



# OAK LEAVES

A PUBLICATION OF FRIENDS OF EL MORO ELFIN FOREST

P.O. BOX 6442, LOS OSOS, CALIFORNIA 93412-6442 ❖ (805) 528-0392 ❖ FEBRUARY / MARCH 2021

## FEMEF's New Directors

By Yolanda Waddell

Three new members and one incumbent were elected to the FEMEF Board of Directors in December. Treasurer and incumbent Dave Bowlus will serve as a Director for two more years. Skip Rotstein, now the Board Chair replacing Jan DiLeo, will remain on the Board through 2022, as will Secretary Yolanda Waddell. The new members include Albert Calizo and Steve Hendricks, each serving one year, and Jeff Reifel, who will serve two years. We know that they will bring new energy and good ideas to our organization.

### Albert Calizo

Born in the Philippines, Albert came to the U.S with a BS in Elementary Education from Philippine Normal University, and went on to obtain an MA in Education and a Master's Degree in Business Administration at Cal Poly San Luis Obispo. He has been married to his wife, Pina, for 46 years, and has three children and eight grandchildren. He is retired after 23 years with the California Department of Justice (County Sheriff) Records/Permits/Warrant Unit. Now he is active as a California Superior Court Interpreter.



Not one to let dust settle under his feet, in 1987 Albert founded and has been President of the Bay-Osos Filipino Community Association. Each year he chairs the popular Los Osos International Festival at St. Elizabeth Seaton Church. He is a current member of the Baywood Park Kiwanis Club and the Central Coast Toastmaster Club. In 2016, the Baywood Park/Los Osos Chamber of Commerce selected him as Los Osos Citizen of the Year.

Because Albert and Pina live close to the Elfin Forest, they and their children have a special appreciation for it. In 1995, when SWAP conducted its first plantings of Coast live oak and Manzanita seedlings in the Forest, Albert organized members of the Bay Osos Filipino Community to help with the planting. Throughout 1995 and 1996, many of the group participated in watering the

Directors *continued on page 2*



Screen shot of some Virtual Meeting participants.  
Photo by Ashley Risch.

## 2020 Virtual Celebration

By Yolanda Waddell with notes from Beverly Boyd

In 2020, the year of the coronavirus pandemic, our traditional SWAP/FEMEF Annual Celebration couldn't be held as a congenial gathering with food, socializing, an excellent speaker and election of Board of Directors members. Instead we met on Saturday, November 14, via Zoom with an excellent speaker, County Parks Director Nick Franco, and a short business meeting.

Our virtual meeting was organized by FEMEF Chair Jan DiLeo and the Board members, with excellent assistance from Zoom moderators Ashley Risch and Mark Teague. Ashley helped Jan through the many details of hosting a meeting with numerous members.

Celebration *continued on page 3*

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## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

*of the*

*Friends of El Moro Elfin Forest (FEMEF)*

*consists of the following members:*

Skip Rotstein, Chair

Dave Bowlus, Treasurer

Yolanda Waddell, Secretary

Beverly Boyd, Acting Recording Secretary

Albert Calizo

Steve Hendricks

Jeff Reifel

The FEMEF Board of Directors meets monthly at 2:00 p.m. on the 2nd Tuesday of the month

Meeting via ZOOM

until Covid-19 restrictions are lifted.

(Date and time are subject to change.)

The next meetings are

**Tuesday, February 9  
and Tuesday, March 9.**

**All Board meetings are open to the public.  
To attend a Zoom FEMEF Board meeting,  
leave a message at 805-528-0392.**



## CONTACT FEMEF

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

(805) 528-0392 and leave a message.

A recorded message will give information about our 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: Lasca Gaylord

SLO County Parks Supervising Ranger

1144 Monterey Street, SLO, CA 93408

(805) 781-1196

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

## Directors *cont. from page 1*

young plants. Albert said that during the years when he was occupied with work and community organizing, he told himself that he wanted to do more for the Elfin Forest. We are pleased that he has chosen to bring his many organizing and people skills to the Board, to benefit the Elfin Forest.

### Steve Hendricks

Born and raised in San Luis Obispo, Steve attended Cuesta College and discovered his love for biology. He continued his studies at Humboldt State University in northern California, receiving both a BS and MS in Fisheries Biology. For twelve years, he pursued a career as a salmonid biologist in the Pacific Northwest.

