

## IN JUNE: CRAIG NIKITAS TRACKING the COOPER'S HAWK



**Craig Nikitas**, now Chief Operator at Bay Raptor Rescue, will deliver a program on the **Cooper's Hawk**, a bird he's come to know quite well; the photo at left shows him holding one he recently rescued in SF. The Program starts at **6pm on Sat, June 22**, at our Visitor Center.

Craig has worked many years for the Golden Gate Raptor Observatory, trapping and banding hawks at Hawk Hill in Marin County in Sept/Oct, as they circle around to contemplate crossing the SF Bay. As you can see in the photo below of Craig & Cooper's Hawk, this particular hawk is not in the mood to be held by a VERY determined Craig.

Mr. Nikitas will delve into the secrets of this awesome predator & has sound recordings to help you distinguish it from the **Sharp-shinned Hawk**, also a denizen of SPVP. Many remember the popular programs Craig gave us on hawks & owls in years past.



## INSECT FIELD TRIP FOR ALL ON SAT, JUNE 8, AT 11am

**Christopher Quock** of San Francisco State University, will be leading an **Insect** field trip for the Friends and for general public on **Saturday, June 8, at 11am** in SPVP.



Christopher, who has a Masters in Entomology from SFSU, was a key person in the research done by Dr. John Hafernik on the **Zombie Bees**. He's a coauthor of a PLOS scholarly paper on the subject.

"He's a keen observer who notices things that other people don't see or take for granted." He doesn't need to go to a tropical rain forest to find a great diversity of insects; he'll help you to find a number of hidden species in our park.



*Insects are the most bountiful high protein animal source for all land life, super pollinators & recyclers of nutrients, but numbers have dropped alarmingly. Come find them with an expert! Bring a **hand lens** to help you see their details.*



Tim Hays



## SPRING BBQ—MAY 18 —VISITOR CENTER PATIO

Promptly at noon on **Saturday, May 18**, our native habitat restoration day, we will enjoy barbecued links and burger patties turned by **Joseph & Eric Piro**, fresh buns,



and an assortment of salads & desserts supplied by each of you "chef's" of the Friends. **Judy Bacon's** team of callers will be contacting you in early May. Her phone # is (650) 359-3123.

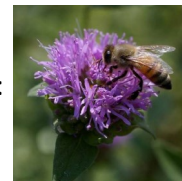
## KATHY KELLERMAN'S: HOW TO GROW NATIVE PLANTS

On **Saturday, May 11, at 6pm**, in our Visitor Center, **Kathy Kellerman**, well-known for having a green thumb, will show us how to grow species that she's successful with in the nursery she manages at Pedro Point Headlands.



Stephen Johnson

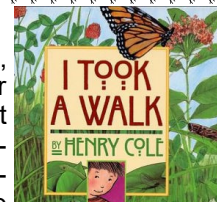
Kathy's ideas will bring pollinators that will stop by your newly planted natives, as this **bee** (at right) who seems to be enjoying our native **coyote mint**. She will help you understand the advantages of creating native plant habitats: being water-wise & astute as to which plants might be better for wildfire zones in the wildland-urban interface; she'll feature photos of local native gardens.



Phil Van Soelen

## CHILDREN'S HOUR

Children will hear from **insects, birds, critters** of all sorts about their adventures during **Storytime**, the first half-hour of Children's Hour. Children will then draw/color these interesting creatures during **Art Buzz**, the second half-hour. All this excitement is to be found at the Visitor Center in San Pedro Valley Park. Materials are provided. This nature-oriented program takes place on the first Saturday of the month at 11 am. The first two dates will be **May 4th & June 1<sup>st</sup>**. Ages: 4 to 8. After the kids finish drawing, they will be ready to explore the park with parents & grandparents.



## JIM STEELE BIRD SONG WALK

**SAT. MAY 18, 8am**

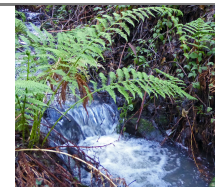
**Jim Steele** is one of the local experts in the recognition of **bird song & calls**, as well as a popular avian hike leader. He will stick mainly to the Creekside & field areas of our Park, but be ready with good shoes & binoculars, as he will go where the songs are. He is the former director of the SFSU field campus.



