

Explore our website:

friendsofsanpedrovalleypark.org

SNIPPITS OF COMING PROGRAMS, TO WHET YOUR APPETITE

Fear not, despite the closing of the VC we have not thrown out all our programs. Some members of the board of "the Friends" like the **Stroganoffs**, are checking into using Zoom or some other teleconferencing platform to present our programs to you in a safe way.

We still have **Bing Quock's** "the Night Sky" and **Tiffany Yap's** "Wildlife Corridors" to look forward to when things open up, but to help whet your appetite we will



also be able to learn more about the wonderful "Insect Pollinators" (left: **syrphid fly** pollinating **barberry** flowers) when **Christopher Quock** presents. **Ellen Natesan**, an ecologist for 20 yrs, who has a PhD in Wildlife & fisheries science, will elucidate the miraculous flow & management of

our drinking water system for the Bay Area, informing us of the great variety of wildlife that depends on its management. Finally we have a commitment from **Dr. Michelle Trautwein** of the Cal Academy, who will reveal her fascinating discoveries involving the **face mites** we all carry around with us.

SHARRON WALKER: ACTION for EARTH DAY "50"

Earth Day is celebrating 50 Years, so thought I would forward this on! Unfortunately Earth Day activities are canceled but we can still support it in our homes or our neighborhoods. The PBC has been around since the mid 90s, once just the Pacifica Beach Coalition, now the PCB supports the environment not only in Pacifica but on the entire San Mateo County Coast! Here are some ideas--Check it out as you may have already done some of the items listed [a sampler]: **REPAIR: DON'T THROW AWAY! BUY ONLY WHAT YOU TRULY NEED! BUY ORGANIC! SAVE ENERGY! SAVE WATER! LEARN ABOUT THE ALBATROSS! REUSE, THEN RECYCLE!***

[*Editor's favorite: canoes crafted by **Ismaël Essome Ebone** of the Cameroon from wasted plastic bottles, for fishermen in need]



PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Park Update:

Due to increase in danger from the

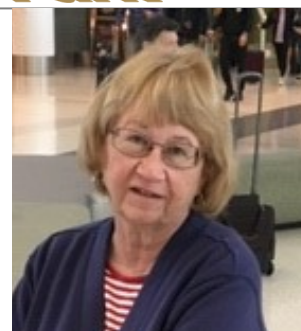
Corona Virus, our chief ranger, **Matthew Del Carlo** told us ***the park will have to close all the trails to hikers, all the trails!***

Please, please limit your walks to your local areas. We have to limit danger for the good of us all.

Be safe,

Judy Bacon

President, The Friends of San Pedro Valley Park



ON THE TRAIL

Ron Wilson sighted a **grey fox** in our Visitor Center parking lot on March 9. But it didn't stick around for a prime photo.



Ron Wilson did photograph this common beauty, a **terrestrial garter snake, *Thamnophis elegans terrestris***, on March 10, about 3/4 of a mile past the horseshoe pits.

Then, the frosting on the cake for Ron's week was this hungry covey of 16? **California Quail** on the WRR.



And on March 21st **Ron Wilson's** keen photo eye caught a possible **trap door spider**, perhaps looking for a mate? Ron's bug book called her a member of the Clathrata family. She was one inch long.

When **Laurie Nikitas'** eyes turned toward a red and white flower, she immediately photographed the pretty, skirted blossoms of the California gooseberry on the east side of the Hazelnut Trail on April 5th.

(continued on page 4)



Hiking Into and Beyond San Pedro Valley County Park

Photos also by Sharron Walker

Feb 2020

If you have never hiked up the trail to Montara Mountain I suggest you do so.

The Brooks Trail connecting to the Montara Mountain Trail to the North Peak Access Road is a little over 2.5 miles. The



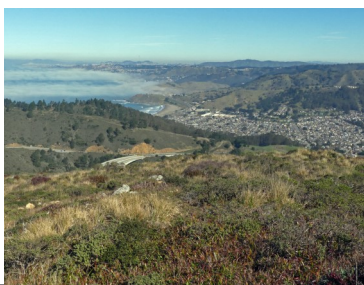
views of the valley, especially when Brooks Falls is flowing (left) are grand. From the bench at the intersection of Brooks and Montara Mt Mountain Trail on a clear day one can see as far as Pt Reyes Headlands. As one ascends to the North Peak Access Road the views continue sweeping across Sweeney Ridge north to San Francisco, and to Pedro Point Headlands.

