

# OAK LEAVES

A PUBLICATION OF FRIENDS OF EL MORO ELFIN FOREST

P.O. BOX 6442, LOS OSOS, CALIFORNIA 93412-6442 ❖ (805) 528-0392 ❖ SUMMER 2026

## State of the Forest: Cultivating Friendship

By Rebecca Rasmussen, FEMEF Board Chair

*“Friendship,” according to Wikipedia.com, “is a relationship of mutual affection between people. Although there are many forms of friendship, certain features are common to many such bonds, as when choosing to be with one another, enjoying time spent together, and being able to engage in a positive and supportive role for one another.*

*Friendships are foremost formed by choice, typically on the basis that the parties involved admire each other and enjoy commonality and socializing.”*

When it comes to El Moro Elfin Forest, these themes of choosing to be together, engaging in positive support of each other, admiring each other, and enjoying each other’s company apply beyond the bounds of human relationships. They can be seen in other species as well.

As humans, we have learned about interspecies friendships in which animals of differing species will directly help or indirectly support each other, as well as to just take a moment to rest together under a tree.

There are countless online videos of people’s dogs making friends with a deer, a duck, or even a skunk. In California habitats there have been documented cases of a fox and skunk hunting together, as well as badgers and coyotes or wolves and ravens cooperatively teaming up.

Similarly, some argue that plants make friends as well. They attract pollinators, offering food in exchange for help with reproducing. Additionally, squirrels will not only eat the acorns of the oaks but also bury them in caches. Sometimes the squirrels will forget about their buried treasures, and later the acorns will sprout and serve to regenerate the forest. Perhaps the most important plant friendship is that provided by mycorrhizal fungi. These web-like, underground symbionts provide water and nutrients, especially important in nutrient-poor soil, to all the plants in the forest.

As an organization, Friends of El Moro Elfin Forest lives up to its name. We are a group of people working in cooperation to care for the forest. While our main focus is removing non-native plants from the area, we also work to maintain the boardwalk, which protects the soil from being impacted and thereby allows the roots of plants and trees better access to water and nutrients. Our work or “acts of friendship” in these focused areas radiate and create a safe space for wildlife to live. We get an opportunity to greet this wildlife whenever we walk through the forest.

State of the Forest *continued on page 2*



*Rosa spithamea. Photo by Rebecca Rasmussen.*

### ❖ Inside This Issue ❖

2	..... <i>State of the Forest: Cultivating Friendship</i>
3	..... <i>Remembering Lasca Gaylord</i>
4	..... <i>MBNEP Releases State of the Bay Report</i>
5	..... <i>Beach Sun Cup</i>
6	..... <i>Conservation Report</i>
7	..... <i>Gardening with CA Natives: Black Sage</i>
8	..... <i>Coming Up in the Elfin Forest</i>
9	..... <i>Walks in the Elfin Forest</i>
10	..... <i>Thank You to Our Generous Members</i>
11	..... <i>Elfin Forest Website Recently Redesigned</i>
12	..... <i>Summer Happenings</i>



**BOARD OF DIRECTORS**  
of the  
**Friends of El Moro Elfin Forest**  
**(FEMEF)**

Rebecca Rasmussen, Chair  
Steve Hendricks, Vice Chair  
Roger Carmody, Treasurer  
Dave Bowlus, Secretary  
Beverly Boyd, Acting Recording Secretary  
Hallie Cooks, Student Intern  
Pat Brown  
Ron Ruppert

The FEMEF Board of Directors meets monthly. Meeting days and times can vary and will be posted on the home page at [www.elfin-forest.org](http://www.elfin-forest.org)

FEMEF Board meetings are virtual and are open to the public. To attend a FEMEF Board meeting, leave a message at (805) 528-0392.

**CONTACT FEMEF**

If you have questions about FEMEF activities or want to volunteer, please call (805) 528-0392 and leave a message. A recorded message will give information about our coming activities and other events.

If you have questions, concerns, or comments about any problems in the Elfin Forest, call or write Kali Beard, SLO County Parks Supervising Ranger  
1144 Monterey Street,  
SLO, CA 93408  
(805) 781-1196

Owners of dogs off-leash can be cited. If you witness dogs off-leash, vandalism, or obvious crimes, call the County Sheriff at (805) 781-4550 or Kali Beard at (805) 781-1196.

If you see or smell smoke, call 911.



@FriendsofElMoroElfinForest



@el\_moro\_elfin\_forest\_

State of the Forest *continued from page 1*



*Paeonia californica.* Photo by Rebecca Rasmussen.

