

# Edgewood Explorer

PRESERVE • EDUCATE • RESTORE

December 2014

Volume 21 Number 4

## Recap of the 2014 Annual General Meeting

by Bill Korbholz, FoE President

“Best General Meeting Ever” was the comment heard from several of the 60+ attendees of this year’s annual General Meeting on October 19.



This year’s theme was “Celebrating Partnerships,” and the sentiment was conveyed through an original puppet skit co-written by Frances Morse and Linda Leong. In the skit, various animals

described the five major partners who do great work to make Edgewood such a compelling destination.

Our actors this year were Bill Korbholz, playing himself; Linda Leong as a great horned owl; Howie Smith as a dusky-footed woodrat; Julia Bott as a striped skunk; Frances Morse as a California gray squirrel; John Morse as a western bluebird; Linda Leong as a Bay checkerspot butterfly and an Anna’s hummingbird; and special guest Kelly Rogers, who played himself and his guitar.



Photo: The Edgewood Players show off their new indigo blue shirts while entertaining guests with a tribute to Edgewood’s special partners. © 2014 Thanh Mougeot

After the skit, Bill Korbholz thanked Arguello Catering for once again providing delicious lunches for all guests. Bill then invited various leaders of our many programs to review their activities and accomplishments.

Next, it was time to announce that Frances Morse had been selected as this year’s Best Friend of Edgewood for her more

than 10 years of volunteer service as a docent, Ed Center host, and organizer of many special projects (not to mention playwright!).



Photo: Frances Morse is honored with Edgewood’s “2014 Best Friend” Award. © 2014 Thanh Mougeot

Finally, we came to the business part of the meeting, electing Directors. By unanimous vote, Linda Leong, Thanh Mougeot (both incumbents) and Todd Reimche were elected for the 2015-2017 term. 🍎

### IN THIS EXPLORER...

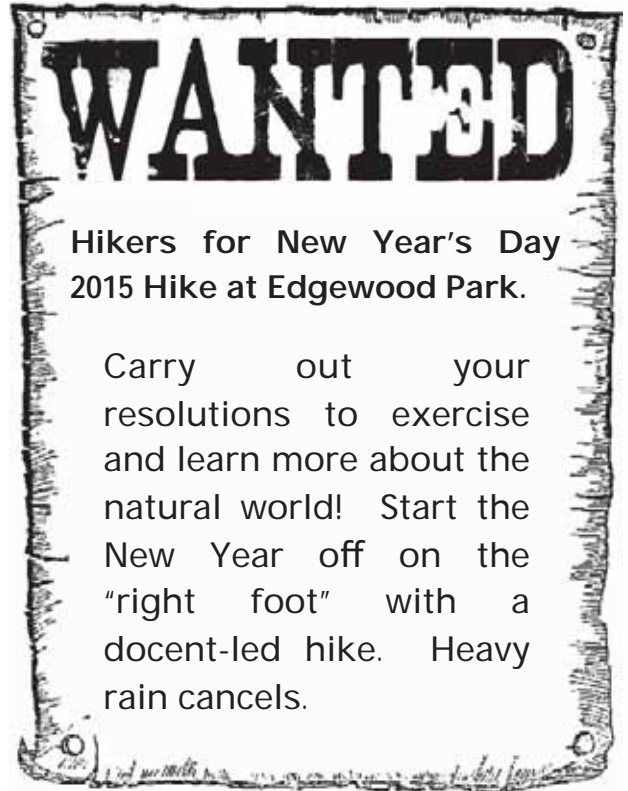
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## New Audio-Visual Equipment at the Ed Center

Santa came early this year and brought us a large flat-screen TV and a Blu-Ray player for use at the Bill and Jean Lane Education Center. The TV has a large screen (65" diagonal) and supports high resolution. It has a built-in web browser which we will use to display information about Edgewood and the Friends. In



addition to playing DVDs, we can project sound and video from PCs and mobile devices, which will come in handy for training classes and *ad hoc* presentations. We haven't subscribed to cable or any of the Internet-based content providers, so you won't be able to watch the Super Bowl or your favorite movie. But we hope you'll find the content that we have programmed for the new equipment to be very compelling and informative. Be sure to stop by for a visit, and check it out. ✓



