

LENNY GRIMALDO: STEELHEAD and SAN PEDRO CREEK, DEC. 2

On Saturday, December 2 at 3pm, **Lenny Grimaldo** of SFSU will



present "Struggles of Steelhead Trout and the Value of San Pedro Creek". Dr. Grimaldo will discuss the life history of the **steelhead trout** & show how our creek's health is important to them.

Lenny leads a fisheries and aquatic research practice for a consulting firm in No. Calif. He has spent his career conducting research on fishes in California waters and is currently studying the role of estuarine marshes to support listed fish species such as **delta smelt, longfin smelt, and Chinook salmon.**

He also works on several steelhead smolt studies in the SF Bay/Delta, aiming to determine the factors that affect their emigration to the ocean. Lenny earned this PhD from UC Davis in Ecology (emphasis Fisheries Biology), M.S. from SF State Romberg Tiburon in Marine Science, and his B.S. in Wildlife and Fisheries Conservation Biology from U.C. Davis. Lenny resides in Pacifica with his wife and 2 boys. *Jim Steele*

HOLIDAY PARTY GOES WILD ON DECEMBER 13 at 6pm

Wild Wednesday, with white elephant gifts: in a personal budget move, the party committee decided you could wrap & bring your most prized possession that you generously "will" to another: the lovely white and gold angel of god statue, the handy dandy snow globe. But it's a double-edged sword. Your only way of getting rid of a "treasure" is for someone to steal from you.

On the other hand, lovely decorations; a succulent ham and turkey provided by the Friends, delicious side dishes, your favorite included, will be at your disposal should you accept our telephone invitation. First time, but want to have fun? Board members will bring newbies into the fold. Sing your favorite holiday songs with **Rob**, our flautist. Then try your luck at the Poinsettia and wine raffle. It's free and fun!



SUNDAY, DEC. 17 MUSHROOM HIKE WITH JR BLAIR



On **December 17, at 10am** you have a chance to comb the trails with an expert on **mushroom** identification, **J.R. Blair**. We will pluck a variety of mushrooms and then reassemble at the Visitor Center with Mr. Blair to identify and discuss them.

Mr. Blair is a long-time member & past president of the Mycological Society of SF. At present he is a UCSF biology lecturer & the director of its field campus in the Sierras. J.R. Blair received his Master's degree in Conservation Biol. focusing on mushroom taxonomy in '99. (deadly *Amanita phalloides* photo from "TimeMachine")

WINGS IN THE NIGHT FOR NOVEMBER

On Saturday, **November 14, at 3pm**, **Corky Quirk** will keep our "spirit3 season edgy for us again with her live bats; they will not be flying around in our Visitor Center, but you will be see Corky's hungry little Chiropterans eating mealworms from her forceps, as they are projected onto our screen in real time.



Additionally, she will bring photos and video of these greatest of all acrobatic flyers, showing you their massive emergence from the Yolo Causeway Bridge near Davis. Each warm night an estimated 250,000 **Mexican free-tail bats** swarm in a magnificent horde into the wetlands of the Yolo Basin. Why? Because they know this marsh is crazy with insects. (Mex. Freetail at left from "Texas Monthly")



Corky will also teach you some of the ins and outs of the bat world in general, accompanied by photos of some odd but terrific critters.

Ms. Quirk is the program coordinator for the Yolo Basin Foundation & founder and executive director of NorCal Bats. She has many years of experience leading educational hikes for children and adults to study the Mexican freetail bats that roost in the segments of the causeway. She has a BS from Humboldt State in Natural Resources with an emphasis in Environmental Education.

ON THE TRAIL

Ron Wilson caught an image of this **Vanessa cardui** on the Weiler Ranch Rd. on Sept. 15. Ron recently found a new *Vanessa* in our amazing Park.



