

[Our website: friendsofsanpedrovalleypark.org](http://friendsofsanpedrovalleypark.org)
Offers info on new natural history programs, recordings of past programs, info on animals and plants in SPVP, and more!

Visitor Center Opens July 3rd!!



Museum, Trailside Store! Volunteers to assist you will be Sharron, Eileen, Mark & Judy.

BETLES & BUGS FOR KIDS

Mark your calendar for **Tuesday, August 10, at 1pm**, when the Beetle Lady, **Stephanie Dole**, will immerse



our children in the science and lore of bugs at the Walnut Grove Picnic Area. A couple of years ago she brought a huge array of these hard-shelled gems (Bay Area **spotted cucumber beetle** from iNaturalist), plus other insects to excite our kids into wonderment.

She spoke in their language, of these amazing joint-legged, antennae-bearing flyers, and then let all the wiggly *Homo sapiens* young make a collection jar for the unknown world of rivals in our picnic areas. Children armed with long-handled nets were turned on to capturing and later identifying their insect beasties. Don't let your kids miss out this time!

PEDRO PARK PLANTS PILFERED

Report & Photos by Laurie Nikitas



In the 22 years I've hiked here, a great pleasure has always been those spectacular **giant trilliums** at the east entrance of the Hazelnut. In those years, the group on the ground to the left as you exit the trail has been poached 3 times, including this year. The poacher doesn't get every corm, so they return & become their gorgeous selves after years of growth, only to be taken again. Farther up the trail, within a maybe 200 ft area, I've seen **Smith's white fairybells** 3

times. Each time I've had one look only, because they also are poached immediately. Last week it happened to the latest one. It's just incredible to me that someone would take the only plant of its kind on the trail. (fairybells last seen 4/21/21; ca 1/4 mile E. Hazelnut)



NATIVE NEIGHBORS: KIDS' PROGRAM JULY 13

Wildmind comes back to San Pedro Valley on the second Tuesday of **July, the 13th, at 1pm**, with 3 active animals that dwell in or near the Bay Area: the **grey fox**, a **hawk**, and a **porcupine**! The Walnut Picnic Area will be the setting for the show and audience, which we hope will include many children as well as their parents or other adults.

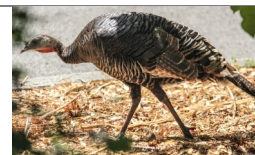


Not that many moons ago, we had sightings of a **grey fox** in this very area: 2 of the ones I've seen in the Park were within a stone's throw from our site, and years ago **Katie Antista** saw one in the South Walnut Grove area grab a **gopher** or 2, heading for the brush, where we assumed a growing family was hidden. This is also an area where **Red-shouldered hawks** are often seen, but for the **porcupine** you must go farther afield, into North Bay counties.

These presenters have always been experienced and talented, truly caring about these animals that have been rescued by Wildmind of Half Moon Bay.

ON THE TRAIL

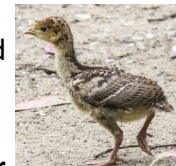
Turkey time blossoms: on April 24, **Ron Wilson** had a **turkey** portrait session with this miss at right in



the Trout Farm near the restrooms and the Brooks Trail. **Laurie Nikitas** snapped her So. Walnut image at



left Ap. 28. At 5pm, June 14, **Ray Trabucco** watched from the handicapped trail, just past the horseshoe pits, as a



female turkey followed by a **wee feather ball**, trotted through the grasses above. A lady trail regular had seen & photographed mom with 4 chicks near that area. (Flicker photo of turkey chick above)

At 8:30pm on June 26, SPVP rangers saw a **mountain lion** near the So. Walnut restrooms. Upon seeing them, it trotted over the bridge to an area near the overflow lot kiosk. A jogger intent on his/her miles, seemed oblivious to the passing feline. (continued on page 4)



ISTVAN PUSKI, OUR MAN WITH RESTLESS FEET

He's flying off the ground below my oak tree with one hand hitting his right foot; a quick reverse with hand slapping his left foot: I had always imagined **Istvan's** Hungarian dancing as some fast stepping and bouncing and twirling in a folksy costume, but the rhythmic athleticism I just saw was a shock—a 5 second-long performance—like being in a musical beside **Russ Tamblyn**?

