

A Walk in The Elfin Forest

SATURDAY, MARCH 11 Th.

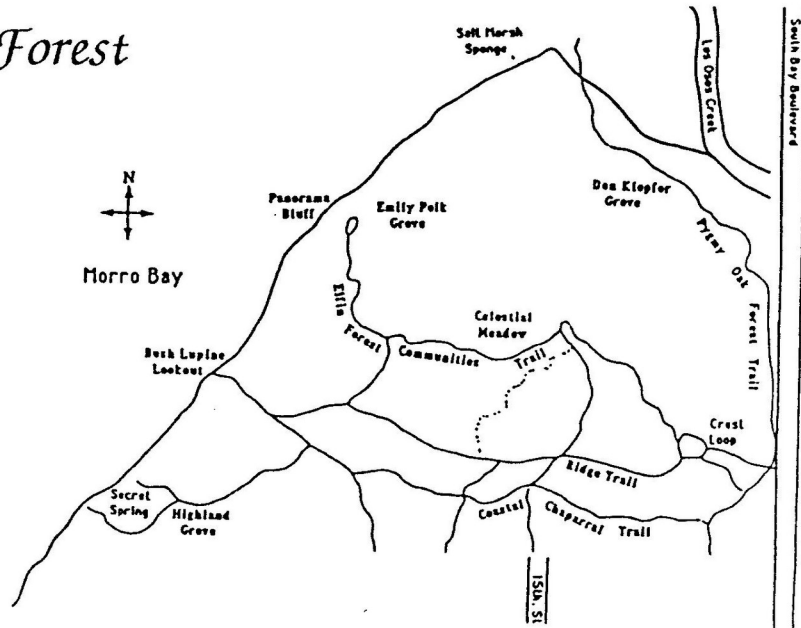
10 am to 2 pm

15th Street Trailhead

Walks on the hour

Rain Cancels

See You There



March 11th. is the day for all of you who have viewed SWAP's project only from on afar or on paper! The property owner, Mrs. Shirley Otto, has given her permission for us to show you first-hand what all our enthusiasm is about. For our quarterly meeting, SWAP will be conducting guided tours of the still unpurchased 39 acres. Guides will be available for hourly tours at the 15th. St. Trailhead from 10 am to 2 pm to show you the incredible natural diversity of this small area and to acquaint you with the spectacular variety of plants and creatures who call the Elfin Forest home. SWAP hopes to generate a broader level of support for this critical part of our effort since such local support is of prime importance in convincing funding sources to select our project. We hope you will join us for a very special treat by coming to visit this exquisite place and seeing for yourself why preserving this unique natural area will enhance life for all of us on the Central Coast.

Thank You - Thank You - Thank You Many thanks are due to the generous people who support SWAP. Thank you for sitting at information tables, helping with mailings, volunteering your homes for meetings or events, giving presentations, installing signs, providing much-needed expertise, doing artwork, sending in memberships, donating money and materials for special projects, encouraging friends to join SWAP, and smiling your encouragement along the way. All of these gifts are important and, combined, have made our success possible. The board would like to thank Dr. Shirley Sparling especially for a donation that has provided major funding for preparation of our grant proposal. She has started us out grandly on the second phase of preserving the Elfin Forest. We hope each of you who has helped SWAP will accept our appreciation. Enjoy that good feeling of having made a difference in the world and please continue your much needed support of SWAP!

FINDING FUNDS

How do middle class working (or retired) people locate \$3.5 million to purchase an urban wilderness? SWAP's board of directors was faced with that challenge after receiving the appraisal of the remaining 39 acres of the Otto Property (El Moro Elfin Forest) last August.

Three months after receiving the appraisal, we still hadn't located a source of funds, nor had we the experience and skill to write a good proposal once we found the source. It became very clear to us that the time had come to spend some of our treasury money to hire an expert. Virginia Black, our Meetings Coordinator, agreed to coordinate our proposal project and called the San Luis Obispo County Land Conservancy for help in locating a proposal writer. We learned that we could hire the Land Conservancy to do the job for us. A contract was written and signed and the project was begun in November, 1988.

