

THE BEAVERS with HEIDI PERRYMAN: 6pm on JUNE 6

Dr. Heidi Perryman, founder of “Worth a Dam” in Martinez, will speak on the phenomenal natural reoccurrence



of **beavers** in this Bay Area town, how the community rallied together to save them and what they have since then learned about this industrious pond-maker’s ability to bring back other species to ecosystems. The program’s date is **Saturday, June 6; time is 6pm.**

Dr. Perryman started out as a child psychologist, but recently her motherly instincts and love

have been applied to a little family of beavers that decided to build a home in this lovely area.

She and others of her group are now delighted to see **Green Herons, Hooded Mersangers, turtles**, and a host of other creatures coming to the new Martinez ponds, thanks to the beavers. (**Beaver photo by Heidi Perryman**)



Since then Heidi has been photographing some of the critters and some of the activities of he beavers. Check on YouTube and you will see some of Heidi’s videos, and notes that teach you ten ways that beavers benefit wildlife and humans alike.

JONATHAN SHORE’S NESTING BIRDS OF THE FARALLONS

Mr. Jonathan Shore, who is one of the privileged few to live on the Farallon Islands for months at a time, will present a program on its avian nesters on **Saturday, May 30, at 6pm**, in our Visitor Center. This wildlife refuge specialist on the Farallon National



Wildlife Refuge, has brain-expanding information on the 12 species of sea and coastal birds that nest on these isolated, rocky prominences off our shores. This is the last holdout of the **Stormy Petral** and the nesting grounds for the **Common Murre**, “breeds” of **cormorants** and other seafarers.

One of the challenges Jonathan and his colleagues face is a common vegetable that “strives” to take over this rocky refuge, and the other is the persistence of one of our dedicated food-raiders, and imagine all the eggs for the taking here! Jonathan is really wedded to the health of this isolated ecosystem; come and see what you can learn.

YOUR NATURE ISSUE—MARCH & APRIL’S RECORD

This April has been a heady one, one in which many of our members have helped us to see the diversity in species and populations in SPVP. Enjoy their observations! In the future I hope you will get active in being one of our Park ‘naturalists’ and in volunteering for the “Friends” and the Park.

Happy Trails, Carolyn Pankow, Editor

JIM STEELE BIRD SONG WALK SATURDAY, MAY 23, 8am



For those of you who missed the April walk, an energetic **Jim Steele** will be out early by the stream and lower areas of SPVP to play tempting music to male avians, to trick them into giving us their little “concert” & thus revealing their species. Bring binoculars!

VISITOR CENTER HEMMORAGING WORKERS

*Emergency in the Visitor Center: We are losing people as their lives take turns no one had imagined;. We do want to thank **Carl Schwab** and new member, **Claudia Vilagi**, for joining the ranks of V.C. staffers, but we still need more people to commit to just a three hour stint once a month! Call **Mila Stroganoff**, who will welcome you to this group of workers who are the only reason the Center can open for the public: 359-1642*

ON THE TRAIL

Let’s start out with this **gopher** that came out on a 78° F day—March 14. We know that this little harvester & unfortunate prey of **bobcat, Red-tailed Hawk**, etc., is a great excavator. Still, photographer, **Ron Wilson** was amazed at the size



of its claws!

Katie Antista saw a beautiful **Red-tailed Hawk** soaring over the hills above the Weiler Ranch Road on Mar. 15 at 5pm. Then **Ron Wilson** photographed this one catching the updraft by the museum 3 days later.



Leave it to all-seeing **Barbara Kempster** to point out a **coyote** to **Katie Antista** and others, as it was sniffing and prancing along at the far end of the So. Walnut on March 8, at 4pm. Look out, gophers!

MILA'S MILES; MILA'S SERPENTS

Mila Stroganoff, our Visitor Center scheduler, and expert pianist and fine ballroom dancer, has been taking to various trails in the Park for many hours lately, often on the Weiler Ranch Road.



On one hike in very early March in the late morning hours, she was privileged to see 3 "sticks" that turned out to have moving parts

on the WWR and its handicap trail. On the latter pathway was the prize: a 4 foot long **gopher snake** sunning itself on the dirt surface; being a person of good manners, she politely walked around him & warned others she saw to respect the serpent's interlude in the sun.

The other two were **garter snakes**. One on the WWR slithered into the grass in a flash, the other insisted on its sunbathing rights, probably the larger one, who may have been as long as 2 feet. Mila noted the longitudinal stripes of the "garters".

