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CAN WE SOLVE THE CORAL REEF CRISIS?: JULY 11

In his **webinar*** talk (See bottom of this page), **Dr. Luis Rocha**, the Curator of Ichthyology at the Cal Academy of Sciences, will give new hope for abating the serious worldwide decline of the **corals** and the fantastic ecosystems they build. Dr. Rocha's lecture will start at **4pm on Saturday, July 11.**



The beautiful and highly diverse coral reef habitats exist in a delicate balance between thousands of species, from **tiny photosynthetic algae** which live in the tissues of the shallower corals, to the giant **fishes**. Lose one link in the chain, and you can throw the entire system out of balance, which is what is happening today as human activities are negatively affecting coral reefs more than ever before. But is there hope for reefs? Dr. Luiz Rocha thinks so, and he will explain why in this talk that will take viewers on a tour of the most spectacular reefs in the world, shallow and deep.

Dr. Rocha has spent more than 5,000 hours underwater studying fishes and published more than 150 peer-reviewed articles and one book. In addition, his work has been featured in many popular media outlets including CNN, the N.Y.



Times, Scientific American, Nat'l Geographic, Science Channel and supported conservation efforts across the globe. Currently his main area of work involves

the exploration of little-known deep coral reefs, between 100 & 500 feet depth, throughout the tropics.

***To register for a **webinar**, send an email to:**

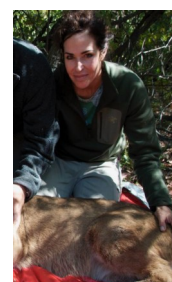
friendsofsanpedrovalley@gmail.com before noon on the Friday before the Webinar. An invitation will then be emailed to you a half hour before the lecture.

Living with Mountain Lions: August 15

In this **webinar*** talk (see bottom of left column), on **Saturday, August 15, at 4pm**, Bay Area Puma Project/Felidae Conservation Fund leader and biologist **Zara McDonald**, will enlighten you about their current work with **pumas** and **bobcats**. She will include mountain lion ecology, history, the challenges of sharing habitat with wild felids, and teach essential tips for their continuous thriving and reproduction while co-existing with humans and their pets. Using non-invasive research techniques, Felidae aims to assist in answering critical questions for the future of wildlife & for the advancement of the field of wildcat research with the help of many citizen scientists and community engagement projects. We will also be able to learn the important role of wild cats in creating healthy ecosystems as well as to enjoy engaging photos & videos.



In short she will talk about mountain lions in the Bay Area, their biology & the recent changes their study has uncovered about these shy and elusive animals living at the urban edge.



ON THE TRAIL

Katie Antista probably had mixed feelings when she saw a **Great Blue Heron** catch a **gopher** in the South Walnut Picnic Area on May 8, at noon. She couldn't see where it flew to, but my bet would be the creek, as they seem to like a little water to flush a hairy critter down the gullet! (photo: *San Francisco Citizen* online.)



Ron Wilson: "Spotted this 4ft. plus **gopher snake** just off the Weiler trail mid afternoon on 5-7-20. Bikers, hikers & joggers, all passing by, not even noticing this magnificent creature even as I knelt to photograph it. First shot caught the tongue out investigating my presence." (Continued on page 4)



GOOD NEWS: Bird song walk leader, **Jim Steele**, is recovering fully from a heart attack, & should soon be back walking the trails in SPVP!



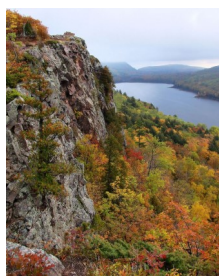
Mark Golembiewski: **Swept Away by Nature, Part I**

One of the newest members of our board, Vice President, **Golembiewski** wrote this nostalgic tale of his journey into America's wilds and wilderness:

"Even though my parents were not 'outdoorsy' people, my love of the

outdoors was likely forged when I was a young kid and we would occasionally take summer vacation trips "up north" in my home state of Michigan. I grew up in a bland suburb just outside Detroit, so it was wondrous to me to see the 'endless' forests of **huge trees** and the gigantic Great Lakes (they were like seeing the ocean for the first time) that make that state so special. It also didn't hurt that I thoroughly enjoyed reading the mythical tales of **Paul Bunyan** and stories of the early explorers when I was growing up.

