



# 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 ♦ APRIL / MAY 2011

## Plans for Boardwalk Repair are on Track

*By Ron Rasmussen, SWAP Chair*

Representatives from San Luis Obispo County (SLO) Parks, the California Conservation Corps (CCC) and SWAP met on January 14 to continue planning for needed repairs of the Elfin Forest boardwalk. Present were Shaun Cooper and Suzan Ehdaie of County Planning, Mike Anderson and James "JT" Taylor of the CCC, and Pete Sarafian and Ron Rasmussen of SWAP. The objectives of this meeting were to tour and examine the entire boardwalk, review the preliminary information on the extent of needed repairs or replacement and then to propose a plan of action. After examining the boardwalk, the group met in Rose's Grove to discuss their observations.

The preliminary findings were largely confirmed. That is, about 20-25% of the deck boards should be replaced, about the same number need repair, but more than 50% are still in good condition. An important point is that the boards needing replacement or repair are not randomly spread over the entire boardwalk, but tend to be found in sections exposed to direct sunlight. In most shaded areas the boards show little or no signs of cracking or splitting. This means that it will probably not be necessary to close the

*Boardwalk Repair continued on page 2*

## Pete Sarafian and Yolanda Waddell Receive CNPS-SLO Award

*Text and Photos by Jean Wheeler*

At their banquet on January 22, the San Luis Obispo Chapter of California Native Plant Society presented their annual Community Service Award for 2011 to Pete Sarafian and Yolanda Waddell. Publications Chair Jim Johnson made it clear that CNPS-SLO wanted to recognize Small Wilderness Area Preservation as an organization and Pete and Yolanda as two of its long-time leaders

*Sarafian and Waddell Awards continued on page 3*



*Publications Chair Jim Johnson presents Yolanda Waddell with the annual Community Service Award of the California Native Plant Society for her work in SWAP's successful efforts to acquire for preservation the Elfin Forest and other properties elsewhere in the state and also for her tireless efforts in native plant preservation and community education in the Elfin Forest.*

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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  
Jan DiLeo, Treasurer  
Yolanda Waddell, Secretary  
Pat Akey, Member at Large  
Debbie Levi, Member at Large  
Pat Murray, Member at Large

The SWAP Board of Directors meets monthly  
at Sea Oaks Mobile Home Park,  
1675 Los Osos Valley Road.

The next meetings are  
**Thursday, April 14**  
**and Thursday, May 12.**

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:

Bob Yetter

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 Bob Yetter at 781-4417.



*Meeting to plan for boardwalk repairs were (L-R) SLO Parks Planner Suzan Ehdaie, San Luis Obispo County Parks Senior Planner Shaun Cooper, James Taylor and Mike Anderson of the CCC and SWAP Conservation Chair Pete Sarafian.*

*Photo by Ron Rasmussen.*

## Boardwalk Repair *continued from page 1*

entire boardwalk, but that the repairs can be done by focusing on those sections that are most in need of attention. Mike and JT noted that repairs may be done by closing only a section where repairs could be completed in one day, leaving the remainder of the boardwalk open for use by visitors.

Funding for CCC labor in connection with the repairs has now been confirmed. California Proposition 84 funds have been committed to support projects such as this one. San Luis Obispo County Parks and the CCC are now concerned with the details of the project. These include items such as choice of specific methods for weatherproofing existing boards, supply and storage of materials, and developing work schedules to meet CCC and other agency requirements.

We are hopeful that repairs can be done during the coming summer. Completion will ensure that the boardwalk will always be a convenient and safe way to visit the Elfin Forest.



*A very young  
Elfin Forest enthusiast,  
Miles Levi,  
found the boardwalk  
to his liking.  
Next thing you know,  
he'll be running along  
the boardwalk to see  
what he can see.  
Photo by Marty Levi.*



# Sarafian and Waddell Awards *continued from page 1*

for preserving native plants within the Elfin Forest. He summarized the extensive efforts of each of these two major SWAP leaders over more than a decade to preserve the Elfin Forest.

**Pete Sarafian:** As Conservation Chair, Pete has been responsible for implementing SWAP's Adopt-A-Park contract with San Luis Obispo County Parks to act as stewards of El Moro Elfin Forest. He has spent more than 500 hours each year coordinating work by SWAP's Weed Warriors, California Conservation Corps (CCC) crews, and other volunteers and habitat restoration contractors to bring the Elfin Forest's native plant habitats to a healthy state.

With his leadership, the invasive veldt grass that once covered over 20 acres of the Elfin Forest is under control and largely removed. Other invasive plant species have also been removed, portions of the Forest have been restored with native plants, spur trails have decreased, and erosion into Morro Bay Estuary has been decreased. Officials of San Luis Obispo County have observed "The amount of monitoring and the expertise Sarafian provides results in a very high level of forest maintenance and preservation—a level the County could not provide."