Val Easton

## ON THE TRAIL

On Feb. 26, Sharron Walker stood by the Trout Farm Trail to capture the gurgling flow of Brooks Creek cascading its way into San Pedro Creek.



Ron Wilson saw these nutrient-hungry **echo blues** "puddling" on March 11, one warm day, on the Weiler Ranch Rd.

(Continued on page 4)

**BESS NERICCIO LEAVES US SOME OF HER TRAIL GEMS**

While Karl Olila mourns the recent passing of her “Greek friend”, **Bess Neruccio**, many others will be inspired by memories of her dedication to & love of nature & birds, especially in SPVP: **Ray Trabucco, Katie Antista, Jim Mackey** & our friend, **Cliff Richer**, would often have her give them the latest bird sightings & called her a “trail regular”. From Bess’s field notes:

*Pedro Valley 6/23/85 8:45 a.m.*



Overcast this morning, but before I finished my hike the sun broke through the clouds. As I entered the park **Brown Towhee** were everywhere. **Swainson's Thrush** (left) could be heard on both sides of the canyon. The **Black-headed Grosbeaks** have chosen to breed here. Lucky for us. They were very busy singing and flying back and forth from the brookside to the hillside.

Coming into the orchard I saw a **Swainson's Thrush** hop to a puddle of water close to the path and, although he saw me clearly, he deliberately chose to take time to gather bits of mud and plant litter in his bill before flying off in the direction of the beautiful **Datura plant** (right). On my return from the back of the canyon I was coming out of the restroom and again I saw the **Swainson's** go to the puddle to pick up another bill full of nesting material.



Dcrjsr



Greg Lasley

Saw **Band-tailed Pigeons; Mourning Doves; Song Sparrows; Northern Flickers; Dendrocopos<sup>1</sup>, sp. (H)<sup>2</sup>; Starlings; Bewick's Wrens** (left); **Olive-sided Flycatcher; Western Wood-pewee; (H); Barn Swallow; Steller's Jays; Scrub Jays; Chestnut-backed Chickadees; Wrentits (H); Calif.**

**Thrasher (H); Robins** and fledglings; **Hutton's Vireo (H); Orange-crowned Warbler** (saw the orange crown); **Wilson's Warbler; Brewer's Blackbirds; Purple Finch (H); House Finches ; Red-tailed Hawks**. At the second brook opening on the ranch side I saw 4 **Allen's Hummingbirds** (2 at right) doing territorial combat for the privilege of a few moments to dip themselves into the brook for baths. I saw them lower themselves into the water until their tiny feet were under. Then they shook water over themselves with their



Sheri L. Williamson



wings. I was so close! On my return I saw an **Anna's** female send an **Allen's** away so that she could bathe. I was watching her when some hikers came around the corner. They were thrilled to see the **tiny Anna's** calmly sitting in the water giving

herself a bath. What at morning! (<sup>1</sup>**Dendrocopus**= common genus-woodpecker ) (<sup>2</sup>H= heard)

**DEAD WHALES BUT LIVE TALK AND AUDIENCE**



Judy Bacon

**Sue Pemberton**, our February speaker (with E. seal, brought to us not just the methods by which she helps assess causes of each creature’s demise, but the drama of the destruction & death of a **whale**, whether by disease or ship strike. In the analysis, she must take many samples, measurements and photos back to her curatorial assistant lab at the Cal Acad. of Sciences. But her passion, and others’ passion for the loss of any whale has helped to firm up the Endangered Species Act now protecting such popularly seen whales off our coast as the **humpbacks** and the **blue whales**.

