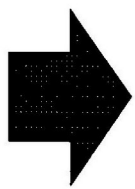




# OAK LEAVES

A PUBLICATION OF THE LOS OSOS / MORRO BAY CHAPTER OF SMALL WILDERNESS AREA PRESERVATION  
P.O. BOX 6442, LOS OSOS, CALIFORNIA 93412-6442 ♦ (805) 528-2579 ♦ JUNE 1997



## THE 'MOVING FORWARD COMMITTEE' CHALLENGES SWAP!!

### SAY WHAT?

We've got the land, the management plan is on the way, and now our goal is to have a sound organization. We are getting "uptown." We need to revise our structure.

### WHAT'S GOING ON?

SWAP is re-doing its by-laws and setting up new election procedures. We are encouraging wider participation in running SWAP.

### WHAT DOES THAT MEAN?

We'll have a revolving board. The new board positions will be for 1-2 years maximum. The Chair, Vice-chair, Secretary, and Treasurer will be elected. The Board of Directors will include coordinators for Finance, Correspondence, Education, Special Events, Walks, Grants, Publications, Membership, and Work Projects.

### WHEN DOES THIS HAPPEN?

November 2nd! We will have a fun and festive celebration and election of officers. It will be an "inside picnic" at the Los Osos Community Center on a Sunday afternoon. There will be yummy food and we'll see the slides from the Elfin Forest Slide Show Contest. It will be a good send-off for our new board.

### WHO WILL CHOOSE THESE NEW PEOPLE?

A new Nominating Committee will identify candidates. At the November 2nd elections, nominations can be made from the floor.

### WHY ALL THE ACTIVITY?

This is SWAP's new era: we will be inviting new and enthusiastic people to be a part of new docent training, new educational outreach as well as continuing our vision with interpretation, revegetation, restoration, education, docent activities and fund raising.

## A DAY IN THE LIFE OF... THE ELFIN FOREST (A Slideshow Contest)



Here's an opportunity to create your own impression of the Elfin Forest with slides. With the help of photographer Ron Bayhan, SWAP is sponsoring a slideshow contest which will culminate in the presentation of the most representative set(s) of slides during our Annual Meeting on November 2nd.

The slideshow should include typical plant life of the Elfin Forest as well as landscapes and human beings. If possible, add some shots of birds, mammals (no dogs or domestic cats, please!), reptiles, amphibians, insects or spiders. Try to show the passage of a day from early morning until sunset; it doesn't all have to be shot on the same day, of course. We suggest attending one of our 3rd Saturday walks (listed on page 3) if you aren't familiar with the Elfin Forest trails.

The finished presentation should contain up to 20 slides, using the same type of film for all slides. Please number and write your name on each slide; place them in plastic sheets for ease of handling by our judges.

Send them to SWAP Slideshow Contest, P.O. Box 6442, Los Osos CA 93412. The deadline for submission is October 10. The winning slideshow(s) will be kept by SWAP for educational, training and promotional purposes.

In addition to the public showing on November 2, the winning photographer(s) will receive a gift certificate from a local photo lab and a photo credit each time the winner's slides are used.

For additional information, phone Ron Bayhan at 528-6444.



## COUNTY EDUCATORS BRAINSTORM FOR SWAP

With enthusiasm and ideas from the education community, SWAP's Educational Committee devised a new outlook for education outreach which will focus on environmental education within the Elfin Forest habitats rather than about the Elfin Forest overall. The committee's goal is to provide training and teaching materials so the reserve can be an accessible, hands-on environmental tool for local schools and the general public. Beth Wimer has offered to be the contact person to coordinate educational activities in the Elfin Forest.



Committee members suggested a process beginning with small, pilot projects and educational "modules." Suggested projects include expanding the slide show with a user-friendly script, recruiting docents for mid-week tours, developing additional, site-specific materials for teachers and writing a guide to the Elfin Forest coordinating text with particular stopping points.

SWAP thanks the educators from throughout the county who have given up valuable time over three months to give their ideas for the SWAP educational outreach program.

*Thank you: Ron Bayan, Fayella Chapman, Bill Jackson, Myron Hood, Mary Coffeen, Wes Hamilton, Kathy Keil, Randy Knight, Charlie Perryess, Susan Rocha, Aryan Roest, Celeste Royer, Yoland Waddell, Beth Wimer, Robin Knapp, Janice Verity, and Les and Rose Bowker.*

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## FROM THE PRESIDENT ...

That's what it's all about...

Les and I had a few hours on a Sunday afternoon before the monthly SWAP board meeting and decided to go for a walk in the Elfin Forest. By ourselves. Not to weed. Not to water. Not to take someone who had never been there on a tour. Not to do anything except enjoy it.

What a great way to put things in perspective! Little surprises such as the tiny new roses along the trail from Bush Lupine Point to Celestial Meadow. A feeling of "getting away from it all" while just five minutes from home.

And a good reminder of what all of us working together have been able to accomplish.

So give yourself a pat on the back and take the time to go for a walk!

*Rose*

June 14

### **JUNE SWAP BOARD MEETING**

The regular, second Sunday, potluck board meeting for June will be held at the NEP Office, 3rd and El Moro Streets in Baywood at 5:30 pm on Sunday, June 14th. See you there!