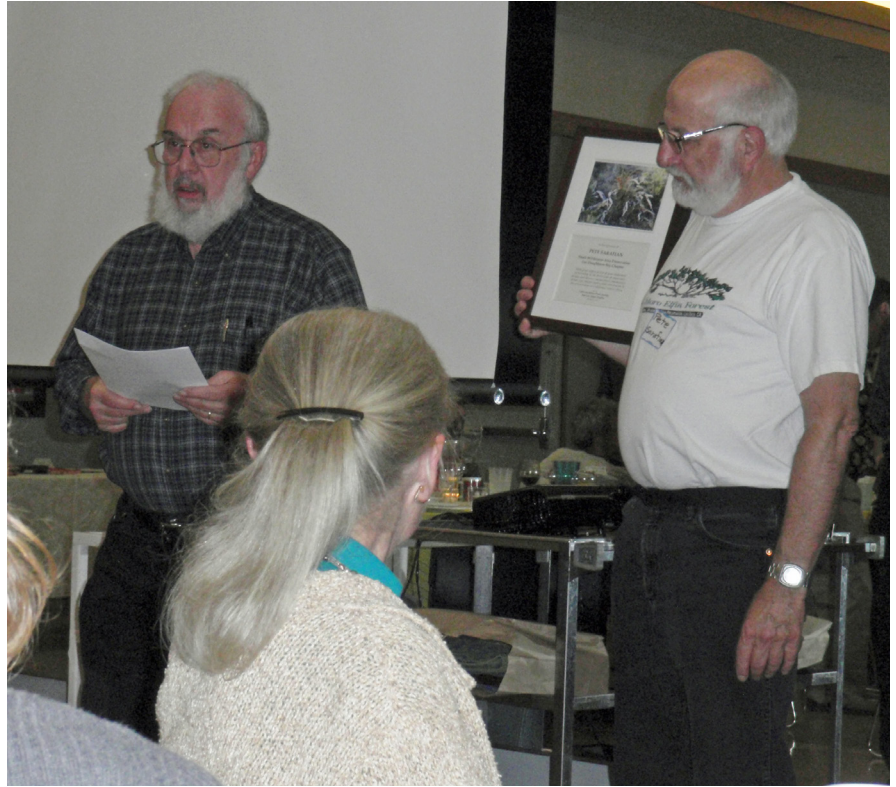
**Yolanda Waddell:** In 1985 Yolanda and others, shocked by signs about a housing development proposed for the low woods and shrubs bordering Morro Bay Estuary in Los Osos, organized a new chapter of SWAP to fight the potential loss. Yolanda became the first President of that Chapter.

In 1987 over half of the 90 acres was saved and became a permanent part of Morro Bay State Park. Remaining active on the Board of Directors after turning over the Presidency to Rose Bowker in 1990, Yolanda helped President Rose Bowker and the SWAP Board in raising over a million dollars of state and federal grants, over \$200,000 in matching funds, and a final grant from San Luis Obispo County to close escrow on the remaining property on July 13, 1994. The County accepted the property as part of County Parks, provided SWAP would act as steward for the property.

Yolanda continues to wear multiple hats in SWAP. She has spent many hours working with the Weed Warriors, has edited *Oakleaves* newsletter since 1999, has co-authored major portions of every SWAP publication, and has acted as a docent for school children introducing them to the native plants and animals of the Elfin Forest.

Yolanda has also served for many years on the Board of Directors of the parent organization of SWAP, assisting other chapters in their successful efforts to preserve properties with their native plants near Cambria, in Santa Barbara, and in the Santa Monica Mountains.

Jim Johnson concluded that in recognition of these efforts and accomplishments, CNPS-SLO was pleased to recognize Pete and Yolanda and SWAP for their continuing, committed and significant Community Service.



*CNPS Publications Chair Jim Johnson (left), tells members at their annual banquet about the enormous amount of work and effectiveness of Pete Sarafian (at right) in preserving native vegetation in the Elfin Forest as he presents Pete with their Community Service Award.*

## 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](mailto: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.



### OAKLEAVES

is published six times per year beginning in February.

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Dirk and Bonnie Walters, and Jean Wheeler.

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# Silvery Blue Butterfly

*Text and Photo By Jean Wheeler*

Among many butterflies flitting about the Elfin Forest in the spring months is the small iridescent and delicate Silvery Blue (*Glaucopsyche lygdamus*).

With a wingspan of only about an inch, males seen from above are a brilliant blue in color. Females vary from brown above to extensively dark blue-gray to mostly brownish with blue only on the body and wing bases--as on this one I photographed in the Elfin Forest. The outer fringe of the wings for both sexes is white with an inner border of dark gray, and the fringe is not checked or spotted. There are also no cell end bars visible on the wings from above (semi-circular dark arcs nearly half way between the body and the wing fringes).

