



OAKLEAVES

A PUBLICATION OF FRIENDS OF EL MORO ELFIN FOREST
P.O. BOX 6442, LOS OSOS, CALIFORNIA 93412-6442 ❖ (805) 528-0392 ❖ AUTUMN 2022

Meet Our Annual Celebration Speaker, Allyson Brooks

By Bob Dees

Our speaker for FEMEF's upcoming 2022 Annual Celebration (November 12, via Zoom) will be Allyson Brooks, Community Engagement Manager for Sierra Foothill Conservancy (SFC). A major non-profit land trust, SFC currently oversees 50,540 acres of protected sites including historic rangelands, mountains, forests, streams, and native flora and wildlife of the Western Sierra Nevada range. With a goal of preserving special places for future generations, SFC also promotes the scientific study of foot-



Allyson Brooks *continued on page 3*

Join the FEMEF 2022 Annual Celebration

By Yolanda Waddell

Another year, another COVID strain, and here we are on Zoom again. Please join us for the FEMEF annual celebration on **Saturday, November 12, from 1 pm to 3 pm.**

An annual meeting with attendance by members is required by the State and our Bylaws. Its purpose is to recapitulate the year's activities, discuss plans for the future, and to elect Directors. Our webmaster will post an announcement of the Annual Celebration on our website, www.elfin-forest.org, two weeks before the event. It will include a Zoom link.

Two to three weeks before the meeting, the Board of Directors will email a notice about the Annual Celebration to members or send postcards to those for whom we have no email address. Those who receive postcards will need to email FEMEF at femef@elfin-forest.org if they wish to join the meeting and will receive information on how to use Zoom as well as how to participate in online voting to elect Board members.

This year, our speaker will be Allyson Brooks, Community Engagement Manager for Sierra Foothill Conservancy. Allyson's PowerPoint presentation will explain what the Sierra Foothill Conservancy does, show examples of native plants and resident animals of the area, and give the challenges land-preservation organizations face today. She will answer questions after her presentation. See Bob Dees' profile of Allyson at left.

Following Allyson Brooks' talk, there will be brief reports by three board members. FEMEF Chair Steve Hendricks will report activities and accomplishments during 2022. Treasurer Dave Bowlus will review briefly the Annual Treasurer's Report that appears on page 10 of this issue and will take questions. Conservation Co-Chair Jeff Reifel will report how weeding, erosion control, and boardwalk maintenance has been accomplished despite COVID-19 limitations.

Election of Candidates for the FEMEF Board of Directors (see page 10) will conclude the meeting and will be conducted virtually. Only the votes of members present at the meeting will be counted.

The FEMEF Board of Directors encourages you, our members, to join our virtual gathering. We want to tell you, the supporters of FEMEF and the Elfin Forest, what we have done on your behalf.

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BOARD OF DIRECTORS

of the

Friends of El Moro Elfin Forest (FEMEF):

Steve Hendricks, Chair

Robert Dees, Vice Chair

Dave Bowlus, Treasurer

Yolanda Waddell, Secretary

Beverly Boyd, Acting Recording Secretary

Allison Fash, Student Board Member

Roger Carmody

John Perrine

Jeff Reifel

Skip Rotstein

The FEMEF Board of Directors meets monthly,
2nd Monday of the month from 2:00 - 4:00 p.m.

The next meetings are

Sept. 12, Oct. 10, Nov. 14

FEMEF Board meetings are virtual and are
open to the public.

To attend a FEMEF Board meeting, leave a
message at 805-528-0392.

CONTACT FEMEF

If you have questions about FEMEF activities
or want to volunteer, please call
(805) 528-0392 and leave a message.

A recorded message will give information
about our coming activities and other events.

If you have questions, concerns or comments
about any problems in the Elfin Forest,
call or write: Lasca Gaylord
SLO County Parks Supervising Ranger
1144 Monterey 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 Lasca Gaylord at 781-1196.



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State of the Forest

By Steve Hendricks, FEMEF Board Chair

Monthly board meetings of Friends of El Morro Elfin Forest (FEMEF) are still occurring on Zoom. These are open meetings and the public is welcome to join (see the Zoom link on the website). We'd love to have your input! Below is an overview of some of the most significant happenings in the last four months.

County Parks Continues to Support FEMEF Boardwalk Maintenance

On your next walk through the Elfin Forest, you may notice that many new boards have been installed. Board member Jeff Reifel and FEMEF volunteers have been hard at work replacing boards. Jeff estimates that a little over 1% of the boards have already been replaced. He and the volunteers have done a great job. They have been working so quickly that the boards from the first purchase have already been used up! Fortunately, County Parks and Lasca Gaylord, the Pasco District Supervising Ranger for County Parks, have agreed to purchase more boards for our ongoing maintenance project.