On a recent walk in the forest, I heard a variety of bird calls so numerous that I could not remember them all. Additionally, I was “greeted” by at least ten lizards who eyed me dubiously, some braver than others and all judging me as I walked by. I additionally became reacquainted with one of my favorite native plants — the California peony (*Paeonia californica*) which was finally waking up from its winter sleep in the same spot it was last year, and I made a new acquaintance in the coast ground rose (*Rosa spithamea*) — which I had never yet seen before in the forest. I also met human passers-by who, like me, were enjoying a morning walk in the forest. Some faces were familiar, while others were brand new.

Each visit to El Moro Elfin Forest offers an opportunity to connect with friends new and old, plant and animal, bold and shy. Spending time with these friends gives us a chance to revitalize ourselves and in turn go out to cultivate friendships beyond the forest. ❖

**Join Us!**  
**First Saturday Work Parties**

We invite you to join us on any first Saturday from 9 a.m. to noon at the north end of 15th Street in Los Osos to enjoy satisfying physical activity in fresh air amid lovely surroundings. Please dress for wind, fog, or sun and in layers of clothing, including long pants, long shirt sleeves, work gloves, and sturdy shoes with closed toes. Take care not to park in front of driveways or mailboxes. For more information, call (805) 528-0392.

**\*\*Nature is wonderfully unpredictable.\*\***

Information in this newsletter is provided for educational purposes. Because wild ecosystems are complex and dynamic, specific observations may occasionally differ from standard scientific reporting.

# Remembering Lasca Gaylord

By Liana Harlan.

In addition, Yolanda Waddell wrote an article about Lasca for the October 2021 issue of *Oakleaves*. We have pulled some excerpts from that article below.

Lasca Gaylord, who served as the Pecho District Supervising Park Ranger for the El Moro Elfin Forest and surrounding areas from 2021 to 2025, passed away on February 2, 2026.

Lasca graduated from Cal Poly Cum Laude in 2010 and went on to work as a Supervising Park Ranger with the San Luis Obispo County Parks & Recreation Department. During her time as a park ranger, Lasca managed the Pecho District staff of eight full-time park rangers, five seasonal park aides, and many volunteers including five camp hosts at the El Chorro Regional Park campground. She also served and managed volunteers from FEMEF, the San Luis Obispo Botanical Garden, SLO4Pups, the Cayucos Dog Park, and numerous Adopt-A-Park volunteers throughout the Pecho District.

Lasca grew up in the mountains of El Dorado County, southwest of Lake Tahoe and north of Placerville, in the town of Somerset. She hiked, camped and backpacked with her family in many of the area's parks, giving her a love and appreciation of the outdoors.

In the October 2021 article, while reflecting on her life as a park ranger, Lasca said, "For me, what is very important is that we do have the ability to provide diverse recreational opportunities. Just sitting out here [in the Elfin Forest] with you, we've seen people out walking their dogs, pushing their kids, looking at the information kiosks — different opportunities for a diverse group of people. It is important for us [County Parks staff] to understand that is not just a certain type of user but all users such as those we see in the Elfin Forest. That really is our job and we are all going to be, as park rangers, equally as helpful and accommodating to people just using the restrooms, people who are camping overnight, or people who are experiencing homelessness and need some shelter. I think that if we can all work together as a community, that is how it will be done."

Lasca leaves behind a legacy of care and stewardship, and we are deeply grateful for the peace of mind that came from knowing the Elfin Forest was so thoughtfully cared for during her time as park ranger. ❖



*Supervising Park Ranger Lasca Gaylord.*



## OAKLEAVES

is a quarterly FEMEF publication.

Editing by Liana Harlan; editing assistance by Bob Dees; fact checking by Jeff Reifel; finish editing by Faylla Chapman; photo editing by Cheyenne Winn  
Layout by Rebecca Rasmussen  
Printing by Hay Printing

Contributors to this issue: Pat Brown, Suzette Girouard, Liana Harlan, Vicky Johnsen, Betsy Kinter, John Nowak, Rebecca Rasmussen, Bonnie Walters (in memoriam), Dirk Walters, Jean Wheeler.

Deadline for copy to *Oakleaves* is the first of the month before issue. If possible, all copy should be submitted by e-mail to [oakleaf@elfin-forest.org](mailto:oakleaf@elfin-forest.org).

## Please Report 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? Taken a good photo? Please report any interesting sighting to your *Oakleaves* editors at: [oakleaf@elfin-forest.org](mailto:oakleaf@elfin-forest.org) or leave a message on FEMEF's answering machine: (805) 528-0392.

# Morro Bay National Estuary Program Releases State of the Bay Report

By Liana Harlan

The Morro Bay National Estuary Program, a local nonprofit that works to protect and restore Morro Bay, has recently released its *State of the Bay* report for 2026. This report is released every three years and provides information on the health of the Morro Bay estuary. The report summarizes key findings and identifies trends in water quality and habitats.