I later attended college at a small engineering school near the western shores of Lake Superior that was located about the farthest you could be from Detroit (more than 9 hours away) and still be in the state of Michigan. Winter there lasted from about Halloween until almost Easter every year (nearly the entire school year), with massive snowfalls, but it was truly a winter wonderland and absolutely beautiful there in the summer. (At right is an autumnal scene in beautiful Michigan)



But my true love of the natural environment was solidified after college when I began traveling extensively from coast to coast while working as an air pollution testing engineer in the early '70s and began to see the geography of the rest of the country. I remember being awestruck when I saw the Rocky Mountains for the first time and when I



.Mark: Bkpkng in the West

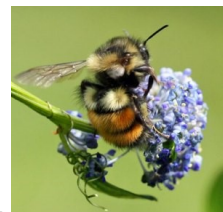
visited California and the Pacific Northwest, seeing the **redwoods** and **sequoias**, along with the Sierra Nevada and the Pacific Ocean. I was blown away and decided the Northwest was where I wanted to spend the rest of my life. Well, it took me a while, but after living in Kansas City for a bit and very briefly in

Oak Ridge, TN while developing a career as an occupational safety & health professional, I accepted a job transfer to San Francisco in 1985 and the rest is history. I married a native San Franciscan shortly thereafter and moved to Pacifica 20 years ago after first residing in SF & Daly City." (Soon: Part II)

POLLINATION & THE IMPORTANCE OF NATIVE BEES

by Judy Bacon & Carolyn Pankow

In his May 16, **webinar** program, **Christopher Quock** convinced us that our **native bees** are more critical for successful pollination than **bats**, **hummingbirds**, **flies**, etc, & possibly, eventually more so than **honey bees**. Amazingly, there are 1600 species of native bees in Calif, though the honey bee gets most of our attention. (**bumblebee** on **Ceanothus**)



Mr. Quock detailed the variety of players and their roles in a huge honey bee hive, their communication & how nectar is gathered and processed to make honey, the larval food, as well as pollen for their protein.



UC photo

While some of our native bees tend to live and work with others of their species, there are the not so social solitary bees, some making their nests in the ground. Then there is the **bumblebee**, who has an unsophisticated colony of an insignificant number of individuals compared to the honey bee. But Christopher stressed that one commonality is that all bees have hairs on their legs & bodies that collect & spread pollen, having evolved in harmony with flowering plants.

Mr. Quock alerted us to some of the present challenges for Native Pollinators:

Habitat – Loss of habitat in many areas: sprawling civilization!

Pesticides – The use of Neonicotinoids arguably being the worst villain for honey bees & their reproduction. Any insecticide is bad news for native bees.

Honey bee– European bees cause the deaths of native bees during times of low pollen & nectar availability.

Then he told us of some ways we can help:

Plant hedgerows in fields and also native plants in our home gardens to support the native bees.

Make or buy bee "hotels", tiny nests or houses (example at rt)



Leave out sticks, logs, and loose ground for homes for native bees. Your yard needs to be a little bit sloppy so that we can keep our ecosystems whole.

Adrian & Mila Stroganoff connected us to Christopher Quock's fine **zoom webinar program**. More to come!

PENINSULA WATERSHED TALK via WEBINAR IN JUNE

By Bing Huey



In the Friends program on June 13, **Dr. Ellen Natesan** gave a fascinating look at a large swath of land of 36 mi² on the San Francisco Peninsula known as the Peninsula Watershed (map at left), owned by the S.F. Public Utilities Commission, and with limited access to the public.

Dr. Natesan offered a revealing look at how the watershed property is managed to simultaneously ensure a safe water supply to some 2.7 million customers in four counties while protecting the natural resources within its boundaries. A healthy environment in the watershed surrounding the four reservoirs is key to the quality of the water they store.

