

# The Friends of San Pedro Valley Park

July/Aug 2019

**Try our Website!** You can "walk" our trails with Bevan Jones, Bing Huey, Jim Steele & Sharron Walker, & there is Much more! Type in at top address bar:

[friendsofsanpedrovalleypark.org](http://friendsofsanpedrovalleypark.org)

## AUG 17: KRISTA HERBE & MEDICINAL PROPERTIES OF BAY AREA PLANTS; 5pm



Join Clinical Western Herbalist, **Krista R. Herbe**, RH(AHG), for a season-centered look into the medicinal properties of Bay Area native plants. In this lecture scheduled for **Saturday, Aug 17**, at **5 pm**,

Krista will share how plants can provide nutrition, improve digestion, heal the skin, treat common diseases and boost the immune system. Highlighting the medicinal, energetic, and spiritual properties of individual plants & their European counterparts, she will also share a few common invasive species and how to use those 'weeds'. Folks will leave with a greater understanding of the unique healing powers of the plants around us.

Krista received her Clinical Western Herbalist certification & was core faculty at the Ohlone Herbal Center in Berkeley. Though Krista is in private practice, she leads community herb walks, doing classes and mentorships in wild & urban places. She works to awaken our ancestral connections to our natural world. (right: healing plant of Montara Mt.: **mugwort, Artemesia douglasiana** )



## VISITOR CENTER DESPERATE FOR WORKERS!

We all love the Visitor Center BUT we may not be able to stay open because we just do not have enough volunteers. Contact **Mila Stroganoff** at: 650 359-1642 to sign up for 3 hours on a Sat. or Sun. once a month at the Center to welcome the public, help them find the right trails on our map & answer other questions about wild SPVP. You will also help them with the Trailside Store purchases & direct children to the little kids section & mailbox



critters. Experienced VC workers will help you learn the job & we think you'll like the camaraderie. Thank you!! Without us, the Center will have to close on unfilled Saturdays & Sundays. (photo of **Terry Sherar** with guest by **Mila Stroganoff**)

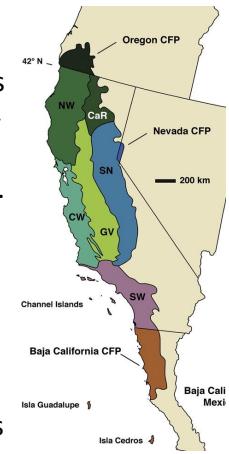
## California Plant Diversity: Saturday, July 6, 5 pm

Morgan Stickrod's Saturday, July 6th, 5pm talk will highlight the amazing biodiversity and beauty of the native plants of California, a flora we treasure and work hard to protect.



He will take a closer look at spring & summer in California- the beautiful wild-flower blooms of California's spring, which can begin in the supposed winter and go all the way into the summer. This talk will celebrate some of the diversity of this species-rich region in the context of the incredibly varied & complex ecosystems these plants have evolved in: from "the ephemeral blankets of vibrant annuals in deserts of the South to the charismatic unveiling of our many geophytes".

As a S.F. native, he's always been awed by the stark variety of life in the natural areas of Calif, but when he moved away to Asheville's U. of No Carolina for his BS in Ecology, focusing on plants, he started really appreciating the labyrinthine variations of our landscapes. (see the Calif. Floristic Province map at right)



In the So. Appalachians, he worked for the Blue Ridge Parkway developing the permanent herbarium collection and doing rare plant management work. He was also involved in several long-term research projects in Great Smoky Mountains NP studying potential resistance in 2 species of **hemlock** to the **Hemlock Wooly Adelgid**.

Morgan is a graduate student at SFSU, investigating seed banks & vegetation dynamics of a brackish tidal marsh in Solano Co. He has worked at the SF Botanical Garden for nearly 3 years.

### ON THE TRAIL

Rangers Greg Escoto & Tim Cook sighted a huge **gopher snake** 20 yards up the W. Valley View Trail. It was much longer than width of the trail; May 15, very late in the PM.



Gary Nafis

June 8, pm: folks asked host **Istvan**, if the 5' **gopher snake** crawling across the V.C. floor was a usual visitor. Istvan gently escorted the serpent out the front door, where it lay in the heat of the asphalt parking lot. Puski placed it in a safer spot.

