

Edgewood

EXPLORER

FRIENDS OF EDGEWOOD • SPRING 2020

Coming Attractions for Our 2020 Wildflower Program

by Friends of Edgewood Board of Directors

Docents Spoke, the Board Listened

Across California, 2019 produced an epic spring “super bloom.” Edgewood was a showcase and the number of visitors at the peak of the show seriously challenged its dedicated team of docents and program supporters. In response, the Friends of Edgewood board undertook a thorough review of the program, focusing on (1) resource availability and scheduling and (2) improving both the visitor and docent experience – starting from a visitor’s trip planning until each visitor has departed Edgewood.

We wrapped up our review in November 2019 and hosted a debriefing for the San Mateo County Parks Dept. We presented a number of recommendations which we thought could improve the wildflower program experience for all ... and the Parks Dept. was completely on board!

2019 Wildflower Program Metrics

- ☼ 1,062 visitors participated.
- ☼ 55 docents led wildflower walks on 12 consecutive weekends.
- ☼ 1,235 volunteer hours were recorded from docents leading hikes.
- ☼ 18 special request hikes and large group hikes were accommodated.

2020 Partnering with San Mateo County Parks Dept.

- ☼ Relocate the visitor sign-in table and canopy to the picnic area to relieve congestion at the Education Center.
- ☼ Provide additional directional signage.
- ☼ New Parks Aide will help manage visitor sign in.
- ☼ Address parking concerns for docents and visitors at the main entrance.
- ☼ Provide a poster-sized map of the preserve to display self-guided hike options.



Wildflower Hikes (WFH), Version 2020

The first and most obvious change to the program for 2020 is the switch from the wonderfully symmetrical acronym “WFW” (Wildflower Walks) to “WFH” (Wildflower Hikes), to emphasize that our wildflower program provides more of an active hiking experience as opposed to a leisurely stroll in the park.

In addition, we have added information to the website, foew.org/springtime-wildflower-hikes to set more realistic

visitor expectations. The website explains that visitors will need to sign in and complete an activity release form for each hiker, and that the hikes will depart by 10 a.m.

Finally, for the first time, we will offer docents the option of limiting their hiking group size to no more than 12 visitors per docent. The board hopes to better match the number of available docents to visitor demand by monitoring website activity and arranging for backup docents. We want to be able to enforce the maximum group size without having to

turn away too many people or directing them to a self-guided hike.

The Friends of Edgewood’s board of directors requests everyone’s patience as we implement these changes. As the wildflower season of 2020 progresses, we encourage your feedback. We look forward to continuing to work with you to create and maintain the best wildflower hike program on the peninsula!



Super bloom 2019 Photo © Kathy Korbholz

Volunteer Activity	Volunteer Hours
Administrative	190.75
Adopt-A-Highway	180.26
Bird Walks	3.00
Bloomin' Walks	865.75
Bluebird Box Monitoring	250.00
Board of Directors	473.00
Butterfly Restoration	82.50
Camera Trapping	251.00
Demonstration Garden	489.00
Docent Continuing Education	462.00
Docent Program	512.25
Docent Training	860.25
Donor Management	717.00
EC Maintenance	56.00
EC Training	14.00
Education Center (EC)	1,043.00
General Meeting	136.00
General Publicity	62.75
Green Grass	643.42
Junior Explorers/Outreach	1,653.50
Membership	51.00
Nature Hikes	723.00
Newsletter	246.75
PG&E Pipeline	39.50
Photo Group	168.00
Project 467	131.50
SOD Blitz	11.00
Thornmint Restoration	15.00
Time Tracking	28.75
Treasurer	113.25
Volunteer Enrichment	539.00
Volunteers Committee	62.00
Website	118.25
Weed Management	2,034.00
Additional activities	60.00
Total	13,286.43

Volunteer Hours Add Up to Success

by Kathy Korbholz

What can you accomplish in 13,286 hours? In 2019, the Friends of Edgewood was able to operate all of its 40+ programs, accommodating over 1,000 wildflower hike visitors, more than 9,000 Education Center guests, and over 1,000 youngsters in our Junior Explorer program. That amount of volunteered time is equivalent to 7.5 person years! (Or one person working 34 hours every week for 7.5 years.) Last year marked the largest number of volunteer hours in our 26-year history.

