

BILL FREEDMAN MUSHROOM WALK, DEC. 29

Dr. Bill Freedman will lead us on a **mushroom walk** around the lower reaches of the Park on **Saturday, December 29 at 11am**. We will meet inside the Visitor Center at that time to hear and see an overview of the fungi before we set out into the crisp air. If you attended his prime lecture on these saprophytes, you'll be confident that he will know just where to look for the early winter "fruit" of these fungi. (internet photo of the chanterelle mushroom is above)

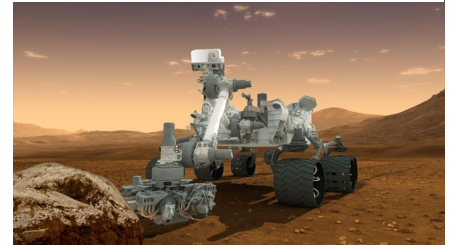
Dr. Freedman received his medical degree from Johns Hopkins University, after receiving his B.A. there and a Masters in Biology at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute. He then served four years in the Army in World War II, and trained as a laboratory technician, eventually running the labs. During that time of war, he also worked as a Parasitologist.

Dr. Freedman worked as a general practitioner for many years, much of the time for Kaiser Permanente. He was disturbed by the deaths of many people from mushroom poisoning, and felt the call to spread the word about the dangers of picking these unknown "toadstools" for our gourmet dinners. One year he predicted that an outbreak of the **death cap**, *Amanita phalloides*, (photo by Fred Stevens) would cause severe illness and fatalities in our "neighborhood", and some did succumb to its toxins. Bill stepped up to the plate. He now serves as the head of the toxicology committee of the Mycological Society of SF. Heavy rain cancels this hike.



BING QUOCK'S EXPLORING THE HEAVENS on NOVEMBER 10

Bing Quock of the California Academy of Sciences will appear at our Visitor Center on **Saturday, November 10, at 7:30pm**. He will give a tour of the season's night sky, especially the objects in the solar system, and will present a large segment on current space exploration, including the Mars rover, "Curiosity" highlighting its discoveries on the "red planet" and the latest on the Space Station—the sky's the limit.



Bing Quock has been an avid sky watcher since childhood and has been associated with the California Academy of Sciences' Morrison Planetarium since 1973, lecturing regularly since 1975. He became Morrison Planetarium's Assistant Chairman and Show Producer in 1982, writing and producing more than 100 astronomy presentations for a wide range of audiences through 2003, when the Planetarium closed for reconstruction.

Mr. Quock was named Assistant Director of the Planetarium, and was a key figure in the opening of the newly-rebuilt facility in October 2008. He continues teaching and speaking to audiences about astronomical topics, explaining astronomy to the media, and providing daily astronomy inserts for newspapers across the country.

HOLIDAY PARTY IN THE PARK

Christmas, Hanukah, Winter Solstice, Kwanza; whatever you celebrate, there will be lots of food including some roasted turkey breast and a honey cured ham, & lots of gaiety at the "Friends" party in the Visitor Center. Of course, we will have the "steal a gift" game, in our usual spirit of larceny. Past players will remember **Shirley Drye** admiring a **Jim Mackey** one-of-a-kind nature photograph, only to have it stolen away without pity.



Bring yourself and a guest if you wish, as well as a pot-luck dessert, salad, or hot dish to share. But do not forget your gift, one for each person attending—from 5 to 15 dollars! We will call you, but plan to come anyway and meet with all of us.

(drawing from clipartpal)

ON THE TRAIL

One might guess that it was September harvest time on the Hazelnut trail for SPVP's **Merriam's chipmunks**. (By **Rinus Baak** photo below) **Katie Antista** saw one by the pathway's east bench, busy at work in a **chinquapin tree**, the fruit of which was scattered onto the ground. A staccato of chattering accompanied its picking. On the next day, June 17th, **Laurie Nikitas** saw several of the striped fellas on the same trail.



Five-fingered ferns are hard to find in our park—remember—Our "resident" professor discovered one in an almost inaccessible part of our creek, but **Katie Antista** located one just below the south west Plaskon Nature Trail bridge at the end of summer.

