



O A K L E A V E S

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 2009

The Elfin Forest: A Brief 15-Year History

By Ron Rasmussen, SWAP Chairperson and Pat Grimes

July 13th 2009 marked the 15th anniversary of the preservation of the El Moro Elfin Forest from development. But the story of how the Elfin Forest was saved begins much earlier.

In 1973, SWAP founder Emily Polk told State Senator Robert Nimmo of the need to preserve 50 acres of the Otto Estate property that bordered Morro Bay Estuary. That 50 acres was part of the 90-acre tract now known as the El Moro Elfin Forest. With Mrs. Polk's help, the Estero Chapter of SWAP and the Alliance for the Morro Estuary, a consortium of several conservation organizations including Audubon, managed to campaign for and achieve (through a bill by Senator Nimmo) State acquisition of the 483-acre Bapatista Ranch at the east end of the Bay and the 50-acre Griffin property across South Bay Boulevard from the Elfin Forest. However, complications arose and the Otto Property wasn't acquired.

In 1979, Emily Polk and her architect husband Ben left for a 10-year stay in England, and in 1981 the Estero SWAP chapter ceased operating, having done all they could to advance the cause. From then on, the acquisition of the Otto property became one of the most complicated in the State's history. By 1983, the details

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County Parks Manager Pete Jenny Retires



Pete Jenny immediately donned the SWAP T-shirt given to him as a retirement gift. Ron Rasmussen is shown handing Pete a framed mural print. Pete also received an Elfin Forest Pocket Guide and a Weed Warrior button.

Story and Photo By Yolanda Waddell

From the time he became a Park Supervisor of a small park outside of the City of Orange in 1980 until his retirement as Deputy-Director of San Luis Obispo County Parks this year, Pete Jenny has been devoted to making the outdoors accessible and enjoyable for children and adults.

In 1990, Pete and his wife Karen moved to San Luis Obispo, where he assumed the job of County Park Operations Supervisor

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SWAP BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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

Ron Rasmussen, Chair / Treasurer
Pete Sarafian, Vice Chair
Yolanda Waddell, Secretary
Pat Akey, Member at Large
Debbie Levi, Member at Large
Bob Meyer, Member at Large
Pat Murray, Member at Large

The SWAP Board of Directors meets monthly
on the 2nd Monday at 7 p.m. at
the Community Center of
Sea Oaks Mobile Home Park,
1675 Los Osos Valley Road.

The next meetings are
Monday, August 10
and Monday, September 14.

All Board meetings are open to the public.
To confirm the date, time and location
(which are subject to change), call 528-0392.



CONTACT SWAP

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

Chuck Lowe

SLO County Parks Supervising Ranger
1087 Santa Rosa Street, SLO, CA 93408
(805) 781-4417

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 Chuck Lowe at 781-4417.

15-Year History continued from page 1

involved a state condemnation lawsuit, the owner's rejection of the state's offer of \$850,000, and an inverse condemnation lawsuit by owner Shirley Otto.

Enter the new Los Osos/Morro Bay Chapter of SWAP, founded in 1985. By that time the statute of limitations on Shirley Otto's inverse condemnation suit was approaching. SWAP members researched the property's history, developed a prospectus stating the importance of this natural area, watch-dogged the state's attorneys, and lobbied our legislators. Assemblyman Eric Seastrand listened to us and worked to secure funding from the 1974 Parklands Act to cover the \$1.7 million cost. He attached the funding to the State budget, shepherded it through the conference committee, and talked Governor Deukmajian into signing it. In 1987, the northern section of the Elfin Forest became a permanent part of the adjoining State Park.

This left the southern 39-acre section still with Mrs. Otto. While the northern section is heavily wooded and on a rather steep slope to the salt marsh below, the southern section is more flat, and covered by typical chaparral that can be easily removed and leveled by a bulldozer. The threat of development in the southern section was much greater. In fact this area had been plotted for 286 residential lots and there were two lots waiting for permit approval to begin building. The Los Osos/Morro Bay Chapter's next battle was to acquire the remaining land; it took seven more years.

Under the presidencies of Yolanda Waddell (1985-1990) and Rosemary Bowker (1991-1997), our SWAP chapter feverishly wrote grants and conducted fundraising events. Over a period of four years (from 1991 to 1994) President Rose Bowker and Development Director Barbara Machado wrote successful grants for more than \$1 million. Granting agencies nearly always want to see that the grantees have the support of the community. The SWAP Board (consisting of Les Bowker, Jerry and Elsie Dietz, Larry and Pat Grimes, Barbara Machado, Flo Ross, and Yolanda Waddell) and many volunteers scoured the community for nickels and dimes and sometimes dollars. The chapter raised over \$200,000 to match the State and Federal grants. Still, this did not quite reach the required \$1.6 million purchase price asked by Mrs. Otto. The end of the four years allotted for fund raising was nearly gone when the San Luis Obispo County Supervisors recognized the importance of this property and gave the final grant funds to allow the sale to go forward. Escrow closed on July 13, 1994 and the Elfin Forest was saved from the bulldozers.