For the most part the habitat is chaparral, although the beginning of the trail winds its way through **Monterey pines**, a few **redwoods**, and a stand of **eucalyptus**. Spring extending into summer brings a colorful display of native wild flower blooms. A unique species of **Manzanita** (*Arctostaphylos montaraensis*) occurs. Frequently spotted above are **Red-tailed Hawks**, **Turkey Vultures** and **Ravens**. Other bird species occur, especially during migration. An abundance of wildlife inhabit San Pedro Valley Park, Montara and San Pedro Mountains.



In February I joined a group of friends to hike beyond the park boundaries (left) along the ridge west of the Montara Mountain trail to the top of San Pedro Mountain, which rises

above Devil's Slide. Below is Sharron's photo of Pacifica from San Pedro Mt.). The elevation gain from San Pedro Park is about 1200 feet, following the ridge line to the saddle then west as far as the trail goes is an adventure.



Hiking west from the end of the park trail one can find their way to the saddle. A rest stop here is a must at Bill's Bench. (Sharron's photo at right) Bill VanderWerf along with his wife Barbara, *Montara Mountain* author, (sold in the Friends' Trailside Bookstore) played major roles in the grass



roots efforts for a tunnel instead of a gouging highway across the mountain. To this day we benefit from their success. By the way, the book *Montara Mountain* offers an informative description of the geology, trails, flora, fauna and history of the old roads that crossed over the mountain. On this hike instead of returning via the park, we descended the old San Pedro Road, a popular Mountain bike & dog walking trail.

For details of this hike and others check out *Trails of the Coastside*, *Northern Peninsula Map* published by Pease Press, also available at the Trailside Store at SPVP Visitor Center.

HOW OUR BOARD COPES WITH "CORONA LOCKDOWN"

You can fight back! Whether it's with good old soap (p 14) homemade masks, or with humor or just by keeping in touch with other folks with cabin fever:

Sharron recommends a little humor: • I'm so excited --- it's time to take out the garbage. What should I wear? • Classified Ad: Single man with toilet paper seeks woman with hand sanitizer for good clean fun.

Judy Bacon is writing poetry (p 14), comforting her love-lorn **Cairn Terrier, Albert**, & reminiscing about her trip to southern Africa (photo) as she reads *Cry of the Kalahari*; **Adrian & Mila** are watching Metropolitan operas, ballets & saving ferns, etc. in their native plant garden; **Sharron & Bevan** are gardening on their farm (p 13)



Enid Ansgarius is sewing for St. Anthony's, as was told she's too old to vol for Pac. Resource Cntr, & facetimeing with her granddaughter of 7, who went on an Earth Day picnic with parents; **Carl Schwab** is video conferencing with Rotary Club members who are supporting the making of PPE for health care workers, walking, watching the Metropolitan opera and PBS. And you?

Thoughts From a Rambling Rover at 90

by James Mackey

March 20, 2020, Noon (50% overcast, cold). South Walnut Picnic Area:

About 20 quail foraging on newly-sown lawn near the volleyball net. Suddenly they all flushed into the stream-side thicket. But within 5 minutes they all returned. I went on to the lower parking lot, where **Katie Antista** had parked.

Nearby were 2 unique **fungi**, about the size of softballs



and made of adjacent red straps with openings among them. They were **lattice stickhorns (Cloathrus ruber)**: see **Arora, David**, *Mushrooms Demystified*, pp 773-4. More common in our park are **octopus stink-**

horns, which often pop up under picnic tables in the Trout Farm Picnic Area.

March 22, 2020, Sunday at 1pm. (50% overcast, warmer) Weiler Rd, 3 juvenile fence lizards on the fence at the trailhead of the Valley View Trail. Plaskon Trail: many **giant trilliums** in full bloom—on both sides of the trail. Hazelnut Trail: a few **adder's tongue** on both sides of the trail. Two **mission bell lilies**, including one with 3 blooms.

Back at the Plaskon Trail and on the south bridge: looking below the bridge and upstream: a new, large **five-finger fern** frond. The only other place where I have seen this species in our park is about 50 feet further upstream in this south fork of San Pedro Creek. Incidentally a sign guide to species on the Plaskon Nature Trail



reads: "**California Indians** used leaves of **hedge nettles** as baby wipes!" My reaction to that was influenced by having read, in this coronavirus time, of stores running out of toilet paper.

