



Edgewood Explorer

PRESERVE • EDUCATE • RESTORE

September 2015

Volume 22 Number 3

Edgewood's Oreo to Board the Skunk Train and Ride Into the Sunset

Best Friend Julia Bott to Retire from the San Mateo County Parks Foundation



San Mateo County Parks Foundation Executive Director, Julia Bott. © 2015 Linda Leong

Yes, the rumors are true. The little stinker is set to retire at the end of November 2015.

Best Friend Julia Bott and proud member of the Edgewood Players is a Southern California transplant. She arrived in the Bay Area in 1987, but immediately prior to her arrival, Julia studied at the School of Environmental Studies and Planning at Sonoma State, with emphasis on water quality and weather sciences, where she sagely chose classes based on the field trips offered.

After volunteering for several years with the Loma Prieta Chapter of the Sierra Club, this self-proclaimed rabble-rouser was hired as their Chapter Director in 1993. During this same time, from the late 1980s to the early 1990s, Julia was actively

(continued on Page 4)

Reader Photos Wanted!

Readers are encouraged to send in their photos of natural things (plants or animals) taken at Edgewood during the three months prior to the next quarterly Edgewood Explorer. Please be sure to include a caption describing who took the photo, what the photo subject is, when the photo was taken, where the photo was taken, etc. As space is available, I would like to publish a few photos periodically. This is NOT a contest. Send submissions to:



photos@friendsofedgeswood.org

Upcoming Third Saturday Docent-Led Nature Hikes - Free! by Todd Reimche

Friends of Edgewood Park and Natural Preserve have exciting nature hikes planned for Fall and Winter 2015/2016. On the third Saturday of each month, a different docent will lead a themed nature hike. All hikes begin at the Bill and Jean Lane Education Center at 10 AM. Everyone is welcome!

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California Turret Spider (*Antrodiaetus riversi*)

By Carolyn J. Strange

Name, Classification, Range and Habitat

Turret spiders are named for the structures they build. These spiders are found only in California, in the Coast Range and Sierra foothills. Within their range, they are limited to moist woodlands, often on north-facing slopes, and near shady streams and thickets.

Their susceptibility to dehydration limits their ability to disperse, so populations become isolated, and diverge over time. Although distant populations may look the same to human eyes, modern molecular biological identification methods indicate that there are at least eight species of turret spiders. They belong to an ancient lineage of spiders, the mygalomorphs, which includes some of the world's largest and longest-lived spiders. Tarantulas and trapdoor spiders are also part of this group, sometimes called "primitive spiders" (as opposed to true or modern spiders). Perhaps the most obvious difference is that mygalomorph fangs swing straight down, instead of towards each other from the sides like pincers. In general mygalomorphs have heavy builds, and don't hang in silk webs; they spend the bulk of their time in burrows.

What to Look for and Notice

Full-grown, turret spiders are only about $\frac{3}{4}$ -inch long, and they generally hide in the ground in daytime. You may never see the spiders, but you can look for their tiny turrets! They're usually camouflaged by bits of plant debris, so the first thing your eyes might pick out are holes in the ground (up to half-inch or so in diameter). Keep looking to notice a collar or tube, made of soil and plant bits, that extends roughly perpendicularly above the soil surface, sometimes by an inch or two. Other creatures, such as tiger beetle larvae, also live in burrows, but their entrances are flush with the soil surface and unadorned. The spider's silk-lined burrow can be up to 8-inch deep. The silk lining is thicker nearer the top, and gradually thins to the bottom. This thicker silk provides support where soil is less compacted, and also helps incorporate debris for building the turret. The spiders build with whatever materials are handy. Where available, tiny twigs and pine needles might radiate outward, spoke-like, from the turret, which increases the spider's ability to sense prey. Turrets also help keep rain out of the burrow. Turrets have also proved flexible and fragile to scientists trying to measure them, so they are best left alone.



