

PAUL DONAHUE: SM Coastal Shorebirds on Sat Ap 22-6pm

How lucky we are to have Pacifican Paul Donahue willing to speak to us a third time, this time on the variety of shore-

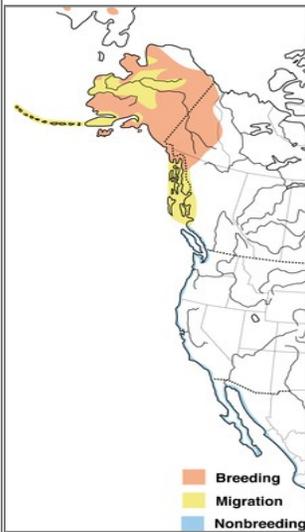


birds that come to our beaches & rocky shores. Though he makes periodic scientific trips to the world's largest tropical wetland, the Pantanal of Brazil, to research & photograph wildlife there, when in Pacifica, Paul's eye & mind are very

much captured by the main families of these waders. (Paul Donahue photo: local wader, the **Wandering Tattler**)

There are 4 groups of true shorebirds in our county, many appearing only during months of shorter daylight: the **Plovers, Sandpipers, Avocet-Stilts, & the Oystercatchers**; however within these families only, the **Snowy Plovers, Black Oystercatchers, & Spotted Sandpipers** nest in our area.

To give you a peek into the drama that will unfold on March 25, at 6pm, in our Visitor Center : Paul says that the longest



non-stop migratory flight of any bird in the world, 7258 miles, was taken by a shorebird, a **Bar-tailed Godwit**—in just 9 days. And the annual migrations of some species take them from nesting grounds on the northern most islands in the Arctic Archipelago to wintering areas at the southern tip of So.

Am. (the complex movements of the **Wandering Tattler** pictured at left, are not totally understood; **Note**: they also over-winter in S.A.)

Paul himself not only travels to study the Pantanal, but also "earned his stripes" traveling to

Colombia to help with a bird research project, doing bird survey work & recordings of bird vocalizations. Soon he became fascinated by the jungles of Peru, where he and his wife, **Teresa**, built walkways & observation posts in the habitat-rich treetops.

Paul is from Mass., where as a high school student he volunteered at the Manomet Bird Observatory learning to band birds & later to conduct the observatory's fall sea watch program, finally becoming a research assistant with its shore-bird project. So this passion has obviously remained with Donohue, making possible this program on the 22nd at 6pm.

SHIRLEY DRYE to MOVE to SPOKANE, WA (Pg 2)

In MARCH, DOUG ALLSHOUSE and DAVID NELSON PRESENT:

RARE & ENDEMIC PLANTS OF SAN BRUNO MT

Save Saturday, March 25, at 5pm, for an intriguing look at

some of the striking diversity of plant life on our much-praised neighbor, San Bruno Mountain; find out just how different their herbs and shrubs are from ours, even though there are definite similarities: for instance, we both have



the rare **Montara Mt. manzanita** and **brittle leaf manzanita**, BUT they also have 3 other species of these red-barked plants, two of which are endemic to "their" Mountain. (photo above shows **Doug** surveying one of the 2 **A. Uva ursi** forma **leobreweri** manzanita plants on SBM. Below is a close-up.)

Doug, who is self-taught, has been hiking and studying these

"mountains" for 32 yrs, & writes a natural history journal on this floristically complex "range" for the Yerba Buena CNPS newsletter. David has been an amateur naturalist since his college days, at times teaching nature classes.



As an amateur photographer, he has taken thousands of photos of life on San Bruno.

Doug Allhouse and David Nelson hike the Mountain every weekend chronicling, photographing and studying the flora and fauna of San Bruno Mountain in preparation for the book they are writing on the natural history of this famous mountain, which will be published by the CNPS. We will be the lucky recipients of some of this work on March 25th.

