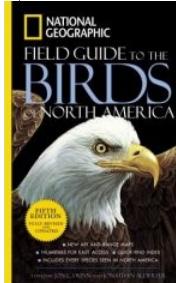


# the FRIENDS of SAN PEDRO VALLEY PARK

## TRAILSIDE STORE STARTS ANEW

Plush toys: clip-on zippered **frog** purses, furry, beady-eyed **Tarantulas**, red and black stylish **ladybug** hand puppets with flapping spotted wings, the yellow and black “**Bumble Bee**” glove puppet perched on the display rack—these are a few of the surprises in our restocked store.

And there are the guide books for your home reference shelves for inner sanctum reading—for a time to recall that



**Warbler** you saw as you coursed along the trail by the **willows**, or the screaming **Hawk** you saw soaring across the Valley View hill.

Mila Stroganoff, our import from the Native Plant Society, who introduced many of our local plant posters, placemats, and nature-natural writing cards, has been at it again—full force this time, bringing her love of nature and her natural savvy into our store. Stock up for the birthdays and the unmentionable holiday, or indulge yourself. We warn you: window shopping can be a dangerous pastime, but maybe this Saturday or Sunday?

## TIM MALONE LEFT HIS MARK on ALL



Tim Malone accomplished what became the pinnacle of his life; he became a full-fledged ranger for San Mateo County, working in this capacity mainly at the Memorial Park.

This occurred 2 years before he died—yet I, for one, can't say that he lost his battle, because more so than many of us he made and realized an important goal.

He loved San Pedro Valley Park, and I still recall his stories of trying to get the perfect **Bobcat** photos while sliding along on his belly, stalking one at the South Walnut. To help us remember him, I decided to include an insert with an article written about him from the June, '02 Volunteers newsletter, & some short news articles in our bulletin about Tim.

## ON THE TRAIL-Sightings

Jim Mackey found the shiny large **wasp**, the **Tarantula Hawk**, sitting on some white **Queen Anne's lace**, which it was busily chomping on and ingesting. (U.S. Army Corp Eng.-Albuquerque w.s. photo by Van Truan & John Martin)



(“On the Trail” is continued on page 4)

## RAPTORS

Join us on **Saturday September 15 at 8pm**, when **Craig Nikitas**, who works with the Golden Gate National Observatory will show you some beautiful predatory birds that have been banded on “Hawk Hill”. (photo of Craig and Cooper’s Hawk on site is by Brant Ward)

Hawk Hill looms almost one thousand feet out and up from the San Francisco Bay, supplying us with one of the most breathtaking views of our Bay and City. But this awesome sight can be intimidating to migrating **hawks** who having traversed Marin County’s Mountain and hills must now find their way across the large body of water. So they swoop round and round, entertaining groups of viewers below. Some are caught in bird banding blinds and removed, to the peril of the intrepid bird banders, who must handle the well-armed killers. Enjoy these vicarious thrills on the 15th!



## WINGS in the NIGHT—Sat, October 20 at 7:30pm

Small **bats** seldom get credit for being big heroes, but people in the hill country of Texas know their good deeds well. Patricia Winters will follow the drama of the **Mexican freetail bat** (Texas fish and wildlife dept photo) as swarms of them save the day for the farmers. See & hear more fascinating info on these winged mammals—their variety and their social ways, and see their weird “beauty”?

Learn why many bats don’t sleep in caves, and how they are resting right beneath our eyes in San Pedro Valley Park. Ask questions about the Park’s Bats.



And best of all see the **live bats** that Ms. Winters calls “perch potatoes” hanging from their “bedroom” ceilings; see them close-up as Patricia makes the rounds through the audience with each of her rescued Chiropterans in her hand. These are bats that can no longer fly and they are from our own Bay Area. Get to our Visitor Center well before **7:30pm** if you have never seen this show. This will be my 4th time, and I know I will still be spellbound. Each time she appears we have had to bring in the benches from outside to accommodate the crowd.