SWAP offered the former Otto Property to San Luis Obispo County Parks and suggested it be joined with the State Park section to form a 90-acre preserve. The County accepted, with the proviso that SWAP would agree to act as steward for the preserve. In 1994, SWAP signed a ten-year Adopt-A-Park agreement with the County that was renewed in 2004 for another ten-year term. This agreement includes more than just picking up trash. Initially, it included preparation of a "Management Plan" to guide restoration and maintenance of the Elfin Forest as a true nature preserve. This plan has been the guiding principle of County Parks and SWAP. Over the past 15 years many acres of the Forest have been cleared of noxious weeds and replanted with native plants. Building of the boardwalk (1999) has been an especially important addition. It has encouraged visitors to allow the Forest to regenerate itself while still offering them the opportunity to enjoy and study the Forest "up close and personally."

Stewardship of the Elfin Forest is not a short-term project. The nature of the land (poor sandy soil) and the weather (little rain and strong, salt-laden northwest winds) favor the typical California Coastal Chaparral that covers much of the Forest. The slow growth caused by these harsh conditions means that recovery of the native plants after years of neglect and loss also takes years. To continue to preserve the Elfin Forest, SWAP's stewardship needs to continue beyond the current Adopt-A Park agreement that expires in 2014. Our membership must continue its loyal support. SWAP especially needs new members for the Board of Directors to guide SWAP in its role of keeping the Elfin Forest an irreplaceable resource for our community. If you love the Elfin Forest and can offer a few hours a month, give us a call.



SWAP Chair Keeps Board and Boardwalk in Good Order

SWAP Board Chair Ron Rasmussen put the boardwalk in order during a recent work party. Constant foot traffic and weathering causes the boardwalk screws to pop up. Ron made a complete circuit of the boardwalk loop with his "gavel," pounding them back down. He said that this is just one of the many tasks that County Parks staff doesn't have time for, and that volunteers can do. Ron says, "You are in one of the most beautiful places on the earth. Help us keep it this way - become a volunteer for Small Wilderness Area Preservation. Call SWAP at 528-0392 or 772-9514 - and feel good."

Jenny Retires continued from page 1

under Tim Gallagher. In that position, Pete worked with SWAP in the acquisition of the Elfin Forest. Then in 1997, he became Parks Deputy-Director (County Parks is a department of County General Services), and has been our constant champion.

Although Pete managed 24 parks including Lopez and Santa Margarita Lake Parks, three golf courses, many hiking trails and several swimming pools, he always had time for the Elfin Forest. He assisted us during the construction of the boardwalk, moderated when our committees to produce interpretive signs and monuments got stuck; and most recently, gave official and monetary support for our Elfin Forest calendar fundraising projects.

In June, four members of SWAP: Ron Rasmussen, Pete Sarafian, Yolanda Waddell and Jean Wheeler, attended Pete's delightful and sometimes hilarious retirement party. We presented him with a framed Elfin Forest mural, a T-shirt, a Pocket Guide and a Weed Warrior button. We hope that he will find time after he catches up with projects at home, to visit the Elfin Forest and perhaps join us on First Saturday work days once in awhile.

However, we mostly want him to follow his own advice given in the latest issue of County Parks' newsletter, *Mariposa* - to "Take a break from the economic grind and go outside and play."



*Education Chair Pat Akey told members of a special needs class from Paso Robles High School about our volcanic peaks during a July school walk.
Photo by Yolanda Waddell.*

School Walk and Docent Signup Time

SWAP Education Chair Pat Akey announces that elementary, middle school and high school teachers are invited to plan class field trips in the Elfin Forest for Fall and Spring semesters. The Education Committee is developing walks on five basic topics: habitats; insects, spiders and other invertebrates; plants and plant adaptations; food chains; and vertebrates (birds, mammals, reptiles and amphibians). To schedule a walk, e-mail Pat Akey at pata@elfin-forest.org, or leave a message on SWAP's answering machine, 805-528-0392.

Also, Pat and the Education Committee are ready to begin training school walk docents. The only requirements are a love of nature and the ability to speak to children and young people in clear terms. We will provide information about the Elfin Forest and the topics. New docents will be asked to accompany a seasoned docent on a school walk before leading their own walks. Prospective docents should e-mail Pat Akey at pata@elfin-forest.org, or leave a message on the SWAP phone, 805-528-0392.

