



OAKLEAVES

A PUBLICATION OF THE LOS OSOS / MORRO BAY CHAPTER of SMALL WILDERNESS AREA PRESERVATION
P.O. BOX 6442, LOS OSOS, CALIFORNIA 93412-6442 ❖ (805) 528-0392 ❖ AUGUST / SEPTEMBER 2010

What's For Dinner?

By Ron Rasmussen, Chair

At a recent work party in one of the oak groves some brightly colored feathers were found scattered among the leaves. A few feet away were 2 or 3 owl pellets containing the bones and other remains of an unidentified small animal. Whether there was a connection is not known. But this tableau was an example of how some animals depend on others for survival.

The dependence for food extends from the tiniest creatures to the largest. For example, in late summer the black sage seed pods have mostly matured and have left the empty shells. These become "apartment houses" for tiny creatures including spiders and gnats. The "gnats" may feed on the seeds remaining in the pods. The presence of the spiders suggests that a "food chain" may be established, since they need live prey to survive.

Larger animals like the coast horned lizard and western fence lizard also feed on insects and may have clear preferences for some species. Some resident and migratory birds also have insects as a primary food source. The largest predators include the gopher snake, the coyote, and occasionally bobcats. Neighborhood cats that may decide to hunt in the forest may themselves become prey for the coyotes. Rabbits and wood rats are dinner for these predators.

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Meet Our New SWAP Treasurer, Jan DiLeo

Text and Photo By Yolanda Waddell

Eleven years ago I interviewed Jan DiLeo because she had joined County Parks staff in 1998 as the Senior Planner (April/May 1999 Oakleaves issue). At that time Jan, as Elfin Forest Projects Coordinator, had completed the negative declaration, a State-required environmental review, for the Boardwalk and was overseeing its construction by the California Conservation Corps (CCC).



The challenges of building the Boardwalk were many, including having to re-design the eastern end because of U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service requirements. The eastern end of the loop is steeper than the average grade required by ADA (American Disabilities Act). Jan and boardwalk designer Mark Dariz worked out a set of level rest areas along that stretch of boardwalk that made the entire loop accessible for wheelchair-bound visitors.

Over the ten years since the Boardwalk was completed in November of 1999, Jan has worked with SWAP on funding, planning and executing thirteen interpretive panels; two monuments; twenty benches; a restoration project that included planting hundreds of native plants and building protective fencing; the recent extension of the Boardwalk into the Rose Bowker Grove; and many other smaller Elfin Forest projects.

We must keep in mind that the Elfin Forest is but a small part of the County Parks System that has over 13,000 acres of parkland. Jan was responsible for writing grants for and overseeing many other projects, as well as being one of the authors of the 2007 update of the County Parks and Recreation Element. This long-term plan for the County's unincorporated areas identifies future park, recreation, and natural area projects.

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SWAP BOARD OF DIRECTORS

*The Board of Directors
of the Los Osos/Morro Bay Chapter of
Small Wilderness Area Preservation (SWAP)
consists of the following members:*

Ron Rasmussen, Chair
Pete Sarafian, Vice Chair
Jan DiLeo, Treasurer
Yolanda Waddell, Secretary
Pat Akey, Member at Large
Debbie Levi, Member at Large
Pat Murray, Member at Large
Danna Weidner, Member at Large

The SWAP Board of Directors meets monthly
at Sea Oaks Mobile Home Park,
1675 Los Osos Valley Road.

The next meetings are
Thursday, August 12
and Thursday, September 9.

All Board meetings are open to the public.
To confirm the date, time and location
(which are subject to change), call 528-0392.



CONTACT SWAP

If you have questions about SWAP activities
or want to volunteer, please call 528-0392 and
leave a message. A recorded message will give
information about our 3rd Saturday Walks,
Work Saturdays, and other events. If you have
questions, concerns or comments about any
problems in the Elfin Forest, call or write:

Bob Yetter

SLO County Parks Supervising Ranger
1087 Santa Rosa Street, SLO, CA 93408
(805) 781-4417

Owners of dogs off-leash can be cited. If you
witness dogs off-leash, vandalism or obvious
crimes, call the County Sheriff at 781-4550
or Bob Yetter at 781-4417.

Coming Events

SWAP Los Osos/Morro Bay Chapter Annual Meeting

When: Saturday, October 17, Noon to 2:30

Where: Nazarene Church, corner of Santa Ysabel & South Bay Boulevard, Los Osos

What: We'll celebrate the 25th Anniversary of our SWAP Chapter, present reports on the Elfin Forest and chapter finances, hear an excellent speaker and vote for Board members. A light lunch will follow the meeting. Watch for more information in the October issue of Oakleaves.

Oktoberfest in Baywood Park

When: Sunday, October 31, 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Where: 2nd Street in Los Osos between Santa Ysabel and El Morro Streets

What: 32nd Annual Baywood Park Street Faire and Car Show

SWAP's booth with the yellow awning will be near the corner of 2nd Street and El Morro. Come visit us and figure out where your house would be on our 1937 aerial map of Los Osos. There will be lots to see and do with music all day long, and vintage and classic cars to admire. For more information, call the Los Osos Chamber of Commerce, 528-4884 or e-mail info@lobpchamber.org

Jan DiLeo continued from page 1

The SWAP Board is indeed fortunate to add a member such as Jan. As a past employee of County Parks, she has a thorough understanding of the Elfin Forest and its needs. But why is she willing to become our Treasurer? Jan is a Los Osos resident. She told us that she was the Treasurer while serving as an elected member of the Los Osos Community Advisory Council, and found it to be an interesting job.