**Ray Trabucco's** heart warmed when he saw a lovely, perfectly patterned teenage **bobcat** at the South Walnut on 6/9 at 7pm. (continued on pg. 4)



## Bess Nericcio, Legendary Bird Observer at SPVP:

A favorite from her field notebook from 34 years ago:

**Pedro Valley:** 10:00 a.m. 7/14/85 [Ed's note: This month!] High overcast turning to sunny



Robert Harding Several notable things happened this morning. On the [Weiler] ranch trail I saw a young **black-tailed deer** coming around the bend near the mountain trail. He had a set of new antlers covered in velvet. He was so curious about me that after a few seconds of mutual staring he began to take a few steps towards me. However, I decided to walk toward him to see how close he would let me get. When I was about 20 feet away, he bounded up the hill.

I saw a **California Thrasher** (right) flying low over the **willows** a little further on.



Cornell University

### **Pine Siskins and American Goldfinches**



Cornell University Beautiful!

were feeding on stands of **timothy** in the meadows. The **Swainson's Thrushes** (left) were singing everywhere. It was really remarkable. Even when I crossed over to the valley trail they could be heard everywhere.

When I reached the last meadow, I surprised a family of **California Quail**. The mother and about six very little **babies** (one shown below) scurried across the path & pitched into the bushes. I froze because I heard the mother continue her clucking, calling the remaining chicks to cross over. What happened next was so funny. The babies plucked up courage to dash out one by one. They ran with so much determination, I sensed the panic. All together five ran across to join the others but four of them tumbled head over heels in their anxiety to reach cover as fast as they could. I had to resist the urge to pick one up just to admire how lovely he was.



Christian Haugland

### **ISTVAN'S HABITAT RESTORATION**

On May 12, prior to the barbecue, and while **Jim Steele's** Bird Song



Walk was in progress, **Mr. Puski**, a guy and gal plus 2 Sheriff workers ruthlessly ended the life of some stealthy herbs: **alien thistles**, the ever unpopular **forget-me-nots**, champion of stick-forever seeds, **alien grasses**, **poison hemlocks** and other unfortunate spreaders by the Trout Farm Trail. (At left is Istvan, the "director" of Habitat Restoration.)

## WORKING on the BEAUTIFUL, WILD HAZELNUT

By Joseph Piro

For our May 11th Trail Day, Istvan Puski, Carl Schwab



and I headed up the west end of the Hazelnut Trail to do some trimming. Even before we got to the trailhead we found a bit of work -- we used loppers to trim some quite low-hanging branches just

on the other side of the bridge on the Plaskon Nature Trail. We continued our way up the hill -- Carl turned back mid-morning because he had some other tasks to attend to and Istvan and I made it all the way up to the eucalyptus forest along the ridgeline. Everything is so green and so many things are blooming -- we saw lots of pretty purple-blue blooms on the **Ceanothus thyrsiflorus** bushes (**Calif. wild**



**lilac**) and plenty of **wild iris** with their striking deep blue & white streaked petals. Go out and enjoy! (Iris & group photo by Joseph Piro )



## NEITHER RAIN, NOR STORM, NOR GLOOMY SKY CAN STOP A FRIENDS BBQ!

By Judy Bacon

We did the "please do not rain" dance, but to no avail. It rained. A lot! **Brian Spigelman, Skeeter & Carol M.** set up the tables plus cloths & chairs in the museum.

We thought about putting a tarp over the big grill. No, wouldn't work. I knew there were Webers here in the VC, but couldn't find them. Brian jumped in his car to bring his grills over and in the meantime we found 2 : a BIG Weber & a little Weber!!

Joseph came & we got the grills going. Meanwhile, folks began arriving & everyone helped set out the side dishes. The people on the trails arrived, (yes, they were out there) looking very, very wet. Ah, the aroma of hamburgers & hot dogs wafting from the patio to the tables! We all lined up & grabbed our favorite grub. Luckily, no one was trampled in the rush.

As we filled our plates, the music of **Scott Hill** was a favorite backdrop to our food. Some of us even broke out in song when he strummed a **Beatle's** number. The best side dish was.....Mimosas! All the meriment! Even some rangers joined in. Joseph miraculously herded all **30** folks inside & took photo on p. 10.

