

## JO ELLIS ON LYME DISEASE AND THE TICK OCTOBER 14



Ever since I found that a young Pacifica neighbor has suffered the severe ill effects of late-treated Lyme Disease, I've felt it important to bring in a knowledgeable-speaker on Lyme. **Jo Ellis** is well-versed on this sinister sneaker/disabler; she will enlighten all who hike into "Bay Area wild" about the real possibility of being attacked by this strange bacteria, and the steps to take after finding a **tick** has decided to set up housekeeping on your body.

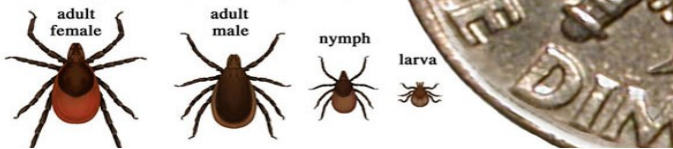
Ms. Ellis, who will be speaking at our Visitor Center at **4pm** on **Saturday, October 14**, is the head of Education Outreach for the Bay Area Lyme Foundation. She is a native of the UK who was originally a Product Development Executive for BBC Education, developing award-winning educational programs that are distributed worldwide.



But her direction changed as her passion led her to deep concerns about the effects of the disease on friends and acquaintances: "I know too many

people [here] whose lives have been derailed by Lyme..... I want to help educate everyone about this insidious disease so we can prevent more cases occurring." (person with some of the later Disease symptoms of Lyme shown above)

Blacklegged Tick (*Ixodes scapularis*)



Ms. Ellis received her BA/MA from Cambridge University, and a post-graduate high-school teaching certification from the University of London. She holds the AMI middle school teaching certification, and is a nationally recognized gifted and talented educator with Johns Hopkins University.

The tick that carries this disease has been found in SPVP, though strangely, the likelihood of its carrying the bacteria is lessened by the prevalence of our fence lizard. The infamous "deer tick" shown above is the carrier of the damaging bacteria, **Borrelia burgdorferi**. (CDC photos)

## GEMS FROM THE VISITOR CENTER LOG:

**7/4**—A **fox** poked his head in the back door & then scampered. (Chris Thatcher)

**7/9**—Vis. reported a young **grey fox** in the Walnut Picnic Area. It was skinny with not much fur on its hindquarters.

**7/16**—Man saw a **baby mountain lion** (16" tall) on the Montara Mt. Trail just before B. Creek cutoff. He made noises to alert mom.

**7/22**—Vis. reported a **bobcat** on Hazelnut Trail at 11:30am.

## VOLUNTEER APPRECIATION DINNER ON OCTOBER 7

About time we showed how much we think of the selfless people who contribute to maintaining the beauty and insure the functioning of SPVP. The Board of the Friends: **Jim, Bing, Carolyn, Istvan, Judy, Mila, and Sharron**, will be sending out invitations for all of you to a hosted dinner that will take place at **4pm on Saturday, October 7**.

Many of you have staffed the Visitor Center, for instance, long-working **Isabel Ebert & Steve**



**Robinson** (photos), some have helped maintain trails and the integrity of our native plants; others have helped organize and run our barbeques and Holiday



parties; some have given programs or consistently contributed to the bulletin, or worked behind the scenes on important projects. This is our way of showing appreciation for all you have done.

## RYAN BERGER AUGUST PROGRAM A WHALE OF A HIT

Over 50 Coastsiders saw the nail-biting, **19-day** rescue of a **humpback whale** by **Ryan & team**; it was held fast and cut deeply by a crab-pot rope off our coast. Many weeks later the giant was seen flopping around, healing beautifully. Ryan also helped us understand the population flux of sleek **seals, sea lions & elephant seals** of the Farallon Islands.

