

Edgewood



Explorer

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MOWING FOR BUTTERFLY RESTORATION

By **Stuart Weiss, Ph. D.**

The Bay checkerspot butterfly (*Euphydryas editha bayensis*) population at Edgewood went extinct in 2002, the victim of a "drive-by" extinction. Emissions of ammonia and nitrogen oxides from 100,000+ vehicles on Highway 280 fertilized a substantial area of serpentine grassland and allowed for invasion of Italian ryegrass (*Lolium multiflorum*) onto the nutrient-poor soils.

In May and June 2005, approximately 10 acres of serpentine grassland at Edgewood were mowed and weedwhacked. Based on results of experiments executed in 2001 through 2004, this treatment will reduce the cover of ryegrass, and increase the cover of California plantain (*Plantago erecta*), the primary food plant for the butterfly, and generally increase native species diversity.

The timing of mowing is critical; catching the ryegrass before it fully ripens its seeds greatly reduces grass cover the following year. Mowing also breaks up the thatch and duff layer that have accumulated through time, and disperses ripened seeds of numerous native wildflowers into newly bare areas where they will thrive next year. This year's mowing was funded by a \$10,000 grant from PG&E made available through the San Mateo County Parks Foundation.

Now that the majority of the former Bay checkerspot habitat has been treated, plans are being developed to get permits and reintroduce the butterfly, using larvae and adults from the large populations in Santa Clara County. Rotational mowing will be continued as needed to maintain suitable habitat conditions. ☼

WELCOME TO NEW PARKS DIRECTOR

Marcia Raines, Director of the San Mateo County Environmental Services Agency, has announced that David Holland has been hired as the new Parks and Recreation Director. David succeeds Mary Burns, who left last October, and replaces Jere Kersnar, who has been acting since Mary left. From Marcia's announcement:

David comes to us from the U.S. Forest Service where he worked for over 30 years in natural resources and outdoor recreation management. His collaborative style, strong interpersonal skills and effective work with friends groups, special interest groups and other agencies make this an exciting time for the park system. He is especially knowledgeable about working with natural resources and special interest groups. Several of those asked about David's skills said they can not imagine a park system that would not benefit from his variety of abilities. We are glad to have the opportunity to see him in action.

David will start in his new job on August 1, relocating from Washington, D.C. The Friends of Edgewood welcome David to his new position and look forward to meeting him and to working with him at Edgewood. ☼

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ORIGINAL EDGEWOOD PAINTINGS TO BENEFIT FRIENDS OF EDGEWOOD

Trevlyn Williams, a Friends of Edgewood member and recent docent graduate, is also a talented artist. She has produced a series of watercolors of Edgewood environs that she calls "Edgewood Views." The paintings range from 11x15 to 22x30 and will be exhibited at Gallery House, 320 California Ave, Palo Alto (enter through the Printers Inc. cafe). The exhibit opens June 28th and runs until July 23rd. There will be an opening reception on Friday July 8th from 6 to 9 pm, with wine, food, and live music.

Trevlyn has generously offered to donate 10% of all sales proceeds to the Friends of Edgewood.



About the Artist

Trevlyn grew up on a farm in South Africa where she developed an abiding interest in the environment. She has a science degree and has taught high school biology and marine environmental education. She began painting with watercolors in the late 1980's, producing mainly artwork depicting African cultural artifacts and animals. She left South Africa in 1993 to live in the U.S. and she and her husband ended up buying a house in Emerald Hills, lured by its proximity to Edgewood. After regular visits to Edgewood, she began work on "Edgewood Views" last fall.

She is very happy to be combining her love of the outdoors with painting, and hopes others will recognize and enjoy the scenes in this series. 🌻

PERKS OF TUSSLING WITH ITALIAN THISTLE

By Jan Simpson

My granddaughter Cammy Simpson is a freshman at Carlmont High School in Belmont. This spring she took a biology class and needed 15 hours of environmental volunteering at Edgewood Park. Since she had a conflict with the Saturday Carlmont weeding sessions, I had the pleasure of pulling Italian thistle with her in an area designated to us by Ken Himes. With gloves on, and a weeding tool for each of us, we were ready to begin!

It was March and the soil was moist, and the Italian thistle was petite. A few deer amidst bush lupine watched us, as did four others across the trail and up the hill. The day was delightful, and after three hours our bags were full, and we felt competent! We decided to cross the Edgewood Trail, and there Cammy discovered a gigantic thistle, attacking it with vigor and determination.



