

## LIKELY EFFECTS of CLIMATE CHANGE on CALIF'S PLANTS



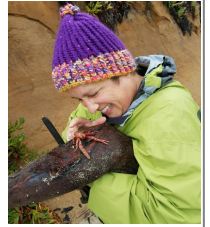
Dr. Tom Parker will speak to us on **Saturday, January 26 at 3 pm** on "Potential Impact of Climate Change on California Vegetation". Since **Humans** are the principal drivers of climate change & most of us heed the latest warnings of "12 yrs till irreversibility", established at the Climate Conference in Poland this month, Tom's ideas have a heightened relevancy.

Dr. Parker's talk will focus on two very different ecosystems: chaparral and tidal wetlands, to provide examples of climate change impact. Though the specific processes are quite different for each case, they are ultimately rooted in the same source, the warming of the planet by increasing CO<sub>2</sub> concentration. For chaparral, the issue is a trend toward a reduced rainy season with greater potential for drying soils, plants and wildfire. For tidal wetlands, sea level rise is occurring at increasing rates, although wetlands should be able to keep up for a few decades. Other issues include how climate change will impact the state's overall hydrology, leading to lower rates of freshwater flow into the Delta, especially in the summer.

Tom Parker, a professor of biology at SFSU, is an evolutionary ecologist focused on the role of plants in ecological communities, especially the chaparral, as in SPVP and on tidal wetlands. Tom has published more than one professional article in conjunction with Mike Vasey.

## "DEAD WHALES DO TELL TALES" with SUE PEMBERTON

On Feb. 16, at 3pm, Sue Pemberton will speak to Pacificans in our Visitor Center.



**Ms. Pemberton** is a Curatorial Assistant in the Department of Ornithology & Mammalogy, at the Cal Academy of Sciences, where her work focuses primarily on **marine mammals**. As a member of the West Coast Stranding Network, Cal Academy is responsible for examining dead marine mammals in order to learn about the health of whale populations & the threats they face. Among the areas she monitors is the Cal. coast from Ano Nuevo to Marin Co.

A life-long nature girl and animal lover, Sue discovered her passion for marine mammals as a rescue and rehabilitation volunteer with The Marine Mammal Center in 1993. She joined the Cal Academy as a volunteer in 2008, beginning in their bone processing lab. Collecting data from marine mammals on local beaches soon followed, and Sue was hired by the Cal Academy in January of 2011.

Born and raised in Pacifica, Sue continues to live on the coast in El Granada. When she isn't crawling around on dead things, she loves spending time with her pets or hiking parks and beaches with friends.

## ON THE TRAIL

**Istvan Puski** was watching a "herd" of 5 **deer** at the Walnut picnic area, when a **Great Blue Heron** grabbed his attention, especially when it snagged a **gopher** with its beak. The tall critter tried for a 2nd course, but the second lucky ground dweller was too much to handle; Mon, Nov. 12.



Unknown

**Walter Colquhoun** told us that an elderly lady, about 5'2" tall was forced to follow a **mountain lion** down the Hazelnut Trail, all the way to the Plaskon, as it was walking ahead of her, & she couldn't go back to her starting point at the east end. The day was about Nov.



3. The rangers surmised that it must have been going down for water. Close to that date **Walter** had noticed some very large scat, apparently from one of these large predators in the same area.

**Ron Wilson** is concerned since he saw **2 dead moles** in SPVP within a short range of time; I know we all care about our little black-coated churners of the earth & grub eaters, especially when they haven't made a furrow under our lawn.



Philippe Huguen

(continued on page 4)

## WOODPECKER WONDER in SPVP on NOVEMBER 18, 2018



Ray Trabucco

**Katie Antista** and I were working at the Visitor Center, when **Ranger Tom Hart** entered with a puzzled look on his face. Did Katie or I know anything about the **woodpeckers** of San Pedro Valley Park? Before Tom showed us the dark image of a woodpecker on his cell I was only a little intrigued; Katie looked first & took a deep breath as she saw the gentle red crest, the curving black lines down its neck; 'twas a female **Pileated Wood-**

**pecker** on an **Oregon alder tree** in the So. Walnut of San Pedro Valley Park!

We three "ran" to the trees by the restrooms in the picnic area with binoculars in hand. During the 15 minutes of flying wood chips whittled out by our little champion, **Ray Trabucco** had magically appeared with a large camera, but Ms. PW was too busy stripping the alder bark, gleaning for **ants**, to care about the Park paparazzi. Look for rectangular scars on the alder trees nearer to the latrines to see the remains of her work.

