



OAKLEAVES

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 ♦ JUNE / JULY 2014

Anniversaries: What's in SWAP'S Future?

By Ron Rasmussen, SWAP Chair

It's the 20th anniversary for the existence of the Elfin Forest and also time for renewal of SWAP's present 10-year Adopt-A-Park agreement with San Luis Obispo County Parks. In the past 20 years, the details of the agreement have been rather general, and it has not really specified SWAP's responsibilities. The following list of specific maintenance activities is the result of a meeting with San Luis Obispo County Parks. It will serve as a guide for SWAP volunteers in preserving the Elfin Forest and will ensure that visitors enjoy their sojourn in this beautiful place.

1. Weed abatement. To be conducted year-round for entire area. Frequency of activity to vary, from weekly in February-April, to monthly for remainder of year.

2. Revegetation with native species. To be done yearly at selected and approved sites, with planting done in the fall prior to the annual rains. Additional watering to be provided if necessary.

3. Trimming of vegetation along boardwalk and designated sand trails. To be done quarterly with guidance from approved arborist and biologist if necessary. Goal will be to allow safe passage of visitors while avoiding harm to native plants.

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The Elfin Forest Saved as Wilderness 20 Years Ago This July!

By Yolanda Waddell



Rose Bowker, 1994 SWAP Board President who wrote most of the grants that saved the Elfin Forest, visited Bush Lupine Point in 2002. She passed away in 2005. Photo by Les Bowker.

Twenty years ago, on July 6, 1994, escrow papers were completed and the Deed for 38.7 acres of the El Moro Elfin Forest was recorded at the San Luis Obispo County Clerk's Office. Prior to that a payment of \$1,600,000 was transferred to Shirley Jean Otto, owner of the property.

Here is what SWAP President Rose Bowker wrote in the September, 1994 Oakleaves: "We did it! We ALL did it. We actually really and truly accomplished our goal of finding the funding to complete the purchase of the Elfin Forest. Escrow has closed. The El Moro Elfin Forest is now a permanent ecological reserve."

Rose continued: "I find myself drawn to the mural on the wall of Los Osos Rexall to look at the list of names of all those who

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BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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

consists of the following members:

Ron Rasmussen, Chair

Jan DiLeo, Treasurer

Yolanda Waddell, Corresponding Secretary

Carrie Arnold, Recording Secretary

Pat Akey, Member at Large

Erick Amaya, Member at Large

Pat Murray, Member at Large

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

The next meetings are

**Thursday, June 12,
and Thursday, July 10.**

All Board meetings are open to the public.

To confirm the date, time and location
(which are subject to change),
call (805) 528-0392.



CONTACT SWAP

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

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

If you have questions, concerns or comments about any problems in the Elfin Forest, call or write: Mark Wagner

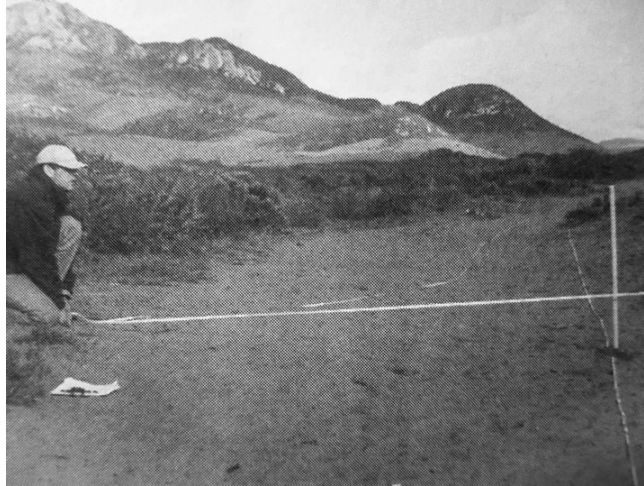
SLO County Parks Supervising Ranger
1087 Santa Rosa Street, SLO, CA 93408
(805) 781-1196

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

The Case for an Elfin Forest Boardwalk

By Yolanda Waddell and Les Bowker

In 1996, SWAP's active members were making many decisions on how to protect and restore the El Moro Elfin Forest Natural Area, yet provide access to visitors. One of the greatest problems was the extensive network of sand trails created by local users over many decades.