Undersides of wings in both sexes are silvery gray to brownish-gray with only a single row of black dots each outlined in white. These dots are "postmedian" but not "marginal or submarginal." This means they arc along the outer half of the wings but not close to the edges of the wings. Dots on the hind wing may be similar to dots on the forewing or much smaller and mostly white or almost absent. On the butterflies I saw they were much smaller and mostly white with a very small black dot in the center. Cell end bars may be visible on underside of the wings.

Adults emerge only once a year, between March and May in the Elfin Forest, and live only for one or two weeks. Adults will eat nectar from many flowers, including those of Family Asteraceae. But host plants for their larvae are mostly legumes. The main host plants in the Elfin Forest are deerweed, lupines, and Pomona milk-vetch. Males patrol near these host plants. After mating, females lay their eggs one per flower bud or young leaf on host plants.

Caterpillars are only about  $\frac{3}{4}$  of an inch long when full grown and eat flowers, seedpods, and young leaves. They vary in color from green if eating young leaves to white, pink, or purple if eating mainly flowers. They can exude fluid drops rich in sugars and amino acids to attract ants. Ants aggressively drive off potential predators and prevent parasitic flies and wasps from laying their eggs in the caterpillars so their larvae can consume the poor caterpillar. In this symbiotic relationship, the caterpillars get protection and the ants get a food source in return. Caterpillars spin a chrysalis, hibernating in leaf litter, emerging as adults next spring.

Silvery Blue butterflies live in coastal dunes, meadows and prairies, shrub lands, open woods, and disturbed areas such as roadsides. Diverse food sources and habitats enable wide distribution from Alaska and Canada south to Baja California and Georgia. The species is not in danger, but one subspecies (*G. l. xerces*) became extinct owing to habitat destruction at a military base in the sand dunes near San Francisco during W.W. II. Another subspecies in the Palos Verdes Peninsula area of Los Angeles is listed as critically endangered.



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## 2012 Elfin Forest Calendar is Under Way

*By Debbie Levi, Calendar Committee Chair*

The SWAP Calendar Committee is preparing the 2012 Elfin Forest Calendar. The Calendar is a valuable annual fundraiser designed to serve continued maintenance of the Elfin Forest, funding of educational programs, and the many visitors.

We need sponsors to help contribute to the printing costs. For each \$50, sponsors receive a complimentary calendar as well as having their name printed on the inside front cover of the calendar. Calendar Page Sponsors donating \$150 or more will have their individual or business name displayed at the bottom of a calendar page for month-long exposure. Sponsor commitment deadline is June 1, 2011. If you are interested please e-mail us: [calendar@elfin-forest.org](mailto:calendar@elfin-forest.org)

This is also the LAST CALL FOR PHOTOGRAPHER SUBMISSION for the 2012 Elfin Forest calendar. Photos will be juried by a professional photographer in cooperation with our Artist Committee. Remember, all photos must be taken in the Elfin Forest!

- o The calendar will be HORIZONTAL format, 9" x 12". Photos chosen for the large monthly main picture will "bleed" to the edge of the page; other photos will be placed in squares on the calendar page

- o To insure adequate resolution the files should be at least 2mb in size (300 dpi or greater). JPG preferred.

Mail a CD with no more than 3 entries to: SWAP Calendar, P.O. Box 6442, Los Osos, CA. 93412 (No online submissions) Photo submission deadline is May 9, 2011.

Contact/Questions: [calendar@elfin-forest.org](mailto:calendar@elfin-forest.org) Help us make this a great calendar!





# True Sedges

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

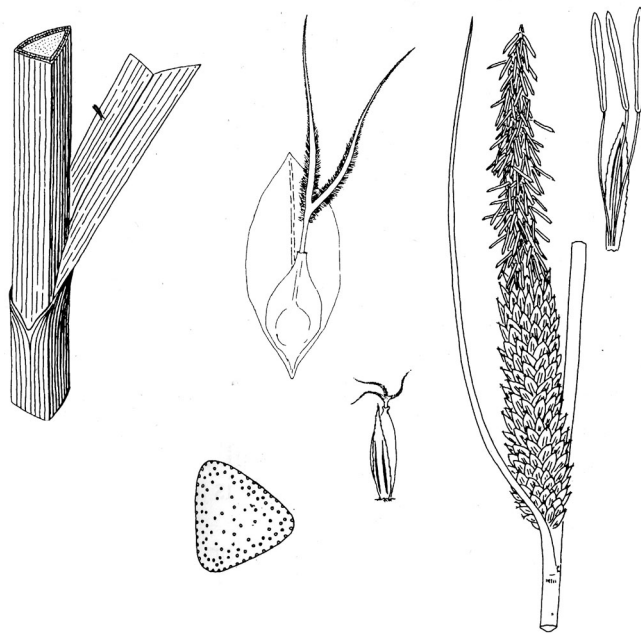
March is a problematic month for illustrators and writers of serialized plant articles, especially for those who have been doing it for a while. Bonnie's and my first drawing and article appeared in *Oakleaves* after a request from Rose Bowker in 1998 (The same Rose Bowker for whom the pygmy oak grove is named). The main problems are that relatively few plants are in bloom this early in the year and those few that are have already been done. So this time we decided to be different by literally going generic. We are not going to discuss a species of plant but a whole genus of plants.