Cammy with gigantic Italian thistle plant

During the following weeks, we watched the thistles grow and multiply. Wherever we looked, there was a thistle, many wearing rose-colored blooms, and certainly thornier than the week before. Each week our bags got heavier. The deer were in the area, there one moment and gone the next time we looked up.

There were unexpected perks to this job. Cammy

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WHAT'S NEW AT EDGEWOOD

By Toni Corelli

Since the second edition of the Flowering Plants of Edgewood Natural Preserve came out, there have been some new plant discoveries and other interesting observations at Edgewood. This is the reason for a flora since it represents information at a given time and as Willis Linn Jepson said in the Manual of the Flowering Plants of California (1925), a flora is “never perfect, complete or final.” The docents and others active at Edgewood will continue to discover and contribute information about Edgewood.

Three New Plants to Add to the Flora



Cicendia quadrangularis, timwort in the Gentianaceae - Gentian Family. It was seen by several people along the Edgewood Trail just

Photo by Kathy Korbholz

north of the Serpentine Loop Trail and subsequently identified. The closest nearby location is at Jasper Ridge Biological Preserve (JRBP) where it is found in wet areas along trails. It is described in John Hunter Thomas' Flora of the Santa Cruz Mountains of California, where he says it occurs in “grassy slopes, mainly on the eastern side of the Santa Cruz Mountains.” The area where it was found at Edgewood is a moist area in grassland. The flowers open in full, warm sun and are closed in the early morning. The other member of this family at Edgewood is the June centaury (*Centaureum muehlenbergii*¹), which blooms in late May through July.

Two other new plants were found by Bill and Kathy Korbholz in their “adopt-a-site” weeding area near the Sunset entrance. These plants do not occur along trails so you will not be seeing them when you lead walks, but keep a look out just in case.

Triodanis biflora, small Venus' looking-glass in



Photo by Kathy Korbholz

the Campanulaceae - Bellflower Family. This is also a new family for the Edgewood flora. The closest known occurrences are at JRBP and, per the Natural Resources DataBase (www.nrdp.org), Palo Alto Foothills Park. Thomas' flora says it is “occasional in brush area, chaparral or grassy flats, often overlooked by collectors.” The Jepson Manual says it occurs in “disturbed areas” and the area where it was found is an open, somewhat disturbed area in serpentine chaparral.



Photo by Kathy Korbholz

Polycarpon tetraphyllum, four-leaved allseed in the Caryophyllaceae - Pink Family. This is a non-native plant from Europe.

Thomas' flora says it is “occasional as a weed in clay and sandy soils and in pavement cracks.” The Jepson Manual says it can occur in disturbed areas, roadsides and shaded waste areas. It was found in the same area as small Venus' looking-glass.

Other Observations This Season

The “white poppy” is probably a color variant of the California poppy (*Eschscholzia californica*). Seeds are sold for various colors including orange, deep orange, white, yellow, scarlet and purple. These color variations are either naturally occurring genetic variations or horticultural experiments. This is similar to what is done in the ornamental roses to select new color forms. Since the plants are so close to the urban boundary, they could have come in via seeds purchased and planted in the landscape. Carolyn Strange first observed the plants near the gate at the Sunset entrance.

Craig Cummings noticed three other wildflowers

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¹The current accepted name is *Zeltnera muehlenbergii*.

AMERICAN KESTREL

By Lee Franks



Glenn and Martha Vargas ©
California Academy of Sciences

The American kestrel, *Falco sparverius*, is a colorful jay-sized falcon commonly seen perched on the PG&E power

towers on the west end of the Park, watching for unwary grasshoppers, birds and rodents. When not perched, they can often be seen hovering, the single most strenuous flight maneuver a bird can execute, above potential prey. All falcons are skilled hunters, and they have a unique, tooth-like projection on their hooked bills that can quickly crush the neck of small prey. The American Kestrel's species name, *sparverius*, is Latin for "pertaining to sparrows," an occasional prey item. It was formerly known as the Sparrow Hawk.

Appearance

A small (10.5") falcon easily identified by its bright rusty back and tail, and striking blue-gray wings. Their cheeks are white with two vertical black stripes. They are whitish below with a rusty wash. When seen in flight from below, they show a distinctive row of translucent spots on the trailing edge of their wings. They show the characteristic falcon in-flight silhouette: long, pointed wings, deep wing-beats, and long tail.

