

## RAY TRABUCCO'S NEW PHOTOGRAPHS OF SPVP ON DISPLAY AT VISITOR CENTER

Brilliant colors, intimate moments of a **hummingbird** feasting on flower nectar, a **Red-tailed Hawk** landing in a **eucalyptus**, a **variegated meadow hawk dragonfly**, a **Chestnut-backed Chickadee** feeding one of its young; this and more... Thanks go to **Katie Antista** & head ranger, **Scott Lombardi** for making this Park photo essay in our Vis. Cntr. possible.

**Ray Trabucco** has been a photographer of SPVP for many years and gave us a popular program featuring flowers from our trails. He is a long time Pacifican who explores the Bay Area looking for the unusual in the commonplace.

## JOHN ALBERS-MEAD PRESENTS INVERTEBRATE PHOTOS FROM FITZGERALD MARINE PRESERVE

On August 7 at 8pm, **John Albers-Mead** of the Fitzgerald Marine Preserve will appear at the Visitor Center to instruct and dazzle you with his surface pictures of such creatures as the one above, left, a mysterious critter that he was able to identify as the baby of the huge **Gumboat Chiton**, & the 2nd, below, a head-on view of a colorful **nudibranch, *Hermisenda crassicornis***.



John's photographic artistry and the story of his determination to "rise with the roosters" to catch the low tides, has appeared on public television's "Quest", to whom he spoke in his entry submission, saying, "Going to tide pools is like a treasure hunt that changes by the minute. The colors, textures, smells, movement, and general feeling of life makes this one of the places where I feel connected with the world." He's usually at those rocky tide pools for three hours at a time, taking photos from the surface of their life-rich "enclaves"—photos that have that "underwater" camera look, after which he heads back to Silicon Valley to build web applications, as he tells it, "for the fake world"



Albers-Mead won a silver award in the compact camera division of the "DEEP

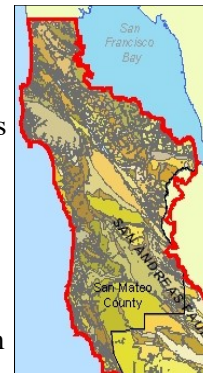
Indonesian International Underwater Photography Competition" in 2009. He is a docent, "a volunteer naturalist" and member of the board of the Fitzgerald Marine Preserve.

## NEW OFFICERS INSTALLED

At the May general meeting these officers took their pledge: President, **Shirley Drye**; VP, **Carolyn Pankow**; Secretary, **Jim Mackey**; Treasurer, **Jane Turrel**. We also welcomed our new board member, **Will Trout**; returning board members are **Jean Leonard**, **Jim Pommier**, and **Istvan Puski**.

## DEMOUTHE STRIKES AGAIN: EARTHQUAKES, ETCETERA

Jean DeMouthe of the California Academy of Sciences, will present "the Geology of San Mateo County" at our Visitor Center on Sat., July 10 at 8pm. At the map to the right you may be able to trace the "line" of the San Andreas fault, which is bound to be paramount in Dr. DeMouthe's presentation.

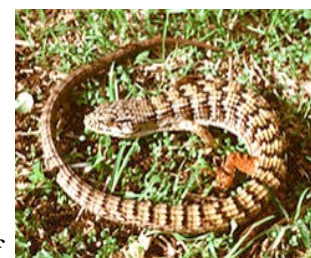


DeMouthe's last show for us was in March of 2008, when she delivered the beautiful, memorable program on the geology of how gems are formed. Although her interest in these stunning jewels of nature has almost become a hobby, she is not owned by one world; she plays keyboard for the Academy jazz ensemble, has recently written what she calls a "trashy Western novel", and is an enthusiastic gardener.

Jean has degrees in geology and science education from Humboldt State University, SFSU, and UC Berkeley. She is the Senior Collections manager for Geology at the California Academy of Sciences, and teaches in the museum graduate studies program at SFSU. She is also the acting county geologist for San Mateo County.

## ON THE TRAIL

At about noon on an early-May sunny day, while walking along the Weiler Ranch Road, **Jane Turrel** sighted a copper colored lizard that she described as being almost one foot long. **Jim Mackey** said it was a **Southern Alligator Lizard**. We have the Northern form also, showing some of the diversity of life in our Park. (Jim Melli photo of Southern Alligator Lizard)



Two new spotted **fawns** were their little way past the gate house with Mom in the lead; they were startled by what could have been their first sighting of a truck when **Ranger David** drove slowly up to them. This on a sunny Memorial Day Sat. morning (Amanda Barber photo)



(Continued on page 4)

## **PART 2 OF JANE TURREL'S LIFE: Healer, Entrepreneur, and Retiree**

I joined the faculty at the University of California at Davis, teaching radiology and treating animals having cancer with irradiation. I developed several techniques for treatment including radioiodine for hyperthyroid cats. The range of animals I have treated include a **tiger** owned by **Siegfried and Roy**, a **Russell's viper**, **lions**, a **koala**, many species of **birds**, breeds of **horses and cows**, as well as the more conventional: **cats and dogs**.