Yes, Ron seems enchanted by the butterfly world as he gets an up close and personal view of this **Liminitus lorquini**, also on the Weiler Ranch Rd. at the midpoint of Sept. Ron tells us that the males of this species hang out at the end of willow



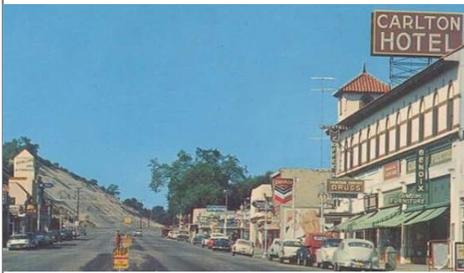
branches, waiting for a female to pass by. (Notice his vigilant eyes)

Ron also reported many **Buckeye** butterflies, one in his photo at right, and a **Monarch** on the Valley View in the early afternoon on a warm day, the 15th of October.



INTO NATURE WITH NEW RANGER, **BONNIE MACCURDY**

I was born in a Atascadero, CA which at the time was a rural



small town. To say I was not your typical little girl is an understatement. I was always found outside either with our farm animals, building a fort or tree house, or playing

football. A colony of **Red headed woodpeckers** lived right outside my window and I loved all their calls and songs and admired their stashes of acorns in the majestic **white oak**. My favorite childhood bird, however, was the **California Quail**. I was delighted to see a covey last week at SPVP!

I had a pet **goat**, a **lamb**, a **duck**, numerous **chickens**, **homing pigeons**, a **rabbit**, **cats**, & a **horse** in addition to a **king snake** I caught on the way home from school. We had a giant wood pile which was home to lots of things including **fence lizards**. In the hot summers we would catch the sunning lizards & remove the tiny **ticks** in their ears before releasing them again.

We camped a lot all over the state and often I got to fish with my father on these trips. We caught **trout** from Shaver Lake in the Sierras or in the Owens River and fished for **bass** in nearby San Antonio, Nacimiento and Santa Margarita Lakes. Once in a while we would go deep sea fishing out of Morro Bay.

My mother was an avid wildlife identifier & wherever we went, she had a bird, sea life or wildflower guidebook to help us learn what we were looking at.



Some of my favorite childhood memories involve our trips to the tide pools near Montana de Oro State Park (pictured at left) or where wildflowers were blooming in the Carrizo Plains.

My football career peaked at age 9 when I was on the Paul Harvey radio show. He thought the world should know about the girl who beat all the boys at the local Punt, Pass, & Kick competition. I didn't realize what all the fuss was about. Of course I could beat the boys!

These childhood passions have mostly stayed with me, and as an adult I still love animals, building things and identifying



wildlife, but I no longer play much football. Lately I've enjoyed crafting things out of recycled lumber & carving spoons. As a ranger I get to repair things, build things on occasion, and I love this part of my job. (Bonnie at left with **Ranger Holeton** & shed Bonnie built at Fitzgerald) (See part II of **Ranger Bonnie MacCurdy's life in nature** in our Jan/ Feb issue.)

BAY AREA TRAVEL WRITERS VISIT SPVP

By Sharron Walker

On Sat, Sept 16, a group of 20 Bay Area Travel Writers visited Pacifica for the second time, to learn about what Pacifica has to offer. The group focused their attention on the south end of Pacifica including San Pedro Valley Park. The topic was "Surf and Turf!"



In one segment **Sharron Walker** gave an informative Power Point Presentation of SPVP, Devil's Slide and Friends of SPVP

Volunteers; when the group dispersed to explore Pacifica, ten joined **Jim Steele** & Sharron on a hike on the Montara Mt/Brooks Trail Loop. There is no doubt several were hooked on our jewel of a park and will be returning to hike more trails! Overall it was a great day of connecting Art & Nature. (photos: **Sharron Walker** gives her "Take a Hike Program"; **Jim Steele** gathers hikers for nature on the trail)



