches; Lesser and American Goldfinches; Bushtits; Bewick's Wrens; and Anna's Hummingbirds. Fairly common but usually staying low in the bushes are California and Spotted Towhees, California Thrashers, and Wrentits. The blue flash and noisy screams of California Scrub Jays are everywhere, and California Quail can be seen scurrying through the underbrush.

Also, begin to keep an eye out for the earliest arrivals of birds migrating south for the winter. Several species of ducks and some wading birds begin to arrive as early as August, and more come in September. The photo of American White Pelicans was taken in a recent year in mid-September. And rejoice in the anticipation of the thousands more birds that will nearly cover the Bay in the months just ahead!

Be a Part of SWAP's Outreach!

If you'd like to join SWAP in this enjoyable type of outreach to the public, see the information on page 12.

On May 31st, SWAP set up its booth at the Eco Faire in Morro Bay, sponsored by Eco Rotary Club of Morro Bay. Among those tending the booth were (L-R) Vicky Johnsen, Yolanda Waddell and Ron Rasmussen.

Photo by Melody DeMeritt.

WALKS in the ELFIN FOREST

Third Saturday Walks

August 15, 9:30 a.m. – All About the Estuary

What is an estuary? Why is the Morro Bay estuary important to the Elfin Forest, and vice versa? Two very knowledgeable walk leaders from the Morro Bay National Estuary Program (MBNEP) will explain the importance of this body of water as we walk around the Elfin Forest boardwalk. Adrienne Harris, MBNEP Executive Director, and Lexie Bell, Assistant Director, will talk about the 48,000-acre watershed that feeds the estuary, threats to estuary health, and Estuary Program's conservation work. Plus, participants will learn how they can help to protect this vital natural resource in their everyday lives. Adrienne and Lexie are known to give pop quizzes – with prizes!

September 19, 9:30 a.m. – What's Underfoot? Soils!

Have you heard the term "Baywood Fine Sand?" It's the name of the predominant soil in Los Osos, as well as in the Elfin Forest. It's what you walk on when the pavement ends, because all of Los Osos was once a series of sand dunes. Soil scientist Lynn Moody will describe local soils and talk about how important soils are in determining what plants will grow in them. We'll learn how sandy soil both benefits and stresses plants. Lynn will also explain why the presence of sandy soils in Los Osos reflects climate change and seismic activity over the past couple million years.

Walks in the Elfin Forest begin at times stated above at the north end (1100 block) of 15th Street off Santa Ysabel in Los Osos. Wear comfortable shoes, long sleeves and pants to avoid poison oak and mosquitoes. Park carefully, avoiding driveways and mailboxes, and leave pets at home. The easy paced walks last 1-1/2 to 2 hours. For more information call (805) 528-0392.



*Botanist Dirk Walters, at right, gives interesting facts about the Sticky monkey-flowers in bloom at his right during his May wildflower walk.
Photo by Vicky Johnsen.*



*Photographer and birder Don Quintana drew camera enthusiasts from all over the county for his June 3rd Saturday walk.
Photo by Ron Rasmussen.*



Morro Bay Estuary Programs's Coastal Cleanup day crew in 2014. Courtesy photo.

Give a Day for the Bay!

By Rachel Pass, MBNEP Communications and Outreach Coordinator

The Morro Bay National Estuary Program invites you to Give a Day for the Bay! Many local organizations are offering volunteer activities that benefit the bay between July 25 and October 31, so it's easy to get involved. Just go to the Estuary Program's website, www.mbnep.org and look for the Give a Day for the Bay calendar. You'll find all the details you need there, so you can choose the date, activity level, and location that work best for you.

SWAP will take part in Give a Day for the Bay on Saturday, August 1st. From 9 a.m. to noon, the Weed Warriors and anyone else who wants to volunteer will pick up trash along South Bay Boulevard or do shoreline cleanup along the edge of the Elfin Forest by kayak. To participate, please send an e-mail to ron@elfin-forest.org.

You can also join ECOSLO for a Tsunami Debris Cleanup on the sandspit, meet up with Morro Bay in Bloom volunteers to clean up Centennial park, do an underwater dive cleanup with Depth Perceptions, or pick up trash around Morro Rock with Surf rider.

How will you Give a Day for the Bay? The choice is yours! Write to Rachel at rpass@mbnep.org to share your Give a Day plans, or to ask any questions.

