

# OAKLEAVES

A PUBLICATION OF FRIENDS OF EL MORO ELFIN FOREST

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

## Join the Annual Celebration on Saturday, September 26

We invite you to join the Friends of the El Moro Elfin Forest Annual Celebration on Saturday, September 26, from 11:30 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the Red Barn (2180 Palisades Ave.).

Biologist Cindy Roessler will introduce you to some of our local bees with up-close photographs, and she will describe the bumble bee surveys currently in their second year at the Elfin Forest.

Light refreshments will be served at 11:30 a.m. with the presentation and general meeting from noon to 2 p.m. RSVP at [www.femef.org](http://www.femef.org). Please try to carpool, as parking is limited. ♦



*The Estuary at low tide. Photo by Rebecca Rasmussen*

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## State of the Forest: Look Up

*By Rebecca Rasmussen, FEMEF Board Chair*

It's so easy to look down. Walking on the boardwalk, we often stay focused on our feet, on where our next steps should be. We aim our eyes downward, looking at the plants or small animals or the tracks they leave behind. It's true. I, too, often find myself with head tilted down, scanning the boardwalk and forest floor, looking for trash to pick up or other items that don't belong. It is only when I stop to take a breath that I take a moment to look up, and I realize how much I've been missing.

Sometimes, it takes my breath away, all that I have overlooked, or rather "underlooked": the thrasher perched at the top of a bush keeping watch, the bees collecting pollen from the Oak catkins, the beautiful cloud formations and the stunning birds of prey soaring overhead. If I look farther, I can see Morro Rock or the mountains rising out of the earth, and my perspective grows.

Looking up, I can see the whole picture. How everything fits together. How the flow of the landscape meets the estuary. How the fresh water meets the salty. How the plants and trees arrange themselves in their habitats.

To me it provides a sense of wholeness, of calm, being part of something bigger and more grand than just a singular life form. Every living thing makes contributions towards the whole. Together, we are part of an amazing place on an amazing planet in an amazing universe.

Throughout this issue of *Oakleaves*, we are including quotes about looking up that we hope you will enjoy. May they serve as a reminder for us to take our time as we move through the forest and reflect on the countless points of view that nature has to offer. ♦

*"Look, up at the sky. There is a light, a beauty up there, that no shadow can touch."*

*—J. R. R. Tolkien, The Lord of the Rings*



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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\_



*This beautiful sheep moth was spotted by a recent visitor to the Elfin Forest.  
Photo by Joan Larive.*

**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.

*"The plants look up to heaven, from whence they have their nourishment."*

*—William Shakespeare*

*Pericles*

**\*\*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.



# Weasels in the Elfin Forest

By Liana Harlan

A recent sighting serves as a reminder that some of the Elfin Forest's most fascinating residents are also the easiest to overlook. "I just saw a weasel chasing the bunnies at the little bench area on the way to Sienna's Grove," one local visitor reported. "I had forgotten about weasels being in the Elfin Forest." An additional sighting was reported on iNaturalist in October 2020.

Elusive, quick, and rarely seen, the long-tailed weasel (*Neogale frenata*) is a small but formidable predator quietly playing an important role in the local ecosystem.

Primarily nocturnal, long-tailed weasels are highly efficient hunters that help balance rodent populations. In habitats like the Elfin Forest, they are often found in coastal scrub and may take shelter in abandoned burrows.

Measuring roughly 12–15 inches in length, these slender mammals have a rich brown coat that remains consistent throughout the year in coastal California. In colder regions, however, long-tailed weasels undergo a seasonal transformation, turning white in winter, known as the ermine phase.

According to NatureWorks, most of their diet consists of small mammals such as mice, voles, rabbits, gophers, and chipmunks, though they will occasionally eat birds and insects. In the wild, they typically live 5–7 years. NatureWorks also notes that long-tailed weasels are highly vocal, using a range of squeals, squeaks, trills, and purrs, and can be surprisingly aggressive when defending their territory.



*Neogale frenata.*

## Taxonomy

The long-tailed weasel was historically classified in the genus *Mustela* (*Mustela frenata*), but in 2021, researcher Bruce Patterson reclassified it into the genus *Neogale*, reflecting updated scientific understanding published in the *Journal of Animal Diversity*.

## Folklore

Beyond biology, weasels have long captured the human imagination. A Scottish tale describes what appears to be a kind of "weasel funeral," in which multiple weasels were observed carrying and burying a fallen companion, an account echoed by similar stories dating back nearly a century. While such stories are difficult to verify, they add an air of mystery to an already elusive animal.