Oakleaves E-mail Address

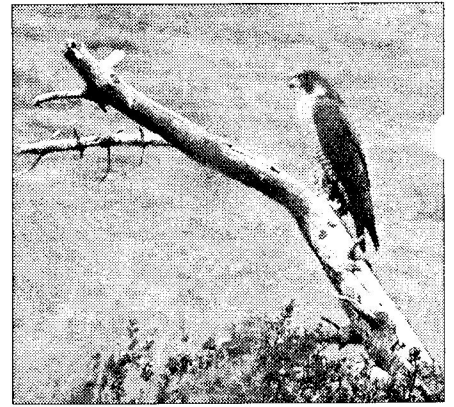
At the request of your editors, the SWAP computer guru, Bob Meyer, set up an e-mail address for Oakleaves to make it easier for you, our readers, to submit photos, letters to the editor, or interesting information. You can reach us at oakleaves@elfin-forest.net. We encourage you contribute to what is really *your* newsletter.

Peregrine Falcon

Text and Photo By Jean Wheeler, Ph.D.

Raptors usually swoop or soar over the Elfin Forest, but occasionally we spy one resting on a limb of the dead pine tree at the east end of the Don Klopfer Grove. SWAP Third Saturday Walk groups have been amazed and delighted to spot red-tailed hawks or white-tailed kites there. During one such walk, this peregrine falcon was taking advantage of the restful lookout.

Famous for speed and power, peregrine falcons (*Falco peregrinus*) are widely known as the fastest animals in the world. When stooping upon small to medium sized birds from far above, they have been clocked at speeds over 200 miles per hour. They stun their prey on impact, catch it in their talons, and bite the neck to snap its spine. Then they take it to a rocky ledge or the ground to eat it.



Peregrines average 15-20 inches long with wingspans of 3 to 4 feet and weigh about 1.5 to 2 pounds. The female is much larger than the male, nearly a third longer and twice the weight. These handsome raptors have blue-black wings and dark brown backs with short dark tails. Undersides of individuals vary from mostly pale, like the one pictured, to darkly striped almost from the neck down. The heads are very distinctive, with a dark "helmet" and light throat and collar. The marking below the eyes is shaped like a large, dark teardrop or a mustache. It reduces sun glare, contributing to their keen vision.

Peregrines fly on all continents except Antarctica, from tundra to tropics and from deserts to the hearts of large cities. Website cameras have followed them while they nest on and fledge young from window ledges. On our central coast, they scrape a shallow cup on rocky ledges, often in tiny caves. Our visitor probably came from an aerie (as raptor nesting sites are called) on Morro Rock, where peregrines have probably been nesting for centuries.

Peregrines mate for life, but accept new mates when widowed. The tiercel (male) shows off for the falcon (female) with aerobatic displays, and he brings food to her when courting. Both incubate the two to four eggs, but the falcon is on them most of the time. The tiercel brings her food, often dropping it to her as she rolls in the air below him. The eggs hatch in about 33 days. Both parents bring food to the young, which fledge 40-45 days after hatching. The young begin to hunt when about 9 weeks old. Those surviving their first year (about half) become sexually mature when three years old, and they live for about 13-17 years.

We nearly lost this remarkable species. By 1965 they were gone from eastern United States, and in 1972 only two pair were known in California, one of those at Morro Rock. In 1973, they were listed as an endangered species. Banning of DDT, banning climbing on Morro Rock, and fostering of captive-hatched chicks on Morro Rock and elsewhere in the nation led successful recovery efforts. By 1997, there were 7 nesting pairs in San Luis Obispo County and 150 in the state with similar successes across the nation. The American Peregrine Falcon was removed from the Endangered Species List on August 20, 1999.

But--the Los Angeles Times ran an article on May 9, 2008, warning that scientists have found that eggs of peregrines in Long Beach, Los Angeles, and San Francisco contain the highest levels of flame retardant household chemicals in any living organism worldwide, apparently from eating urban pigeons. Only traces were found in eggs from rural and coastal areas of the state. Continued vigilance is needed.

To see a world in a grain of sand,
And a heaven in a wild flower,
Hold infinity in the palm of your hand,
An eternity in an hour.

— William Blake

*One has to be close to a California aster (*Lessingia filaginifolia*) to see its simple beauty. This flower, with petal colors ranging from pink and violet to white, can be seen throughout the Elfin Forest from August through December. The photo, by Bob Meyer, appears in color on the November page of our 2010 Elfin Forest calendar.*



Pholisma

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

I'm guessing that no one who has seen the plant Bonnie has drawn for this article doesn't recognize it. It goes by the scientific name, *Pholisma arenarium*. As one might guess with a plant this distinctive, it has many common names. The few I've collected include: pholisma, desert pholisma, sand plant, scaly stem sand plant, dune food, and purple sand food. My favorite is a local common name--golf balls or purple golf balls. All of these names apply to one or more of its conspicuous characteristics.

Pholisma arenarium does have a scaly "stem"; it is purple when in bloom; and it grows only in coastal and desert sand dunes. Any name referring to its use as "food" is confusing, as I found no reference to this species being eaten. I suspect it is a confused reference to a second species of Pholisma (*P.* or *Ammobroma sonorae*, true sand food), a rare desert plant found in S.E. California, Arizona and New Mexico. True sand food is endangered by off-road vehicle activity, so even it is NOT an appropriate food plant.