Turrets are built with silk and available materials. Outward radiating "spokes" may help the spider sense prey nearby.

Life and Behavior

Turret spiders are homebodies, who rarely leave their burrows, and for most of the year each burrow houses just one of the dark brown spiders—except when young spiderlings remain in their mother's burrow during their first winter. Mating occurs in August or September, and it's the only time adults —males only— leave their burrows. When a male reaches sexual maturity (at 8 or 9 years!), he sets out at night to find a female and mate, or die trying. He dies afterwards, anyway. Females continue to mate yearly, and can reach at least 16 years of age. *(continued on Page 3)*

(Turret Spider...continued from Page 2)

Silk-wrapped egg sacs, attached half way down the burrow, contain 20–70 eggs. Spiderlings hatch in early fall, and usually wait to disperse until spring. They can't go very far, because they're small and dehydrate easily, so they dig in nearby, building their burrows close to their mother's. That's why spider turrets occur in clusters of smaller burrows around a larger burrow of an adult female. It's a family thing.

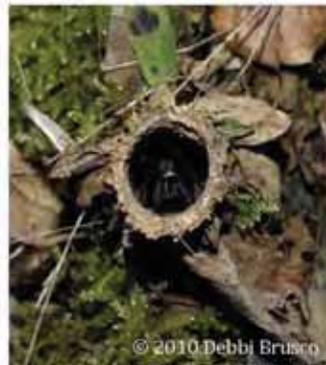
What They Eat and Who Eats Them

Like many of their mygalomorph relatives, turret spiders are ambush predators that lurk in burrows. Turret spiders wait deep in their burrows during the day, and come up for food at night, poised just inside the turret. They capture millipedes, ants, termites, beetles, and other arthropods. They sense prey through vibrations, quickly lunging part-way out of the turret to seize whatever stumbles past. The last pair of legs grips the turret lip, and the first two pairs of legs help the mouthparts grab and position the prey for piercing with the fangs. Once injected with venom, the meal is pulled down into the burrow. If prey gets away, turret spiders don't give chase. One researcher who wanted to study



turret spiders more closely in the lab tried to entice them from their burrows with tethered prey. It didn't work, and he had to dig out the spiders.

Any creature that would eat a spider that size is a potential turret spider predator, but the protective burrow makes it a harder meal to find. As is often the case, the dispersing young are most vulnerable. The burrow provides little protection from a parasitoid fly that uses turret spiders as a host.



Poised just inside its burrow, the ambush predator awaits passing prey.

Roles in Ecosystem

These tiny predators help control populations of other arthropods, and no doubt end up feeding some of them too. Although the spiders are seldom seen, the homes they build delight nature-loving humans.

Link to sweetclipart.com



Science writer Carolyn J. Strange has written hundreds of articles. She became an Edgewood neighbor in 1998, a docent in 2003, and has served the Friends of Edgewood in various ways ever since.

This article was sparked by the vision and generosity of Norma Jean Bodey, Friends of Edgewood Docent Class of 1996.

COUNTY OF SAN MATEO
PARKS DEPARTMENT

Marlene Finley
Director, San Mateo County Parks
mfinley@smcgov.org
650-363-4020 T
650-599-1721 F

455 County Center, 4th Floor
Redwood City, CA 94063-1646
www.SMCofParks.org

NEWS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

PG&E Pipeline Testing in Edgewood County Park Now To Mid-November

Date: August 26, 2015

Redwood City, Calif. – The Pacific Gas and Electric Company (PG&E) has begun hydrostatic pressure testing on the pipeline located in Edgewood County Park & Natural Preserve. Work will take place in three locations along the Sunset, Edgewood and Serpentine trails and at the Clarkia trail junction. The Park's Sunset Trailhead will serve as the access point for project crew and equipment. Pipeline testing is expected to be completed in mid-November. Trails will be open during the project. However, periodic trail closures will occur when equipment, including PG&E and contractor trucks, must be moved. Signs will be posted on trails when this occurs.

