

# Edgewood Explorer



September 2012

Volume 19 Number 3

## Let's Go Digital!

### Communications Changes Are Coming

By Bill Korbholz, Board President



Friends of Edgewood could not exist without our valued members and donors, and we want to improve the way that we communicate with all of you. Starting in 2013, we intend to begin distributing our newsletter and other occasional pieces of information via email as well as US postal mail. We hope that email distribution will make our newsletter more accessible and readable. Of course, those who prefer to receive the hardcopy version will still be able to do so. (The newsletter is archived on our website [www.friendsofedgeswood.org](http://www.friendsofedgeswood.org).)

We have email addresses from many of you who have already provided them, but in some cases, the addresses we have on file may be incorrect or incomplete. If you would like to confirm or change your email address with us, please send a message

with the subject "Go Digital" to [membership-coordinator@friendsofedgeswood.org](mailto:membership-coordinator@friendsofedgeswood.org). (If you prefer NOT to receive any email from us, use the subject "Unsubscribe" for your email.) If you send us a confirmation or update by September 15, you'll have a good chance of receiving our first email message to our members - an invitation to our annual general meeting and picnic - set for October 7. **As always, we will never share your personal or contact information with any other organization.**

Also starting in 2013, we intend to recognize our donors by listing their names and dues/donation amounts (by category) in our newsletter from time to time. If you want us to omit your name, email [membership-coordinator@friendsofedgeswood.org](mailto:membership-coordinator@friendsofedgeswood.org) with the subject "Anonymous," or leave a message at 1-866-GO-EDGEWOOD (1-866-463-3439).

Thank you for supporting the Friends of Edgewood and Edgewood Natural Preserve!



## Education Center Visitors



Time Period	Adults	Children	TOTAL
Apr '11 - Mar '12 (Inaugural Year)	7474	2363	9837
Apr '12 - Jul '12	2878	923	3801

## General Meeting and Picnic – Save the Date!

The Friends of Edgewood annual general meeting and picnic is set for Sunday, **October 7**. We'll have updates for you on Edgewood, the Ed Center, and more. Come and see who will receive the coveted Best Friend award for 2012. And who can resist that great sandwich bar generously supplied by Arguello Catering? Mark your calendar, and watch your mail in the coming weeks for the official notice.

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## Junior Explorers Program 2012

by *Kate Connors,*  
*Program Coordinator*

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The past school year was another busy one for the Junior Explorers, in spite of March rains that made scheduling a challenge. Our energetic docents hosted over 500 students and scouts from summer 2011 to summer 2012. We're pleased to have had many repeat customers among the local teachers, and to have welcomed some new groups, too.

One of these new groups was the Seasons Playhouse preschool, whose plan was to take 4 hikes at different times of the year, focusing on seasonal changes in nature. (What a great idea!) Carol Hankermeyer took this group under her wing, and writes: "Fruits and seeds were the theme for 9/30, with much attention also paid to many different spider webs, as the spiders trapped and consumed energy from insects to lay overwintering eggs. The children took home acorns and buckeyes I supplied to try planting at school. There being no rain yet by 11/4, it was hard to show the changes water brings to the earth. Edgewood looked much the same as on the children's previous visit. We noted the empty junco nest as a seasonal change without mentioning that the nestlings were probably eaten rather than fledging! Otherwise we focused on trees and poison oak changing color and losing leaves, and each child went home with a beautiful leaf rub from fallen leaves. I'm eagerly awaiting the spring episode of Seasons Playhouse."



We learn some very interesting things from the kids as we walk along. Judy Pugh shares: "When we were finishing our hike with the 4th grade girl scouts,

the two girls behind me had an amazing conversation. The first girl said, 'Now that we are older we should not say, Let's have a play date. We are too old for that. We should say, Let's hang out.' Her friend said, 'Can't we say, Let's play together?' The other returned, 'Let's hang out would be better.' I loved that exchange."

