

"CHRISTMAS" HOLIDAY PARTY

Come one, come all, to the "Friends" delicious celebration of the approaching winter solstice. We'll meet on December 11th at 6:30 in our beautiful Visitor Center for pot luck with turkey & ham provided by our "friends" group. (123RF cartoon)



Jennifer Alpaugh and **Rob Hughes** have volunteered to be our host and hostess for this event. They will call you to supper, to our joyous Christmas gift exchange game; Don't forget that Santa Claus giveth and he taketh away. Then Jennifer and Rob will conduct our raffle of the poinsettias and ??. **Denise Marcucci, Bing Huey, Shirley Drye, and Carol Martinez** will be calling you before the event.

BRIDGE BUSINESS By Joseph Piro

Under an overcast and misty-at-times sky, we split into 2 groups for our September 14th Trail Day -- **Ranger Kat** and 2 fellows both named **Ed** went up the Trout Farm Trail with the power hedge trimmer while **Ralph Larson** and I went up to the bridge on the Brooks Falls Trail to give it some TLC. We trimmed back bank-side stuff on both sides, removed all the little bits of dried twisted



vines from the wire mesh railings, scraped and pulled back dirt from the wood posts and I even went under it to clear branches out. We all got back to the Visitor's Center at noon to enjoy our annual end-of-summer potluck BBQ with all the Park friends. [Joseph

shot this photo of **Ralph** "over the side"; Joseph also cooked the links and burgers for 28 people]

VALUED VISITOR CENTER WORKERS

We value all who man the desk for 3 hrs every month, and suggest *you step up to the plate*. But even if you can't, you can shadow one of our experts first and then take over in emergency; you will be doing a great favor for people who come here from Pacifica, the Bay Area, and many far away places. Thanks especially to our newest worker, **Judy Bacon**, who is taking over once a month and to double-shifters, **Doris Kelly, Jack Dodson, and Lois Joseph**.

WE MUST SAY GOODBYE TO FRED LOUGHIN

And that hurts, because Fred gave so much to youngsters here in the Park, and because he left behind some good trail and volunteer friends. We didn't count all the children that he gave programs for in the Visitor Center, but what a legacy he left behind.

PLEASE SEE THE ARTICLE ON PAGE 2

AMAROQ WEISS'S NOVEMBER TALK ON WOLVES

Amaroq Weiss, West Coast Wolf Organizer for the Center for Biological Diversity, will give a presentation on the return of wolves to the Pacific West, covering topics from wolf ecology to the politics of wolf recovery. Her program will take place at the Visitor Center at **3pm on Saturday, the 2nd of November**.



Since wolves used to inhabit much of the Pacific states, it follows more reasonably that Ms. Weiss coordinates campaigns for the restoration and protection of wolf populations in California, Oregon, and Washington. As a biologist and former attorney, she has worked in wolf conservation for 17 years, including for the California Wolf Center, Mexican Wolf Conservation Fund and Defenders of Wildlife. Recently she jointly produced two films on the fight for wolves.



As a child, Amaroq insisted to her parents that she wanted puppies, not human babies, and she never lost that love of canids. Many years later she became a certified practitioner in a holistic method of behavior training and bodywork for dogs and had her own practice in that field for about 4 years.

Ms. Weiss holds a B.S. in entomology from Iowa State University, an M.S. in entomology from University of Wisconsin, & a law degree from Hastings Law School..

ON THE TRAIL

Sometimes the most astonishing thing you see is not the large mammal you chased around a corner to the Plaskon nature trail on Sept 13th to be sure what it was, (a **bobcat**, who stopped and stood its ground, grooming itself nonchalantly) but a wee little creature, the **spotted tussock moth caterpillar, Lophocampa maculata**,—seen on a sunny September 16th morning by your editor, at 10am, crossing the handicapped pathway near the willows. They prefer to feed on **willows & alders**.