We want to thank our many volunteers who contributed their time to make our programs a success. We are always looking for additional volunteers to help share the work. When you volunteer, you give:

Your gift of time — Whether your time is spent preparing for and leading docent hikes, staffing the Education Center, cleaning up trash along Interstate 280, weeding, checking nest boxes, or guiding Junior Explorers, your time makes a valuable contribution to the Edgewood community.

Your gift of knowledge — When you demonstrate which invasive weed to pull, aid a visitor to choose the best trail, explain Edgewood’s ecosystem to someone, or share your knowledge to help children become more engaged with nature, you broaden the appreciation of our preserve and its place in the broader community.

Volunteering can:

- Reduce stress, combat depression, keep you mentally stimulated, and provide a sense of purpose.
- Connect you with like-minded people in a supportive community.
- Be fun!

Please join us by volunteering for one of the programs listed at left. In fact, consider the volunteer opportunity on page 4, or others at foew.org. Who knows? With your help we may set a new record next year.

Photos (top) ©2019 Whitney Mortimer
(left) ©2019 Laurie Alexander
(right) ©2014 Kathy Korbholz





Howie Smith instructing FoE volunteers on distributing the seed in the beds.



Volunteers finishing up the seeding.

County and Volunteers Get Edgewood Farms Up and Running

by Perry McCarty, all photos ©2020 Perry McCarty

On Monday, Feb. 17, eleven Friends of Edgewood volunteers met at the newly constructed Edgewood Farms to sow seeds for the Green Grass project. The object of the Green Grass initiative is to reduce invasive grasses and increase native plants, grasses, and wildflowers in both the serpentine and non-serpentine (“fertile”) grassland areas. When invasives are removed, something will take their place, so we will be spreading seeds of desirable plants to encourage their spread.

Seed collection is labor-intensive. One approach is to collect an initial batch, then increase it at a “seed amplification” facility, which grows the initial seeds into plants and harvests all of the seed they generate. We are doing that for yarrow (*Achillea millefolium*) at HedgeRow Farms, but that costs \$8,000 per taxon and requires a great deal of seed – more seed than we will be able to collect for many plants. The solution: Edgewood Farms, our local, small-scale amplification site.

We are just beginning the Green Grass project, so this is a learning year. We planted 17 taxa that the Friends of Edgewood seed collection group gathered last year: milkweed (*Asclepias fascicularis*), harvest/elegant brodiaea (*Brodiaea elegans*), clay mariposa lily (*Calochortus argillosus*), yellow mariposa lily

(*Calochortus luteus*), soap plant (*Chlorogallum pomeridianum*), ruby chalice clarkia (*Clarkia rubicunda*), California oat grass (*Danthonia californica*), big squirreltail grass (*Elymus multisetus*), California poppy (*Eschscholzia californica*), goldenaster (*Heterotheca sessiflora*), goldfields (*Lasthenia californica*), bicolor lupine (*Lupinus bicolor*), summer lupine (*Lupinus formosus*), checker mallow (*Sidalcea diploscypha*), blue-eyed grass (*Sisyrinchium bellum*), narrow-leaved mule ears (*Wyethia angustifolia*), and smooth mule ears (*Wyethia glabra*).

We have one more taxon, cream sacs (*Castilleja rubicundula ssp. lithospermoides*). It is a semi-parasite and needs a host. We intend to add it to some of the beds that have grasses after the grasses have germinated. We hope the grasses will work as the host.

San Mateo County Parks donated and constructed the seed beds and the deer fencing surrounding the site. They also provided three interns – Johanna Harrison, Olivia Kurz, and Alex Wilbanks – for three days to help install the seed beds and fill them with potting mix. Dee Himes, Ken Himes, Howie Smith, and Perry McCarty also helped get the seed beds ready.

Please come by and inspect the new Edgewood Farms, located on the hillside next to the Day Camp restrooms!



Volunteers sowing seeds and tamping them down.



County Parks interns, Johanna, Alex, and Olivia, plus Ken Himes filling the seed beds with potting mix.



Join Our Wildflower Hikes Success Team!



We are looking for a few folks who can help run Friends of Edgewood’s wildly successful wildflower hikes program. Being a **docent coordinator** during the spring wildflower season is an important job and a great way to get more involved with FoE. Our docents are awesome, and new hikers fall in love with Edgewood every year because of this popular public outreach program.

Please contact docent-coordinator@friendsofedgewood.org to learn more about this opportunity.