An hour before, he had told me innocently, (seemingly) how he was at a SF folk music festival years ago, enjoying the music while dancing with a bunch of others, sensing that one by one people were disappearing from the dance floor till he alone was caught up in the joy of dancing, the music; I listened, enthralled. "When the players stopped, they all clapped for me", as did everyone surrounding the floor. He smiled, and I knew I had to see him dance!

After Istvan Puski graduated from Oceana High at 18, he began his mission to reclaim his Hungarian heritage, traveling to his grandparents home in Budapest to study the unfathomable Hungarian language (for one semester of total immersion), at the end, realizing that his best efforts rendered him only semi-fluent in this tricky language with no resemblance to any other tongue he'd ever heard.

The constant, brain-straining language deal landed him in a pit of distress, rendering him easily compliant when his non-English speaking folks convinced him to loosen up a

bit, to become a real Hungarian with folk-dancing lessons. The fuse of this music and artistic action was quickly lit, so that in a couple of months when asked to join a touring group, he had no doubts he was their man, traveling to folk festivals: one from the Netherlands to Belgium and Italy, and the other into Poland, Hungary and the Czech Republic, later lingering on in Bulgaria, living with friends.

Alas, thus he was diverted from his original idea: earning enough money to become a master of his high school instrument, the trumpet, enrolling in a conservatory in Paris.

Later, at the College of San Mateo, he studied drafting, procuring a good-paying job in Silicon Valley before graduation. Yet, sitting in a building was not part of the script of his genome; roaming was.

One day Istvan went for a casual hike in SPVP, taking the beautiful Montara Mt. Trail, but unable to stop, going over hill and dale, one foot after the other, an abundance of nature, till he finally headed to Pilar Point, for water and



relief. The way back was a dark walk along the old Devil's Slide Road, but when your bicycle is in the Park & your home in Rockaway Beach, & walking is what you do...

So Mr. Puski has an urge to trek, to explore, a restlessness to dance, but also to lay waste to alien plants & to mend trails. On "off" days, Istvan would go on the Weiler Ranch Rd. with mattock (the ax) in hand to get to the Valley View or Hazelnut, etc, dressed in his casual levis and his famous sandals.

Your imagination can probably see the trouble that was ahead: visitors realized that this man with a "deadly weapon" was not a ranger, and their imagination took a dark turn: possibly an angry man, waiting for the right moment??? We're happy Istvan wears identity showing his affiliation now, for his own safety; little did people know he was repairing trails for them & rescuing native plants. (next time: native herbs & Puski).

BLUE SKIES FOR TRAIL TRIO

by Joseph Piro



For our May 8, 2021 Trail Day, **Stan Jensen, Istvan Puski** (lft to rt. In photo) & I took to the Valley View /Weiler Ranch Rd. loop. Overall, the Valley View Trail looks in good shape and we found most of our work on upper switchbacks on the east end, where we found a few spots of **coyote brush, *Ceanothus*** and whatnot that needed a bit of trimming back. A little bit of work and a lot of enjoying the beautiful sunny blue sky made for a great morning in the Park.

THEY'RE STILL HERE: THE OHLONE

by Judy Bacon



On Sat., May 15, **Mark Hylkema** from the California State Parks, presented us with a webinar lecture “Lifeways of the Ohlone Indians of the San Francisco and Monterey Bay Area”. (Top: Kuksui, “The Big-head Dancer”; Thanks, M. Hylkema)

California supported the largest population of native people in North America. These peoples had a diversity of culture formed into a mosaic of intertribal politics with a great variety of languages.