This photo from the April, 1996 Oakleaves shows Cal Poly student Jim Mathis taking a soil depth measurement.

Grimes and his wife Pat, SWAP's Publications Coordinator, mapped out the most essential trails and gave them names: Ridge Trail, Habitat Trail, Orchid Trail, etc. Trails that weren't designated would be blocked off eventually.

One of the grants obtained to preserve the Elfin Forest stipulated the trails would provide access for the "mobility impaired," meaning "handicapped" people, parents with strollers, young children, etc. Neither paving the trails with decomposed granite nor asphalt would be effective in a sandy environment. The best method, SWAP



Retired Cal Poly ecologist Les Bowker, who was the advisor for Jim Mathis, points to the approximate place where the 1996 photo was taken. Photo by Yolanda Waddell

felt, would be a boardwalk. The boardwalk was designed by Mark Dariz in consultation with Cal Poly architect Paul Wolff. The design is in compliance with ADA regulations.

Typically, a construction project in a natural area requires environmental mitigation either through an additional project or measures to minimize the environmental impact

The most popular trails that led to oak groves and the viewpoints had become deep and wide. Foot traffic disturbed the sandy soil that then washed or blew into the Morro Bay estuary. Trails needed to be limited to those that would provide access from 11th through 17th Streets and allow visitors to walk around the Forest. Projects Coordinator Larry

Case for a Boardwalk *continued on page 3*

Elfin Forest Saved *continued from page 1*

made this possible. It's very impressive! And behind the names are so many stories of community spirit and willingness to work to save a very special small wilderness."

The mural that Rose wrote about was dedicated on June 5th of that year, after all the funds had been raised to purchase the southern 38.7 acres of the Forest. The mural was designed and painted by Los Osos artist Barbara Rosenthal with grant funds from the National Wildlife Federation. Attached to the mural is a plexiglass sign with the names of all who contributed money and work to save the Elfin Forest.

Dedication of the mural was held at the Los Osos Rexall Drug-store parking lot, and then everyone went to the Celestial Meadow in the Elfin Forest for strawberries and wine, with music provided by Spooner's Cove String Band. Development Coordinator Barbara Machado led the group in singing, "This land is your land, this land is my land. The Elfin Forest was saved for you and me."

Twenty years later, Rose Bowker's words at the end of her 1994 message are still true: "We still need your support. We need your membership. We need your volunteer time to work on projects in the Elfin Forest and to continue our outreach and educational activities." Tragically, Rose Bowker passed away from cancer in 2005, but her words continue to inspire those of us who love the Elfin Forest. If people are willing, SWAP will continue as steward of the Elfin Forest for generations to come.

Members of the 1994 SWAP Board of Directors pose for a photo in the Forest they helped to save 20 years ago. Left to right are Yolanda Waddell, Les Bowker, Barbara Machado, Elsie Deitz, Jerry Deitz, Pat Grimes and Larry Grimes.
Photo by Pat Brown.



Barbara Rosenthal designed and painted the Elfin Forest mural on the Rexall Store building in 1994, and the mural still looks good. The list of contributor names can be seen at the right.

Photo by Yolanda Waddell.

Case for a Boardwalk *continued from page 1*

of construction. SWAP's position was that the boardwalk would reduce erosion and was in itself a mitigation measure. To support this view, an estimate of the amount of sand eroded from the current trails was needed. Cal Poly biology senior James Mathis, under the direction of Les Bowker, Cal Poly ecologist and former SWAP Board member, was to determine how much sand was eroded from two of the trails for his Senior Project.