## EXOTICS IN ELFIN FOREST

In a recent *SLO Stewards*, an ECOSLO publication, an excellent article explained exotics in San Luis Obispo Creek and inspired us to pass along similar information about the Elfin Forest habitat. The hardworking SWAP volunteers who have spent many Saturday mornings removing these exotics are doing very important work to maintain the ecological integrity of the Elfin Forest.

Exotics, or plants and animals not native to a particular ecosystem, compete with the native populations for light, water, and nutrients or food. Because they are not part of the local species balance, exotics often overwhelm the native ecosystem. According to *SLO Stewards*, "Exotic species often have no natural enemies who prey upon them, browse them, or eat their seeds. Thus these exotic species can spread rapidly . . . reducing the habitat value of the natural environment." Some of the non-native species introduced to the Elfin Forest include German ivy, slender-leaf ice plant, veldt grass and smilax.

German ivy is a rampant vine which literally chokes native species by consuming most of the available light, water and nutrients. Smilax is also an invasive vine. German ivy is most obvious among the willows along South Bay Boulevard near the new bridge, and smilax is spreading in the oak grove near Bush-Lupine Point. The slender-leaf ice plant with bright yellow flowers is invading the coastal dune scrub habitat.

Veldt grass, native to South Africa, is one of the most prolific, invasive exotic species in our area. This drought-resistant grass has spread to every and any available space from paved street edges to covering acres of land along South Bay Boulevard. It seems to be winning the competition with native plants, simply overwhelming the ecosystem. Thanks to SWAP's hard work over the last two growing seasons, you will see very little veldt grass in the Elfin Forest although it is obviously evident along South Bay Boulevard and at some of the street ends.

San Luis Obispo County Parks Department is responsible for any spraying that might be done. SWAP will continue with hand removal. We need more volunteers for this challenging job. If we can't keep the exotics under control, the unique, multi-habitat Elfin Forest we've preserved could become an example of exotic triumph.

Work days are usually the first Saturday of the month and we are recruiting individuals and groups to be responsible for exotic removal in specific areas at times when it's convenient for them. If your family or your group is interested in adopting a street end or other area, please call 528-4540 or 528-3035. Exotic species removal offers immediate results in the enhanced appearance of the Elfin Forest and in the long term value of native species protection. When you join an exotic control effort you can see the difference you make!



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### **SLO County Honored for Elfin Forest Project**

The California Park and Recreation Society recognized the SLO County Parks Department for their work with SWAP on the Elfin Forest Natural Area. The County was awarded an honorable mention in the Planning and Problem Solving category for 1996.

# THIRD SATURDAY WALKS

**June 21** It's Summer Solstice in the Elfin Forest! Join Teresa Larsen, a naturalist at Rancho El Chorro, to find out what changes take place in plants in preparation for the long, dry summer, and how the other creatures adapt to this. Teresa has a sharp ear and eye for birds as well, and will help you spot and identify them. Bring binoculars.

**July 19** Learn the ancient history of the Elfin Forest from archaeologist Dr. John Parker, Cuesta College instructor and archaeological consultant. Dr. Parker will take us back in time to learn about the ancient inhabitants of the Elfin Forest and Central Coast. He will also use Chumash artifacts to demonstrate their culture and processes.

**August 16** "By Their Leaves You Shall Know Them" is the title of Dr. Shirley Sparling's walk designed to help us identify a plant when it isn't in bloom. We'll learn how truly varied and individual each plant species is, and how easy it is to know a plant from its leaves alone.

**September 20** Take a journey through time while walking along the Elfin Forest's paths with Cal Poly geologist David Chipping. His story, beginning in the geologic past with the formation of the "Franciscan melange," will help us to better understand the land around us. A plant enthusiast as well, Dr. Chipping will show how local plant communities have formed as a result of geologic action.

Walks begin at 9:30 am (unless otherwise noted) at the north end of 15th Street off Santa Ysabel in Los Osos. Wear comfortable shoes, long sleeves and pants to avoid poison oak and mosquitoes. Please park carefully, avoiding driveways and mailboxes. We ask that you not bring dogs or other pets. The easy paced walks last 1-1/2 to 2 hours.

*Call 528-4540 evenings for information.*

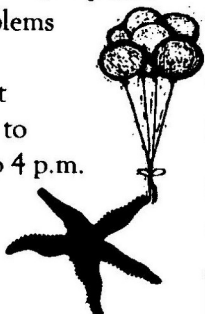
## DON'T MISS THE GRAND OPENING OF THE NEW ROTUNDA EXHIBITS

Saturday, June 28 ★ 10:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m.  
Museum of Natural History ★ Morro Bay State Park

The members of the Central Coast Natural History Association and local staff of the California State Parks invite one and all to the Grand Opening of the New Rotunda Exhibits! The festivities will include a Ribbon Cutting at 10 a.m., Seashore Wonders, nature walks, puppet show, food, music, and fun for the whole family! Admission to the museum on this day is free.