We've pulled together below a few questions and highlights from the report.

## Is water in the creeks and bay clean enough for fish and aquatic life?

Some areas are healthy and others are degraded. Fish and aquatic life require clean waters that have adequate oxygen and are free of pollutants. To better understand whether the waters of the bay and creeks support the most sensitive wildlife, Estuary Program staff and dedicated volunteers conduct ongoing monitoring of oxygen levels, nitrate pollution, and creek health indicators.

## Are bird populations that depend on the bay and surrounding lands stable?

Yes, the diversity of birds in the Morro Bay area appears stable, but some types of birds face difficult conditions or are changing their behavior due to forces such as habitat loss.

The Morro Bay estuary and watershed provide a variety of habitats that support a wide diversity of bird species. Understanding the health of bird populations is a crucial tool for tracking environmental health. Across the country, a third

of U.S. birds need conservation action for protection, which safeguards both habitats and the economy. About 100 million Americans are birdwatchers, with bird-related expenditures reaching approximately \$100 billion in 2022. [More information on tracking of Morro Bay shorebirds and monitoring Los Osos bird populations can be found in the report.]

## Are important natural areas being protected, enhanced, and restored?

Yes, more than 5,400 acres have been protected, and thirty-eight projects have been completed to improve natural areas and water quality.

The Estuary Program works with many partners to protect, restore, and enhance habitat in the Morro Bay estuary and the lands that surround it. These efforts support open space, healthy habitats, clean water, and

resilient lands for people and for wildlife.

## Develop Bay-Friendly Habits

Even small actions can make a difference. Here are some things you can do to help protect the bay and the lands that surround it.

### PICK IT UP

Cleaning up pet waste helps keep harmful bacteria out of the bay and creeks, protecting the waters for people and wildlife.

### MANAGE THAT TRASH

Put trash in the right receptacle so it doesn't end up in the bay where it can harm wildlife.

### WATCH WHAT GOES DOWN THE DRAIN

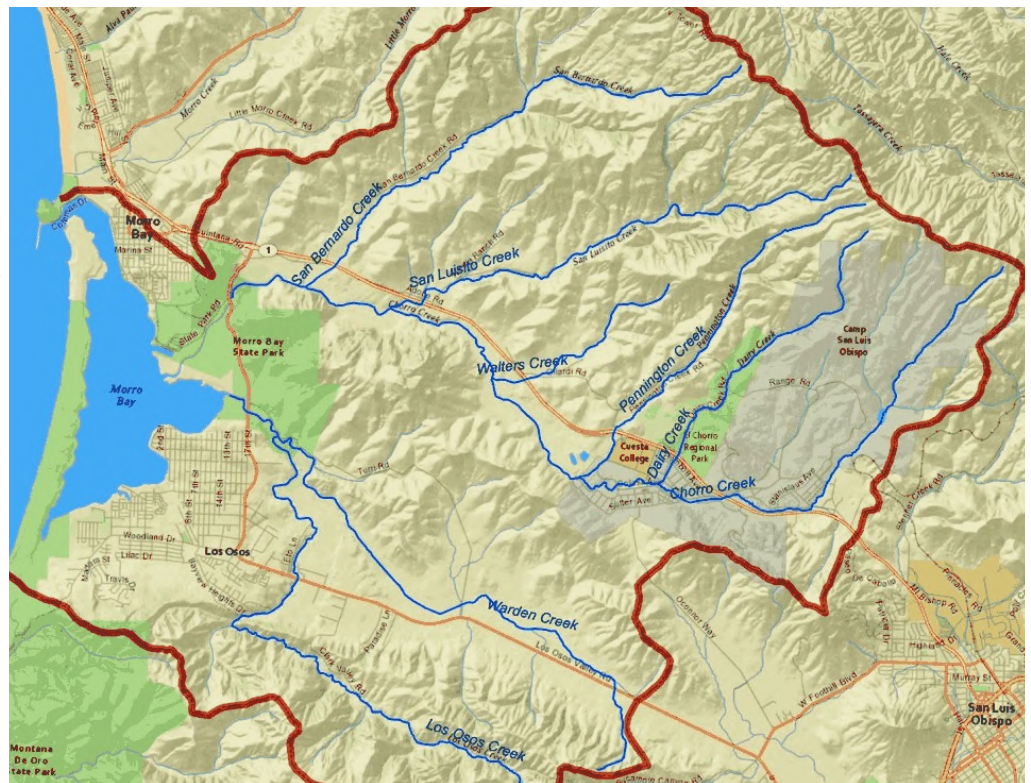
Stormdrains direct runoff into the nearest waterway, whether that's a creek or the bay. Help keep chemicals, trash, and yard waste out of drains.