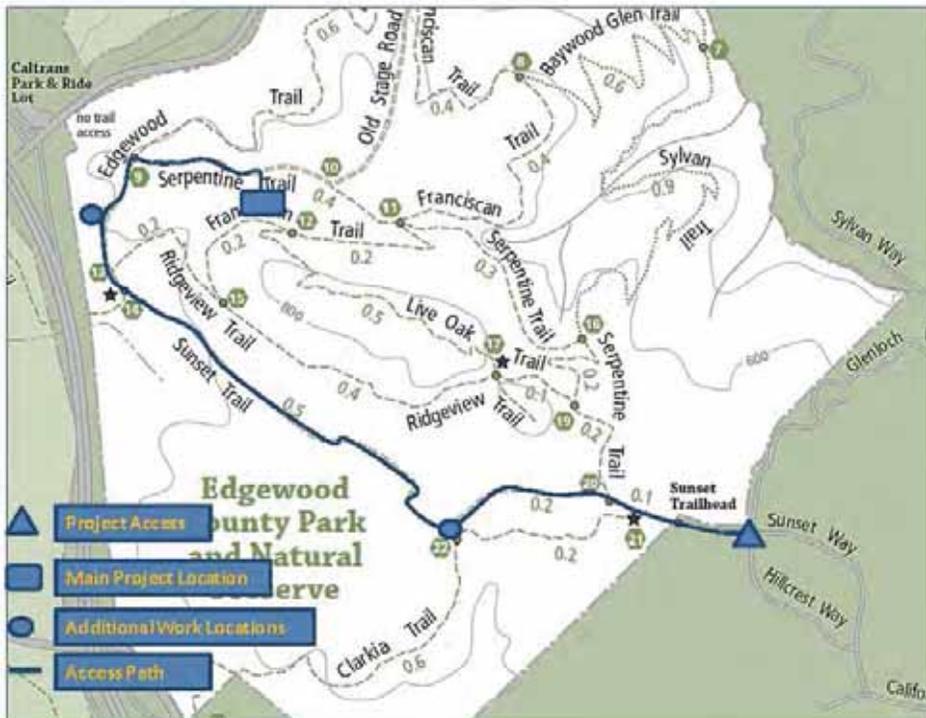
San Mateo County Parks' natural resources manager, park rangers and representatives of the Friends of Edgewood Natural Preserve have worked with PG&E to ensure that work is in accordance with environmental regulations to protect the Preserve's sensitive habitats.

Questions about the project can be directed to Francisco Ybarra, PG&E Project Manager, at (650) 598-7449 or San Mateo County Parks at (650) 363-4020.

Edgewood County Park and Natural Preserve is located at 10 Old Stage Coach Road at Edgewood Road in Redwood City. The 467-acre park is known for spring wildflower displays, native plant communities and rare species.

For more information, contact:
Marlene Finley,
Parks Director
(650) 599-1394 or MFinley@smcgov.org

-End-



(Julia Retires...continued from Page 1)

engaged in efforts to defeat a planned golf course at the site of our preserve, working with Carolyn Curtis and the Save Edgewood Park Coalition (made up of more than 40 organizations) in the area of media relations. When Edgewood was declared a preserve, the Friends of Edgewood was formed, and Julia continues to support us today. In 2005, she was honored with a Jefferson Award* "recognizing her many years of dedication and hard work on behalf of the environment and parks."

Another dedicated group lobbied the San Mateo Board of Supervisors to establish the San Mateo County Parks Foundation (Foundation), and Julia became its first Executive Director in 1998. The Foundation was initially charged to address a list of six major projects to start, the most ambitious project being establishment of a visitor center at Edgewood, for an estimated amount of \$500,000. More than ten years and \$2.5 million later, the Bill and Jean Lane Education Center (EC) finally became a reality. As "project mom", Julia oversaw the design and construction of the EC, which was awarded the [2012 Sustainable San Mateo County Green Building Honors Award for a public project](#). The final project included a restoration project disguised as a parking lot (i.e., mitigation of steep slope and encroachment at the creek); addition of 6 to 8 ft of riparian buffer; and a new bridge which provides a safe place to congregate after exiting cars or a bus.

