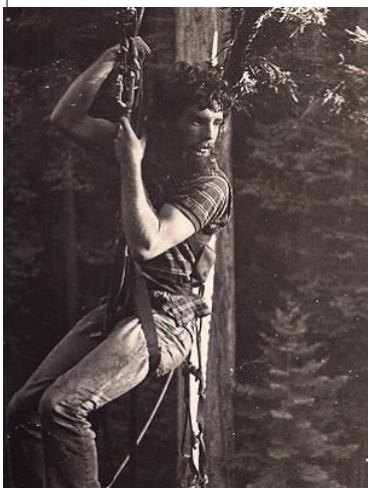


GREG KING & IMPERILED CALIFORNIA RIVER FRIDAY, 8/14



When I first plunged into the pristine, cool waters of No. Calif's Smith River in the 80's, Greg Smith was spending a week up in a redwood tree, protesting against logging of the last unprotected old growth stands of *Sequoia sempervirens*. A fortune 500 company was intent on buying an area of trophy redwoods from the Pacific Lumber company and "harvesting" all its trees. (at left—Greg in protest)

The Smith River still carves its way through huge dense stands of redwoods, Douglas firs, etc. in NW Calif., but now it and its



environs are threatened by pesticide pollution. On **Friday, Aug. 14, at 6pm**, you have a chance to hear **Greg King** of the King Range family, speak on the present efforts to save the river & its ecosystems from a polluted, diminished future.

Mr. King received a B.A. in Political Science from UC Santa Cruz in 1982. He moved north to Guerneville, where he covered timber politics, earning himself a 1986 Lincoln Steffens Investigative Journalism Award for exposing illegal logging practices by timber giant



Louisiana Pacific Corp. He was a member of "Earth First" during the battle for the survival of old growth redwoods. (photo of Smith River by **M.D.. Vaden**)

In 1999 King founded the non-profit Smith River Project, dedicated to protecting

California's wildest river, and in 2004 he founded Siskiyou Land Conservancy, a land trust and advocacy organization that serves five counties in northwestern California. King is currently writing a book, *The Ghost Forest*, a history of the redwood ecosystem and redwood logging and protection efforts.

AUGUST BARBEQUE CANCELED—NEED VOLUNTEERS TO HELP

The Friends of SPVP would like to have a summer barbeque—maybe in Sept, and a holiday party, however no one stepped up to the plate after the appeal for help. Our main need right now is to have a volunteer who will coordinate the telephone tree for events, but we also need vol. to help with the set-up that **Carol Martinez** and **Skeeter** have been doing almost singlehandedly. Please call **Carolyn Pankow** at 355-7466 if you would like to commit to one of these jobs for a year.

DEBORAH ZIERTEN: SAVING the REDWOOD ECOSYSTEM

Deborah Zierten is the education & interpretation manager at the "Save the Redwoods League". The subject of her talk on **Sat, July 11 at 6pm**, will be "Why do we need to fight to save the Redwoods?" She will tell us more about the challenge of global warming to this trophy species & its wildlife & surrounding flora.

Ms. Zierten joined the League in 2013 after 8 years of experience teaching students environmental science. She recently worked for a local environmental education organization where she taught watershed ecology. Deborah has also worked for the Nat'l Park Service, KQED & the UC Cooperative Extension creating curriculum & outreach material relating to the natural history and ecology of the Bay Area.

Deborah is a native to this part of California; her introduction to nature was on family hikes & camping trips, but it was really on a trip to Ecuador where she traveled to learn Spanish but was hired as a rainforest guide, that her passion with nature began. Deborah went on to earn her B.A. degree in Biol. from the U. of Ore. & a Masters of Science from Southern Oregon University. She comes highly recommended by **Carla Schoof**. SM. Co. vol. pgm specialist.



ON THE TRAIL

One of **Barbara Kempster's** biggest thrills was at the end of May, I believe, when she and **Ron Wilson** saw two different **Belted Kingfishers** fly towards the creek from a tree in the South Walnut: a mating pair? Alas, how many **steelhead** could they find in San Pedro Creek? However, we do know that



Kate Antista spied a trout below the far Weiler Ranch Rd. bridge in mid-June. (kingfisher —gallery4share.com)

This glossy black beauty below is a **carrion beetle**,

Nicrophorus humator, who favors bird carcasses. "Friend" **Ron Wilson** found it at the end of May, right next to a dead **Robin**, whom Ron discovered is quite vulnerable to the **West Nile Virus**, so he bagged the "red breast's" body, giving it to the ranger on duty.