RAY TRABUCCO

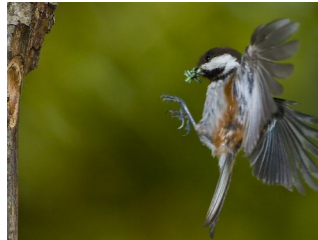
Ray Trabucco, our "brush-mustached" nature-guy, loves photographing birds, mammals & flower, particularly in SPVP, Mori Point, GG Park, but spent oodles of time here this April. Friendly Ray chats enthusiastically about these critters to park lovers. Due to technical difficulties, we must look to the future to get HIS photos here of these sightings:

First set on April 9 – singing Spotted Towhee by the north pkg lot at noon.



Downy Woodpecker initiating a nest in a willow on the Trout Farm trail at 1:45pm.

Active Chestnut-backed Chickadee nest in willow on



Trout Farm Trail at 2:30pm. (Gary Luhm photo)



octopus stinkhorn fungus at Trout Farm picnic grounds.

Second set on April 10 – left to rt. Below: fringe cups, & Smith's fairy bells (Walt's Camera World photo) & starflow-ers (Friends of Boyne R. photo) at So. Trout Farm. (look also in our native sun garden to see the fringe cups and starflower.)



BING HUEY ON THE VALLEY VIEW



All of us who love the open sunny dryness of the Valley View Trail will appreciate the fact the Bing Huey took the time to photograph and study the **blue dicks, Diche-**



lostemma capitatum, that are not always blue, dwelling in the grassier areas.

Mr. Huey did a little research, finding that the Trail Center online newsletter published an article about flowers on this trail in the same location 15 years ago, mentioning the white variant of the blue dicks.



Bing, who has been a researcher in the field of genetics at UCSF for many years noted: "[I] found these flowers in a spot with a number of what might be white variants of the blue dicks (*Dichelostemma*) growing

among the more normally colored ones. ..Among these, there are a number of what looks to be genetic intergrades, which seem to have the white and blue colors more separated as the flowers develop, and then more homogeneously mixed as they reach full bloom."



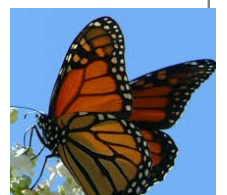
RANGER MATT AUDA-CAPEL IS BACK IN SPVP!

Ranger Matt Auda-Capel, this soft-spoken man was at the gatehouse when he mentioned that he had seen a **grey fox, *Urocyon cinereoargenteus***, walking up the Trout Farm at 7:30pm on Sat., Ap.11; after it paused to turn its head to look back, it trotted casually up the pathway. (Nick Dunlop photo) *Next Issue: Barbara Kempster & Ray Trabucco & foxy.*



RANDY T. BURNS

Randy Burns is a husky man, with bronzed, weather-tempered skin, a true outdoors nature lover. This keen-eyed man is a Northern Paiute senior citizen from the Pyramid Lake area of Nevada who loves to hang out, observing nature in the north-east section of the Park. He was happy, if not buoyant, when he saw a **monarch butterfly** there on February 6 and again on March 29th of this year.



A NATURALIST'S PERSPECTIVE

by Jim Mackey

May-June 2015

Hummingbirds! Last February 3rd, at 11:30 a.m., it was sunny and warm, and I was walking on the Weiler Ranch Road - by the first large meadow. A squeaky "song" alerted me to the presence of a male Anna's Hummingbird, who was perched on the top of a coyote brush. I stopped and pointed my camera at him, causing him to take flight - soaring up and then diving into his

"pendulum flight", which culminated in a loud "pop" over my head. The bird then returned to his perch, while I had advanced a little closer and resumed taking his photo. We repeated this interaction for about 15 minutes, during which he dived over me six times while I took a dozen photos.



In some of these photos, when the bird faced me and the sun behind me, it had a glittering, red gorget (throat and forehead) with the feathers held out stiffly.

In other photos the gorget was black. So the red was not produced by a pigment but by reflection from minute mirror-like platelets (i.e. iridescence). Thus the male hummingbird is not so conspicuous to predators in all directions and at all times.



In comparison, the red epaulets on the wings of male Red-winged Blackbirds are pigmented (not iridescent), but these birds can hide them under other feathers when not displaying. (drawings from Peterson Field Guide to Birds of N.A.)

What does the female Anna's Hummingbird do? She builds the nest, lays and incubates the two eggs, and broods and feeds the young - in our winter (rainy or not)! This species is associated with chaparral and feeds on manzanita flowers (which bloom in winter). One study concluded that Anna's hummingbirds also benefit from the winter-flowering bluegum eucalyptus.

A hummingbird nest is an intricate, dense, insulating, camouflaged structure.

(Hummingbirds are the smallest animals that produce most of their own heat, and being small they have a relatively large surface from which heat is lost.