As the Executive Director of the Foundation, Julia has worked tirelessly to continuously fundraise

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 Our Lady of
 Mount Carmel School

The essays below were written by fifth graders from a local school after a field trip led by Edgewood Junior Explorer docents (Martha Vercootere, Leah Moffat, Kate Connors, Carol Hankermeyer and Barb Erny) in April 2015. As you can see from glancing through a handful of the short essays, these adolescents really learned to appreciate the diversity of our local flora and fauna during their visit to Edgewood Park and Natural Preserve.

Teacher Kelly O'Connor, who is also a host in the Bill and Jean Lane Education Center, organized the visit. She says, "Our Lady of Mount Carmel School is a TK-8 academically challenging Catholic elementary school serving a diverse community in Redwood City. The school's mission is to develop students with creative minds, a sense of purpose, compassion for others and the courage to act on their beliefs. Students are challenged to grow spiritually, emotionally, intellectually and physically."

To see more of the essays in print, visit the Bill and Jean Lane Education Center when the Center is open.

Edgewood Park Field Trip

by Colin

Our field trip to Edgewood Park was really fun and I learned a lot. The lantern flower was a cool flower because it had spikes inside. While looking at one of the lantern flowers up close it had a bee inside trapped inside! We learned about gall's from an oak tree that had baby wasps still inside. We also saw a gall that was eaten through and the wasps were gone. We learned about red poison oak and saw some that was out in the middle of a open field. We saw a big piece of rusted metal and then a little bit after I saw tons of rusted metal cans both metal items were pretty old. My favorite part of the hike was just being out in nature and hearing all the bird sounds. I recommend that people should go to Edgewood Park, it is beautiful.

Edgewood Park

In April on the 23 5th grade went on a fieldtrip to Edgewood Country Park. We got to see some animals like a woodrat. We saw the woodrats homes, we got to learn about the woodrats. We also saw a garden snake or thats what we think it is. We saw a bunch of lizards and one camelian. We got to see some cool flowers, trees, and leaves of plants. Most of the flowers we saw were really tiny and little like the scarlet flower. One of my favorites were the buckeye tree because it is the state tree in Ohio. The big flowers on it looked pretty and they smelled good. There was a sticky monkey flower too. I really liked it there because it is amazing and very beautiful.

Edgewood County Park

by Sky

On Wednesday we went to Edgewood County Park. We saw many interesting plants and animals. One of animal the animals was the Banana Slug it is yellow, slow, and sticky we saw two banana slugs and one looked like a baby. Another thing we saw was the Cowboy Cologne Plant, the reason it is called that is because the myth is that the cowboys in California rubbed it on themselves before they went to see a girl because it smells good. The last thing we saw was lots of Wood Rat houses the Wood Rats are rats that live in a teepee like structure, "they are very big rats". My favorite part was when we got to touch the Cowboy Cologne, "it smells very good", "I loved Edgewood Park".

Aidan



Edgewood Park Field Trip

By Nate

Yesterday, my class and I went to Edgewood Park for a field trip. We saw many interesting plants, animals, and structures. There were lots of flowers such as Blue-eyed Grasses, Franciscan Onions, and Sticky Monkey Flowers. Because the Blue-eyed Grass is not blue and not a grass, the Blue-eyed Grass is an unusual name for this flower. It is actually a purple iris. We also got to see four lizards. Once it noticed us it ran away pretty fast for such a little creature. There was also the Dusky-footed Wood Rat, but we didn't get to see one. My group counted one hundred nine rat houses, though. The houses are water-tight. Even though the plants and animals were interesting, my favorite parts were the Dusky-footed Wood Rat housing. They were huge! Sometimes there are three to seven houses in one area. As you can see, Edgewood Park is a great place to take a hike.