I decided that serving pet animals in a private setting was preferable to university life, and so in 1990, Veterinary

Oncology Specialties in Pacifica was born. For 15 years, I had a busy practice overseeing radiation treatment of animals with cancer and cats with hyperthyroidism. It was an exhilarating time but required 24/7 attention. In 1996, I retired from practice.

Since then, I have enjoyed traveling, photography and gardening, all low-stress "preoccupations". I needed an outlet for my energies & have found a home at the San Pedro Valley Park.

*Jane Turrel*

Jane has been an exceptional treasurer for "the Friends", straightening out our taxes after we became a non-profit, even hiring, with her own funds, an accountant when she knew she was in over her head. Jane has helped me with publicity & restored things to order in our office (including cups, food, and junk in the "kitchen").



She is also taking on most of the responsibilities of the Trailside Store chief, reading through a maze of catalogues to pick the best nature books and doing the dreaded inventory.

And after a little research, I found this news "release" about Jane from the U. of Illinois "Veterinary Report" newsletter:

***Dr. Jane M. Turrel ('70), owner of Veterinary Oncology Specialties, a Pacifica, Calif., clinic specializing in radiation oncology, was honored by Cornell University's College of Veterinary Medicine for her support of its cancer program. Both of Jane's parents graduated from Cornell—class of '43. Her love of all animals (humans not excepted), knows no bounds.***

For a final, personal touch, above is Jane with a beloved cat, **Dizzy**, a few years ago. **Connie**, her present cat, rode on Jane's lap during an entire round trip to Colorado & back!

*Your editor, Carolyn Pankow*

## **YOUNG WORKERS HELP CLEAR PASSAGE ON LOWER HAZELNUT**

We had a suprisingly awesome turnout for our May 8th Trail Day! In addition to myself and **Jim Pommier** we had 8 new people join us -- **Bryanna Crispell, Anna Ogo, Philip Mondejar, Noah Chee, Peishan He (Sylvia), Jonathan Gonzalez, Mario Mejia** and **Jamie Miller**. With so many people, we could easily tackle what "Ranger" Martin suggested -- doing string trimmer work up on the Hazelnut Trail. After rounding up all our tools -- me taking the string trimmer and everyone else with several various rakes, pitchforks and loppers -- we headed up Hazelnut behind the Visitor's Center. Though there were plenty of spots that needed attention, I focused our efforts on 3 or 4 lengthy sections that were particularly overgrown. With so many people, work went quick, and those sections of trail look great now. It was sure nice to have a big group of people and I sure hope some come back again!



Well, it was just **me** and **Jim Pommier** for the June 12 Trail Day. At 8:45 in the morning the sky was blue and cloudless & it was already quite warm, so we decided to tackle a super-local project: cleaning up the little path that winds thru the "sunny version" of the Native Plant Garden alongside the Visitor's Center. Many of the bushes were overgrown and there were plenty of tall weeds in the path, so I figured it would be a good task we could do while also enjoying the shade from the building and tall trees near the patio. Jim did most of the trimming while I scraped all the weeds and re-raked the entire length of the path. Take a stroll thru now--the path is nice & wide & weed-free and things are trimmed back! Enjoy! **Joseph Piro**

## **FACTOIDS**

**The turkey vulture often directs its urine onto its legs. This serves two very important purposes. In the summertime, wetting the legs cools the vulture, as the urine evaporates. (The vulture cannot sweat like us). In addition, this urine contains strong acids from the vulture's digestive system, which kill any bacteria that may remain on the bird's legs from stepping in its meal.**

(Credits for facts & beautiful photo of this majestic bird to the Turkey Vulture W.S.)