While sightings like these may feel rare, the long-tailed weasel has likely been a steady, unseen presence in the Elfin Forest all along. The next time you walk the trails, you may not spot one, but knowing they're there adds another layer of intrigue to the forest. ❖



### 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  
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Contributors to this issue: Pat Brown, Suzette Girouard, Liana Harlan, Vicky Johnsen, Betsy Kinter, Joan Larive, 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

# Bat Walk Reveals Hidden Nightlife of the Elfin Forest

By Liana Harlan

Retired biology instructor Ron Ruppert led participants on an evening walk that documented five bat species, and he's asking the community to help track local bat populations by reporting sightings. Ron shared many fascinating insights into the habits and mysteries of these elusive flying mammals.

Using the Echo Meter Touch 2 with a Samsung (Android) tablet, Ron confirmed the presence of five different species of bats:

**Hoary Bat** (*Lasiurus cinereus*) - This was the first bat recorded but I did not discover that until analyzing the Echo Meter this morning. This is a large bat in our area. They are often solitary when roosting where they hang out under tree bark and on tree branches where they blend in by looking like leaves. They have broad wings allowing them to maneuver while chasing their prey. This is the ONLY land mammal found on the Hawaiian Islands.

**Mexican Free-Tailed Bat** (*Tadarida brasiliensis*) - I also missed this one early on but it showed up on the recorder. They have the mouse like tail that is not connected to the tail membrane thus "free." They form large colonies in caverns and under bridges such as the Yolo Bridge near Sacramento. They are the fastest bats in level flight and may be the fastest mammals recorded at nearly 100 mph! They are known to devour 25-50% of their body weight within a nightly 30 minute foraging flight.

**Big Brown Bat** (*Eptesicus fuscus*) - A common bat in our area, hanging out in small colonies wherever they can find a crevice. Often found in and around human structures. These are the second or third largest bat in California. On this night this was the most common bat we recorded.



Attendees inspect a bat information box at the recent Bat Walk.

Photo by Pat Brown.

**Pallid Bat** (*Antrozous pallidus*) - The California State bat! A medium sized bat in our area. Can forage on the ground often eating Jerusalem crickets (potato bugs) and leaving the head and legs of the insect scattered below the roosting spot.

**Silver-Haired Bat** (*Lasionycteris noctivagans*) - Recorded twice on our evening outing. They are large like the Hoary Bat and have some of the same behaviors.

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). ❖



Ron Ruppert speaks to the bat watchers at the recent Bat Walk.

Photo by Pat Brown.



# Common, Bush or Sticky Monkey Flower

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

As I write this (late February), I anticipate the orange or golden tubes of the bush monkey flower to be one of the most common and obvious flowering shrub all along our immediate Pacific coast. It's one of the most common shrubs throughout the California Floristic Province, which extends from southern Oregon to northern Baja, Mexico, and west of the crest of the Cascade, Sierra, and Peninsular Ranges. In this county, at least four more or less recognizable types are known. The one around the San Luis Obispo, Morro Bay and Arroyo Grande areas has the flowers borne on long stalks (pedicels), have shorter tubes, and are orange in color (*Mimulus* (and/or *Diplacus*) *aurantiacus*). This is form that Bonnie has drawn. I suspect it would make a great addition to any garden as it tolerant of a wide range of exposure, moisture, and soil type.

Common names include common sticky, or bush monkey flower. Monkey flower comes from the observation that one can recognize the face of a (laughing) monkey in the spot pattern of the fused petals (corolla). I have to admit, since coming to California, I have often looked for this face and have yet to see it in any of the species I have observed. In a search of the internet I found that others have had the same problem. One author even indicated that over active imaginations may be the source of the name. The adjectives, common, bush, and sticky are all appropriate as they are all descriptive of this monkey flower. First, it is the most common and widespread monkey flower in our area and the only one visible from the Boardwalk in the Elfin Forest. Bush refers to the fact that it is tall (up to 3 feet or 1 meter) somewhat woody, i.e. it is a shrub or bush. "Sticky" refers to the trichomes (hairs) that cover the leaves. They have a bulbous tip that breaks down into a sticky goo.