The study site began from the 16th Street access trail and ended at Bush Lupine Point on the heavily traveled Ridge Trail which runs the length of the highest dune in the reserve. By suspending a taut measuring tape from one side of the path to the other, measuring its width and then measuring the distance down to the path, Jim was able to calculate the amount of sand lost due to erosion. His final calculation showed that 4,953 cubic feet or a total of 248 tons of sand had been displaced from the paths over the years.

Jim suggested in his student project paper that a one-mile-long boardwalk would provide access to persons of all abilities and prevent further trail erosion. Les Bowker agreed, pointing out that even though building a boardwalk would cause some disturbance of the Forest, the boardwalk would mitigate that disturbance by covering the eroded areas and preventing them from being further eroded. The Elfin Forest boardwalk was built and completed by the California Conservation Corps in 1999, under the oversight of County Parks with assistance from SWAP.

Sand Wasps

Text by Jean Wheeler, Ph. D.; Photo by Pat Brown.

Sand wasps like the one photographed by Pat Brown are not considered dangerous to humans like the hornets or yellow jackets they resemble in size and coloration. Females do have a small stinger, visible at the extreme rear of the insect in Pat's photo, but this is used to kill flies as food for their larvae. They might sting if captured and mishandled or stepped on barefoot, but such stings are rare. They may appear to be aggressively buzzing a person, but are actually attempting to capture the flies also buzzing around.

A large number of species commonly known as sand wasps belong to several genera in a family of wasps, including all wasps of the genus *Bembix*. The one in Pat's photo is assumed to be *Bembix americana comata*. About an inch or slightly less in length, they are banded black and white to yellow and white like hornets or other wasps, often with a greenish tinge and large green eyes, like this one Pat watched in the Elfin Forest.



Bembix wasps are called sand wasps because they favor sandy locations. They are also known as digger wasps because they excavate short tunnels into the sand, quickly disappearing below. Females dig these short tunnels using their elongated mouths as tools. They lay only one egg per tube.

The wasps themselves are solitary, not social like the better known stinging yellow jackets and hornets. Though there may be many sand wasps with incubation tubes in the same local area, it is because the area is favorable for digging and has a good supply of flies as food, not because they are socializing.

Stings by sand wasps usually kill the flies they prey upon. Many other wasps only paralyze their prey and stock large numbers still alive with their eggs. Those wasps then seal and permanently leave the incubation chamber.

A female sand wasp tends to lay each egg on only one dead fly for food at first, sealing her hole temporarily to avoid predators when she leaves. She returns to each of her nursery tubes repeatedly on following days with freshly killed flies as her larvae grow, resealing the chamber loosely each time she leaves. Each larva can consume about twenty flies before pupating, and will leave its incubation tube the following year as an adult.

Adult sand wasps feed on flower nectar, assisting the flowers in pollination. They are very fast fliers and catch many of their prey actively in flight, including house flies, deer flies, gnats, and mosquitoes so bothersome to humans. The large numbers they take to feed offspring in each of many tubes help to control populations of these annoying flying pests. On the other hand, sand wasps and their larvae are also welcome food to many other animals, including other wasps. They are thus important ecologically as both predators and prey.

Editor Note: For more information about other species of sand wasp found in the Elfin Forest, see

"Small Sand Wasps Reveal Hidden Secrets at Elfin Forest" by Dr. Frank Kurczewski, page 4 of the October/November Oakleaves.

SWAP's Future *continued from page 1*

4. Erosion Control. To be an ongoing activity over the entire Elfin Forest, especially in the fall before the rainy season. Methods may include water bars, wattles and revegetation. May require presence of a biologist during work.

5. Blocking non-designated trails and delineating designated trails. A continuous activity to be carried out monthly over the entire Elfin Forest. Methods may include use of barriers of branches, single strand symbolic fencing on 3-foot stanchions, 5-foot vinyl mesh fencing, or wooden split rail fencing. Services of a biologist may be required.

6. Maintain the Boardwalk. Includes replacement or repair of damaged or decayed wooden structural components and metal fasteners. Monitor monthly for needed maintenance. Repair any potential hazard to visitors as soon as practical. Notify County Parks if needed maintenance or major repairs are beyond capabilities of SWAP.