ON THE TRAIL

In the very early pm of Dec. 24, "Ginger" saw a **coyote** run to

a hill near the beginning of the Montara Mt. trail, where "he" stood for quite a while as some **Homo sapiens** observed him; he was large and bushy tailed with a healthy coat. (**coyote** photo from California Karelian website)



Katie Antista tells us that the **Mission Bells** petioles (flower stems) have nodded over at the top with their heavy buds



ready to burst forth—Feb. 26th, beginning of Hazelnut Trail, just after the large oaks. (photo by **Barbara** and **Bill VanderWerf**)

(continued on page 4)

RETURNING AFTER THE RAIN : FLOWERS on the HAZELNUT

by Laurie Nikitas

I saw my first [female] **hazelnut flower** [of the season] today—Saturday, Feb. 10, but the phone couldn't handle these little guys. I'm including this picture of its deep pink flower from a couple years ago when my camera did a great job. People often don't see these. They're the size of one's small fingernail and appear at a very particular time. Once a plant's male catkins are pretty much done, these flowers appear on top of the branch—a great way to prevent plants from fertilizing themselves.



Today I could see the brilliant way hazelnuts deal with this climate. The catkins mature at various times over months. Next to the spent plant with the flower today were plants with closed catkins less than 1 in. long. The spent one probably had its pollen washed away these last days, but its flowers can now be fertilized by plants that ripen during our brief dry spell. They can dodge & weave their way through rainy winters & get the job done. Otherwise the rain can be a disaster for these wind pollinated plants.

This was my first hike in three weeks. So much has bloomed, including **fetid adders tongue**, **western trillium**, **anemones**



and **osoberry** (Laurie's photos of **hazelnut**-above & **anemone**-left). Otherwise, it was pretty quiet after all the rain-water just gushing out of the earth everywhere.

LIBRARY PROGRAM: FAMILY HIKING AT SPVP

By Sharron Walker

The Friends of San Pedro Valley Park is joining with the Pacifica Library to promote their program Explore Out Doors. The goal is to encourage local hiking and outdoor exploration, especially for families, by providing backpacks to check out, supplied with binoculars, trail maps, and hiking guidelines. To kick off the program Sharron Walker will give a presentation at the **Sanchez Library on Mar. 4, at 11AM**. The focus will be hiking guidelines, what to bring & highlights of San Pedro Valley Park & Devil's Slide trails. If you are interested in attending on Mar 4, contact **Paula Teixeira** with the **Pacifica Library**, **650 355-5196 ext 229 Sharp Park** or **650 359-3397 ext 229 Sanchez** or email Paula at teixeira@smcl.org

Shirley Drye's Move to "North Country"

Shirley is a long-time member: She joined the then Volunteers of SPVP in 1990, and she has lived in her house on Crespi Dr. for 59 years. Shirley has always been a member of the Board of the Friends, serving as President and Secretary. However, at almost 88 years old, she finds it necessary to

RUNOFF REDIRECT SAVES TRAIL INTEGRITY

By Joseph Piro

Istvan Puski, Keith and I joined Rangers **Matthew Tolmasoff** and **Joe Immethun** for a sunny February 11th Trail Day. We took advantage of the nice weather after the grey and rainy streak earlier in the week to hike the Old Trout Farm/Brooks Falls loop and check on all the water action. We found several spots, including the small footbridge by the old foundation, where we helped dig ditches to re-direct all the run-off.



We ultimately made it up to just past the Brooks Falls/Montara Mtn. Trail intersection (sorry I didn't get Keith and Joe in my photo; they were ahead of us). And seeing all 3 tiers of Brooks Falls was certainly a treat! (See photo p. 5)



Istvan, Tolmasoff, & Joseph at Montara Mt./Brooks bench

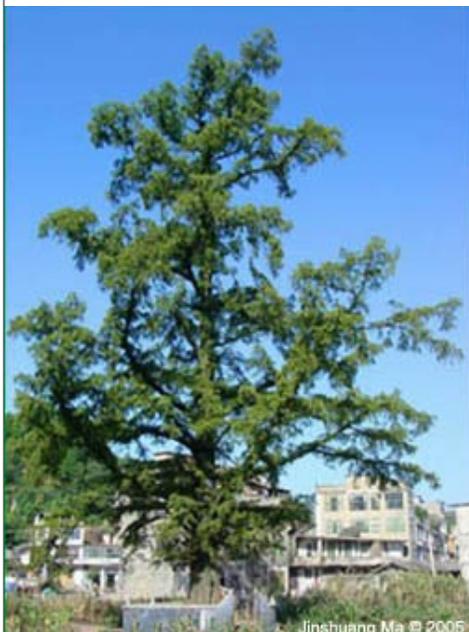
live near her youngest daughter, Diana. All of us have learned so much from Shirley, have been delighted by her stories, her laughter, her warmth, her love of people, of nature and of the history of the people of this area. She has so many good friends among us, but of course she will meet many new people in Spokane, and that should keep her happy. Our loss is their gain! All of us find it hard to say goodbye, but you can still keep in touch with her at : shirleydrye@yahoo.com