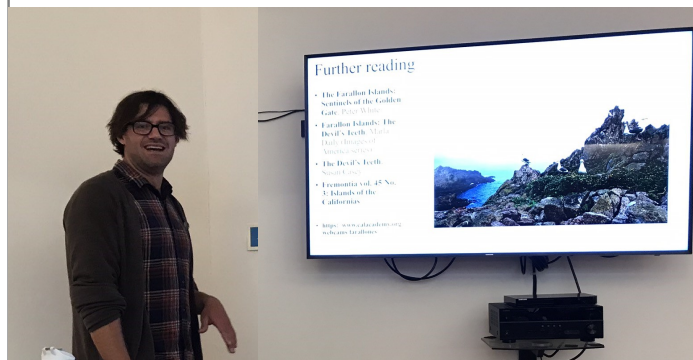
March 26: Sign on Weiler Rd., facing Oddstad Blvd.

"**Mountain lion** seen at Weiler on March 24 and 25."

Sign at entrance to Plaskon Trail points away. This is an effort to spread out hikers to avoid contagion of the coronavirus!

A REVIEW of MORGAN STICKROD'S EXPEDITION to THE FANTASTIC FARALLONES

By Mila Stroganoff



Mila Stroganoff

Having attended Morgan Stickrod's "Ecosystems of the Farallon Islands," I felt I was actually there on these illusive and restricted islands. Morgan said that he had been trying for ages to get out to the Farallones and finally succeeded but, then again, he's a biologist and botanist whose help was needed in data collection. He shared his remarkable photos and experiences, history of the islands, and insights.

The Farallon Islands are made up of 4 groups of rocky promontories which make up California's northernmost islands. They are located 30 miles from San Francisco and 20 miles south of Point Reyes and are considered part of San Francisco. They are collectively referred to as the Farallon National Wildlife Refuge and are presently co-administered by U.S. Fish and Wildlife and Point Blue Conservation Science. The premise for creating the refuge was to preserve the breeding grounds of **sea birds** and **sea mammals** and the mission now extends to managing and enhancing the recovery of wildlife on the islands. The Southeast Island, the only inhabitable island, had the first lighthouse in California built due to the horrific number of shipwrecks that occurred when seafaring people had to make their way into San Francisco Bay. Fog covers the island 90 – 95 percent of the year. Clear days are very rare indeed. There is little rain; the island is battered daily by sea waves, high winds & salt spray. The smells are terrible considering the islands are a breeding place for 13 species of seabirds and have 300,000 annual nesting birds.



US Fish & Wildlife Service

(continued on page 4)

Fantastic Farallones (continued)

Tens of thousands of **gulls** squawk and helmets are definitely needed as these birds zoom in to peck at your head or poop on you. There is not a peaceful moment day or night. Paradise for humans this is not.



fws.gov

Some of the other birds include **puffins** (at right), **Brandt's Cormorants**, **auklets**, **western gulls**, **guillemots** and **storm petrels**. The **common murre** suffered a devastating loss in population due to humans stealing their eggs and crushing them during the Farallon Island Egg Wars. Even over a hundred years later they are still recovering their numbers, which had dropped from some 400,000 to 60,000. Breeding season for birds is April through July, and in the fall you have songbirds arriving. There are two localized endemics on the islands, one being the **Farallon arboreal salamander** (left). and the other the **Farallon cave cricket**. In terms of botanical diversity, non-native species outnumber natives 3 to 1 with a total of 46 plant taxa for the island.



Kerry Froud

Maritime Goldfields (*Lasthenia maritima*), has adapted to growing on feces – bird poop -- and there is a super abundance of that. The goldfields are used for ground nesting material by cormorants & gulls and as a cover for gull chicks. The invasive plant - the problematic **New Zealand Spinach** – was once planted but is proving to be detrimental to the burrowing auklets due to its root structure and also produces tons of seed capsules which pile up in various spots, but : Recent studies show removal of New Zealand Spinach is working & is being replaced by Goldfields.

Last but not least the pinnipeds should be mentioned. There are 5 species: **elephant seals**, **northern fur seals**, **California sea lions**, **Steller sea lions**, & **harbor seals**. Let me mention the **grey whales**, **orcas**, & **great white sharks** which also inhabit the waters.



NOAA

ON THE TRAIL (continued)

On the 25th of March, "Al" alerted **Walter Colquhoun** to a partially sequestered **mountain lion** in a ditch near the end of the Weiler Ranch Road. **John Murphy** and **Sue Granfield** also saw the puma, but Walter went in for a photo, even though he knew **no one should approach a mountain lion!** He left when its ears assumed a backward position.