Red Maids

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

Bonnie's drawing for this issue of *Oakleaves* shows a plant found throughout western United States and spreading north into British Columbia. It has also been recorded in a couple of South American countries, but it is especially common in coastal California. It is generally given the common name of red or pink maids (*Calendrinia ciliata*) although I've also seen it called fringed red maids and desert rock purslane on the web. Although common and displaying easily-seen bright pinkish-red flowers, it is often overlooked. This is because it tends to grow with leaves and branches flat on the ground or flat against surrounding plants. One sees it best looking straight down on it. This is how the photo was taken upon which Bonnie's drawing is based. The flower in the picture has stamens just emerging from deep in the flower. Admittedly, Bonnie's drawing portrays a phase in the life of this wildflower that is fleeting.

What has been drawn is only the initial tight spiral cluster of leaves attached to a stem less than $\frac{1}{4}$ or so inches tall. Botanists call this a basal rosette. In order for the next statement to make sense, one must remember that stems grow longer only from their tips. This growth point contains cells capable of dividing to produce more cells which can then differentiate into the various types of adult cells (called stem cells in animals such as humans). This region is called the apical meristem.

In the plant drawn the apical meristem has produced a single, just opened flower. Flowers are genetically limited to parts that are set in size and shape and once they attain that configuration they stop growing. The central axis of the rosette is then blocked from growing taller. In order for the plant to expand, it must produce branches from lateral meristems found in the upper angle between a leaf and the stem to which it is attached. Unlike the initial vertical rosette axis, these branches grow horizontally and leaves are produced far apart. Additional flowers can be produced along the sides of these branches in an arrangement (inflorescence) called a raceme.

These secondary branches can themselves produce more branches. I had never seen this plant produce a carpet of color visible from a speeding car until this year. It was in a fallow field and the color was so different from anything I had ever seen, I had to stop and take a closer look. It was a carpet of red maids. I suspect that it was able to grow in such profusion due to the drought. All the larger, showier plants were either absent or extremely stunted. Red maids is a native plant, but is one that actually thrives with a little human disturbance. For this reason, it is also classified as a weed, but only a slight nuisance one.

Some might wonder why I haven't mentioned the plant family to which red maids belongs. This is because there has apparently



been a recent change. In ALL my 'older' reference books, this species is listed in the purslane family or Portulacaceae. This family contains miner's lettuce and the beautiful Lewisias. The old Portulacaceae was easily characterized by only two sepals and succulent leaves. But the new Jepson Manual recognizes all California genera but one (*Portulaca* –true purslane) that were in the Portulacaceae to be now in family Montiaceae. None of my plant taxonomy references recognize Montiaceae so none of them indicate how to distinguish the new family from the old one.

A quick perusal of keys in the Jepson manual did not yield any obvious distinctions. Why was Montiaceae separated out? In systematics, any recognized taxon (order, family, genus) should be derived from a single ancestor. Such a taxon is said to be 'monophyletic.' However, modern classification procedures called "cladistics" indicate that genera of the old Portulacaceae separate into different clusters with different ancestors. Such a group is said to be polyphyletic and is a no-no! Unfortunately, a lot of characteristics used to produce modern classification systems are not readily apparent in the field or even without a well-equipped laboratory as they are DNA- or physiologically-based.

Consistent with its weedy designation in the Elfin Forest Pocket guide, red maids would be expected to be found in disturbed ground. However, I haven't seen it on the Forest lands for many years. I don't expect to see it either due to the hard work the volunteers have been restoring the area. I suspect it's worth a notice in *Oakleaves* due to its recognition as a pretty wildflower and its likely presence in the developed and vacant lands surrounding the Elfin Forest.

Ed. Note: A few years ago, Pete Sarafian pointed out some Red maids in the conservation triangle near Bush Lupine Point.