**Errata:** The photo of **Craig Nikitas** with an angry hawk, May/June , shows a **Red-shouldered Hawk**.

## A Naturalist's Perspective

by Jim Mackey

May/June 2019

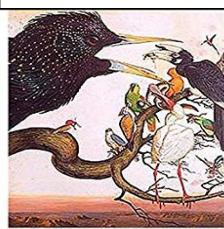
Dr. Seuss told us that "Funny things are there and here and everywhere." I thought of this late one spring when I led a group to the Trout Farm Picnic Area to inspect some red octopus stinkhorn fungi (left) that had poked up under a picnic table. After I announced the name, a little

boy (about 6 years old) asked, "Does it have 8 arms?" He was not only interested in naming living things but also in grouping them in an orderly way in his mind.

Laurie Nikitas also witnessed her very young grandson's interest in plants and animals on a hike in our Park, which she described in an article on pg. 2 of the Mar/Ap '19 newsletter. (photo: Jim Mackey Jr. at 5, thrilled at finding a backyard toad in 1972) So it is human nature to want to be familiar with our biological surroundings (what has been termed our umwelt, & ant-expert E.O. Wilson called biophilia).

But whereas virtually all peoples have succeeded in grouping living plants and animals in useful ways, scientists have persisted, since Darwin, in classifying organisms according to their genetic (i.e. evolutionary) relationships. So whales are placed in the same class (as mammals) with bats!, rather than with, say, swordfish. This dilemma is beautifully discussed in a book, "Naming Nature, the Clash between Instinct and Science." by Carol Yoon, 2009.

Has our ability to describe the DNA (genes) of an organism been useful in taxonomy (the study of evolutionary relationships)? You bet! I learned that about 2% of my (and your) genomes are derived from **Neanderthals** ("cave-men")! Which may explain my tendency to stay-at-home, rather than setting sail for the horizon, like many modern humans. And I did assist a colleague in banding bats in a cave in Kentucky. Before the use of DNA, taxonomists assumed and hoped that the characteristics that they were comparing (e.g. in anatomy or behavior) were genetically based. But with DNA they are comparing genes directly.



**NAMING NATURE**  
THE CLASH BETWEEN INSTINCT AND SCIENCE  
CAROL KAESUK YOON



J. Mackey relative

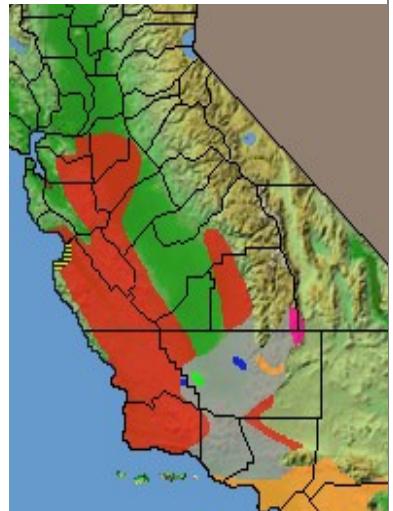
The 3rd edition of **Robert Stebbins'** "Western Reptiles and Amphibians" (2003) includes the only species of California legless lizard (**Anniella pulchra**) that was known at that time. It was described as 4 - 7 inches in length with small eyes with lids (so not a snake). Stebbins wrote, "Watch an individual in good light to see it blink," These little animals are seldom encountered because they live primarily underground in sandy soils - habitats that have been lost to developments. But



over many years, students from U.C. Berkeley's Museum of Vertebrate Zoology collected the lizards from many parts of California. Several years ago they found that they could analyze DNA from these museum specimens. The genes occurred in 5 distinct groups, indicating that **4 new species** needed to be named, to accompany the original A. pulchra. One of them was named Anniella stebbinsi!

[Ed: to find a Anniella pulchra nigra, the legless lizard near us, go to coastal dunes of Santa Cruz Co. as shown in Gary Navis's distribution map—note: 1 sp. not coded]

(top photo of the 4 species by researchgate.net)



● *Anniella pulchra* - Northern California Legless Lizard

● *Anniella pulchra nigra* - Black Legless Lizard

● *Anniella stebbinsi* - Southern California Legless Lizard

## KATHY KELLERMAN ENCOURAGES PLANTING OF NATIVES

If you ever wanted to get a boost for your dream of restoring our valley's wildlife by planting natives, you left **Kathy's** talk with great inspiration & aspirations. One wonderful part of her talk: **Mila & Adrian Stroganoff** have planted as some of their natives: **Ceanothus**, a female **silk tassel**, **cream bush**, **red elderberry**, **sticky monkey flower**, **coyote brush**, **hazelnut**, **toyon** etc. in the easement behind their house on Alviso. **Loretta O'Brian** hosts easy to plant **wax myrtles**, **twin berries** & **Ceanothus** in her yard. **Kathy** also brought some beautiful, easy-to-grow natives, such as a lovely succulent, **Dudleya farinosa** as a teaser.