The scientific name does offer some confusion. The specific epithet (second name or *aurantiacus*) is generally no problem especially for the plants that grow here on the coast and in Elfin Forest. The name "*aurantiacus*" is derived from New Latin and means the color orange, which is the color of the corolla in our plants. But this species of monkey flower is extremely variable and changes color in different areas of its range. For example it's mostly yellow in our county in the Santa Lucia Mountains and eastward. The genus name is a bit more confusing. Is it *Diplacus* or *Mimulus*? I decided to do a little literature search on the Internet. It turns out there is not really scientific consensus on this question. Maybe a little history would be helpful.

When I came to California in 1969 the main flora in use at the time was, Munz and Keck, *A California Flora*. They placed all of the California monkey flowers into the single genus, *Mimulus*. Dr. Hoover, in his 1973, *The Vascular Plants of San Luis Obispo County, California*, placed the Monkey flowers in two genera depending on whether they were woody or not. The woody ones he placed in *Diplacus* and the herbaceous ones in *Mimulus*. The current botanical bible, *The Jepson Manual* places all the monkey flowers in the single genus *Mimulus*. So we should be able to say, "Case closed!"

It is now time for DNA to confuse the story. But before I go there, I need to also note that this genus has switched botanical families. In the older references, monkey flowers were in the very large and diverse figwort family (*Scrophulariaceae*). General consensus now places the monkey flowers in the family, *Phrymaceae*. This family has a worldwide distribution, but most of its genera are native to the Southern Hemisphere. North America has only couple of genera in the family.

California, however, has most of the species and they are ALL monkey flowers. The basis for this family switch is primarily DNA based sequence comparisons. While they were getting the data to justify the family switch they also discovered sequence inconsistencies within the genera as well as between them. One of these inconsistencies apparently led to the breakup of genus *Mimulus* and/or *Diplacus*. Chloroplast DNA sequences indicated that *Mimulus*/*Diplacus* needed to be broken up into several genera. Most of the species (both herbaceous and woody) ended up in the genus *Diplacus* and that is where our species ended up. *Mimulus*, according to this research, is reduced to seven species in North America with only two in California. The rest go to *Diplacus* based primarily on flower features and DNA sequence data. So our monkey flowers seem to be *Diplacus aurantiacus* at least for now. I noted a problem when I read the paper. It seems that DNA from chloroplasts indicates one relationship while that from the Nuclear DNA indicates another.

When you go out to look for the flowers of the shrubby monkey flower, you may want to see it move. Most people know plants can move their leaves in response changing light conditions and seeds and pollen move if wind, water or animals carry them. However, these types of movements are often so slow that most of us will never have actually seen them. Some of us, who are nature TV junkies, may have seen plant movements in time lapse photography. In plants of this genus, the stigma (the end of the central bowling pin shaped structure, called the pistil or female organ,) consists of two small flat plates. When the flower opens, the plates are spread apart exposing the lower part of the upper plate and the upper side of the lower plate. These two surfaces are the pollen receptive portions of the stigma. When pollen is deposited on one of these surfaces, the two plates move together relatively rapidly or 'slam' shut. This relatively rapid movement can be seen anytime, by simulating a successful pollination. Just, gently rub the stigmas with a pine needle, pencil point, or grass leaf and watch the stigmas close. If you came back to the same flower after a few hours, the stigmas will have reopened, so no permanent damage will have been done. ❖



# Conservation Report

By Vicky Johnsen, Conservation Co-Chair

## May 2

Eleven volunteers worked about 2 hours each at various tasks.

Dave Bowlus removed a rotting wooden bench from, I believe, Bush Lupine overlook.

Natalie and Julia tackled the remaining Veldt Grasses along the path from 15th to 16th.

Zarah and her mom dug up Narrow Leaf Ice Plant in various locations. (See attached photo).

Pat Brown pulled down and dug up Asparagus Vine in an area that's been infested in the past.

James Solum, Mason Price, a new volunteer Shy Gardner and I trimmed the entrance to and all along the 11th Street sand trail.

That left Thad Geer to battle the: "Freeway Ice Plant" that's encroaching into the Forest off 14th Street.

The Veldt Grasses, the Asparagus Vine, and all trail trimmings were jammed into over a dozen 30+ gallon "Contractor" bags, (see attached photo). This was the first time we tried hauling away the trimmings. Chopping up chaparral bushes into semi-manageable pieces, filling the bags and dragging or rolling it all out of the Forest took a huge amount of time and energy. But THEN: we were left with the problem of how to dispose of it all. Many volunteered to take bags to their individual green waste bins. I know I hauled three. In the end, we had to leave four very full and heavy bags on the side of the 11th Street parking area. I asked Kali and she kindly sent out someone from County Parks to take them to the maintenance yard for Co. Parks for disposal. (Later I retrieved the bags to patch and reuse).