READY FOR RAIN

By Joseph Piro

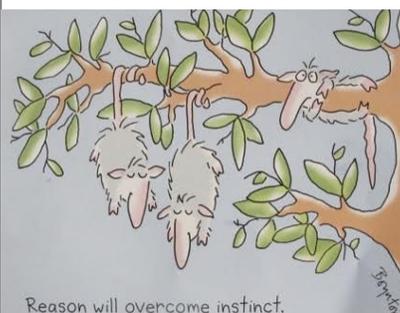
For our October 14th Trail Day, **Istvan Puski** and I joined Rangers **Greg Escoto** and **Matthew Tolmasoff** and new Park Aide **Tommy Hart** for some work on the Brooks Falls/ Montara Mtn. Trail loop. In anticipation of the (hopefully) rainy season ahead, we started by clearing out built-up debris under and around the small bridge by the old foundation on the Brooks Creek Trail and then continued up the mountain, clearing out leaves and silt from drain dips along the way. We also cut back some stray branches leaning over the trail in various spots. Certainly a nice and productive way to spend a pleasant, sunny Fall morning.



A Naturalist's Perspective by Jim Mackey

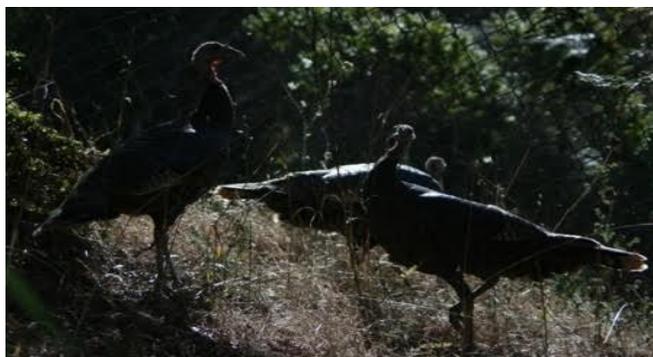
Ecologists frequently struggle to learn the factors that limit the distribution of an animal or plant. One such factor is competitive exclusion. It is thought that species that occupy the same ecological niche cannot co-exist. The niche is multidimensional, including habitat. Think of **Bewick Wrens** in the Coastal scrub, **Winter Wrens** by the creeks, & **Rock Wrens** at Devil's Slide.

We are living at a very dynamic time! Millions of people, in China, the U.S. and elsewhere have moved from farms to metropolitan areas. Wildlife have also been moving into cities. (Think of **coyotes**, **deer**, **mountain lions** and **Cooper's Hawks**.) These new urban members of a species may then undergo selection for greater intelligence than their rural ancestors



because of the necessity to cope with a new environment. I saw a cartoon, featuring **opossums**, with a caption: "Reason will overcome instinct." What good would it do for an **opossum** to instinctively play dead when frightened by a car?

On Oct. 6 I was walking down Oddstad Blvd., below Park Pacifica Ave., when I spotted four **turkeys** that had left San Pedro Park and moved into Pacifica. But they were apparently blocked from the street by the traffic, and from the sidewalk by a lady with a large **dog** on a leash. So they moved in and out among the parked cars (across from the gas station) before pan-



icking into running up the bank under an oak. Incidentally, this episode reinforced my belief that our Park is correct in not permitting **dogs**. (J. Mackey photo above)

Where did our Park's turkeys come from? Do we have a niche for them? Are they just outcasts from a viable population in the S.F. watershed? And will they succeed in establishing a population here? Do we have trees suitable for their roosts? (Maybe, thanks to the settlers who planted trees here.) Will the females find suitable, protected places for nesting on the ground? What about food? They are known to prefer **acorns**. On Oct. 6 I walked under the large **live oaks** at the

west end of the Hazelnut Trail. There was a thick litter of brown leaves, but peering into the litter I spotted only four acorns, and each was a green, damaged acorn. It has been my impression that these trees don't produce prolific crops of acorns. And isn't it thought that the local Indians trekked elsewhere to collect acorns?