REDWOODS IN OUR PARK

By Sharron Walker



Yes we have redwoods as many of you know, but do you know we have two of the three species of redwoods growing in our park? Near our visitor center there are several *Sequoia sempervirens* commonly known as **Coast Redwoods**, growing. These trees naturally grow on our California coast and up into Southern Oregon. But we also have a representative of the *Sequoiadendron giganteum*, commonly known as **Giant Sequoia** or “Big Tree”. Its natural habitat is in the Sierra Nevada. The latter is growing alongside a coast redwood near the Creekside Picnic area just south of the Plaskon Trail entrance. (**S. Walker** photo of the 2 trees) I have not been able to determine when it was planted or by whom. If anyone knows speak up! Regardless, how wonderful to have these two growing side by side. If you haven’t checked them out, do so, and compare the cones and needles. What a great teaching opportunity when at the park, especially for kids!



Note: If interested the third species of redwood is the **Dawn Redwood**, (*Metasequoia glyptostroides*) which is not found in our park. (The photo at left is the “type tree” in the Hubei region of China from which all seeds were taken to grow this species.) [Dawn Redwoods were considered extinct when found in 1943 on the mountainous slopes

Jinshuang Ma © 2005

in remote parts of the Hubei region of China, but once flourished over vast areas of the Northern Hemisphere, dominating the vegetation of Arctic latitudes for some 35 million years. Refer to the Yale Peabody Museum of Natural History website to read of the detective story about the amazing finding of this tree, as well as the cause of its near demise.]

WINSLOW BRIGGS HITS a HOME RUN with Feb. FIRE TALK

by Jim Steele

On Feb. 28, **Dr. Winslow Briggs** gave a delightful and highly informative overview of how various plants recovered from different degrees of scorching in the 2007 87,000 acre fire at Henry Coe State Park. Satellite data revealed that after 2 yrs. most of the park was almost as green as it was before the fire.



Lightly scorched **oaks** produced new leaves within months. Some of the greening, however, was from the dormant seed bank of invasive annual and biennial species that suddenly appeared in full bloom the year following the fire, then oddly disappeared the subsequent year.

Native shrubs like **Ceanothus** usually die in a fire but also rely on buried seeds to return after a fire. **Monterrey pines** protect their seeds in closed cones that only open when exposed to extreme heat. (Continued on page 4)

OUT WITH THE SILT, IN WITH THE DRAINS

by Joseph Piro

Happy New Year everyone! And fortunately we had a nice, sunny, clear day for our first Trail Day of 2017! To kick it off, **Istvan Puski, Keith** and **I** headed up the west end of the Hazelnut Trail (behind the VC) to check on all the drain dips. We made it up to the 1-mile marker and were happy to see things generally looked in pretty good shape after all these recent storms -- we just needed to shovel out lots of built-up silt and make sure they were sloped enough to keep all the water flowing in the right direction. Take advantage of these nice breaks in the weather to enjoy the trails & to see creeks running high, fast & clear, too! (below: Istvan, Keith, Joseph)

(J. Piro photo)



ON THE TRAIL (continued)

Laurie Nikitas, that tireless hiker, photographed the pendulous **male silk tassel catkins** on February 10th on the Hazelnut Trail. "The silk tassels are so happy." See this photo on p. 7 if you get the paper online.



