

TRY: www.friendsofsanpedrovalleypark.org

NEWS BRIEFS:

Pacifica dry rot strikes Closed Visitor Center:

On display in our great patio is the attack of dry rot on the beams and post of the VC, likely spreading into the window area of the center, the actual wall. Chief Ranger of SPVP and our district, **Matt Del Carlo**, is hot on the problem, but just how far the dry rot extends is unknown, as is the time they will finish the job.



New Water Faucet at SPVP! Report: **Sharron Walker**. Thanks to our multi-skilled rangers: **Matt Del Carlo, Lisa & Pedro**, we have a new faucet ideally located near the Sun Garden! The watering team carried many buckets of water to keep the newly planted Earth Day Project natives alive. This was a challenge as the watering cans had to be filled at the park kiosk, a long trek! (photo: **Sharron Walker**)

ROUGH & THE RUGGED WORKERS RESTORE TRAIL

by **Joseph Piro**

Returning to some spots we noticed last month that could use a little more work, **Stan Jensen, Istvan Puski**, my brother **Erik** and I once again worked up on the Brooks Falls Trail for our August 14, 2021 Trail Day. This time, armed with McLeods, mattocks, a rake, loppers and handsaws, we cut back the bank to widen the trail in some spots just above the **eucalyptus** forest where the **manzanita** starts... filled in some spots where the outside trail edge was collapsing a bit..... cut some low-hanging manzanita branches... and piled dead brush in some bends where it appeared people were short-cutting. Happy trails! [Applause from all to our team!]



***For Webinar instructions see page 3.**

DR. KRISTA KEMPPINEN—BIODIVERSITY AND THE EXTINCTION CRISIS: A Webinar* **Tues, Oct. 12, 7pm**

Biodiversity loss is occurring at unprecedented rates, with around 1 million species threatened with extinction, including 41% of **amphibians**, 36% of **sharks and rays** and 26% of **mammals**. This talk will give a brief overview of the extinction crisis, what is causing it and why it matters. We will also discuss some of the global criteria used to determine if a species is imperiled, as well as how a species may come to be listed under the Endangered Species Act. While this talk will be global in nature, we will present some examples of at-risk species from the United States.



Endangered. pup fish; NV

Dr. Krista Kemppinen is a scientist in the Endangered Species Program at the Center for Biological Diversity. Her main focus currently is imperiled **aquatic** and **riparian species** in the southwest. She has also worked on global extinction risk assessments of **tunas, billfishes** and **reef corals**, and conducted research on **reforestation**, endangered species recovery and past climate change. In addition, Dr. Kemp-



pinen spent 2 years working with Arizona State U & Conservation Int'l on primarily terrestrial biodiversity & ecosystem services conservation. She holds a Ph.D. in climate science & a bachelor's from the U of Cambridge. (Diversity: **Az fishhook cactus**, Krista K.)

ON THE TRAIL

I found that the **mt. lion** sighting reported in our Jul/Aug issue had a more intriguing element to it when I talked to **Ranger Ryan Parkinson**, the person who alerted others to the sleek feline in the Walnut Picnic area. Ryan said that the cat was watching a group of 3 **skunks** by the Volleyball Court, perhaps aware that this meal, while tempting, could have strong repercussions. (photo of captive puma and skunk: Caters News) [Google: "Watch this skunk show a mountain lion who's boss."] (continued on p. 4)



NORTH WALNUT WILD

by Carolyn Pankow

Just over 50 folks, half of them children, gathered at the concrete tables of this group picnic area on July 13, for a presentation by Wildmind, with explainer, **Megan**, trained at So. Calif.'s famed teaching zoo in Moorpark, & **Molly**, experienced animal handler and long-time resident of Shamrock Ranch. Four admired predators emerged from the blue van: first the **Great Horned Owl**, with its swivel-



Mila Stroganoff



Mila Stroganoff



Judy Bacon

ing head and momentarily still, silent wings, with one compromised eye. Then the impatient **Red-tailed Hawk**, a rescue from a suburban garden-hosed nest, stole the scene as its expansive wings swept up & down repeatedly in huge arcs, horizontal sails in a storm. Luckily Molly was strong & skilled as its talons gripped onto her falconer's glove. We learned that these weapons lock in place once the raptor has a prey in its clutches.