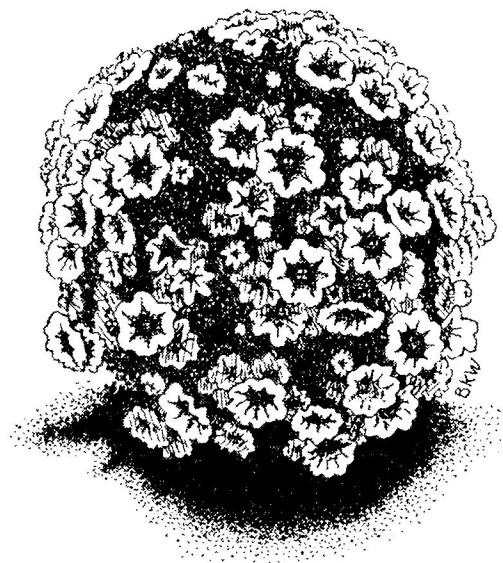
I put stem in quotations above because the plant we see from June through August in the Elfin Forest dunes is actually just its inflorescence or a group of flowers. In this case, the inflorescence is what botanists call a spike where flowers are borne stalk-less (sessile) on an elongate axis. Below the lowest flower is the inflorescence stalk or stem (peduncle) that extends from a few inches to a foot or more into the sand. All my references indicate that the peduncle arises directly from the root of another flowering plant such as *Ambrosia* (beach bur), *Croton* (croton), and *Ericameria* (mock heather).

I'm not sure what exactly is happening at the peduncle-root interface. All but one of the references indicate that the peduncle arises directly from the host root which would make the vegetative part of pholisma totally inside the host plant's root. But Mary Coffeen, in *Central Coast Wildflowers*, tells of recent research with radio-active tracers that found radio activity not only in the host and in pholisma, but also in fungi associated with the host plant

root. Mary suggests that Pholisma may, in fact, be parasitic on the fungus and not directly on the host flowering plant. Certainly implied is that the fungus is mycorrhizal, which is a mutualistic symbiosis

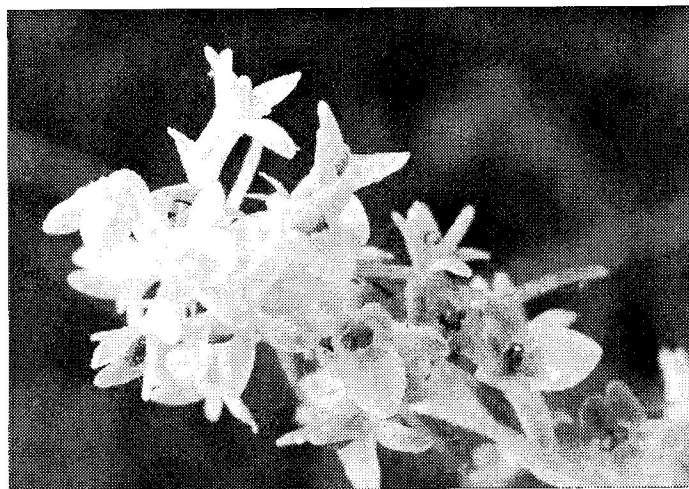
between the fungus and vascular plant root. The fungus allows an increase in the amount of soil water and nutrients collected by the host plant roots. In return, the fungus is supplied with sugars produced by its host. Assuming that the radio-active tracers were applied to the host plant and not to the soil, I'm guessing that the radio-active tracers could simply have passed into the fungus and pholisma separately and not serially as implied by Mary. Either way, I find this relationship very intriguing.

Finally, those familiar with my articles might notice that I haven't stated to which plant family pholisma belongs. This is because it appears to be in flux. All current published floras put it in its own small family (Lennoaceae) which currently consists of a couple of genera of parasitic desert and/or sand dwelling plants. But recent analysis based heavily on DNA sequences merge the Lennoaceae into a group or complex of formerly independent families known collectively as the Boraginaceae Complex. Unfortunately, I more recently heard that the old family, Boraginaceae, no longer exists as it is being incorporated into the mint family (Lamiaceae). We will have to wait for the new Jepson Manual, which is expected late this year or early next, to get the final word.



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? 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, 528-0392.



Yolanda Waddell and Jean Wheeler (who took this photo) sought out rein orchids in bloom along the trail above South Bay Boulevard in June.

Felon Thrashes Morro Manzanita

By Pete Sarafian,

Chapter Vice-Chair & Conservation Chairperson

Speaking personally, I will never forget Memorial Day 2009. Sometime between about 1:30 pm and 2:30 pm on Monday, May 25th, an unknown felon entered the Elfin Forest and began to attack and break anything within reach. The damage extended through an acre of north-facing hillside behind protective fencing between 11th and 12th Streets. The perpetrator broke branches off plants with a heavy instrument and just hands, legs and body weight. He (presumably an adolescent male) scattered branches and wooden stakes everywhere. He tore down silt fencing, tossed fence posts into the brush, and destroyed brush boxes along vertical trails. Even a defenseless gopher snake was brutally mutilated behind its head. The worst part of the damage included dozens of Morro Manzanita (*Arctostaphylos morroensis*) bushes. These plants grow nowhere else on earth and are federally listed as threatened under the Endangered Species act. That makes the criminal behavior a felony. The California State Lands Commission owns the land that was vandalized. The owner has leased the land to SLO County for 25 years.