If the turkeys succeed here, will it be at the expense of others? I once watched a Tom turkey pluck a large **alligator lizard** (left) out of deep grass and swallow it whole. We have a healthy population of **fence lizards**, a few alligator lizards, and fewer **skinks** that I would hate to sacrifice for turkeys.

VOLUNTEER APPRECIATION DINNER: SPECIAL HONORS

Our Board members brought this event to all of the volunteers of SPVP, especially honoring seven of our hardest &



Ron Wilson

longest working volunteers, who were given framed certificates of appreciation; here's some of the work they did: **Katie Antista** worked as membership chair & on the native plant garden for a decade; **Dr. James Mackey** gave us 11 informative and humorous evening natural history slide programs, & wrote his column, "A Naturalist's Perspective" for our newsletter for 15 years. (at right: Jim Mackey receives his award from our president.) **Christine Thatcher** managed our Fog Fest Parade entry for 3 years, was Trailside Store Manager for several years, and manned the VC for 15 years. **Mila Stroganoff** managed the



Sharron Walker

Trailside Store for a sterling year, & has been our vol. coordinator for the VC for 3 years. **Carolyn Pankow** served as your program chair for 15 years, was editor of the newsletter for 16 years, & co-sponsored our parties for 10 years. A special recognition bonus was awarded to **Istvan Puski**, who has worked with both the Trail Group & on Habitat Restoration for a decade, taking over as the leader for the latter in 2013, & to **Joseph Piro**, who has worked on the Trail Group for 26 yrs, since he was a freshman at Terra Nova, taking over as leader in 2009, & then writing his article on trails for our newsletter for 7 years. (see p. 4)



ON THE TRAIL (continued)

Bing Huey photographed the beautiful blue of the **Common Checkered Skipper, *Pyrgus communis*** on the 15th of October. (right) and the styl-



ishly attired **Field Crescent, *Phyciodes pulchella***, on the Valley View on Sept. 14th (shown above left).

Sharron Walker took a picture the **Coast live oak** on the w. end of the Hazelnut in late Oct; **Laurie Nikitas** found the 3 **turkey girls** roosting on its thinner branches in the evening.



Ron Wilson

Laurie was walking mid day high on the east side of the Hazelnut; a **grey fox** trotted right across the trail in front of her!

Ron Wilson saw a **buck** rubbing his antlers on the **willow** trunks by the Weiler RR. near the horseshoe pits. The stag then established his right of way past some ***H. sapiens***.

NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 2017 CALENDAR

NOVEMBER TRAIL DAY

Saturday, November 11.....9am

NOVEMBER HABITAT RESTORATION DAY

Saturday, November 18.....9am

CORKY QUIRK'S LIVE BATS

Saturday, November 18.....3pm

NOVEMBER BOARD MEETING

Tuesday, November 21.....7pm

LENNY GRIMALDO'S STEELHEAD AND THE CREEK

Saturday, December 2.....3pm

DECEMBER TRAIL DAY

Saturday, December 9.....9am

HOLIDAY PARTY

Wednesday, December 13.....6:30pm

DECEMBER HABITAT RESTORATION DAY

Saturday, December 16.....9am

J.R. BLAIR'S MUSHROOM WALK

Sunday, December 17.....10am

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

WAR ON AN ENGLISH AND AN AFRICAN THREAT

Trout Farm Trail: in September the indomitable **Istvan Puski** and **Ranger Matt Tolmasoff** used pruning saws to slice off the feeder vines of **English ivy** that start as seeds shat by birds from high in the trees. In October this pair & two others vanquished much of the persistent **Cape weed** that colonized the South Walnut Picnic Area.