Mila Stroganoff

Then a reptilian meat eater, a **king snake** three and one half feet long, famed for its death-vic constriction of **rattle-**

snakes and immune to their venom, exercised in sinuous motion in Molly's hands. "He" was a rescue from a pet-neglect home. Finally, the shyest fella, a mammal, cradled its soft furry body into his keeper's arms, then strained to grab treats from Molly, as Megan explained that a rush of attention from some children had scared the **grey fox**

mother away, and that she never returned. A quick exit speed often up to 42mph and ability to climb into trees has saved many of these vixens from the jaws of a larger predator. They're smaller than a red fox; a third the size of a coyote.

Across the way, in the South Walnut Grove picnic area, 3 **black-tailed deer** reclined on the grass, enjoying a respite, while back beside us a **Dark-eyed Junco** briefly joined our gathering, pecking at the weeds under the shedding **eucalyptus trees**.

SAN MATEO CO. PARKS FIRE ECOLOGY WALK

By Bing Huey

Old Haul Road is a reminder of the extensive logging in the past of the Santa Cruz Mountains. It's a fire road that runs through *Pescadero Creek Co. Park*, but much of it parallels the route of a narrow-gauge railroad once used to haul logs to area lumber mills. During the vastly destructive CZU fire last August, it became a major fire break, giving fire crews & Parks staff a position from which to keep flames from spreading north.



Ultimately, most of the devastation progressed southward from Butano Ridge, where lightning strikes ignited the blaze. Flames spreading northward and downhill to Old Haul Road burned mostly understory, charring trees but leaving most standing. (see Bing Huey photo above)

About a dozen visitors came to observe the effects of the fire along Old Haul Road on 24 July, during a fire ecology walk led by **Ranger Katherine Wright & Natural Resources Manager Hannah Ormshaw.**

(Continued on page 3)

FACIOM

Variations in the songs of mockingbirds—who "love" to imitate the songs of other birds' melodies. **Mockingbirds** aren't just randomly stringing together the refrains they imitate. Rather, they seem to sequence similar snippets of melody according to consistent rules. The authors of a study found that our human composers use some of the same strategies as mockingbirds when transitioning from one sound to the next: changing timbre, changing pitch, stretching the transition (lengthening it in time), squeezing it (shortening it in time). Example: pitch change can be heard in the famous opening of Beethoven's Fifth Symphony, and in *Frozen 2's* "Show Yourself", you hear the stretching of sound transitions.



(Neuroscientist **Tina Roeske**, field biologist **Dave Gammon**, & music philosopher **David Rothenberg**; "Mockingbird Morphs Music: *Frontiers in Psych.*", 2021.

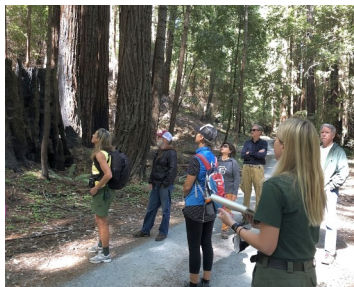


(Fire Walk from p 2)

Redwoods & Douglas firs charred at the base by burning shrubs & forest litter were visible as were burned shrubby trees such as **tanoak**. There was new

growth by herbaceous plants like **sorrel & sword fern**. (as shown in **Bing Huey** photo above)

Ranger Wright gave an overview of the total extent of the burn areas and where the devastation was greatest. She also gave attendees an opportunity to reflect on and express thoughts about the future and how best to manage forests in a changing climate and during a time of increased threat from wildfires. Resources Manager Ormshaw gave details of how the fire progressed and the firefighting efforts during the blaze and the aftereffects of the fire on the forest and its inhabitants. Then she discussed options under consideration by Co. Parks for future management of park forests.