On January 31, **Barbara Kempster** entered



the Park on the Weiler Ranch Rd., coming upon the spectacle of a flock of **house sparrows** almost diving from the **eucalyptus trees** on the hill & landing in some foundation bricks in the

Water Department yard, to take a joyous bath in their fresh rain water. Aha! Barbara saw some multi-tasking going on as the birds drank the resultant bath soup. (Dan Callister photo)

Barbara & hiking partner sought out every bit of sunshine they could find on February 10th, rushing into the Park to see plenty of **giant trilliums** by the fence of the Plaskon, as well as the smaller and "stalked" **Trillium ovatum**



(Wikipedia photo at left) on the opposite side of this nature trail. They

noticed as they turned onto the Hazelnut Trail, that the stinky little **fetid adder's tongues** (West Coast Naturalist photo) didn't quite succeed in camouflaging themselves; Barbara and friend found more of this "shy" member of the Liliaceae, up the trail a bit, near the huge fallen **oak**. On the same trail who should appear but the sparrow with the dark chest spot, the **song sparrow**. However this was on February 13th at 11:15am.



Barbara's greatest thrill was seeing one of our **mule deer** standing on the Montara Mt. trail for minutes, looking out through the trees toward the valley below; she seemed "at one with nature—a moment of peace for her." Again it was 11:15 am, but on Feb. 10th.

A day later Ms. Kempster's friend noticed the "first" **fence lizard** of the season, appropriately, right by the fence on the WWR connector bridge. (Anand Varma "portrait" photo of an exceedingly handsome **fence lizard**)



MARCH—APRIL 2017 CALENDAR

MARCH TRAIL DAY

Saturday, March 11.....9am

MARCH HABITAT RESTORATION DAY

Saturday, March 18.....9am

MARCH "FRIENDS OF SPVP" BOARD MEETING

Tuesday, March 14.....by Email

ALLSHOUSE & NELSON: RARE & ENDEMIC PLANTS, S.B. MT.

Saturday, March 25.....5pm

APRIL TRAIL DAY

Saturday, April 8.....9am

APRIL HABITAT RESTORATION DAY

Saturday, April 15.....9am

APRIL "FRIENDS OF SPVP" BOARD MEETING

Tuesday, April 18.....7pm

PAUL DONAHUE'S SHOREBIRDS OF THE S.M. CO. COAST

Saturday, April 22.....6pm

For all events except Mtgs., meet at the Visitor Center.

DR. WINSLOW BRIGGS PROGRAM continued from page 3

Other species lack fire-resistant seeds and rely on sprouting. **Poison oak** quickly sprouts from its extensive root system, while plants like **manzanita** and **chamise** sprout from insulated underground burls. In the hottest sections of a fire the earth can be so scorched that nothing grows, and those areas must rely on re-seeding from other regions.

Dr. Briggs id'd chemicals leached from charcoal that were shown to stimulate seed germination. He also determined some plants were sensitive to smoke, with cyanide being an unexpected signal molecule. Dr. Briggs continues research investigating the molecular signals that control how plants respond to fire. This world-renowned researcher mapped molecular signals allowing plants to follow the sun or help seeds to recognize when they should stay dormant.