For me, one of the pleasures of hiking with young people is that their sharp eyes spot things I would never see. The highlight of one late spring trip was a pair of alligator lizards that I completely missed as I led the group right on by. One wriggled toward the trail on its stumpy legs, and cries of "Snake? Yes! No! Lizard!" rang out. An unexpectedly exciting wildlife encounter!



Thanks to Carol, Judy, and all the docents who participated last year: Laurie Alexander, Nancy Baum, Amity Binkert, Harry Cornbleet, Fran Cummings, Kathy Dollard, Barbara Erny, Roger Humphrey, Anna Lee, Pat Oren, Jim Rea, Heidi Schell, Peggy Smullin, Jack Stovel, Robert Strode, Majida Thalji, and Martha Vercoutere.



Photo: Kathy Dollard educates 4th graders from White Oaks School while Anna Lee looks on.

© 2012 Laurie Alexander

We were so pleasantly surprised by the enthusiasm of new 2012 docents! It's great to have the people-power to keep offering our unique free program to everyone who can benefit from it.

And here comes the new school year. . . 📖

## Bluebird Summer Is A Big Success!

by Frances Morse and Laurie Alexander



"Western Bluebird" by Trevlyn Williams,  
Watercolor © 2011 [www.trevlynwilliams.com](http://www.trevlynwilliams.com)

If you were around Edgewood between May and August, you may have noticed kids hugging Redwood Trees, families asking how they could put a bluebird nesting box in their back yard, kids and parents doing arts and crafts in the picnic area, and children giggling about animal poop. These sights and sounds were made possible by the creative vision and leadership of Laurie Alexander, Frances Morse, Cynthia Lockhart and their spirited corps of volunteers from FOE, Sequoia Audubon Society, and Santa Clara Audubon Society.

Six "Bluebird Summer" events attracted over 122 adults and 68 children. A Bluebird Discovery Workshop in June educated 32 FoE members and Bluebird Summer Volunteers with Bluebird 101, featuring a slideshow and presentation by Audubon Society's Susan Kritzik and hands-on investigations of nests and feathers with Cynthia Lockhart. Branching into a new world targeting younger kids (ages 3 to 7), FoE hosted three Bluebird Celebration playdates, the first playdate held in May as a pilot workshop with the Burlingame Mothers Club, helpfully arranged by Heidi Schell. A total of thirty-four families (39 adults and 45 kids) attended our three playdates. They went on a nature walk,



bluebird monitor who showed them a real nest, saw a puppet skit about the comeback of the Western Bluebird at Edgewood, listened to the adventures of a bluebird who grows up in a nest box, and then made their own bluebird family stick puppets to take home. For the slightly older public, we held Bluebird Discovery Day in the Bill and Jean Lane Education Center in late July where 40 adults and 20 kids participated in five hands-on stations (feathers, nests, computer, kids activities, and habitat), as well as listened to talks by Audubon Society members about setting up bluebird boxes and using online resources about birds. Participants watched recently hatched Western Bluebird babies and their mom on a live video cam and took home a free photo of bluebirds at Edgewood. Finally, 15 people (12 adults, and 3 kids) came for our last event - a bird walk in August.



Bluebird Ladies: H. Schell, L. Alexander, M. Vercoutere, and F. Morse © 2012 Thanh Mougeot

Bluebird Summer was our first major effort to use the Education Center and FOE volunteers for public programs outside of wildflower season, paving the way for more year-round activities. Many benefits came from this initial effort. First, we developed partner relationships with other like-minded organizations (Sequoia Audubon Society and Santa Clara Audubon Society). Second, we attracted many new visitors to Edgewood (e.g., most of the participants in our Bluebird Celebration playdates were first-time visitors to Edgewood). Third, we increased awareness of the comeback of the Western Bluebird at Edgewood and how that comeback benefitted from our habitat restoration programs (nest boxes, Weed Warriors, Ranger mowing, and Checkerspot/Serpentine efforts). Finally, we provided opportunities to get young children into nature and to show them and their caretakers that they can make a difference in the natural world.