## COUNTY AWARDS SPVP VOLUNTEER OF YEAR TO JUDY BACON



A surprised Judy receives award from Parks Superintendent Scott Lombardi at the volunteer appreciation luncheon.

A spirited **Judy Bacon**, in a relatively short number of years, has managed to do more for the Friends of SPVP than many a long-time member. Seeing a need that had never really been filled, she became our creative hospitality chairperson. She saw the need for a new board secretary and filled that position. For every event, she often leads the planning and does most of the shopping. Judy willingly attends & writes articles for events, bringing them to life with her expressive photos. Each season her decorations festoon the Visitor Center. If a job needs to be done, she's there; recently that job has been on a committee with **Bing Huey** & the **Stroganoffs**, organizing & unearthing data on our treasury records. Thank you, Ms. Bacon. (Thanks, **Sharron**, for informing the County about our work!)



Sharron Walker

## MUSHROOM DISCOVERY !

On Sat. Dec. 1, **Mushroom** enthusiasts showed up at the Visitor Center to join Mycology expert, **JR Blair**, director of the SFSU Sierra Field Campus, for the 3rd annual SPVP Mushroom Foray. After a brief talk, participants hit all trails to seek out mushrooms, collecting with special permission so that Blair could use specimens as teaching aids back at the Visitor Center. JR discussed the mushrooms collected, pointing out characteristics, toxic ones, & those that are edible. Photo above is one of the finds, a **chanterelle**, probably ***Cantherellus californicus***. In spite of the recent rain, mushrooms were not as plentiful as last year, but some treasures were found. And many of the fungus hunters used the new Parks Foundation sponsored \$2 **Mushroom Guide** selling at our store. **Sharron W.**

## WILD HOLIDAY AT THE PARK on Dec. 12th

In the Center, destruction was rampant; it wasn't just the 3 dozen wild **H. sapiens** that attacked the delicious but exposed dishes: turkey, ham, yams, vulnerable vegetable concoctions, **Istvan's** raspberry bars; what a mess! But it was the unprincipled stealing of the starfish bowl, the white owl, CARE package of coffee & Godiva chocolates & wine bottles by the alcohol-hungry few that could have ruined the party if **Rob Hughes** had not pulled out his magic flute & made the beasts sing. I believe the joke-filled jesters: **B. Jones & L. Bothen**, etc. and the happy **Mila Santa & Adrian Elf** brought some peace to the revelers.



## LOOKING AT OUR STEELHEAD POPULATION AND OUR CREEK

By Roger Mascio

San Pedro Creek is doing well. A couple of months ago **Sharron Walker**, **Ralph Larson** and I took a Go Pro video of some large pools in the creek and in a short distance we videoed approximately 50 small **Steelhead**. It was a pleasant surprise. That shows a lot more of these



silvery fish are making it up the creek from the ocean to spawn than we could have imagined. There are probably 1000 small steelhead or more in the total length of the creek and its tributaries. This is the only creek between Marin County Creeks and Pilarcitos Creek in Half Moon Bay that has Steelhead in it. Above you can see me, Sharron Walker, Ralph Larsen, stylishly garbed, ready for braving the creek. ( photo by **Bevan Jones**)

The San Pedro Creek Coalition has been bringing people into Pacifica from entities like the Resource Conservation District, the Monterey Steelhead Trout Project & U.S. Fish & Wildlife, so that they can help us better understand how to keep our creek & trout healthy & on a safe pathway for home-owners.

## BIRD NESTS RISE AGAIN AT THE SPVP CENTER

Words and Art by Joseph Piro

With the entire Bay Area, including Pacifica, under a blanket of smoky, hazy air being blown down from the devastating Camp Fire up north near Chico, instead of working outdoors on the trails for our November 10th Trail Day, we worked inside and around the Visitor's Center. Ranger **Tom Hart**, **Istvan Puski** and I installed 2 new shelves to display some

bird nests, organized the bookcase by the reading corner, modified one of the display boxes to gain some extra book

storage space, used the leaf blower to quickly clear the back patio and raked the paths that meander through the Sun and Shade Gardens. Whether inside or out, there's always something good to work on at the park!