Bing Huey Photo of our Grey Fox in the So. Walnut on Sunday, June 6



At 6pm on that evening of April 27, **Barbara Kempster** and **Ray Trabucco** saw a **grey fox** catch & eat 3 **gophers** in the So. Walnut picnic area, one right after the other. "She" then disappeared into a hole or tunnel in the brush, likely to regurgitate a meal for "her" hidden kits.

People reported a grey fox on that hunting ground in May, & in early June, it was again attracting attention. This time Bing Huey shot this lovely photo of what I like to believe is the great provider, a healthy-looking Mom?

ATTACKED BY BLACKBERRIES?

By Joseph Piro

Himalayan Blackberry was on the menu for our June 13th Trail Day. Under a wonderfully sunny and warm sky, **Istvan Puski** and I joined Rangers **Kevin O'Brian** and **Matt Auda-Capel** tackling 2 spots where this thorny beast was prevalent. The first spot was on the creek side just on the other side of the water department gate mid-way up the Trout Farm Trail, and the other spot was under those big **eucalyptus** trees that fell over across the creek and canyon a little further up the trail. Even with heavy work gloves, you had to watch where you grabbed those long, thorny canes to pull and remove it! [If you check out **Istvan Puski**, who is obviously enveloped by all the challenging undergrowth, you can see what the fellows were up against!]



"A BAD DAY FOR THE PRICKLY ITALIAN THISTLE"

By Joseph Piro

Our May 9th Trail Day was not a good day for all the tall, prickly **Italian thistle** along the lower section of the Trout Farm Trail, as that's what **Istvan Puski**, my brother **Erik Piro** and I helped **Ranger Kevin O'Brian** and **Park Aide Troy Butler** remove. And there was a counter attack: even with sturdy gloves on, you had to be careful where you grabbed that stuff! But into big bags -- probably around a dozen or so -- and then into the truck, it all went. Bye-bye to thistle and hello to hiking this scenic little stretch of creek-side trail. (photo l to r: **Joseph Piro**, **Kevin O'Brian**, **Troy Butler**, **Istvan Puski**, and my brother, **Eric Piro**, quite proud of this armed trophy)



A NATURALIST'S PERSPECTIVE

By Jim Mackey

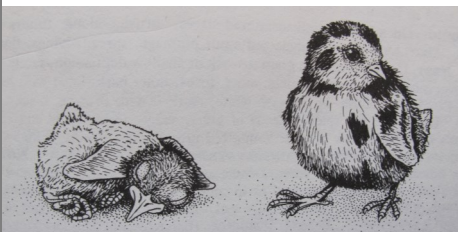
July/Aug. 2015

Baby pigeons. Recently in the "Baby Blues" cartoon, in the S.F. Chronicle, the little boy (Hammie) sits on a couch next to his Dad, who is holding a book. Hammie says,

"Dad, how come the car windows fog up when it rains?" Dad replies, "I dunno." Then Hammie asks, "Why don't we ever see baby pigeons?" Dad: "Beats me." The Mom enters and tells Hammie not to disturb his Dad when he's reading. But the Dad says that it's ok, because how else will Hammie ever learn? (above is a photo of an altricial pigeon chick)



Have you ever seen baby pigeons? Most of us have been charmed by the sight of ducklings, perhaps trailing after their mother, or quail chicks feeding on the ground with their mother while the father is perched on a nearby shrub looking for danger. Ducklings and chicks are examples of **pre-cocial** babies, that are downy, open-eyed



and mobile upon hatching, while baby pigeons and song-birds (passerines) are **altricial** - naked, blind and helpless upon hatching. (above—to the left a altricial House Sparrow baby; to the rt. Is a precocial Ruffed Grouse baby.) Their only talent is to gape when the nest moves, because that likely signals the return of the parent with food.

In an evolving lineage of birds, the selection of one or the other of these two modes of development depends on food availability & predation. In a precocial species the female must obtain enough food to produce large, calorie-rich eggs. Upon hatching, the babies must be able to reach an adequate food supply. In an altricial species the adults expend a tremendous amount of energy in nest construction and bringing food (usually protein-rich insects) to the nestlings. Predation is more likely to wipe out the whole brood than in the case of a family of precocial young.