FEMEF is also working on a plan to replace benches that are beginning to show their age. New benches will have the same style as older ones but will have slight modifications in design and materials to increase their longevity. County Parks indicated that it will also provide funds for replacing worn or damaged benches. If you would like to help with this or other projects, please check the "Forest News" link on the website for upcoming work parties. Thank you, County Parks, for your support, and kudos to Jeff Reifel for leading this effort.

Trail Guide Update

The updated trail guide has been finalized and will be sent off for printing soon. County Parks and Alex Benson, owner of the Baywood Inn, have agreed to contribute \$600 each for the printing of 15,000 trail guides. Look for the new field guides in a few months when you are out on a walk in the Elfin Forest. We ask that you return the field guides after your walk to help us save on printing costs. Thank you, Jeff Reifel and the trail guide committee, for spending many hours working to update and streamline the guide.

No Recognition Bricks, but Bench Plaques

Last month we learned that County Park regulations will not allow FEMEF to build a recognition brick pathway at the Elfin Forest. We are discussing other ways to recognize people who have played a large role in overseeing the Elfin Forest over the decades. One option is to add plaques to the 22 benches spread throughout the forest. County Parks allows three plaques per bench, and most benches currently have only one plaque. FEMEF will be considering additional plaques as a way to honor significant people in the Elfin Forests' past.

Plastic Fence Removal and Butterfly Hill Update

Conversations with County Parks last month confirm that major projects in the Elfin Forest are on indefinite hold until the Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP) is approved by the relevant federal and state agencies. The timeline could extend many months to several years. Big projects like the Butterfly Hill overlook and removal of large sections of plastic fencing will need to wait until the HCP is approved. FEMEF is inquiring about the removal of small sections of fence that have vegetation growing through them. Stayed tuned for updates on these projects.

Detecting Wild Boar in the South Bay



By John Perrine

Although the Elfin Forest is great wildlife habitat, not all wildlife species are equally welcome – and this is especially true for wild boar, also known as feral pigs. Common names can cause confusion, but wild boar and feral pigs are really the same species (*Sus scrofa*). The animals that we may see rooting in our natural areas are a hybrid of escaped domestic swine and imported Eurasian wild boar and are widely hunted for sport.

Pigs are not native to the western hemisphere (the peccaries of the southwest are not “true pigs” but rather members of a separate though closely related taxonomic family). As a result, their wallowing and rooting behavior, insatiable appetite, and high reproductive rates can cause great ecological harm. And because they can weigh

up to several hundred pounds apiece, wild boar can also be a menace to motorists.

In late 2017, biologists from the Morro Bay Estuary Program contacted me, asking if my students and I could help determine how many wild boar were active in the area where Los Osos Creek flows into Morro Bay, just outside of the Elfin Forest Preserve. In November 2017, my student Brendan Nakaji and I set out 3 motion-activated trail cameras along Los Osos Creek close to the South Bay Boulevard bridge. We left the cameras running for 14 weeks, checking them weekly.

We found that this small area was inhabited by several different groups of pigs, ranging from solitary boars to large herds (called “sounders”) consisting of several mature males and females and their striped offspring. The cameras closer to the bridge detected pigs on an almost daily basis, while the camera farther up Los Osos Creek detected the least pig activity.

At the same time as our survey, a trapper working with USDA Wildlife Services removed several pigs from this area. But our cameras showed that he didn’t get them all. In fact, we got several photos of pigs foraging around the Wildlife Services trap but never actually going inside.

One good thing about pigs is that they don’t usually stay in one place for long, and these pigs were no exception. After several months, they moved to another portion of their home range, away from our cameras. We have no way of knowing exactly where they went or when they will return. Perhaps one day we will be able to put tracking collars on several pigs and learn more about their movements.

Allyson Brooks *continued from page 1*

hill ecosystems and provides educational and recreational opportunities for the public.

Allyson Brooks has been the Community Engagement Manager for SFC for over four years. She grew up in the Sierra Nevada mountains near Shaver Lake, California, where she developed a passion for everything outdoors—from land conservation and studying biology to physical activities. Most of the endeavors that Allyson has chosen throughout her life have involved science, conservation, immersion in the outdoors, and movement. She was a whitewater river guide on the Kings River for four years, a zookeeper and environmental educator, and a science teacher to multiple grades of students, including at the community college level. She received her Bachelor of Science degree in Biology, Ecology Option and her Master’s degree in biology and education from California State University, Fresno.