This genus is the genus *Carex* or the true sedges. This genus has an entry in the *Elfin Forest Pocket Guide* without a species listing. Why this might be acceptable will be covered below. True sedges generally prefer soils that are nearly always wet to saturated with fresh water. Habitats with these types of soils are typically given names such as swamps and marshes, or in the mountains, wet meadows. These habitats are not common in the Elfin Forest. In fact, I know of no *Carex* visible from the boardwalk. If one wants to find the *Carex* listed in the guide, I suspect one would have to look down along the inland edge of the salt marsh, above the high tide line, where the lighter fresh water flows out from under the dunes above the salt water.

Bonnie's illustrations were done originally for Dr. David Keil's and my plant taxonomy text. *Carex* belongs to the sedge family which resembles grasses in being herbs with long narrow leaves divided into two parts. There is a distal, flat, free blade portion and a basal, cylindrical portion that surrounds the stem or culm. In the sedges, the cylinder or sheath is completely closed, while in the grasses it's almost always split down the side opposite the attachment to the blade. Sedges also have stems that are either flattened or more commonly triangular in cross-section, i.e. they have edges.

Closed sheathes and edgy stems are family characteristics, but what sets the true sedges apart from the rest of the sedges? For this we need to look at their flowers. True sedges produce their male flower parts (stamens) and female flower parts (pistils) in separate flowers unlike all the other genera in the family. But the difference doesn't stop there. In all members of the family the minute individual flowers are produced behind a leaf-like bract and in front of an inflorescence axis. *Carex* is not an exception. However, it produces two kinds of flowers, male (staminate) containing only 3 stamens, and female (pistilate) containing a single ovary bearing 2 or 3 styles on top.

How the staminate and pistillate flowers are distributed on/ and among the individuals of a species is a major identifying characteristic. The rarest distribution is to have staminate flowers borne on one plant and pistillate flowers on a completely separate plant. More common is to have the two types of flowers borne on the same plant. Least common, in my experience, is to have the two types of flowers in the same inflorescence. In fact, the most



common distribution is to have the two types of flowers borne in their own separate inflorescences as shown in Bonnie's drawing.

One last feature is quite unique to the pistillate flowers of *Carex*. If one tries to get intimate with the ovary of a true sedge flower by merely pulling back the enclosing bract, one would discover that the ovary is completely enclosed within a surrounding membranous structure called a perigynium. The perigynium is found only in *Carex*. What is it and where did it come from? First, it is neither petals nor sepals. I know this because my plant taxonomy text back in college said it! Unfortunately, it didn't tell me what it was. But, on a Field Botany trip with Cal Poly students a number of years ago, I found a species of *Carex* in the Sierra that had a half-formed perigynium. In this species the origin of the perigynium was obvious! Remember, sedge and grass leaves have two parts, a flat, distal blade and a basal cylindrical sheath. The perigynium turns out to be nothing more than the flower bract's sheath.

Why do most flower books ignore sedges completely and many floras and species lists simply identify true sedges as *Carex* spp? (And this is in spite of the fact that *Carex* is one of the largest genera in the nation and the world.) First, their very small, inconspicuous flowers give them an automatic bye in almost all wild-flower books. Secondly, their simple structure means there aren't many characteristics with which to establish identification.

Take two common and similar coastal species as an example. They are the Santa Barbara Sedge (*C. Barbarae*) and coastal sedge (*C. obnupta*). The 'differences' between these two sedges according to the illustrations in the Jepson Manual are the minute appendages on the top of the pistillate flower bracts and perigynium in the Santa Barbara sedge as opposed to their absence in the coastal sedge. But, Dr. Robert Hoover in his San Luis Obispo County Flora notes that many of our sedges that match these two species fail to produce fruits and are probably hybrids. If they don't produce fruits, they don't produce the characteristics needed to distinguish these two species either! And, this makes their identification difficult at best and impossible at the worst.



*The Education Committee has been occupied lately with upgrading the docent manual in time for Spring school walks.*

*Shown (l to r) are Jean Wheeler, Education Chair Pat Akey, Pete Sarafian and Yolanda Waddell.*

*Photo by Dave Akey.*

## Education Corner

*By Pat Akey, Education Committee Chair*

Spring is here and the Education Committee has plenty to do. We led two field trips in March: one for a special group, and another for a Cuesta College environmental biology class. In February, we gave a presentation about SWAP, its history and our school walks program to Baywood Elementary schoolteachers. Many of the teachers were unfamiliar with our school walks program and were pleased to know that our walk activities coordinate with California State standards.

We are continuing to add information to our docent manuals. Most recently we added a section with information and photos about the most common native plants of the Elfin Forest. Our next project will be to develop a section on the 60 most-seen birds, with short descriptions and photos. In the future we will add butterflies, insects, mammals, reptiles and amphibians. These sections will make our manual a handy reference for docents to learn from and to refresh their memories. When school children are in the Elfin Forest, they ask about everything they see; this requires the school walk docent to be a natural history generalist.