Maryann Huey

DOUBLE DIRECTION TRAIL CLEARED TO GO

By Joseph Piro

July 10, 2021 Trail Day, **Stan Jensen, Istvan, Erik & I** covered some ground trimming branches, & whatnot along the way. We went up the Trout Farm, joined the Brooks Creek Trail & made our way up to the bridge, coming back down, doing the Plaskon Trail behind the V.C. Everything's looking good and the trails are once again open to bi-directional travel. Head out & enjoy!



Zoom Webinar Instructions

Adrian Stroganoff

Online registration for Webinars will be available starting Monday, September 27th. You need to go to our website, <http://friendsofsanpedrovalleypark.org>. In the Events section you will find a link to the registration page for each webinar. There you need to put in your name and email address to register. You will then get a confirmation email with further instructions, and reminder emails closer to the event.

LOOK FOR THESE GEMS in SEPT/OCT

Five years ago in 2016:

Katie Antista sees **grey squirrel** acrobats in the **oak trees**: Lower SPVP, 2pm, Sept. 30. Sept./Oct are acorn dropping times.



Or. Conserve.



Ray Trabucco: **grey fox** jumps up into **wil-low tree** by v. ball court, Oct. 6, 3:30pm: **Belted Kingfisher** flies from creek near N. Walnut Grove a few sec. later.

Ten years ago in 2006:

Ranger Jonel: **Great Blue Heron** flies over Wal. Grove Bridge 10/1; **Katie Antista** sees **Monarch Butterfly** on **eucalyptus** by maintenance yard; late Oct.

Judy Spitler finds **California Quail** are forming groups of from 10 to 20 birds in SPVP on Oct. 1.

Laurie Nikitas sees full-length catkins of **Hazelnut** --Sept.

NATURE JOURNALING: SAN PEDRO VALLEY PARK

by Sharron Walker

Nature Journaling is a growing movement for all! Lead Journaler, **John Muir Laws**, says, "it's collecting & organizing your observations, questions, connections, & explanations [of nature] with drawings & descriptions in pages of a notebook with words, pictures and numbers." It blossomed in SPVP in July with this group that's an out-growth of my Sanchez



S. Walker

Art Center class: **Melanie Hauser, Martie Sauter, Caitlin Corley & Fredele Cohen**; (also **Carl Schwab**, nearby, sketching an **octopus stinkhorn fungus**; **Jane A'Hearn** doing **leaf study**, at right) At this, our recent meeting, we spent the first 15 min. simply observing signs of nature around us such as the wind, shown by tossing leaves & branches, as well as new colors showing in the leaves, caused by the stressors of summer — like the drought, revealing their hidden hues. We had questions: "I wonder what **insect** created **red galls** in the creek **willows**?" Nature journaling is about being curious. This mtg: discussed diversity of observations in nature; Next mtg: signs of spirals in nature.



Interested in journaling? Sharron has a new class for you at Sanchez. Contact me at sharronlee@aol.com To learn more about nature journaling go to : johnmuirlaws.com.



ON THE TRAIL (cont'd from p 1)

Ray Trabucco reported a poignant scene: on Aug. 6 at 5:30pm, a **young grey fox** who was not walking normally & seemed unhealthy, ventured a bit from a spot near the grass in the So. Walnut, returning in a daze, not clearly on any mission. However, Senior Citizen, **Cynthia Jones**, saw her first grey fox, a healthy one, on Aug. 16th at 2:30pm, in the same area, resting on the grass. (above: **wildadironacks** photo)

Bing Huey got a photo of this **Merriam's Chimpunk** as it was harvesting **hazelnuts** on, naturally, the Hazelnut Trail.



"California Autumn" is subtle, but can be beautiful. Witness **Joseph Piro's** shot of these **berries & leaves** of the **pink flowering currant** on the Brooks Falls Trail on our August trail day.

As **Ray Trabucco** stood in the Walnut Grove, a long train of 6 **does** & 3 **spotted fawns** came walking casually between the parking lot & the So. Walnut. One fawn was smaller, either the "runt of the litter" or a younger one?