### BE A RESPONSIBLE BOATER

Make sure that your boat's waste-holding tank is free of leaks, and always dispose of your waste properly on shore.

\*\*\*

The 2026 Morro Bay National Estuary Program's full report can be found online at <https://www.mbnep.org/state-of-the-bay-2026/>. Be sure to review it for additional information about the estuary, including upcoming projects to protect habitats. ❖



# Beach Sun Cup

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

Beach sun cup (*Camissoniopsis cheiranthifolia*) is one of the few plants that bloom year-round along our coast. It is found most commonly on the unstable, sandy hillocks immediately inshore from the beach. It is also occasionally found on disturbed sandy soils away from the immediate coast in places such as the Elfin Forest. However, I wouldn't spend a lot of time looking for it from the boardwalk since I suspect its presence in the Elfin Forest is now historical.

Before the natural area was set aside there were lots of heavily used, open, unstable sandy patches, habitats in which beach sun cup could establish and grow. After the Elfin Forest became a natural area, volunteers were able to control land use via the establishment of recognized trails. This was a start, but the ground-based trails became wider and wider, which exposed the sandy soils to wind erosion. Although probably diminished, there was still some habitat for beach sun cups to grow. When the boardwalk was built, the result was even less disturbance within the Elfin Forest. With the reduced disturbance, the dominant shrubs grew taller and, more importantly, wider. They stabilized the sand and shaded out species like the beach sun cup, which requires open, sunny, and unstable sand in which to establish and grow. I haven't seen beach sun cup in the Elfin Forest. If it is to be found, I'd look for it in open sand just above the bay. Thanks to the fine work of volunteers, that type of habitat has gotten very rare and none of it can be seen from the boardwalk.

Before 1969, this plant was in the genus *Oenothera*. At that time the common name applied to this genus was "evening primrose." So *Camissoniopsis cheiranthifolia* would have been called "beach evening primrose" or simply "beach primrose." However, that common name is quite misleading. First, primrose is a name better applied to a totally different and unrelated group of plants in the true primrose family (Primulaceae), which includes the shooting star and the pimpernel. The only trait that sun cups and true primroses share is their general tubular-shaped flowers.

Sun cups share, with other members of its family Onagraceae, four separate petals instead of the five fused ones found in the primroses. In fact, the flowers of the Onagraceae, including the sun cups, have a distinctive set of characteristics: they produce flowers that possess four sepals, four petals, and eight stamens attached to the top of a generally thin, elongated ovary which displays a four-part structure. This can be summarized as CA4 CO4 A8/G 4. The abbreviation CA is short for calyx, which is the collective term for the sepals. CO stands for the corolla, the collective term for the petals. A is the abbreviation for andrecium, which translates as all the "male things," which are all the stamens. G stands for gynoecium or "female things," which represents the four-parted ovary, style, and stigma.

Why did Dr. Peter Raven separate the sun cups from the evening primroses? First, and the most easily observed reason, is the stigma. A look at Bonnie's drawing will show it to resemble a single wide cap as opposed to the four hair-like stigma branches found in true evening primroses. A second trait is harder to determine. True evening primroses produce their flowers at dusk, bloom through the night, and fade in the morning. Sun cup flowers open at dawn and bloom during the day. This means the two genera have different pollinators since their flowers are open at different times of the day. Evening primroses would be expected to be visited by night flying animals such as moths, whereas sun cups would be visited by dayflying visitors.

While researching tidbits to include about beach sun cups, I came across the discussion of the species in the book by Mary Coffeen titled *Central Coast Wildflowers*. In it, she reprints part of an article titled "The Morro Bay Sand Spit, a California Treasure" by my friend and former Cal Poly professor, Wayne Williams. In it he describes the pollination of beach sun cup as follows:

"The plant's bright yellow flowers cover new sand deposits everywhere along the sand spit, enhancing dune stability. Its blossoms face downwind. The pollinator is an exceptionally large bumblebee (*Bombus* sp.). We have all heard how bumblebees manage to fly despite the aerodynamic engineering theory that would render them land-bound because of their weight and size. These bees deftly approach the beach primrose [i.e., sun cup] flowers by flying upwind for greatest flight stability. Their powerful thorax muscles and large size allow them to survive within this niche, gathering food and pollinating, because of the downwind direction of the primrose [sun cup] corollas. Since the primrose[sun cup] is decumbent where wind speed is slowest, the bees can also work over large territories. I have often watched these bees and have never seen any other species pollinating beach primrose [sun cup] at the sand dunes. This symbiosis between plant and insect allows both the plant and the bumblebee to thrive and reproduce."