It would appear that the vandalism may have begun on an earlier day or hour. There was vandalism of silt fencing also in the extreme southwestern corner of the Forest near 10th Street. But at about 2:30 pm there was audible hammering going on in the 11th-12th Street area. There was no such noise earlier, at about 1:30 pm. This author yelled at the perpetrator and chased him away. Unfortunately, the felon escaped before positive identification was possible. SWAP has notified the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, the State of California, SLO County Parks and the Sheriff's Department. SWAP is offering a reward of \$1,000. to anyone who can identify and help convict the felon. SWAP distributed reward flyers to residents in the first block of streets adjacent to the Elfin Forest.



This photo shows a portion of the damage done on May 25th in the Elfin Forest by an unknown perpetrator to manzanita and other shrubs as well as silt fencing and erosion control boxes. Photo by Bob Meyer.

“... the damage included dozens of Morro Manzanita (*Arctostaphylos morroensis*) bushes. These plants grow nowhere else on earth and are federally listed as threatened under the Endangered Species act. That makes the criminal behavior a felony.”

Editor's Note: SWAP members Linda and David Chipping were so disturbed when they learned of the damage done to the Elfin Forest, that they have added \$200 to the \$1,000 SWAP reward amount. We thank them for their concern and generosity.



OAKLEAVES

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Co-editors are Yolanda Waddell and Jean Wheeler;
layout is by Katy Budge. Editing assistance by Pat Grimes.

Contributors to this issue:

Pat Grimes, Betsy Kinter, Debbie Levi, Bob Meyer, Ron Rasmussen, Pete Sarafian, Yolanda Waddell, Dirk and Bonnie Walters, and Jean Wheeler.

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oakleaves@elfin-forest.org.

Let's All Pull Together

I'm sure we'll have plenty to do,
And it may even be something new.
There's lots that's gone wrong,
But if we all sing a song,
We're sure to have a good time too.

Please come to the north end of old 15th Street,
Off of Santa Ysabel in Los Osos is where we meet.
At the entrance to the Elfin Forest is where you'll park.
Don't block mail boxes or driveways; the neighbors will bark.

Yours in the cause of conservation,
Pete Sarafian



Alon Perlman collected a bag of veldt grass and other invasives from the bottom of the embankment along South Bay Boulevard during the June work party. Photo by Yolanda Waddell.



Rich Johnson, Pete Sarafian and Prisila Johnson (not shown), did some repair to silt fencing, including installing coconut fiber matting, during the July 4th work party. Photo by Yolanda Waddell.

Weed Warriors

By Pete Sarafian, Conservation Chairperson

Heat Doesn't Stop June Work Party

Wow, was it ever hot along South Bay Boulevard in early June! The Wonderful, Weekend Weed Warriors suffered from the direct sunshine and lack of breeze. Many had to break for water or for good, and yours truly was dizzy and dehydrated by the end of the morning. The Warriors included Jay Bonestell, Rich and Prisila Johnson, Bob Meyer, Alon Perlman, Ron Rasmussen, Dar Reynolds, Pete Sarafian and Yolanda Waddell. Everyone yanked grass along the highway embankment. SWAP now has moved the heavy veldt grass infestation down to within inches of the curb. As the Warriors finished up their work and climbed to the top of the hill, the ocean breeze cooled the air temperature by at least 10-20 degrees. It was a welcome relief and the perfect end to a tough morning. Way to go, Warriors! You endured the hot weather and really pitched in to do a great job. Thanks to all.



SWAP First Saturday Work Parties

SWAP First Saturday Work Parties are held at 9 a.m. to noon on the first Saturday of each month. Please dress for wind, fog, or sun. Layers work well. Long pants and long-sleeved shirts are good. Sturdy shoes are a must. Meet at the north end of 15th Street at the Elfin Forest entrance. Take care not to park in front of driveways or mailboxes. Call 528-0392.

Lou and Ann Robinson, sponsors of the San Luis Obispo County Community Foundation Environmental Awards, posed at the May award ceremony with Pete Sarafian (center), recipient of the Sustained Environmental Contribution Award. Photo by Yolanda Waddell.

Coming Up in the Elfin Forest

Text and Photos By Jean Wheeler

Flowers and fruit both adorn the Elfin Forest in August and September. Along the boardwalk, lizards dart actively in the warm sun, pausing to do their "pushups." Resident birds are weaning their young and migrants are already passing through on their way to their winter homes to the south.