(continued on p. 4)



*(continued from p. 3)*

Krista Wright, a mother from La Honda who attended a Bluebird Playdate with her 2 children on June 21, captured the success of Bluebird Summer. On her evaluation form, she wrote, "Loved it all. It was age appropriate, perfectly paced, wonderful story, craft, walk. Thank you so much for sharing your knowledge and time."



© 2011 Michael Yessik

Thanks again to Laurie, Frances, and Cynthia and our dedicated volunteers. If you'd like to extend Bluebird Summer, please stop by the Education Center and purchase one of our beautiful bluebird mugs or magnets. They make great gifts and memories.

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© 2012 Frances Morse

Photos: Bluebird Summer Celebration Activities

### Edgewood Park Habitat Restoration

a collaboration between:

- ✓ San Mateo County Parks & Recreation
- ✓ Friends of Edgewood Natural Preserve
- ✓ The California Native Plant Society

**YOU** can help keep Edgewood Park beautiful **AND:**

- ☼ See rare & interesting plants up close at our work sites
- ☼ Learn all about plants & ecology from local experts
- ☼ Meet other volunteers with similar interests
- ☼ Enjoy fresh air & exercise in a **BEAUTIFUL** setting!



### Snakes Alive!

Be alert - rattlesnake sightings are up again this year. Review Roger Meyer's article in the Dec. 2011 Explorer before you hit the trails.



Photo: Young rattler in Edgewood Preserve.  
© 2011 Jan Casazza



© 2012 Frances Morse

One of [the Red Shouldered Hawk fledglings] graced the trees in the Picnic Area Saturday morning [July 14] while several of us were setting up for the last Bluebird Celebration Playdate. It took our breaths away. [The fledgling] sang, swooped to the ground at one point, flew to a different tree, and seemed totally unafraid of us. We just stopped and watched - too awestruck to worry about getting set up in time! This is what makes Edgewood special. ~ Frances Morse

Wildlife is something which man cannot construct. Once it is gone, it is gone forever. Man can rebuild a pyramid, but he can't rebuild ecology, or a giraffe. ~ Joy Adamson

## Bluebird Summer - Primary Thanks

**Lee Franks** and **Marilyn Travis** have monitored 29 nest boxes at Edgewood every spring for more than ten years. Their work inspired and informed Bluebird Summer.

**Susan Kritzik**, Sequoia Audubon Society, presented "Natural History of Western Bluebirds" at Bluebird Discovery Workshop. Her presentation is available on a PC in the BJLEC.

**Nelle Lyons**, Sequoia Audubon Society, translated her extensive knowledge of Western Bluebirds and nest monitoring into simple terms to fascinate 3 to 7 year olds learning about bluebirds for the first time.

**Cynthia Lockhart**, local Bluebird Monitor, educated Laurie and Frances so they knew what was interesting. Planned and implemented the idea of "Stations" at Discovery Day. Provided nests and feathers for closeup, hands-on, observation. Acted the role of Bluebird Monitor at Bluebird Celebration Playdate.

**Lance** and **Wanda Ginner** sponsored and provided access to their live Western Bluebird Nest Cam from Portola Valley, allowing Ed Center guests to spy on the private lives of nesting bluebirds.

**Mike Azevedo**, Nestbox Coordinator for Santa Clara Valley Audubon Society's Cavity Nester Recovery Program, intrigued visitors with two one-hour presentations, including Q&A, on *How Can You Help Western Bluebirds?* at Bluebird Discovery Day.

**Melissa Hero**, Sequoia Audubon Society, demonstrated and explained *E-bird* and other birding apps at Bluebird Discovery Day.

**Susan Cossins** of Sequoia Audubon Society (SAS), **Susan Peterson** of FoE & SAS, and **Martha O'Neal**, of SAS and Bluebird Coordinator at Filoli, took charge of the Bluebird Walk on August 4, educating hikers about Western Bluebirds and why Edgewood's serpentine grasslands are one of the best places to find Western Bluebirds in San Mateo County.