The ancestors of early Native Americans came into North America some time before 18,000 years ago, during the late Pleistocene Epoch. As the climate began to change, the people



Marilyn Angel Wynn

changed with it. They began to use **tule** plants that grew along the shore to make houses, (above, left) & boats that plied the bay, rivers & even the ocean, (showing a likely Hawaiian influence) for **steelhead & salmon**, etc. Elk bone harpoons had them hunting bigger game: **sea otters, sea lions, & elk**. Mark showed us an array of spearheads-used until 900 BC., after which the bow & arrow appeared, their bow being a hard-pull, extremely deadly one, changing their effectiveness at hunting **elk, deer & grizzly**. The **Ohlone** managed the game by having annual fires, resulting in a healthier, tempting new growth for prey animals.

Besides fish & game the Ohlone relied heavily on **hazelnuts & acorns**, grinding them into meal, along with **Clarkia**, etc. In the case of acorns, toxins & bitterness were leached out; hazelnuts were usually roasted, but many recipes were used. Among their stored acorns, **black oak** lasted exceptionally well throughout the winter.

They cooked in elaborately made baskets, so tightly woven that you could boil water with hot rocks, cleansing them in 1 basket, placing clean rocks into a saturated or soupy meal in another.



Hierarchies grew: shamans, priests, medicines & rituals. Creation stories featured spirit animals: clever **Coyote**; **Eagle** of the world beyond; **hummingbirds** representing innocence. Music abounded: bone flutes, **Ceanothus moth** cocoon rattles, hollow log drums, etc

Tribes on the S.M. & Santa Cruz Co. coasts developed marine resources early on.



Neighboring counties of the Santa Clara Valley SF Bay seashore developed a different economic focus, creating an exchange system in which olive-shells (left) were featured, eventually promoting more complex levels of social organization. Seashells were found among artifacts of Indians of NV, whereas the Ohlone possessed obsidian from the Napa & Mammoth areas of Calif.



Then along came the Spanish, who brought with them diseases that decimated the native population. As the Spanish built missions, they took over Indian land, outlawed Ohlone rituals, took away their shamans, and made virtual slaves of these people.

But the Ohlone never disappeared, working as laborers, even vaqueros, as the “white” settlers later took over California after the gold rush—and they have struggled to maintain their language and culture ever since. Remember: **THE OHONE ARE STILL AMONG US!**

We hope to have Mark back to teach us more about the Ohlone, including the huge earthen structures they built!

WORK DAY WITH VOLUNTEER LEADER, STU SMITH

Fri., July 2: Another chance to vanquish the **forget-me-nots, cape ivy, poison hemlock**, every alien native plant competitor. Meet at Visitor Center with gloves at **9am**.

THE PLIGHT of the WESTERN MONARCH BUTTERFLY

by Bing Huey

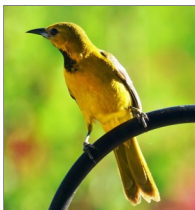
The decline of the **Western monarch butterfly** is taking place as predicted and is now at crisis stage. The number 30,000 had been set as a critical threshold, but in 2019 the count was 29,418. By the 2020 Thanksgiving count, fewer than 2,000 were overwintering at coastal California sites, and by the New Year's count, there were around half that.



The story behind this impending catastrophe was the topic of the 5 June webinar, presented by **Kimberley Young**, the Ambassador for Education and Conservation for the Xerces Society for Invertebrate Conservation. In addition to her work with Xerces, she's a UC Master Gardener & operates her own 10 acre regenerative farm.

In addition to speaking about the biology of the butterfly & its host plants, Kim described the multiple threads that have driven the Western migrating population of the monarch to the brink of extinction. Chief among these are loss and degradation of habitat for overwintering and for breeding and migration. Additionally, there

(continued on page 5)

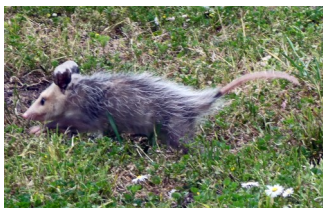


ON THE TRAIL (cont'd from p 1)

On June 14th, 5pm, **Ray Trabucco** was astonished to see a 1st year male juvenile **Hooded Oriole**, whom he watched for 10 min. between handicapped trail & the WRR, a bit up from the horseshoe pits.