## A NATURALIST'S PERSPECTIVE

By Jim Mackey

July/Aug. 2010

**Urban Wildlife.** Wildlife seem to be increasingly prevalent in our cities. This is reflected beautifully in **Melissa Peabody's** 2008-DVD: "San Francisco; Still Wild at Heart." I hope that many of you saw Melissa's presentation at our Visitor Center or purchased a copy of her DVD at our Trailside Store. You will recall that she focused on coyotes in San Francisco, while comparing them with populations in other cities, including Chicago and New York. Happily, many professional ecologists today are attracted to the study of urban wildlife, where they apply modern techniques like radio telemetry and DNA analysis. Thus it was determined that San Francisco's coyotes have probably descended from a population north of S.F. Bay and immigrated to the City over the Golden Gate Bridge.



Why have wild animals moved into the noisy, tumultuous, artificial environment of a modern city? Why did some wolves that were genetically pre-disposed to become domestic move into human societies and evolve into dogs? Food is probably the paramount factor, while protection from the physical environment and enemies has played a lesser role.

**San Pedro Park and suburban Pacifica.** Why would an animal settle in one of these locales and not the other? Are quail more successful in our Park, in part, because of our ban on pets? Do our deer thrive because both locations complement each other in meeting their needs? This last Fathers' Day I was enjoying a hike on the Weiler Ranch Road with my three wonderful children when my son spotted a buck grazing on the slope above the Park's maintenance yard. We stopped and, using binoculars, saw that there were three large bucks (photo by **Mark Forrester**) with forked antlers – still in velvet – and that they were gorging on the very abundant giant vetch – including the purple flowers (a high-quality diet, plus incidental protection from mountain lions by admiring humans!) But what about the dry season? At that time we, on Oddstad Blvd., attempt to protect some of our favorite plants from the onslaught of the deer.



In the spring of 2009 we enjoyed watching a doe and her twin fawns (twinning is evidence of a healthy herd) along the Trout Farm Trail and into the Walnut Grove picnic areas. But during the summer I learned to slow down when driving down Terra Nova Blvd. at night & watch for all 3 (I assumed to be the same animals) to cross the street between the Casa Pacifica apartments & the Church & Library.

**Great Horned Owls** (from [itsnature.org](http://itsnature.org)), like deer, may benefit from our Park as well as the adjacent suburbs. They nest in the Park's eucalyptus groves during winter and spring, when they may prey primarily on the Park's wildlife – especially our native wood rats (CA Dept F & G photo below). However, one summer we had an outbreak of roof rats (a subspecies of the European black rat) at our house and we were visited by a Great



Horned Owl! I reflect on the great epidemics of plague that rats have fostered in the past and remember that plague still exists at a low level in the U.S., then I conclude that owls should be welcome in our cities. Of course, Friends, nothing is all good, or all bad. I once met a man in Berkeley who said that he was walking his **Chihuahua** on a leash one night when he felt a sudden tug on the leash. Yep – a Great Horned Owl was trying to fly off with the dog!

**Poor Jim's Almanac.** I hope that you know to what I am referring when I say that we are approaching a "season for dessert." Yes, the scats of **foxes** and **coyotes** will be enriched with seeds from plants like **coffeeberries**, **plums**, **manzanitas** & **huckleberries**.

### VALIANT ATTEMPT BATTLING VINCA

**Vinca**, aka periwinkle, knows no respect for any other plant—oh, well I know this, having had a neighbor plant some on the border of our property. Its roots are the most tenacious I have ever tried to pull, but maybe you are not as naïve about its grip on life as I was.



Four men: **Will Trout**, our new board member, **Jim Pommier**, **Jim Mackey** and "**Bill**" from Davis assaulted it with everything they had in an attempt to remove it from the stone wall near the LaVerne Decker bench. Let's take one day at a time. For the moment we can breathe easier, can see the "historical stone wall". Around the corner??? In June it was **Jim Mackey** and **Jim Pommier** hacking away at **poison hemlock** on the Trout Farm.

June habitat restoration day was on the usual third Saturday of the month. **Jim Pommier** and **Jim Mackey** pulled tons of **poison hemlock** from the side of the Trout Farm Trail. Not only is it an invasive pest to the natives, but also a hazard for little kids!



**ON THE TRAIL** (continued)

Ranger Jonel said that she and 2 others, on different occasions, saw a smaller, perhaps 50-60 pound healthy looking **coyote** with a good bushy tail, “on the hunt” along the Weiler Ranch Road in that space between the service road & the Walnut picnic grounds. These sightings occurred towards the end of May. (Billie Cromwell photo) Also late in the month, Pacifican, **Greg Ranson**, saw a **coyote** eating a possible **gopher** in the fields by the Weiler Ranch Road. And **Ray Trabucco** saw a **coyote** on Je 22 at 2pm, walking ahead of him on the WRR, just this side of the creek; the maverick had red tones, was young & healthy, & in no hurry. Perhaps it had already had its rodent or rabbit lunch.