On the sunny morning of Sept. 27, **Walter Colquhoun** made a sighting of the **Great Blue Heron** on the church grounds. Then things real-



ly started heating up, as on Oct. 8 and 17, at about 9:30, I saw a **G. Blue Heron** walk slow-motion across the parking lot, once toward a raven who was hanging out by the garbage. On Sun. the 20th, Mr. Long-legs wowed many visitors in the parking lot with his tall, stiff-legged regal stride. On Oct. 26, **Shirley**

Drye saw one walk in front of the Visitor Center door! (heron spitting out weeds by **Ray Trabucco**)

GOODBYE, FRED LOUGHLIN, PRIZE-WINNING 20 YEAR VOLUNTEER

"Ranger Fred", as some of the children called him, will be missed by all who knew him, but those who knew him as youngsters, especially. A look at past newsletters will tell you about his popular school programs and his award. Then we will tell you a little about Fred as a person and how he enjoyed the Park. (At right is Fred having received a volunteer award from then President, Ed Decker.)

Once, in early 2002:

"I watched Fred with a class of third and fourth graders gathered around him on the floor of our museum. With bushy beard and twinkling eyes, with a mischievous smile, he started with exuberance and kindness, allaying the fears of the children that we might have deliberately killed our posed critters. The children wanted to know just how real they were..: "These are their feathers or fur, only their eyes are fake—marble."

And in the September/October newsletter, 2004 we wrote of Fred's deserving deeds that did qualify him as "Volunteer of the Year" by the then 'Volunteers of San Pedro Valley Park'.

"We do take our time, but at our last meeting there was a unanimous vote that the selfless teacher of nature in our Park, Fred Loughlin, deserved our high praise and therefore this plaque and honor as "Volunteer of the Year", for his over 10 years of service teaching children of Pacifica about our flora and fauna.

One SPVP visitor recently asked me if Mr. Loughlin, whose letters of thanks from a brownie troop are now on display, was available for her little troop, and how much did he charge? She was astonished when I said that Fred always volunteers his time for such organizations and has spoken to and led hikes for countless school groups. His friendly voice, and rugged looks give him a ranger aura that the children always love."

When I first met Fred I was immediately impressed by his friendly demeanor; I found him to be an endearing character—he was vintage Fred. Loughlin taught basic computer skills at the Community Center, where he undoubtedly charmed all the older women who took his classes. Fred was so fond of the Park, that he hiked the Trout Farm trail and the Weiler Ranch Road every morning, putting some of us younger "explorers" to shame, until a couple of years ago, when he shortened his walks., but couldn't leave the trails.

Walter Calquhoun told me that Fred was a connoisseur of big band music, that when he visited, Glen Miller and others were often playing on his stereo. Fred was an Army Medical Technician for 6 years,becoming a very patriotic man, who flew an American flag from his house. Fred was a television technician, who fixed computers on the side. He was so many things, but mainly he was a good man.

THE FRIENDS OF SPVP CELEBRATE TRAIL DAYS WITH A BARBEQUE IN V.C. PATIO—SEPT. 14, 2013

Somehow, the drizzly 12 noon barbeque sparked up the energy of (from left to right): Edwin Marcucci, Bevan Jones, Ralph Larsen, Sara Shaw, Jim Mackey, Christine Guzman, Sharron Walker (crouching), Shirley Drye (peeking), Betty Parent, Barbara Bernhart, Carolyn Pankow, Terry Sherar, Isabel Ebert, Steve Robinson, Barbara Kempster, Adrian Stroganoff, Mila Stroganoff, Carol Martinez, and Monika (a guest from Germany). Not shown, but very much present, were the photographer, Joseph Piro, Denise Marcucci, Sandy Larsen, Jack Dodson, Lois Joseph, Julie Thomas, Christian Rivlin, & grandson, Kingston. Rangers Cat Allen, Greg, and aide, Steve popped in for a plate after setting up tables and barbecue for us. Thanks to all for the preparation and good food and great conversation! We hope to see more of you lovers of the wild next time. I dare you to tell us you can't find some people you can talk to in this garrulous, nature-loving bunch. The menu: Polish links, homemade hamburgers, broccoli salad, pasta salad, split pea, etc. salad, watermelon, etc. fruit salad, and of course apple pie and chocolate chip cookies.