They often allow their body temperatures to drop at night when roosting in order to conserve heat. But the nest allows a female to retain a high temperature, promoting faster development of the young. (Jim Mackey photos of baby hummers in nest in a SPVP red-

wood tree were taken on Mar 5, then Mar 14, 2014)



Poor Jim's Almanac. Enjoy the bird song of spring! Especially the rising, spiraling, flute-like song of the Swainson's Thrush. (image of Swainson's Thrush singing from ABC birds.)

SPLIT TEAM ACTION ON BROOKS MONTARA LOOP

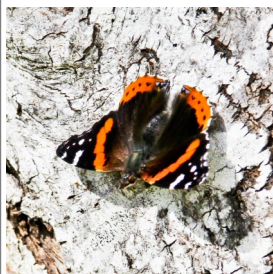
We had nice weather and a nice turn-out for our March 14th Trail Day -- my brother **Erik Piro**, **Istvan Puski**, **Raphael** and **Gabe Clark**, **Mario Torresan**, **Jack Coats** and **me**. With so many people, we decided to split into 2 groups -- Raphael and Gabe went up the Montara Mtn. Trail with Istvan to rake and clear drain dips while I led the others on the Brooks Falls/Trout Farm loop where we trimmed back lots of vegetation in several spots and smoothed out a bad rut. Happy trails!
Joseph Piro



ON THE TRAIL

(Continued)

Ron Wilson caught images of **Chestnut-backed Chickadees** excavating and cleaning a nest formerly used by **wood-peckers** on the Plaskon nature trail at 4:30pm on Mar. 18. I do believe this little species used it last year also.



On Mar. 15, Ron Wilson photographed this early hatching **red admiral butterfly** sunning itself on a willow trunk along the trail south of the so. parking lot.

Ron took shots of this orange & black **crane fly** (Tipulidae) along the Trout Farm path near the end of the picnic area. This one was nestled on a dried fungus-laden willow at 2 PM on March 18th.



This close-up of **Ceanothus thrysifloris** blossoms Bing Huey photographed on the Montara Mountain Trail in mid-March, is the clearest and most beautiful I've ever seen of this species.

And a little History from 2 active seniors; **Shirley Drye**

reported on this Feb. 22: "Today in the Park I saw about 10 adult **quail** on the tank side of the Trout Farm Road. Also saw a beautiful, very **tiny blue butterfly** [note that we have identified 3 species of blues in SPVP, a land of diversity!] A few **milkmaids** (Russ Cary photo) are blooming by the south side of the so. Plaskon Bridge."



On Feb 13, **Jim Mackey** sighted a **Red-tailed hawk**, swooping over the Trout Farm Trail. Then his ears alerted him to the 3 hoots in a series of the **female Great Horned Owl** nearby. (fewer than the male's 5 hoots)

MAY-JUNE 2015 CALENDAR

MAY TRAIL DAY

Saturday, May 9.....9am

MAY BOARD MEETING

Wednesday, May 13.....7pm

MAY HABITAT RESTORATION DAY

Saturday, May 16.....9am

JIM STEELE'S MAY BIRD SONG WALK

Saturday, May 23.....8am

JONATHAN SHORE'S NESTING ON THE FARALLONES

Saturday, May 30.....6pm

BEAVERS WITH HEIDI PERRYMAN

Saturday, June 6.....6pm

JUNE BOARD MEETING

Wednesday, June 10.....7pm

JUNE TRAIL DAY

Wednesday, June 13.....9am

JUNE HABITAT RESTORATION DAY

Saturday, June 20.....9am

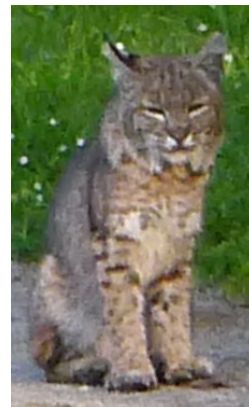
For all events except board meetings, come to the Visitor Center. For board meetings call: 355-2245, Pres. Jim Mackey

Who hasn't seen the **coyotes** that cross the main entry road from St. Peters to the hill? On Ap. 10, in the early pm, I saw a skinny juvenile, (**Lauren Webster** photo) who kept looking back toward the brush by the church, as it crossed to the base of the hill, & then trotted back, in front of my car.



Was Mom on the other side? **Ron Wilson** saw a female on the entry hill, & **J. Mackey** saw a full grown **coyote** there, one-whose coat glowed golden in the mid day sun. Remember **Laurie Nikitas's** photo of the macho male on the hill by that entry road last October? Well, **Mary Steincamp**, of "Waves" hair salon, is a great morning hiker, & at 7am on Ap. 9, saw a "German shepherd-sized" **coyote** walk across the macadam & go through the breach in the St. Peter's fence. At 7:30pm, on April 10, Ray Trabucco sighted a **coyote** on the north pkg lot sidewalk.