The museum parking lot is rather small, so please help alleviate any potential parking problems by carpooling, walking, bicycling, etc. Parking will be available on Morro Street in Morro Bay, with a free shuttle service to and from the museum from 9:45 a.m. to 4 p.m.

*For more information,  
call the Museum of  
Natural History, 772-2694*



*Lack of rain since January has made watering the restoration project an intensive operation for SUPER volunteers.*

## NEW LINK TO SWAP AND THE ELFIN FOREST ON THE WORLD WIDE WEB!!



Web browsers can now find the Elfin Forest via a Los Osos website. The Elfin Forest home page, designed by Ernest and Allen, has been linked to Morro Bay Online and now it's also linked to the Los Osos/Baywood Park Chamber of Commerce page. At the <http://www.TheBayBreeze.com/Services/Chambers/LosOsos/index.html> address, scroll down to Small Wilderness Area Preservation on the list of chamber members then click to link to the Elfin Forest home page, <http://www.morrobay.com/index/elfin/home.htm>

*Many thanks to SWAP for the recent honors, but the real Volunteers-of-the-Year are the people involved in all the projects you see on these pages. Without them, I wouldn't have much to do!*

*Katy Budge*

## THANK YOU, THANK YOU, THANK YOU

to J. Aitken, S. Ames, L. Armstrong, K. Baker, M. Bayhan, L. Bennett, A. Bersie, J. Bonestell, D. Casey, J. Chadwick, P. Childers, Citicorp Foundation, V. Culbert, L. Daniel, Books & Company, B. Eddy, H. Graves, B. Griffiths, M. Hamilton, M. Harrison, J. Hartzell, E. Kengel, J. MacDonald, S. McLeod, D. Patterson, E. Peter, J. Ray, P. Rygh, C. Sandoval, B. Schetzer, S. Schubert, J. Severson, H. Sicher, J. Simek, E. Smith, G. Taylor, J. Tewell, M. Tittle, D. Vincent, and G. Walter.

**ADVISORS**  
 Leslie Bowker, Ph.D., Ecologist  
 David Chipping, Ph.D., Geologist  
 Charles Dills, Archaeologist  
 Mark Dantz & Antoni Antho, Boardwalk Design  
 Steve Eabry, Morro Bay Task Force  
 Myron Graham, Morro Coast Audubon  
 Ray Belknap, SLO Land Conservancy  
 Jim Havlena, CPA  
 Don Hoffman, Central Coast Natural History Assn.  
 David Keil, Ph.D., Botanist  
 Bud Laurent, SLO County Supervisor  
 Bud & Alice Meyer, C.N.P.S.  
 Bill Newman, Friends of the Estuary  
 Aryan Roest, Ph.D., Zoologist  
 Dave Sears, California State Parks

**OFFICERS 1997**  
 Rosemary Bowker, President  
 Yolanda Waddell, Corresponding Secretary  
 Jerome Deltz, Treasurer  
 Ruth Allen, Membership Chair  
 Pat Crimes & Kary Budge, Newsletter Editors

*Per Name or Current Resident  
 Address Correction Requested*

Los Osos / Morro Bay Chapter  
**SMALL WILDERNESS AREA PRESERVATION**  
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 P.O. Box 6442, Los Osos, CA 93412 - 6442

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## SWAP DOCENT PROGRAM COMING UP!

With our major fundraising efforts past, SWAP can now focus on the educational aspects of our Elfin Forest Natural Preserve. We are beginning the formation of a team of trained docents (a Latin word meaning teacher or interpreter) who will act as SWAP "hosts" on our third Saturday walks, and eventually become walk leaders themselves. Each docent-in-training will have a mentor to assist him or her in learning the natural history of the Elfin Forest as well as how to present information to the public (interpretation). Interested? Call Yolanda Waddell, Docent Coordinator, 528-4540.

### Elfin Forest Pocket Guide Available

"Pocket Guide to the Plants and Animals of the Elfin Forest Natural Area" was edited by Yolanda Waddell with illustrations by Becky McFarland. The extensive, 25-page guide covers 24 mammals, 13 amphibians and reptiles, 110 birds, 121 arthropods, 150 flowering plants and 35 fungi known to occur in the Elfin Forest. The species lists were compiled by Aryan Roest, Ph.D., Ron Ruppert, Jim Royer, V.L. Holland, Ph.D. and Dennis Sheridan. Funds for printing were provided by a grant from the SLO Co. Board of Supervisors' Environmental Projects Fund. The guide will be available for \$1 on Third Saturday Walks and at Books & Company and Volumes of Pleasure in Los Osos.

## MEMBERSHIP FORM

Name\_\_\_\_\_

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Phone\_\_\_\_\_

- ☐ Member \$12    ☐ Defender \$100  
☐ Steward \$25    ☐ Champion \$250  
☐ Protector \$50    ☐ Life Member \$1000  
☐ I want to help, please call me!

Have you renewed your membership on time?  
 Check out the label on this newsletter for the date you last sent in your membership.

***EVERY membership counts!!***

Make checks payable to SWAP,  
 Mail to Small Wilderness Area Preservation,  
 P.O. Box 6442, Los Osos, CA 93412 - 6442