Just imagine how much observation time was required to allow one to come up with this kind of natural history fact. There are many more yet to be discovered, and that's why natural areas like the Elfin Forest are so important! ❖



# Conservation Report

By Vicky Johnsen, Conservation Co-Chair

February 7

A total of 33 volunteers showed up ready to fight off invasive plants. Luckily, Zarah Wyly had done an extensive survey the day before and was able to divide the volunteers into five groups. Dave Bowlus, Roger Carmody and Jan Moore pulled up newly emerging veldt grasses along the South Bay slope. Dean Thompson trimmed oaks along the lower boardwalk with help from James Solum and Natalie Zaragoza.

Pat Brown led Angela Logan's five students from Paso Robles High School's Wilderness Club off the 11th Street trail to dig up narrowleaf ice plant but found a huge mat of asparagus fern roots.

Zarah and her mom took the nine California Conservation Corp volunteers to tackle the Cape ivy below Sienna's View, and Vicky had a group work down below Butterfly Hill to pull out a large area of Cape ivy. And lastly, needless to say, Craig Johnsen's home-baked cookies were very much appreciated.

March 7

Zarah Wyly and Jeff Reifel led the 10 volunteers in Vicky Johnsen's absence. Jeff and three volunteers tackled the veldt grass that has appeared on the slope facing South Bay Boulevard. Pat Brown and three other volunteers trimmed the entrances to trails as well as areas along the boardwalk. Zarah and her mom surveyed the Klopfer Grove and finished by clearing the parking area at 16th Street.

April 4

There were 12 volunteers at the Work Day in April, despite the heat and dry easterly winds. Angela Logan and Jan



*Volunteers at the February Saturday work party worked to remove the infestation of Cape ivy. Photo by Zarah Wyly.*



*Zarah Wyly removing an invasive ice plant.*

Moore trimmed the access to Butterfly Hill in preparation for Pat Brown's Saturday Walk. Vicky and three volunteers faced the challenge of trimming the trail out to Sienna's View despite a robust batch of poison oak. Dean Thompson also trimmed along the boardwalk. Zarah and her mom battled the additional veldt grass on the South Bay slope. (Vicky returned weeks later to pull yet another bagful, and there's still more.) Jeff Reifel surveyed and repaired areas along the boardwalk. ❖



*After removal of the Cape ivy. Photo by Zarah Wyly.*

# Gardening with California Natives: Black Sage

By John Nowak and Suzanne Girouard

Black sage (*Salvia mellifera*) is an attractive plant that is often present but seldom dominant, comfortably sharing its place among other coastal chaparral plants. Its branches are covered with abundant pale blue or lavender flowers calling out “See me!” to all. The origins of the black sage’s common name are unknown, possibly coming from the dark green color of its leaves, especially during drought years. It would be hard not to notice its green leaves while walking the trails of the Elfin Forest.

*Salvia mellifera* is frequently found growing with its other perennial friends such as *Baccharis pilularis* (coyote brush); *Acmispon glaber* (deerweed or California broom), formerly *Lotus scoparius*; and *Lupinus chamissonis* (silver dune lupine). Sometimes referred to as a pioneer species, black sage can quickly re-establish disturbed areas, making it an ideal plant for revegetation projects.

Black sage is an excellent source of food and shelter for a host of birds, mammals, and insects, especially bees and butterflies. In fact, its species name *mellifera* means “honey-bearing” in Latin. As black sage seeds mature and fall to the ground, California quail (*Callipepla californica*) and other ground birds gorge upon them. Big-eared woodrats (*Neotoma macrotis*) use the seeds' soft wood to make their shelters, which dot the landscape of the Elfin Forest. Brush rabbits (*Sylvilagus bachmani*) and black-tailed deer (*Odocoileus columbianus*) enjoy black sage’s fresh new foliage when its strong-smelling oil content is lower.

You may have heard of black sage honey, known for its dark color and bold flavor. Black sage has a late blooming cycle that is beneficial for bees and other insects, as well as hummingbirds when other nectar sources are scarce.

California native peoples had many uses for black sage. Local Chumash used it mainly for medicinal purposes, often making an aqueous solution by submerging the plant’s leaves into salt water. This mixture was then placed in the sun for a couple of days to steep like sun tea. Then someone with an ailment would soak their feet in this solution to remove pain. There are also accounts of early Spanish settlers using the leaves and seeds during cooking to flavor a bland meal, somewhat akin to European uses of another sage, *Salvia officinalis*, for cooking.

Gardening with black sage can be very successful if it is planted in the proper location in your garden. It prefers a sunny to semi-sunny area and well-drained soils. Drip irrigation, however, will lead to an early decline of the plant and root rot. Once black sage is established, monthly summer watering will keep a lush appearance and prolong flowering. After black sage has flowered, remove the seed heads to encourage more compact growth. A periodic heavy pruning in autumn will stimulate regeneration of growth, similar to re-growth after a fire. Seeds collected in July are easy to germinate by simply sowing them in sandy soil and once new plants sprout sufficiently, transplanting them



Black Sage. Photo by Jean Wheeler.

into a selected spot.