## ON THE TRAIL

**Ray Trabucco and Katie Antista** went up the Montara Mt. Trail in search of the **salal** that grows by the beginning of the switchback on June 27. They found the lovely petit tubular white flowers of this



**Gaultheria shalon**, on many healthy plants, along with the tempting, tasty berries (left). In addition they found the **baneberry** gar-



nished with its translucent **poison red berries** and lower down on the trail the delicate **globe lilies**, still in bloom. Try this hike at the same time next year! (**Wing-Chi Poon** photo of salal flowers; salal berries from **Dana Kelley Bressette's** website; poisonous red baneberry by **Stephen Lea**; white globe lily by **Scott Cox**.)



(continued on page 4)

### BACK TO THE PAST: SPVP IN 1990 WITH BESS NERICCHIO:

*Below is the second vintage Bess observation from her notebook:*

**6-14-90 San Pedro Park 10: 12:30 Windy, sunny**

I walked very leisurely up Brooks Fall Trail. When I approached the retaining wall I saw and heard 4 or 5 **Steller's jays** flying about and "shacking" boisterously. Naively I thought that they were quarreling among themselves and admiring the flashing blue of their wings, I stopped under my favorite tree where I sometimes see **Downy**

Randy Hume

**Woodpeckers** or other surprises. Except for the jays all was quiet. I took a few more steps and passed under a canopy of **alder** leaves. Ahead I saw several spots of fresh whitewash. The spots were about the size of a quarter. Musing about this I twisted my neck to look up and over my shoulder. Three fledgling **Northern Saw-whet owlets** were staring down at me. My astonishment froze me to the spot, and after several seconds of staring at each other, the owls flew out from under the canopy. Two flew into



naturemappingfoundation

the brush but the third one flew to a **eucalyptus** branch about ten feet away from me and perhaps twenty feet high. I had a perfect view of him. While I watched him, a couple of Steller's Jays came by to harass the owl. They were so noisy that although I saw the fledgling open his beak to threaten back I couldn't hear what sound he made. And that wasn't the only disturbance. There was a busload of school girls in the park. And just then I heard about 6 of them coming along the path singing and talking. When they climbed the stairs they saw me and greeted me as they continued and passed under the owl. He looked down at them but didn't seem in the least perturbed.



When the owl turned his head I recognized the bulbous shape I have seen in some bird paintings. I have always assumed that the artist was using poetic license, but Bent\* describes the juvenile plumage of the head as "particularly full and fluffy".

I watched the owl for a full twenty minutes before he flew away. Now thinking about it I wonder why he didn't dive for the bushes along with his siblings.

Could his decision to stay out in the open be a sign of curiosity? He certainly showed no fear of the jays, and my presence didn't seem to make him uncomfortable. I'll never forget beautiful colors and the white triangle on his forehead. When he finally flew into the brush I stayed on a few minutes longer marveling at my good luck.

([guardiansofgahoole.wikia.com](http://guardiansofgahoole.wikia.com) photo)

\*Arthur Cleveland Bent (1866-1954)

### AWAY WITH THE POISON IN OUR PARK!

Plants that is; who knows why the infamous plant of history has become so good at invading far-flung areas, loving the disturbed borders of SPVP. **Istvan Puski** and **Ranger Matthew Tolmasoff** were steady and true in removing the lacy-leaved **hemlocks** from the Trout Farm Road Trail, and while they were at it, tugged out some non-native **thistles** on that 3rd Saturday morn in June.

### RUN FOR YOUR LIFE, LITTLE BUNNY; TRUE LIFE DRAMA

By Jim Steele

Last month (July, '17) I was walking the Weiler Ranch Road, crossed the bridge and began the last stretch down "**bush bunny** lane" towards the roundabout at the end of the road. The bunnies seem to have varied personalities: some bunnies are nervous nellys and scamper into their runways through the bushes despite my distance; others are more daring and don't hop away until I am right next to them. A few remain in place and just keep chewing and I wonder if their boldness may be their downfall if a predator approached.