We had planned to give a series of four docent training sessions at the end of March and the beginning of April. However, because of lack of response, we have rescheduled our docent training to the Fall. In the meantime, we will continue to develop our manual, give school walks when requested, and schedule special training sessions for our current docents.

## Celebrate California Native Plant Week, April 16-24

*By Yolanda Waddell*

The California Legislature recently established California Native Plant Week to take place during the 3rd week of April each year. Assembly Concurrent Resolution (ACR) 173 was introduced by Assemblywoman Noreen Evans of Napa, co-authored by Assemblyman Sam Blakeslee and sponsored by the California Native Plant Society. It recognizes the vital historical, artistic and economic contributions that California's native plants have made to our state. In particular, it recognizes that home landscaping and gardening with native plants can cut residential water use from 60 to 90% over conventional gardening.

In San Luis Obispo County, the Board of Supervisors will introduce a resolution on Tuesday, April 12, stating that the County joins the Legislature in recognizing the essential value and importance of California native plants. They encourage community groups, schools and citizens to conduct activities that promote native plant conservation and restoration.

The San Luis Obispo chapter of CNPS is coordinating a week of activities by several local organizations including our SWAP chapter. On Saturday, April 16, Pat Brown will lead her annual 3rd Saturday Butterfly Walk with an emphasis on the importance of native plants as food for our local butterflies. The walk will begin as usual at the north end of 15th Street in Los Osos, at 9:30 a.m. (see page 9 for more information).

Other organizations participating in Native Plant Week are the Nipomo Native Garden, the Sierra Club, SLO Growing Grounds, Las Pilitas Nursery and SLO Botanical Garden. Also there will be visits to home gardens and talks about edible, medicinal, fire retardant, and drought resistant native plants. Details can be found on the CNPS web site, [www.cnps-slo.org](http://www.cnps-slo.org)



*For California Native Plant Week, butterfly enthusiast Pat Brown will lead a "Butterflies and Native Plants" tour of the Elfin Forest. Here she is shown sharing butterfly information with walk participants on her annual butterfly walk. Photo by Yolanda Waddell.*



# Weed Warriors

## January Work Crew Bars Erosion

In January, the work party was held on the second Saturday, January 8, giving all involved a day off on New Year's Day. The task at hand was controlling erosion in the area west of Bush Lupine Point. Twelve 4x4 wood erosion bars were pounded into place using rebar rods that fit pre-drilled holes in the bars.

In addition, under the supervision of Pete Sarafian and contractor/builder Les Goodwin, the January work party finished planting and watering Manzanita seedlings on the hillside below Bush Lupine Point. They also placed chicken wire fences around each tasty seedling to protect them from ravenous brush rabbits. Thanks to Warriors Donna Anderson, Lani Erickson, Bob Meyer, Prisila and Rich Johnson, and Denise and Mike Sloan for a very productive morning of work.

## Weed Warriors Intercept Invasion

Our archenemy, veldt grass, continues to assault the Elfin Forest. Abundant winter rains have encouraged dormant seeds in the soil to sprout and the large clumps of the perennial grass to set seed. Most of this new growth is at the edge of the Forest but the wind can blow the seeds into the Forest where they can take root and grow.

On Saturday, February 5 and again on Saturday, March 5, two crews of loyal Weed Warriors attacked the stand of veldt grass at the edge of the Forest between 15th and 17th streets. By removing hundreds of sprouts and the seed-carrying panicles from plants that we didn't have time to dig out, the risk for invasion of the Forest was reduced.

Warriors present in February were Jay Bonestell, Dave Bowlus, Lani Erickson, Cody Gruybohl, Bryon Hibbert, Alon Perlman, Ron Rasmussen, Pete Sarafian and Dean Thompson.

In March, the crew consisted of Pat Akey, Jay Bonestell, Lani Erickson, Bob Meyer, Ron Rasmussen, Charlie Sitton, Yolanda Waddell, and Norma Wightman.

In February, five Morro Shoulderband snails were found in veldt grass clumps and relocated by Pete Sarafian; and in March, sharp-eyed Charlie found two of the snails. Our Snail Monitor, Bob Meyer, relocated them to a safe and suitable new habitat. Not all the veldt grass has been removed from this location, but significant progress has been made. Future work parties will complete the job.

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## 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 shirt sleeves 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.