Bing Huey shot this lustrous **small-headed fly** sipping **sticky monkey flower** nectar.

DON'T MESS WITH MOTHER NATURE

And don't mess with **beavers**! In Ben Goldfarb's book: **Eager Beavers Matter** ranchers in one area of NV found that beavers they were slaughtering were warmly welcomed by the most successful rancher in the area, who learned that they conserved water for him in time of drought—filled the aquifers, restoring the diversity of vegetation, wildlife, & even the health of the cattle.

No one had realized that beavers used to be as thick as thieves in the Sierras, where their greening could help in this time of drought & fire! But don't try to pet one; their incisor teeth are auto-sharpened.



SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER 2021 CALENDAR

SEPTEMBER TRAIL DAY

Saturday, September 11.....9am

SEPTEMBER HABITAT RESTORATION DAY

Saturday, September 18.....10am

OCTOBER TRAIL DAY

Saturday, October 9.....9am

KRISTA KEMPPINEN; BIODIVERSITY, EXTINCTION CRISIS

Tuesday, October 12.....7pm

OCTOBER HABITAT RESTORATION DAY

Saturday, October 16.....10am

SUNDAY "WELCOME TABLES"often from 10am-4pm

Outdoor volunteers meet at Visitor Cntr. Webinars NO!

Beetles, Bugs and More!!!

Text & on-site photos by Sharron Walker

On Aug 10, **Stephanie Dole**, aka the Beetle Lady, treated a crowd of us to an energetic and informative program on bugs—her 3rd one at SPVP. The program was held in the Walnut Grove Picnic area.

Stephanie's array of displays engaged us all, as did her comparison of their weird exoskeletons (outer) & appendages to ours as well as their



"changeling" life cycles. But the highlight was the live bugs: there was **Barbara the tarantula**, whom we held in our



Lee's "Exoskeleton"

hands! & an up-close look at a fat & juicy **Jerusalem cricket**, an insect often seen on SPVP trails.

Following the "meeting of the bugs" we then made our own "Pooters" or bug catchers, (below) a simple, yet effective design allowing us to view the bugs we had swept into our nets from the nearby shrubs.

The technique to securing a bug is to fold the net over quickly after capture. (Stephanie's website: Beetlelady.com)



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** (pankownca@gmail.com); Members-at-large: **Bing Huey, Sharron Walker**; Vol. Contributor: **Katie Antista**

WATERING EARTH DAY FLEDGLINGS

What a great group of volunteers! Once we planted on Earth Day, we of course had to water the new plants to make certain they survive in our seasonal summer dry period, especially under the drought conditions we are experiencing. Thanks to **Carl Schwab**, we had a watering sign up schedule. The "Water Lilies" have been especially active, watering weekly, and others have filled in on numerous days.

Photos & Text by **Sharron Walker**



Faces of Success: Enid & Laurie

THE WATER LILIES

Appear at bottom of page (l to r)

Judy Bacon

Enid Ansgarius

Alice Shirley

(with help on this occasion from Susan Kern—below at right)



Double Work for a Strong Bevan Jones



Superman Carl with Alice

Vigorous Volunteers



Sharron Walker

Weeding Warriors

Left: Mark, Istvan & Brian: Noses to the grindstone on a weeding day!

Below: Stu, Carl & Judy
6/4/21, pull Ever-present Invasives from the Trout Farm Roadside.

We could use more Weeding Warriors

Join us on Habitat Restoration Day!

See Calendar: top of p.4 of this bulletin

Watch for announcements of Weeding Days on our website.

Stuart Smith, Thank You!

Our Volunteer Coordinator for San Mateo Co. Parks, places weeds into receptacle on the Trout Farm Rd. He's planned and worked with the Friends on many weeding projects.

Stuart is a graduate of SFSU, & among other things, is a former executive chef at La Terra Fina.