Education Corner

By Yolanda Waddell, Acting Education Chair

In March, SWAP docents Vicky Johnsen, Frances Meehan and Chris Van Beveren attended a thematic interpretation workshop for docents. The workshop, sponsored by the Central Coast State Parks Association (CCSPA), featured author and professor of communication psychology, Dr. Sam Ham. His book, *Environmental Interpretation*, is used by State Park docents as a guide in developing their nature walks.

During his workshop, Dr. Ham explained his TORE model (Thematic, Organized, Relevant and Enjoyable) of planning and delivering meaningful walks. The emphasis is on having a strong theme for a walk and developing the walk around that theme. In reporting on the workshop, Vicky Johnsen said that she came away with the understanding that humans are “meaning-makers” – they can be led, but will draw their own meanings from the experience.

In past years, the Education Committee has developed nature walks for K-12 and college students, with the emphasis on primary grades. In the past two years our new docents have been working on preparing themselves to give walks for groups that include all ages, similar to the walks given by State Park docents but focused on topics related to the Elfin Forest. Vicky Johnsen is now giving a monthly walk every second Wednesday at 10 a.m. Each month she selects a different topic, such as butterflies, birds, plant communities, etc.

The Education Committee will continue to give walks for schools, working to refine them in order to give each student a meaningful experience of the Elfin Forest. We will also develop guidelines for future docents to give walks for the general public. In the works is an idea to prepare some of our docents to be “roving docents.”



Wild Cucumber



Cape Ivy

The Annual “Ivy” Vine Mixup

Text by Yolanda Waddell and Bob Meyer;

Photos by Bob Meyer

Just about every year in April or May, a well-meaning Elfin Forest visitor will pull up a bunch of our native Wild Cucumber vine (*Marah fabaceus*) (pictured top left) thinking that it is a destructive “exotic plant.” The cucumber vine has tendrils, grows from a tuber below ground, has white blossoms, and produces round, prickly green fruit. It dies back within 2-3 months each year, doing little if any damage to its supporting shrubs. The exotic plant the person has in mind is a similar-looking vine, Cape Ivy (*Delairea odorata*) (pictured bottom left).

To help distinguish between the two vines, SWAP has posted a flyer at every Elfin Forest entrance that explains the differences. Created by SWAP member Bob Meyer and titled “Wanted: Dead – Alive” the flyer has a photo of each vine and a list of characteristics.

Cape Ivy is an invasive plant from South Africa. It has smooth rubbery feeling leaves, clusters of yellow flowers and no tendrils. It grows under, in, and through the Elfin Forest’s oak trees, eventually overwhelming them. It doesn’t die back in the summer. Cape ivy continues to be a serious problem deep in the Elfin Forest, but cannot be seen from the boardwalk because of SWAP’s constant removal efforts.

Cape Ivy should not be pulled; the stems break into pieces and each piece that falls onto the Forest floor can produce a new plant. ONLY authorized personnel, including SWAP member Pete Sarafian, who has a spray permit, may work on eradicating Cape ivy in the Elfin Forest.

Except for trained and authorized personnel, pulling either plant is bad for the Elfin Forest.

Weed Warrior Report

Text and photos by Yolanda Waddell

March – Canceled

No one complained that the rain poured buckets in Los Osos on Saturday morning, March 1st. The plants at the ends of 11th and 16th Streets were watered from the sky, and Ron's home-baked cookies were placed in the freezer till the next work party. Our Weed Warriors were able to stay at home and gather strength for the April work day.

April – No Showers, Lots of Work

An energetic group of 15 Weed Warriors came on April 5th to do battle with weeds. We had two snail monitors on hand: Barrett Holland of SWCA and Pete Sarafian. One group went to the Don Klopfer Grove next to the estuary with Barrett, and the other went to the slope along South Bay Boulevard with Pete. The Klopfer Grove group pulled several bags of cheat grass; the South Bay Boulevard group snapped up hundreds of veldt grass seedlings and larger size plants of that very vigorous weed.