Edgewood Park

By Gull

My class went on a field trip to Edgewood County Park. We hiked, looked at wildflowers, found animal tracks, and more! My group's docent's name was Carol. She was very informative. We found two Banana Slugs. One was bigger, and one was smaller. We saw animal scat. I'm not sure what animal it was from, though. My group also found twenty Woodrat nests. The nests look like dams that beavers make, but on land. The nests are made of wood pieces and sticks. The nests have a nursery, eating area, and even a bathroom! The bathroom is at the entrance because the Woodrats don't like too have a messy house. These animals are very smart. They put Bay leaves in their homes to keep bugs away because bug don't like the scent. Woodrats are the size of rats, but they look like mice. I enjoyed learning a lot at Edgewood Park.

My favorite part was looking at all the flowers. Each student in my group had to find a certain flower. I had to find the Yarrow. It was white with little flowers bundled up. It was also called the Achilles Flower because Achilles would use it to heal wounds. Edgewood Park was super exciting and I can't wait to go back!



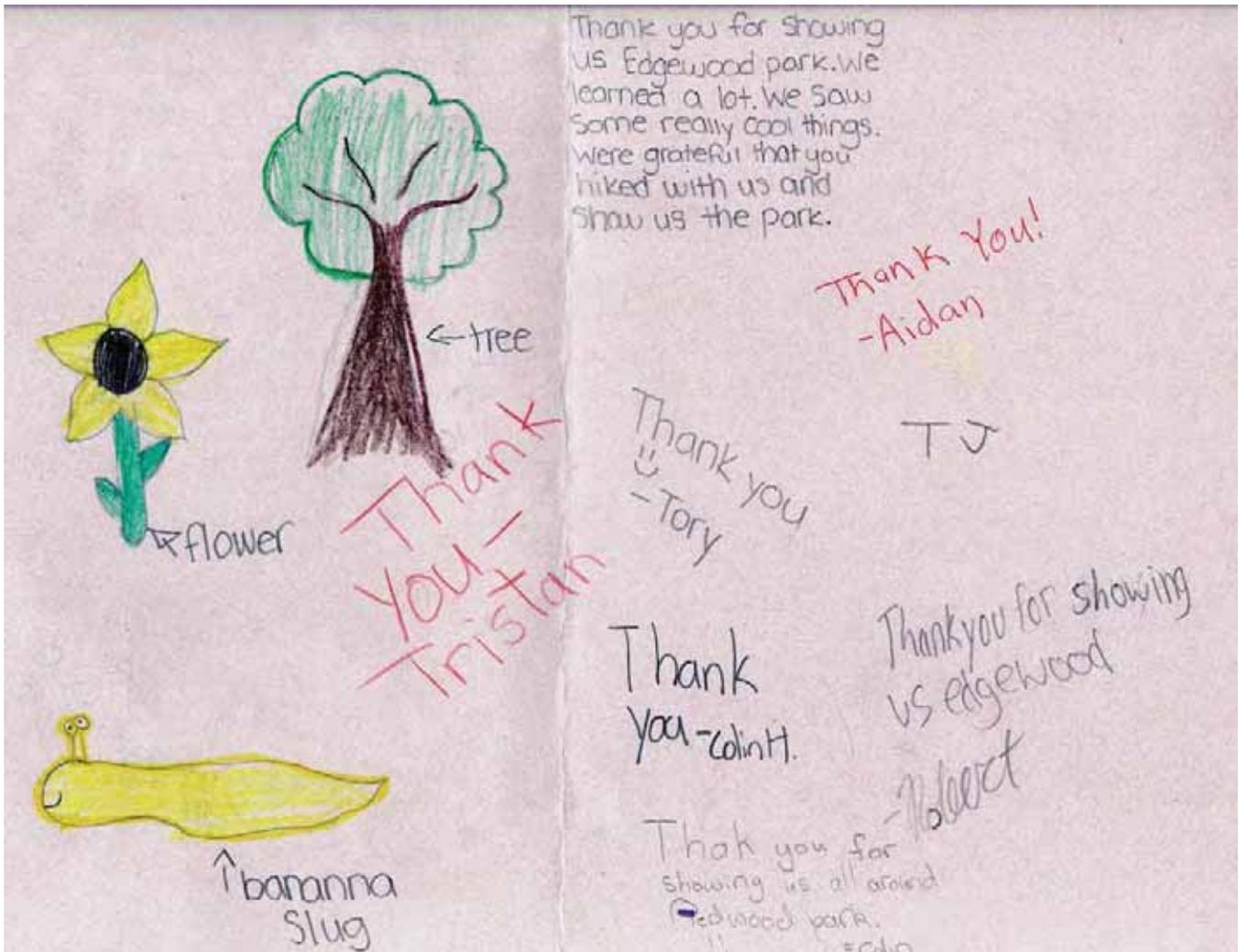
Yarrow Flower



Woodrat Nest



Banana Slug



Thank you card from Our Lady of Mount Carmel 5th Graders, April 2015

You're Going to Gobble This Up!

by Paul Heiple



Turkeys in Edgewood © 2015 James Dudley

The turkeys (*Meleagris gallopavo*) have arrived in Edgewood. This is no surprise to most people since they are large birds that often gather in open areas and have been seen by most frequent visitors. But what does it mean for Edgewood, and what can we expect?

The first item that everyone wants to know: is it a native bird? The birds we are seeing are not native to California. They were successfully introduced for hunters by the California Department of Fish and Game (Fish and Game; now, Fish and Wildlife) over a long period of time and with great effort. The first introduction was on Santa Cruz Island in 1877 by private ranchers (just what the island vegetation needed after goat introductions!). Fish and Game started releasing turkeys in 1908, in the San Bernardino Mountains. Releases of captive-raised stock occurred from then until 1951. About 4600 birds were released during this period with no known success. In 1959, the program started again, but this time wild-caught birds from the Rio Grande area of