In 2002, Steve moved back to the Central Coast with his wife, Rachael. He had part-time positions teaching Marine Biology, first at Hancock College in Santa Maria, and then at Cuesta College. At Cuesta, he teaches an Environmental Biology class as well. That class involves field trips to local nature preserves including the Elfin Forest Natural Area. Steve's classes have had the benefit of excellent and informative tours of the Forest by FEMEF docents Vicky Johnsen, Pete Sarafian and Jean Wheeler. In March, 2020, his class was scheduled for a tour that had to be cancelled because of the coronavirus pandemic. Instead, Steve created his own video tours of each site that the class was to have visited, including the Elfin Forest. Steve's 54-minute tour can be seen on the FEMEF website, [www.elfin-forest.org](http://www.elfin-forest.org), under Visiting Forest. He also teaches biology classes at Cal Poly, and is Co-Chair of the Central Coast Biological Society.

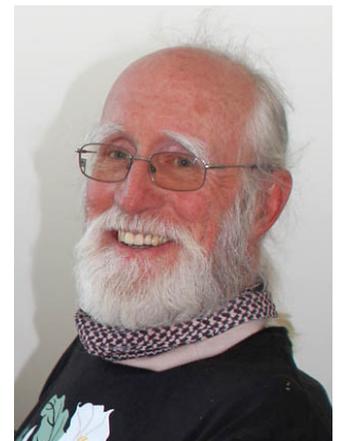
Steve and Rachael moved to Los Osos a few years ago, and takes his 3-year-old daughter, Zoe, on walks to the "elephant" forest. Zoe hasn't seen any elephants but loves the Elfin Forest. As a member of the FEMEF Board, Steve brings his knowledge and scientist's point of view, his broad acquaintance with other scientists and local agencies, and his dedication to informing and educating about the natural history of the Forest and Morro Bay Estuary. Steve said that he is very excited to be part of the Elfin Forest. We thank him for giving his time and energy to helping FEMEF in its mission to preserve and maintain the Elfin Forest.



### Jeff Reifel

Jeff (his last name is pronounced Rye-FEL) is a long-time friend of the Elfin Forest, having spent vacations in the Los Osos/Morro Bay area from the early 1990s until 2010, when he moved to Los Osos. Last October, Jeff became the FEMEF Webmaster, succeeding long-time Webmaster Bob Meyer. See the article about Jeff on pages 3-4 of the December/January Oakleaves. In November, Jeff agreed to serve on the FEMEF Board of Directors, and recently agreed to become Conservation Committee Co-Chair with Vicky Johnsen. His conservation work in the Elfin Forest has included trail work, erosion control and maintenance of the boardwalk in the absence during COVID of long-time boardwalk caretakers Rich and Prisila Johnson.

Jeff, with his science background, many skills and history of conservation work, is an excellent addition to the FEMEF Board. We thank him for his dedication to the Elfin Forest.



# Celebration *cont. from page 1*

During the meeting, Ashley and Mark stood by to help people who were having trouble getting into the meeting, and to be in charge of the “Waiting Room” for admitting attendees into the meeting.

Twenty-one FEMEF members, Board members and staff attended the meeting. Vice Chair Skip Rotstein moderated the celebration, welcoming those in attendance, expressing thanks to active FEMEF members for their hard work, and introducing the speaker.



*County Parks Nick Franco, speaker at FEMEF virtual meeting.  
Photo by Ashley Risch*

During Nick Franco’s presentation, using PowerPoint, he talked about the types of facilities under County Parks’ purview. Community Parks are mostly free for public use with trails, picnic areas and play areas. Those parks aren’t expected to be self-supporting. Regional Parks are laid out for group use and camping, with a charge for daily

use. County Parks has three golf courses that operate as businesses. A recent addition to the Dairy Creek Golf Course is a Toptracer Range, providing “augmented reality golf,” where the golfer hits a golf ball with a golf club, and it is digitally tracked.

Nick discussed the effects of COVID-19 restrictions on County Parks. In many cases, attendance and use of facilities increased. The golf courses and camping are popular. Trash collection increased because of additional use by many people wanting to be out in the fresh air, in a safe place. Overall, the County Parks budget was down in 2020, but work is continuing on projects such as the Bob Jones Pathway, the Morro Bay to Cayucos trail connector, and development of the Pirate’s Cove area.

During the business portion of the meetings, Skip Rotstein gave an update on FEMEF programs and projects. He reported that there are no scheduled nature walks in the Elfin Forest because of COVID, but groups of six led by an authorized walk leader may be organized through FEMEF. A proposal to remove obsolete green fencing has been sent via County Parks to U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service for approval. The Board is working on a plan to create a viewing area at Butterfly Hill, which is located at the top of the 11th Street trail.