This seems to be a less-than-desirable solution to the challenge of disposing of trail trimmings.

My thanks goes to Steve and to Dean for emailing me their thoughts on this topic last month.

## June 6

Eleven volunteers arrived ready to tackle multiple chores.

Jeff Reifel and Keith Gardner took on the chore of removing encroaching "freeway ice plant" out of the Elfin Forest just beyond 14th Street parking area. This was met with resistance from one of the homeowners until another neighbor helped Jeff work out a solution that everyone could agree on.

Dean Thompson trimmed areas along the lower boardwalk while Dave Bowlus repaired and painted those wooden benches which were in the worst shape.

Pat Brown, Natalie Zaragoza, Angela Logan, Julia Ferguson, Shy Gardner, and James Solum joined me in pruning vegetation along various trails. This generated a huge amount of brush trimmings. Shy and Keith Gardner managed to dispose of almost half. My



*Volunteer James Solum trimming the Upper Boardwalk.  
Photo by Dean Thompson.*

heartfelt thanks goes out to them.

The remaining pile of trimmed branches formed a big mound which was left on a tarp on the side of the "paper road" between 11th and 12th street parking areas. Unfortunately, SLO County Parks did not have the trucks nor the staff available to come pick up as they did the previous month. I scrambled and enlisted the help of Natalie Zaragoza as well as my neighbor, Murray Kirby (as both had pickup trucks) and on Thursday, June 11th, we managed to fill up the back of both trucks for the drive out to the County Park's maintenance yard. With head ranger, Kali Beard's permission, the vegetation was left alongside their chipping machine ready for later mulching.

## July 4

Nine volunteers showed up for our: "First-Saturday-Work-Day" on July 4th, despite it being a holiday.

Five volunteers worked diligently to rid the slope below "Butterfly Hill" of the Narrow Leaf Ice Plant infestation that we've battled repeatedly in the past.

Dean Thompson and James Solum trimmed the Upper Boardwalk of the encroaching Ceanothus.

Jeff Reifel removed much of the barbed wire that was discarded below Bush Lupine Point.

Zarah Wyly surveyed the interior of the Forest for areas in need of attention as far as invasive plant removal. ❖



# Care of Elfin Forest Endemics in Your Garden

By John Nowak and Suzette Girouard

As fall approaches, it's time to prepare our gardens for the winter. Fall is also the ideal season to plant Elfin Forest favorites such as black sage (*Salvia mellifera*), buck brush (*Ceanothus cuneatus*), Morro manzanita (*Arctostaphylos morroensis*), and many others. How do we prepare our gardens for winter? Here are some steps we have developed over time. First, we like to walk through the garden and look closely at each area. Do some of these areas have old plants that need to be replaced? We sometimes take a note pad with us to write down our thoughts. Sometimes we like to do this after work, when we're feeling relaxed. If we are designing a garden plan, we ask ourselves, "What would grow here that I see on my nature walks?" This could take weeks, but knowing that the rains are coming can be encouraging. When possible, we try to match size to area. For example, a *Ceanothus* plant or a manzanita in a large sandy area along with *Salvia mellifera* would be appropriate. We can't have fun all the time, so our next step is weeding. We prefer hand pulling, following up with mulch. When possible, use oak tree chippings as a soil top dressing to discourage weeds. In my experience, when mulch is applied too thin, it is ineffective. A thick layer of three inches will inhibit or kill most annual weeds. Perennials such as veldt grass will not be controlled with mulch. You must first remove established clumps of veldt grass by hand and then follow up with mulch to kill the seeds. With warmer fall nights comes the need to keep a keen eye out for insect pests. Many pests will show up when you least expect them. Spider mites and aphids attack manzanitas (*Arctostaphylos species*), *Ceanothus* species, pacific wax myrtle (*Myrica californica*) and coast live oak (*Quercus agrifolia*). Luckily, we have a secret weapon—water. Using a spray nozzle, turn the operating dial to "jet" and rinse insects off an infected plant. You can safely control insect populations with a once-weekly early morning spray. For severe infestations, an application of neem oil or insecticidal soap followed weekly with a spray of water will rid your plants of most soft-bodied insects such as spider mites or aphids. For hard-to-control insects such as scale, thrips, and mealy bugs, you might use a horticultural oil spray,



*Ribes speciosum*. Photo by Pat Brown.