Bob & Prudy Bowers

Sharron Walker's Trout Farm picnic group was interrupted by the "flight" of this young **opossum** on May 27, at 2:30pm.



JIM STEELE'S BIRD SONG WALK

by **Sharron Walker**

An enthusiastic group of 15 birders joined **Jim Steele** on May 8, in front of the SPVP Visitor Center at 8am for his popular bird song walk! This walk was special for a couple of reasons: one was that we were able to be together outdoors for this wonderful event, after being cooped up this past year, and two, a year ago Jim experienced a major heart attack, so it was great seeing him back doing what he is so good at-- identifying birds by song and teaching that skill!



May 8, in front of the SPVP Visitor Center at 8am for his popular bird song walk! This walk was special for a couple of reasons: one was that we were able to be together outdoors for this wonderful event, after being cooped up this past year, and two, a year ago Jim experienced a major heart attack, so it was great seeing him back doing what he is so good at-- identifying birds by song and teaching that skill!

Jim introduced us to BirdNET – a free app developed by the Cornell Lab of Ornithology. (above: Jim helps **Judy Bacon**) The BirdNET research project uses artificial intelligence & neural networks to train computers to identify more than 3,000 of the most common species worldwide. A bird song can be recorded using the microphone of a phone to see if BirdNET correctly identifies the probable bird species present in a device recording. Jim instructed us what to listen for in the bird song's components & phrases. One bird we did see, which is a common resident of SPVP was the **Dark-eyed Junco**. But we identified more birds by sound than by sight, which was our goal. Overall it was very informative & enjoyable—great *having Jim back doing his spring bird song walks!!* (s. Walker photos)



JULY/AUGUST 2021 CALENDAR

JULY VOLUNTEER WORK DAY

Friday, July 2.....9am

JULY TRAIL DAY

Saturday, July 10.....9am

WILDMIND'S NATIVE NEIGHBORS KIDS' PGM.**

Tuesday, July 13.....1pm

JULY HABITAT RESTORATION DAY

Saturday, July 17.....10am*

BEETLES & BUGS; STEPHANIE DOLE**

Tuesday, August 10.....1pm

AUGUST TRAIL DAY

Saturday, August 14.....9am

AUGUST HABITAT RESTORATION DAY

Saturday, August 21.....10am*

*Please note new starting time.

**Meets in the Walnut Grove Picnic Area, depending on repairs at V.C.; For all other events, meet at Vis. Cntr.

MOUNTAIN MISSION ACCOMPLISHED

by **Joseph Piro**



Joseph Piro

For our June 12, 2021 Trail Day, **Stan Jensen, Istvan Puski**, my brother **Erik** and I went for a mission up the mountain -- the popular Montara Mtn./Brooks Falls loop. Under a great blue sky, we used our collection of loppers, McLeods and whatnot to trim back several spots where the vegetation was getting a little too wild and dug out some "tripper" roots, among other things. The trails look great, so head out and enjoy!

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); Members-at-large: **Bing Huey, Sharron Walker**; Vol. Contributor: **Katie Antista** member misc. **Our organization's website: friendsofsanpedrovalleypark.org**

NEVER CRY WOLF

by Judy Bacon

The Big Bad Wolf and Little Red Riding Hood are both a part of 200 yrs of negative portrayal of **wolves**. But on Ap. 17, we had the Center for Biol. Diversity's **Amaroq Weiss**, advocate for these top predators via Webinar, conveying a picture of Calif. & West Coast wolf history, ecology, etc.

Indigenous people of our Coast existed in harmony with wolves, but Europeans interacted with this formerly respected hunter from 1750 to 1924, by slaughtering them, until the last one was mowed down in Calif. in the 1920's.