Between Bush Lupine Point and Siena's View, Hollyleaf Cherry shrubs (pictured below) have bright red berries. In the same area are California Coffeeberries. A color photo by Marlin Harms features their yellow, red, to almost black berries on the August page of SWAP's 2010 calendar, available on September 12 (see article on page 10).

Yellow flowers of Mock Heather brighten much of the Elfin Forest during these two months. California Goldenrod also has yellow flowers at this time. It is not wind pollinated, like the species that causes major allergy problems.

White flowers are also widely displayed near the boardwalk. They bloom on shrubs such as California Sagebrush, Dune Buckwheat, Coyote Brush, Chamise, and (closer to the ground) on California Croton. Pink flowers that may still be seen in these months are Pink Everlastings, California Asters, and California Hedge Nettles.

Continuing to be active are year-round resident birds, such as the Dark-eyed Junco (pictured above). Also resident full time are California Quail, both Towhees, four species of Sparrows, four species of Titmice and Nuthatches, Bewick's Wren, Wrentits, California Thrashers, Northern Mockingbirds, Western Bluebirds, Blue-gray Gnatcatchers, four species of Finches, and still more bird species, including raptors and woodpeckers.

Summer or transit-only visitors include five species of Swallows, Swainson's Thrush, the Black-headed Grosbeak, Wilson's and Yellow Warblers, the Western Tanager and others.

By September, year-round resident ducks and shorebirds begin to be joined by aquatic species from the north, passing through on their way south, and by species arriving to spend the winter in Morro Bay. Look for early arrivals by Pied-billed Grebes, Gadwall Ducks, Northern Shovelers, or Blue-winged Teal. And rejoice in the anticipation of the thousands more birds that will nearly cover the Bay in the months ahead!



Rick Halsey to Speak at SWAP Annual Meeting

SWAP has invited Richard (Rick) Halsey, Director of the California Chaparral Institute, to speak at our Annual Meeting on Saturday, October 17th. Because Rick is a popular speaker and has a message for many on the Central Coast, our meeting will take place at the Oak Glen Pavilion in the San Luis Obispo Botanical Garden.

A biologist first and foremost, Rick also has been trained as a Type II wildland firefighter. His award-winning book, *Fire, Chaparral and Survival in Southern California*, is in its second edition. The topic of his illustrated talk will be "The Chaparral, a new way to look at life." He will describe the many myths and mysteries of the chaparral ecosystem, its plant and animal life, its fragile relationship with fire, and how we can adapt to California's fire-prone environment. Save the date!

WALKS in the ELFIN FOREST

Second & Third Saturday Walks

August 15, 9:30 a.m. – Archaeology Walk

Elise Wheeler, District Archaeologist for San Luis Obispo State Parks, will help us to do some time traveling into the pre-Spanish past of Central Coast inhabitants, the Chumash and their ancestors. Walking along the boardwalk, she'll tell us the fascinating story of the ancient peoples who preceded the Chumash and explain how archaeologists can determine changes in the ocean's level by studying human habitations. She'll show us examples of technology development through the ages and will give us a word image of everyday life in the Elfin Forest during the time of the Chumash. We'll learn about Chumash money, economy and trade. This walk will reveal a complex world of the Elfin Forest's past inhabitants, one that we would never suspect while walking along the boardwalk today.

September 19, 9:30 a.m. – Reptile Walk

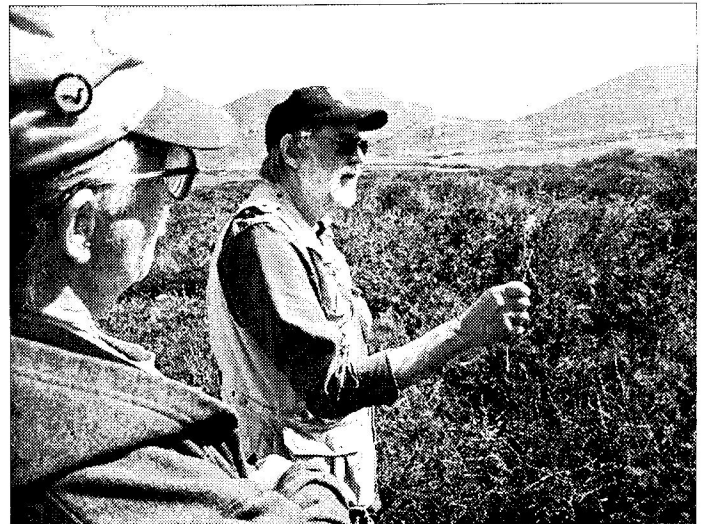
Join Cuesta College biologist Robb Tibstra as he tours the Elfin Forest in search of the Coast Horned Lizard and maybe the Southern Alligator Lizard. We'll be sure to find some Western Fence Lizards sunning themselves on the boardwalk rails. Since most of the Forest's reptiles and amphibians are hard to find, Robb will bring reptile skins and perhaps a live critter or two so walk participants can see what some of those small and retiring Forest inhabitants look like. Learn how these elfin creatures behave, survive, and protect themselves from predators – including boys!