As I approached a more daring one, it turned to scamper away just as I came alongside it, and that move likely saved its life. Just as it was turning, a lurking **bobcat** sprang from the bushes diving for the bunny, but only managed to loosely get one paw on the bunny that then



spun away to safety. The bobcat's momentum carried it



within two feet of me as it rolled over the ground. It sprang to its feet, looked up, and we caught each other's gaze for about 10 seconds. I wondered if it was embarrassed I had witnessed its failure, or perhaps miffed I spooked its meal it had patiently stalked. Whatever the case, it turned and bounded back into the bushes, and I blurted out, "Awesome".

### THE FRIENDS LOSE DENISE MARCUCCI (1949-2017)



A lovely lady, **Denise Marcucci**, who took over the bookstore a few years ago, is shown with present manager, **Sharron Walker**: Sharron in Park garb, while Denise is artistically dressed and smiling beautifully. She had a long battle with Parkinson's, but always kept a positive attitude. Maybe it was her love of and talent with art that helped to sustain her for so many years, but it was fortunate that she was married to Edwin Hacking, artistic photographer and soul mate. Denise also had 2 gifted daughters, as well as a dear pet, a Golden Doodle that also gave her great delight. Below is an excerpt from a bio that she wrote for this newsletter:

"I grew up around Chicago. My family was involved in little theater and little musical theater for most of my childhood, and it was great fun! I graduated from Northern Illinois U. in De Kalb, Ill. I earned a dual degree which prepared me to teach multi-handicapped preschoolers for eight years in the inner city of Chicago. I loved those years!

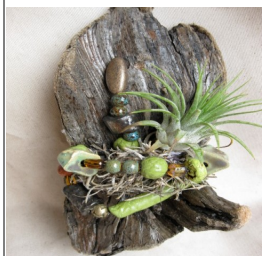
I moved here in 1977 to go to SFSU grad school. I thought I'd learn to design teaching materials for those special ed. Kids. That was great too. But that idea changed a bit and I ended up staying here in Pacifica with a new career in video production and satellite teleconferencing AND a new husband!

I worked for the major players of Silicon Valley, Hewlett Packard, Cisco, Apple, and Sun Microsystems. 1983 brought us twin girls-gorgeous! Our girls are both very artistic and working in N.Y. City—too far away!

In 2003, I became an Emergency Medical Tech (EMT^), a lifelong dream. I worked in the emergency room at Peninsula Hospital for four years, and I retired when I was diagnosed with Parkinson's disease.

I then took up pottery at Clay Creations here in town. I incorporate my clay work with jewelry making. And lately, I've been making air ferns, and mobiles from articles I find on the beaches and trails of Pacifica. So here I am today with you. I owe San Pedro Park a great deal for all the hours of peace and vitamin D it has given me. I feel like this is a chance to give back."

*Thank you, Denise*



### CLOUDS OF MIST-ERY ON AUGUST TRAIL DAYS

For our August 12th Trail Day, Ranger **Matthew Tolmasoff**, **Istvan Puski**, **Tommy Hart**, my brother **Erik** and I did some good work up in the clouds. Under a very low, grey, misty-at-times cloud deck, we went up the Brooks Falls Trail, trimming some overgrown brush along the way, before we reached our final destination on the Montara Mtn. Trail. There, along the big bend just past the old rifle range, we removed a handful of **pampas grass** plants growing right alongside the trail and trimmed other overgrown brush. We then returned down the mountain -- Matthew and Tommy going all the way down the Montara Mtn. Trail to check conditions while the rest of us went down the Brooks Falls Trail again. Somewhat surprisingly, several hardy folks passed us while we were working,



on their way further up the fog-shrouded mountain. (J.Piro photo)

### POISON AND PRICKLES

On habitat restoration day, June 17th, leader **Istvan Puski** and Ranger **Matt Tolmasoff** worked like the devil, pulling **poison hemlock** and **invasive alien thistles** from the Trout Farm Rd. You are invited to bring a pair of thick gloves and join them on, at 9am, 3rd Sat of each month, outside the Visitor Center. Help our native plants to flourish. Be it known that Istvan knows his native flora, so you just might learn the names of some of your favorite native plants on that day. (photo of Istvan by Joseph Piro)