A Naturalist's Perspective  
by Jim Mackey

Another, or the same, Great Blue Heron (GBH)? In our last issue **Ron Wilson** presented several fine photos of a GBH that he took at the South Walnut Picnic Area. Ron titled the display, "The return of the Great Blue", because, while all but one of the photos were taken in 2018, that one was taken in 2013. Also, in our Sept./Oct. 2018 issue there is a picturesque photo of a GBH that **Joe Piro** took just upstream from the mouth of San Pedro Creek. This locale looks like where I spotted a GBH at noon on a sunny Friday, Dec. 07, 2018. But the pose of this bird was unique, as shown in the photo below. (all photos by **J. Mackey**)



Its wings were held partly open, so that the bird's shape resembled an arrow that had plunged into the earth. I don't know when it assumed this position, but it held it for 1/2-hour while I was watching. I was surprised to see so much black plumage attached to the bird's sides. This is normally covered by the wings. I am convinced that the bird was basking in the sun. It reminded me of fence lizards that are cool and dark when they emerge for the day. They seek a sunny spot where they bask until warm, and then change to a lighter, more reflective color.

I caution myself by remembering that dark melanin in feathers makes them stronger. Hence black wing tips in Snow Geese. Also our herons build & settle on bulky stick nests, so black plumage may have more than 1 function, but one of them must be basking in the sun. My bird finally broke its pose & began walking along the edge of the creek. It looked awesome when it fully extended its wings! It was, indeed, a



GREAT BLUE HERON!

I then noticed a large, white wading bird that had been approaching me from farther upstream - a Great Egret (photo below) I don't take egrets for granted. I remember that they were threatened, early in the 20th century, by the millinery trade and habitat loss. So humans have been devastating to wildlife, which may be leading to a sixth global mass extinction, but let's not villify all humans. Egrets, Brown Pelicans and Bald Eagles are evidence that conservationists have muscle, and this gives us HOPE!



CARE FOR EAST HAZELNUT

By Joseph Piro

For our December 8th Trail Day, **Istvan Puski** and I gave the east end of the Hazelnut Trail a little holiday TLC. After enjoying a sunny and brisk walk out the Weiler Ranch Road -- and passing **Ranger Tom Hart** & 2 others starting to work on the cut-down of some small eucalyptus trees on the Valley View hillside -- we headed up and cleared out several silted-up drain dips, dug out a few small, trail-side pampas grass plants and trimmed back random, low-hanging branches. Things look good on the trail -- head out and enjoy a happy holiday hike! Cheers and happy and peaceful holidays to everyone!



**ON THE TRAIL (continued)**

**Ron Wilson** on 12/8/18: "This buck walked right by me on the path just past the bridge off the parking lot. He was a bit jittery and tried to run over the bridge only to slip & slide and fortunately not break a leg.



Same with his buddy, not pictured, who followed him." This shot of **Ron's** (at the right) was taken moments later near the volleyball court at No. Walnut where these young'-uns lined up to— jump the fence?" With inborn logic, each walked under the barrier!



Nov 9—"This **mushroom** stopped me dead in my tracks" said **Laurie Nikitas**. It shows a charcoal & gray striped pattern on the cap & a strange nubby, long white stipe. To id it, she will look for changes in the babes below it.

As **Jim Steele** ambled up the Weiler Ranch Rd in the early eve of December 20, he heard the distinct sound of the **Poorwill** (right), not to mention the call of the Saw Whet Owl .



Cornell Bird Observatory photo

Nov 9: **Laurie Nikitas** saw the **bobcat** that hangs out in the 2nd Weiler Ranch Rd. meadow ; she's seen it 3 or 4 times lately.



**DON'T MESS WITH MOTHER NATURE**  
**CLIMATE CHANGE AFFECTS BIRD MIGRATION**



The 15 yr. long **Grinnel** Resurvey Project has found that due to a world temperature rise of close to 2° F in the last 100 years, many birds like **hermit warblers** of the Coast Ranges and the Sierras, have been breeding 5 to 12 days earlier. A century ago **Joseph Grinnell's** party took detailed observations of birds (& all other vertebrates) for 36 years in their field notebooks. In 1916, Joseph said that some day scientists could probably use this info in 100 years, and was he right! During the temp-critical nesting season, birds adjust for their young, who cannot escape the heat; it's not the maximum or minimum temperatures that challenge birds the most, but nesting temps! (*Nat'l Wildlife Magazine. Dec/*