## ARROYO WILLOW; the SEPT.—OCT. PLANT

We were camping at Indian Wells in Southern California many years ago; it was lovely, wild and restful, and I was absorbed and happy with the comforting shaggy beauty, the fresh scents of the plants, the bountiful wildlife. The scene was so compelling, the arid country having been awakened by this oasis and its slender stream, that I hardly noticed the thin growth of **willo**ws lining the banks. (photo of arroyo willow with its male catkins by Michael Charters)



A month later, on Memorial Day, we decided to return to this isolated, pristine camp, but we found ourselves swallowed up by loud radios, motor bikes and throngs of people. Heading out away from the camp towards the stream, our hearts sank to see it invaded by many other humans, appreciating the wilds in a way unlike ours. And as we gravitated to the stream we saw a father tearing willows from the banks to help his son build a dam; unfortunately he resisted my gentle suggestion to let the plants grow.

Years later, as our creek in San Pedro Valley Park was modified by a bridge, etc. which would help the **steel-head** to spawn upstream, I realized that willow cuttings had been poked into the banks to hold them and eventually to provide cover for wildlife (see photo at left).



Willows have adapted to being used in dams by beaver for eons, and stump sprout after fires. ([ci.monrovia.ca.us/city\\_hall/fire-department](http://ci.monrovia.ca.us/city_hall/fire-department))

We have 2 **willo**ws in our park, the **Sitka willow**, which is restricted to very wet areas & streamside, and the **arroyo willow**, *Salix lasiolepis*. This latter one, which is much more common in SPVP, has a longer, narrower leaf.

Since the arroyo willow must have a constant source of water, it grows long tap roots that reach aquifers long after a stream has turned into a dry bed. This means that this succulent growth is available throughout much of the year for **Black-tailed Mule Deer**, **Brush Rabbits**, mice, & the **Dusky-footed Woodrat**,

who undoubtedly uses bunches of willow stems for his house.

At least 4 kinds of willow galls or growths form on the arroyo willow. Galls can be made by a variety of insects: **wasps**, **saw-flies** (bee and wasp group), **midges** (like gnats), etc., each of those giving sustenance to **birds** and **spiders**, AND they don't "damage" the plant.



One is left wondering what IS deleterious to the arroyo willow—NOT fire, & apparently not willow dam builders, nor many of our six legged opportunists.

## FACTOID

**Yellow Jacket** season. Watch out if you just scored a hit at a picnic—heed this warning: "If a **yellow jacket**, [*Vespula vulgaris*], stings you don't smash it, especially if there is a nest nearby. The venom sac releases a chemical that will incite other yellow jackets to sting." ([msucares.com/newsletters/safety](http://msucares.com/newsletters/safety)) (The nests are usually built underground, as **Pegge Fields** and **Jim Pommier** found out in painful wonder a few years ago on the Montara Mt. trail.) (drawing from Pherotech w.s.)



## DIGGING OUT THE DANDELIONS AND NURTURING THE NATIVES

You can have muscles at 75, and they do; you can have vim and vigor as a Senior, and they do; you can rise out of your rocking chair and onto the trail as an oldster or tumble off your dirt bike as a "youngster" and have that coveted camaraderie with these 2 congenial men: **Jim Pommier** and **Jim Mackey**. On July 21 on Native Plant Day, they worked their way up the Hazelnut Trail, weeding out **dandelions** and pruning back the overhanging brush, after having fought quite a battle with the **eucs** one month prior.