October 2019 – Cleared areas inviting off-trail visitors.
Photo © Kathy Korbholz



February 2020 – New fencing installed to protect the recovering habitat. *Photo © Kathy Korbholz*

Fencing Protects Cleared Habitat

by Kathy Korbholz

The last Explorer newsletter featured an article about the safety vegetation removal work recently completed by PG&E in Edgewood Preserve. The article mentioned the plan to install new split-rail fencing along the Sunset and Franciscan trails where the newly cleared area could be mistaken for new hiking pathways.

As the fence was being installed, a sharp-eyed Barrie Moore and several weeders commented that the fence posts seemed remarkably tall. Further investigation

revealed that the contractors were intending to put in fencing three rails high. Quick intervention by our president, Peter Ingram, and San Mateo County Parks Dept. Natural Resource Manager, Hannah Ormshaw, avoided a dreadfully imposing barricade.

Through these cooperative efforts, Edgewood now has a lower, more rustic split-rail fence. The freshly split wood will age and darken over time to become less visible and resemble existing fencing throughout the preserve. These fences will protect the recovering habitat and the creatures who live there.



Warrior's Plume Makes 2020 Debut

by Bruce Homer-Smith

Warrior's plume (*Pedicularis densiflora*) is one of my favorite springtime wildflowers because it is unusual, easy to pick out, and rewards a closer look. It has bright red flower clusters like a paintbrush but has leaves like a fern.

The big flower clusters look confusing from a distance but close up you can see an elegant design for attracting hummingbirds and other pollinators: The saw-toothed bracts create a big red display to attract nectar-loving pollinators who are on the lookout for red.

(1) Flowers have two fused upper petals that form a long tube, red on the outside and yellow inside. It contains the pistil and stamens. At the base of the tube is nectar. The pollinator collects and deposits pollen on its way to the nectar.



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(2) Flowers also have three white-tipped, fused, lower petals that create a small lip for pollinators to land on.

Warrior's plume flowers early, before the trees above have grown leaves to create shade. This allows it to photosynthesize and offer its flowers in the sun, and then enjoy the cool shade during the hot summer months.

Warrior's plume is a parasite when it can be, digging its roots into the roots of overhanging manzanita, madrone, and oak trees. But it can also live on its own, photosynthesizing food from its green leaves. Warrior's plume doesn't steal much, so the host plant is generally undamaged.

For more, check out <http://PlantID.net/?Taxon=Pedicularis+densiflora>

Do you have a favorite Edgewood wildflower or plant? Please tell me about it at bruce@plantid.net.

About the Author: Bruce Homer-Smith is the author of PlantID.net, Edgewood's plant identification website. Find the full Edgewood Plant List at <http://plantid.net/?PlantList=Edgewood+Preserve>.





Donate Your Old iPad

Do you have an old iPad that you would like to get rid of? Donate it to Friends of Edgewood!

We are looking for a few iPads still in good working order to use as sign-in devices for our spring wildflower hikes. We can use both standard and mini sizes but they must be iOS 9.0 or higher. If you have one to donate, contact mc@friendsofedgewood.org and we'll arrange to pick it up.

What Gall! Insects Trick Trees into Making Homes for Larvae

by Elaine Salinger

A gall is deformed tissue produced by a plant in response to the chemical or mechanical stimulation of an invading organism. The invader can be fungi, bacteria, mites, aphids, moths, gall midges, sawflies and fruit flies, beetles, or gall wasps (Cynipids). But the undisputed champs are the tiny little wasps called Cynipids. These non-stinging wasps are masters at getting plants to build homes for their larvae.



Photo © Joyce Gross

While most galls are just a few millimeters in diameter, there are two types of galls at Edgewood that are much larger. One particularly large and easily seen gall is called the live oak apple gall because it has the

appearance of a woody apple 1-2 inches in diameter. It forms when an oak gall wasp lays eggs on the central vein of an oak leaf. When the larvae hatch, chemical and hormonal interactions between the wasps and the oak cause the oak to form the gall. This gall is so large that it provides a home for many other insects.



Photo © Franco Folini,
[Flickr.com](https://www.flickr.com/photos/francofolini/) CC BY-SA 2.0

The other large gall is the poison oak gall. You can see this type of gall on the tallest branches of a poison oak bush on Old Stage Road between the Serpentine Trail and the Franciscan Trail. Look towards Interstate 280 and you will see an odd elongation and flattening of the poison oak branch tips. This type of gall is unusual because it was probably caused by genetic mutation rather than a reaction to an insect.