Another project not yet tackled is updating the interpretive panels in the Elfin Forest to provide more specific information about the Forest and about endangered species.

The meeting concluded with expressions of appreciation to our active volunteers by Jan and Skip, especially to Bob Meyer who served as SWAP/FEMEF Webmaster for 20 years. Jeff Reifel has succeeded Bob as Webmaster. Yolanda Waddell thanked Jan DiLeo, who retired from the Board at the end of December, for her energy, wisdom and organization.

# New Adopt-A-Park Agreement Signed

*By Skip Rotstein, FEMEF Chair*

Friends of the El Moro Elfin Forest (FEMEF) will continue our 26-year history of partnering with County Parks in maintaining and restoring the El Moro Elfin Forest Natural Area. We have renewed our Adopt-A-Park Agreement with San Luis Obispo County Parks for another five years (2021-2026).

In 1994, SWAP, now FEMEF, purchased and donated 38.7 acres to the County with the provision that our volunteers would help to restore and maintain the preserve. SWAP President Rosemary Bowker signed an Adopt-A-Park Agreement with County Parks that listed what our organization agreed to do to help maintain the new County Natural Area. The Agreement lists removing invasive plants, re-vegetation, trimming vegetation along the boardwalk and trails, maintaining the boardwalk, erosion control, blocking unauthorized trails, promoting awareness in the community about the need to protect our natural resources, and “projects agreed to by County Parks.”

Many projects have been completed under the Adopt-A-Park Agreement. One, appreciated by all visitors, was building the boardwalk. Since construction, its useful life has been extended many years by FEMEF’S Adopt-A-Park maintenance. In 1999, Mark Skinner of the Land Conservancy of San Luis Obispo coordinated a Veldt Grass removal project along the 1-acre slope above South Bay Blvd. to prevent the very invasive grass from taking over the Elfin Forest and destroying its ecosystem. SWAP Weed Warriors assisted with the project. Ever since, now as FEMEF Weed Warriors, they have maintained the slope by pulling and removing invasive plants. Other projects included erecting green mesh fencing to protect fragile revegetation plantings and to limit access to plant restoration areas.

After years of SWAP and FEMEF Adopt-A-Park care, restored plants have grown so successfully that we have been able to remove some of the fencing, and have plans to remove more in the future. Sand trails and the boardwalk have been lined with black cable known as “symbolic fencing.” Benches were placed on the boardwalk with County agreement and the generosity of donors. Interpretive displays created by SWAP and County Parks to promote awareness of our natural resources, will be updated in the future by FEMEF.

FEMEF’S next Adopt-A-Park project is the restoration of Butterfly Hill at the upper end of the 11th Street trail with more attractive fences, native plants to fill in the disturbed area, benches and an interpretive panel. The Weed Warriors and other FEMEF volunteers will continue honoring our Adopt-A-Park agreement to make El Moro Elfin Forest a unique and beautiful wildlife preserve we can enjoy with pride.

# Witch's Butter Mushroom

*Text and Photos by Jean D. Wheeler, Ph.D.*

February and March are the best times to look for mushrooms in the Elfin Forest. In those months last year, I wrote our first featured article about a mushroom species--the Black Elfin Saddle Mushroom (*Helvella lacunosa*). This year I'm covering a second of my favorite mushrooms in our small park – Witch's Butter (*Tremella mesenterica*). I enjoy this one because of its lovely bright color, interesting texture, and whimsical common name.

To those of us who grew up thinking of mushrooms as “toadstools,” it may come as a surprise that witch's butter is a kind of mushroom. The term “mushroom” refers to the fruiting body of a fungus distinct from its feeding vegetative part, thus a shape with distinctive parts (as opposed to other fungi like slime molds, yeasts and mildew). Mushrooms reproduce via spores grown in specialized cells in the fruiting body, the part of the mushroom we see.