As SWAP Treasurer, Jan enjoys interacting with Database Coordinator Betsy Kinter as well as all of the Board members in their various capacities, and the Oakleaves editors. The Treasurer keeps records of income and expenses; prepares a monthly, quarterly and annual report to the Board; and calculates and files our sales and income tax reports.

Jan said that she is impressed with SWAP's membership, admiring their generosity and loyalty in continuing as members year after year. She also likes working with the SWAP Board, saying, "they are an enthusiastic group and great to work with. They remember what is the main purpose of the organization." The SWAP Board is equally impressed with Jan's loyalty to the Elfin Forest she has helped protect for over a decade and her generous offer to continue her aid in a new role. So they voted Jan DiLeo onto the SWAP Board at the May 13th monthly meeting, and unanimously elected her Treasurer.

What's For Dinner ? continued from page 1

In terms of numbers, the vegetarians greatly outnumber the predators. Rabbits, wood rats, California quail and other seed and vegetation eaters are well represented in the forest. Some, like the wood rat, may over time help re-seed the forest. The seeds that they gather to store in their many nests may, if not eaten, germinate to establish new plants. In fact some seeds require passage through an animal's GI tract in order to germinate.

This short overview of how some animals in the Elfin Forest obtain their food shows that some very complicated interactions exist among the different species. The loss of even one plant species, for example the black sage, might also mean the loss of the little spiders and gnats, that in turn are food for birds and lizards, that are food for owls and hawks, etc., etc. The interrelationships that have become established over millennia now ensure that all species have a reasonable chance to survive. For this reason we must continue to protect all of the plants and animals. We at SWAP recognize our obligation to preserve the Elfin Forest. We acknowledge and greatly appreciate your continued support.

The Bumble Bee Story

Text and Photo By Jean Wheeler, Ph.D.

The bumble bee shown in this picture is one of about two dozen species of bumble bees living in California. It is probably *Bombus vosnesenskii*, the yellow-faced bumble bee. That is the most common species in the state as well as in our region. This bee, photographed along the lower boardwalk in mid-July, matches descriptions and pictures of that species on several websites. *B. vosnesenskii* ranges along the west coast from southern British Columbia into Baja California and inland slightly into Nevada.

Bees of this species are about a half to a bit over three-quarters of an inch in size, with queens larger than workers. They are distinctively colored black except for two yellow or yellowish-white bands. One stripe extends from the tiny face well onto the front of the thorax, the middle segment of bees that mainly houses the muscles for the wings and legs. Most of the thorax and the wings and all six legs are black. The second yellow stripe is well back on the abdomen, the third segment that houses digestive and reproductive organs, but there is a definite black derriere behind the yellowish-white stripe.

Bumble bees are social insects with queens, workers, and males. But unlike honey bees, the colony is annual and often nests underground. The old colony dies out in autumn. Only new young fertilized queens winter over, each in her own hibernacula, a small hole she digs in the soil. She emerges, probably around January or February in our area. She feeds on nectar and pollen and searches for a suitable nest site, perhaps an abandoned rodent burrow. She stores a mass of pollen, builds a waxy cup to store nectar, and lays her first brood. She raises her body temperature to incubate the brood by shivering her thoracic muscles. She and her first brood feed off the stored nectar and pollen, and the young spin cocoons while the queen lays succeeding broods. When they hatch, workers take over the job of bringing in more nectar and pollen for the queen and her succeeding broods.

By the time workers outnumber young to be fed, some unfertilized eggs which will produce males and some fertilized eggs that will produce new queens have been laid. Males leave the nest while new queens may act as workers for a few days before making their mating flight. Mating usually begins with the male mounting a queen in the air and they fall to the ground. Several minutes later, the queen kicks the male off with her hind legs. Both may mate more than once. The new queen then feeds to build up body fat, digs her hibernacula, and winters over alone.

Bumble bees are important pollinators of crops as well as a great diversity of native plants. They are able to pollinate some flowers that honey bees are not attracted to or unable to pollinate. For example, tomato flowers do not produce nectar and must be vibrated at a specific frequency to release their pollen. Honey bees cannot do this and, unable to get nectar or pollen, do not visit tomato flowers. Bumble bees and some other native bees do have the vibration trick. Although capable of self-pollination, studies have shown that tomatoes not pollinated by bumble bees or other native bees produce smaller and less numerous fruits.

Now about the very old myth, "Science proves bumble bees can't fly." An old simplistic mathematical model was unable to describe their flight. But models recognizing that wings need not be rigid and can bend, twist, and change stroke angles have long since solved that problem!



Let's All Pull Together

It's that time of month again you all,
Time to stand up straight and tall.
Or crouch on your knees,
And dig out and squeeze,
And all that weeding folderol.

Please come to the north end of old 15th Street,
Off of Santa Ysabel in Los Osos is where we meet.

At the entrance to the Elfin Forest is where you'll park.
Don't block mail boxes or driveways;
the neighbors will bark.

Dress in layers to withstand wind, fog and sun.
Wear long pants and sleeves- poison oak is no fun.

Sturdy shoes are a must to protect your l'il piddies,
You may bring work gloves and hand tools,
but we have some for you kiddies.

We provide the water and also a snack,
So at least that is one thing you don't have to pack.