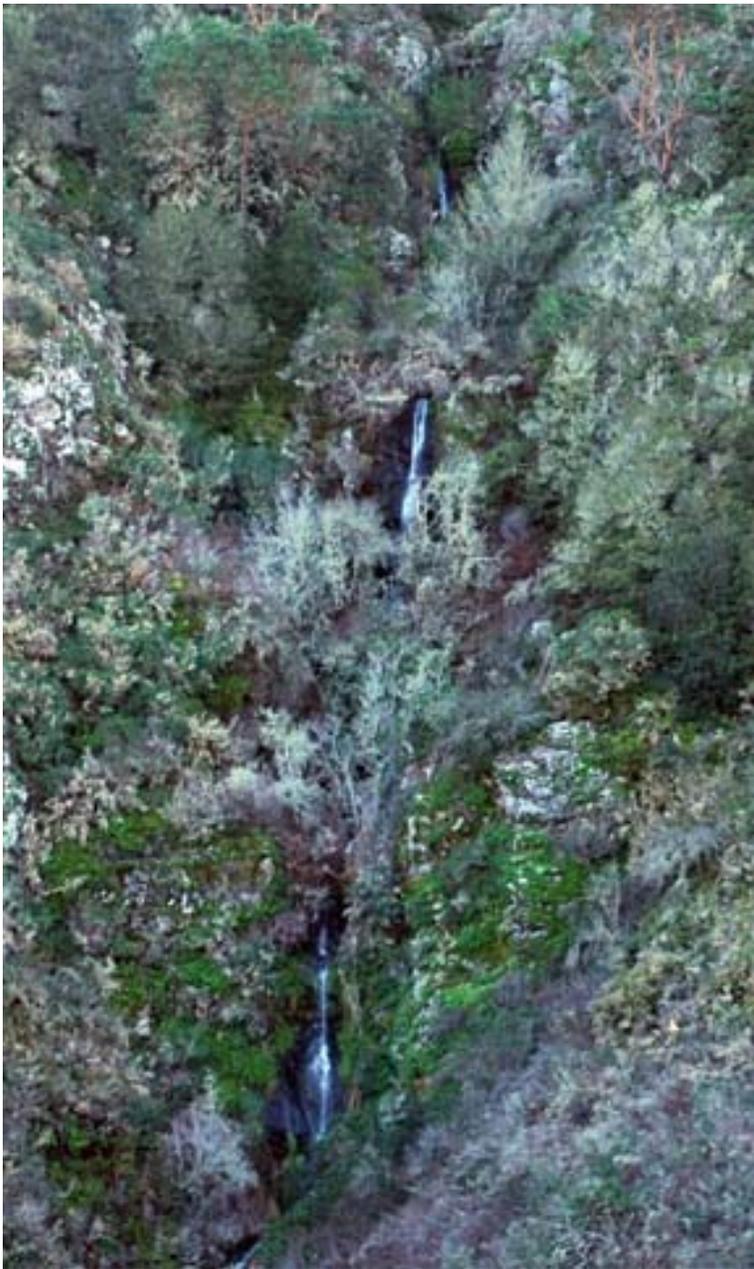
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Supernatural spit is frog's secret weapon for catching bugs-

Frogs are famous for the long sticky tongue they use to snag prey. But what is it about this tongue that allows a frog to nab an insect, pull the insect back to its mouth with lightening speed, and eat it — yet the stickiness doesn't glue the frog's mouth shut? The secret is super sticky saliva that's reversible. A new study from the Georgia Institute of Technology demonstrates that the saliva can turn from a honey-like viscosity to one more like water & back again, and all within a few seconds. (photo of frog catching insect by Getty images) (text: Mother Nature Network; 2/9/'17)



The Leaders of "the Friends of SPVP": President: **Jim Steele**. Vice President & Editor of this newsletter: **Carolyn Pankow**; Secretary: **Shirley Drye**; Treasurer: **Bing Huey**; Visitor Center Desk and Staffing: **Mila Stroganoff**; Habitat Restoration leader: **Istvan Puski**; Trail Leader: **Joseph Piro**; Membership: **Jim Steele**; Programs: **Carolyn Pankow**; Trailside Store Manager: **Sharron Walker**; Mobile Display Board: **Katie Antista**. Member at large: **Jim Mackey**. Letters to the editor at: pankwinca@gmail.com