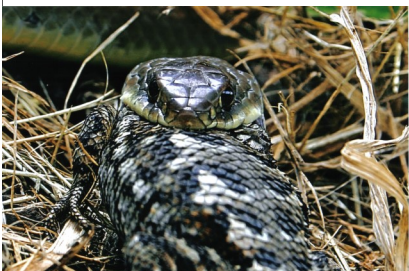


ENCOUNTER ON THE WEILER TRAIL

By Ron Wilson; Photos by Ron Wilson

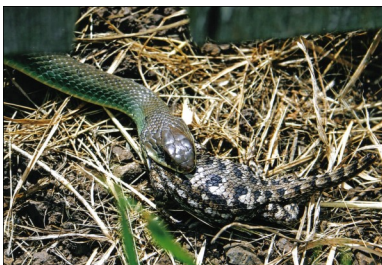
Ever wondered how a creature with no legs could outrun a different species with 4 legs?

San Pedro Valley Park's most frequent path is probably the Weiler Trail, which consists of one mile in and another back from the picnic area, where you might encounter a bobcat in his mid-morning hunting time, breakfast being gophers, quail and rabbits. Wandering about three quarters of a mile one warm morning in June, I barely noticed a **Western Fence Lizard** darting swiftly along toe frame-work holding the trash can near the bridge. Seemingly in a very agitated frame of mind, the lizard appeared to be conscious of some predator and rather than remaining still and inconspicuous, he seemed to be concerned about some danger I couldn't detect. Within a few seconds, approximately 10 feet across the path from him, a **Yellow-bellied Racer** that was about 3 ft. in length, tore across the path in front of me, heading toward the lizard. The movement was so swift that all I was sure of was that these incredible creatures had established some form of communion and then swiftly disappeared from view. Walking over to the container where some type of contact seemed evident, neither



of the reptiles was visible. Curiously lifting the can out of the frame it sat in, I spotted the snake with the lizard already trapped, head first, in the snake's mouth, clarifying who won the race and the encounter.

Assuming that I was attempting to steal his dinner, the snake slowly pulled the lizard away from me without losing eye contact. I slipped onto the ground slowly while attempting to get a few photographs from a reasonably close position. Feeling intrusive, I took a few quick pictures, and then backed away, put the trash container



back in the frame holder gently enough not to injure the snake (too late for the lizard) and allowed him some privacy to finish a well-earned meal, feeling nature had taken its course.

NEWS BRIEFS

We are happy to report that Ranger David Vasquez has been promoted from a Ranger II to a Ranger III. David will now be in charge of San Mateo County Memorial Park, so he will, of course be leaving us, and this saddens all the volunteers & "The Friends of San Pedro Valley Park". He will serve in his new capacity starting in mid-Nov.. Thank you, David, for being our right arm.



Two new Ranger II's will now be working in San Pedro Valley Park: Ranger **Cat Allen** and Ranger **Barry Chandler**. Ranger III, the "Laurel" will be working here also. Cat attended our wildly popular Bats program with a dynamic **Monique Lee** on Saturday night, October 20, and introduced herself, telling some of us the news. We are excited to see both of them enter into our lives.

HABITAT RESTORATION LIVES

September: H.R. leader, **Istvan Puski**, took care of the natives in the "trout" tanks, as well weeding out the "bad". October H.R. : **Istvan, Sara Shaw, Frank Hood, Ranger Vasquez** and **Ranger Cat Allen** dug yarrow and horsetail that was slated for cut-back and transplanted the plants into the metal tanks that are now little native plant gardens.

ISTVAN AND JOE ON THE HIGH HAZELNUT

By Joseph Piro; Photo by Joseph Piro

It was just your trusty two-man trail team of **Istvan Puski** (photo below) and **me** for the September 8th Trail Day. **Jane Turrel** was in the Visitor's Center early and mentioned there were some branches hanging low up on the Hazelnut Trail behind the V.C., so Istvan and I decided we'd go up to investigate and start a little drain-dip duty. We made it up to the start of the eucalyptus forest at the top of the mountain, doing a little trimming and digging. On our way back down we also picked up some plants to transplant into the old tanks by the Trout Farm picnic area. And then, best of all, we enjoyed our annual end-of-summer potluck BBQ lunch on the patio -- good food and a good turn-out!