## Edgewood Docent Kickstarts Development of New Interpretive Tools

Recognizing a need for information about some of the animals that live at Edgewood, Norma Jean Bodey, docent class of 1996, commissioned articles for Friends of Edgewood's docent training binder. The new articles include Dusky-footed Woodrats by wildlife researcher Ken Hickman (see page 3) and Botta's Pocket Gopher, Banana Slugs, and Turret Spiders by science writer Carolyn J. Strange. Biologist Christal Niederer provided an article about the Bay checkerspot butterfly, while nature illustrators Logan Parsons and Lucy Conklin created a full-page drawing of the life cycle of the Bay checkerspot and its dependence on seasonal

timing of California plantain and Owl's clover. Thanks to the committed work of these authors and artists, FoE docents will have excellent information to share with visitors about these Edgewood critters.



## San Francisco Dusky-footed Woodrat (*Neotoma fuscipes annectens*)

By Ken Hickman

### A North American Native

*Neotoma fuscipes* is native to oak woodlands and chaparral throughout the Coast Ranges, from Central California into Oregon.

*Neotoma fuscipes annectens* is the regional subspecies of San Francisco and the Santa Cruz Mountains and foothills. Because of this limited range it is a California Subspecies of Special Concern with local protections.

Dusky-footed woodrats have brown-gray fur, a white chest, and sooty-gray tops on their feet and sometimes face. The tail is about equal to their 8–10 in. body length and lightly haired—not as naked, long and tapered as *Rattus* sp., such as the black rat. While similar superficially, they're not closely related to European *Rattus* rats, but are genetically closer to deer mice (*Peromyscus* spp.).



Dusky-footed woodrat at entrance of stick house.



Woodrat collecting coffeeberry leaves to store in her larder.

### Nocturnal, Caching Herbivores

Woodrats eat leaves, flowers, buds, berries, seeds, nuts, acorns and fungi that they forage and collect at night, and store in larders in their houses for future meals. Some plants are “aged” to reduce toxins and bitter flavors. Other collected plants, such as bay laurel leaves, help reduce fleas, mites and other parasites in the larders, house, and on the woodrat itself.

Favorite foods include poison oak, toyon, coffeeberry, coast live oak, and bay laurel.

Their instinct to gather food and sticks also sometimes drives them to pick-up shiny objects too, which is why they're also called packrats and trade rats.



Woodrat-nipped twig.

### What to Look for and Notice

The most obvious signs of woodrats are their stick houses, easily visible from the trail. Also watch for fresh twigs on the ground, nipped off with a pruning shears-like cut. They snip and store seasonally, heaviest in fall before winter, and often climb trees and bushes and snip a bunch to then collect off the ground over multiple nights.

(continued from Page 3)



Stickhouse of a female dusky-footed woodrat.

### Keystone Builders with Live-in Buddies

Woodrats build fortress-style "stick houses" around hollow trees, logs, rock piles, and the like. The structures have a central nest chamber, ladders for vegetation and nut storage, and multiple tunnels, entrances, exits and latrines. Houses protect them from weather and predators, and maintain a consistent habitat for living and long-term food storage. Woodrats are a keystone species for these houses, which are relied upon by numerous live-in species, including mice, lizards, snakes, salamanders, frogs, crickets, beetles, and millipedes. Woodrats sometimes maintain multiple houses, and move among them to forage more broadly. Great climbers, they also occasionally build houses up in trees.

### Solo and Social

Adults generally live solo in houses, but are social and live in neighborhoods. Loosely matriarchal—females choose mates, sometimes the same male year to year. Males will cede houses to females, and senior females generally occupy the best houses. Typically they just have one litter per year of 2-3 pups, which often ride around on Mom's belly. Kids stay with Mom for as much as a year, and woodrats can live 6 to 8 years (if not caught by a predator, such as an owl, snake or coyote!). Males disperse furthest, usually less than 500 feet, and daughters tend to stay nearer to Mom, and may even inherit the house from her. Both often look for abandoned "starter houses" when they disperse.



Ensatina salamander going into woodrat stick house entrance next to a male suitor of the house owner.



California mouse

### Fun Woodrat Factoids

California mice (*Peromyscus californicus*) are deeply connected to woodrats and almost exclusively live in their stick houses with them. If woodrats hear a threatening noise outside their house, they'll sometimes thump their feet, or rattle their tail in dry leaves to mimic a rattlesnake, to both scare the predator and alert their neighbors.