Meanwhile in the native plant sun garden, **Katie Antista** was trimming and pulling weeds so that all could see the name labels for each "specimen"... The **Dudleya**, which were so beautiful in late June and early July have dried up

a bit, but please notice the "fruits" of labor of our Native Plant group: purple color on the leaves of the buck-eye, the violet pink blossoms on one coyote mint on the path's side, sticky monkey, yarrow, and golden rod in bloom, and the few fruits of the barberry that the delivery of this bulletin

may be too late to point out to you. (coyote mint-a Bill & Barb.VerderWerf photo; barberry photo by Dieter Wilken)



## A NATURALIST'S PERSPECTIVE

By Jim Mackey

**Chickadees** must certainly be rated as one of our more appealing birds. Their black caps and bibs contribute to their appeal, as do their acrobatic maneuvers as they glean insects and seeds from foliage and twigs. This year we have been entertained by our **Chestnut-backed Chickadees** (photo by Keith Cummings) at two nest sites in tree cavities. One was the **apple tree** in the Trout Farm Picnic Area, while the other was in a **plum tree** by the bridge between the Walnut Grove and the horseshoe courts.



While growing up in northern Ohio I learned to appreciate the **Black-capped Chickadees**. Our green woods were lush and teemed with life during the wet, hot summer. But what a contrast with the stark landscape in winter! Black skeletons of deciduous trees were etched against a white, snowy background. Most animals left on migrations, became dormant, or died. But our chickadees continued to frolic in our woods, and gave life to the landscape.

**Aldo Leopold** also appreciated Chickadees in Wisconsin. He expressed this in an essay in his classic: "Sand County Almanac". The essay is titled "65290", which was the

number on the band that he put on the leg of his longest-surviving chickadee. This little bird survived five Wisconsin winters! Leopold wondered why "65290" out-lived his fellows. "Was he more clever in dodging his enemies? What enemies? A Chickadee is almost too small to have any. That whimsical fellow called Evolution, having enlarged the dinosaur until he tripped over his own toes, tried shrinking the chickadee until he was just too big to be snapped up by flycatchers

as an insect, & just too little to be pursued by hawks and owls as meat. Then he regarded his handiwork and laughed. Everyone laughs at so small a bundle of large enthusiasms." ("Chickadee in winter" photo-Empire State College, NY)



**Missing Birds?** I deeply regret not seeing or hearing **mockingbirds** in our Park or my neighborhood in Park Pacifica. Please let me know if you have them in your neighborhood. (Drawing of Mockingbird from PSA school 234, NY) I hear their beautiful songs when I visit our



children in San Mateo and South San Francisco, as well as my brother in Berkeley. Does that mean that our climate in Pacifica is colder or less sunny than elsewhere in the Bay Area? (Maybe global warming will bring us mockingbirds.) But, on the bright side, we do get enough sunshine in Pedro Park so that we can see active fence lizards in every month of the year! (Incidentally I saw the first hatchling fence lizard on Aug. 10 this year.)

This is the 1st summer when I have not heard the "What peeves you?" whistle of an **Olive-sided Flycatcher** in our Park. Have we lost our first neotropical migrant species?



**Poor Jim's Almanac.** Aster are autumn flowers in our Park, in Ohio and elsewhere. Look for our violet-colored **California aster** along the Weiler Ranch Road. Also be on the look-out for a large rabbit carrying a basket of flowers. It could be the Aster Bunny! (Sorry) **Fox** and **coyote** scats are becoming more interesting since they will be containing seeds of **huckleberries**,



**manzanita & coffeeberries.** [Coyote scats lumpy with berries have dull, rounded ends—at left]

## JOSEPH PIRO'S TRAIL REPORT—July 14

It was a much better turn-out of all us regulars again today! By around 8:15am we had **Ed, Hal, Jim [Pommier], Art** and myself. After Hal told us he wouldn't be going up on the trail today with us due to his bad knee, he told us we'd be working with some volunteers that were coming from REI. We learned they were going to be cutting a little new trail to provide better access the bench on the flat pad above the trail near the top of the eucalyptus forest on the Montara Mtn.



Trail (aka the old Boy Scout camp site?). So along with **Ranger Doug**, some other Park Aides/Volunteers and about a dozen folks from REI, we hiked up the trail. Art and I lagged behind the main group, only because we were cutting some overhanging brush and stuff along the way. By the time we arrived at the site, a new side-trail in both the uphill and downhill directions was already roughed in. We joined everyone working on it — digging up roots, cutting back the bank at the proper angle, raking out the new trail surface to a good width and slope, etc. By around noon the new little piece of trail was looking good and access to the bench — and the great view from it looking out over Linda Mar valley and beyond -- was definitely much better!