*Salvia mellifera* is an important component of the dune chaparral community. Its ability to restore and revegetate disturbed areas, along with providing food and shelter to animals and insects, earns its welcome into your garden.

## Black Sage Syrup Recipe

By Liana Harlan

1 cup water  
1 cup sugar  
10-20 black sage leaves

Heat the water and sugar until the sugar is dissolved. Then turn off the heat and add the black sage leaves. Let steep for 30 minutes and then strain out the leaves. This syrup is great in coffee or tea. ❖

## Save the Date!

FEMEF's Annual Meeting is scheduled for September 26, 2026 at the Red Barn in Los Osos. More information coming soon!

# Coming Up in the Elfin Forest

Story and Photos by Jean Wheeler

After the colorful diversity among our winter and spring wildflowers and birds, one might expect less floral and bird color in the heat of summer, but not to fear! Summer also brings lots of brilliant flowers and the return of birds from winter sojourns south of us. Returning and year-round birds will be feeding and instructing this year's brood of youngsters.

Orange California poppies continue to bloom nearly all year. Shrubs at the upper end of our boardwalk are also almost blanketed with large orange flowers. These are called sticky monkey-flowers, but it's their leaves that are sticky, not the flowers! Also bordering our upper boardwalk are many spikes of white chamise (pictured). Yellow deerweed flowers are common around much of our boardwalk. Coast dudleya has large succulent leaves on the ground, mostly shaded by taller shrubs, but its tall reddish-green stalks are topped by tubes of yellow flowers. Pink flowers include cobwebby thistles, wild rose, and California hedge nettle. Bright red flowers in the undergrowth with saw-toothed edges are cardinal catchflies. Bush Lupine Point in the Elfin Forest is named for its gorgeous tall spikes of blue flowers, seen from late spring to early summer.

Often called "flying flowers," butterflies in early summer include Morro blues, who lay their eggs on bush lupine leaves. Acmon blues look to deerweed to support their caterpillars. Green coastal bramble hairstreaks seek dune buckwheat. Gabb's checkerspot like California poppies for their nectar, and California oak moths lay eggs on our pygmy live oaks.

The birds most likely to catch your attention are California scrub jays, loudly screaming their name. A loud buzz comes from the orange- and black-spotted towhee. Large, round California quail have silly-looking, bobbing heads and sound to me like they are calling "quer-CAH-go." The California thrasher is distinctive with its long, down-curved bill. Then there are busily chattering flocks of tiny fuzzy gray birds, their clusters dominated by bushtits (pictured) and blue-gray gnatcatchers. Talkative little brown birds include several species of sparrows and wrens.

Well over two dozen mammal species inhabit or visit our Elfin Forest. But other than rabbits and squirrels, many are nocturnal or very shy and are seldom seen on a casual stroll. However, large woven mounds of sticks built by a female dusky-footed woodrat to house herself and raise her young can be seen in many places within a few feet of the boardwalk. Also, tracks of several species may be seen in dirt beside the boardwalk. Sometimes even one of our resident coyotes crosses the boardwalk, usually well beyond a startled human walker. One afternoon a few years ago, I watched and photographed two deer (pictured) well inside our boardwalk loop.

Remember to keep your eyes open and to enjoy the beauty and activity of the wild vegetation and animal life we work to conserve in our Elfin Forest! ❖



*Bush Tit*



*Chamise*



*Black-tailed deer*

## **Thinking of Switching to Online *Oakleaves*?**

If you receive a print copy of *Oakleaves*, we encourage you to visit our online version at [www.elfin-forest.org](http://www.elfin-forest.org).

If you decide to be an online reader, you will receive an email when each new issue is posted on our website. Your decision would save paper, ink, and FEMEF dollars for other uses. Just email us at [oakleaf@elfin-forest.org](mailto:oakleaf@elfin-forest.org) with the subject "Switch me to online."