*Yours in the cause of conservation,
Pete Sarafian*

Elfin Forest Sightings

Brush Rabbit



Seeing a Brush rabbit isn't unusual in the Elfin Forest if one takes a stroll along the boardwalk in early morning or at dusk. What is unusual is to have one sit still long enough to snap a good photo. SWAP member and Weed Warrior Charlie Sitton sent this to us, saying, "My Friend Jef Ford while

visiting from Portland, Oregon, took this with his Pentax camera. The rabbit in question was hiding under the canopy. Jef managed to get down low and sneak this photograph."

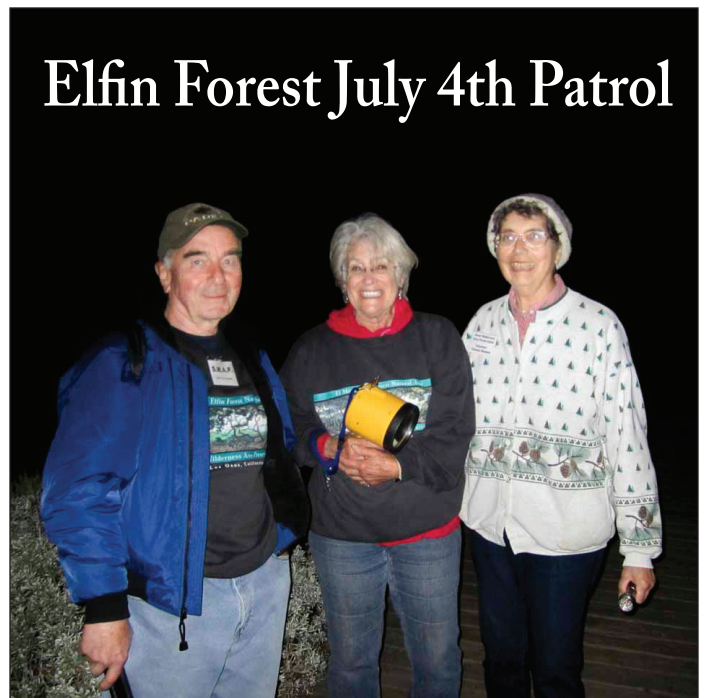
Melica Imperfecta

In April, Pete Sarafian came across a native bunch grass that he hadn't seen before. He identified it as *Melica imperfecta*, a long-stemmed grass, 1-2 feet tall, with many tiny, shiny seeds along the stem. Pete learned that the grass often grows up through other plants so that the roots are in the shade. It is sold in nurseries and is useful for stabilizing slopes. It used to be an important forage for elk, but most stands of *Melica imperfecta* have been wiped out by overgrazing. Common names are California melic, Smallflower melic-grass and Coast range melic. Photo © Lew Stringer (calphotos.berkeley.edu).



Pholisma arenarium

This small but spectacular parasitic plant displays its lavender and white flowers from April through August. Known as Sand plant, Sand food, Purple sand food, or just Pholisma, it has a fleshy stem that is parasitic on the roots of Mock heather or Croton. Dirk Walters wrote a complete article about this plant in the August 2009 issue of Oakleaves. Photo at right by Dave Bowlus.



By Yolanda Waddell; photo by Jay Waddell

We tend to have fog on July 4th in Los Osos and Morro Bay, so the possibility of enjoying Morro Bay fireworks from the Elfin Forest is an iffy prospect. This year, the sky was fairly clear and those in the know flocked to the Elfin Forest for a good view of the fireworks. Some brought chairs and sat along the boardwalk near Bush Lupine point, some sat on boardwalk benches, and some sat on the boardwalk or just stood. In all, about 75 people enjoyed a crowd- and traffic-free finale to their 4th of July celebrations.

Our SWAP Board's July 4th tradition is to walk around the boardwalk singly or in pairs to make sure that no accidents have happened, that no fireworks have been set off, and that no one is smoking. This July 4th the patrol volunteers included Pat and Dave Akey, Pat Murray, Ron Rasmussen, and Jay and Yolanda Waddell. As always, we found that the benches with good views of the fireworks were filled with visitors quietly enjoying the spectacle. Only one person was smoking, and apologized when reminded that it is truly dangerous to smoke in the Elfin Forest. The above photo shows Ron Rasmussen, Pat Murray and Yolanda Waddell in their patrolling outfits.