Later in April, Pete Sarafian and Vicky Johnsen went back to the South Bay Boulevard to finish clearing out the veldt grass that the April 5th group hadn't had time to pull. Our wonderful April Weed Warrior platoon included Pat Akey, Jessica Armstrong, Dave Bowlus, Pat Brown, Olivia Chilton, Lannie Erickson, Jack Fanselow, Barrett Holland, Vicky Johnsen, Prisila and Rich Johnson, Frances Leitch, Conservation Chair Ron Rasmussen, Pete Sarafian and Yolanda Waddell. Thank you all!

Let's all pull together

Here is a weeding song (to the tune of Happy Wanderer)

By Yolanda Waddell

We love to yank those evil weeds,
our shovels in our hands;
And as we weed we sing this song
and care for our woodland.

Let us weed, Let us weed,

Let us weed,

Let us we-he-he-he-he-he-heed,

Let us weed, Let us weed,

and care for our woodland.

SWAP First Saturday Work Parties

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



In May, Rich and Prisila Johnson gave the now one-year-old plants at the end of 11th Street their monthly watering.

Photo by Yolanda Waddell.



The team of Weed Warriors that pulled Cheat grass in the Don Klopfer Grove included (L-R) Ron Rasmussen, a new unidentified Weed Warrior, Olivia Chilton, snail monitor Barrett Holland, Rich Johnson, Prisila Johnson and Jack Fanselow. Photo by Yolanda Waddell.



OAK LEAVES

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Ron Rasmussen, Yolanda Waddell and Jean Wheeler.
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Coming Up in the Elfin Forest

By Jean Wheeler

This is the best time of the year for fanciers of blue flowers to visit the Elfin Forest. Silver dune lupine inspired the name for Bush Lupine Point and is spreading in the nearby revegetation area along the south edge of the boardwalk. The silvery leaves below its blue flower spikes feed the caterpillars of the Moro Blue Butterfly.

A particular favorite of many flower watchers is called wooly star. Look for this small, low-growing bush topped with many lovely blue blossoms along the 15th Street sand trail, where that trail meets the boardwalk, and south of the boardwalk near the Fairbanks Monument.

Yellow and orange flowering plants tend to dominate the Elfin Forest in early summer, including sticky monkey-flower, deerweed, California poppies, and flowers rising on stalks from the succulent rosettes of coastal dudleya.

Black sage should still have some white to lavender blossoms showing, while many have already dried to black pom-pom balls circling the stems. Dune buckwheat shrubs are shorter and also have white flowers. At the inland end of the boardwalk, chamise has white flower spikes.

Pink flowers show in spikes of California hedge nettle as well as in cobwebby thistle. Red flowers in the undergrowth that look like they've been cut with pinking shears are called Indian pinks.

June and July remain good months to look for butterflies. Under the Flora and Fauna button on our website (elfin-forest.org), eighteen of the twenty-two butterfly species listed are shown as flying in these months. These are also good months to watch fence lizards doing pushups on the boardwalk and to search for other reptiles.

Many birds of the oak woodlands, maritime chaparral, and coastal dune scrub which comprise the Elfin Forest are feeding young in these summer months. Listen for a loud buzz to locate the Spotted Towhee calling from the top of a shrub. He's very distinctive with his black head, rust-colored flanks and rump, and white-spotted wings. His drabber cousin, the grey-brown California Towhee, may be seen darting between shrubs or on the ground between them.

Other birds flitting over or among the shrubs or oak trees include flycatchers such as the Black Phoebe and the Western Kingbird; Bewick's Wren and the noisy but elusive Wrentit; Chipping, Lark, Savannah, Song, and White-crowned Sparrows; Black-headed Grosbeaks; Orange-crowned, Yellow, and Wilson's Warblers; Brewer's Blackbird; House and Purple Finches; and the Lesser and American Goldfinches.