Volunteer Appreciation (continued from page 3)

All attendees received a bobcat "Friends of SPVP" tote bag (below: **Eric** and **Joseph Piro** with vol. bag-S. Walker photo) and a copy of "The History of the Friends of SPVP", and were treated to a **Sharron Walker** slide show of the Friends at work and play, as well as a scrumptious dinner with festive cake and **Judy Bacon's** autumn decorations. Then former president, **Dr.**



Mackey introduced, **Ed Decker**, our earliest volunteer present, and former president and trail worker, who picked out the raffle tickets for prizes that included 3 of our Park's steel water bottles. President, **Jim Steele**, as our MC, delighted us as he told of the time an ax-carrying **Istvan Puski** unknowingly frightened some walkers on the Weiler Ranch Road. We, the board thank **Amy Sullivan**, who has revitalized our library, and all of you who make our volunteer organization a dynamic group.

THREE REASONS MONTARA TRAIL IS WALKABLE

By **Joseph Piro**

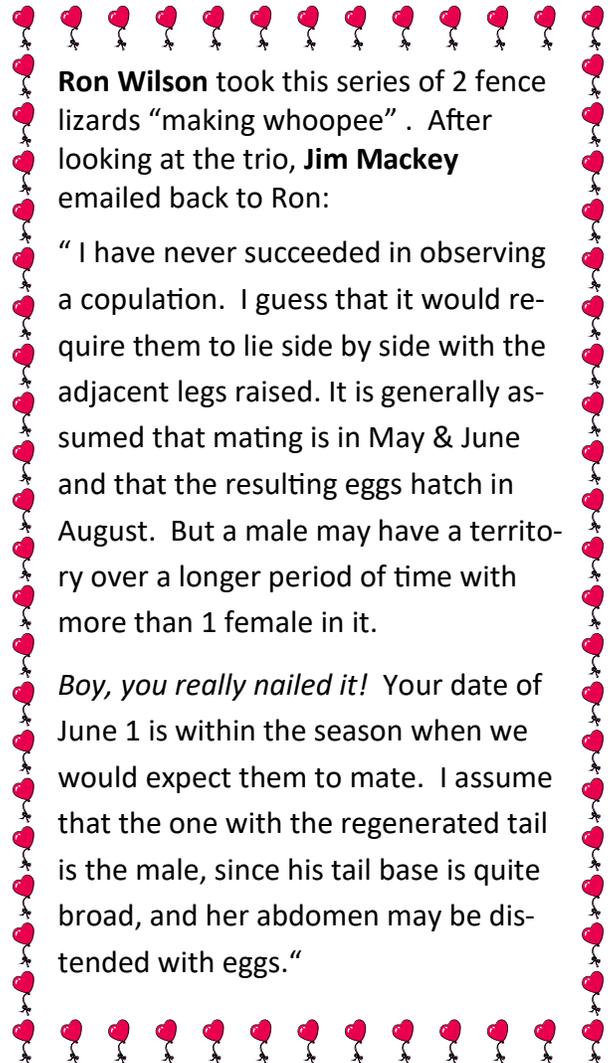
For our September 9th Trail Day, a trio: Ranger **Matthew Tolmasoff**, **Istvan Puski** and I did some brush work on the start of the Montara Mtn. Trail. With a gas-powered hedge trimmer, rakes, a pitchfork and some lopers, we headed a short way up to the quarter-mile marker and worked our way back down. Matthew ran the trimmer, liberally clearing the uphill side of the trail of a variety of overgrown vegetation, while Istvan and I raked and pitchforked everything over the downhill side and left a nice, well-groomed trail behind. Enjoy!



The Leaders of "the Friends of SPVP": President: **Jim Steele**; Vice President & Editor of this newsletter: **Carolyn Pankow**; Secretary: **Judy Bacon**; Treasurer: **Bing Huey**; Visitor Center Desk and Staffing: **Mila Stroganoff**; Habitat Restoration leader: **Istvan Puski**; Trail Leader: **Joseph Piro**; Membership: **Jim Steele**; Programs: Incoming Chair (Dec.), **Jim Steele**; Trailside Store Manager: **Sharron Walker**; Membership miscellany, mobile display board: **Katie Antista**. *Letters to the editor:* pankowinca@gmail.com