Tule

By Dirk Walters, Ph. D.; Drawing by Bonnie Walters

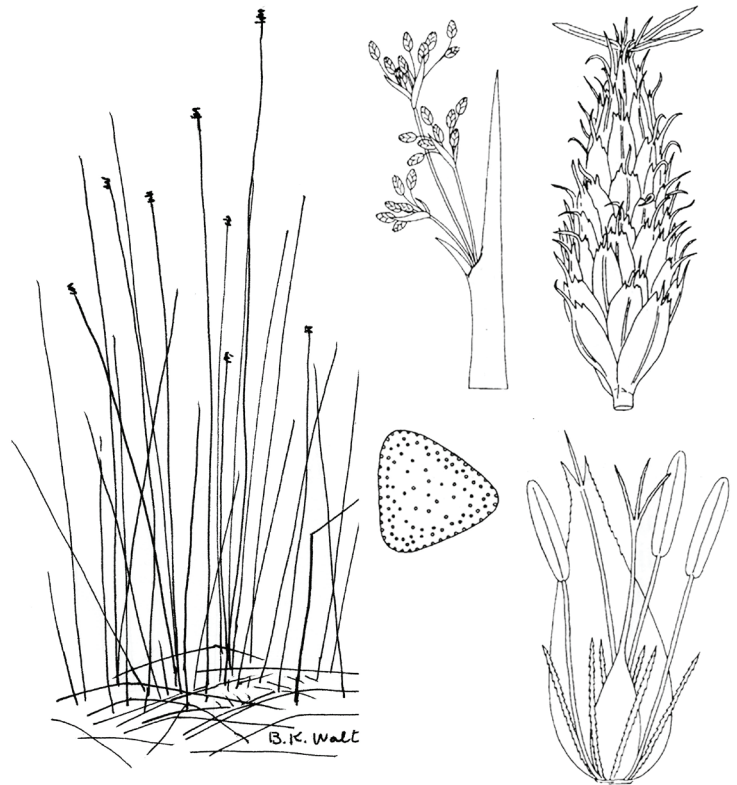
In the Elfin Forest, two tule species grow in the boundary (ecotone) strip between the salt marsh and the upland oaks and shrubs. Both species require lots of fresh water but are capable of surviving periodic short exposures to salt water. They are commonly called tule or bulrush. The illustration accompanying this article contains a set of drawings Bonnie did for Dr. David Keil's and my plant taxonomy text plus a new one of the plant's growth form. These tall (usually over six feet or about two meters) grass-like plants resemble spears or pikes as they have no apparent leaves. Except for short ones just below the flowers, leaves are restricted to sheaths at the stem base. Their flowers are borne in clusters just below their often sharp tips.

There is a potential problem with the two common names given. These names have been used for members of two different genera from two separate plant families -- the sedge (Cyperaceae) and the rush (Juncaceae) families. A look at Bonnie's drawings will show that the illustrated plant is clearly a sedge. Bonnie has shown a stem cross section. Note that it is triangular although the 'edges' are rounded. Further the flowers' clusters are sedge-like, i.e., produced in minute elongate clusters called spikelets. Each tiny flower is hidden behind a single bract. In these species the perianth (sepals and petals), is represented by dry flat ribbons. Because 'rush' is the name commonly used for members of the Juncaceae, I prefer the name tule over bulrush.

How does one know the difference between a sedge and a rush? When I first took a plant taxonomy course, I learned a little rhyme which aided in identification of the three common 'grass-like' families -- the rushes, sedges and grasses (Poaceae). It goes: "*Rushes are round, sedges have edges, and grass comes in joints*". "*The grass comes in joints*" part is a corruption of what the rhyme historically said. Since I was in college in the sixties and the corruption dates from then, I never learned the correct i.e., original wording. Maybe someone can help me out.

The two species of tule found in the Elfin Forest and adjacent wetlands are the common tule, *Schoenoplectus acutus*, and the California tule, *S. californicus*. The two species are fairly easy to distinguish. California tule has bright green stems that are bluntly triangular while common tule possesses a grey-green round stem. The illustration is of a California tule. A word about the 'S.' or genus name in the two species binomials. According to Jan Timbrook (2007) in her book, *Chumash Ethnobotany*, the correct genus name, according to the Flora North America Project and presumably the new Jepson Manual when it is published, will be *Schoenoplectus*. However, none of the current floras use this name so Jan Timbrook decided to continue using the long established name, *Scirpus*.

Tules have two extensive chapters in Jan Timbrook's book. She indicates the Chumash recognized two kinds of tule based on their cross sections -- flat (actually not a tule but the cattail) and



round, *tule Redondo*. Other tribes did acknowledge the difference between the triangular and round stem tule. As might be expected from two chapters devoted to one type of plant in an ethno-botany book, native people had many uses for the tule. Seeds, rhizomes, and young shoots were sometimes eaten although one source indicated that they felt gathering them for food (especially the seeds) was not worth the effort. The stems were bundled and the bundles overlapped to produce a thatching for Chumash dwellings. Bundles were also tied together in such a way to form a canoe-like water craft. Stems were also used extensively to form mats used in many ways. There are many other uses but I've not space to discuss them. However, I feel I have to mention one last use I did find intriguing. Poorer classes of Chumash women wove skirts out of tule because they couldn't afford the animal skins used for clothing by the upper classes. I guess I was naive enough to think sorting into economic classes was found only in modern systems.



OAKLEAVES

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oakleaves@elfin-forest.org.

A Vision Made Possible

By Pat Murray, Trail Trimming Committee Chair

Can you imagine what the 90-acre parcel of land could look like now if our El Moro Elfin Forest was not made possible? Just think: there could have been about 150 homes built on that parcel of land.

SWAP's obligation--established by an on-going management plan--is to be the stewards, to maintain and help keep this wonderful area healthy, free of invasive species, and as safe as possible. May we be reminded about and grateful to the many caring and very energetic folks who have donated their time and financial contributions over the past 25 years. This will continue by welcoming loyal, dedicated, conscientious volunteers who come out for our first Saturday monthly work gatherings and other projects in the Elfin Forest.

Have you ever noticed how quickly vegetation can grow, especially when we have had rains? With seven trail entrances into the Elfin Forest and the nearly one-mile boardwalk loop, maintenance is essential. Who's responsible for this maintenance? - a special group of folks called "Trail Trimmers" who have offered to go through a little instruction process by a SWAP member. These workers receive a County Parks Volunteer Badge or County Parks cap which must be worn whenever they're out doing this particular volunteer work. Our thanks to: Dean Thompson, Otis Carter, Marilyn Fentress, Teresa Malone, and newly added Loisann & Ralph Cass. Special thanks to Jerry Ambrose, a very dedicated worker who travels down from Paso Robles to offer his help. The convenience of this work is that as long as you wear your assigned badge or cap, you can schedule your own day and time to work, and call in your hours each month so SWAP gets credit. All volunteer hours taking place out in the Elfin Forest are totaled and reported monthly to County Parks.