John Ashbaugh, Land Conservancy Director, and Bill Roalman, Staff Analyst, reviewed all background information on the site and identified potential fund sources. We selected the Wildlife Conservation Board, an arm of the state Department of Fish and Game, as the most appropriate source at this time. The WCB administers state bond monies, such as those from Proposition 70, the 1988 Parks and Wildlife Bond Act. Its purpose is "to acquire and develop lands and waters for wildlife conservation and related recreational purposes."

A telephone inquiry to Fish and Game in Sacramento led us to feel encouraged that we have a chance and the process of proposal writing was begun. It is still in progress. A draft following a detailed set of procedures and guidelines been read read and critiqued by SWAP's advisors with expertise in botany, ecology, zoology, and land acquisition. We hope to have the proposal finished, approved by Jim Lidberg, DFG Wildlife Biologist for San Luis Obispo County, and on its way to Sacramento within a few weeks of your receiving your newsletter.

SWAP believes that we have spent your membership donations well on a project that fulfills our purpose of land acquisition and conservation. We ask your continued support. If you haven't renewed your membership, please do so. Together, and only together, we can make a difference.

Yolanda Waddell, President

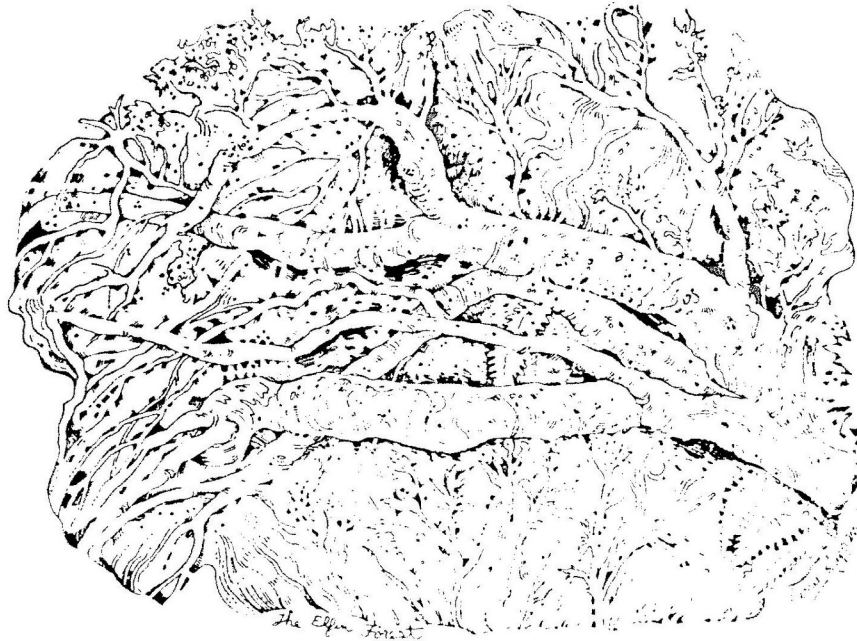
SWAP Board of Directors

Yolanda Waddell, President	Virginia Black, Meetings/Grants
Larry Grimes, Treasurer	Dennis Sheridan, Historian/Art Exhibit
Pat Grimes, Secretary	Richard Watkins, Friends of the Estuary Liason
Myron Graham, Art Exhibit	Betty Dougherty, Natural History Assoc. Liason
Leslie Bowker, Science Coordinator	Marie Campagna and Susan Armstrong,
Rosemary Bowker, Publications	Mailings

PYGMY

OAK

PROFILE



The pygmy oak is a remarkable variant of the coast live oak, *Quercus agrifolia* var. *frutescens*. Dr. V. L. Holland, Cal Poly biologist, and Ann Howald, Fish and Game ecologist, state that it is found principally along the California coast on old stabilized dunes. The pygmy oaks in the El Moro Elfin Forest are unusual with shrubby forms and multiple trunks that often curve toward and reach the ground where they become buried and rooted. There are only a few places along the entire pygmy oak range (from southern Mendocino County to San Diego County) where a grove is characterized by such trees with multiple curved trunks that reach the ground.