October 10, 8:30 a.m. – Pre-Big Sit! Bird Walk (Second Saturday – Note earlier time)

Jim Royer, coordinator of the Elfin Forest Big Sit! will lead us on a bird inventory walk in preparation for Sunday's Big Sit! This is an international event hosted by Birdwatcher's Digest (www.birdwatchersdigest.com), that pits participating groups of birders against one another to identify the most species in a 24-hour period. Our Big Sit! takes place at Bush Lupine Point. On Saturday, walk participants can join Jim in finding and identifying 60 or more species of birds throughout the Elfin Forest and in the Morro Bay estuary. This walk is for those who just enjoy looking at birds as well as for more experienced birders. You'll come away knowing more about birds, their calls, their habits and habitats.

October 17, 9:30 a.m. – Chaparral Wisdom Walk

As he tours the boardwalk, chaparral biologist Rick Halsey will talk about the differences between chaparral and coastal dune scrub, the plants that are characteristic of each, and the forces that influence them, including fire. Author of the book, *Fire, Chaparral and Survival in Southern California*, Rick is Director of the California Chaparral Institute based in San Diego. A teacher for 30 years, he encourages everyone to learn about the plants, animals, birds and other inhabitants of this extremely important California plant community. Prepare for a dynamic walk, filled with information. Rick will be joined by SWAP members who will provide specific information about the Elfin Forest.



Dirk Walters spied some veldt grass hiding in a shrub during his May Wildflower walk, and took the opportunity to talk about the "evil weed." Photo by Yolanda Waddell.



During his plant survival walk in June, Ken Levine explained that the chalky surface of the Dudleya plant serves to protect it from the sun. Photo by Jean Wheeler.

Walks in the Elfin Forest begin at times stated above. Park at the north end of 15th Street (16th Street for wheelchairs) off Santa Ysabel in Los Osos. Walks begin on the boardwalk at the end of the 15th Street path. Wear comfortable shoes, long sleeves and pants to avoid poison oak and mosquitoes. Please park carefully, avoiding driveways and mailboxes. Please leave pets at home. The easy paced walks last 1-1/2 to 2 hours. For more information call (805) 528-0392.

Thank You to Our New and Renewing Members

Compiled by Betsy Kinter, SWAP Database Coordinator

NEW MEMBERS:

Jeff Grover
Tom Levi
Donald and Elizabeth Maruska
Judy Salamanca
Theo and Edith Waddell
Diane Zaepfel

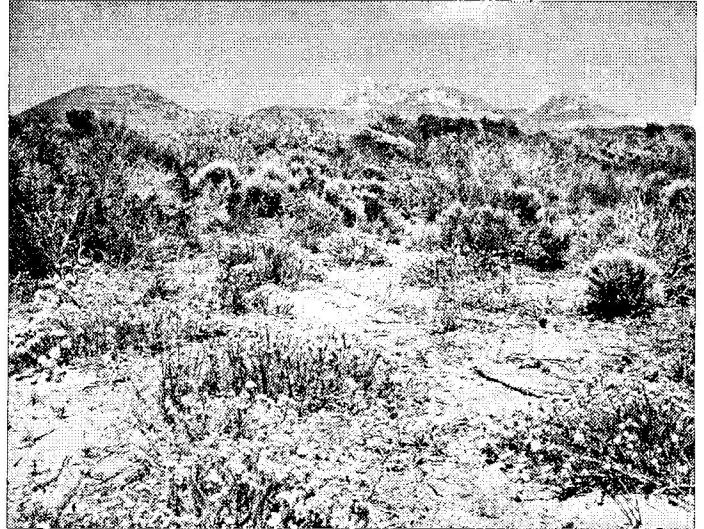
RENEWING MEMBERS:

Priscilla Akin	Vanita Jones
Ray and Sonya Bracken*	Mike and Melissa Leahy
Christine and David Braun*	Martin and Deborah Levi
Eleanor Brown	Norman MacGillivray
Katy Budge*	Jean and Marlene Mathias
David and Linda Chipping*	Beth and Sheldon Miller*
Vic, George, and Doris Croy*	Beverley and Bill Moylan*
Margaret Diehl and Claudette Kolk	Melvin and Mary Norby
Linda Faust*	Richard S. Parker
Margaret Fox	Stanley Reichenberg
John and Joy Gault	Bill and Callie Sandoval
Larry and Pat Grimes*	Bob and Barbara Schwenoha*
Charles W. Hallstrom*	John Severson
Mr. and Mrs. Burton Harris*	Robert and Mia Simmons
Arylane Hill	Margaret Smith
Dr. Steve Jio and Family	Lani Steele*
Jypsy Joe Johnson*	David and Helianthe Stevig
Rich and Prisila Johnson*	Yolanda and Jay Waddell

DONATIONS:

Carolyn Schanberger*

*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.