Allyson’s role as Community Engagement Manager for SFC includes a fascinating list of responsibilities. These include overseeing education, outreach, and volunteer programs for SFC, assisting in the organization’s development, and serving as a land steward. She runs SFC’s youth field trip program as well as its sponsored hikes and classes, community events, volunteer days, outreach presentations, docent activities, Native American tribal relationships, community and educational partnerships, grant-writing, fundraising, and stewardship activities. She also coordinates tasks such as fence-building and repair, trail and preserve maintenance, rangeland program assistance, and any other on-the-land maintenance necessary for ecological stewardship of SFC’s several thousands of acres of properties. As if these responsibilities were not enough to keep her busy, Allyson and her husband Drew are also the parents of two wonderful children.

Allyson Brooks’ presentation at this year’s FEMEF Annual Event will include an overview of SFC, an introduction to some of the native flora and fauna the organization helps to protect and their historical uses, and the challenges land-preservation organizations face today. FEMEF is honored to have Allyson Brooks as our 2022 Annual Celebration speaker. Be sure not to miss joining her on November 12. See Yolanda Waddell’s article on the Annual Celebration in this issue of *Oakleaves* for information about how to attend the event.

Remembering ...



Lee Markwort

By Jean Wheeler. Photo by Robert Boxberger

A member of our organization well before we succeeded in buying the Elfin Forest property for donation to County Parks, Leona (Lee) Markwort passed away on July 13, 2022. Born on October 30 in 1922, Lee lived a giving and productive life for nearly a full century. She was a next-door neighbor to the Elfin Forest for 26 years at her home bordering our forest on the end of 12th Street. She hosted events such as the release of some of our calendars.

Lee grew up in the Upper Peninsula of Michigan, where she graduated from college and began teaching. She met George Markwort, a sailor, at a USO club, and they were married for 47 years. George was from California, and they settled in Los Angeles where they raised their children, Mark and Kathy. Lee had taught in Los Angeles for 35 years when she and George retired. They moved to the home at the end of 12th Street to be near their son Mark and his family, who lived in Los Osos. After George passed away in 1992, Lee continued to live here until 2012, when she moved to a smaller home in Cayucos near where Mark's family had previously moved to from Los Osos.

On moving to Los Osos in 1986, Lee and George enjoyed walking sandy trails from their home, learned of our group's fundraising to purchase the land as a reserve, joined, and became very active. They helped set up our booths, told visitors about the Elfin Forest, and encouraged them to visit and to help protect our small wilderness park.

Fond memories among our leaders include Lee feeding quail between her home and our forest; Lee talking about hearing and seeing a crow warn feeding quail that a coyote was coming; Lee chatting with visitors on trails and explaining why dogs should be leashed as her Cloe and Meg were; Lee gently scolding misbehavior she encountered from visitors on trails; Lee's love of dark chocolate candies and red wine at our parties; and Lee's sign on a window of her car: "I Brake for Dark Chocolate."



Chris Van Beveren (left, with spotting scope) and fellow school walks docent Vicky Johnsen.

Chris Van Beveren

A Leader among School Walks Docents

By Jean Wheeler

Chris Van Beveren was born in Pennsylvania in 1942. Her family moved to the San Fernando Valley in 1948, so she was a Californian for most of her life. She earned a degree in home economics from San Fernando Valley College, now California State University at Northridge. She married Jim Van Beveren, whom she had known since high school, and they raised three children.

Enjoying traveling with the family, Chris worked as a travel agent for over 40 years, visiting more than 65 nations. She fell in love with birding on a tour in the Everglades and became active in the Audubon Society, an affiliation she continued in Los Osos and Morro Bay after she and Jim retired and moved here. Living next to the Elfin Forest, she developed a large native plant area on their property, pulling weeds herself and encouraging native plants to prosper in her garden. She spent much time on our boardwalk and paths and answered our call for volunteers to act as docents for school walks.

Early in 2013 Chris and Vicky Johnsen were both training to become school walk docents. Vicky remembers that Chris had an infectious enthusiasm for all things natural, especially birds. She says that Chris had "a marvelous ability to describe HOW to identify birds seen in the Elfin Forest." Vicky described some examples, including "the ways Chris would pantomime the tippy-dihedral way that a turkey vulture flies by extending her arms out at an angle from her body and tip them up and down. Chris would also demonstrate what she termed the 'brown towhee chicken-scratch' by hopping backwards and forwards as that bird does while foraging on the ground."

Vicky greatly appreciates the way "Chris was always ready to help out as a docent with the grade school walks through the Forest even when it became physically taxing to keep up with the fast pace of students." Vicky says she values Chris for her unique and creative ways of encouraging young students to think for themselves and because Chris "tended the young minds that visited the Forest just as she tended her own natural garden at home."

Outstanding not only as a school walks docent herself but also in teaching and encouraging other docents, Chris will be greatly missed. She died at her home in Los Osos on July 28, 2022 at the age of 79.