Outflows from the watershed serve as habitat to the federally-protected **steelhead trout**. Clean water flowing out of the reservoirs translates to clean water for migrating steelhead. Therefore, water is monitored for quality and temperature and studied using methods such as **invertebrate** monitoring, snorkel surveys, & steelhead surveys.

A map of the watershed shows a mosaic of several different habitat types. There are shrublands, comprised of maritime chaparral and coastal scrub, hardwood forests of mostly **bay laurel** and **coast live oak**, **conifer forests** in the wetter areas, and **grasslands**. Dr. Natesan spoke of the loss of much of the original natural habitat and threats to its rare plants and animals. She described efforts by the SFPUC to restore the habitat, such as removal of **nonnative trees** and regrading of the terrain to create wetlands.



Aaron Schusteff

It is the terrestrial ecology of the watershed that makes it so distinctive and worthy of protection. Its varied geology and climate give it a high degree of local biodiversity. 10% of all native species in California are found there, making it part of the Golden Gate Biodiversity Hotspot. It is home to such rare species as the **Hillsborough chocolate lily** and **San Mateo thorn mint** (above). Areas of thin serpentine soil host specially adapted plants while excluding others, notably nonnative ones. Endangered wildlife includes the **California red-legged frog**, **SF garter snake**, & the **endangered marbled murrelet**, the latter being found in the old growth **Douglas fir** in the conifer forest.

Ellen enlightened us about a unique & fascinating natural area that is located close by. It can be accessed by visitors by either the Sawyers Camp Trail, administered by San Mateo County Parks, or by limited docent-led hikes on the Fifield & Cahill Ridge Trails (photo at rt.) There are plans to expand the trails that are within the limited access areas.



S.F. Chronicle

SHARRON, OTHERS; DOUBLE DISCOVERY: YOUNG HAWK AND ITS BANDS

Sharron Walker: Yesterday I had this wonderful sighting of a juvenile **Red-tailed Hawk**. It was about 2:30 on Friday, May 29. Initially I spotted it flying into a **willow** by the picnic grounds near the creek at the beginning of Trout Farm Trail. I was amazed to spot it, as it was so well camouflaged. Because it



Sharron Walker

was young, it seemed not to be disturbed by my presence, so we spent approximately 45 minutes in each other's company, with me following it as it flew to 3 perching spots. Note there are bands, aqua on right leg, silver on left. I'm curious about the significance of the banding, and have sent a letter to the Audubon society. *Ms. Walker received a USGS certificate for contributing information on this banded bird.*

Craig Nikitas, chief of Bay Raptor Rescue, reported: the GGRO banding manager, **Teresa Ely**, & her husband were hiking the Trout Farm last week, [last week of May] and saw the same bird, and were able to get a photo showing the band number.(G-04). Here's the info on it: *This beautiful hawk was banded on September 10, 2019. It was sexed as a male and weighed 794 grams. (28oz or 1lb, 12oz.)* "Thank you both for passing on the sighting of the juvenile Red-tail we banded last September. A very small male, now about a year old. This is at least the third sighting of this individual in the park. Maybe it will make a home here to nest & breed next spring. That would be really fun"

Ranger Matt DelCarlo: has 2 photos of this same RTH, sitting on the split rail in the parking lot. It buzzed him & Greg [Ranger Escoto] last Friday outside the VC.

ON THE TRAIL (continued)



Ron Wilson

Katie Antista and **Ray Trabucco** led **Jim Mackey** to an area of the lower parking lot where they had found 2 piles of poop from, presumably, a **mountain lion** on May 15. Jim researched the size of puma scat, finding that it's often 1 1/8 in in diameter, which was precisely the same as a measurement he took on site from one supremely hairy cylinder. Later Ron Wilson also found the heap.

Man on the Plaskon entry bridge by the VC, proudly told of a **bobcat** quite a distance up the Hazelnut trail at high noon on May 9; apparently it was in no hurry. Another party had reported one stopping and blocking the same trail on May 5.