(continued on Page 7)

(Turkeys...continued from Page 6)

Texas were released. From 1959 to 1988, 2924 birds were released. Releases continued from 1989 to 1999 with species that could establish themselves at higher elevations. A 2004 report stated an estimated total of 242,000 turkeys spread over 29,168 square miles of California.

In the past, California did have a species of turkey, *Meleagris californica*. This animal's fossils are found in southern California, and most of them come from the tar pits at Rancho La Brea. The birds went extinct 11,000 years ago, about the same time that all the large mammals went extinct. The reason is not known, probably because humans were the cause and our species does not like to admit that we do such things. The California turkey was most closely related to *M. gallopavo*, compared to any other species, so the Fish and Wildlife releases are of this most closely related turkey. We will never know what different behaviors the extinct species had nor how it fit into the ecosystem, which was very different from the ecosystem we have now. We therefore cannot say whether the introduced birds will be a perfect fit to replace the extinct bird.

The reproduction biology of turkeys starts with the breeding season in the spring, when males compete for females by strutting and gobbling. The females then disperse to dig shallow nests on the ground and lay 4 to 17 eggs. The eggs hatch 25 to 31 days later. The chicks spend one day in the nest and then feed themselves under the protection of the mother. The females may bring their broods together to form larger flocks. The males do not participate in raising the chicks.

Predation comes from many species. Snakes, raccoons, skunks, foxes, and a number of other predators eat the eggs. Chicks are the targets of coyotes, bobcats, foxes, and owls. The adults are so large (females about 9 pounds, males about 16 pounds) that few predators can tackle them. Also, they can fly quite fast, and at night they roost in trees.