Walter Colquhoun

FACTOID and MORE

In the spring, 2020 issue of *Bay Nature*, **mountain lions** are lauded as an insurance against rampant Lyme Disease. Why? As you may know, the tick that transmits the **Lyme bacteria**, is often called the "**deer tick**", and a large number attach themselves to these antlered species, even though the **western gray squirrel** is actually the preferred host.



Areas where mt. lions have made a comeback have fewer deer. In contrast to the 1960's when rampant hunting was the norm, Calif deer population reached 2 million; when hunting ceased, the population of mt. lions began recovering, & now the deer population is 1/4 of that of the 60's! Studies have shown that **if the density of deer becomes too low, the increase of ticks levels off; it did!** (A puma eats 50 deer/year.)

KEEPING OFFICIAL RULES on UNOFFICIAL TRAIL DAY

By Joseph Piro

This morning **Istvan** and I rode our bikes up to the Park and kept the recommended 6 feet of "social distance" between us -- pic attached. We just walked the Trout Farm/Brooks Falls loop and trimmed back some low-hanging stuff -- not too much really. We were both surprised though at the number of people also out -- families with children, couples.... it was quite nice to see and everyone said they just wanted to get outside. Yes indeed. (photo by **Joseph Piro**)



The Leaders of "the Friends of SPVP": Interim President: **Judy Bacon**; V. President: **Mark Golembiewski**; Secretary: **Enid Ansgarius**; Treasurer: **Susan Kern**; Visitor Center Shift Coordinator: **Carl Schwab**; Habitat Restoration Leader: **Istvan Puski**; Trail Leader: **Joseph Piro**; Membership Director: **Adrian Stroganoff**; Program Director: **Carolyn Pankow**; Director of Hospitality: **Judy Bacon**; Directors of Website Management: **Lakshmi Javadekar** and **Jayesh Kapoor**; Trailside Store Manager: **Melinda Moses**; Newsletter editor: **Carolyn Pankow** (pankowinca@gmail.com); Member-at-large: **Bing Huey**. **Volunteer Contributors:** **Katie Antista** on membership misc.; **Mila Stroganoff** as program consultant.

DON'T FORGET TO CHECK OUT OUR WEBSITE: friendsofsanpedrovalleypark.org

SHARRON WALKER'S
HIKING THROUGH AND BEYOND SAN PEDRO VALLEY PARK



A wilderness feeling reigns on the San Pedro Ridge Trail, outside SPVP; Feb 1, '20

Walter wonders: who's watching the walkers?



Puma; 3/24/20; end of WRR

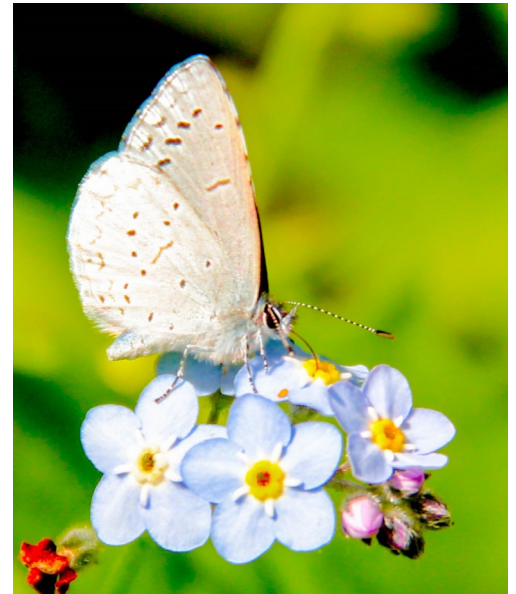
Walter Colquhoun

Sharron Walker's Bumblebee



Black Tailed Bumble Bee; February 28; Brooks Falls Trail

Ron Wilson's Butterflies-2



Echo Blue on Forget-Me-Not
April 3; Trout Farm

Tortoise Shell puddling
April 1; Trout Farm



Ron Wilson



Close up of some of Ron Wilson's Quail from "On the Trail", page one (Cropped)



White Veined; April 19; Trout Farm



Mourning Cloak; April 1; Trout Farm



Sulfur (camouflaged); March 31; Trout Farm



Anglewing; April 3; Trout Farm



Echo Blues puddling; April 1; Trout Farm

Ron Wilson in Quest of a Turkey Photo, also finds 2 human "turkeys"