**CALENDAR FOR JANUARY/FEBRUARY 2019**

- JANUARY TRAIL DAY**  
Saturday, January 12.....9am
- FRIENDS OF SPVP JANUARY BOARD MEETING**  
Monday, January 14.....7pm
- JANUARY HABITAT RESTORATION DAY**  
Saturday, January 19.....9am
- DR. TOM PARKER'S CLIMATE CHANGE & CALIF. PLANTS**  
Saturday, January 26.....3pm
- FEBRUARY TRAIL DAY**  
Saturday, February 9.....9am
- FRIENDS OF SPVP FEBRUARY BOARD MEETING**  
Monday, February 11.....7pm
- FEBRUARY HABITAT RESTORATION DAY**  
Saturday, February 16.....9am
- SUE PEMBERTON'S "DEAD WHALES DO TELL TALES"**  
Saturday, February 16.....3pm

*For all events except Board Mtgs, meet at the Visitor Center*

**PROFILE of NEW RANGER IN OUR DISTRICT: JACOB GEORGE**



I was drawn to the serious demeanor of **Ranger Jacob George** as he set out from the Visitor Center to check for downed limbs or trees, asking me to relay any reports to the rangers. This clean-shaven, olive-complected and typically strong-looking young ranger favours San Pedro Valley Park with its fresh air and wildness over all the entities in **Matthew Del Carlo's** Dist 4.

Jacob worked at the Coyote Pt. Marina for about 2 yrs, enjoying the challenge of ranger patrol on the Bay, watching out for stranded boats, etc. On Dec. 15th the Coyote Pt. Yacht Club honored him as the Marshall of their Holiday Parade.

Jacob told me about some of the transformation taking place at the new Tunitas Creek unit of the district, for instance the path of a new access road, and he showed me a photo of the historic home of musician **Chris Isaacs** in the park, however, warning me that it is too dangerous at present to go from the Coast Hwy down to the beach. Back here at the park, the main danger is often deadfall, something this ranger will always be on the lookout for, especially after winter storms.

**FACTOID**

**Rats**, especially young males, will laugh, emitting ultra sonic calls when they're tickled & in a good mood. After a time they will learn to seek out the hand that tickled them and even "jump for joy" in response. I'd like to think that sometimes our **wood rats** tickle each other within their fortress nest of sticks. 11/10/'16 *New York Times* James Gorman

**The Leaders of "the Friends of SPVP":** Vice President & Editor of this newsletter: **Carolyn Pankow**; Secretary: **Judy Bacon**; Interim Treasurer: **Bing Huey**; Visitor Center Coordinator: **Mila Stroganoff**; Habitat Restoration leader: **Istvan Puski**; Trail Leader: **Joseph Piro**; Membership: **Adrian Stroganoff**; Programs: **Mila Stroganoff, Carolyn Pankow**; Hospitality: **Judy Bacon**, Trailside Store Manager: **open**; Membership misc: **Katie Antista**. **WEB SITE:** [friendsofsanpedrovalleypark.org](http://friendsofsanpedrovalleypark.org) **Letters Ed :** Carolyn at

*Ms. Pileated Woodpecker came, Ranger Hart spotted, Katie Id'd & Ray photographed her  
In the South Walnut Group Picnic Area on November 18, 2018*



Nov. 18, 2018 South Walnut Group Picnic Area; on alder tree

**Ray Trabucco**

**Ron Wilson's Proud Stag Striding, Slipping and Sliding Across the Weiler Bridge,  
Now chooses a firmer footing**



12/8/18

Ron Wilson's  
The Dilemma of 3 young  
mule deer:  
to jump or to duck?

12/8/18



11/9/18

Laurie Nikitas

was taken aback by the strange  
beauty of this mushroom, which  
JR Blaire thinks may be a *Coprin-*  
*opsis lagopus*, a type of inky cap.  
Notice young ones below.