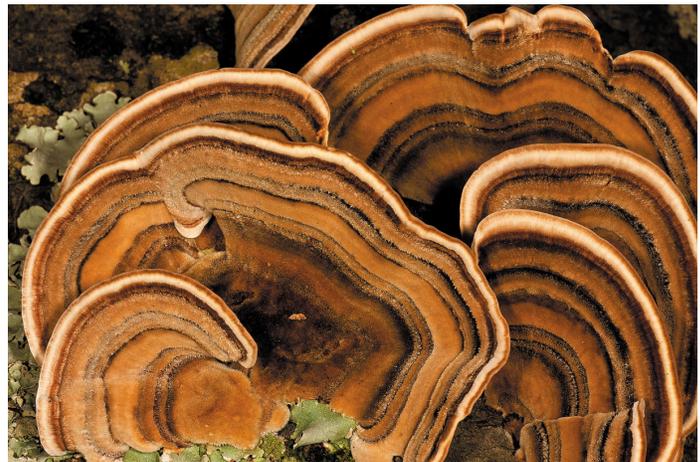
The largest group of mushrooms, including our Witch's Butter and Black Elfin Saddle, is called “Basidiomycetes.” They sexually reproduce spores on the outside of microscopic club-shaped cells called “basidia.” A smaller group of mushrooms, the “Ascomycetes,” produce their spores inside mother cells called “asci.”

Spores branch into many threadlike cells called hyphae, merging with threads from a spore of the same species but “sexually” different (complicated, “sex” can be more than two!) to form a network of hyphae called the mycelium, which digests food.

Witch's Butter is a “jelly” sort of mushroom. The scientific name means “trembling” and shaped like “intestines.” It lacks a stalk between the unseen mycelium and the fruiting body. Hidden in dead wood, the mycelium parasitically digests food from another mushroom species as both contribute to decay of the wood, releasing minerals “higher” plants can then use.

With enough food, the fruiting body forms on the surface of a dead branch, usually in hardwoods like our oaks. It is a slippery, bright yellow to orange lobed brainlike mass, roughly three inches across, with the microscopic spores on the surface. It swells with rain, shrivels losing color when dry. With another rain, it swells again to a yellow-gold convoluted mass of jelly. There are other jelly fungi in similar and other colors, including black. This one was first identified in Sweden and is found on all continents except Antarctica. Its appearance and color on logs in hardwood forests led to suspicion of supernatural cause, with witches getting the blame.

Witch's Butter is generally considered edible but tasteless. However, some cooks, especially in Asia, use the rubbery mass to give texture to soups. There may also be some medical properties to this and other jelly mushrooms. Witch's Butter has been used, especially in Asia, for immune benefits. Reserchers have reported antitumor properties, have suggested use to improve immunodeficiency, and to prevent degeneration of small blood vessels among the aged. It is also reported that Witches Butter may reduce some respiratory problems. Whatever medical benefits Witch's Butter may have, I find seeing its cheerful-looking jelly on dead branches in our Elfin Forest gives a boost to my morale!



*From our 2012 Elfin Forest Calendar  
Turkey-Tail Mushrooms, Photo by Dennis Sheridan  
(See more calendar photos on page 6.)*

# Seaside Golden Yarrow

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

Editor's Note: Revised by Dr. Walters  
from his Feb/Mar 2000 Oakleaves article.

The plant featured this time is *Eriophyllum staechadifolium*. The most widely used common name in our area, is seaside golden yarrow. In several local flora books, I have seen it referred to as the seaside wooly sunflower (or daisy) and lizard tail. It is not common in the Elfin Forest. In fact, I was not able to observe it currently from the boardwalk at all. There used to be a few plants that flowered regularly near Siena View, but I haven't seen them there for several years. I would expect that I could have found it by searching drier sites just above the high tide line along the upper edge of the salt marsh. The species is most easily viewed from the Bench Trail at Spooner's Cove, Montana de Oro State Park. The species is found almost exclusively within sight and sound of the ocean.

Of all the coastal shrubs this is the one I find to be the most distinctive and attractive. The tiny yellow flowers are in heads and the heads are in moderately sized flat-topped clusters. The tiny flowers are of two kinds. The center of the head is filled with flowers bearing five petals joined into a tube. These flowers are so tightly packed together that they appear to be a solid disk. Thus, they are called either tube flowers, based on the shape of their corollas or disk flowers, based on their position in the head. The second type of flower is always found in the same head with the disk flowers, and when present, are restricted to the outer edge of the head. They have only three joined petals and these are flattened into a tongue-shaped extension called a ligule. The ligules extend outward from the head like the rays of a sun drawn by a kindergarten child. Because of this, they are called ray flowers. In order to see the sepals, you would have to dissect the head and examine each individual tiny flower. The sepals are minute scales approximately 1 mm. long. They are not green, but rather a dry white color. Since this group of plants (the sunflowers or composites) never has green sepals, botanists have given the sepals in this family its own special name, pappus.