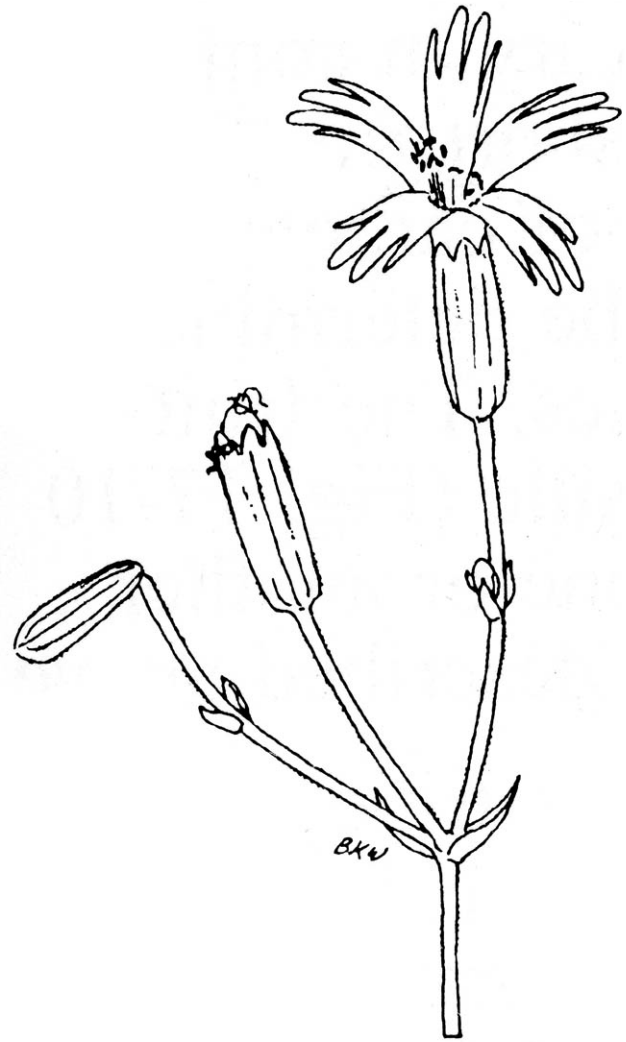
Cardinal Catchfly

Text revised by Dirk Walters, Ph.D. from his October 2013 article
Drawing by Bonnie Walters

Late summer or early fall (or more appropriately “late dry season”) in the Elfin Forest is a downtime. There doesn’t seem to be anything happening. Even the animals appear to be resting. It seems that the only plants blooming are the mock heather (yellow – *Ericameria ericoides*) and possibly some residual coast California buckwheat (white – *Erigonum parvifolium*). But if one looks carefully down by the Rose Bowker Grove one may just see a few bright red flowers. The name most common around here is Indian pink. But I found a better common name on the internet, cardinal catchfly. Either way it’s *Silene laciniata*. It has the habit of using other plants for support, as its stems are weak. So look for it growing out of the canopies of relatively short neighboring plants. Its paired leaves are broadly joined at their base and appear, at first glance, to be quite grass-like. But no grass has opposite leaves, and a close examination of the leaf blades will show a single larger midrib. The Elfin Forest is near the northern extent of this species’ range. It can be found on our coastal dunes and further inland on serpentine outcrops.

An examination of Bonnie’s drawing will show what appear to be the five fused petals at the end of a long tube. The tube is formed by the fused sepals (calyx). The petals are separate. If one were to slit the side of the calyx tube, the five separate petals would simply fall away from each other. Each petal consists of two quite distinct regions. The showy part is bright red and is called by botanists “the claw.” Each thin basal portion is the length of the tube and basally attaches separately to the receptacle below the ovary. The sepals and stamens also attach to the receptacle. So despite its casual appearance, the ovary is superior.

The local common name, Indian pink, I believe to be the less desirable because of the use of “Indian.” The name *Indian* often indicates that the plant in question was used in some way by the North American native peoples. I didn’t find any reference to their use of this species either online or in my library. I’m guessing that the use of the word Indian here simply refers to it being native to California. The second name, *pink*, refers to a common trait in its family, Caryophyllaceae, or pink family. Pink, in this case, does not refer to the flower’s color, which is bright red, but to the fringed petals. That is, it refers to a practice known to tailors as cutting the edge of unsewn fabric with special shears that leave the cloth’s edge saw-toothed. The shears are called “pinking shears,” and their purpose is to prevent the edge from unraveling. Now, “cardinal catchfly” is a much better name. First, the flowers are bright red like the plumage of a cardinal. The term *catch-fly* refers to a common trait found in many flowers that produce lots of special trichomes (hairs) on their sepals. These individual trichomes resemble the colored pins often stuck into maps; they have short shafts and large round heads. When mature, these “heads” break down into an acrid, terrible tasting glob sticky enough to ensnare small insects such as flies and bees. Why would this be an advantage to the flower? Many



flower-visiting insects, when prevented from entering the flower the correct way will attempt to steal nectar by biting a hole through the base of the flower or calyx. This is pure thievery, as the insect gets the nectar without pollinating the flower.