## WALKS in the ELFIN FOREST Docent-Led Third Saturday Walks

*Reservations required; masks are optional. To reserve a spot on the walk, email us at [walks@elfin.forest.org](mailto:walks@elfin.forest.org) and indicate the number in your party in the subject line of your email.*

Topics for the below dates are:

- \* June 20, 9:30 a.m.  
**Insects with Dennis Sheridan**
- \* July 18, 9:30am  
**Herpetology with Trevor Ruppert**
- \* August 15, 9:30am  
**How Plants Survive with Vicky Johnsen**

*Please check our website under "Visiting" and then "Walks in the Forest." Walks begin at times stated above at the north end (1100 block) of 15th Street off Santa Ysabel in Los Osos. Wear closed-toe shoes, long sleeves and pants to avoid poison oak and mosquitoes. Park carefully, avoiding driveways and mailboxes, and leave pets at home. The easy-paced walks last 1-1/2 to 2 hours.*

*For more information or if you use a wheelchair, call (805) 528-0392.*



*Pat Brown led a butterfly walk on April 18.  
Photo by Vicky Johnson.*



*Vicky Johnsen led a hiking group of 17 participants, organized by Sandy Lee, in the Elfin Forest on Friday, March 27. Photographer unknown.*



*The annual Fungus Foray mushroom walk. Photo by Pat Brown.*

### Join the Annual Bat Walk on July 25

The third annual Bat Walk with retired biology instructor, Ron Ruppert, will take place on the evening of Saturday, July 25 at 8pm. Ron will share many fascinating insights into the habits and mysteries of these elusive flying mammals. During last year's walk, he confirmed the presence of five different species of bats:

- \*Mexican free-tailed bat (*Tadarida brasiliensis*)
- \*hoary bat (*Lasiurus cinereus*)
- \*silver-haired bat (*Lasiorycteris noctivagans*)
- \*pallid bat (*Antrozous pallidus*)
- \*big brown bat (*Eptesicus fuscus*)

If you have found bats (dead or alive) in SLO county, Ron would like to know about your sightings. Take a picture if you can and send it to [oakleaf@elfin-forest.org](mailto:oakleaf@elfin-forest.org).



*Jelly Fungus. Photo by Pat Brown.*



*Turkey tail mushrooms on a log in the Elfin Forest.  
Photo by Pat Brown.*

# Thank You to Our Generous Members

Compiled by Betsy Kinter, FEMEF Database Coordinator

## NEW LIFETIME MEMBERS

Charlie & Leslie Cohn      Chris & Arlene Kettering

## NEW MEMBERS

Mark Browning\*

## DONATIONS

Mary Chiaretta      The Friday Morning Hikers  
Andrea Davis      Esther Patague  
Bob & Jan DeWitt – in      Barbara Rosenthal  
honor of Carol Pilling's      James Wasynczuk  
birthday

## RENEWING MEMBERS

William Bouton\*      Jen Nelson\*  
David Bowlus & Beverly      Kim & Murray Randall\*  
Boyd\*      Jeff Reifel  
Lurlie E. Edgecomb\*      Oscar Sarafian  
Sharon Iranpour\*      Bob & Barbara Schwenoha\*  
Jane Johnson\*      Sue Shields  
Penny Koines\*      Nancy Stephens\*  
George Lusich\*      Zach & Corinne Tanner  
Marlys McPherson      Katherine Tennant\*  
Bob & Sharon Meyer\*      Zarah Wyly\*  
Jim & Barbara Murray\*

*\*Thanks to those listed on this page 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.*

*If you recently sent a donation to FEMEF and don't see your name in this issue's New and Renewing list, be assured that your gift will be acknowledged in the next quarterly issue. Gifts are processed by two different volunteers before reaching our editors, and newsletter copy deadline is one month before the date of issue.*



*Jan DiLeo at the Parks for Los Osos fundraiser on April 25. Photo by Ashley Smith.*

## Share Your Observations with iNaturalist

Did you know you can use the iNaturalist app to share your observations in the forest? Anyone can upload photos and identify species they have seen in the forest. You can also search and view what others have reported in the area.

At its core, iNaturalist is about people helping each other identify and learn about the organisms they observe. The iNaturalist app works on all devices.

<https://www.inaturalist.org/places/el-moro-elfin-forest>

## Thank you to our Members and Donors

Your generous donations and membership renewals support future projects to maintain the Elfin Forest and boardwalk, refurbish and replace informational signs and aging benches, make other improvements, and fund projects to serve our mission: "to preserve and maintain El Moro Elfin Forest Natural Area; to inform and educate about the natural history of the Elfin Forest and the Morro Bay Estuary; and to promote and support scientific research in the Forest."

# Elfin Forest Website Recently Redesigned

Recent updates to the Friends of El Moro Elfin Forest website reflect a thoughtful redesign focused on improving accessibility, organization, and user experience. The refreshed site has a more streamlined navigation and enhanced structure, making it easier for visitors to explore, learn, and connect with the Elfin Forest. Ongoing improvements also support better integration with social media and digital outreach, helping the organization share its conservation efforts with a broader community. To access the new website, please visit [www.elfinforestlososos.org](http://www.elfinforestlososos.org).