A NATURALIST'S PERSPECTIVE

By Jim Mackey

Nov./Dec. 2013

What glows in the dark? Isabelle Ebert and Steve Robinson were prowling around at dusk recently and noticed several small worm-like things that glowed. I had the same experience years ago in Mendocino County, which reminded me of the fireflies (or ladybugs) in Ohio. (These are bad common names because the insects are actually beetles, in the family **Lampyridae** - which is a good name because it refers to the glow, which enabled me to remember the name.) Do you remember the Mills Brothers' hit song, "Glowworm"?



"When you gotta glow you gotta glow, turn on the AC and the DC for the female of the species." So I looked up Lampyridae in **Powell** and **Hogue, California Insects**. None of the California species of Lampyridae glow as adults, but several glow as larvae (Calif. **Glowworm** larva)

(hence are "glowworms"), and in one, the females mature in the larval form, and their glow may attract males. (Even as the sparkle in Isabelle's eyes attracts Steve.)

Classification of animals and plants may be natural (showing evolutionary relationships) or artificial (e.g. grouping plants in a wildflower guide by color). Some groupings of organisms that were thought to be natural have been revealed by recent genetic comparisons to be artificial. Thus New World vultures, including our **Turkey Vulture** (Audubon w.s. photo of American vulture), appear to be more closely related to **storks** than to **hawks**, which are related to **Old World vultures** (Old world vulture photo below from Flicker). So these two groups of "vultures" have evolved from different ancestors into a vulture-niche (of habitat



and food) in different regions. Apparently a hooked beak can evolve readily in birds, so is not an infallible evidence of actual relationship. (Consider the hooked beak of a **shrike**, (photo of shrike to left from alabouthbirds w.s.) which is in the order of perching birds.)



Scientific names are usually derived from word-roots in Latin or ancient Greek. This makes it equally difficult for

scientists in all countries to understand the meanings of the names. Also since these languages are "dead" (not in popular use) the meanings of the words will not change. I have a copy of Jaeger's Source-book of Biological Names and Terms that is fun to refer to. Incidentally there are international committees of scientists that attempt to standardize the world-wide use of names (another form of globalization).

I grew up, in Ohio, in the company of **Bluejays** (*Cyanocitta cristata*). In 1948 a highschool buddy and I motored laboriously to the west. We camped in a coniferous forest in the Rockies where I was stunned to see a blue and black,

loud-mouthed bird that I knew must be a jay! It was a **Steller's Jay** (*Cyanocitta stelleri*) (Stellar's Jay photo from Wikipedia Commons). In San Pedro Park we have two jays that are blue, but we don't have the official Bluejay. We have Steller's Jays and **California Scrub-jays** (*Aphelocoma californica*).

The Bluejay and Steller's Jay are closely related (both crested) so are in the same genus: *Cyanocitta* (cyan = Gr. blue; citta = Gr. chattering bird). *Cristata* is from crist L. = crest. The Scrub-jay is in the genus *Aphelocoma* -



comes in our Park of both the pale Scrub-jay (Scrub Jay photo from allaboutbirds) and the dark Steller's Jay is evidence that we have both open, sunlit habitats (shrub communities) and shaded forest (bluegum eucalyptus). [Your editor does not agree with Dr. Mackey in thinking that the invasive bluegum is needed for the Steller's Jay to be in our park, a park with abundant streamside alders, pines, & acorn-bearing oaks]

Poor Jim's Almanac. Late October into November is the breeding season for our deer. The

bucks that have been herding together become hostile toward each other and seek the does that are coming into heat.