The leaves are quite wooly, especially when young. It is this character that is referred to in the genus name. *Erio-* means wooly and *-phyllum* means leaf. In the adult leaves, the wool is restricted to the lower surface. *Staechedi-* is derived from a Greek name that referred to one of their local plants with smelly leaves. The leaves of seaside golden yarrow do have a pleasant scent. In our local plants, the leaves are deeply lobed. This leaf character is present in the most widely distributed variety, *E. staechadifolium* var. *artemisiifolium*. The common name lizard tail is an interesting one since it probably refers to the leaves as well. How can a name that seems to describe a linear, smooth edged (entire), fleshy shape be used for our plants? It obviously can't. But, there is another variety. It is actually the one from which the species was first described. It would now be given the variety name *E. staechadifolium* var. *staechadifolium*. This variety, as might be predicted, has longish, smooth edged, fleshy leaves. It is the form that is commonly found



at the area where the species was first collected and described, from Monterey, California, northward.

Seaside golden yarrow is in the nursery trade. It would make a wonderful flowering shrub with its profusely produced, moderately large, clusters of yellow heads that contrast with its fleshy gray-green foliage. Unlike a lot of native species, however, it would require supplemental watering and some shade if one would try to grow it away from the coast.



## OAKLEAVES

is published six times per year beginning in February.

Co-editors are Yolanda Waddell and Jean Wheeler;

Layout is by Katy Budge.

Editing assistance by Pat Grimes.

Contributors to this issue: Albert Calizo, Jan DiLeo, Steve Hendricks, Vicky Johnsen, Betsy Kinter, Sera Melini, Jeff Reifel, Barb Renshaw, Skip Rotstein, Ashley Risch, Thomas Soares, Yolanda Waddell, Dirk and Bonnie Walters, Jean Wheeler.

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

# February Images from Our Historic Calendars



*Clockwise from left:*

2011  
*Mushrooms.*  
Watercolor by  
Heather D. Johnson.

2010  
*Great Horned Owl.*  
Photo by Dave Bowlus.

2009  
*California Peonies.*  
Watercolor 8.5" x 11.5"  
by Rachel Winn Yon.

(See Dennis Sheridan's  
Turkey-Tail Mushroom photo  
on page 4.)

# Elfin Forest: Preserve or Playground?

By Yolanda Waddell

Most visitors to the Elfin Forest enjoy the Forest from the boardwalk. But there are some who don't understand that it is a preserve - home to more than 200 species of native plants including the threatened Morro Manzanita, birds, animals, reptiles and insects including an threatened butterfly - and is only meant for passive recreation such as walking, birding, taking photos, and relaxing on its benches.

Conservation Chair Vicky Johnsen sent the accompanying photo in January, showing footprints in the sand leading away from the boardwalk. Someone wasn't content with staying on the boardwalk, and decided to go "cross country."

Also in January, FEMEF volunteer Alice Welchert sent an email about an encounter in the Rose Bowker Grove with three women who had hung their hammocks from the oak trees and were resting in them. Alice explained that the oaks are very old and fragile, and they said they didn't know they couldn't do that. Alice mentioned that she has also seen people swinging from the oak trees. The Conservation Committee is planning to put a sign in Rose's Grove asking visitors to stay on the deck and not to climb in the trees.



Footprints in the sand show that a visitor left the boardwalk to go "exploring." Photo by Vicky Johnsen.



During a meeting about serious erosion problems on the slope below Bush Lupine Point, Jeff Reifel, left, and Pete Sarafian discussed possible solutions. Photo by Vicky Johnsen.

## Weed Warrior Report

By Jeff Reifel, Conservation Committee Co-Chair

The ongoing pandemic continues to restrict our work in the Elfin Forest to small distanced groups and individuals. However, plants keep growing, rain keeps falling, screws keep rusting, visitors keep coming and upkeep struggles to keep up.

Vicky Johnsen, Dean Thompson and James Solum have done some major trimming of the encroaching vegetation. The trimmings are used to help block and obscure unauthorized use trails. James has since moved out of the area and will be missed.

Jeff Reifel continues to maintain the boardwalk. The increased foot traffic on the boardwalk has caused many of the failed screws to reveal themselves. Twenty five hundred new screws now secure the deck boards. That's about one in every twenty-five screws. Fifteen of the stringers, the boards spanning lengthwise and supporting the deck, had broken or cracked, giving the boardwalk a less than solid feel. These are now reinforced with new foundations.

Dave Bowlus did some timely work on water bars and sand berms along some of the sand trails just before our late December rains.