### ON THE TRAIL (continued)

**Barbara Kempster** found one of our? **turkeys** preparing to cross Linda Mar Blvd by the Sanchez Adobe. She halted all traffic until it was safely across, on Weds. May 29, late pm.

**Ron Wilson** on June 3rd: "This **bumblebee** on the **w. morning glory** seemed fast asleep in the early morn on Brooks Creek Trail. Seems pretty well covered in pollen from partying the night before & happy to sleep in past 9."



**Neil Conway** saw a **Grey Fox** on the Brooks Creek Trail, halfway to the waterfall viewing bench on a Wednesday in mid-May.

**Ray Trabucco's** new aha! moment was finding a tiny rubber boa on the lower Trout Farm Trail on 6/10/19 at 6:25pm.



**DISCOVERING  
INSECTS IN  
JUNE WITH  
CHRIS  
QUOCK &  
SPVP FRIENDS**

*Thoughts →  
on insects at right*

### HOW DO OUR TRAIL GARDENS GROW? TRIM & TIDY

by Joseph Piro

It was just **Istvan Puski** and **me** for our June 8th Trail Day. There was a big trail run the Park this morning, so we kept it easy but productive. We took loppers & handsaw, walking the Trout Farm/Brooks Falls Trail loop, pulling some tall weeds and trimming back low-hanging stuff all along the



way. We then cut back a few things on the Plaskon Nature Trail and I finished by trimming & raking the little path that winds through the native Sun garden. Enjoy the trails in this nice weather!

### CALENDAR FOR JULY/AUGUST, 2019

#### **MORGAN STICKROD'S CALIFORNIA PLANT DIVERSITY**

Saturday, July 6.....5pm

**FRIENDS' BOARD MEETINGS-call Mila:** 650 359-1642

Mondays.....7pm

#### **JULY TRAIL DAY**

Saturday, July 13.....9am

#### **JULY HABITAT RESTORATION DAY**

Saturday, July 20.....9am

#### **AUGUST TRAIL DAY**

Saturday, August 10.....9am

#### **AUGUST HABITAT RESTORATION DAY**

Saturday, August 17.....9am

#### **KRISTA HERBE'S MEDICINAL PROPERTIES OF CA PLANTS**

Saturday, August 17.....5pm

All events except board mtgs: meet at Visitor Center.

"Not a day on the Earth passes without..." insects offering music & beauty on our lands: the humm of the **bees**, the wail & brrr of the **cicada**, & in the evening, the ticking, whirring, grating sound of the **katydid** & the cheerful chirping of the **cricket**; the rainbow tints of the **butterfly**, the lemon fur of the **bumblebee**, the shine of the **beetle**.....

Adapted rom **Edwin Way Teale's** "Adventures in Nature"

### 67 HOMO SAPIENS IN AWE OF 5 WILDMIND CRITTERS

by Mila Stroganoff

The VC was graced by 5 beautiful animals on April 18: Sixty seven children & adults learned about a very awake one-eyed **Great Horned Owl** & its rescue from a car collision as well as how its feathers make it a silent flyer. **Renee & Megan**, 2 instructors for the program, also brought out a **grey fox**, **porcupine**, **opossum**, & **Red-tailed Hawk** and spoke about each animal. The grey fox, whose mother had been scared away by kids from a play yard, had waited fruitlessly for mom. As the stories unfolded, ideas about bio-diversity, loss of habitat, foraging techniques, & the sensory advantages that certain animals have over humans; think acute sense of smell in the fox, super night vision in owl, were cleverly inserted into the mix.