*Weed Warrior Alon Perlman frees some Mock heather (*Ericameria ericoides*) shrubs from the strangling clutches of veldt grass during the February work party. Photo by Yolanda Waddell.*



*Rich and Prisila Johnson participated in the January planting, watering and fencing of Manzanita seedlings that replace some of the Manzanita plants destroyed by a vandal in 2009. Photo by Yolanda Waddell.*



*Norma Wightman, Yolanda Waddell and Ron Rasmussen face their veldt grass enemy, seen in the foreground. Photo by Charlie Sitton.*



# Coming Up in the Elfin Forest

*Text and Photos By Jean Wheeler*

April and May are the major butterfly months in the Elfin Forest, and butterflies are featured on our Third Saturday Walk on April 16, led by Pat Brown (see pages 6 and 9). Of the 22 species of butterflies listed on our website ([elfin-forest.org](http://elfin-forest.org)) under the Flora and Fauna button, only the Monarch Butterfly is not listed as flying during either April or May.

Butterflies are sometimes called “flying flowers” and they are attracted to many plant flowers for nectar to keep them flying strongly long enough to mate and lay eggs for the next generation. Females seek out especially plant species that will support their caterpillars. Males often patrol near those host plants seeking females not yet mated. Males and females not yet mated can also be attracted to open hilltops, which serve as their “singles bars.” In the Elfin Forest, an open hilltop between two oak groves south of Bush Lupine Point along the sand trail from 11th Street to the boardwalk is nicknamed “Butterfly Hill.”

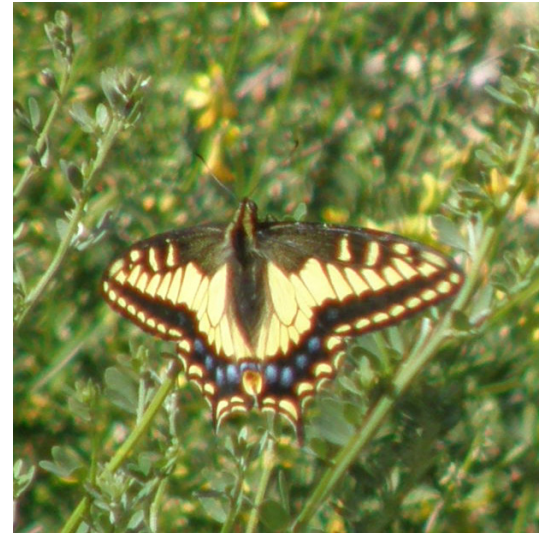
Anise Swallowtails (pictured, black and yellow) are often seen at Butterfly Hill, but their major host plant is fennel, an invasive weed discouraged in this natural area. Pale Swallowtails (similar but black and off-white) lay eggs on buckbrush ceanothus, hollyleaf cherry, and coffeberry, so they and their caterpillars can be widespread in the Elfin Forest.

Silver dune lupines are the host for Moro Blues, so look for them near the blue flower spikes around Bush Lupine Point. This plant has been so displaced by urban development that it and these butterflies are found in few places now. Their survival is of concern and it is encouraging that both now appear to be thriving in the Elfin Forest. Caterpillars of the Silvery Blue (see page 4) favor yellow-flowered deerweed. Deerweed is also favored by Coastal Bramble Hairstreaks (green with light brown patches), along with white-flowered dune buckwheat. Both plants are blooming widely in the dune scrub and maritime chaparral.

Among the most commonly seen butterflies throughout the Elfin Forest in April and May is the Variable Checkerspot (orange and black). Its large fuzzy black caterpillar with orange spots feeds on the leaves of the sticky monkey-flower, whose orange blossoms glow brightly around most of the boardwalk in spring and early summer.

While admiring butterflies among the many lovely flowers of spring from the boardwalk and sand trails, your eyes will no doubt also be attracted by the flight of avian residents. Most of our year-round birds are actively nesting or raising young. Especially likely to be seen and heard are the bright blue Western Scrub Jays, orange and black Spotted Towhees, chattering flocks of tiny fuzzy gray Bushtits, and the large brown California Thrasher with its down-curved beak (pictured). Among arrivals in April or May from winter homes farther south are Warbling Vireos, Hooded Orioles, Black-headed Grosbeaks, and Yellow, Townsend's, and Wilson's Warblers.

What a colorful and exciting time to visit the sand trails and boardwalk of our small wilderness area!



## Earth Day, Every Day

In 1969, Senator Gaylord Nelson (D-Wisconsin) established Earth Day to focus public attention on environmental issues. Thanks to his efforts and the work of many thousands of like-minded people, Earth Day is celebrated each year on April 22nd. Citizens around the world combine efforts to protect our global environment. Everyone at SWAP shares this vision. We invite you to honor Earth Day by visiting The Elfin Forest during the next several weeks. Please take advantage of our 3rd Saturday walks (see page 9) and learn more about our local natural wonder. You can also visit the San Luis Obispo County Earth Day Festival on Saturday, April 23, at El Chorro Regional Park. Look online at [www.earth-dayalliance.com](http://www.earth-dayalliance.com) for more information.