Sharron Walker



Joseph Piro

Joseph Piro, Stan Jensen, Istvan Puski and Eric Piro
Working on the Montara Mt. Trail in August, 2021



Judy Bacon

Thanks to President Bacon & our Program Director, Mila Stroganoff, on July 13, Wildmind brought some of SPVP's species for a closer look for over 50 of us. Only the king snake is an "outlander".



Mila Stroganoff



Mila Stroganoff



Mila Stroganoff



Mila Stroganoff



Tarantula Touching Time!



Stephanie, the real Beetle Lady with her Displays



Sharron Walker's Western Tiger Swallowtail on Buckeye; 9:30am, 7/20/21;
Native Sun Garden;



Laurie Nikitas; likely Juvenile Turkey; 8/20/'21;
May be Growing Young seen previously with Mom;
Too Unafraid of Humans



Joseph Piro:
Flowering Currant's
Lovely Leaves
and
Succulent Berries
in
"California
Autumn"

Bing Huey:
White Madrone
Flowers in Ear-
ly Summer;
June 25;
Hazelnut Trail

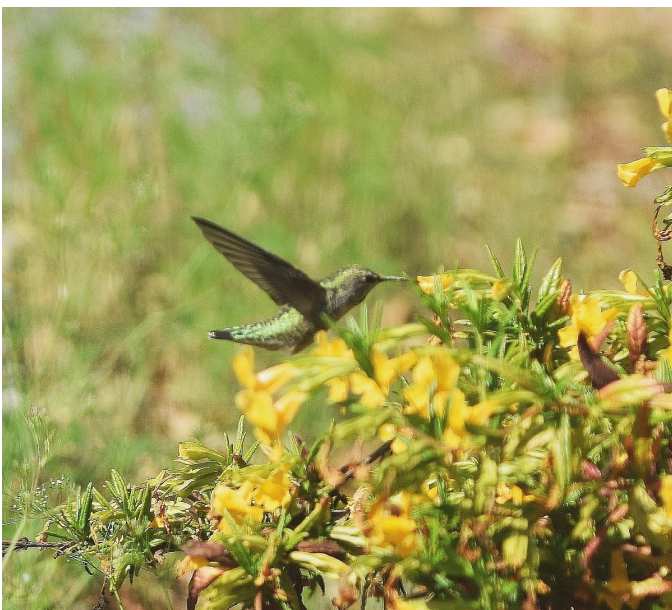
Note: A tough find,
as Madrone flowers
"barely make it" in
SPVP!



Bing Huey's Summer Life 2021



Merriam's Chipmunk on Hazelnut shrub; July 28; Hazelnut Trail
 "My Hazelnut: Back Off!" (Bing said she was picking nuts)



Anna's Hummingbird Sips from
 Sticky Monkey Flower
 July 28
 Near Visitor Center



Small-headed Fly
 (*Eulonchus*, Acroceridae)
 Also Likes Monkeyflower Nectar;
 June 25; Hazelnut Trail

Bing Huey's "Into the World of the Little but Powerful"

Diversity & Interdependence of Animals with Plants, summer 2021



Nomada Bee on Oregon Sunshine,
Sips some Nectar from *Eriophyllum lanatum*
BUT
Will likely look for Social Bee to Parasitize.
June 25, 2021; Hazelnut Trail



Trirhabda Beetle (Chrysomelidae)
on Hazelnut Leaf; They like to
eat leaves, but can be fussy;
Aug. 13; Montara Mountain Trail



Carpenter Ant on Toyon;
July 20; Hazelnut Trail



Carpenter Ant on Monkeyflower;
June 25; Hazelnut Trail

Sharron Walker: Two Mammals Shared Dinnertime and Place, but Couldn't Agree on the Menu



Tart and Spicy Brush Wins the Day, as Black Tailed Deer Munches
on **Poison Oak!** at 6pm on July 8, 2021; Weiler Ranch Rd.



Brush Rabbit sports Wear & Tear on His Excellent Ears while he shows us his
preference for Fine **Herbs** at 6:15pm on July 8, 2021; Weiler Ranch Rd.