FACIOM

Why can't our **coyotes** take down a full sized **deer**, while the coyotes of the Northeast U.S. can? Our coyotes did not interbreed with **wolves**, and lack of some wolf DNA in their genome. This has kept their size down relative to NE coyotes and their jaws less powerful. Yet in many areas smaller coyotes can be a threat to deer by killing the fawns. (Discovery News online)



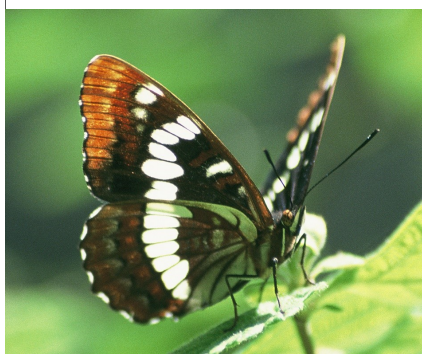
A NATURALIST'S PERSPECTIVE

By Jim Mackey

Nov./Dec. 2012

Why "butterfly?" You may have wondered why the word "butter" became part of the name of these beautiful flying insects. Indeed, it has been said that the original name, in early Victorian England, was the very apt "flutterby." Somewhat later some gentlemen and ladies were enjoying a game of croquet on Wembley Green. One of the ladies had her ball hard on the ball of a gent and she held her mallet poised to deliver a crushing blow – when a flutterby suddenly flew up and broke her concentration. She was so flustered that she could only say "Bother, drat butterfly." This so amused everyone that they never let her forget her mispronunciation.

Why Lorquin's admiral? Why did I nominate this species as the iconic butterfly for our Park? Not because of its name, which honors the first butterfly collector in California, Pierre Lorquin – an unsuccessful French gold



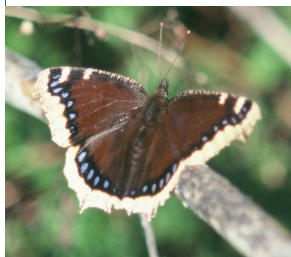
prospector. But because my walks in the Park, over the years, have been brightened by seeing it in every month from June 3 to October 24. I have seen it most often on red osier dogwood (*Cornus s. sericea*), including once on the flowers; next often

on arroyo willow, twice on stinging nettles and once on the flowers of coyote mint. **A. M. Shapiro** and **T.D. Manolis**, in "Field Guide to Butterflies of the San Francisco Bay and Sacramento Valley Regions," say that this butterfly is a "quintessential riparian species." And our Park, with its year-around creeks, is a quintessential riparian park. (Jim Mackey's photo of Lorquin's admiral Butterfly can be seen above).

Shapiro and Manolis (ibid) also state that since 1999, Lorquin's admirals and **mourning cloak butterflies** (Jim Mackey photo below) "have suffered dramatic declines."

These authors speculate that as climates warm, organisms may shift northward, or upward, or ... (guess)... coastwise (to a fog belt). I have seen mourning cloaks in January and February in our Park,

which was nostalgic because I remember seeing them in warm spells in winter in Ohio. Somehow the adults find shelters in which they over-winter. In contrast the Lorquin admiral caterpillar weaves a tent out of a willow leaf in which it over-winters.



Mimicry. Lorquin admiral and **California sister butterflies** (photo by Beth Kinsey)



greatly resemble each other. Each is black with diagonal white stripes and orange spots on the apices of the fore-wings. However in the sister the orange spot is surrounded by black (see plate 24 in Shapiro and Manolis).

Even though the sister is associated **with live oaks** and the Lorquin with **willows**, it was thought that their similar appearance might be the result of mimicry. Shapiro and Manolis (ibid) report that this theory was tested, in 2001, using **scrub jays** as predators. Indeed, it was found that the Lorquins were palatable while the sisters were distasteful to the jays. I have not noticed any California sisters in our Park; have you?

Poor Jim's almanac. Enjoy the red foliage of the **poison oak**. November is mating season for our deer. And watch for our first "spring" blossoms – on the **pink-flowered currants**.



THE LIFE OF VOLUN-

TEER, CHRISTINE GUZMAN, PT. 2

That was why when I was starting junior high she [her Mother] told me that we were going to leave Star Valley.



She had taken all the extension classes she could and she wanted to finish her Bachelor's degree at Utah State University in Logan, Utah. This shook my world. I cried and cried for months before and months after the move. When I was done crying, although

I did not realize it at the time, I had buried in some inaccessible place my childhood connection to the natural world. (beautiful Star Valley, Wy, above)

When I got to Logan, I discovered French, and that became my new identity. My new friends and I conversed in French as soon as we had enough vocabulary. We used to go up to the university and pretend to be French exchange students. I once persuaded my mother and brother to pretend to be my host family when a young man came calling.