The marvelous vision happened and a beautiful natural area was saved. With all this said, remember how fortunate we are to have an area like this for EVERYONE to continue to learn about, appreciate and respect.

Alon Solves Old Problem

By Pete Sarafian, Conservation Chairperson

A hearty thank you to Alon Perlman, one of SWAP's long time Weed Warriors. With some help from realtor Steve Auslender, Alon managed to obtain an entire box of heavy-duty plastic bags for the SWAP weeding effort. For years this author has repaired bags that came back from monthly work parties full of holes. The woody shrubs in the Elfin Forest shred even the most sturdy bags. Now we have a supply that should last for years. What a treasure trove! How lucky we are to have someone on our team who is involved in many Los Osos conservation efforts and is a former Los Osos Community Advisory Committee (LOCAC) member.



Chuck Woodard, County Parks Arborist (shown with clippers) visited the Elfin Forest last Fall to give a shrub and tree trimming orientation to a crew of SWAP Trail Trimmers. Shown counterclockwise from right are Ron Rasmussen, Pat Murray, Dean Thompson and Jerry Ambrose. Photo by Yolanda Waddell

Education Corner

By Pat Akey, Education Committee Chair

Spring 2010 brought Baywood Elementary first graders for their second trip of the year to the Elfin Forest. The classes of Cheryl Dove, Kelli Gang and Cherie Newell - sixty children in all - walked three blocks from Baywood School in May to learn more about the Elfin Forest. They discovered that insects live in bushes, trees and flowers, and that insects are food for birds and the Western Fence Lizards that they saw scooting along the boardwalk. They also visited the Rose Bowker Grove and talked about how good it is to be silent and listen to the birds and other sounds of the Forest.

Docents leading the May walks were Pat Akey, Otis Carter, and Yolanda Waddell. We welcome Otis to our small crew of school walk docents. This was his first solo nature walk, and he did a wonderful job.

The Education committee will meet in September to continue our search for new curricula for the Fall and Spring of 2010-11. We hope to locate other schools that might want a field trip to the Forest. We are offering a Scholarship for buses. If any of our members know elementary teachers who might be interested in bringing their classes to the Elfin Forest, please contact Pat Akey at mpakey@sbcglobal.net. Thank you.

Please Report Elfin Forest Sightings

Have you observed any unusual birds in the Elfin Forest? Mammals? Reptiles? Amphibians? Insects? Interesting activities or footprints of wildlife in our Elfin Forest? Unusual plants? Please report any interesting sightings to your Oakleaves editors at: oakleaves@elfin-forest.org for inclusion in future issues under "Elfin Forest Sightings." You can also leave a message on SWAP's answering machine, 528-0392.

Weed Warriors

By Pete Sarafian, Conservation Chairperson
Photos by Yolanda Waddell

Conservation Workers Reach Infestation for First Time

The infestation of Cheat grass (*Bromus diandrus*) in the Elfin Forest is an old one. However, in June and July the Wonderful Weekend Weed Warriors attacked a large, concentrated infestation for the first time. Undoubtedly, the Cheat grass has been in the Don Klopfer Grove for a long time. Until this year, there wasn't enough time and people power to address it. The ability to reach it now indicates that we still are gaining ground on weeds. The Cheat grass occupies about an acre of understory in the oaks by the Bay. How it got there is anyone's guess, but it is overrunning native sedges and other native plants.

June's attack team included Jay Bonestell, Lannie Erickson, Rich and Prisila Johnson, Alon Perlman, Ron Rasmussen, Pete Sarafian, Kathy Spencer and Yolanda Waddell. First the team cleaned up new Veldt grass (*Ehrharta calycina*) coming up where SWAP had pulled it before between the 15th and 17th Street entrances. Then the team hiked north to the Bay and went after the second nasty grass. They only managed to work about one-quarter acre, but it was a great start to an old problem.

July's team consisted of Jay Bonestell, Dave Bowlus, Steve Cake, Rich and Prisila Johnson, Ron Rasmussen, Pete Sarafian, Ariana Tway, Yolanda Waddell and Norma Wightman. They continued the effort on Cheat grass and managed to expand the area worked to about half of the total infestation. A big THANK YOU to all the warriors who helped for these past two months. One person can't do it all, but together SWAP workers continue to make good progress.



Two large Slenderleaf iceplants lurking in the coastal dune scrub couldn't escape Jay Bonestell (left) and Alon Perlman, shown holding their catch during the June work party.



(above) New Weed Warrior Kathy Spencer joined the fray during June's Cheat grass de-seeding fest. She and her husband have recently bought a house in Los Osos, and she plans to help again.



(at left) Ariana Tway hadn't visited the Don Klopfer Grove before, and was delighted to help out during July's Cheat grass de-seeding party.

SWAP First Saturday Work Parties are held at 9 a.m. to noon on the first Saturday of each month. Please dress for wind, fog, or sun. Layers work well. Long pants and long shirt sleeves are good. Sturdy shoes are a must. Meet at the north end of 15th Street at the Elfin Forest entrance. Take care not to park in front of driveways or mailboxes. Call 528-0392.