RON WILSON'S: SEX ON THEIR MIND

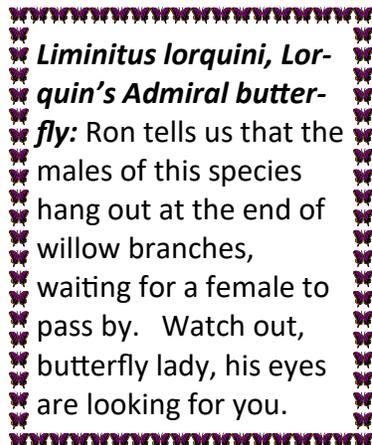




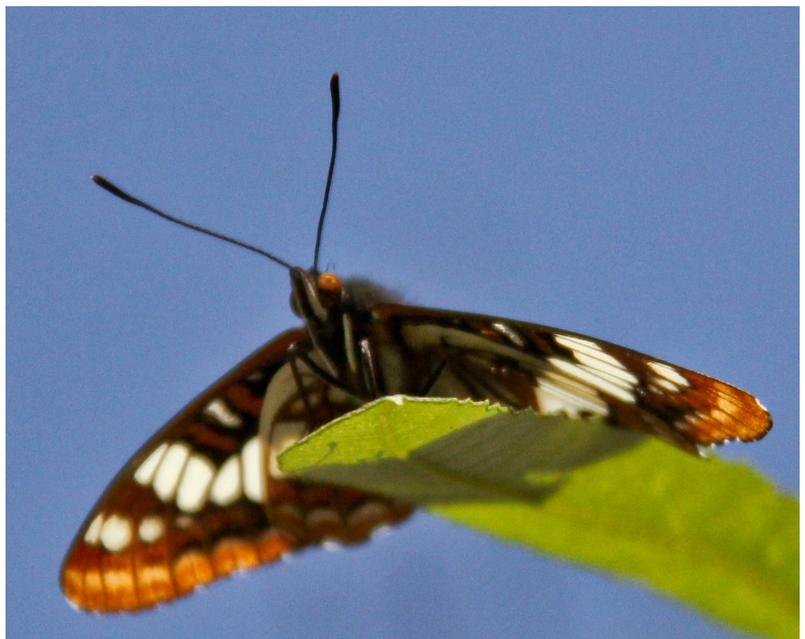
Ron Wilson took this series of 2 fence lizards “making whoopee” . After looking at the trio, **Jim Mackey** emailed back to Ron:

 “ I have never succeeded in observing a copulation. I guess that it would require them to lie side by side with the adjacent legs raised. It is generally assumed that mating is in May & June and that the resulting eggs hatch in August. But a male may have a territory over a longer period of time with more than 1 female in it.