Why do some try to exterminate them when we know, from studies in Yellowstone, that wolves seek out the youngest & weakest of an **elk** herd as prey, keeping populations of these browsers healthy.



Wenaha Pack .Ore.DFW

Even though 90% of the time, the elk escapes, these large animals offer adequate sustenance. **Cattle & sheep** are not preferred prey. Ranchers can do a better job of protecting their cattle with guard dogs, horse patrols, & strangely, flags, and hunters should

learn the value of these top predators in maintaining a healthy balance between elk populations & forest growth.

To better document what was happening, wolf advocates began collaring wolves in Oregon in 2011, when the 1st wolf, known as OR-7, stepped West of the Cascades after 170 plus years absence. A brother of his was probably the dominant male in California's 1st pack, the Shasta Pack of 2015. He & his family disappeared (Wolf-haters mantra: "shoot, shovel, & shut-up") after a rancher's calf was killed in 2019. A collared OR-54 traveled 1000's of miles through 16 counties in Calif, looking for a mate, before she was found dead in '20. At least 3 others were illegally killed here. Wolves' behavior makes them so vulnerable in a heavily populated state like ours.

On the happier side, the CDFW & the USFS discovered that the Lassen Pack had 3 pups, grandkids of OR7 and about 21 pups total by 2020, when a new male sired another litter. A 2nd Calif. pack, the Whalebacks, is now flourishing in Siskiyou Co. Family life abounds.



In wolves only alpha male & female mate. She gives birth to 1 lb pups, who nurse for 9 wks. The

young then rely on regurgitated food, usually by stimulating an adult: parents and close relatives, by licking its mouth, as dogs are ingrained to do. (dreamtime.com photo)

We need laws to protect wolves, as many people still will kill a wolf if it is spotted, no matter what. In 2019, the wolf population in Washington was 108, in Oregon 158 and in Calif. less than 12. We can help by being an advocate for wolves; some suggestions are: speaking up at hearings, writing letters, joining in protests, starting petitions for new laws protecting wolves, voting for new statutes & supporting organizations like The Center for Biological Diversity, Defenders of Wildlife, etc. Think public support, legal protection and exercise constant vigilance. Tell our governor to protect wolves now. The fate of the wolves rests with the states until the federal government reenacts their Endangered Species status.

(Here are 2 URLs to check out: They are case sensitive.

<http://bit.ly/ReinstateWolfProtections>

<http://bit.ly/CenterWolfCampaign>

(Monarchs, continued from page 3)

are the effects of climate change on the butterfly's life cycle and also on its host plants, namely the milkweed for breeding and various flowering plants for nectar. Then there are the impacts of pesticides and, more recently, of wildfire. These are severe challenges to a migratory insect that requires precise microclimates and depends on host plants throughout a large range.

Despite its dire numbers the Western monarch has yet to gain listing as endangered, other organisms apparently taking priority. The Xerces Society has long worked for monarch conservation. Presently, they are working in support of pending congressional legislation that will provide for protection of the monarch. The Society is also a great online resource for people interested in taking action to save the butterfly. From making observations as community scientists to planting host plants, there are activities for those who are not willing to give up on this resilient insect. The planting of the correct species of milkweed, for example, is valuable for breeding monarchs, **but not within 5 miles of the coast** where they overwinter. Throughout its range flowering plants can be planted that provide nectar for each season, preferably natives and in large quantities: try **coyote mint** (photo: **Annie's Annuals & Perennials**), **coyote brush**, **manzanitas**, **mules fat**, **willows**, etc.