Coming Up in the Elfin Forest

Story and Photos By Jean Wheeler

What a bountiful display of coastal dudleya (pictured) we have decorating the Elfin Forest this summer! Their succulent grey leaves are mostly hidden under the shelter of surrounding shrubs and herbs, but their tall pink stalks are showing slightly curved sprays of small bright yellow flowers nearly everywhere I look as I write in mid-July. Although our Pocket Guide (sold on page 11) gives their blooming period as May through July, they are going so strong on the heavy rains they absorbed last winter and spring that I'm sure the display will continue to be impressive well into August.

Also adding yellow flowers in August and September will be mock heather, already showing many swelling green buds, peak rush rose, and the continuing display of California poppies. The bright red berries of holly leaf cherry shrubs and the yellow, red, and almost black of coffeeberries should add to the show, especially between Bush Lupine Point and Siena's View.

Expect lots of white flowers near the boardwalk too, blooming on shrubs such as California sagebrush, dune buckwheat, coyote brush, chamise, and (closer to the ground) on California croton. Pink flowers to look for in these months are pink everlastings, California asters, and California hedge nettles.

Reptiles are especially active in the warmth of summer. Western fence lizards pause to do their pushups along the boardwalk, and you may be lucky enough to see one of our snakes, none of which is poisonous. Coyotes are occasionally seen slipping like ghost dogs through the brush. On morning walks, look for tracks in the sand of our nocturnal visitors; raccoon tracks are especially common.

This is a good time of the year to observe closely our year-round resident birds, undistracted by all those winter visitors and spring and fall transients. Quail scratch and scurry through the underbrush with males occasionally laboring to the top of a shrub to boast their dominance. The blue flash and noisy screams of California scrub jays are everywhere. Plentiful and easy to see are white-crowned and some other sparrows, nearly all of our finches, bushtits (one is pictured), Bewick's wrens, and Anna's hummingbirds. Fairly common but harder to see are California and spotted towhees, California thrashers, and wrentits. Also keep an eye out for possible sightings of our summer-only visitors, such as most of our swallows, Swainson's thrush, the black-headed grosbeak, Wilson's warbler, and the western tanager.

So come out to the Elfin Forest on a summer's misty morning or sunny afternoon. Marvel at the abundant and active life displayed by our plants and animals. They are so marvelously adapted to take advantage of our winter rains and still provide a wondrous tapestry of life even in summer's stressful drought season.



SWAP Newsletter is Online

Did you misplace your copy of Oakleaves? Do you want a friend to see an article in a recent issue? Your problem is solved with a few keystrokes on your computer. Type in <http://www.elfin-forest.org> and you will reach our web site. Then click on the line that says, "Read the current copy of Oakleaves and more." You will find a line that says, "To read the (current month) issue of Oakleaves, click here." If you want to read a past issue, there is a column of links by date, extending back to December/January, 2004-05. Some of our members now prefer to read Oakleaves on line rather than receive it by mail. If you would like to be among our "on line only" readers, let us know at oakleaves@elfin-forest.org.

We'd Like Mail!

We encourage our readers to submit photos, letters to the editor, or interesting and timely information by e-mailing to oakleaves@elfin-forest.org. We look forward to hearing from you.

The Editors.

WALKS in the ELFIN FOREST Third (and Second) Saturday Walks

Aug. 21, 9:30 a.m. – Insect Walk

Summertime brings out the creepy crawlies that we often overlook. Local naturalist Al Normandin will search every nook and cranny along the boardwalk for the Good, Bad, and Ugly of these creatures, as well as the pretty summer butterflies. The importance and ecology of our local insects will be discussed during the walk. Bring a hand lens if you have one, or close-focusing binoculars.

September 18, 9:30 a.m. – Reptile Walk

Join Cuesta College biologist Robb Tibstra as he tours the Elfin Forest in search of the Coast Horned Lizard and maybe the Southern Alligator Lizard. We'll be sure to find some Western Fence Lizards sunning themselves on the boardwalk rails. Since most of the Forest's reptiles and amphibians are hard to find, Robb will bring reptile skins and perhaps a live critter or two so walk participants can see what some of those small and retiring Forest inhabitants looks like. Learn how these elfin creatures behave, survive, and protect themselves from predators, and yes – boys!

October 9, 8:30 a.m. – Pre-Big Sit! Bird Walk (Second Saturday – Note earlier time)

Jim Royer, coordinator of the Elfin Forest Big Sit! will lead us on a bird inventory walk in preparation for Sunday's Big Sit! This is an international event hosted by Birdwatcher's Digest (www.birdwatchersdigest.com) that pits participating groups of birders against one another to identify the most species in a 24-hour period. Our Big Sit! takes place at Bush Lupine Point. On Saturday, walk participants can join Jim in finding and identifying 60 or more species of birds throughout the Elfin Forest and in the Morro Bay estuary. This walk is for those who just enjoy looking at birds as well as for more experienced birders. You'll come away knowing more about birds, their calls, their habits and habitats.

October 17, 9:30 a.m. (Third Saturday) – Archaeology Walk

Cal Poly anthropologist Dr. Terry L. Jones will help us to do some time traveling into the pre-Spanish past of Central Coast inhabitants, the Chumash and their ancestors. Walking along the boardwalk, he will tell us the fascinating story of the ancient peoples who preceded the Chumash and explain how archaeologists can determine changes in the ocean's level by studying human habitations. He'll show us examples of technology development through the ages and will give us a word image of everyday life in the Elfin Forest during the time of the Chumash. We'll learn about Chumash money, economy and trade. This walk will reveal a complex world of the Elfin Forest's past inhabitants, one that we would never suspect while walking along the boardwalk today.