Marlin Harms' photo, "Eriastrum and View to Hollister," is on the cover of the 2010 Elfin Forest Calendar.

2010 SWAP Calendar Preview

By Debbie Levi

SWAP's Calendar Committee is pleased to present the 2010 Elfin Forest calendar at a preview event scheduled for Saturday, September 12, 2009. You are invited to join us from 2:00 to 4:00 p.m. at the end of 12th Street by the Elfin Forest trailhead. Food and beverages will be served. Come and meet the featured photographers as well as our generous sponsors. Original work by some photographers will be available to view and purchase.

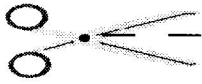
We extend our thanks to all contributors. The selected works of 22 photographers represent different and extremely creative impressions of the Forest. We are proud to share their work. The featured photographers are: Rodney Bateman of Big Daddy Photography, Bill Bouton, Dave Bowlus, Pat Brown, Bob Gathright, Golden State Aerial Surveys, Marlin Harms (cover), Grace Huntsinger, Ron James, Jerry Kirkhart, Teddy Llovet, Robin Manusak, R.W. Meyer, Abe Perlstein, Bruce Peterson, Charlie Sitton, Rose Spagnola of Emerald Rose Photography, Lori Steed, Jay Waddell, Yolanda Waddell, Jean Wheeler and April Wise of April Wise Photography.

Everyone is invited to preview this special calendar on September 12th. To pre-order the 2010 calendar, please contact Debbie at 528-1911 or see the Shoppers form on page 11 and we will reserve your copies at \$15.00 each. The proceeds will go for continued maintenance and restoration of the Elfin Forest.



New Item – 2010 Calendar!

Call 528-1911 to pre-order your SWAP Elfin Forest Calendar for 2010, available in early September. The 9”x12” calendar features artistic photos of scenes in the Elfin Forest and wonderful close-ups of plants and animals we enjoy every year as well as fascinating natural history information in the sidebars for each month. Shown here is the photo by Abe Perlstein chosen for the January page of this beautiful calendar.



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) @\$19.00 = \$ ____
 Short Slv. T-Shirt (XXL, XXXL) @\$22.00 = \$ ____
 Long Slv. T-Shirt (S, M, L, XL) @\$23.00 = \$ ____
 Long Slv. T-Shirt (XXL, XXXL) @\$25.00 = \$ ____
 Sweatshirt (S, M, L, XL) @ \$25.00 = \$ ____
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2. PHOTOS OF THE ELFIN FOREST

Original photo note cards by Bob Meyer
 ____ @ \$3.00 or ____ set of 5 @ \$14.00 = \$ ____

Original photo postcards by Bob Meyer
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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. Charts for bloom season, form, color, and habitat for 200 vascular plants plus lists of lichens and mushrooms known to occur. Habitat and peak months seen are charted for 187 birds. Also listed: 28 common mammals; 10 reptiles; 4 amphibians; 19 butterflies and moths (charted by size, months in flight, color, and host plants); 104 other arthropods and 7 gastropods.

____ @ \$2.00 = \$ ____

4. ELFIN FOREST MURAL PRINTS

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

____ @ \$20.00 = \$ ____

or framed size 7 x 20 in

____ @ \$45.00 = \$ ____

5. 2010 ELFIN FOREST CALENDAR

Enjoy these views by gifted local photographers all year around!

____ @ \$15 = \$ ____

Shipping costs within zip 934 __ __

Calendars, \$2 each ____

Pocket Guides & Note Cards \$1.50 = ____

Mural Prints on Foamcore \$5.00= ____

Framed Mural Prints: \$12.00 = ____

Shirts (per shirt): \$4.00 = ____

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

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Reward offered for felony vandalism information; see page 6.

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WANTED A FEW GOOD PEOPLE

Help SWAP Chapter support the Elfin Forest with just a few hours a month of your time.
Become a Board member – visit a Board meeting on the second Monday of the month at 7 p.m. and try us out. Call 722-9514 or e-mail ron@elfin-forest.org.
Join our Calendar Committee and help produce and market the lovely Elfin Forest calendar, our principal fundraiser. Call Debbie at 528-1911 or e-mail debbie@elfin-forest.org for details.
Join our Education and School Walks Committee. We need school walk docents and people to develop a good docent training program. Call Pat at 528-4832 or e-mail pata@elfin-forest.org.
Become a Weed Warrior or join our Conservation Committee. Our work parties are the first Saturday of every month from 9 to noon. E-mail pete@elfin-forest.org or call 528-0392.
Service to the community is a way to spread happiness and to be happy.

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- Steward \$50
- Protector \$75
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- Defender \$100
- Champion \$250
- Guardian \$500
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- Life Member \$1000

I want to help, please call me!
Memberships include a subscription to SWAP's bimonthly newsletter, *Oakleaves*.
All donations to SWAP are tax-deductible.
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