Check these websites for further information:

<https://xerces.org/publications/plant-lists/monarch-nectar-plants-california>

<https://xerces.org/mph-act>

Birds of Spring in SPVP



Ron Wilson's: Band-tailed Pigeons on Alder branch;
Native Pigeon with White Crescent on neck, yellow bill with black tip, yellow legs;
May 25, 2021; Trout Farm Road



Sharron Walker: "sneaky" shot
of male Dark-eyed Junco;
Morning of May 8, 2021

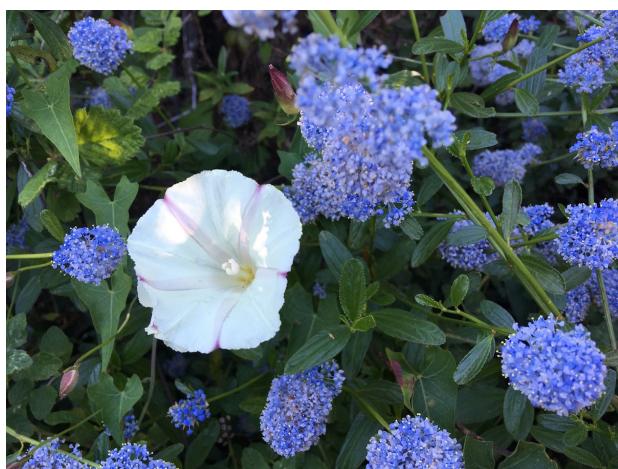


Bing Huey; Chestnut-backed Chickadee
with "Fresh Meat"; 6/21/'21; Montara Mt. Trail

Scenery and Flowers ON THE TRAIL Joseph Piro



Walking Valley View from West to East on May 8, 2021.
The Weiler Ranch Rd. leads across the SP Creek Bridge.
The Hazelnut Trail ascends from the east.



A Morning Glory peeks out
from a *Ceanothus thyrsoifloris* shrub
5/8/21; Valley View Trail



Brooks Falls Trail View
June 13, 2021

Trio of Bing Huey's Fringe Cups; May 17, 2021



Bing Huey

Fringe Cups, *Tellima grandiflora*,
in Native Sun Garden



Bing Huey

Edited from Bing's photo at left



Bing Huey

Fringe Cups Near Hazelnut Trail

Laurie Nikitas' Fringe Cups, at Right.



Laurie Nikitas

Laurie Nikitas; Fringe cups; May 26,
2021; Top of Hazelnut Trail

Bing's June Photo Heralds in the Dry Season



Gold Back Fern with Furred Fronds; Bing Huey; 6/21/2021; Montara Mt.
If it rains, they'll unfurl!

Turkey Time, Spring 2021



Laurie Nikitas' Turkey & hoofed audience;
April 28; North Walnut Grove



Enid Ansgarius; Female Turkey; Mon-
day, June 3, 5:50pm; near V.C.



Mark Golembiewski; Turkey; fenced
grassy area W. of No. Pkg. Lot; May 17,
1:15pm.