How might a cardinal catchfly be pollinated? The first thing we need to do is note that the only possible (legal) entrance to the deep, relatively narrow floral tube (where the nectar is produced at its base) is via a very tiny hole through which the style and stamen filaments also emerge. A pollinator would have to be either small enough to enter the hole (not likely) or have a very long, thin proboscis, or tongue. That eliminates essentially all flies, bees, and beetles that have chewing mouth parts. That leaves three common long-proboscis pollinators -- butterflies, moths, and hummingbirds. Butterflies usually require flowers that provide a landing platform. The cardinal catchfly is orientated so that the showy parts of the petals are vertical which does not provide a landing platform for butterflies. Cardinal catchflies bloom during the day, so that should eliminate most moths. Further, I haven’t noticed any pronounced floral odors produced by this flower. A day-flying pollinator that hovers in front of flowers and possesses a long, thin beak (and tongue), and keen eyesight in the red portion of the spectrum would be a hummingbird. This is a conclusion that could have been gotten easily from the internet, but not nearly as fun.



Photos from the Forest

(Top left) Sun over the highpoint of the boardwalk by Theo Waddell.

(Middle left) Mock Heather by Dave Bowlus.

(Bottom left) Bee on a dune buckwheat flower by Vicky Johnsen.



*In all things of nature,
there is something
of the marvelous.
~ Aristotle ~*



Harvester ants, the major item in the diet of coast horned lizards. There is concern that tiny Argentine ants invading the Elfin Forest may be displacing the larger harvester ants without replacing them in the diet of coast horned lizards, thereby endangering the lizards. Photo by Joey Rektor.

Please Report 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: oakleaf@elfin-forest.org or leave a message on FEMEF's answering machine, (805) 528-0392.



*Team replacing damaged boards. Jeff Reifel in foreground.
Photo by Jeff Reifel*



*Replacement boards show up among the old now in our boardwalk.
Photo by Jean Wheeler.*

Progress in Boardwalk Repair

By Jeff Reifel

If you have walked in the forest recently you may have noticed a smattering of new decking on the boardwalk. Our planning committee proposed a simple, low impact, scalable, as-needed approach to replacing failing boards. San Luis Obispo County Parks approved the plan, purchased materials and provided storage for the lumber.

Volunteers have replaced over 120 of the worst boards and expect a second order of lumber. Work continues while we await more wood. A small crew identifies offending planks, painstakingly removes various problem screws, frees boards, wire brushes accumulated sand, rust and debris from supporting joists, and finally fastens the old boards back down with a few good screws. I chop twelve-foot lengths of two-by-six boards into manageable six and four foot lengths and rip tapered pieces that turn corners.

The installation of new lumber goes fast. Volunteers cart the boards in and out before most visitors arrive. New boards are swapped for old. A good crew can install 40 boards in a couple of hours. Board members, Roger Carmody and Skip Rotstein, FEMEF volunteers, James Solum and George Pilling, and the Black Hill Gang have the project off to a running start. If this sort of work appeals to you, volunteer@elfin-forest.org.

Gardening with California Wax Myrtle

Text by John Nowak

The Gardening with California Plants for this issue is California wax myrtle, *Morella californica*. The plant is still known in the nursery trade by the former scientific name *Myrica californica*. Common names are California wax myrtle (preferred name in our Pocket Guide sold on page 11), Pacific wax myrtle, or California bayberry. This plant occurs mostly on the shady northeast, wind-swept slopes of the Elfin Forest. It can be found with similar plants such as fuchsia-flowered gooseberry, California coffeeberry, coast live oak, poison oak, and spiny rush. It has a large distribution along the North American Pacific coast from Gray's Harbor, Washington, south to Long Beach, California, with an isolated population on Vancouver Island, British Columbia.

In cultivation, California wax myrtle is available at most nurseries. It is valued as one of the most attractive California native plants, and it is commonly used as a small tree or for a wind break, especially here in Los Osos. It prefers to be multi-trunked (as a large shrub) but can be pruned into a single-trunk tree.

Wax myrtle has long green leaves that have a spicy smell and are deer resistant. It has small white-to-cream-colored flowers that start blooming in the fall. The fruits are purplish in color and waxy in appearance. These fruits are attractive to many birds such as the northern flicker, house finch, and American robin but only in small quantities.

This plant has very few insect problems but can become infested with spider mites or thrips. A soap spray or Neem oil spray will take care of the problem. Remember to spray weekly for one month to eradicate the infestation. The plant is known to be drought tolerant, but care should be taken to add moisture for at least one to three years, depending on annual rainfall, to get young plants well established.