I majored in French and Spanish and eventually became a Spanish teacher. I married a man from Bolivia and greatly improved my fluency in Spanish.

(CHRISTINE GUZMAN'S LIFE continued on p. 4)

CHRISTINE GUZMAN (continued)

We had two daughters and after they were born, my love for nature began to reawaken. It really had not gone away, but it had become less apparent to me. As my children grew, I wanted them to experience the natural world and love it as much as I did. We were lucky to live in Pacifica where we could enjoy the beaches and the hiking trails. We have had a horse to ride. We have had dogs and cats. We joined 4H and raised **turkeys, chickens, rabbits**, even two **sheep** and a **goat**. I guess without realizing it I was trying to provide a farm experience for my girls in the same way that it was meaningful to me. You will not be surprised that today my two grown daughters have their own chickens, **ducks**, goats and a **pony**.



I enjoy learning everything about the natural world. I always find something to interest me, whether it is the very large **orb weaving nocturnal spiders** that appear every summer in my yard or the Red-shouldered Hawk that lives in the eucalyptus on the hill behind my house. For a few weeks in July I enjoyed watching many **violet green swallows** catch insects behind Park Mall. I

could not even see what they were hunting, but they would barrel through the alley inches above the pavement until they got close to me and then swoop over the fence into the adjacent field at such a breakneck speed that it was impossible for me to visually follow just one for very long. There was at least one barn swallow with them, and it remains after all the other swallows have gone.

BROOKS FALLS : TRIM & DRAIN DIP DIGGING

By Joseph Piro

At first I thought it would just be **me** for our October 13th Trail Day, but then trusty **Istvan Puski** arrived (better a little late than never - yay!). I started by sweeping out and organizing the tools our volunteer tool shed. And



then, to do a little trail-work, we took some lopers and McLeods and hiked up the Brooks Falls Trail to a bit past the bench overlooking the falls, trimming several **manzanita** branches back & cleaning out some drain dips along the way.

NOV.— DEC. 2012 CALENDAR**NOVEMBER TRAIL DAY**

Saturday, November 10.....9am

BING QUOCK'S FRONTIERS OF SPACE

Saturday, November 10.....7:30pm

NOVEMBER GENERAL MEETING

Wednesday, November 14.....5:30pm

NOVEMBER HABITAT RESTORATION DAY

Saturday, November 17.....9am

DECEMBER TRAIL DAY

Saturday, December 8.....9am

HOLIDAY PARTY

Wednesday, December 12.....6pm

DECEMBER HABITAT RESTORATION DAY

Saturday, December 15.....9am

BILL FREEDMAN'S MUSHROOM WALK

Saturday, December 29.....11am

*For all events, meet at the Visitor Center**For all events, meet at the Visitor Center***ON THE TRAIL** (continued)

Ranger **David Vasquez** and Park Aide, **Bernadette**, saw a **Red Tailed Hawk** closing in on a **Raven**, then crashing onto the large black bird, which lived to fly away with its nearby partner, perhaps for further mischief another day. It was September 17 at about 1pm and occurred by the **California live oak** tree near the park kiosk. (photo by JR Compton)

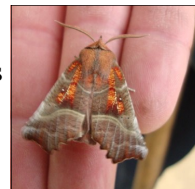


Ray Trabucco sighted a **Barn Owl** flying in the vicinity of his home in Park Pacifica, close to the Park. It landed in a nearby tree. This "first" happened early in the evening of a day in early October. While we have not seen one in SPVP, we now wonder if we might be able to find one here..(internet photo of Barn Owl)



On the morning of September 8 trail day, **Joseph Piro** and **Istvan Puski** found this orange

festooned **moth** on the Hazelnut Trail, as well as some delicious looking **huckleberries**.



We won't ask if Joe and Istvan resisted temptation and left them for the wildlife or if they temporarily became wild creatures.



A Golden-crowned Sparrow was found in a disoriented state in the parking lot on Sun, Oct. 21, a rainy day.

Veterinarian, **Jane Turrel**, decided he had had a concussion; **Jim Mackey**, noting its pale yellow crown, identified it as a juvenile fellow, who had probably migrated south ahead of our Alaskan Gulf storm. (internet photo of immature one) Veterinarian, and "Friends" member, **Nancy Craig**, rescued him.