Sharron Walker's " And the winner is...";
May 25 at 4pm



Sharron Walker

Hairy Woodpecker; 5/25/21; 2:30pm;
Trout Farm Picnic Area



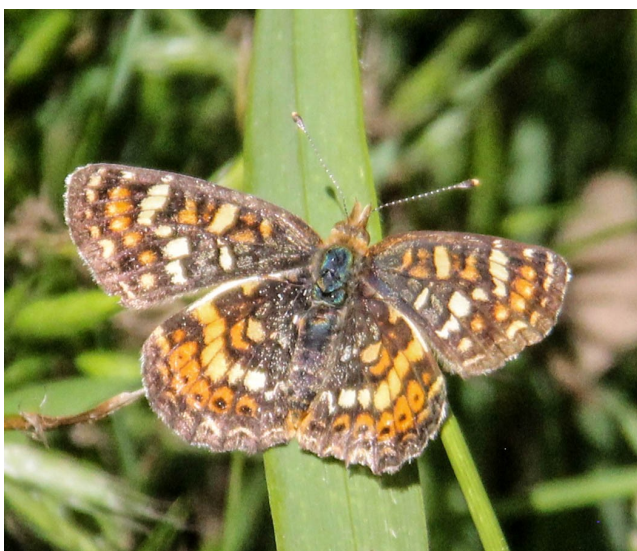
Sharron Walker

Male Calif. Quail, Forever Vigilant;
2/25/21; 2pm;
Trout Farm Picnic Area

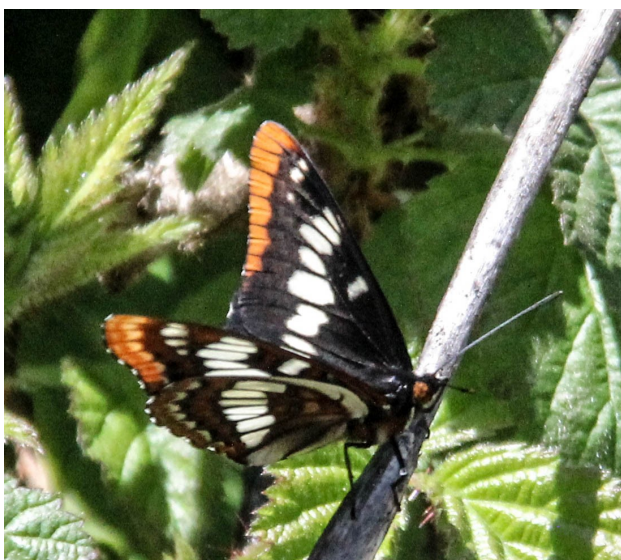


Sharron Walker: Young Opossum, Sprinting; May 27; 2:30pm;
Trout Farm Picnic Area

Butterflies Abound for Ron Wilson



Field Crescent - *Physiodes campestris*



Lorquin's Admiral - *Liminitis lorquini*



Echo Blue; 6/18 at noon; Trout Farm

On May 20, '21, when the sun finally shown on the volleyball court area of San Pedro Valley Park, Ron Wilson captured the showy wings of 3 favorites. May 29, sunny and warm, but just one ventures out? On June 18, at noon on a sunny day, Ron "captured" the diminutive Echo Blue.



Red Admiral - *Vanessa atalanta*



Angewing—Vestige of Beauty;
5/29/21; 2pm; Trout Farm

Bing Huey's Bees and a Bug Avoid Foe



Diadasia bituberculata, Bindweed Turret Bee, a Native Sheltering in Morning Glory;



Bombus californicus; Wood Mint; 5/21/'21; Valley View Trail

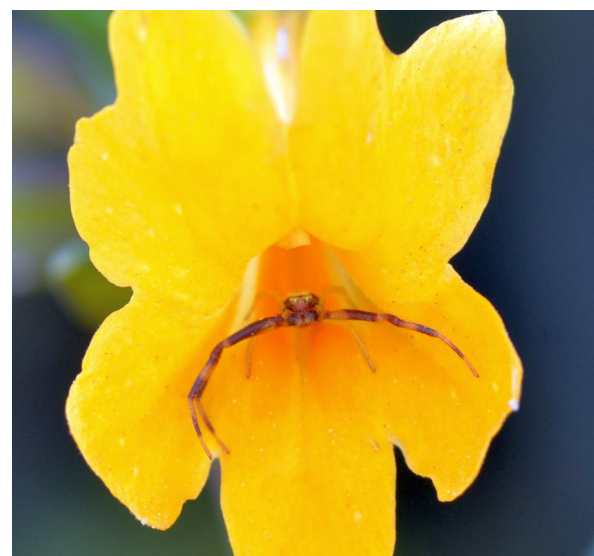
While the 2 voracious Crab Spiders at bottom wait for an unfortunate prey, 2 lucky bees and a bug enjoy a morning glory, woodmint & a monkey flower, safely resting, working and hiding—lucky little pollinators!



Closterocoris amoenus, true bug; 5/28/'21; Montara Mt. Trail



Crab Spider in Coyote Mint; 5/21/'21; Brooks Creek Trail



Crab Spider in Monkey Flower; 6/21/'21; Montara Mt. Trail