Ray Trabucco has marveled at the display of flowers in late spring of this year on the WRR: **hairy honeysuckle** (left), **blue flax**, **Franciscan Indian paintbrush**, **blue-eyed grass**, & on the Hazelnut, **rein orchid**.

**PHILLIP POSK THRILLED BY CORELLI HIKE**

Phillip loved Toni Corelli’s “after the show” hike on the **Brooks Creek Trail** on the Morning of April 24, and thinks she is a great “interpreter”: “What I found particularly interesting is the way she guided our perceptions of the **soil profiles** as we progressed up the mountain. She showed us how soils are an indicator of the **biotic plant communities**. Another highlight was the experience of tracing out the **burls** of the various trees and shrubs such as **California Huckleberry**, **Brittle-Leaf Manzanita**, and the **Chinquapin** (Marci Enos photo of fruit of Chinquapin).



Also of interest was the way she tied all of this into the site, exposure, humidity, fire ecology, & the microclimates of each of the three plant communities that she had discussed in her presentation.” [Phillip said that the groves of Maritime Chaparral stood out in sharp relief at a distance]

*Phillip Posk*

**ERRATA**

**Avis Boutelle**, and **Nancy Frost** as well as **Toni Corelli** are the authors of the book now for sale in our bookstore, **Plants and Plant Communities of the San Mateo Coast**.

**JULY—AUGUST CALENDAR****JULY TRAIL DAY**

Saturday, July 10.....9am

**JEAN DEMOUTHE—GEOLOGY SAN MATEO CO.**

Saturday, July 10.....8pm

**JULY GEN. MEETING—ALL ARE WELCOME**

Wednesday, July 14.....7pm

**JULY HABITAT RESTORATION DAY**

Saturday, July 17.....9am

**ALBERS-MEAD INTERTIDAL LIFE-OUR COAST**

Saturday, August 7.....8pm

**AUG. GENERAL MEETING—ALL WELCOME**

Wednesday, August 11.....7pm

**AUGUST TRAIL DAY**

Saturday, August 14.....9am

**AUGUST HABITAT RESTORATION DAY**

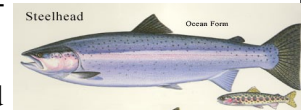
Saturday, August 21.....9am

*For all events meet at the Visitor Center  
September—Tom Evans—Weather of the Central  
California Coast*

*October—Chris Wilmers—Mountain Lions*

**SENTIMENTAL SCENTS FOR STEELHEAD?**

After another late May rain storm, (Thursday, May 27) I decided to visit the mouth of San Pedro Creek as it meets the Pacific Ocean. Sure enough the creek was swollen and murky with eroded soil from San Pedro Park. The creek flowed copiously with fresh runoff. I wondered as I observed, if our San Pedro Creek **steelhead salmon** can smell the muddy water and taste the creek where they were born? Do they find their way back each year by remembering and smelling that special scent of their fresh water home? And do they by serendipitous happenstance follow this scent to their ancestral home at exactly the same time they smell the runoff water, when the creek is high and ready to run? Is this part of their story? If so it's been a good wet season for our endangered S.P. Creek steelhead salmon, or *trout*, if you will. *Jack Dodson*

**NEWS BRIEFS from David Vasquez**

- ◆ **Trout Farm picnic area** will have a **new group site**, but still keep the “first come first serve” areas.
- ◆ **Student conservation Assoc.** worked on a long, long-corridor of the **Hazelnut trail** in June.
- ◆ **Laurel Hackleman**, formerly of area 2, is our new park ranger; she won out over heavy competition!
- ◆ Early cutting of grass due to growth after heavy rain.

**Questions or letters to the editor?** —email: carolynjunepankow@yahoo.com or write **Carolyn Pankow**, “Friends of San Pedro Valley Park”, 600 Oddstad, Pacifica, CA 94044. The editor is the writer of all uncredited features.

**The Leaders of “the Friends of San Pedro Valley Park”:**

President, **Carolyn Pankow**; Vice President, **Shirley Drye**; Secretary, **Jim Mackey**; Treasurer, **Jane Turrel**; members at large, **Jean Leonard** and **Istvan Puski**; visitor center staffing, **Jean Leonard**; Habitat Restoration Day Leader, **Jim Pommier**; Trail Day Leader, **Joseph Piro**; Membership, **Catherine Antista**; Programs, **Carolyn Pankow**; Trailside Store, **Jane Turrel**.