On the estuary, many individual ducks and shorebirds remain all year or even arrive to nest here after vacationing for the winter farther south. Among waders, willets and killdeer continue to be common. Also resident all year are great blue and black-crowned night herons, along with many snowy and greater egrets. Most of our raptor species are here all year, and likely to be actively hunting with fledglings to feed in June and July.

Despite the severe drought of our nearly rainless winter this year, there will still be lots of flowers, birds, and other wildlife such as reptiles, bees, and butterflies to enjoy on a summer stroll around the boardwalk.



Red-tailed Hawk flying overhead. Photo by Jean Wheeler.



Dune Buckwheat. Photo by Vicky Johnson.

Please Report Elfin Forest Sightings

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

WALKS in the ELFIN FOREST

Second Wednesday Walks

June 11, 10:00 a.m. – The Extraordinary Oak

What makes an ordinary oak tree so extraordinary? Come learn why oaks succeed in the Elfin Forest and worldwide. At the same time, docent Vicky Johnsen will identify late-blooming wildflowers, newly-fledged birds and maybe some butterflies.

July 9, 10:00 a.m. – Elfin Forest Habitats

Join Vicky Johnsen for her 2nd Wednesday morning ramble. Her topic today is "The Elfin Forest Habitats: Hobbits would love this place...or would they?" Come along and find out for yourself.

Third Saturday Walks

June 21, 9:30-10:30 a.m.

– All About the Estuary

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

Note: *This walk lasts one hour.*

July 19 – Weather and the Elfin Forest

John Lindsey, the PG&E Weather Man based at Diablo Canyon, will give a fascinating walk and talk about the effects of weather on the plants and animals of the Elfin Forest. John, an authority on coastal weather, will help us to understand why the topography of San Luis Obispo County plays an important role in where rain falls, and how much or how little. This will be an excellent mini course in meteorology, and will give us an edge in discussing that universal topic – the weather.

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, and leave pets at home. The easy paced walks last 1-1/2 to 2 hours. Only heavy rain will cancel a walk. For more information call (805) 528-0392.



David Berry, retired State Parks ranger and superb tracker, points to an animal track during his walk in April. Photo by Yolanda Waddell.



Vicky Johnsen, center, was assisted by Pat Brown (at Vicky's right) for her 2nd Wednesday butterfly walk in April. Though the cloudy day wasn't favorable, some butterflies were seen.

Photo by Yolanda Waddell.



Birder Mike Stiles, far right, led an enthusiastic group for some excellent bird sightings in April. Photo by Ron Rasmussen.

Thank You to Our Generous Members

Compiled by Betsy Kinter, SWAP Database Coordinator

RENEWING MEMBERS:

Richard and Brenda Allmann*
Bob and Linda Bailey*
Thomas and Michele Esser*
Catherine D. Hopson*
Roberta Knapp*
Barbara Machado*
Jim McCoy*
Marilyn Moore and Sandra Taylor*
Patrick and Dorothy Rygh*
SWCA Environmental Consultants*
Yolanda and Jay Waddell*
Mary Whelen*

DONATIONS:

Yolanda and Jay Waddell in memory of Jack Whelen

**Thanks to those listed above who donated more than the \$25 (regular) or \$15 (senior or student) membership dues. The additional donations will be used for special projects in the Elfin Forest.*

If you recently sent a donation to SWAP and don't see your name in this issue's New and Renewing list, be assured that your gift will be acknowledged in the next bimonthly issue. Gifts are processed by two different volunteers before reaching our editors, and newsletter copy deadline is one month before the date of the issue.



Thinking of Switching to Online Oakleaves?

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

From Our Readers

Charlotte Gordon of Tollhouse, California, reads each issue of *Oakleaves* online. After receiving the notice that the April issue was up, she wrote: "Thank you so much for providing this on-line version. I thoroughly enjoy it."

In our acknowledgement, we told her that our graphic designer (Katy Budge) and Web Site Committee (Bob Meyer and Danna Weidner) work hard to make the online version available to our readers. Charlotte wrote back: "I volunteer for 2 non-profits here in our foothills of the Sierras and appreciate all the energy it takes to keep an organization afloat."