such as those sold under the Bonide name brand. Usually, when you have scale or aphids, ants will follow, using the other insects as a food source, with their honey dew being a favorite treat. To control ant colonies, use ant bait stations or ant bait stakes (cautiously around pets and wildlife). Whenever you spray in the garden, even with a totally organic product, watch out for bees. If you see bees, the rule is to not to spray. Spray late in the day when bees have returned to their hives. When using only water, lightly spray first to send the bees on their way. Then increase the water stream using top-to-bottom motions to wash the plants. We will conclude with a few steps for pruning. Many Elfin Forest species, when grown in the garden over time, will require pruning. Remove overgrowth, dead flower heads, and insect infested branches, or give an overgrown plant a general shaping. After pruning, water heavily to remove dirt and grime to give the plant a fresh appearance. Now you are ready for selecting your favorite Elfin Forest plant for your garden. We have chosen the fuchsia-flowered gooseberry (*Ribes speciosum*) to plant in our garden. ❖

*"It's all a great mystery...Look up at the sky and you'll see how everything changes."*

*Antoine de SaintExupery  
The Little Prince*



# Coming Up in the Elfin Forest

*Story and Photos by Jean Wheeler*

Autumn in our Elfin Forest remains colorful. Flowers on some species are changing as they age, often maturing into vibrant berries or seed heads. Birdlife continues to provide flitting streaks of color. Young hatched in spring are now maturing and feeding themselves. Some avian migrants will pause here on journeys southward. Others settle here for our mild winter, returning north to warming nesting regions in spring.

Yellow mock heather flowers (pictured) bloom from August into September. White dune buckwheat flowers age to pink, then rust. Honoring Halloween, the white flowers of black sage become robust black seed heads. Near the estuary, large bushes now carry the coffeeberries for which they are named (pictured), aging from yellow, through red, to black. Other flowers in autumn are California asters (white to pinkish or lavender petals around yellow central disks), seaside golden yarrow, coyote brush (fluffy white flowers), and dune buckwheat bush (white flowers of summer have aged to dark pink or rust).

Birders in autumn will be looking for migrating species as well as our resident species. With climatic warming in recent decades, we miss seeing our estuary almost carpeted with huge flocks of migrating birds. However, there will still be at least some birds in those migrant species arriving to spend winters with us, or pausing in passing through during their migrations to Central or South America. They seek warmer weather and much better food supplies than their nesting areas can provide in northern winters.

Resident and migrant dabbling ducks to look for include mallards, northern pintails, gadwalls, American wigeons, northern shovelers, blue-winged teal, cinnamon teal, and green-winged teal. Diving ducks could include ringnecked, canvasback, bufflehead, common goldeneye, red-breasted merganser, and ruddy ducks. Horned, eared, pied-billed, western, and Clark's grebes also may be seen until March or April. Shorebirds such as sandpipers, dowitchers, and the American avocet (pictured) reach peak populations by the end of autumn.

Of course, we continue to have many resident birds in our Elfin Forest, such as California scrub jays, California quail, spotted towhees, and bushtits. We also host brush or woodland birds migrating through or wintering. Fox, Lincoln's, and golden-crowned sparrows join our resident white-crowned sparrows, and Say's phoebe joins the black phoebe. Some American robins, hermit thrushes, cedar waxwings, western tanagers, and pine siskins may also visit.

We may not have tall trees covered in big red, orange, and yellow leaves in our autumn, but we do have lots of colorful flowers, fruits, and very active and beautiful birds, and even brush rabbits, squirrels, lizards, and very occasionally a coyote or deer may be seen from or even on our boardwalk! ❖



*Mock Heather*



*Coffeeberry*



*Avocet*

## 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. 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 still to be determined:

\* **September 19, 9:30 a.m.** - Learn about Oaks and Acorns with Zarah Wylly

\* **October 17, 9:30am** - Learn about the 9 Sisters, Salt Marsh, and Bay with Faylla Chapman

\* **November 21, 9:30am** - Explore Potions and Poisons with Jeff Reifel and Barbara Renshaw.