### TWO NEW RANGERS GRACE OUR PARK

Our Chief, **Ranger Matthew DelCarlo**, head of the Coastal Division, is reputedly quite happy to be receiving 2 new rangers, who will often be found working on trails, in restrooms (alas!) removing fallen branches, & helping keep order in SPVP. They are **John "Jack" Lippert** & **Bonnie MacCurdy**. Happily, Bonnie has offered to write a little memoir for an upcoming newsletter.

**ON THE TRAIL** (continued)

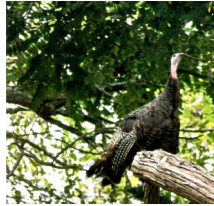


Laurie Nikitas has an eye for rustic beauty and wildlife in SPVP; on July 19, at 12:57pm, she identified a serpent: "the **Santa Cruz garter snake: *thamnophis atratus***, sunning on an "ancient **madrone** snag that twists back on itself over the trail" the trail being the Hazelnut—a half mile up its east end. This also from Laurie: "It was quite calm as I moved in a bit, but as you can see, it was staring

right at me." (See Laurie's photo on outdoor bulletin board.)



Huge **coyote** in Walnut picnic area at about 2pm on



Aug. 5. 3 **turkeys** took to the big

**cypress**, probably anticipating his ravenous appetite. **Ron**



**Wilson** says it weighed 70 lbs: I say—maybe, had it not missed its T. giving dinner. Ron also saw 2 loving fence lizards. (all 3 of Ron's photos are on b. board)

**RON EBY'S SEA OTTER PROGRAM GOES SWIMMINGLY**

**Sharron Walker** was among the throngs that were spellbound by champion **otter** observer, **Ron Eby** on Jul 15. She was impressed by what an ideal habitat & stable home the Elkhorn Slough estuary is for this voracious set of happy gatherers. Since the slough is shallow in comparison to the ocean, a smorgasbord of **crabs**, **sea urchins** and other delectables are easy to pluck and attack on their "chest/plates". Male otters raft up and hang out in the forebay, while females and their pups tend to stay in the back area of the slough where a cover and "nest" of **eelgrass** thrives.

But how did the sea otter help the eelgrass and the crabs, & urchins survive when the furry munchers are eating the daylight out of the "shellfish"? (see last bulletin) Turns out that the pollution of fertilizer runoff from farms choked the eelgrass, but happily fed slime-hungry **sea slugs** that crabs had plundered. Enter the sea otter in the

80's & the crabs were kept in check, allowing for a renewed population of slugs to save the eelgrass, & yes, the crabs and urchins too.

(**Sharron Walker** photo of resting sea otter in the Elkhorn)



**The Leaders of "the Friends of SPVP":** President: **Jim Steele**; Vice President & Editor of this newsletter: **Carolyn Pankow**; Secretary: **Judy Bacon**; Treasurer: **Bing Huey**; Visitor Center Desk and Staffing: **Mila Stroganoff**; Habitat Restoration leader: **Istvan Puski**; Trail Leader: **Joseph Piro**; Membership: **Jim Steele**; Programs: **Carolyn Pankow**; Trailside Store Manager: **Sharron Walker**; Membership miscellany, mobile display board: **Katie Antista**. *Letters to the editor:* [pankowinca@gmail.com](mailto:pankowinca@gmail.com)

**SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER 2017 CALENDAR**

**SEPTEMBER TRAIL DAY**

**Saturday, Sept. 9.....9am**

**SEPTEMBER HABITAT RESTORATION DAY**

**Saturday, Sept. 16.....9am**

**SEPTEMBER FRIENDS OF SPVP BOARD MEETING**

**Tuesday, Sept. 19.....7pm**

**VOLUNTEER APPRECIATION DINNER**

**Saturday, October 7.....4pm**

**OCTOBER TRAIL DAY**

**Saturday, October 14.....9am**

**LYME DISEASE IN SAN MATEO COUNTY WITH JO ELLIS**

**Saturday, October 14.....4pm**

**FRIENDS OF SPVP BOARD MEETING**

**Tuesday, October 17.....7pm**

**OCTOBER HABITAT RESTORATION DAY**

**Saturday, October 21.....9am**

*For all events except board Mtgs., meet at the Visitor Center*

**THREE "BARBERS" TRIM THE TROUT FARM**

by **Joseph Piro**

**Ranger Matthew Tolmasoff, Istvan Puski and I** were the crew for our July 8th Trail Day. With a big trail run in the Park today (the parking lot was virtually all full by 9am!), we wanted to work somewhere with enough room around us so we wouldn't be in the way, so we headed up the Old Trout Farm Trail to do some trimming. Using spiffy new loppers, we worked our way from the water department gate back down to the trailhead picnic area, making several large piles of cuttings along the way for later pickup. Enjoy this gentle & scenic stretch of trail along the still burbling-good creek! (**Istvan** takes a turn in **Joseph's** photo)



**FACIOM**

Most of us know that galls form when a parasitic female **insect** lays her eggs on a plant, the plant responding by encapsulating the developing larva in a growing chamber, the "gall". What I didn't realize is that a type of **wasp**, a parasitoid, can lay its egg (s) inside the gall, killing the original parasite, and emerging as an adult. And hyperparasitoids can be a parasitoids on these parasitoids. Apparently "dirty double dealing" is not peculiar to humans!

(**Fremontia**: 9/13)

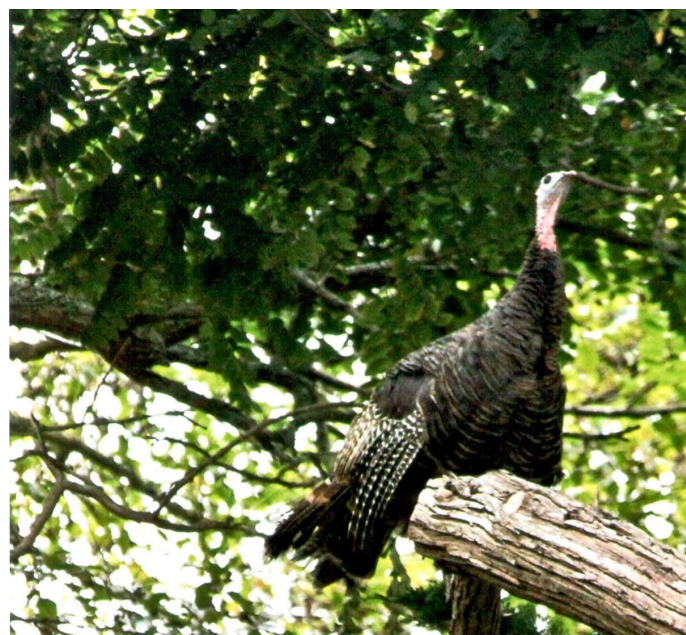
(photo of a parasitoid --**Mohammed Mahdi Karim**.)



*BUSY SUMMER DAYS IN SPVP*



*Large Coyote, by Ron Wilson*



*Turkey in a Tree, by Ron Wilson*



*Santa Cruz garter snake on madrone snag, by Laurie Nikitas*



*Turkeys by **Laurie Nikitas***

*On the West end of Weiler Ranch Road in late July*



Two lizards lovin' likely male and female fence lizards

Ron  
Wilson  
In SPVP



"Two buddies chillin': 2 male mule deer in the Walnut Picnic Area.



Ron also photographed many butterflies: Here is one beauty , *Vanessa virginensis*—Hazelnut Trail on July 20,



Vandals in the Park!