**Laurie Alexander**, Bill and Jean Lane Education Center Coordinator, provided the vision for Bluebird Summer and implemented that vision with the grace of a bluebird. Designed and scheduled the events, recruited and coordinated volunteers, did the marketing, purchased materials, led nature hikes, acted in skits, and even did program evaluations, all with smiles and appreciation for all who helped her. A true BEST FRIEND of EDGEWOOD.

**Frances Morse**, FoE and Ed Center host, conceived and coordinated Bluebird Celebration. Created

activities (including colorful stick puppets) that brought Western Bluebirds to life for the young kids. Wrote and performed the excellent script for Owl and Bluebird, then adapted it to different situations. Investigated and purchased mugs and provided free bluebird photos.

**Trevlyn Williams**, **Deanna Schiel**, and **Michael Yessik**. Provided lovely Western Bluebird images used to promote Bluebird Summer.

### For Advice:

**Dick Blaine** (California Bluebird Recovery Project), **Toby Goldberg** (Santa Clara Valley Audubon Society), **Jennifer Rycenga** (Sequoia Audubon Society).



Photo: Trina Warren shows a young visitor how to hug a tree. © 2012 Frances Morse

### Other FoE Volunteers

#### Bluebird Celebration and Discovery Day Volunteers

Nancy Baum, Norma Jean Bodey, Julia Bott, Kate Connors, Kat Greene, Leah Hunt, Anna Lee, John Morse, Ruth Norris, Glenn Pendleton, Heidi Schell, Peggy Smullin, Jack Stovel, Kathryn Strachota, Martha Vercoutere, Trina Williams, Mary Wilson

#### Other FoE:

**Mary Wilson** – Loaned and set up microscopes and slides to see feathers closeup.

**Martha Vercoutere**. Developed the magnets, helped design graphics, donated her chickens' feathers!

**Magnet Makers:** Pam Delgado, Leah Hunt, Bill Korbholz, Kathy Korbholz, Linda Leong, Thanh Mougeot, Deanna Schiel

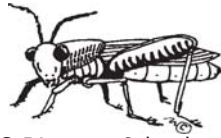
**Julia Bott and Kathy Dollard** – Loaned canopy.



## Nature News Nuggets

### —Soil Legacies—

By Carolyn J. Strange



© DiscoverySchool.com★

Weeds can be a real pain in the soil, sometimes even after they're yanked and gone. Invasive plants don't just crowd out natives; they can also taint the soil, leaving it less hospitable for natives. This lingering legacy then continues to inhibit natives and encourages further invasions.

In greenhouse studies combining several invasive grasses with native Midwestern perennial species, researchers evaluated soil quality. Plants were grown separately for three cycles of growth and soil "conditioning." Then seedlings were planted in the conditioned soils, and their growth was monitored. In general, natives seem to share the soil with other species more easily, but results varied.

Weeds altered soils physically, microbially or both. Prior studies have documented that invasive species modify soil food webs, microbial communities, and the uptake and cycling of nitrogen and other elements. In this study, the researchers found that the presence of root-associated fungi affected the results. With such fungi in the soil, natives tended to ease the growth of invasive plants, while invasives created neutral or negative consequences. (For more on arbuscular mycorrhizal fungi, see the 03/12 *Explorer*, pg 4 <<http://friendsofedgewood.org/wp/wp-content/uploads/2012-03.pdf>>).

Fortunately, some native species didn't suffer in weed-warped soils. Land managers might be able to use such natives as cover crops or "nurse" plants that restore soils so they can once again encourage other natives to put down roots.

Interactions between animals can also negatively impact soil. A different team of researchers has shown that chronic fear in a prey species leaves a negative legacy that suppresses vegetation. Fear changes the chemical composition of grasshoppers' bodies. Carcasses of such scared 'hoppers rot at about the same rate as those of happier 'hoppers, but subsequent decomposition of surrounding dead plant litter slows down, and soil fertility decreases.