## FEMEF Merch Order Form

See photos of all items at [www.elfin-forest.org/store/default.htm](http://www.elfin-forest.org/store/default.htm)

All Prices Include Sales Tax

### 1. MURAL SHIRTS & SWEATSHIRTS

Large mural design by artist Barbara Rosenthal on both front and back. Forest green fabric with the words "Friends of El Moro Elfin Forest" above the mural and "Los Osos, California" below the mural. (Zip Hoodie has mural on the back only.)

Indicate the desired size(s) (S,M,L,XL,XXL)

\_\_\_ Short Slv. T-Shirt size \_\_\_ @\$25.00 = \$ \_\_\_  
\_\_\_ Long Slv. T-Shirt size \_\_\_ @\$30.00 = \$ \_\_\_  
\_\_\_ Pullover Hoodie size \_\_\_ @\$40.00 = \$ \_\_\_  
\_\_\_ Zip Hoodie size \_\_\_ @\$45.00 = \$ \_\_\_

### 2. ELFIN FOREST MURAL PRINTS

Signed prints by artist Barbara Rosenthal.  
Image size 4 1/2 x 16 1/2 in. Mounted on foamcore.  
\_\_\_ @ \$35.00 = \$ \_\_\_

### 3. ALPHABET BIRD BOOK

With 26 clever verses and superb photos on facing pages, this book is sure to please young and old.  
\_\_\_ @ \$20.00 = \$ \_\_\_

### 4. MURAL MUG

A 15-ounce beverage mug with wraparound mural design. Microwave-safe; hand-wash suggested.  
\_\_\_ @ \$20.00 = \$ \_\_\_

### 5. ELFIN FOREST CAPS

One-size-fits-all cap with adjustable strap in back, 100% cotton. Three colors: forest green, maroon, and navy blue. Specify color when ordering.  
\_\_\_ @ \$20.00 = \$ \_\_\_ Color(s):  
\_\_\_\_\_

SUBTOTAL OF ORDER: \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
(Please print when filling order, and indicate how many of each.)

SHIPPING COSTS: Within and near Los Osos, free delivery may be possible. Shipping costs are a flat fee of \$15 per order.  
Please call (805) 528-0392 to arrange for delivery

TOTAL OF ORDER WITH APPLICABLE SHIPPING COSTS \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
City/State/Zip: \_\_\_\_\_  
Email: \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone (w/ area code): \_\_\_\_\_

Make checks payable and mail to:  
FEMEF, P.O. Box 6442, Los Osos, CA 93412-6442  
Call-in orders may also be made: (805) 528-0392

## See Something, Say Something

Please report any illegal campers or other unlawful activity that you see in the Forest to the San Luis Obispo County Sheriff's Office-Coast Station located on 2099 10th Street in Los Osos. Their phone number is (805) 528-6083. A large fire in the Elfin Forest could spread to houses adjacent to the Forest. Lighting fires is arson, punishable with a jail sentence.

In the event of a fire found in the Forest, call 911 for immediate assistance. The town of Los Osos receives emergency services through CalFire at Station 15-South Bay. They are located at 2315 Bayview Heights Drive in Los Osos. Their phone number is (805) 528-1053.



FRIENDS OF EL MORO ELFIN FOREST  
*A Non-Profit Public Benefit Corporation*  
 P.O. Box 6442, Los Osos, CA 93412-6442  
 (805) 528-0392 - www.elfinforestlososos.org

Non-Profit Org.  
 U.S. Postage  
 P A I D  
 San Luis Obispo, CA 93402  
 Permit No. 112

*Address Service Requested*

Remembering Lasca Gaylord, Park Ranger - Page 3

Please check renewal date on your label.



*Pat Brown spoke about the Elfin Forest on February 17 at the Central Coast Biological Society meeting that took place at Humdinger Brewery. Photo by Liana Harlan.*

### MEMBERSHIP FORM

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address \_\_\_\_\_  
 City/State/Zip \_\_\_\_\_  
 Email \_\_\_\_\_  
 Phone \_\_\_\_\_

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> New Member                        | <input type="checkbox"/> Renewing Member |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Member \$25                       | <input type="checkbox"/> Defender \$100  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Steward \$50                      | <input type="checkbox"/> Champion \$250  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Protector \$75                    | <input type="checkbox"/> Guardian \$500  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Seniors/Students \$15             |  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Life Member \$1000                |  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> I want to help, please call me!   |  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> FEMEF has permission to email me. |  |

Memberships include an online subscription to FEMEF's quarterly newsletter *Oakleaves*.

- Check here to receive the online version by email
- Check here to receive the print version by U.S. mail.
- Check here if you do not wish to receive *Oakleaves*.

All donations to FEMEF are tax-deductible  
 EVERY membership counts!

Make checks payable to: FEMEF  
 Mail to: Friends of El Moro Elfin Forest  
 P.O. Box 6442, Los Osos, CA 93412-6442