Woodrats are cleaner than European rats, because they're herbivores and live solo, but also because they live more cleanly, and have outside latrines where they "poop on the stoop," instead of inside the house. Woodrat urine and poop can sometimes contain Hantavirus, so leave their houses alone.

Ken Hickman is a wildlife researcher and Friend of Edgewood. Follow his adventures at [NatureofaMan.blogspot.com](http://NatureofaMan.blogspot.com). This article was sparked by the vision and generosity of Norma Jean Bodey, Friends of Edgewood Docent Class of 1996.

# LEAD WILDFLOWER WALKS AT EDGEWOOD!

*Friends of Edgewood Natural Preserve*

## Docent Training 2015

***What do Wildflower Walk docents do?*** We lead free, 3-hour hikes on weekend mornings from mid-March through mid-June at Edgewood Park. We talk about wildflowers, plant communities & why Edgewood is special. Our docents love leading wildflower walks and meeting and educating the public.

***What will you learn?*** The seven evening classes cover the history, topography, geology, plant communities and wildflowers of Edgewood as well as how to lead a hike. Each evening class is followed by a hike in Edgewood on the next Saturday morning. The same presenter covers the same topic on both days.

***Is there a fee?*** Yes, \$30 for training materials, payable the first day of class.

***What is the schedule?*** Evening classes meet from 7 to 9 p.m. in Redwood City. Saturday hikes meet at trailheads in Edgewood Park and run from 9:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

***Are there other time commitments?*** We will have a graduation potluck 1 or 2 weeks after the end of the training - date, time and location TBA. In addition, you will be paired with an experienced docent for a "one-on-one" training experience and will also observe at least one wildflower walk then help lead one or two Wildflower Walks during the spring.

### 2015 SCHEDULE

<u>Wednesday</u>	<u>Saturday</u>	<u>Topic</u>	<u>Presenter</u>
Jan. 21	Jan. 24	Introduction, History, Topography of Edgewood	John Allen
Feb. 4	Feb. 7	Geology of Edgewood	Paul Heiple
Feb. 18	Feb. 21	Oak Woodlands	Ken Himes
Mar. 4	Mar. 7	Chaparral	Ken Himes
Mar. 18	Mar. 21	Leading walks	Ty Freiberg
Apr. 1	Apr. 4	Floral Morphology	Mary Wilson
Apr. 15	Apr. 18	Grasslands	Alf Fengler

**REGISTRATION: email Mary at**  
[docent-trainer@friendsofedgewood.org](mailto:docent-trainer@friendsofedgewood.org)

**Registration closes Jan. 14, 2015**

**More information or questions?**

**Go to [www.friendsofedgewood.org](http://www.friendsofedgewood.org) or visit the Education Center at Edgewood**

# 'Tis the Season For Giving!

## Field guides, T-shirts, & more

*For sale at the Ed Center - ask the Host*

### Wildflower guide \$1

A color brochure with color photos and descriptions of the preserve's common native wildflowers. A must-have for springtime visitors!



### Edgewood plant list \$3

This comprehensive 27-page booklet by botanist Toni Corelli lists all of Edgewood's flowering plants – listed both by common name and by scientific name within family.

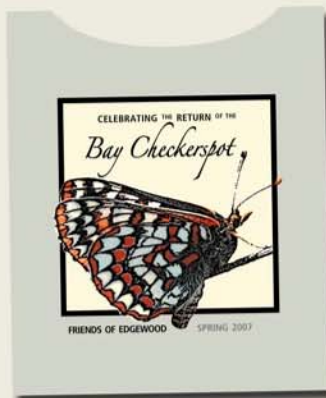
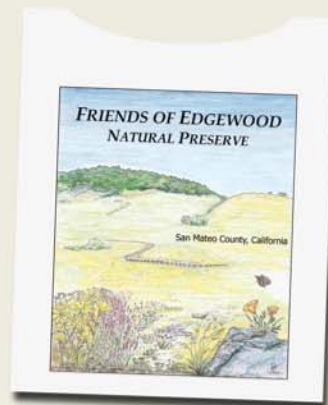


### Flowering Plants of Edgewood Natural Preserve \$12

The authoritative botanical field guide to the park. Written by botanist Toni Corelli, this 368-page reference includes descriptions and drawings of the vascular plants found at Edgewood. Keys, illustrations, and a list of nomenclature and taxonomic changes.