Behavior

Primarily a "sit-and-wait" hunter, locating prey visually from exposed hunting perches. Most capture attempts occur within 50m of their perch. Hover-hunting usually occurs when suitable perches are absent. They hover by facing into the wind with wings in the glide posture.

Wing and body posture are adjusted continuously to wind turbulence while the head remains remarkably fixed.

Most prey are captured on the ground, although some individuals become adept at capturing flying insects or small birds. They make direct flight to prey, which is seized with one or both feet. Small prey are consumed on the ground, and larger prey are typically carried back to the hunting perch. They will cache uneaten remains of prey and surplus kills, to be used during periods of unfavorable weather or to meet the needs of a growing brood. Time spent on the ground is typically only a few seconds, but occasionally they will spend several minutes on the ground when faced with difficult prey, e.g. those that hide under matted vegetation.

Despite their size, kestrels successfully defend their territories against larger raptors, such as Red-tailed Hawks and Cooper's Hawks. Also, they are often successful in evicting or out-competing nest competitors such as woodpeckers and squirrels.

Sounds

American Kestrels have a fairly limited repertoire consisting of variations on 3 main vocalizations; **klee** (a rapid series of 3 to 6 notes which carry far), **whine** (may last as long as 1 to 2 minutes, and is used by both sexes during courtship), **chitter** (most frequently used call by both sexes in their interactions). Kestrel chicks are able to give weak, but consistent **peep** calls at 1 day old, to beg for food. This food-begging call increases in intensity as they grow. Nestlings can **whine**, **chitter**, and **klee** at about 2 weeks of age.

Breeding

Males locate and inspect potential nest cavities within their established territories, then escort the female to them. The female makes a selection from those shown to her. Kestrels prefer tree cavities surrounded by large open patches covered with short ground vegetation with adequate hunting perches nearby.

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DOCENT GRADUATES

By John Allen

Each year the Friends of Edgewood puts on a training program to prepare new docents to lead the public on wildflower walks at the preserve during the months of March, April, May and June. Our training this year started in February and consisted of six classroom sessions and six field trips ending in April.

These training sessions were presented by experts on Edgewood Park and Natural Preserve. They were Ken Himes, Paul Heiple, Bob Buell and Toni Corelli. Each of these presenters covered material designed to help the new docents become familiar with the park.

16 people completed the training in 2005 and are already leading walks. They are: Joe Barile, Susan Crocker, Orrin Cross, Ted Cruze, Craig Cummins, Carolyn Dorsch, Lee Gallagher, Fran Naylor, Judy Pugh, Marianne Schonfisch, Michael Tu, Dawn Van Seggen, Trevlyn Williams, Mary Wilson, Michael Yantos and Jan Yelland. The time and considerable effort expended by the class is greatly appreciated. 🌸

(WHAT'S NEW, Continued from page 3)

near the urban boundary along the south Sylvan Trail. These are *Nemophila maculata*, fivespot; *Nemophila menziesii*, baby blue eyes; and *Gilia tricolor*, bird's eye gilia. These too were probably introduced from seeds from wildflower packages. The fivespot and the baby blue eyes had previously been introduced into Edgewood for erosion control on the western and southern flanks below inspiration heights. They were not successful in establishing permanent populations, probably because they were not in

their favored habit or environment.



"Funnycup" photo by Judy Mason

The "mutant buttercup" was found along the Serpentine Loop between the Service Road

and the "view point". We call it "funnycup" at JRBP. This buttercup, which is actually a genetic variant of the California buttercup, *Ranunculus californicus*, was found throughout San Mateo and Santa Clara County this season. The reason it may have been so abundant this year is a result of climatic conditions, especially the rain timing and quantity. This anomaly was first documented in 1889 in the Bay Area and described in Lyman Benson's monograph of *Ranunculus* in North America (*American Midland Naturalist* vol. 40, 1948) and occurs in San Mateo, Santa Clara, Contra Costa, and Alameda Counties. Therefore, it evidently has maintained itself in the Bay Area for well over a century. However, this year it put on quite a show in our area.

Other plants to add to the garden plants section on page 2 of the Edgewood Flora are:

Bellis perennis, English daisy - Day Camp
Diospyros sp., persimmon - Day Camp
Taraxacum officinale, dandelion - Day Camp
Viburnum sp., viburnum - Sylvan Trail.