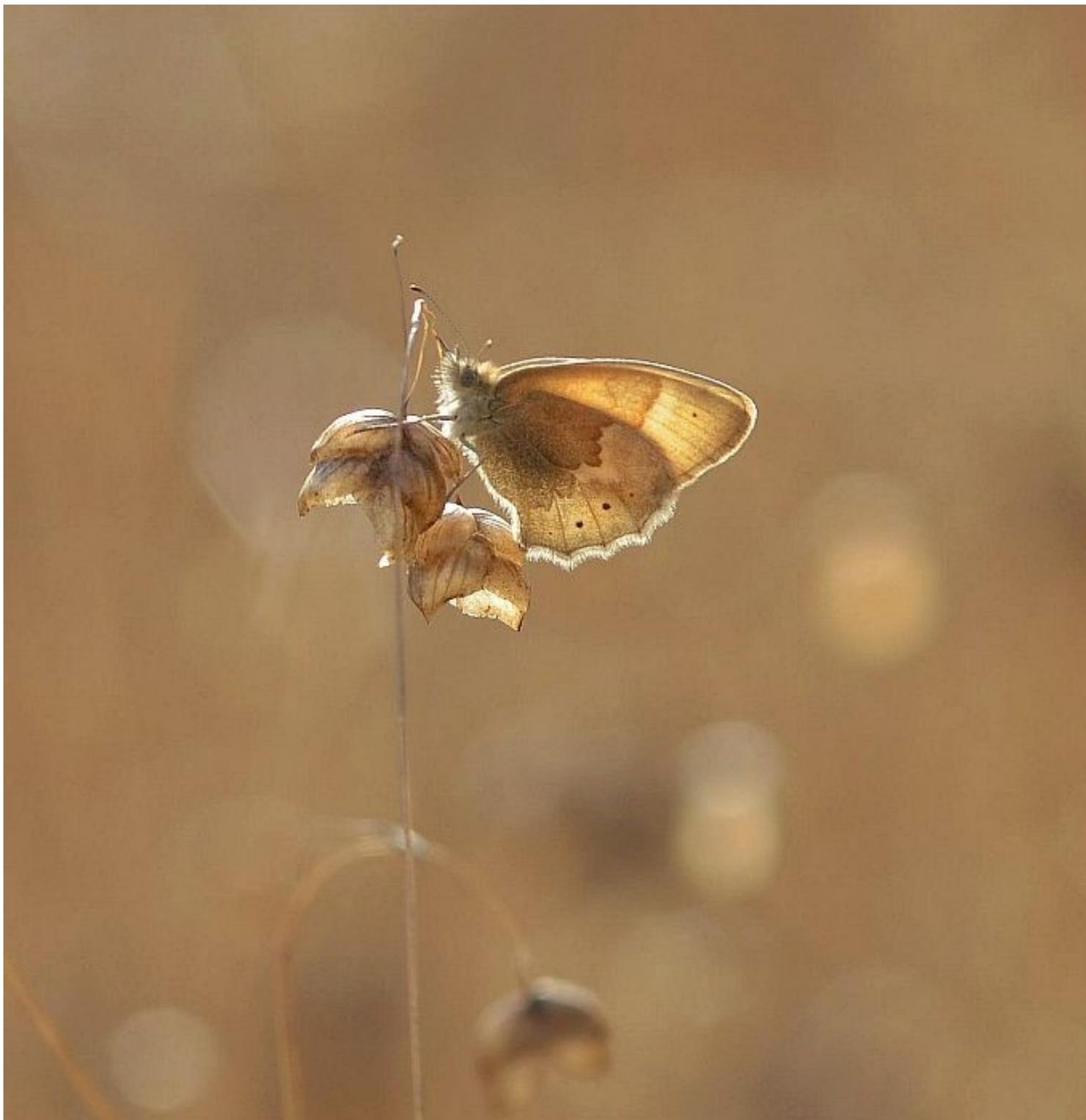
Boy, you really nailed it! Your date of June 1 is within the season when we would expect them to mate. I assume that the one with the regenerated tail is the male, since his tail base is quite broad, and her abdomen may be distended with eggs.”



***Liminitus lorquini*, Lorquin's Admiral butterfly:** Ron tells us that the males of this species hang out at the end of willow branches, waiting for a female to pass by. Watch out, butterfly lady, his eyes are looking for you.



Bing Huey's small arthropods: pages 6 and 7



a California ringlet, *Coenonympha tullia California*, on rattlesnake grass—September 14



“STRANGER THINGS”: a **trash line orb weaver, *Cyclosa walckenaeri***, Hazelnut Trail, 26 August . Bing has found 2 species of this weird critter in SPVP.

Bing Huey's—Flowers in the Fall; Sharron Walker's—Autumn Leaves



Left: **Female Coyote Brush** Pistillate Flowers & Seeds; right: **Male Coyote Brush** with staminate flowers, Oct. 8



Flower Buds of **Elk clover, Aralia californica**, Old Trout Farm Trail, September 25



Leaves of **poison oak** by **Sharron Walker**