Sat. Jan 14, 10AM. Sharron Walker—Brooks Falls



Bing Huey: Clavulina, a coral mushroom; Jan.21

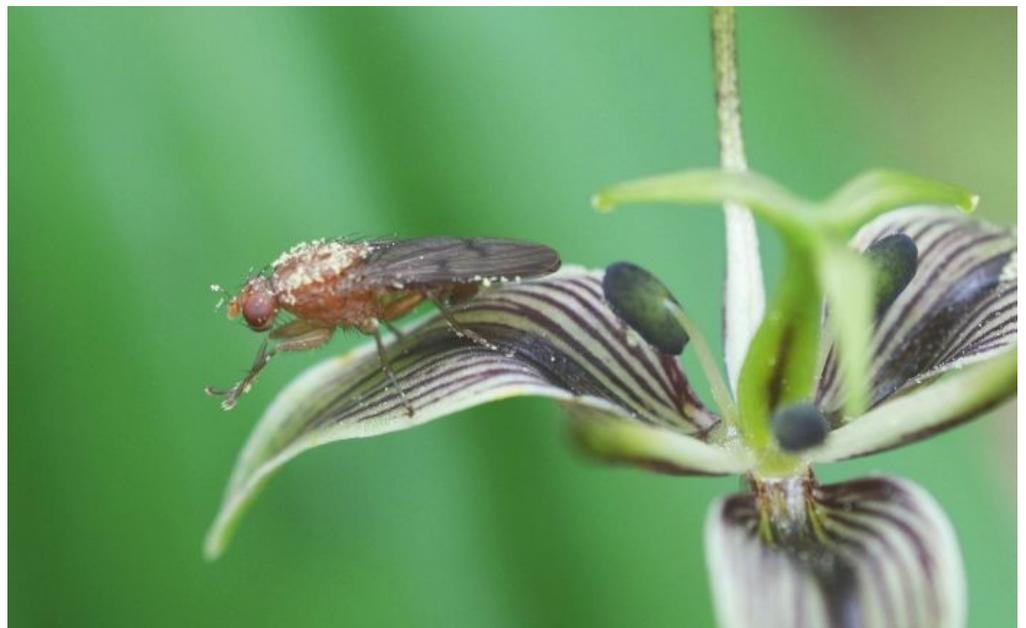


Bing Huey: Black Elfin Saddle Mushroom; Dec. 22, 2016

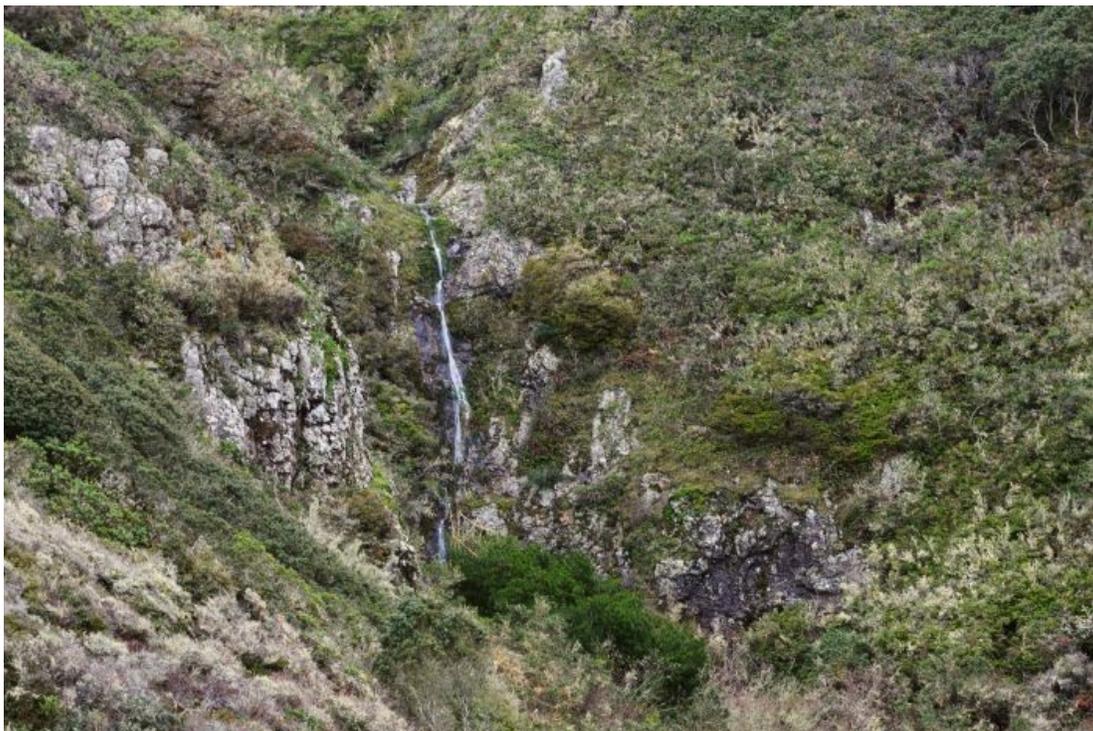
Bing Huey's

POLLEN-DUSTED FLY
ON FETID ADDER'S
TONGUE

Feb. 18



Bing Huey: Rugged country around Brooks Falls—from 2 angles; Jan 21





Laurie Nikitas: Silk Tassel: *Garryea elliptica*; Hazelnut Trail; Feb. 10