When looking for that perfect shrub or small tree for oceanfront conditions here in Los Osos, remember California wax myrtle. For now, best wishes and happy gardening!

Coming up in the Elfin Forest

Story and Photos by Jean Wheeler

Our autumn lacks the “fall” of big, brightly colored leaves, but it is still a season of interest and beauty in our Elfin Forest. Some flowers change color while others become beautiful fruits. Some plants continue flowering from summer, while others only begin opening late in autumn. This year’s wildlife young are reaching maturity and must learn to feed themselves. Migrating birds are passing through or arriving to settle in for the winter in our Elfin Forest and on Morro Bay National Estuary.

Yellow flowers of mock heather bloom from August into September. White flowers of dune buckwheat age to pink, and then to rust. Pompom blossoms of black sage transition from white through brown to black in time to look appropriate for Halloween. Tiny red berries festoon hollyleaf cherry bushes. Larger coffeeberries darken from yellow through red to black, often together on the same branches. California poppies continue to bloom in yellow to orange. California asters bloom throughout autumn with white to pale pink or lavender ray flowers around central yellow discs. Cardinal catchfly (photo; and Dirk Walter’s full account of this species is on page 5) still has bright saw-toothed red flowers under oak trees along the lower boardwalk.

Often beginning to open by November are white to lavender blossoms on buckbrush, also known as California lilac, one of our most widespread shrubs all around the boardwalk. Tiny white bells of morro manzanita, often blushing light pink, may also begin to open along the lower boardwalk in late November if we have an early rain. Bringing still more color to our small wilderness in autumn are our resident birds and many migratory birds passing through or wintering here. Fox, Lincoln’s, and golden-crowned sparrows join our year-round white-crowned sparrows from October to March or April. Ruby-crowned kinglets also settle in for the winter. Our summer Swainson’s thrushes have gone south but are replaced by incoming American robins and hermit thrushes. Yellow-rumped warblers also arrive in autumn. Resident black phoebes are joined by their relatives, Say’s phoebes, for a winter visit. Birds passing through in small flocks on their way to the tropics may include cedar waxwings, western tanagers, and pine siskins.

Birders are especially attracted to Bush Lupine Point and Siena’s View in these months to view bird species floating on the estuary. Several species of ducks may arrive as early as August. By October dabbling ducks, dipping their heads to seek food with tails pointing up in the air, may include mallards, northern pintails, gadwalls, American wigeons, northern shovelers, and teal (blue-winged, cinnamon, and green-winged).

Diving ducks plunge completely below the surface disappearing in search of their food. Among those to look for as they pop back up to the surface are scaup (lesser and greater), ring-necked, canvasback, surf scoter, bufflehead, common goldeneye, red-breasted merganser, and ruddy ducks.



Avocets.



Cardinal Catchfly. Also, see article on page 5.

Horned, eared, pied-billed, western, and Clark’s grebes also arrive from September to November remaining until March or April. Shorebirds such as sandpipers, dowitchers, and the American avocet (pictured) reach peak populations by winter.

Black brant geese have been famous for wintering on Morro Bay, several thousand at a time when I first moved here in 2000, but down to only a few hundred in recent years. Severe decline here in eel grass, their primary food source in our bay, and warmer winters in the subarctic bays of southern Alaska allowing greater numbers to winter there instead spending energy flying south may account for the decline.

Local birders led by Jim Royer will be at Bush Lupine Point participating in an international event, the Big Sit, on Sunday, October 9th. They will be counting all bird species they can see from the point.

WALKS in the ELFIN FOREST

Docent Led Saturday Walks

Reservations are required. Simply indicate the number of participants in your group in the subject line of an email to: walks@elfin-forest.org

September 17, 9:30 a.m. –

Seeds, Space, and Time Travelers

Registration opens 8/22

Enjoy an easy walk around the Elfin Forest, led by Barbara Renshaw and Jeff Reifel to investigate the amazing properties of seeds and the methods plants use to send them traveling. Barbara and Jeff will bring a variety of seeds, most of them local, but also some very large ones, like a coconut, from other parts of the world. Many seeds present on plants in the Elfin Forest will be discovered, including mature acorns on coast live oak trees. Barbara and Jeff will also dissect berries to show the fruit, the seed coat and then the embryo inside the seed. Don't miss this unusual and informative walk.

October 15, 9:30 a.m. –

Pacific Wildlife Care

Registration opens 9/20

Pacific Wildlife Care (PWC) volunteer and Central Coast Outdoors owner/guide Virginia Flaherty will lead a walk focusing on PWC's rehabilitation program. PWC has rescued, rehabilitated and released thousands of animals since 1986, including virtually all of the native species found in the Elfin Forest, on the sand spit and in the estuary. Virginia will talk about what we can do to help insure the return of injured, orphaned, and oiled wildlife to the hills and waters of the Central Coast. She will bring one of PWC's Wildlife Ambassadors to the start of the walk.