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

# Coming Up in the Elfin Forest

*Text and Photos by Jean Wheeler*

We're running on dry again, with only about a half inch of rain so far this fall as I write on New Year's weekend, with precipitation predicted to remain much drier than normal. But we can be thankful for our good fortune in February and March in two ways when it comes to our floral landscape. First, because our vegetation is fully adapted to virtually no rain in summer and frequent droughty winters as well. Second, because we can enjoy gorgeous blossoms on many of our native plants in these two months when most Americans can see little more than bark and needle leaves above snow and ice.

In these months much of the boardwalk is bordered by the white to pale lilac flowers of buckbrush ceanothus, also called California lilac. Along the lower northern boardwalk are the blushing pink bell-shaped blooms of Morro manzanita, soon to be replaced by "little apple" fruits of their Spanish name. California peonies (pictured) are raising their unusually large and lush leaves by California standards, rising a foot or two directly from soil along the 11th street sand trail and near Siena's view. The leaves are protected from hot sun by surrounding shrubs. In early February, they should be adorned by a few drooping red flower balls an inch or so in diameter. They remain only for a few weeks; then the entire plants disappear for nearly another year.

Golden yarrow will have flowers in that color and there will be lots of California poppies blooming, more yellow than orange this close to the coast. Prickly-stemmed fuchsia-flowered gooseberries are nearing the end of their blooming season, with long red flower tubes providing nectar for hummingbirds among shrubs along much of the lower boardwalk.

Some rain will also bring on mushrooms, especially in the shelter of our live oak groves. The vegetative bodies of most mushrooms are spread widely throughout the soil below. What we see above ground are the much smaller fruiting structures (my page 4 article has pictures and natural history of one such species, called witch's butter). Some mushrooms are delightfully edible, but many are deadly poisonous, and it can be very difficult to discern which of those is which.

There are a number of migratory ducks wintering on the estuary, including American Wigeons, Buffleheads, Northern Pintails, Northern Shovelers, and Teal. Virtually all species of water birds and wading birds listed in our Pocket Guide (sold on page 11) are at peak populations in these months, as are all the raptors listed, and a great many of the passerines. Watch the shrubs around the boardwalk for many species of flitting little brown and little grey birds, some year-round residents and others visiting only in winter, like the Ruby-crowned Kinglet (pictured, but the ruby head patch is seldom seen, usually covered by other feathers).

Larger thrashers, towhees, scrub jays, quail, blackbirds, and doves can be seen and/or heard regularly. By the end of February and through March into April, we'll also have the spring migration of birds passing through, and possibly remaining for a few days, en



route from their winter homes in Central and South America to their summer breeding ranges in our northern states and Canada.

Come for a walk on the wild side in our small wilderness area. Watch for plants beginning to bloom late in winter and despite substantially below normal rainfall. Listen and look for our resident birds as they engage in mating rituals and prepare to raise their 2021 families. Try to catch a glimpse of lizards, rabbits, squirrels, or maybe even a wild coyote, a valuable resident helping to keep prey populations in check.

## Please Report Sightings

Have you observed any unusual birds in the Elfin Forest? Mammals? Reptiles? Amphibians? Insects? Interesting activities or footprints of wildlife in our Elfin Forest? Unusual plants? Taken a good photo?

Please report any interesting sightings to your Oakleaves editors at: [oakleaf@elfin-forest.org](mailto:oakleaf@elfin-forest.org) or leave a message on FEMEF's answering machine, (805) 528-0392.



# WALKS in the ELFIN FOREST

## Update – Walk Videos on Elfin Forest Website

*By Yolanda Waddell, Walks Committee Chair*

In January, when this is being written, COVID-19 is rampant throughout San Luis Obispo County. Petra Clayton, our 3rd Saturday nature walks coordinator, is still unable to schedule walks in the Elfin Forest, so our traditional February Fungus Foray cannot be given. However, we have posted two excellent walk videos on our website, [www.elfin-forest.org](http://www.elfin-forest.org). They can be found under the heading, “Visiting Forest” at the top of the website home page.

The videos were made by the following persons:

### *Petra Clayton*

6-minute video with music background made from shots taken while on a nature walk in the Elfin Forest in July, 2017. Includes wildflowers, birds and wild pigs in the estuary. The wild pigs were removed from the estuary after the video was made.

### *Steve Hendricks*

54-minute instructional tour of the Elfin Forest made in March, 2020 for his Environmental Biology class when restrictions due to the coronavirus pandemic prevented their field trips. Contains much valuable information.