In a model system for studying predator-prey interactions, redlegged grasshoppers — medium-sized

crop generalists that range over most of North America— were raised in cages with or without nursery web spiders. These spiders are active hunters. They use their silk to create nurseries for their young, not to build traps that passively capture prey. Unfortunately for the experimental spiders, their mouthparts were glued shut so they could only terrify but not otherwise harm their prey.

Stressed-out grasshoppers facing chronic predation risk have higher metabolic rates than control grasshoppers. And, like some human cookie jar raiders, they seek more "carbs" to fuel their fear. Shifting their diet from their usual nitrogen-rich foods to more carbon-rich carbohydrates alters the composition of their bodies. Carcasses of stressed and relaxed grasshoppers were allowed to decompose, and then grass litter was added to the burial plots. While the carbon-to-nitrogen ratio of the scared grasshoppers' bodies changed by only about 4 percent, grass decomposed 60 to 200 percent faster in burial soil from stress-free grasshoppers. Without adequate nitrogen, soil microbes struggle to decompose debris.

This research is part of a broader effort to understand the transfer of energy and materials between different levels of the food web in ecosystems. A preponderance of evidence shows that predators exert tremendous influence on ecosystem structure and dynamics, due not only to direct lethal effects but also to indirect effects, by causing behavioral adaptations amongst their prey. (For more on the ecology of fear, see the 12/09 *Explorer*, pg 2 <<http://friendsofedgewood.org/wp/wp-content/uploads/2009-12.pdf>>)

This study revealed a new pathway by which predator-prey interactions can influence nutrient cycling. Stress resulting from heat and drought might also leave similar legacies affecting soil communities, whose contributions to global biogeochemical cycles and climate change are still being explored.

### References

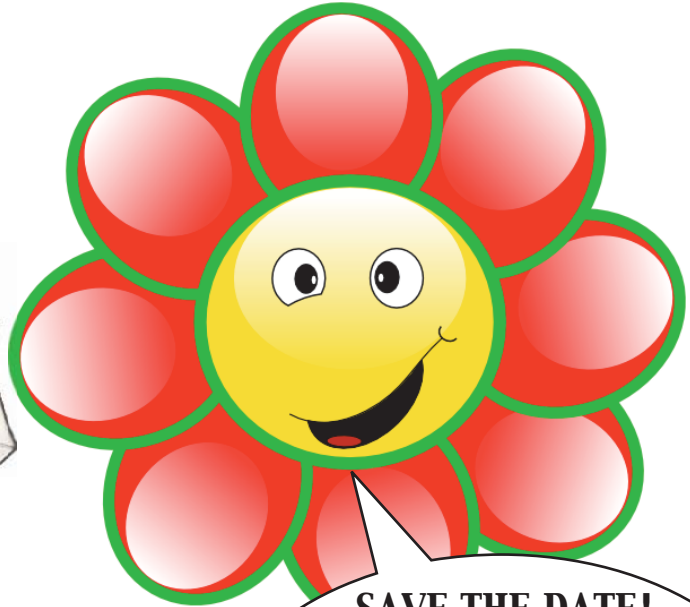
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[http://www.sciencenews.org/view/generic/id/341454/title/Grasshoppers\\_terror\\_outlives\\_them](http://www.sciencenews.org/view/generic/id/341454/title/Grasshoppers_terror_outlives_them)



### Wildflower Walks 2012

Approximate volunteer hours and number of visitors for the 2012 wildflower walk season:

Prehike	119 hours
Walks	216 hours
Greeters	17 hours
Visitors	405



**SAVE THE DATE!**  
**THE ANNUAL MEETING**  
**OF THE FRIENDS OF**  
**EDGEWOOD WILL TAKE PLACE**  
**ON SUNDAY, OCT. 7 -**  
**DON'T MISS IT!**

## Interpretive Walks Return!

Third Saturdays, 10 AM at the Education Center

- \* September 15, 2012 - Galls for Beginners with Laurie Alexander
- \* October 20, 2012 - Spiders! with Guest Hike Leaders Jack Owicki and Debbie Brusco
- \* November 17, 2012 - (TBD)



Invite your family, friends, and neighbors!