Turkeys are opportunistic omnivores, eating mainly nuts, fruit, and seeds. Acorns are high on the list of favored foods. They eat insects also, but the percentage of insects eaten declines with maturity. Turkeys occasionally eat vertebrates. They will also eat plants and tubers; bulbs were not mentioned in the literature I read. An encouraging study in San Luis Obispo County found that the staple food was slender wild oats (*Avena barbata*) and brome (*Bromus*) species. I wonder if wild oats (*A. fatua*) is also on the menu; the turkeys could be helping the weeding effort.

Why did the turkeys show up in Edgewood this year, the same year they showed up at Jasper Ridge? It might have to do with the drought and the fact that turkeys need to drink up to twice a day. I do not know which spring they were using at Edgewood, but they must have had access to some surface water. Perhaps the water supplies they had been using before dried up, forcing them to look for new habitat. Will they remain in Edgewood? The answer to that question is not known at this time. Under article 4.1.3 of the [Strategic Plan for Wild Turkey Management of Nov. 2004](#), Fish and Wildlife will work with a park's management objectives to control or remove when the turkeys conflict with the park's objectives. Since Edgewood is a natural preserve whose primary management objective is to protect, preserve, and restore Edgewood's natural resources, this is a possible avenue to take if the turkeys become a problem. 📧



Turkeys in Edgewood © 2015 James Dudley

(Walks...continued from Page 1)

Sep 19: "What's So Special About Oaks? Everything and Nothing" Docent Roger Humphrey will share stories of the Oak.

Oct 17: TBD

Nov 21: "Creature Features" with docent Kathryn Strachota. Have you ever wondered... What do dusky-footed woodrats look like? What are their stick houses like inside? How many live in one house? What do they eat? Who wants to eat them? How do they find mates and raise pups? Why are they called "packrats"? Come ask lots of questions to learn about this keystone species. Children especially welcome. You'll walk a 2.5-mile loop on the Sylvan, Serpentine, Franciscan and Baywood Glen Trails at a moderate pace.



FoE President, Bill Korbholz, proudly displays his new volunteer name badge and jacket. © 2015 Kathy Korbholz

Edgewood Volunteers Have Style!

by Kathy Korbholz

As many have surely noticed by now, we updated our name badges with the new FoE logo just in time for the launch of the 2015 Wildflower Walk season. The Friends of Edgewood provided each volunteer with one magnetic backed (vs. pin backed) badge. Any volunteer wishing to purchase a new, or to have an additional, badge should indicate interest by sending an appropriately informative email to info@friendsofedgewood.org. You will be contacted to verify interest and to submit payment to purchase your badge(s) when we are ready to place another order. Approximate cost is \$10.00 per badge.

Also, at the end of 2014, the Friends of Edgewood applied for and received a generous volunteer grant from the San Mateo County Parks Department which enabled us to offer light-weight, water-resistant jackets to FoE volunteers at a marked-down price. The jackets are perfect for layering



over your T-shirt on cool spring mornings or to stuff in your fanny pack in case of sprinkles. The black jacket has the Friends of Edgewood logo, the word “volunteer” on the left chest, and the San Mateo County Parks logo on the right shoulder.

These jackets normally sell for between \$18 and \$26 depending on how many are purchased at one time. With help from the grant and the Friends of Edgewood, we’re able to offer them at a substantial savings...for just \$10.00! Volunteers who joined Edgewood after January 2015 or who did not order a jacket at that time, can still purchase one (depending on stock availability) at the Bill and Jean Lane Education Center. The jackets seem to run a little small; you may want a larger size so it will be sure to fit over other garments. Purchase yours today! **(sorry, this offer is limited to volunteers only; NOT for the general public)**



(Julia Retires...continued from Page 4)

for maintenance of our serpentine habitat and funding in support of Creekside Science for monitoring and butterfly reintroduction efforts. One of her favorite things to do is to hang out in the EC and interact with patrons; hear what they like; and see their enjoyment of our preserve. "People love Edgewood and are engaged."