The 7-month gestation will produce fawns in May, when there will be warmth, water and fresh browse. (Walter Colquhoun photo of 2 SPVP bucks engaging one another)



ON THE TRAIL (Continued)

On October 2, **Barbara Kempster** and friend counted 19 quail emerging from the willows to the side of the handicapped trail—time 9am. The next morning your editor and a small **bobcat** were both surprised to almost have stumbled into each other at the same spot. Perhaps “he” was concentrating too hard on finding one of the plumed birds in the bush. (Jeff James photo of what might have happened...)

A morning trail regular, **Henry Matias**, also had an extremely close encounter with the undoubtedly juvenile **bobcat**, a few days later in the same spot.

Ranger **Greg Escoto** reported a funny flurry of dust bathing by a group of perhaps a dozen **quail** in the evening at the green waste area below the lower lot.

Probably to get rid of mites and other pests, they placed their bellies in the dirt and did a dance, wiggling and wagging, with flapping wings flying the dust upwards onto their backs. It was early September.

Bing Huey took this photo of a large **wolf spider** while hiking with a friend on the Valley View trail on Oct. 17. Apparently the spider insisted that he had to give her a quarter if he wanted to photograph her.



NEWS BRIEFS

Hot off the press: You will see 2 new faces at SPVP; each is a ranger II. They are Rangers **Miranda Holeton** & **Kevin O'Brien**. More later on these 2 quality people.

NOVEMBER-DECEMBER CALENDAR

AMAROQ WEISS'S WOLVES

Saturday, November 2.....3pm

NOVEMBER TRAIL DAY

Saturday, November 9.....9am

NOVEMBER GENERAL MEETING

Wednesday, Nov. 13 at Shirley Drye's.....7pm

NOVEMBER HABITAT RESTORATION DAY

Saturday, November 16.....9am

HOLIDAY PARTY

Wednesday, December 11.....6:30pm

DECEMBER TRAIL DAY

Saturday, December 14.....9am

DECEMBER HABITAT RESTORATION DAY

Saturday, December 21.....9am

For all events, unless indicated otherwise, meet at the Center

MAKING WAY FOR THE FLOWERS

Our habitat restoration group cleared shrubs from the fields on lower Hazelnut to make way for flowers and grasses. Pictured below, front: **Istvan Puski**, **Ranger Greg Escoto**, Standing: “**Rangers**” **Steve and Joe**, and volunteers **Mike, Eugene, Dan, Jake Sigg** of the Calif Native Plant Society, and **Christine Guzman**. **Bing Huey**, hab. rest. regular took this photo.



WEILER RANCH WEED-OUT

By Joseph Piro

We had a great turn-out and a wonderful sunny Fall morning for our October 12th Trail Day. **Laurel Bennett**, **Jessica Navarro**, **Jon Sosa**, **Kim Stafford** and **Alicia Wu** (all volunteers from One Medical Group) joined me, **Istvan Puski**, **Ralph Larsen** and **Ranger Kat Allen** for brush-trimming work along the start of the Weiler Ranch Road. It was a lot of lopper work cutting back mostly **coyote brush** (and avoiding the poison oak/ivy) and then tossing it all into the truck Kat drove. We made 2 truckloads-worth! Enjoy the trails! [Looks like we need more “Friends” members to help keep these pathways “hikable”]

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

The Leaders of “the Friends of San Pedro Valley Park”: President, **Jim Mackey**; Vice President, **Carolyn Pankow**; Secretary, **Shirley Drye**; Interim Treasurer, **Bing Huey**; member at large, **Istvan Puski**; **Visitor Center staffing-open** (thank you all for help, work, and time from staff); Habitat Restoration Leader, **Istvan Puski**; Trail Leader, **Joseph Piro**; Membership, **Catherine Antista**; Programs, **Carolyn Pankow**; Trailside Store: **Denise Marcucci** . . .