Don DeBolt

In the last few days **Katie Antista** had been hearing **woodpeckers** tap, tap tapping in her neighborhood, but had not seen one; well, into SPVP late the morning of May 26, and low and behold, in the Walnut Group Picnic Area on the large cypress, she saw what was likely a **Hairy Woodpecker**, as she knows it not only has a longer beak, but also is larger than the **Downy Woodpecker**, a look-alike also found in our Park. (Wikipedia photo)

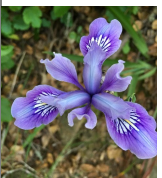


David Maher

Ray Trabucco loved the 5 very tiny **quail chicks** crossing the E. Weiler Ranch Rd. with their Mom on Mon, June 15, at about 4:30pm. Then, in a few more yards down the road, he found a **juvenile alligator lizard** with gorgeous colors and a flat head, nearly stationary.



Gary Nafis



And there was the beauty of the **Douglas Iris**, captured by **Mark Golembiewski** on the Brooks Creek Trail on May 6.

USING NATURE TO COPE WITH THE CURSED COVID

Judy Bacon's favorite way to cope is to social distance near nature; now with up to 8 buddies in parking lot!



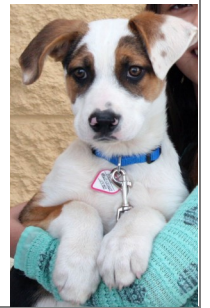
Katie Antista's way is to social distance walk in the park on week days, often with nature friends, with an eye for finding "hidden" plants and birds.

Sharron Walker's style is to make it a priority to connect with nature...in her yard, walking the coast, checking the creek for **steelhead** sightings, & at SPVP. Don't even try to hold this girl down!

Carolyn Pankow's way is to gaze at leaves & trunks of her beautiful Calif. Sycamore (at left) big leaf maple, coast live oak & cherry trees while lunching on her



deck as she tries to convince her hound, **Nellie**, to stop chasing **rabbits, birds**, etc. in her very aggressive manner. (She was to be half border collie, not half killer-hound; here she is the day we adopted her, looking so harmless)



FACTOID

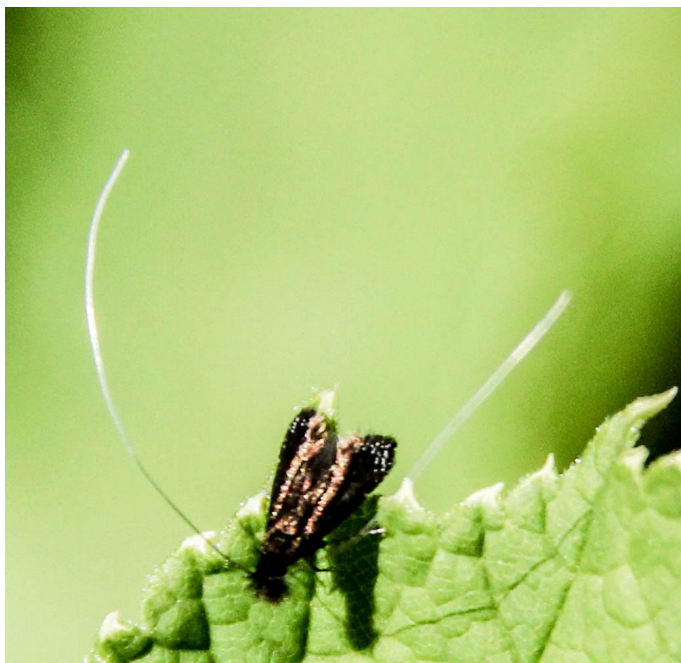
Spiders are often thought of as obligate carnivores, but according to **Mary M. Gardiner** and **Mary Griffith** of Ohio State University, when times are tough, some, like the **crab spider**, will turn to eating pollen and nectar of a **flower**, while waiting all too long for an insect victim to ambush. Some will actually eat the greenery of a **plant**, injecting it first with digestive enzymes.