6:30am **Mary Steincamp** saw an "elderly" **bobcat** walking casually up the Weiler Ranch Rd., one who vanished near the E. Hazelnut. 6:20pm on Ap. 18, **Michael Kimbell**, a "Friend", took this great photo of a shaggy one on the horseshoe pits path-same fella? [male range 10-80 mi²]



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 SPVP": President: **Jim Mackey**; Vice President & Editor: **Carolyn Pankow**; Secretary: **Shirley Drye**; Interim Treasurer: **Bing Huey**; member at large: **Istvan Puski**; Visitor Center Staffing: **Mila Stroganoff**; Habitat Restoration leader: **Istvan Puski**; Trail Leader: **Joseph Piro**; Membership: **Jim Steele**; Programs: **Carolyn Pankow**; Trailside Store Team Manager: **Sharron Walker**; Mobile Display Board: **Katie Antista**



Front row (left to right) : Bevan Jones, Claudia Velagi, Pat Robinson, Carol Martinez, Terry Sherar, Nattie Juvland, Christine Guzman, Shirley Drye, Carolyn Pankow, Katie Antista, Skeeter. Back row (left to right): Joseph Piro, Jack Coats, Carl Schwab, Sharron Walker, Katy Beltran, Barbara Kemptster, Jim Steele, Ray Trabucco, and Istvan Puski. Not pictured but present: Betty Parent, twin bothers, Rafael and Gabriel Clark, Ranger Cat Allen.

WE ARE ASKING FOR VOLUNTEERS!

If we can't get more volunteers for the following, we will have to cut back on barbeques and/or the holiday party, length of the newsletter, and the number of programs we schedule. Consider :

Phone work—Calling members for the barbeques and Holiday Party. Time commitment is less than 1 hour.

Barbeque, & Christmas Party Coordinator: This person reminds **Jim Steele** to make a new membership list, assigns a calling list to each person and mails lists to them, tells them what kind of dishes are needed, keeping an email contact with phone people. He also does an eye inventory of plates, etc., to see what needs to be purchased and buys it with organization money. He or she can run things his way, but I will be glad to help launch her. **Time commitment is about 3 hours for each event.**

Refreshment/Hospitality person: For many programs, a busy **Terry Sherar** helped get out the food for the audience but now I need someone new who can work with me, or buy the cookies, etc., prepare the table with hot water, coffee, etc. We could really use a small committee to trade off on this job. **Time commitment: about 30 minutes before a program.**

Publicity

Writing articles—If you like to research and write, we could use you to develop some or all of the articles for the Tribune for each speaker. Often the speaker will write his own biography, and I could assist you at the outset. **Time commitment: about 3 hours a month.**

Distribution of flyers—for this volunteer job, you would place the flyers on the bulletin board and in the 2 kiosks and take 2 to one of the libraries for distribution, and perhaps one to the Community Center, etc.

Time commitment: 1 hour once a month.

Thank you ahead of time for volunteering. Happy trails from your editor and program chair, Carolyn Pankow



HABITAT RESTORATION

The 21st of March: **Istvan Puski**, our leader, worked with **Ranger Chris**, and 7 or 8 others, including **Christine Guzman** and a student from Skyline, on the front slope, digging out brush to encourage native grasses. One of our favorites is ***Calamagrostus nutkaensis***, **Pacific reed grass**, which we planted at the far end of our native sun garden a few years ago. Then, the next day, the college student worked with Istvan, pulling Cape weed from part of the first big field off the Weiler Ranch Road. (photo of **Pacific reed grass** is from SF Bay Natives web site) [Yes, more habitat restoration workers are needed too; they meet at the Visitor Center every 3rd Saturday of the month. Come on May 16th or June 20 for spring detail.] (missing April report)

KEEPING THE TRAILS PASSABLE

Istvan Puski, Jack Coats, Gabe, Raphael and I were on duty for our April 11th Trail Day. Under a wonderfully sunny sky, we once again worked on the Brooks Falls and Old Trout Farm Trail loop. On the Brooks Falls Trail, we made it up to the edge of the eucalyptus forest where we did some more bank cutting in spots where the uphill side was starting to slide a bit and force people out towards the edge. Then, along the stretch of the Old Trout Farm Trail by the old foundation, the vegetation was narrowing the trail so we trimmed all that back. And, after our morning work, we returned to the Visitor's Center to enjoy a great potluck BBQ lunch with all the other volunteers. Definitely a good day! (From left to right: **Joseph Piro, Istvan Puski, Jack Coats, Rafael, and Gabe** (twin brothers) On the Upper Trout Farm.

Joseph Piro

[**Joseph Piro** is the trail days leader and the photographer and writer of this article and the burger and links chef for our barbeques, who also holds down a full time job at a web design company.]