*Keep an eye on our website home page, [www.elfin-forest.org](http://www.elfin-forest.org) or check outgoing messages each month at 805-528-0392 for any update about walks.*

# “A Little Elfin Forest Magic”

Yoga Teacher Sera Melini and Thomas Soares visited the Elfin Forest in December and posted these photos on Instagram with the comment, “A little Elfin Forest magic to lift us up.” She commented later that they love the Elfin Forest. Photos by Sera Melini and Thomas Soares.



## Elfin Forest Beat

*By Counting Reporter Barb Renshaw and Jeff Reifel*

The number of visitors to the Elfin Forest has continued to increase during the period of Covid 19 restrictions. The Forest is seen as a safe and accessible outdoor space. I record the totals of visitors encountered on a daily round through the forest. Observations average 15 people a day with a single day high of 49 people over a 45-minute period. Most visitors are observing the one-way circulation.

Today, the Tuesday after the holidays, I had the assignment of interviewing people in the Elfin Forest. I walked my beat slowly, hanging out for a few minutes at each overlook or scenic spot. I walk this beat 4 or 5 days a week and count every person and dog I see. Tuesdays usually average 11 people and 2 dogs. But, on interview day I saw only 2 people in the distance. This reminded me of Tuesdays prior to the pandemic. During December 2020 holidays, I encountered many families with children every day.

Back in October I remember conversing with a couple who were from elsewhere in California, but who had visited the Forest in the past. They were preparing to retire and investigating Los Osos as a possible retirement destination. I also met people from other states.

Some locals, like me, walk in the forest frequently. We “regulars” wave to each other. Weekdays have a higher ratio of dogs to people, suggesting that more of the people are local than those I see on weekends. During weekends and holidays, I see larger family groups. The largest family group I encountered had 10 members, several of them babies or toddlers.

I plan to interview some visitors in time for the next *Oakleaves*.

# Thank You to Our Generous Members

*Compiled by Betsy Kinter,  
FEMEF Database Coordinator*

## NEW MEMBERS:

Jan Redman  
Zach & Corinne Tanner

## NEW LIFE MEMBERS:

David & Linda Chipping

## RENEWING MEMBERS:

Bob & Linda Bailey*	Wendy McKeown*
Kate Blickhahn*	Bob & Sharon Meyer*
David Bowlus & Beverly Boyd*	Marie Moore & Elaine Mason*
Steve & Sue Burns*	Pat Murray*
Ruth & Les Christiansen*	Jim & Barbara Murray*
Kathleen M. Copeland*	Al Normandin
Evelyn Dabritz*	Patrick O'Donnell*
Diane Dalenberg*	Robert Pavlik*
John Dilworth Jr. & Carole Maurer*	Rebecca Rasmussen*
Francesca Fairbrother	Jeff Reifel*
Jean & Jack Fanselow*	Oscar Sarafian
Gary Giannico*	Bob & Barbara Schwenoha*
Alta Hall*	Dennis Sheridan*
Kirsten Holmquist*	Dr. Jan W. Simek*
Heather & Jim Johnson*	Peg Smith*
Jypsy Joe Johnson*	Charles & Bernadette Soter*
Martha MacGillivray	David & Helianthe Stevig*
George & Vicki Marchenko*	Madeline Taylor*
Bob & Mary McCorkle*	Chris & Jim Van Beveren*
	Rex & Janice Wolf*

## DONATIONS:

Susan & Myron Hood

*\*Thanks to those listed above who donated more than the \$25 (regular) or \$15 (senior or student) membership dues. The additional donations will be used for special projects in the Elfin Forest. If you recently sent a donation to FEMEF and don't see your name in this issue's New and Renewing list, be assured that your gift will be acknowledged in the next 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.*

# New FEMEF Life Members in 2020

David and Linda Chipping, long-time members of SWAP/FEMEF, chose to become Life Members in December by donating \$1,000 to FEMEF. The choice to give this generous level of support was also made during 2020 by another steadfast member, Andrea Davis. Crow and Wendy White provided a \$1,000 donation through the Hamill Family Foundation.

Life Members place their trust in Friends of El Moro Elfin Forest to protect the Elfin Forest for many years to come. They will receive a lifetime subscription of the Oakleaves newsletter. Since they don't need to renew and are acknowledged on our New and Renewing page just the one time, we will print a list our life members each year. Thank you, Life Members – you are an important part of FEMEF's financial backbone!