Thank You to Our Generous Members

Compiled by Betsy Kinter, SWAP Database Coordinator

NEW:

Richard Laster The Wilde family*

RENEWING MEMBERS:

Patty Arnold	Sheila Montooth*
C. Dawn Aulenbrock*	Brian Nofziger*
Bob & Linda Bailey*	Shirley Palmer
Baywood Inn*	Mr. Billy R. Pewitt*
Ed Bobich*	Nicholas & Dorothy Pier*
Diane Bougher*	Nova Poff
Christine & David Braun*	Jim & Wendi Proffitt*
Paul Crafts	Patrick & Dorothy Rygh*
Francesca Fairbrother	Bob & Barbara Schwenoha
Catherine D. Hopson*	Peg Smith*
Dr. Steve Jio and family*	Nancy Stephens*
Jypsy Joe Johnson*	David & Helianthe Stevig*
Gene & Mimi Kalland*	SWCA Environmental
Aya Kimura*	Consultants*
Roberta Knapp*	Marilyn Moore
Sally & Randy Knight*	& Sandra Taylor*
Barbara Machado*	Lisa Wallender
Susan McTaggart	Celia Zaentz*
JoAnne Milburn	

DONATIONS:

William L. Johnson
The Very Rev. Fr. Speier, St. Athanasius,
Antiochian Orthodox Church

Correction: in June/July *Oakleaves*,
Gary & Marianne Wallace were listed as renewing members.
They are actually new members and we welcome them.

*Thanks to those listed above
who donated more than the \$25 (regular)
or \$15 (senior or student) membership dues.
The additional donations will be used
for special projects in the Elfin Forest.
If you recently sent a donation to SWAP
and don't see your name
in this issue's New and Renewing list,
be assured that your gift
will be acknowledged in the next bimonthly issue.
Gifts are processed by two different volunteers
before reaching our editors,
and newsletter copy deadline is
one month before the date of the issue.

Alese Bell – a Remembrance

By Yolanda Waddell



*Alese Bell was President
of the Friends of
the Fiscalini Ranch
Preserve for many years.*

Recently we learned with sadness
about the death of Alese Bell, a long-time
active member of Friends of the Fiscalini
Ranch Preserve in Cambria. Alese and
her husband Bob Bell were among those
who worked hard to save the Fiscalini
Ranch from development in the late
1990s. That group of concerned citizens
formed a chapter of SWAP, called North
Coast SWAP, to have the advantage of
SWAP's tax-deductible status. With the
help of the American Land Conservancy,
North Coast SWAP raised \$11 million in
grants and private donations to finalize
the purchase in November, 2000.

In the years that followed, Alese and
the North Coast SWAP Board took on
the task of restoring the Preserve, which
had been turned over to the Cambria
Community Services District. North
Coast SWAP became a separate organiza-
tion for tax reasons, adopting the name,
Friends of the Fiscalini Ranch Preserve
(www.ffrpcambria.org). Alese was Presi-
dent of the FFRP Board. To raise funds
for care of the Preserve, Alese chaired
their annual Great Kitchens of Cambria
event for some years. She passed away
on May 20, at age 67. SWAP sends our
condolences to Alese's family and to the
FFRP Board and Executive Director,
JoEllen Butler.



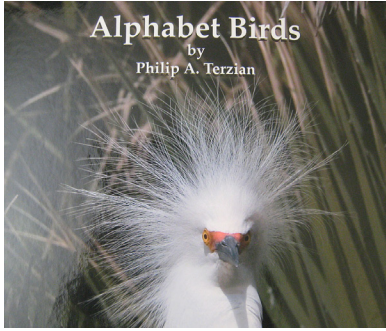
OAKLEAVES

is published six times per year beginning in February.

Co-editors are Yolanda Waddell and Jean Wheeler;
layout is by Katy Budge. Editing assistance by Pat Grimes and Leslie Rotstein.
Contributors to this issue: Pat Brown, Elsie Deitz, Melody DeMeritt,
Friends of the Fiscalini Ranch Preserve, Pat Grimes, Bob Isenberg,
Vicky Johnsen, Betsy Kinter, Morro Bay National Estuary Program (MBNEP),
Rachel Pass, Ron Rasmussen, Barbara Rosenthal, Yolanda Waddell,
Dirk and Bonnie Walters, and Jean Wheeler.

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Deadline for copy to Oakleaves is the first of the month before issue.
If possible, all copy should be submitted by e-mail to: oakleaves@elfin-forest.org.



Alphabet Birds: Book for Kids

SWAP is selling this wonderful book by Philip A. Terzian with gorgeous pictures of birds, one for each letter of the alphabet. The facing page features a clever little poem for each bird in large-sized text and child-appropriate wording.