During his annual Elfin Forest wildflower walk in May, botanist Dirk Walters showed the leaf arrangement of a Silver dune lupine to interested walk participants. Photo by Yolanda Waddell.



In June, PG&E meteorologist John Lindsey (standing on bench) provided walk participants with an excellent handout about weather patterns on the central coast. It was a beautiful day for a weather walk. Photo by Bob Meyer.

"We must protect the forests for our children, grandchildren and children yet to be born. We must protect the forests for those who can't speak for themselves such as the birds, animals, fish and trees."

-Qwatsinas (Hereditary Chief Edward Moody). Nuxalk Nation

Walks in the Elfin Forest begin at times stated above. Park at the north end of 15th Street (16th Street for wheelchairs) off Santa Ysabel in Los Osos. Walks begin on the boardwalk at the end of the 15th Street path. Wear comfortable shoes, long sleeves and pants to avoid poison oak and mosquitoes. Please park carefully, avoiding driveways and mailboxes. Please leave pets at home. The easy paced walks last 1-1/2 to 2 hours. For more information call (805) 528-0392.

Thank You to Our New and Renewing Members

Compiled by Betsy Kinter, SWAP Database Coordinator

NEW MEMBERS:

Art Fong*
Kathleen Spencer*

RENEWING MEMBERS:

Pat Akey	Rich and Prisila Johnson*
Jerry and Mary Ann Ambrose*	Katie Karikka
Randy Ball	Heidi Kausch
Ray and Sonya Bracken*	Jerry and Judith Kirkhart
David and Linda Chipping*	Sally and Randy Knight*
Janice A. Clucas*	Christine A. Lancellotti*
Lisa Coffman	Martin and Deborah Levi
R.S. and L.H. Cowan	Norman MacGillivray
David and Evelyn Dabritz*	Losi and Frank Martinez
Elsie and Jerome Deitz*	Robert and Ceil McDougle*
Margaret Diehl	Bob and Sharon Meyer*
Pat Brock Diener	Beth and Sheldon Miller*
John Dilworth and	Hector Montenegro
Carole Maurer	Burton Moyer and
Alice Dobias	Marilyn Clark*
Ilene Doering	Beverley and Bill Moylan*
Margaret Fox and	Paul and Julie O'Connor
Claudette Kolk*	Alan and Elaine Olson
Frank and Gail Freiler*	Julie Orr*
Bethany and Don Griffiths	Nicholas and Dorothy Pier*
Larry and Pat Grimes*	Kathryn Reid
Marlin and Connie Harms	John Severson
Burton and Dorothy Harris*	Charles and Sally Sitton*
Joan Heaney	Bert and Elaine Townsend*
Arthur Hubbard*	Janice and Roger Verity*
Dr. Steve Jio and family	Michael Walgren and
Steve and Jill Jobst*	Lisa Andreano*
Jypsy Joe Johnson*	Michael Ward

DONATIONS:

Los Osos Fitness
Susan Minker – Life Member
Red Hat Society members, Ventura and San Francisco
Scolari's Food and Drug Co.
– anonymous donor through matching gift program

**Thanks to those listed above who donated more than the \$25 (regular) or \$15 (senior or student) membership dues. The additional donations will be used for special projects in the Elfin Forest.*



Come Preview and Buy the 2011 Calendar!

By Debbie Levi; cover painting by Stuart Denker

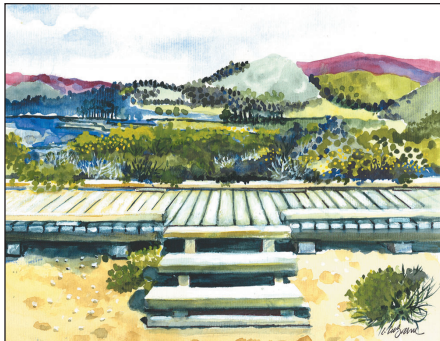
You are invited to the first showing and sale of the 2011 Elfin Forest calendar! This Preview Event will be held on Saturday, September 11, 2010 from 2-4:30 p.m. at the end of 12th Street in Los Osos directly adjacent to the Elfin Forest trailhead. Parking is available at any of the Elfin Forest street-end entrances.

This year the calendar features the beautiful artwork of 20 very talented San Luis Obispo County artists. They are: Jay Bonestell, Dave Chipping, Ken Christensen, Stuart Denker, Betty Field-Haley, Don Griffiths, Connie Harms, Heather D. Johnson, Larry Kappen, Janine Kirkpatrick, Larry LeBrane, Sharon Meyer, Alon Perlman, Shirley Pittman, Ellen Pool, Barbara Renshaw, Barbara Rosenthal, Arnie Setran, Laurel Sherrie, and Raechel Winn Yon.

All contributing artists have been invited to display their original calendar paintings and two or three other pieces of their art for both show and purchase.