Dave Pressland

The Leaders of "the Friends of SPVP": President: **Judy Bacon**; Vice 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**; Director of Programs: **Mila Stroganoff**; Zoom Webinar Program Coordinators: **Mila & Adrian Stroganoff**; 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 Contributor: **Katie Antista** on membership misc.; Program consultant: **Carolyn Pankow**.

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



Fairy moth, Adelidae family; May 3; Hazelnut Trail; Common in May on the Valley Manroot. Tiny tiny body! Long, long, long antennae



Albino Crane fly; 5/3/20; Weiler Ranch Rd.

Felis concolor: May 5th, Hazelnut Trail



On May 5, 2020, a little family: mother, father and child, was hiking on the Hazelnut trail, we believe just after the 1/2 mile mark, on the way from Plaskon Trail to WWR when they came across this **mountain lion** lying in the middle of the trail. When it saw them, it moved into the brush where the father took the photo at left. It would not run away.

The incident was reported to your editor by **Laurie Nikitas**, who wondered why the family was hiking "backwards" on the trail. Thank you, **Ranger Lisa Di Lorenzo** for obtaining a copy of their photo.

Sharron Walker's Steelhead



Here they are at the Capistrano Bridge; did they make it into SPVP in this year of little rain?



Sharron saw about 10-12 steelhead there at 11am on May 7; the largest were about 10-11 inches; others about 3-5 in

Walker, Wilson Confront Large Gopher Snakes



Sharron Walker:

Located on Weiler just beyond the Horseshoe Pits, 5/18/20 at around 1pm, sunny, so most likely warming itself. Interesting behavior as usually when I come across a snake; it moved away rapidly. This one was partially on the side path that parallels Weiler Ranch Trail. It was there as I approached, remained at least 5 minutes until it then decided to move into the brush adjacent to the trail. It may have been almost 4' long.

Ron Wilson was lucky that on his first shot that day, this reptile, probably just over 4' long, had tested Ron with his forked tongue, which not only can smell (through its Jacobson's organ on the roof of its mouth), but can locate the direction the scent is coming from. One can only wonder what he thought of Ron. Seen on May 7, mid afternoon just off the Weiler Ranch Road





May 7; Weiler Ranch Rd.



May 18 at 1pm; Weiler R.R., near horseshoe pits

Jim Mackey's, "Sleuthing"



As he suspected, Jim found the watchful father California Quail was protecting his wife and chicks, who were feeding under the parking lot brush

Mark Golembiewski's Pick of Douglas Iris; May 6;
Brooks Creek Trail



Ron Wilson; Love of the Lepidopterans



Phyciodes campestris, field crescent; May 22



Probably a *Poanes melane* skipper; May 22;
on wild oats



Angewing; 3pm; June 10, 2020
Warm Spot near Visitor Center

Juvenile Red-tailed Hawks all over the place in SPVP!



Sharron Walker: Young Red-tailed Hawk
May 29, on willow tree, picnic grounds at
start of Trout Farm



Sharron Walker: Young Red-tailed Hawk;
May 29; flew to other willows
by Trout Farm



Ron Wilson; Young Red-tailed Hawk
on June 3 at 7am; On fence near
Visitor Center



Sharron Walker's banded male—juvenile
Red-tailed Hawk, "Pedro"; June 7 2020;
on St. Peter's Roof

Ron Wilson's Raven and Chickadee: the Contrast



Raven: breakfast time: note powerful beak; at 7am on June 3rd; near Vis. Cntr.



Little Chickadee who enriches the world with its song, now enriches scavengers & the soil from which it came; May 22: Valley View Trail

District Ranger,
Matthew DelCarlo &
Ranger III Darrick
Emil

A Moment to Relax in
the Native Entry
Garden



Sharron Walker



Sharron Walker

Chief DelCarlo,
Running the Show

Del Carlo with Ranger
Lisa Di Lorenzo working
from the Visitor Center
Museum
While Distancing
Ranger Emil under ta-
ble, adjusting some-
thing?



Sharron Walker