*Please check our website under "Events." 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.*



*Female vs. male western fence lizards.  
Photo by Cheyenne Winn.*



*A photo from the reptile walk.  
Photo by Jeff Reifel.*



*Cindy Roessler captures a bee. Photo by Pat Brown.*

*"Stars don't beg the world for attention; their beauty forces us to look up."*

*Matshona Dhliwayo*

*Canadianbased philosopher, entrepreneur, and author of books*



*A photo from the recent bee walk.  
Photo by Jeff Reifel.*



# Thank You to Our Generous Members

Compiled by Betsy Kinter, FEMEF Database Coordinator

## NEW LIFETIME MEMBER

Katy Budge

## NEW MEMBERS

Phoebe Adams

Lara Bertaina\*

Sally Ames\*

## RENEWING MEMBERS

L.R. Erickson\*

Cindy Roessler\*

Kevin & Julia Ferguson\*

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Dennis Sheridan

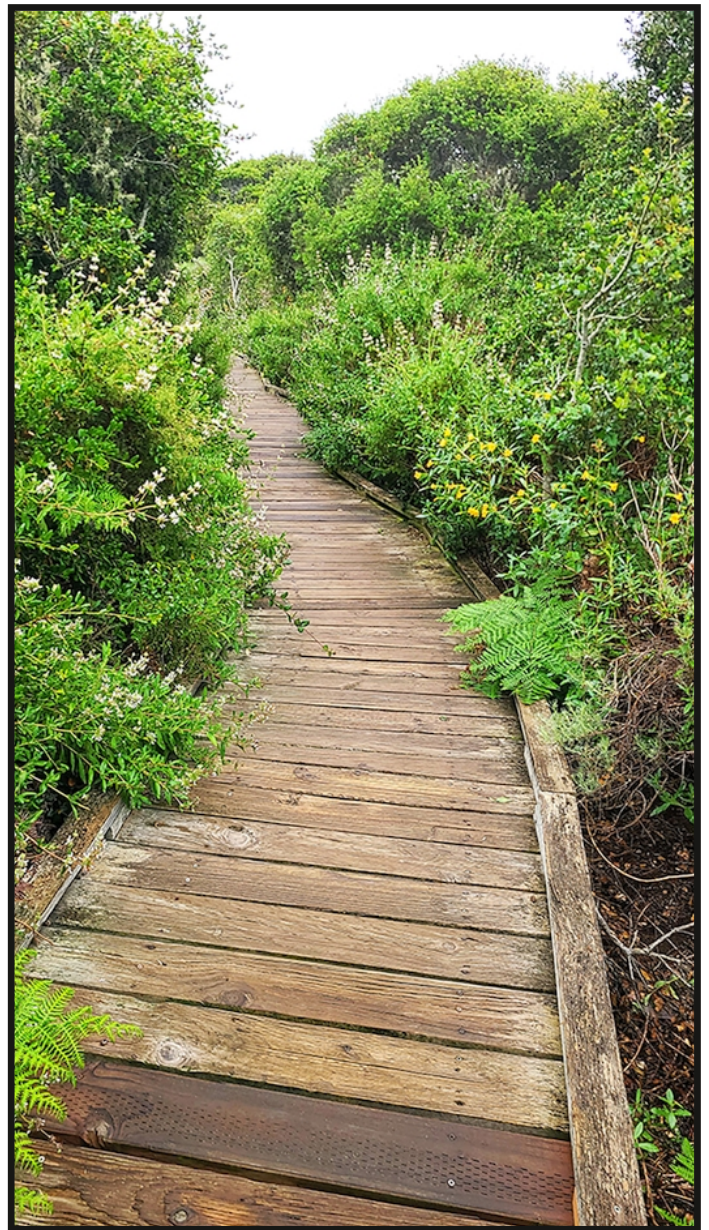
Andrea Davis

Kenneth Stoddard

Paolo Perrone

*\*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.*



*The Boardwalk on a wet day. Photo by Rebecca Rasmussen.*

## 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>

*"When you look up at the sky, you have a feeling of unity which delights you and makes you giddy."*

*—Ferdinand Hodler, Swiss painter*

## **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."



## Call for Volunteers

This work continues to be done by a group of people with diverse talents. We have carpenters, webmasters, public speakers, photographers, fine artists, accountants, teachers, scientists, historians, filmmakers, writers, and more. But we still need help. What talent or skill do you have that could be added to the list? We invite you to join us as we continue the legacy. To volunteer to protect the Elfin Forest please call (805) 528-0392 or email [info@elfin-forest.org](mailto:info@elfin-forest.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](http://www.elfinforestlososos.org)

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

*Address Service Requested*

Weasels in the Elfin Forest - Page 3

Please check renewal date on your label.

*"If I really wanted to pray I'll tell you what I'd do. I'd go out into a great big field all alone or in the deep, deep woods and I'd look up into the sky—up—up—up—into that lovely blue sky that looks as if there was no end to its blueness. And then I'd just feel a prayer."*

*L.M. Montgomery,  
Anne of Green Gables*



### 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