Mila Stroganoff

**The Leaders of "the Friends of SPVP":** President: **Mila Stroganoff**; Vice President: **Judy Bacon**; Secretary: **Enid Ansgarius**; Interim Treasurer: **Bing Huey**; Visitor Center Director: **Mila Stroganoff**; Habitat Restoration leader: **Istvan Puski**; Trail Leader: **Joseph Piro**; Membership: **Adrian Stroganoff**; CoProgram Directors: **Mila Stroganoff, Carolyn Pankow**; Director of Hospitality: **Judy Bacon**; Directors of Website Management: **Lakshmi Javadekar and Jayesh Kapoor**; Trailside Store Director: **open**. Membership misc: **Volunteer, Katie Antista**. **WEB SITE:** [friendsofsanpedrovalleypark.org](http://friendsofsanpedrovalleypark.org) Editor of this newsletter: **Carolyn Pankow** ([pankowinca@gmail.com](mailto:pankowinca@gmail.com))

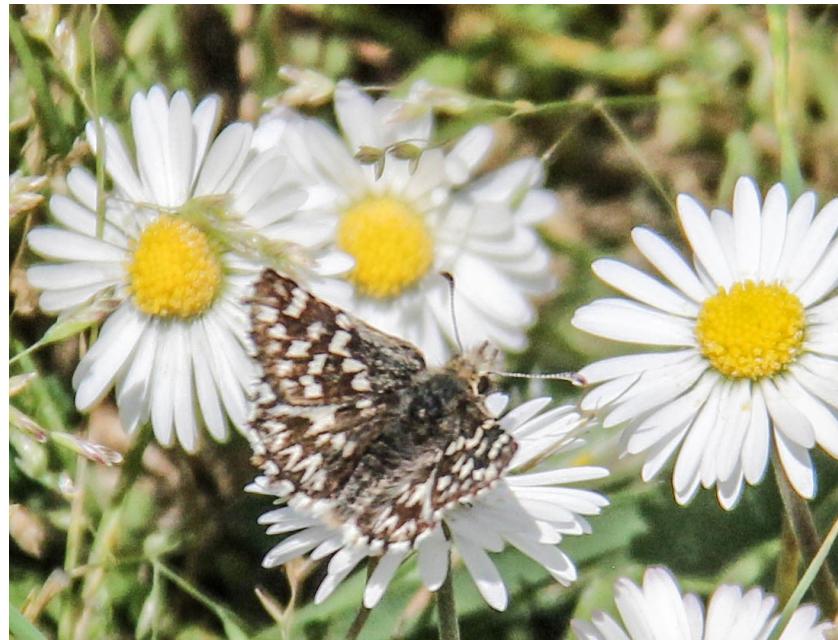


**Native bumblebee** with full pollen sacs on CA State flower: May 8; back of Weiler Ranch Rd.



**Lorquin's Admiral Butterfly** on **Stinging Nettle** in May; Weiler Ranch Road

Lovely Lepidoptera and a Bee  
By Ron Wilson



**Checkered skipper**, 5/12/19, 12-1:30pm (first this year)  
Weiler Ranch Rd.



**White-veined Butterfly**, 5/12/19, 12-1:30pm; late-year sighting; Weiler Ranch Road



**Bumblebee on Western Morning Glory**, 6/3/19, 9am;  
Brooks Creek Trail

Ron Wilson's Underwings, "Overwings" or  
Butterflies Have a Field Day on a Sunny May 9th



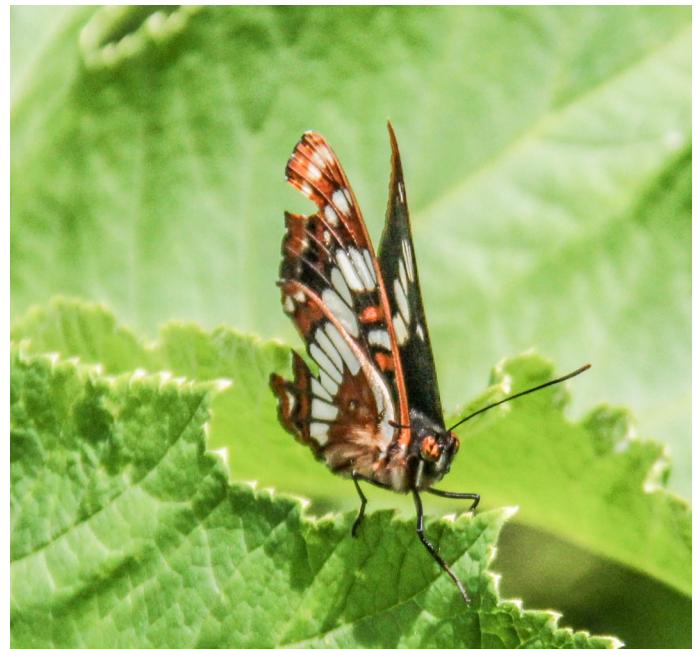
**Painted Lady** with proboscis into Asteraceae  
(sunflower family) flower May 9, ca 2pm; WRR