The Turkey Story

Ron heard the turkey above make a distinct gobble, gobble sound as if annoyed or pursued, though Ron was in the area of the volleyball court whereas the turkey was up the Valley View Trail. And pursued it was by 2 "dummies" who went off trail to chase it a ways off the Valley View Trail. Since they were waste deep in brush, the ticks must have enjoyed their visit. It was just after noon on April 7. (small photo preserves their anonymity)



Ron Wilson Scouts for the Grey Fox on April 8

9



The grey fox was "sleeping" when Ron unfortunately got a bit too close, but managed to catch 2 more nice shots of "him"; April 9; volley ball quart meadow



Spring Plants of San Pedro Valley Park

Laurie Nikitas photographs
a gem of our Park:
Canyon gooseberry,
Ribes menziesii



Jim Mackey photographs our
prized five-fingered fern,
Adiantum aleuticum on San
Pedro Creek on March 26



Sharron Walker; an Eye for Spiders



Hillside Pea with possible Crab Spider; February 17, 2020;
Hazelnut Trail



Orb Weaver and web; February 28, 2020
Trout Farm

Sharron Walker's Osoberry on the Brooks Creek Trail



Sharron photographed these views of osoberry, *Oemleria cerasiformis*, our early-bloomer of the Rose family on February 28, on the Brooks Creek Trail
















Down on the Farm


 With Farmer Jones
 

 mannin' the till, draft
 

 horses being out to
 

 pasture.
 







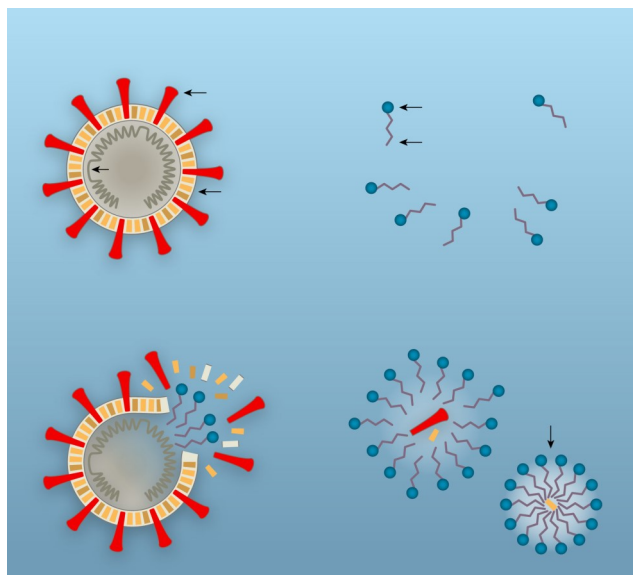
 * And hired-hand, Miss Shar- *
 * ron, plantin' the crops and *
 * watchin' out for varmits. *
 * Hear some rascally rac- *
 * coons done visited; you can *
 * bet got no good on thir *
 * mind. *

Why Soap Works

At the molecular level, soap breaks things apart. At the level of society, it helps hold everything together.

DIAGRAM OF SOAP (WITH WATER) ACTING ON THE COVID 19 VIRUS AS YOU WASH YOUR HANDS

Thank you, New York Times and Ferris Jabr



Oh Virus, oh Virus,

Please, please go away.
My nails are too long,
My hair's going gray.
I'm cooking and baking,
Not as good as it sounds,
When I got on the scale,
I had gained four more pounds!
Oh virus, oh virus,
Please, please go astray,
But I'm being good,
At six feet away!

By Judy Bacon

Upper left diagram: PICTURE OF THE CORONA VIRUS, which has a membrane of oily lipid molecules, which is studded with spike proteins that help the virus to enter cells. (arrows from top to bottom: spike protein, genetic material, lipid membrane and other proteins)

Upper right diagram: SOAP MOLECULES have a hybrid structure, with a head that bonds to water and a tail that avoids it. (arrows from top to bottom: Hydrophilic head (bonds with water); hydrophobic tail, avoids water, but bonds with oil and fat.

Lower left diagram: SOAP DESTROYS THE VIRUS when the water-shunning tails of the soap molecules wedge themselves into the lipid membrane and pry it apart.

Lower right diagrams: SOAP TRAPS DIRT and fragments of the destroyed virus in tiny bubbles called *micelles*, which wash away in water. The arrow on the second drawing show a *micelle*, which will wash away with water.