What a great season, keep your eyes open for new additions and observations and I'll leave you with one of my favorite quotes by Willis Linn Jepson: "There is something lost behind the ranges over yonder. Go you there." 🌸

(AMERICAN KESTREL, Continued from page 4)

No nesting material is brought to the nest cavity. The female simply hollows out a shallow depression in any loose material on the cavity floor. One egg is laid every other day until a clutch of 4 to 5 is achieved. Both sexes incubate the eggs for approximately 30 days. A clutch of 5 eggs takes 2 to 3 days to hatch, each egg taking 48 to 52 hours from pip. The female helps the young out of the shell, which is either trampled into the nest or eaten by the female. Brooding by the female begins immediately at hatching and lasts 8 to 10 days.

Young depart the nest at 28 to 31 days old, but are dependent on their parents for food for about 12 to 14 days after fledging. Flight agility increases noticeably during the first week after

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ADOPT-A-HIGHWAY UPDATE

By Ken Seydel and Bill Korbholz

For our work in March, April, and May, nine, four, and six folks, respectively, volunteered to help us clean our section of I-280 adjacent to Edgewood so that drivers could appreciate spring's beautiful wildflower displays.

For those 3 months, we collected a total of 28 bags of trash. In addition to the usual hubcaps and car parts, we found a wooden bird sculpture and a black bra (don't you love springtime!).

We'd like to thank the following freeway warriors who gave 2 to 3 hours of their time every other month for this worthwhile cause: Pat Bennett, Carolyn Dorsch, Katherine Greene, Billy James, Bill & Kathy Korbholz, Margaret Marshall, Susan Russell, Ken Seydel, Jan Smith, and Michael Yantos.

If you have an interest in joining our great group please contact Ken Seydel. We will see that you are safety trained and equipped with your very own Picker, hard hat, goggles, gloves, and bright orange vest. ☼

(TUSSLING WITH THISTLE, Continued from page 2)
found reddish wee bugs on the small thistle. Weeks later, the bugs were larger, brownish red, and spittle covered the larger thistles. Mystery solved: they were spittle bugs!

One day a good-sized alligator lizard perched on Cammy's weeding tool and let me take a picture, then left us quickly. Another Wednesday, as we walked to our area, we saw a bluebird, heard a meadowlark, and watched a grosbeak. Besides the birds, the flowering grasslands were breathtakingly beautiful! The last week we weeded, we headed toward a barren area where the Italian thistle likes to sprout, but instead, coiled up, wearing black and white striped bands, was a marvelous well-fed adult king snake. What a name for such a strikingly handsome, harmless (to us) snake!

Some of the hikers and runners would see us, and thank us for weeding, which was very nice.



Cammy and Jan

This experience made me appreciate the dedicated weeders who go out twice weekly. This was a great way to enjoy Edgewood with my granddaughter, who each spring, since she was four, has walked the trails of Edgewood with me, searching for fairy lanterns (also known as globe lilies). As we walked down the trail, having completed the required 15 hours, we saw countless fresh pale pink fairy lanterns. Now that was another unexpected bonus!

Cammy's Thoughts on her Experience

This experience was both fun, and helpful to the environment. Being the daughter of an environmental scientist, I for one loved Edgewood Park and would hate to see it taken over by weeds like Italian thistle.

One of the days while we were pulling the thistle, a man asked us what we were doing. My grandma told him, and he actually said thank you to us, which I thought was very nice. That feeling of making other people happy is too hard to describe, but it felt great! ☼

(AMERICAN KESTREL, Continued from page 5)
nest departure. Perch-hunting success occurs 3 to 5 weeks after nest departure.

Reference

The Birds of North America, No 602, 2002; John A. Smallwood and David M. Bird. ☼

**STEPPING UP AND DIGGING DEEP—
THE STORY CONTINUES**

By Peter Ingram

As previously reported, last fall the Friends pledged \$10,000 from accumulated reserves to the Parks Foundation as part of a \$50,000 challenge grant for construction of the Edgewood Interpretive Center.

When we shared this exciting action with the Friends membership at the annual meeting and picnic last October, we also talked about our companion goal of raising and donating at least \$1,000 each year, to help fund the on-going operation of the Center, once it is opened.

While the one-time construction donation was deemed a bold amount for our very small organization, the commitment to contribute annually to the Center's operating budget is actually going to be a bigger challenge, in that we must raise additional monies each year to

meet our goal.