It's great to hear from a SWAP member who is working hard for land preservation in another part of California. We'd love to hear from other members who are involved in similar efforts.

SWAP is a Green Light ECO Faire Sponsor

The Morro Bay ECO Rotary is hosting their 2nd Annual Green Light ECO Faire on Sunday, June 1, from noon to 5 p.m. at St. Timothy's Church in Morro Bay. Trina Dougherty of the ECO Rotary invited SWAP to be a sponsor for the Faire. The SWAP Board agreed to support this worthwhile project at its April meeting.

The goal of the ECO Faire is to raise money for solar-powered lamps that are distributed to people who live in areas without electricity. The funds raised by the Faire go to Unite to Light, a non-profit dedicated to providing portable, durable solar-powered lights that replace kerosene lamps or no light at all. A group called Hands in Nepal received 75 lights paid for with funds from the 2013 ECO Faire. The lights were delivered to schools and a sewing co-op in Nepal.

There will be many ECO-focused organizations, food, music, children's activities and more. SWAP's information booth will be set up at the ECO Faire. We'll be selling our new mural mug as well as our T-shirts and other merchandise. Come by and join in the fun. St. Timothy's Church is at 962 Piney Way, across from the Morro Bay Community Center. For more information, contact the ECO Rotary at 801-4826 or 748-9615.

"...one cannot but wonder how an environment can make people despair and sit idle and then, by changing the conditions, one can transform the same people into matchless performers."

~ Muhammad Yunus,
*Banker to the Poor: Micro-Lending
and the Battle Against World Poverty*



SWAP Now Selling a New Mural Mug!

Our new beverage mug is now available for \$10! It is a 15-ounce mug with a large comfortable handle and is microwave and dishwasher safe. Wrapped around and baked into the surface is our wonderful mural design by Barbara Rosenthal — the same one long enjoyed on our T-shirts and sweatshirts, also sold below!



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 = \$___
- ___ Sweatshirt (XXL, XXXL) @\$27.00 = \$___

2. ELFIN FOREST NOTE CARDS

Original print note cards

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

Indicate No. per View(s):

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

3. POCKET GUIDE

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

___ @ \$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 = \$___

6. MURAL MUG

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

___ @ \$10 = \$___

Shipping costs within zip 934 __:

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

Pocket Guides & Note Cards \$1.50 = ___

Mural Prints on Foamcore \$5.00= ___

Shirts each: \$4.00 = ___

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

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

TOTAL OF ORDER

\$___

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

Name: _____

Address: _____

City/State/Zip: _____

Email _____

Phone (w/ area code): _____

Make checks payable and mail to:

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

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




Los Osos / Morro Bay Chapter
SMALL WILDERNESS AREA PRESERVATION
A Non-Profit Public Benefit Corporation
P.O. Box 6442, Los Osos, CA 93412-6442
(805) 528-0392 www.elfin-forest.org

Non-Profit Org.
U.S. Postage
PAID
San Luis Obispo, CA 93402
Permit No. 112

Address Service Requested

Can you identify the good and bad vines? See page 6.

Please check renewal date on your label.

 printed on recycled paper

Things for Kids to do in the Elfin Forest During Summer

Explore with a camera. Come early when bunnies are **hopping** around and quail are foraging. Send "best" photos to *Oakleaves* at the end of the summer and we'll publish them.

Pack a lunch and have a **picnic**.
Look at the flowers and butterflies.

Become a birder. Take binoculars and a bird guide and see how many birds you can identify.



Become a **writer**. Make a journal about your visits to the Forest, and turn that into a story.

Get exercise. **SHAPE UP** by walking or running around the boardwalk.

MEMBERSHIP FORM

Name _____

Address _____

City/State/Zip _____

Email _____

Phone _____

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

☐ I want to help, please call me!

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

☐ **Check here to receive the online version only.**

All donations to SWAP are tax-deductible.

EVERY membership counts!

Make checks payable to: SWAP.

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