While **Jim Mackey** was out gathering observations & photos for his November program, he chanced upon two **Ravens**, one of whom was making a sound like the tapping of a **woodpecker**—imitation being their specialty. This sleek, black, intelligent pair were hanging out in the cypress by Walnut Grove. (Drawing from Washington Dep't of Fish & Wildlife w.s.)

**Ranger Jonel** passed the news on that she saw 2 baby Bobcats in the South Walnut Picnic Area. She also found that a **Great Blue Heron** was perched on a conifer

just outside of the main entrance gate and later another on a conifer inside the park boundary; many think that the GBH is exclusively a **fish-eater**, but they love a plump **gopher**, a mainstay in our park. The sighting was made on July 23. (Bobcat kitten from Pelotes Nature Preserve website; photo of heron from Coffee Creek Nature Preserve website)

On July 16 someone noted in our Visitor Center “comments book” that there were 2 very tiny **fawns** nursing on their Mom near the Center. (Stoney Lonesome Photos ws)

**NEWS BRIEFS**  
**Martin King**, park aide, who often works in the entry kiosk, has spent quite a bit of time tending the Native garden that Rangers **Ishida** and **Heisinger** planted. The display of **yarrow**, **huckleberry**, **Douglas iris**, and even one plant of **coyote brush** and one of **flax** are a classy entry to our Park.

New “**Friend of San Pedro Valley Park**”, **Diane Poston**, has been putting in volunteer time after a crash course on visitor liaison with **Jean Leonard**. Diane also made it to our August barbecue, entertaining a bunch at one table with her conversation.

**Hal Jorgensen** will be back on the trail after he finishes a grueling series of physical therapy sessions for his knee replacement surgery. He has already limped into the Visitor Center. It’s hard to keep a good Norwegian down!



## SEPTEMBER—OCTOBER CALENDAR

### SEPTEMBER TRAIL DAYS

Saturday, September 8.....8am

### SEPTEMBER GENERAL MEETING

Wednesday, September 12.....7pm

### SEPTEMBER NATIVE PLANT DAY

Saturday, September 15.....9am

### **CRAIG NIKITAS “RAPTORS”**

Saturday, September 15.....8pm

### OCTOBER GENERAL MEETING

Wednesday, October 10.....7pm

### OCTOBER TRAIL DAYS

Saturday, October 13.....8am

### OCTOBER NATIVE PLANT DAY

Saturday, October 20.....9am

### **PATRICIA WINTERS “WINGS in the NIGHT”**

Saturday, October 20.....7:30pm

(For all events, meet at the Visitor Center)

## BARBEQUE TRAIL DAY-Sat. August 11th

While **Alex Dezfoli** & **Art Armstrong** worked on the Montara Mountain trail, **Sara Shaw**, **Joseph Piro**, & **Jim Pommier** cut brush to widen the Brooks Falls Trail. **Ed Decker** still got stuck doing the barbequing, but was consoled by wife, **Joy**; We saw **Raul & Jean L.**, **Jim M**, **Katie A.**, **Valerie, Mila & Adrian**, Mt. Man, **Ishtvan**, & **Christian Rivlin**, **Diane Poston** and **Carolyn P.** eating up a storm in the patio with the workers. **Ranger Doug Heisinger** also made it to the gathering.



## OFF TO WORK THEY GO—August

Rather than spending all their time in our Sun Garden which they know **Katie**

**Antista** faithfully tends, our team of 3: **Sara Shaw**, **Jim Mackey** & **Jim Pommier** left after cutting its overgrown shrubbery & walked over to the hill that's at the junction of the

Weiler Ranch Road & the Valley View Trail. The warm up in the garden was a good idea: they worked arm and shoulder muscles to the limit in an effort to rid the slope of the **eucalyptus** sprouts.