**Painted Lady**, camouflaged underwings on May 9, about 2pm;  
Weiler R.R.



Underwing of a **Echo Blue**, May 9, ca 2pm; WWR



Underwing of a weathered **Lorquin's Admiral** on  
May 9, 2019, about 2pm; Weiler RR



**Buckeye** May 9, about 2pm, WRR



**Woodland Skipper** 2pm May 9,  
WRR

# BING HUEY: DIVERSITY, DRAMA, BEAUTY of PEDRO VALLEY PARK

8



Mr. Robin Redbreast; 2/23/19; enjoying Toyon berries on the Valley View Trail



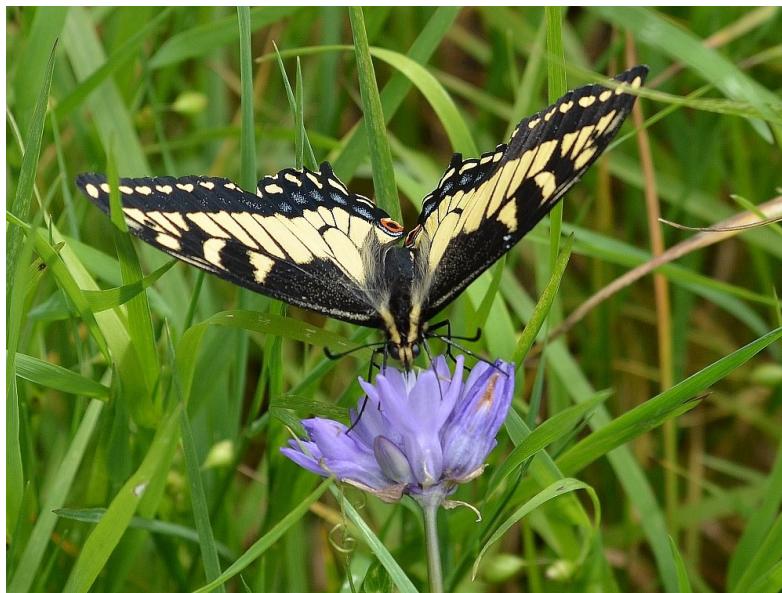
Adelid day moth enjoying Ceanothus on April 12, '19; Brooks Creek Trail



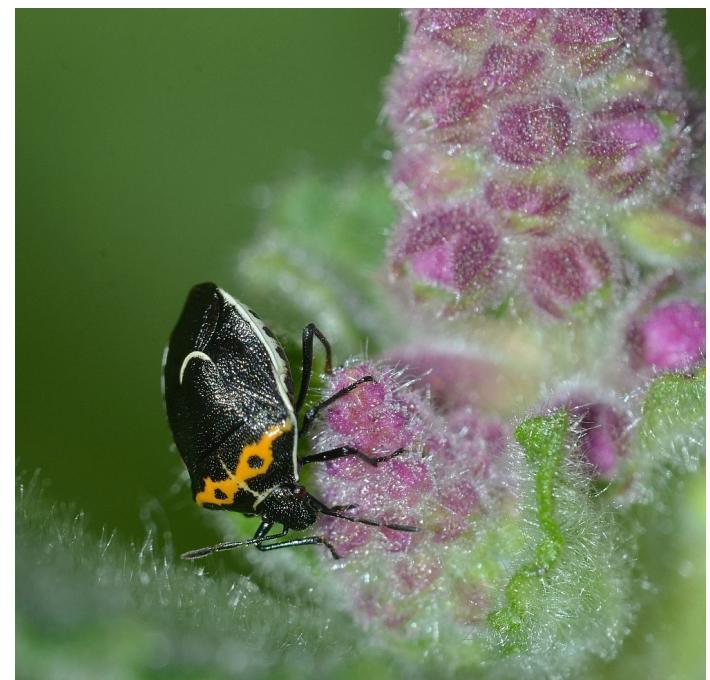
Crab spider with unfortunate fly on April 12, 2019; Brooks



Detail from above; Mt. Man kind of guy?