When asked what's in store for her retirement, Julia says that she plans to take one year off to do whatever...she may show up to volunteer somewhere for 3 hrs, but she will not be in charge of anything! She hopes to reconnect with her garden, travel, read, and hike.

When asked what's in store for the Foundation, Julia said, "The next stage of the Foundation is going to be great!"

*The **Jefferson Awards Foundation** was created in 1972 by the American Institute for Public Service. The Jefferson Awards are given at both national and

local levels. Local winners are ordinary people who do extraordinary things without expectation of recognition.

Editor's Note: The Friends of Edgewood expresses its deepest appreciation for all of Julia's efforts in support of Edgewood Natural Preserve. We wish her all the best in her retirement and look forward to her future performances with the Edgewood Players.



Photo: Julia Bott debuts as Oreo the Skunk

Yes, I'd like to become a Friend of Edgewood!

Here's my membership donation to support preservation, education, and restoration:

Join or renew online at FriendsofEdgewood.org

- \$25 Friend
- \$50 Advocate *
- \$100 Steward *
- Other: \$ _____

* Donors of \$50 or more receive a set of six Edgewood greeting cards; donors of \$100 or more also receive a one-year subscription to *Bay Nature Magazine*.

Name _____

Address _____

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I'd like to get the newsletter by email mail.

- Please keep my thank-you gifts.
- Please keep my donation anonymous.

Make checks payable to **Friends of Edgewood**, and mail to:

Friends of Edgewood
PO Box 3422
Redwood City, CA 94064-3422

For volunteer opportunities, visit www.FriendsofEdgewood.org/Get-Involved



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Calling
 all Friends to the
 ANNUAL MEETING
 Sunday, Oct. 18, 2015; 11:30 AM
 Details will be mailed soon!
 Food - Fun - Festivities
 FREE!!!

Mission Statement of The Friends of Edgewood — To protect and celebrate Edgewood as a unique treasure by promoting exemplary stewardship, and by reaching out with informative public programs. www.friendsofedgeswood.org

PRESERVE • EDUCATE • RESTORE

**Bill and Jean Lane
 Education Center -
 Autumn Hours and By
 Appointment***

Wed	9:30 am to 12:30 pm
Sat	9:30 am to 4 pm
Sun	9:30 am to 4 pm

*Subject to volunteer staffing.

**2015
 Board of
 Directors**

Laurie Alexander
 Bill Korbholz
 Kathy Korbholz
 Linda Leong
 John Morse
 Todd Reimche
 Mickey Salgo
 Howie Smith
 Jack Stovel
 Mary Wilson



UPCOMING EVENTS

Annual Meeting (10/18) 

Bird Walks
 9/13, 11/8 

Third Sat Nature Walks
 9/19, 10/17, 11/21, 12/19
 10 AM (BILEC)

Adopt-A-Highway
 Next Sessions: 9/13, 10/3, 11/1, 12/5
 To volunteer or get more information, contact
 Dave Hershey at [adoptahighway-
 coordinator@friendsofedgeswood.org](mailto:adoptahighway-coordinator@friendsofedgeswood.org)

For more, see
<http://www.friendsofedgeswood.org/events>

The Edgewood Explorer is published quarterly by the Friends of Edgewood Natural Preserve, a nonprofit organization dedicated to preserving and restoring Edgewood and to educating the public about its treasures. The newsletter is edited by Linda Leong and is supported by contributions from many Friends. For more information about the Friends of Edgewood, visit our website at www.friendsofedgeswood.org, mail us at PO Box 3422, Redwood City, CA 94064-3422, leave a message or fax us toll-free at (1-866) GO-EDGEWOOD (1-866-463-3439), or email us at info@friendsofedgeswood.org.