The Executive Committee has been discussing various approaches, and has concluded that a combination of increasing our membership base along with an updated dues schedule is the most likely way we can be successful.

For those of us who have friends and neighbors who may enjoy Edgewood, but have not become members, we need to reach out and bring new families in.

And for those of us who have been faithful members for a number of years, we have never seen a dues increase since the Friends were founded in 1993.

In the coming months, we will finalize our recommendations for 2006 dues, and let you know how your continued membership will be a vital resource for sustaining the new Edgewood Interpretive Center. ♻️

MEMBERSHIP DUES

New or renewing members may clip and complete this section to pay **tax-deductible** annual membership dues. Please send your check payable to **Friends of Edgewood Natural Preserve** to the return address on the back of this panel. Renewing members can determine their membership expiration date by checking the six-digit code to the right of their name on their mailing label. For example, if the code is 06/2006, membership runs through June 2006. Questions, call (866) GO-EDGEWOOD or contact membership-coordinator@friendsofedgewood.org.

Name

Address

City State Zip

Home Telephone Work Telephone

- \$15 Basic Membership (includes newsletter)
- \$25 Family Membership (newsletter)
- \$7 Student/Retired Membership (newsletter)
- \$50 Supporting Membership (newsletter, *Edgewood Checklist of Plants*, boxed set of Edgewood photo greeting cards, and 1-year subscription to BAY NATURE magazine)
- \$100 Benefactor Membership (above premiums plus Toni Corelli's Flowering Plants of Edgewood Natural Preserve)
- \$250 Patron Membership (same premiums as \$100 Benefactor level)
- I am enclosing a gift of _____.
- Please send ___ copies of the *Edgewood Vascular Plant List* (\$2), ___ copies of *Common Native Wildflowers of Edgewood* (\$2), ___ copies of the Apr-Jun 2004 BAY NATURE magazine (\$5), ___ copies of Flowering Plants of Edgewood Natural Preserve (\$25). Includes tax, S&H. All items subject to availability.
- Please do not send any premiums.

I would like to participate in the following:

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Docent program | <input type="checkbox"/> Weed management |
| <input type="checkbox"/> GIS/GPS mapping | <input type="checkbox"/> Schools outreach |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Newsletter/web | <input type="checkbox"/> Habitat restoration |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Public relations | <input type="checkbox"/> Adopt-A-Highway |



UPCOMING EVENTS

- ❑ *Saturdays, June 18, July 16, SPECIAL WEEDING DAYS*. See edgewood.thinkersrus.net.
- ❑ *June 26, BIRD WALK*. Meet Audubon Society docent Lee Franks at 8 am at the Day Camp kiosk. This is the last walk until fall.
- ❑ *June 28 - July 23, EDGEWOOD ART EXHIBIT*. View Trevlyn Williams' watercolors of Edgewood. 10% of sales proceeds will be donated to Friends of Edgewood. See page 2.
- ❑ *Monthly, ADOPT-A-HIGHWAY*. The next sessions are scheduled for 6/26, 8/6, and 8/28/05. Contact Ken Seydel to volunteer or for more information.

TOUR DE PENINSULA

“Have the Big Fun” is the motto of this year’s 12th annual Tour de Peninsula, scheduled for the morning of August 7th. The largest fun bike ride in Northern California, the Tour is staged in the scenic hills of the San Francisco Peninsula. The 33-mile ride (with 2 official shortcuts) begins and ends at Sequoia High School in Redwood City and traverses a course that includes exclusive use of Sawyer Camp Trail, which cuts through the stunning Crystal Springs Reservoir watershed.

The Tour benefits the San Mateo County Parks & Recreation Foundation. To register as a rider or to volunteer to help with the event, please visit the Foundation’s website at www.supportparks.org. ♻️

The Edgewood Explorer is published quarterly by the Friends of Edgewood Natural Preserve, a nonprofit organization dedicated to preserving Edgewood for the human, plant, and animal generations to come. The newsletter is produced by Bill Korbholz with assistance from Laverne Rabinowitz and contributions from many Friends. For more information about the Friends of Edgewood, visit our web site at www.friendsofthewood.org, mail us at PO Box 3422, Redwood City, CA 94064-3422, call or fax toll-free at (866) G O-EDGEWOOD (866-463-3439), or email info01@friendsofthewood.org.

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