### Friends of Edgewood T-shirt \$20

Featuring Judy Mason's original artwork of an Edgewood hillside in bloom. 100% cotton, white Hanes Beefy-T.



### Checkerspot T-shirt \$20

Commemorating the reintroduction of the Bay Checkerspot Butterfly to Edgewood in 2007. 100% cotton, sage green Hanes Beefy-T.

**Cash or check – made to  
"Friends of Edgewood".**

Additional items may be available –  
ask the Center host.

Adult Sizes: \$20  
Child Sizes: \$15



**NEW  
COLOR!**

**Stumped for a present?** As friends and relatives curtail consumption and downsize their belongings, it is hard to find the right present to commemorate a holiday, birthday, anniversary, or other significant milestone. Why not make a donation in someone's honor today?

# Changing Faces...

## Part I - Junior Explorers Moves Along

By Carol Hankermeyer



Photo: Carol Hankermeyer educates future stewards.

© 2014 Julie Do

After 17 years and 4 years respectively, Carol Hankermeyer and Kate Connors are retiring as Coordinators of the Junior Explorers Program for children. It has been a very rewarding experience for both of us. There's no greater feeling than to see a child's excitement over a banana slug, fence lizard, deer, turret spider home, dusky-footed woodrat nest, or a beautiful wildflower and know you helped him/her make a new discovery. We trust that child's experience may lead him/her to be a future steward of Edgewood.

Kate and I are delighted to welcome Kate Finnigan as the new Junior Explorers Coordinator. Her background as former Docent Coordinator gives her the valuable experience needed to manage the program. I'm confident that our Junior Explorers docents will support Kate Finnigan as she seeks field trip leaders for the request hikes that we've already begun receiving this fall. I will also offer support when requested.

As our outgoing Junior Explorers Coordinator, Kate Connors has done a stellar job for the past 4 years. In the school year 2013-2014 she organized, implemented, and helped lead 15 field trips for children who might not otherwise have visited Edgewood and discovered its wonders. We hope to keep them coming with our enthusiastic new Coordinator and our awesome docents old and new. We always need more Junior Explorers docents! How

about you? The main qualifications are a passion for nature and a joy in working with children. To find out how to become a Junior Explorers docent, please send an email with your contact info to [JuniorExplorers-coordinator@friendsofedgewood.org](mailto:JuniorExplorers-coordinator@friendsofedgewood.org). ◇◇◇◇◇◇◇◇

## Part II - Ken Seydel's "Baby"

by Dave Hershey, New Adopt-A-Highway Program Coordinator

Adoption is usually a long-term responsibility, and that's certainly been the case for Ken Seydel with his "adoption" of a section of I-280. In 1989, through the Caltrans Adopt-A-Highway program, Ken became one of the first California volunteer adopters. For the next 8 years, working alone, he removed litter from both sides of a stretch of I-280 that included land bordering what became Edgewood Natural Preserve in 1993. By 1998, Ken was spending 16-20 hours every other month on litter collection. Being newly retired and therefore busier than ever, he offered to allow the Friends of Edgewood to assume the role of Caltrans liaison. Ken became the first Friends of Edgewood Adopt-A-Highway program coordinator and created the robust program that exists today. He dubbed the group the "Road Warriors". Among the many unusual items that Ken has found in his numerous hours along the freeway are an envelope containing \$150, a United Airlines ticket to Paris and a body in a sleeping bag (live). In October 2014, after 16 years leading the Road Warriors and 25 years clearing litter from I-280, Ken decided to retire as the Adopt-A-Highway program coordinator. Ken's service as an Adopt-A-Highway volunteer will continue as soon as his recovery from knee-replacement surgery is complete. Ken's story is a great example of how an individual can make an important contribution by recognizing a need, finding a way to address the need, and then following through with a sustained commitment. The Adopt-A-Highway group looks forward to enjoying Ken's good humor and gentlemanly ways when he returns.

The Friends of Edgewood Adopt-A-Highway program offers the opportunity to contribute to the safety and beauty of the land near Edgewood Park by removing litter from I-280. About 10 acres are, in effect, added to Edgewood Park by this effort to make the land between the park boundary and I-280 as



(continued on Page 6)



# Share your Enthusiasm for Nature

- Stimulate curiosity and awareness about plants and animals.
- Create a stewardship ethic for the land.
- Learn about local wildflowers, animals and ecologies.