**CLOVIS –the word of the day!**

**By Judy Bacon**

If you did not know what Clovis was, you certainly did after **Dr. Todd Braje**, an anthropological archaeologist, gave his presentation of how the first Americans settled in the “New World”! Most of us assumed, I did, that the first Americans came through the bridge from Asia to Alaska and southward 13,000 or so years ago. Dr. Braje talked to us about his research in finding out how early the first Americans were here. Clovis is the name of a distinct Paleo-Indian culture named for the distinct stone tools found in New Mexico, dating from nearly 13,000 yrs. ago. Dr. Braje’s research opens up the idea that our first Americans came from the south up along the coast & that there were pre-Clovis people here possibly earlier than 13,000 yrs. ago. An informative and amusing presentation; Dr. Braje concluded that his research brings more questions than answers! (photo below by **Mila Stroganoff**)





## Friends' SUSAN HERRING: My Life in Nature: Pt. 2

As well as spending time at "Cedarscent", our family regularly camped and hiked in a variety of places. We took a yearly trip up Mt. LeConte (Romantic Asheville photo), near Gatlinburg. Between 15 and 25 of us would climb the mountain one day, spend the night at the Lodge at the top, eating in the dining room and having a sing-

along, storytelling gathering in the evening. We'd climb down the following day. There were 3 or 4 trails to the top. I loved to "race" the boys, and gave them a "run for their money". Dad would carry the big pack and bring up the rear. We'd all carry a bit of Gorp. When we were older, the parents said we had to camp out and cook. We tried as hard as we could to get a fire going, but everything was wet to the core. Nothin' doin'. We pleaded with the folks, and I think after they tried to get a fire going, they let us eat in the lodge.

We loved camping on Roane Mtn in North Carolina (at left).



Luke Barber

It was covered with **Rhododendron bushes** and a great place to play Sardines (opposite of Hide and Seek - 1 person hides, and when anyone finds them, they stay there together until the others find them).

One year we hired a yacht and sailed around the Virgin Islands with the skipper and his wife, the cook. Delightful, those clear blue waters! Another year we took a bunch of folks for a canoe trip in the 10,000 lakes in the Minnesota, Canada border waters. Recently, one of the women sent me a photo from the trip of my sister and I holding a bunch of **fish**, with her standing behind us. I asked her if she knew who caught the fish, but she didn't. One year we drove to Maine. I'd said I was going to jump into the ocean; I did, & then jumped right out. Whew - freezing! My mom's family was all about water, so we'd meet up at the beach, and have wonderful times swimming in the ocean, and being together.



Greg Brutt

In 1973 I moved to the spiritual community, The Farm, in Summertown, TN. They'd only been there 2 years, so mostly we were living in Army tents and busses - so right in nature. Built everything, dug well and outhouses. Swam in the creeks. Worked hard; grew food; lived simply and very



Lisa Powers

cheaply. There were **rattlesnakes & copperheads** (left) which if caught were taken several miles away & released, but you needed a snake stick. I had a couple of benign encounters: with a copperhead and with a rattler.

We had midwives and home births unless there was a problem. Built wonderful relationships with the locals, including 1 doctor who taught our midwives how to deliver complicated births. The kids grew up roaming the woods, and we had a solar schoolhouse. We gradually built houses, but often lived with upwards of 50 folks. We had a gorgeous meadow for Sunday meditation and would Om as the sun rose. One night walking to our far out tepee, 2 other young women and I saw **phosphorescent fungi** by the creek. Beautiful. (Right: Photo: Ylem/Wikimedia Commons)



We moved to Pacifica in 1986. I divorced in 1997, but met my 2nd husband and we married in San Pedro Valley Park in June, 2001. Very sweet. I so love this park. My friend has her yearly Montara Mountain birthday hike. We sometimes lunch at Montara Beach, and sometimes in the park. Since the **dog** died last year, we've been able to come here again, and while I miss the dog, I'm very happy to be able to walk here again.

## Fisher's ANTS; MADAGASCAR'S SOS-BIG HIT

Dr. Brian Fisher highlighted that there are no individuals in the **ant** world. Each ant is a part of the whole colony & will do everything to protect it. And maybe we could learn from them: ants have no traffic jams when thousands rapidly navigate one "highway". New for me: ant larvae eat insects on behalf of the adults & then produce a protein-rich liquid for their elders to eat; imagine our role being switched with babies! What a talk!