SWAP Shoppers' Order Form

See Photos of All Items at www.elfin-forest.org

All Prices Include Sales Tax

1. MURAL SHIRTS

Mural design by artist Barbara Rosenthal on both front and back. Words on shirt: "El Moro Elfin Forest Natural Area" above mural and "Small Wilderness Area Preservation" and "Los Osos, California" below mural.

Circle Sizes:

- ___ Short Slv. T-Shirt (S, M, L, XL) @\$20.00 = \$ ___
- ___ Short Slv. T-Shirt (XXL, XXXL) @\$23.00 = \$ ___
- ___ Long Slv. T-Shirt (S, M, L, XL) @\$25.00 = \$ ___
- ___ Long Slv. T-Shirt (XXL, XXXL) @\$27.00 = \$ ___
- ___ Sweatshirt (S, M, L, XL) @\$35.00 = \$ ___
- ___ Sweatshirt (XXL, XXXL) @\$37.00 = \$ ___

2. ELFIN FOREST NOTE CARDS

Original print note cards

___ @ \$3.00 or ___ set of 5 @ \$14.00 = \$ ___

Indicate No. per View(s):

- ___ All 5; ___ Don Klopfer Trail; ___ Ocean View;
- ___ Wild Hyacinth; ___ Horned Lizard; ___ Dudleya

3. POCKET GUIDE

Useful 56-page guide to plants and animals of the Elfin Forest. Lists for mammals, reptiles, amphibians, birds, arthropods including moths and butterflies, gastropods, vascular plants, lichens, and mushrooms. Some with charts for seasonality, color and more.

___ @ \$3.00 = \$ ___

4. ELFIN FOREST MURAL PRINTS

Signed prints by artist Barbara Rosenthal, image size 4 1/2 x 16 1/2 in; mounted on foamcore

___ @ \$25.00 = \$ ___

5. ALPHABET BIRD BOOK

With clever verses and superb photos, this book is sure to please young and old.

___ @ \$21.65 = \$ ___

6. MURAL MUG

15- ounce beverage mug with wrap-around mural design, microwave and dishwasher safe.

___ @ \$10 = \$ ___

Shipping costs within zip 934 __:

Bird Book, \$2.77 (book rate) per book = ___

Pocket Guides & Note Cards \$1.50 = ___

Mural Prints on Foamcore \$5.00= ___

Shirts each: \$4.00 = ___

Mural Mug: \$6.00 ___ (If more than one mug, call for shipping cost.)

For shipping costs outside 934 __, call (805) 528-0392

TOTAL OF ORDER

\$ _____
(Please print when filling order, and indicate how many of each.)

Name: _____

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City/State/Zip: _____

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Phone (w/ area code): _____

Make checks payable and mail to:

SWAP, P.O. Box 6442, Los Osos, CA 93412-6442. Call-in orders may also be made: (805) 528-0392.




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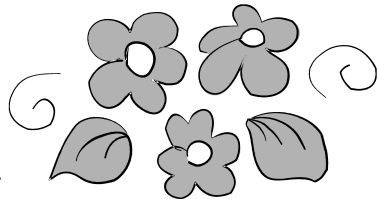
Address Service Requested

Give a Day for the Bay! See page 9

Please check renewal date on your label.

 printed on recycled paper

Booth Workers Needed for Morro Bay SummerStreet Fair



SWAP has been invited to participate in the Morro Bay Summer Street Fair on Sunday, August 2nd, from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Our booth will be located at what Fair Coordinator Neil Farrell calls the "Eco Corner," at Harbor and Main Streets. We will be located near other environmental groups.

Morro Bay is a tourist destination and draws visitors from many places. We'll talk to them about SWAP and the Elfin Forest, distribute literature, and sell t-shirts, sweatshirts, our beautiful new SWAP mug, etc. If you would like to volunteer to staff our table at this event for a two-hour shift, please call SWAP's message phone at 528-0392 or e-mail ron@elfin-forest.org. Give your name, shift preference and phone number. Join us, you'll have fun!

MEMBERSHIP FORM

Name _____

Address _____

City/State/Zip _____

Email _____

Phone _____

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> New Member | <input type="checkbox"/> Renewing Member |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Member \$25 | <input type="checkbox"/> Defender \$100 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Steward \$50 | <input type="checkbox"/> Champion \$250 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Protector \$75 | <input type="checkbox"/> Guardian \$500 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Seniors & Students \$15 | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Life Member \$1000 | |

I want to help, please call me!

Memberships include a subscription to SWAP's bimonthly newsletter, *Oakleaves*.

Check here to receive the online version only.

All donations to SWAP are tax-deductible.

EVERY membership counts!

Make checks payable to: SWAP

Mail to: Small Wilderness Area Preservation,
 P.O. Box 6442, Los Osos, CA 93412-6442.