November 19, 9:30 a.m. –

Saltmarsh, Bay and Oyster Farms

Registration opens 10-16

Marine biologist Faylla Chapman is a longtime volunteer with Morro Bay National Estuary Program and in our Elfin Forest. She knows well and enjoys the beauty of the inhabitants of the bay from microscopic to very large and as year-around or seasonal residents. Faylla will give us captivating insights on ecological relationships between our Elfin Forest, the entire bay, salt marsh habitats within the bay, and the oyster farms we see from Bush Lupine Point and Siena's View.

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 closed-toe 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 or if you use a wheelchair, call (805) 528-0392.



By Jean Wheeler

Dean Thompson is a member of our Conservation Committee, long-time Weed Warrior, and worker on nearly anything that needs doing in our Elfin Forest. He reported that on August 13 a friend walking his dogs smelled smoke, found a smoldering fire near a bench in Rose's Grove, and immediately alerted Dean. Bringing a shovel and two gallons of water, Dean smelled the smoke as he approached and noted that someone had covered the fire with something like a sweater, perhaps trying to smother it, but the item of clothing was smoldering also. His friend soon joined Dean, bringing another gallon of water and a trash bag with which they finished extinguishing the fire and cleaned up the mess.

On receiving Dean's report of the fire, FEMEF Chair Steve Hendricks thanked him, terming the event "Very scary indeed." Steve commented that we are very lucky to have many folks watching out for our beautiful Elfin Forest.

We all need to be very careful to avoid creating such dangers as fire or other threats to the Forest ourselves, as well as to pay attention to sights, sounds, and smells around us and to report any concerns immediately. The Bulletin Board along the boardwalk between 15th and 16th streets has phone numbers to call if assistance is needed.



OAKLEAVES

is a quarterly FEMEF publication.

Editors are Yolanda Waddell, Jean Wheeler, and Bob Dees.

Layout is by Katy Budge.

Contributors to this issue: Dave Bowlus, Robert Dees, Steve Hendricks, Vicky Johnsen, Betsy Kinter, John Nowak, John Perine, Jeff Reifel, Joey Rektor, Dean Thompson, Theo Waddell, Yolanda Waddell, Dirk Walters, Jean Wheeler.

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If possible, all copy should be submitted by e-mail to: oakleaf@elfin-forest.org.

Thank You to Our Generous Members

Compiled by Betsy Kinter, FEMEF Database Coordinator

NEW MEMBERS:

Linda Barra*
Mike & Margarete Lozito
Linde Owen*
George & Carol Pilling*
Toni L. Taff*

RENEWING MEMBERS:

Richard & Brenda Allmann*	Heidi Kausch*
Randy Ball*	Randy & Sally Knight*
Craig Baltimore	Mary Leizear*
Carolyn Boomer & Mike	Don & Liz Maruska*
Askew*	Sandra Mason
William Bouton*	Marlys McPherson
Pat Brown*	Susan McTaggart*
Stephen Cake*	Sheila Montooth*
Lisa Coffman	Marie Moore & Elaine Mason*
Linda Cordes*	Louise Noel*
Paul Crafts*	Marshall Ochylski*
Scott Danielson*	Rita Robinson
Jan Di Leo*	Cindy Roessler*
Andrea Dunlop & Max	Skip & Leslie Rotstein*
Miceli*	James & Sharon Skinner
Thomas & Michele Esser*	Pebble & Terry Smith, James
Kathy & Emil Flock*	Berry Vineyard*
Jan Harper*	Dan & Elizabeth Songster*
Dr. Steve Jio and family*	the Ungar family*
Craig & Vicky Johnsen*	Edward & Marilynn Vilas*
Gail Johnson*	Lisa Wallender*
Laura and Charles Kass*	

DONATIONS:

Alex Benson, Baywood Inn - for printing of trail guides
Dianne Bougher
Nancy Ottum
Roxanne's Birkenstock, San Luis Obispo
Don & Mary Sears – in memory of Chris Van Beveren
Roger & Janice Verity – in memory of Elsie Deitz

**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 FEMEF 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 quarterly 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.*