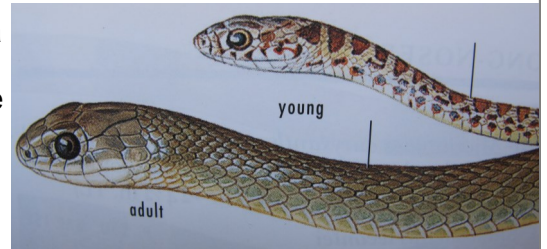
Pigeons, and doves, have a great advantage in being the only birds that lactate. This "pigeon milk" is produced from fatty cells shed from the lining of the crop and is similar in protein and fat content to rabbit's milk. Furthermore, the male, as well as the female, lactates!

(I would like to recommend an essay on the mode of development on pp 581-587 in "The Birder's Handbook", by **Ehrlich**, et al. I think that we still have a copy in our Trailside Store.) Incidentally, our brush rabbit has altricial young (born naked, blind and helpless), while the jackrabbit - found in open areas - has precocial young.



(above is a photo of **brush rabbit** babies by **Alison Hermance**)

Poor Jim's Almanac. Our fence lizards should be mating and burying their eggs in June - which should hatch in August. Their push-up display of their blue bellies is quite entertaining. Look for them along the Valley View Trail. Recently I spotted a common racer on a wooden platform that covers a ditch running from the Weiler Road into the first meadow. The snake struck at a fence lizard and both of them shot across the platform in less than a second and dived into the grassy ditch! About 10 minutes after this episode the lizard reappeared on the platform. (the common racer is pictured above)



ALL'S FAIR IN LOVE AND NATURE

By Bing Huey

I have been waiting for [this sick, sad, and unsightly attack on one of our favorite plants] to appear this year to get an image that would be topical. (if you catch the slightest whiff of a pun, it is intended.) If you have not seen it before, these **poison oak** leaves have been infected by a gall-forming **mite** (***Aculops rhois***). To anyone who might have developed a swollen red rash from poison oak, it might be sweet satisfaction to see it suffer its own dermal malady. (Bing's photo June 27 on the Trout Farm Trail)

[However, as many of you know, poison oak is one of the most important shrubby plants for many creatures of SPVP, including the **mule deer**, **Wrentits**, and a host of **insects** who pollinate its flowers.]



ON THE TRAIL (Continued)



This agile **grey fox**, *Urocyon cinereoargenteus*, shows the tree climbing ability of this canid, unlike his not-so-close cousin, the red fox. Thanks to **Ron Wilson** for waiting by the Trout Farm picnic

area for this moment on May 18 at dinnertime.

Michael Kimbell said that this **Western fence lizard** let him approach to within one foot to get this photo on the western Hazelnut—April 30.



While clearing Italian thistle from the side of the lower Trout Farm Road, **Joseph Piro** captured the beauty of the park's **Western morning glory**, *Calystegia occidentalis* "in its prime" in May.



A spotted coat announced a growing **fawn** who was keeping close to Mom and one other female **mule deer**. The trio left the road for the grassy field, then were later browsing through comestibles on the other side of this area half way up the Weiler Ranch Rd on the first of June at 7:30pm. (Brad



Christensen's mule deer fawn above)



Ron Wilson's bobcat hunting in So. Walnut on June 21 at 8am

JULY—AUGUST CALENDAR 2015

JULY BOARD MEETING

Wednesday, July 8.....6:30pm

JULY TRAIL DAY

Saturday, July 11.....9am

DEBORAH ZIERTEN'S SAVING REDWOODS

Saturday, July 11.....6pm

JULY HABITAT RESTORATION DAY

Saturday, July 18.....9am

AUGUST TRAIL DAY

Saturday, August 8.....9am

AUGUST BOARD MEETING

Wednesday, August 12.....6:30pm

GREG KING'S ASSAULT ON THE JEDEDIAH SMITH RIVER

Friday, August 14.....6pm

AUGUST HABITAT RESTORATION DAY

Saturday, August 14.....6pm

For all events except the Board Meetings, you will meet at the Visitor Center.

PRICKLY PROBLEM ON HABITAT RESTORATION DAY

By Joseph Piro

My new friend **Stephanie** and I joined leader, **Istvan Puski**, **Christine Guzman** and Ranger **Matt Auda-Capel** for our June 20th Native Plant Day. Under a sunny blue sky, Matt drove us all in the ATV out Weiler Ranch Road to the east end of the Hazelnut Trail, where we worked on removing alien **thistle** plants in that little meadow off to the side there. It was a good and productive time filling a couple of big black bags with those prickly foes.