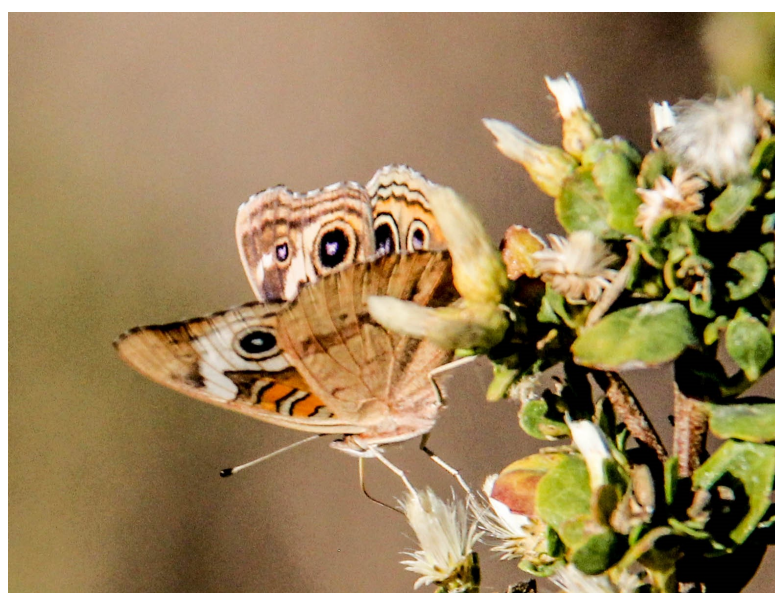


As *Bing Huey* roams the trails of SPVP he sometimes shares their wonders with us: On Sept. 23, it was *Merriam's chipmunk* with its subtle dark stripes, scrambling along a tree on the Hazelnut Trail; on Dec. 14, the beauty of late autumnal *creek dogwood* leaves on the Plaskon Nature Trail; On Oct. 14 it was a **black-tailed deer** browsing on our native **honeysuckle** vine on the Hazelnut; on Dec. 19 **puff balls**, *Lycoperdon perlatum*, who had popped up on the Brooks Creek Trail





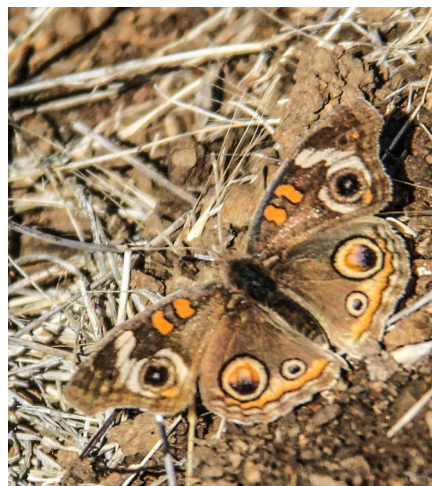
## AUTUMN BUCKEYE OBSESSIONS by RON WILSON



On Nov. 3, at 10:30am, **Ron Wilson** saw this **Buckeye** apparently sipping from a female **Coyote Brush** flower on the Valley View; **Bing Huey** informed Ron that this is an important plant for sustenance during the fall months.



**Ron Wilson's male Buckeye Butterfly 11/25**



**Ron Wilson's female Buckeye butterfly 11/25**



**Ron Wilson's Great Blue Heron: "Busted! No Handicapped sticker!"**

## “Honored Guest”

By Sharron Walker



**Judy Bacon** holds the award for her contributions to The Friends of San Pedro Valley Park, while **Carol** and **Carolyn** chat, at the Volunteer Appreciation Luncheon

# HOLIDAY PARTY

Photos by Sharron Walker



ClkW: Eileen, Amy, Judy, David & others "chow down"



Sit-down comics: Clockwise: Jack, Bevan, Larry, Roger, Jim



Yafei Yang is honored by Mila Stroganoff & all for conceiving & painting her beautiful Mt. Lion & Young.



Again, Jennifer Alpaugh created a beautiful Christmas Tree using recycled paper from calendars for her crafted ornaments. Way to go, Jennifer.



Our chief Naturalist, Jim Mackey, with Mila Santa & Elf



Adrian Elf liked Carolyn's newly gifted hat, Santa not so much.



Rob Hughes led our Holiday singing by "Jennifer's" tree with the lovely tones of his flute

Kevin Trenberth\* has said: “**Global warming** exacerbates the conditions & raises the risk of wildfire”: California suffered again this dry season and **Ron Wilson** reminds Pacificans of our smoke-filled days when Paradise, California burned—November 11, 2018



\*Kevin Trenberth, is the distinguished senior scientist at the National Center for Atmospheric Research