Jim Pommier told me he took out a couple of **Pyracantha** and **Cotoneaster** bushes. Summing up their months of vigilance and work on that slope, he said, “I’m pretty proud of the way that side looks”. Many other hills are waiting for a “Friend” like you on the 2nd Sat.of any month.

Questions or letters to the editor? email: carolynpankow@comcast.net, or C. Pankow 600 Oddstad Blvd: Pacifica, CA

**The Volunteers:** Valerie Patten, President; **Carolyn Pankow**, V.P.; Shirley Drye Secretary; **Ed Decker**, Treasurer; **Christine Thatcher**, & **Jean Leonard**, members at large; **Hal Jorgensen**, Trails; **Katie Antista**, Membership; **Carolyn Pankow**, Programs &Editor; **Mila Stroganoff**, Trailside store; **Jean Leonard**, Visitor Center; **Jim Pommier**, plant removal.

**RANGER TIM**—June 2002

Two men are carrying a load of redwood, trudging their way up the Montara Mountain trail. The man in the rear is showing the strain of the haul; he wears a brown shirt. In front I see a man of youthful stride also in a brown shirt, the ranger's uniform, and slowly recognize, of course, the 27 year old "energy" of the park, **Tim Malone**.

Tim Malone, park aide, is ranger quality; if he lived in Canada you could picture him with the hat and uniform of the "mountie", and he has all the sought-after attributes of that breed: loyal, hard-working, fearless, mature, and kind. He is also gentle, respectful and polite to the public, knows how to reel in the offenders without offending them—the lady with the dog, the teens with a messy picnic area, all of the transgressors. He likes people and is liked by them, and is respected by his "bosses".

One of his biggest supporters is **Ranger Jonel**, who admires the way Tim string cuts a trail till it becomes a charming pathway, mows an area closely, leaving an arcing lawn space; installs signs—consistently does whatever is asked of him fast, efficiently and in good humor. A strong man in fit physical condition, he completes the hardest jobs with apparent ease. But Tim has other dimensions.

During his "down time" in the gatehouse you can find him reading exciting books like "Mastering Plumbing", "the Sunset Guide to Masonry", "the Modern Electrician", the latter which career he has seriously considered, and yet he pours over JR Tolkien books at other times, having read some twice. He has an eclectic interest in music, but as a "kid" and young teen was an aficionado of the "Donnie and Marie" show. He loves to sit at home in Pacifica working jig-saw puzzles, but often flies to ski country, where friends have a cabin in the mountains.

Tim has been put through some difficult times in his quarter century, but luckily he has strength of character and a close family and neighbors, especially within St. Peter's Church, to cheer him on. He is proud of his family: a sister who is active in Amnesty International, a mother who teaches catechism, a brother who is studying music, and a father who is an appeals administrator for a large concern.

**DECISION TIME FOR TIM**—January 2003

If you don't see "ranger" **Tim Malone** as often these days, it will be due to the tight restrictions on the county budget and not because Tim is not a dedicated Park worker. He has made his big decision, focusing on training for park work, taking 2 important classes this last semester at West Valley College in Saratoga: Park management, and Conservation of Natural Resources. Tim hopes to work at a variety of county or state parks after his education is completed.

**NEWS BRIEFS**—July/August 2005

"**Ranger**" **Tim** gets accolades from **Ranger Jonel Ishida** for carrying on the heaviest park work while injuries plague the "full" rangers.

**NEWS BRIEFS**—September/October 2005

Newly appointed as a Ranger 2, **Tim Malone** may be leaving for another county park, but pledges to train his replacement aide well. Tim will miss our park! Note his photos of our S. Walnut **bee swarm** and **gopher** and of a colorful Park **millipede**. They're on the horseshoe pit board and in the Visitor Center.

[Tim became a very successful ranger at San Mateo Memorial Park]