Annual Treasurer's Report for Fiscal Year 2021-2022

By Dave Bowlus, Ph.D., FEMEF Treasurer

After a couple of years of Covid-19 pandemic restrictions, some FEMEF activities began again in spring of 2022. Our recent winter of little rain slowed down weed growth, and no snail monitoring has been necessary due to the absence of volunteer "Weed Warrior" activities. Last November's Annual Membership Meeting took place on Zoom. A long-term project to upgrade our aging boardwalk is now being performed by volunteers, and County Parks is providing the construction materials. A revised Trail Guide will go to press soon, mostly paid for by the County and a generous donation from the Baywood Inn, which has been a Trail Guide supporter since the first publication in 2002. Those donations will be reported in the next fiscal year. Consequently, expenditures from our treasury from July 1, 2021, through June 30, 2022, could be considered mundane. Meanwhile, FEMEF members and other donors have continued to support the work of our all-volunteer organization to protect, maintain, and provide education about the Elfin Forest. The funds in our treasury totaled \$62,536 at the end of June 2022, an increase of almost \$2,000 since the fiscal year began. Thank you for your generous support!

Revenues for 7/1/2021 through 6/30/2022

Memberships and donations:	\$15,571
Merchandise sales:	\$1,557
Bank interest	\$12
Total:	\$17,140

Expenses for 7/1/2021 through 6/30/2022

Education related:	
Publications and mailing	\$5,489
Conservation equipment and supplies	\$255
Merchandise for sale	\$1,501
Office supplies & other operating expenses	\$7,735
Annual Membership Meeting	\$294
Total:	\$15,274

Election of Board of Directors

At the November 12 FEMEF Annual Celebration, five of nine incumbent members of the board of directors are up for re-election. Steve Hendricks and Skip Rotstein will be up for re-election in 2023. Yolanda Waddell and John Perrine will retire from the board at the end of this year.

Candidate	Term
Dave Bowlus, FEMEF treasurer Retired biology professor	2 years, through Dec. 31, 2024
Roger Carmody Retired CPA	2 years, through Dec. 31, 2024
Bob Dees, FEMEF Vice Chair Retired college president	2 years, through Dec. 31, 2024
Allison Fash College student	1 year, through Dec. 31, 2023
Jeff Reifel, FEMEF webmaster Retired science teacher	1 year, through Dec. 31, 2023



Do you enjoy the mural by Barbara Rosenthal painted on the wall of the Rexall Drug Store in Los Osos? Get a signed full-color print (mounted on black foam core as shown) to hang on your wall or give as a gift (#3 below)!



FEMEF Shoppers' Order Form

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

All Prices Include Sales Tax

1. MURAL SHIRTS

Large mural design by artist Barbara Rosenthal on both front and back. Black shirt with the words "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. POCKET GUIDE

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

___ @ \$3.00 = \$___

3. ELFIN FOREST MURAL PRINTS

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

___ @ \$35.00 = \$___

4. ALPHABET BIRD BOOK

With 26 clever verses and superb photos on facing pages, this book is sure to please young and old.

___ @ \$20.00 = \$___

5. MURAL MUG

15- ounce beverage mug with wrap-around mural design. Microwave safe; hand wash suggested.

___ @ \$15 = \$___

6. ELFIN FOREST CAPS

One size fits all cap with adjustable straps in back, 100% cotton. Two colors, forest green and maroon. Specify color when ordering.

___ @ \$15 = \$___ Color(s)___

SUBTOTAL OF ORDER

\$___

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

SHIPPING COSTS:

Within and near Los Osos, free delivery may be possible. Shipping costs otherwise depend on zip code and package weight.

Please call 805-528-0392 to arrange for delivery or shipping.

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APPLICABLE SHIPPING COSTS \$___

Name: _____

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Make checks payable and mail to:

FEMEF, P.O. Box 6442, Los Osos, CA 93412-6442.

Call-in orders may also be made: (805) 528-0392.



FRIENDS OF EL MORO ELFIN FOREST
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Join Us for the Annual FEMEF Celebration! ~ see page 1

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Enjoy Oktoberfest! Booth Workers Needed

Celebrate the annual Oktoberfest in Los Osos this year on Sunday, October 30 on Second Street in downtown Baywood Park.

FEMEF will participate, setting up our booth among others featuring many kinds of arts, crafts and ethnic foods. We'll talk with visitors about the Elfin Forest, distribute literature and sell T-shirts, sweatshirts, our beautiful coffee mugs and caps and notecards.

We need volunteers to staff our table at this event. If you can work a two-hour shift between 9:00 am and 4:00 pm on this day please call SWAP's message phone at 528-0392. Give your name, shift preference and phone number. Join us in the 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 |

Donation only \$ _____

- I want to help, please call me!
 Memberships include a subscription to FEMEF's quarterly newsletter, *Oakleaves*.
- Check here to receive the online version only.**

All donations to FEMEF are tax-deductible.
 EVERY membership counts!
 Make checks payable to: FEMEF
 Mail to: Friends of El Moro Elfin Forest,
 P.O. Box 6442, Los Osos, CA 93412-6442.