And onward: insects can provide rich protein for people: companies grind up **crickets** for a digestible powder for humans to mix with porridge; over dinner he mentioned that fried **wasps** taste a lot like **shrimp**; by this time **Judy Bacon** said she was turning a little green around the gills.

So the new focus Brian's adopted for this biodiverse island, with only 10% of its forests left, is to provide tasty insects as protein for most of the populace and to try to break them from raising **cows** or **chickens**. He considers this work more critical than his ID of 1000 ant species.

His appeal: save Madagascar's forests & **lemurs**, who are going extinct by sending a check to the Cal Acad of Sci, adding: **Madagascar project under the direction of Brian Fisher**; mail to ; 55 Music Concourse Dr; Cal.Acad. of Sciences; SF, CA 94118. USA."





### ON THE TRAIL (continued)

Sharron Walker watched as this **Great Blue Heron** flew from its standing point in San Pedro Creek to this alder “perch” . You can’t blame her for saying this was one beautiful heron. Seen on about Feb. 26.

Ron Wilson caught this image of the **day-flying moth, *Mesoleuca gratulata***, who Ron said was in constant motion when he snapped a blurry photo almost a week ago. But persistence and knowledge of their hang-out, and general activity, took him to the Trout Farm Rd. where one was posing by the **forget-me-nots** at 4pm on Mar. 26.



Doin’ the turkey trot: there they were, visible from Weiler Ranch Rd. but just into the church property: 6 beautiful **wild turkeys**, just when many of us had wondered if the



**bobcats, coyotes or raptors** had eaten them out of this world. Thanks to **Ranger Tom Hart**, who found them Sat. morning, Mar. 23.

Sharron Walker followed the blooms of the spring on several days in March. One beauty she photographed: a ***Trilium chloropetalum***.



On Mar. 23, at closing time, **Mila and Adrian Stroganoff** spotted a gorgeous **bobcat**, probably an adult, that had crossed the Weiler RR & had stopped short before continuing into the field, where it paused for a minute just before heading into the tall **grasses** that mostly hid him.

### TOUGHEST WEEDS HELPLESS AFTER HEAVY RAIN

**Leader, Istvan Puski, Ranger Tom Hart, and Abe** said that it was child’s play as they eased out **cotoneaster, Scotch broom** (right), tiny **eucs**, etc. from the water-logged hill above the entry road on March 16, Habitat Rest. Day.



### CALENDAR FOR MAY/JUNE, 2019

#### **CHILDREN’S STORY AND DRAWING HOUR**

**Saturday, May 4.....11am**

#### **MAY TRAIL DAY**

**Saturday, May 11.....9am**

#### **KATHY KELLERMAN’S “GROWING NATIVE PLANTS”**

**Saturday, May 11.....6pm**

#### **JIM STEELE’S MAY BIRD SONG WALK**

**Saturday, May 18.....8am**

#### **MAY HABITAT RESTORATION DAY**

**Saturday, May 18.....9am**

#### **MAY FRIEND’S BBQ**

**Saturday, May 18.....12 noon**

#### **CHILDREN’S STORY AND DRAWING HOUR**

**Saturday, June 1.....11am**

#### **JUNE TRAIL DAY**

**Saturday, June 8.....9am**

#### **CHRISTOPHER QUOCK’S INSECT FIELD TRIP FOR ALL**

**Saturday, June 8.....11am**

#### **JUNE HABITAT RESTORATION DAY**

**Saturday, June 15.....9am**

#### **CRAIG NIKITAS’ “TRACKING COOPER’S HAWK”**

**Saturday, June 22.....6pm**

(Board Meetings on the first Monday of the Month at 7pm)

(For all events but meetings, meet at the Visitor Center)



### FINE TUNING TOOLS

By Joseph Piro



On this grey & rainy morning, March 9th Trail Day, **Istvan Puski & I, Ranger Tom Hart & Steven Johnson** cleaned, sharpened & organized some tools in the workshop. We scrubbed off dirt, sharpened the blades & oiled the wood handles of several shovels, McLeods (left) & mattocks (right). Certainly a good, indoor, rainy day activity!

bench-cut the inside of the trail to make it a little wider and more comfortable to walk. Nothing like a little TLC to keep our trails open for all to enjoy!