For updates, see [www.friendsofedgeWOOD.org/year-round-interpretive-walks](http://www.friendsofedgeWOOD.org/year-round-interpretive-walks)

## 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 the mailing label. For example, if the code is 06/2012, membership runs through June 2012.

Questions? Lv msg at (866) GO-EDGEWOOD (866.463.3439) or contact [membership-coordinator@friendsofedgeWOOD.org](mailto:membership-coordinator@friendsofedgeWOOD.org)



Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City/State/ZIP: \_\_\_\_\_

Day Phone: (     )     -     

Eve. Phone: (     )     -     

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

- Please list me as a donor.    Please list me as "anonymous".
- I prefer to be listed as \_\_\_\_\_.

- \$10 Student/Retired (includes quarterly newsletter)
- \$25 Friend (newsletter)
- \$50 Advocate (newsletter, set of 6 Edgewood greeting cards)
- \$75 Supporter (newsletter plus choose one)
  - Set of 6 Edgewood greeting cards and 1-year subscription to *Bay Nature* magazine
  - Toni Corelli's *Flowering Plants of Edgewood Natural Preserve*
- \$100 Steward or  \$250 Guardian (newsletter, set of 6 Edgewood greeting cards, plus choose one):
  - 1-year subscription to *Bay Nature* magazine
  - Toni Corelli's *Flowering Plants of Edgewood Natural Preserve*
- Please keep the premiums and maximize the value of my dues.
- I am enclosing a gift of \_\_\_\_\_.

Please send (subject to availability):

\_\_\_\_copies of *Common Native Wildflowers of Edgewood* @ \$1.50; \_\_\_\_copies of the *Edgewood Vascular Plant List* @ \$3.00; \_\_\_\_copies of the Apr-Jun 2004 *Bay Nature* magazine @ \$6.00; \_\_\_\_copies of *Flowering Plants of Edgewood Natural Preserve* @ \$12.00. All prices include tax, shipping & handling.

- Docent program
- Education Center host
- Newsletter/web
- Public relations
- Junior explorer program
- Habitat management
- Organizational support
- Adopt-A-Highway



**Bill and Jean Lane  
Education Center (EC) -  
Hours of Operation\***

Wed	9:30 am to 12:30 pm
Fri	1 pm to 4 pm
Sat	9:30 am to 4 pm
Sun	9:30 am to 4 pm

\*Through Sep. 2012, subject to  
volunteer staffing.

**2012  
Board of  
Directors**  
 Laurie Alexander  
 Paul Heiple  
 Bill Korbholz  
 Kathy Korbholz\*  
 John Morse  
 Christal Niederer  
 Cynthia Schreurs  
 Mary Wilson



\*Director Emeritus



**UPCOMING EVENTS**

**Adopt-a-Highway**  
 Next Sessions: 8/26, 10/6, 11/4, 12/1  
 To volunteer or get more information,  
 contact Ken Seydel at [adoptahighway-coordinator@friendsofedgewood.org](mailto:adoptahighway-coordinator@friendsofedgewood.org)

**Weed Warriors**  
 National Public Lands Day  
 Session: 9/29

**Interpretive Walks**  
 3rd Sat, 10 AM  
 Admission is FREE!

**Annual Meeting**  
 Oct. 7, 2012  
 FREE - All Friends Welcome!



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 edited by Linda Leong and is supported by contributions from many Friends. For more information about the Friends of Edgewood, visit our web site at [www.friendsofedgewood.org](http://www.friendsofedgewood.org), mail us at PO Box 3422, Redwood City, CA 94064-3422, leave message or fax us toll-free at (866) GO-EDGEWOOD (866-463-3439), or email us at [info@friendsofedgewood.org](mailto:info@friendsofedgewood.org).

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**ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED**



**Calling  
all Friends to the**  
 ANNUAL MEETING  
 Sunday, Oct. 7, 2012  
**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.friendsofedgewood.org](http://www.friendsofedgewood.org)