Additionally, we thank our very generous 21 sponsors for their financial support. They are: Cash-Weidner Family Trust; Bob Davis, Realtor; Good Tides Coffee House; Jerry Gregory, Realtor; Shar Gregory, Mortgage Lender; Hano's Real Estate; Los Osos Fitness; Los Osos Flower Market; Los Osos Rexall, Tewell Family; Mark's Baywood Cyclery; Morro Bay National Estuary Program; Noi's Little Thai Take-out; Otter Bay Gifts; Rabobank Los Osos Branch; Rebecca Rasmussen-Tufenkian; SAGE Ecological Landscapes; San Luis Obispo County Parks; Sea Pines Golf Resort; Volumes of Pleasure Bookshop; Jay and Yolanda Waddell; and Mary Lou Wilhelm, Root Cellar Publications.

Please help SWAP with this yearly fundraiser by purchasing your calendar(s) at \$15 each, on sale at this event, SWAP's Annual Meeting, and our booth at the Baywood Oktoberfest. Orders can be mailed in using page 11 of this Oakleaves. The calendar also will be available at local stores. E-mail calendar@elfin-forest.org for more information.



New Item – 2011 Calendar!

Order several beautiful SWAP 2011 Elfin Forest Calendars for yourself and as gifts, available September 11! The 9" x 12" calendar features images painted by our talented local artists of scenes, plants, and animals we enjoy every year. There are also fascinating sidebars for each month containing information on human and natural history. Painting for January (at left) by Larry LeBrane.



SWAP Shoppers' Order Form

See Photos of All Items at www.elfin-forest.org

All Prices Include Sales Tax

1. MURAL SHIRTS

Mural design by artist Barbara Rosenthal on both front and back. Words on shirt: "El Moro Elfin Forest Natural Area" above mural and "Small Wilderness Area Preservation" and "Los Osos, California" below mural.

Circle Sizes:

___ Short Slv. T-Shirt (S, M, L, XL) @\$19.00 = \$___
 ___ Short Slv. T-Shirt (XXL, XXXL) @\$22.00 = \$___
 ___ Long Slv. T-Shirt (S, M, L, XL) @\$23.00 = \$___
 ___ Long Slv. T-Shirt (XXL, XXXL) @\$25.00 = \$___
 ___ Sweatshirt (S, M, L, XL) @ \$25.00 = \$___
 ___ Sweatshirt (XXL, XXXL) @ \$27.00 = \$___

2. PHOTOS OF THE ELFIN FOREST

Original photo note cards by Bob Meyer

___ @ \$3.00 or ___ set of 5 @ \$14.00 = \$___

Original photo postcards by Bob Meyer

___ @ \$1.00 = \$___

Indicate No. per View(s):

___ All 5; ___ Don Klopfer Trail; ___ Ocean View;
 ___ Wild Hyacinth; ___ Horned Lizard; ___ Dudleya

3. POCKET GUIDE

Useful 56-page guide to plants and animals of the Elfin Forest. Charts for bloom season, form, color, and habitat for 200 vascular plants plus lists of lichens and mushrooms known to occur. Habitat and peak months seen are charted for 187 birds. Also listed: 28 common mammals; 10 reptiles; 4 amphibians; 19 butterflies and moths (charted by size, months in flight, color, and host plants); 104 other arthropods and 7 gastropods.

___ @ \$2.00 = \$___

4. ELFIN FOREST MURAL PRINTS

signed prints by artist Barbara Rosenthal,
 image size 4 1/2 x 16 1/2 in; mounted on foamcore

___ @ \$20.00 = \$___

5. ALPHABET BIRD BOOK

With clever verses and superb photos, this book is sure to please young and old.

___ @ \$21.65 (including tax) = ___

6. 2011 ELFIN FOREST CALENDAR

Local artists have contributed to this stunning calendar, available after September 11. ___ @ \$15 = \$___

Shipping costs within zip 934 __:

Calendars \$2 each: = ___

Bird Book, \$2.77 (book rate) per book = ___

Pocket Guides & Note Cards \$1.50 = ___

Mural Prints on Foamcore \$5.00= ___

Shirts each: \$4.00 = ___

For shipping costs outside 934 __, call (805) 528-0392

TOTAL OF ORDER \$___

(Please print when filling order, and indicate how many of each.)

Name: _____

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City/State/Zip: _____

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Phone (w/area code): _____

Make checks payable and mail to:

SWAP, P.O. Box 6442, Los Osos, CA 93412-6442.

Call-in orders may also be made: (805) 528-0392.

SWAP 2011 Calendars Available - page 11.

Los Osos / Morro Bay Chapter
 SMALL WILDERNESS AREA PRESERVATION
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 P.O. Box 6442, Los Osos, CA 93412-6442
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Wanted: A Few Good People

Help SWAP Chapter support the Elfin Forest with just a few hours a month of your time.

Join our
Education and School Walks Committee.
 We need school walk docents and people to develop a good docent training program. Call Pat at 528-4832 or e-mail pata@elfin-forest.org.

Become a **WEED WARRIOR** or join our **Conservation Committee.** Our work parties are the first Saturday of every month from 9 to noon. E-mail pete@elfin-forest.org or call 528-0392.

Service to the community is a way to spread happiness and to be happy.



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- | | |
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| ☐ Protector \$75 | ☐ Guardian \$500 |
| ☐ Seniors & Students \$15 | |
| ☐ Life Member \$1000 | |

☐ I want to help, please call me!

Memberships include a subscription to SWAP's bimonthly newsletter, *Oakleaves*. All donations to SWAP are tax-deductible.

EVERY membership counts!

Make checks payable to: SWAP.

Mail to: Small Wilderness Area Preservation, P.O. Box 6442, Los Osos, CA 93412-6442.