Anise Swallowtail on blue dicks, April 25; Valley View

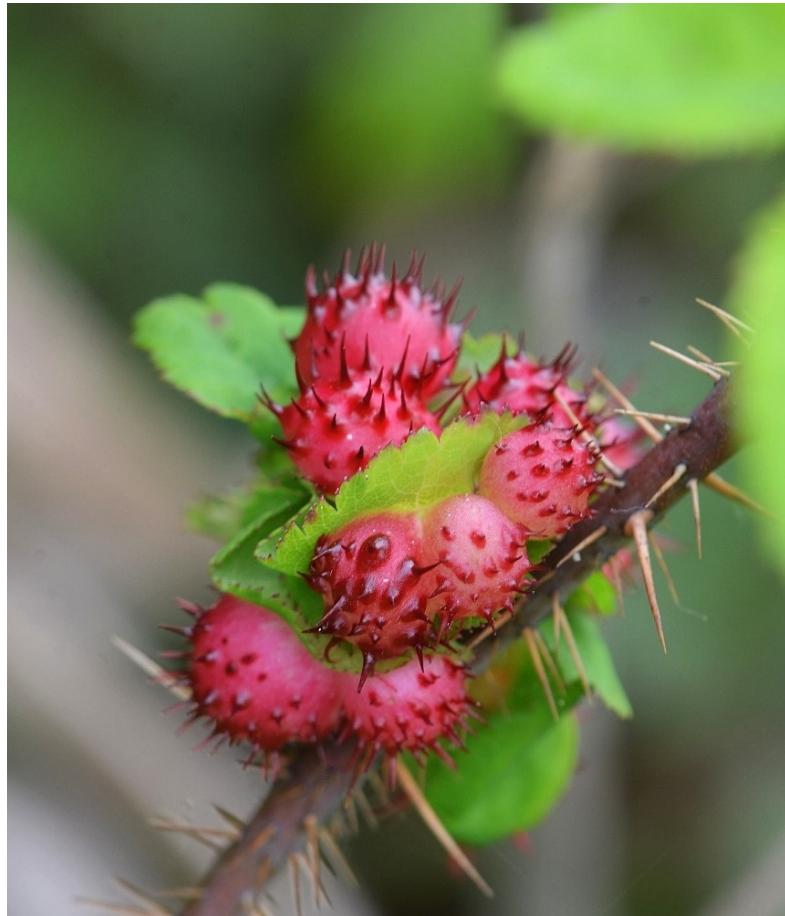


Stink Bug: *Cosmopepla conspicillaris* on wood mint, April 12; Brooks Creek Trail

# The Weird but Wonderful by Bing Huey



**Lattice Stinkhorn** and the Company it Attracts (**housefly?**)  
April 25; parking lot



**Dipolepsis politus** wasp gall on California wild rose,  
5/5/2019; Hazelnut Trail

# BARBECUE REVELERS



Front Row: Joseph Piro (**Chef**), Sharron Walker, Katie Beltrano, Istvan Puski, Amy Sullivan

Second "Row": Youhua, Jennifer Alpaugh, YaFei Ni, Susan Herring, Judy Bacon (**Worker, Organizer**), Carol Martinez (**Worker**), Carolyn Pankow, and Darlene Easterby. (Welcome, new member Darlene!)

Third "Row": Park Aide, Bevan Jones, Jane, Brian Spigelman, Ranger Tom Hart, Rob, Walter Colquhoun, Richard Herring, Isabel Ebert, Steve Robinson (hiding?), Enid Ansgarius, Christine Guzman.

Other party revelers not pictured: David Bacon, Jack Coots, Irene Lee, Carl Schwab, Skeeter (**Worker**) Thanks to all who helped out and to all who made and brought great dishes!



Earth Day,  
Linda Mar Beach  
**Brian Spigelman**  
And  
**Jack Coots**  
Promote  
The Friends of SPVP  
Thank you, fellas!



M. Stroganoff

Some of 60 at Wildmind's Calif. Wild pgm, 4/18