### DON’T MESS WITH MOTHER NATURE

Folks from abroad are stealing **Dudleya Farinosa**, a Park plant, taking many thousands from Coastal Calif, selling them in China & Japan. The most mature & robust plants can sell for several hundred dollars. This reminds me of the theft of **saguaros** and other **cacti** from the desert by our own citizens, but the potential here for a devastating loss is greater. (Nat’l Wildlife magazine)



### BROOKS TRAIL RESTORED AS PAMPAS GRASS PLUNDERED

By Joseph Piro

On Trail Day, April 13, **Istvan Puski**, my brother **Erik & I** joined **Stuart Smith**, the S.M. Co. Parks Vol. Coord., for some good work up on the Brooks Falls Trail. We worked the stretch of trail from the uphill side of the bridge to a sharp bend laden with pampas grass, a little way up. We pulled some pampas grass down & used McLeods & hoes to (cont’d above)



**The Leaders of “the Friends of SPVP”:** President: **Mila Stroganoff**; Vice President: **Judy Bacon**; Secretary: **Enid Ansgarius**; Interim Treasurer: **Bing Huey**; Visitor Center Director: **Mila Stroganoff**; Habitat Restoration leader: **Istvan Puski**; Trail Leader: **Joseph Piro**; Membership: **Adrian Stroganoff**; CoProgram Directors: **Mila Stroganoff, Carolyn Pankow**; Director of Hospitality: **Judy Bacon**; Directors of Website Management: **Lakshmi Javadekar and Jayesh Kapoor**; Trailside Store Director: **open**; Membership misc: **Katie Antista**.  
**WEB SITE:** [friendsofsanpedrovalleypark.org](http://friendsofsanpedrovalleypark.org) Editor of this newsletter: **Carolyn Pankow** ([pankowinca@gmail.com](mailto:pankowinca@gmail.com))



## Ron Wilson's "Moth Dressed like a Butterfly"



Day-flying Moth, *Mesoleuca gratulata* on a flower on March 26, 2019; Trout Farm Road

## Sharron Walker celebrates early Spring in SPVP with her Camera



*Trillium chloropetalum*



*Zygadenus Fremontii*  
"Star Lily"



A Closer Look



RON WILSON'S BROWSIN' AND LOUNGIN'  
OFF THE WEILER RANCH RD.



3/8/19 Weiler Ranch  
12:06pm  
Ron Wilson

Oh, the tender spring buds of the **willow!**—a gourmand mule deer's delight, at 12:06, on 3/8/19



Now to rest together, while guarding this tasty salad, as well as ourselves! 3/15/2019



SHARRON WALKER'S GREAT BLUE HERON  
ON CREEK ALDER PERCH



“**Great Blue Heron** which was in the creek; actually we surprised each other, I stayed on the ground, however, and he flew into a nearby **Alder**. What a handsome one he was!” Sharron saw the beauty on about February 26.



SHARRON WALKER'S  
BROOKS CREEK CASCADING  
INTO SAN PEDRO CREEK



**Sharron** was poised at the South Fork of San Pedro Creek when she caught Brooks Creek cascading its way to the larger stream. This was in the early afternoon of February 26 . The shot is from the nearby picnic area.



## Brian Fisher's Talk to Pacificans on March 30 Photographed by Mila Stroganoff



Photo slightly cropped

Notice the cape on the **ant**: superhero?  
Ants help save the forest AND as a unit they are mighty!  
Their tight social organization is even stronger than their great physical strength



Joseph Piro: Brooks Creek Trail Restoration on April Trail Day