Many of the oaks in the miniature El Moro Elfin forest are well over 100 years old. Ron Ruppert, biology instructor at Cuesta and Hancock Colleges, counted 105 annual growth rings in a section taken from a damaged branch of one oak and estimated the age of the tree to be between 200 and 300 years.

Dr. David Keil, Cal Poly botanist, states that the Elfin Forest Oaks are the products of thousands of years of natural succession. The dunes on which they are found were initially unvegetated coastal dunes with little or no organic matter. Gradually the dunes were stabilized by shrubs and herbaceous plants which decayed and added organic matter to the soil. About ten thousand years ago the sandspit was formed blocking off the supply of sand and protecting the old dunes from wind and salt spray. The vegetation changed to species other than the original "pioneer plants" thus preparing the way for the climax community of oak trees by adding mineral nutrients to the porous sandy soil and increasing its water-holding capacity with abundant organic matter.

The oaks grew slowly establishing the mound-like oak communities now found on the old dunes. The canopy of interlocking treetops, wind-pruned on the western side, slopes gradually up to 15 foot tall trees in the woodland's interior. These pygmy oaks are in the final stage in plant succession. Natural modification of dune sand to soil that would support these unique trees took place over thousands of years. Once disturbed, neither the soil nor the vegetation could be recreated.

SMALL WILDERNESS AREA PRESERVATION
 LOS OSOS / MORRO BAY CHAPTER
 SEMI-ANNUAL TREASURER'S REPORT
 JULY 1, 1988 TO FEBRUARY 21, 1989

INCOME:

MEMBERSHIPS:	\$280.00
DONATIONS:	\$823.00
INTEREST (SESLOC):	\$105.63

<u>TOTAL INCOME:</u>	\$1208.63
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DISBURSEMENTS:

PHOTOGRAPHY:	\$71.08
PROFESSIONAL SERVICES: (GRANT PROPOSAL PREP.)	\$1000.00
PRINTING:	\$54.20
POSTAGE:	\$168.24
SUPPLIES:	\$72.43
LIABILITY INSURANCE:	\$270.00
OCTOBERFEST ENTRY FEE:	\$25.00
ROOM RENTAL:	\$60.00
TELEGRAM: (COASTAL COMMISSION)	\$57.35
ASSOCIATION FEES: (STATE WIDE S.W.A.P.)	\$107.00
ASSOCIATION FEES: (LAND TRUST FOR GROUP LIABILITY INSURANCE)	\$100.00

<u>TOTAL DISBURSEMENTS:</u>	\$1985.30
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<u>LOSS FOR THIS PERIOD:</u>	\$776.67
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ASSETS:

CASH-CHECKING:	\$1797.14
CASH-CHECKING (LAND FUND):	\$1270.93
CASH-PETTY:	\$17.46

<u>TOTAL ASSETS:</u>	\$3085.53
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BEGINNING NET WORTH (7/1/88):	\$3862.20
LOSS FOR THIS PERIOD (2/21/89):	\$776.67

<u>NET WORTH:</u>	\$3085.53
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Return to Larry Grimes, Treasurer, S.W.A.P., P.O. Box 6442, Los Osos, CA 93402.

Response Form

- I can give my time and energy to this effort
- Enclosed in my \$10 membership fee
- Additional donation of to help with operating expenses

Name _____ Phone _____

Address _____ Zip _____

Bulk Rate U.S. Postage PAID San Luis Obispo CA 93402 Permit No. 112



**Small Wilderness
Area Preservation**

P.O. Box 6442
Los Osos, California 93402

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