Diane Blakeslee, San Luis Obispo  
Jay and Ann Bonestell, Los Osos  
David and Linda Chipping  
Andrea Davis, Santa Rosa  
Fran and Marsh Harkins, Bakersfield  
Melville Hodge, Saratoga  
Joan Hughes, Fresno  
King David's Loge #209, F&AM, San Luis Obispo  
Laurence (Bud) and Marci Laurent, Corvallis, OR  
Fred Mednick, Mercer Island, WA  
Susan and Allen Minker, Los Osos  
Frederick G. Novy III, MD, Los Osos  
John and Cheyanne Parker, Lucerne  
Barbara and Robert (Rosey) Rosenthal, Los Osos  
Pete Sarafian, Los Osos  
Shirley Sparling, Pacific Grove  
Ken Volk, San Luis Obispo  
Jay and Yolanda Waddell, Los Osos  
Dirk and Bonnie Walters, San Luis Obispo  
Jean D. Wheeler, Los Osos  
Crow and Wendy White, Los Osos  
Mary Lou Wilhelm, San Luis Obispo

## Thinking of Switching to Online Oakleaves?

If you use your computer a lot, we encourage you to take a look at the online Oakleaves at [www.elfin-forest.org](http://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. Just e-mail us at [oakleaf@elfin-forest.org](mailto:oakleaf@elfin-forest.org) with the subject: Switch me to online.



## Elfin Forest Caps

One size fits all for these caps. They have adjustable straps in the back and are made of 100% cotton. Two handsome colors are available, forest green or maroon. Each cap has emblazoned in gold across its front the image of one of our coast live oaks, elfin-short but with a wide sprawling canopy, and the words "Elfin Forest Natural Area."



# FEMEF 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) @\$20.00 = \$\_\_\_
- \_\_\_ Short Slv. T-Shirt (XXL, XXXL) @\$23.00 = \$\_\_\_
- \_\_\_ Long Slv. T-Shirt (S, M, L, XL) @\$25.00 = \$\_\_\_
- \_\_\_ Long Slv. T-Shirt (XXL, XXXL) @\$27.00 = \$\_\_\_
- \_\_\_ Sweatshirt (S, M, L, XL) @\$35.00 = \$\_\_\_
- \_\_\_ Sweatshirt (XXL, XXXL) @\$37.00 = \$\_\_\_

### 2. POCKET GUIDE

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

\_\_\_ @ \$3.00 = \$\_\_\_

### 3. ELFIN FOREST MURAL PRINTS

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

\_\_\_ @ \$35.00 = \$\_\_\_

### 4. ALPHABET BIRD BOOK

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

\_\_\_ @ \$20.00 = \$\_\_\_

### 5. MURAL MUG

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

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

### 6. ELFIN FOREST CAPS

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

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

### SUBTOTAL OF ORDER

\$ \_\_\_\_\_

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

**SHIPPING COSTS:** Within and near Los Osos, free delivery may be possible. Shipping Costs otherwise depend on zip code and package weight.

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

### TOTAL OF ORDER WITH

APPLICABLE SHIPPING COSTS \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

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

Email \_\_\_\_\_

Phone (w/ area code): \_\_\_\_\_

Make checks payable and mail to:

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

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



FRIENDS OF EL MORO ELFIN FOREST  
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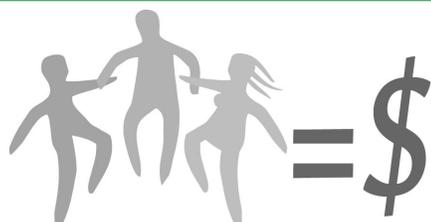
*Address Service Requested*

Meet the new FEMEF Board Members ~ page 1!

**Please check renewal date on your label.**

printed on recycled paper

## Are You Current?



Every membership helps us to be more convincing to foundations and government agencies when we ask them for funds. They all want to know "How many members do you have?"

Please look at the renewal date on your mailing label to know when your membership expires. If it's time to renew, use the form in the box to the right of this one to support FEMEF for another year. Notice you can check to receive only the online version of Oakleaves (with photos in full color!) to switch more dollars from mailing costs to conservation efforts.

Timely renewal of your membership helps us to save on postage and the time needed to send a renewal reminder by mail. Thank you for supporting FEMEF and the Elfin Forest!

## MEMBERSHIP FORM

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

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

Email \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

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

Donation only \$ \_\_\_\_\_

I want to help, please call me!

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

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

All donations to FEMEF are tax-deductible.

EVERY membership counts!

Make checks payable to: FEMEF

Mail to: Friends of El Moro Elfin Forest,  
 P.O. Box 6442, Los Osos, CA 93412-6442.