# WALKS in the ELFIN FOREST

## Third Saturday Walks

*April 16, 9:30 a.m. –*

### *Butterflies and Native Plants*

In honor of California Native Plant Week, butterfly enthusiast Pat Brown will lead a walk from the point of view of a hungry butterfly. As you tour the Elfin Forest with her, Pat will introduce you to several native plants and talk about the butterflies that sip their nectar and the caterpillars that eat their leaves. Pat has taken many photos of butterflies in all stages of development from eggs to mature butterflies, and will share them along with fascinating butterfly facts. She'll lead you to hang-outs of Variable Checkerspot, Moro Blue, Swallowtail, Hairstreak and other butterflies that make the Elfin Forest their home. She will also share information about butterfly books, web sites and butterfly-related materials. She recommends that you bring a hand lens and a pair of close-focusing (5-10 ft.) binoculars.

*May 21, 9:30 a.m. – Wildflower Walk*

Regardless of whether there have been April showers, the Elfin Forest always has May flowers because the Forest's hardy native plants are used to doing without water. Dirk Walters will take us on a delightful tour of almost everything that's in bloom in the Elfin Forest. There will be bright yellows of Fiddlenecks, Rush-roses, Deerweed, Golden Yarrow and of course California Poppies. White Popcorn flowers, Pearly everlasting and Yarrow plants are in abundance too, as well as pink Cobwebby Thistles and blue Wild Hyacinths. The Silver Dune Lupines at Bush Lupine Point should be covered with pale blue blossoms, and alive with honeybees and Morro Blue butterflies. Treat yourself to a springtime experience in Nature's own garden.

*June 18, 9:30 a.m. – Solstice Walk*

With Summer Solstice but a few days away, Bob Field will help us to understand why the longest day of the year was so important to Native Americans including the Chumash, and for that matter, to all past cultures. As we tour the Elfin Forest, Bob will talk about how seasonal changes and the interactions of sunlight and water affect the diversity, abundance and distribution of life. He will discuss the influence of the oceans on everything that can be seen in the Elfin Forest, and will point out a variety of plant adaptations to seasonal change.

*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.*

### We'd Like Mail!

We encourage our readers to submit photos, letters to the editor, or interesting and timely information by e-mailing to [oakleaves@elfin-forest.org](mailto:oakleaves@elfin-forest.org). We look forward to hearing from you. *The Editors.*



*Walk Participants Charlie Sitton and Pete Sarafian, and Animal Tracks walk leader Evan Albright spot an interesting track next to the boardwalk. Photo by Jean Wheeler.*



*Dennis Sheridan and fungus-loving stalwarts came out on a cloudy, rainy Saturday in February to join the Fungus Foray in the Elfin Forest. Before the walk, Dennis displayed examples of mushrooms that they were likely to see. Photo by Yolanda Waddell.*

*I only went out for a walk and finally concluded to  
stay out till sundown.*

*for going out. I found, was really going in.*

*~ John Muir, 1913,*

*in L.M. Wolfe, ed.,*

*John Muir, John of the Mountains:  
The Unpublished Journals of John Muir, 1938*



## Thank You to Our New and Renewing Members

*Compiled by Betsy Kinter,  
SWAP Database Coordinator*

### NEW MEMBERS:

Phillip & Joyce Kerce  
Dr. Nigel Lock

### RENEWING MEMBERS:

Patty Arnold	Julie Miller & Larry Kleiger
Rosemary Baxter	Marcia Munson*
Mr. & Mrs. Roy Bayly	Pat Murray*
Kay Blaney	Jim & Barbara Murray*
Susan & Ed Chandler*	Billy R. Pewitt
R.S. & L.H. Cowan*	Barbara Renshaw*
Stephani & Stuart Denker*	Rita Robinson
Cheryl Dove	Barbara & Robert Rosenthal
Woody Frey	Monica Rowcliffe*
Gary Giannico*	Patrick & Dorothy Rygh*
Martha & Leon Goldin*	Carolyn Schanberger*
Richard & Charlotte Gordon	Nancy Stephens*
Tom & Rita Hadjiyane	Tomoko Sugano
Jan Harper*	Kathleen W. Toscano*
Kirsten Holmquist *	Marisa Waddell
Heather & Jim Johnson*	Danna Weidner & Tom Cash*
Gene & Mimi Kalland*	Robert Wheeler*
Aya Kimura	Mary & Jack Whelen
Roberta Knapp*	Sigmon & Sadako Whitener
Barbara Machado*	Rachael Yon
Peggy Mayfield	

### DONATIONS:

W.G. Mcelhinney

Yolanda & Jay Waddell in memory of Ceil McDougale

*\*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.*

## Arbor Day – A Time to Care About Trees

*By Yolanda Waddell*

The first Arbor Day took place on April 10, 1872 in Nebraska. Its founder was Julius Sterling Morton (1832-1902), a Nebraska journalist and politician. He felt that Nebraska's landscape and economy would benefit from the wide-scale planting of trees. On that first Arbor Day, more than one million trees were planted. In the years that followed, other states took up the idea and in 1970, President Richard Nixon proclaimed the last Friday in April as National Arbor Day. This year, National Arbor Day will be Friday, April 29.