## *Volunteer at Edgewood's Education Center!*

**Volunteers** at the Bill & Jean Lane Education Center at Edgewood County Park and Natural Preserve engage guests in a way that maximizes the visitors' enjoyment and understanding of the Ed. Center, its exhibits, and the Natural Preserve.

**Schedules** are flexible. Each volunteer staffs the Ed. Center for 3.5 hours at least once per month, or as much as once per week, throughout the year. We make it easy for you to set up your commitments ahead of time, so you can participate on dates that work with your personal schedule.

**Learn** about Edgewood as you volunteer! Until they are comfortable, each new volunteer is paired with a host who is already familiar with the Education Center and Edgewood Natural Preserve.

**Contact:** [EdCenterCoordinator@FriendsofEdgewood.org](mailto:EdCenterCoordinator@FriendsofEdgewood.org)

Or leave a message at 866-GO-EDGEWOOD (866-463-3439).

More details: [www.FriendsofEdgewood.org/Get-Involved](http://www.FriendsofEdgewood.org/Get-Involved)



### Articles Wanted!!!!

Do you have special expertise to share? Did something interesting happen during your shift at the Education Center? Do you have unique photos taken in the park? If so, please consider submitting an article or two to share with fellow Friends.

*(Ken Seydel's "Baby" - continued from Page 5)*

hospitable as possible for plants and animals and, at the very least, free of litter. We clean our designated area on the first Saturday (even months) or Sunday (odd months) morning each month. Attendance is completely at the discretion of the individual; so, though our volunteers are very dedicated in the long-term, the makeup of the group at any given session is fluid. A typical session takes about 2 hours depending on group size, amount and nature of the litter, etc. If you would like a little exercise while you're doing good for the environment, you should consider joining us. The highway is a bit noisy, so conversation is difficult (for conversation, join the Weed Warriors!). But the views are great if you edit out the freeway, and you never know what you'll find (a sampling can be found in the March 2010 issue of the Edgewood Explorer). For more information, look for "Adopt-A-Highway" under "Get Involved" on the Friends of Edgewood website and/or contact me at [adoptahighway-coordinator@friendsofedgewood.org](mailto:adoptahighway-coordinator@friendsofedgewood.org).



# Interpretive Walks

Third Saturdays, 10 AM at the Education Center

❖ **December 20, 2014 - Let's Check Out the Dusky-Footed Woodrats at Edgewood Park.** What do woodrat stick houses look like inside? How many woodrats live in one house? What do the woodrats themselves look like? What do they eat? Who wants to eat them? Let's find out on this Interpretive Walk with docent Kathryn Strachota.



❖ **January 17, 2015 - Native Peoples at Edgewood Park.** Compare our modern lifestyle with that of the Native Americans who lived near Edgewood. Join Kathy Korbholz as she leads this walk.

❖ **February 21, 2015 – Buds and Birds at Edgewood.** Come see what's blooming (or going to bloom) at Edgewood Park. Then we'll look up and see what's flying in the Preserve. Come join docent Trevlyn Williams as she tells us what's up with the Buds and Birds at Edgewood.

Invite your family, friends, and neighbors! For updates, go to: <http://www.FriendsofEdgewood.org/Events>



Photo: Exclusive event walk with Diane West-Bourke.  
© 2014 Laurie Alexander

## 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](http://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*.

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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](http://www.FriendsofEdgewood.org/Get-Involved)



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*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](http://www.friendsofedgeswood.org)*

**PRESERVE • EDUCATE • RESTORE**

**Bill and Jean Lane Education Center - Winter 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  
 Thanh Mougeot  
 Todd Reimche  
 Mickey Salgo  
 Howie Smith  
 Jack Stovel  
 Mary Wilson



**UPCOMING EVENTS**

**New Year's Day Hike**  
 Jan. 1: Meet at the Ed Center @ 10 AM

**Docent Training**  
 Register by January 14

**Adopt-A-Highway**  
 Next Sessions: 12/6, 1/4, 2/7, 3/1

To volunteer or get more information, contact  
 Dave Hershey at [adoptahighway-coordinator@friendsofedgeswood.org](mailto:adoptahighway-coordinator@friendsofedgeswood.org)

**Third Saturday Nature Walks**  
 12/20, 1/17, 2/21 (10 AM start)