The State of California officially celebrates Arbor Week in March. It was March 14-17 this year, celebrating the official State Tree, the California Redwood (*Sequoia sempervirens*). However in San Luis Obispo County, Arbor Day is always celebrated in April, close to the date of the original Arbor Day. This year, the City of San Luis Obispo Public Works Department, Urban Forest Division, will sponsor its 28th Annual Arbor Day on April 9, from 9 to 11 a.m. in Mitchell Park.

The Arbor Day celebration will include presentations of awards to the winners of the Grades 1-6 Art and Prose Contest, as well as a tree planting. At 11 a.m., Tree Committee Chairman and Cal Poly Biology Professor Matt Ritter will lead a walk and talk about the many trees in the park.

Earlier that week, on Thursday, April 7, Matt Ritter will give a presentation from 12:30-1:30 p.m. at San Luis Obispo City County Library, 995 Palm Street. Matt will sign copies of his new book, *A Californian's Guide to the Trees Among Us*. It features over 150 of California's most commonly grown trees. The book tells the stories behind the trees that shade our parks, grace our yards, and line our streets. It is a paperback, will sell for \$18.95, and will be available at most local bookstores. The publisher is Heyday Books. The talk and book-signing will be followed by a tree walk by City Arborist Ron Combs at 2 p.m.. Both the talk and walk are free to the public.

For homeowners or renters, Arbor Day is an excellent opportunity to take care of the trees that are in our yards and possibly to plant new ones. Inspect your trees. Note any broken branches or evidence of disease or insect infestation. Think about how planting new trees might improve the look of the property or provide wind or heat protection. Take a trip to your local nursery to see what's available and to get new ideas. Try to attend Matt Ritter's talk on April 7, or the Arbor Day celebration on April 9th. And pay a visit to the Elfin Forest where you will be surrounded by healthy Coast live oak trees (*Quercus agrifolia*) as you walk along the boardwalk, and can see willows, sycamores, wax myrtles and cottonwoods growing along the edge of the bay below the Bush Lupine and Siena's View observation decks. As a member of SWAP, this is your gift to the community and the Central Coast of California. Thank you for celebrating Arbor Day all year long.







*Item 4 Below  
signed Elfin Forest  
Mural Prints by a local artist*



## SWAP Shoppers' Order Form

*See Photos of All Items at [www.elfin-forest.org](http://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 = \$\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_ Sweatshirt (XXL, XXXL) @ \$27.00 = \$\_\_\_\_

### 2. PHOTOS OF THE ELFIN FOREST

Original print note cards

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

Printed postcards

\_\_\_ @ \$1.00 = \$\_\_\_\_

Indicate No. per View(s):

\_\_\_ All 5; \_\_\_ Don Klopfer Trail; \_\_\_ Ocean View;  
 \_\_\_ Wild Hyacinth; \_\_\_ Horned Lizard; \_\_\_ Dudleya

### 3. POCKET GUIDE

Useful 56-page guide to plants and animals of the Elfin Forest. 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

\_\_\_ @ \$25.00 = \$\_\_\_\_

### 5. ALPHABET BIRD BOOK

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

\_\_\_ @ \$21.65 (including tax) = \_\_\_\_\_

### 6. 2011 ELFIN FOREST CALENDAR

Local artists have contributed to this calendar.

\_\_\_ @ \$15 = \$\_\_\_\_

**SOLD OUT**

Shipping costs within zip 934 \_\_:

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

Pocket Guides & Note Cards \$1.50 = \_\_\_\_\_

Mural Prints on Foamcore \$5.00= \_\_\_\_\_

Shirts each: \$4.00 = \_\_\_\_\_

*For shipping costs outside 934 \_\_, call (805) 528-0392*

**TOTAL OF ORDER** \$\_\_\_\_\_

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

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

Bring family & friends to  
the Elfin Forest on Earth Day, April 22!

Los Osos / Morro Bay Chapter  
SMALL WILDERNESS AREA PRESERVATION  
A Non-Profit Public Benefit Corporation  
P.O. Box 6442, Los Osos, CA 93412-6442  
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## Help Wanted



Environmental non-profit organization made up of good-hearted volunteers is looking for like-minded individuals who want to contribute their time to the betterment of the Elfin Forest, the community, the environment, and themselves.

### Needed are:

1 or 2 computer-savvy persons who will help to maintain the SWAP web site.

Reply to [webmaster@elfin-forest.org](mailto:webmaster@elfin-forest.org).

1 or 2 sociable individuals who will join our Membership and Volunteer Committees. No experience necessary – only the desire to support SWAP.

Reply to [yolanda@elfin-forest.org](mailto:yolanda@elfin-forest.org).

Service to the community is a way to spread happiness and to be happy.

## MEMBERSHIP FORM

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City/State/Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

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

☐ I want to help, please call me!

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

☐ Check here to receive the online version only.

All donations to SWAP are tax-deductible.

EVERY membership counts!

Make checks payable to: SWAP.

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