Galls are usually species-specific, meaning that a specific gall is found only on a specific host plant, or in some cases on a few closely related plant species. The invaders have evolved alongside their host plants, just as pollinators have evolved along with the plants they pollinate. One plant may host many different types of galls. While most galls are tiny structures seen on leaves, requiring careful looking, some on stems and branches are easier to spot.

Because Edgewood is rich with plant diversity, it is also rich in gall diversity. Fall is the best time to see the colorful, pretty galls on valley oak and blue oak. In spring, Coast live oak and other plants have some cool galls too! Oak galls at this time of year are especially spectacular with bright colors and weird shapes.

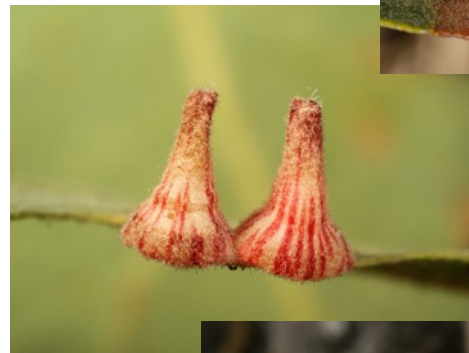


Red cone gall on valley oak

Photo © Joyce Gross



Striped volcano gall on blue oak
Photo © Joyce Gross



Urchin gall on blue oak
Photo © Joyce Gross



As part of the Volunteer Enrichment series, entomologist extraordinaire Merav Vonshak, with the help of Sara Witt and gall enthusiast Paul Heiple, gave a gall talk at the Education Center in October 2019. The talk was followed by a Saturday hike led by Merav, Sara, and Paul. During our hike we saw 26 different types of galls on seven different host species, including four species of oaks!

Treasurer's Report for 2019

by Angela Mallett

Over the last few years as treasurer (and treasurer-in-training), I have seen our revenue and expenses grow as we expand our education and interpretation programs, broaden our outreach, and ramp up our long-term habitat restoration initiatives. 2019 was another excellent year for revenue. Donations continue to come in to support Project 467. We also received some generous grants, amounting to 37% of our incoming (non-investment) revenue. Membership dues and other gifts amounted to 60%. The remaining revenue was from merchandise sales and fees we charge for docent training materials.

How are we using the money you give us? In 2019, 62% of our expense budget was used for habitat restoration and preservation. (We began fundraising for Project 467 in 2018, and in 2019 we started projects using this money.) We spent 17% on our wildflower hikes, docent training, Junior Explorer programs, operating the Bill & Jean Lane Education Center, and publishing the Explorer newsletter. We also granted 3% to our nonprofit partners who are key to our strategic goals. The remaining expenses included hosting our annual general meeting, costs related to incoming donations, insurance, and other general operating expenses.

Thank you to our volunteers, members, and friends for your generous support, both in donated money and time, to allow us to fund exciting new projects and expand existing programs.



Photo © Kathy Korbholz

Become a Friend of Edgewood!

JOIN or RENEW your membership ONLINE or by MAIL:

ONLINE: foew.org/donate

BY MAIL: Send this completed form with your donation amount circled to Friends of Edgewood, 3 Old Stage Coach Rd., Redwood City, CA 94062-3801.

\$25 \$50* \$100* \$250* \$500* \$_____

Please make me a Sustaining Member and charge my credit card \$_____ each month. (\$5 minimum)

EXPLORER newsletter preference

email mail

*Donors of \$50 or more receive 6 Edgewood greeting cards. Donors of \$100 or more receive a year of *Bay Nature* magazine. Or choose No thank-you gifts.

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Thank you for supporting the Friends of Edgewood. We couldn't do what we do without friends like you! Friends of Edgewood is a 501(c)3 nonprofit. Donations are tax-deductible as allowed by law.

Switch to a Sustaining Membership Easier for you. Better for Edgewood.

Friends! A sustaining membership lets you make a monthly donation via your credit card and have a huge impact on programs like Project 467, Junior Explorers, and more. Can you spare just \$5 or more per month to support Friends of Edgewood and the park we love?

Go to foew.org/donate, and follow directions to become a sustaining member, or email us at mem@friendsofedgeswood.org, and we will help you get set up.



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Friends of Edgewood

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3 Old Stage Coach Road
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Bill and Jean Lane Education Center at Edgewood Park and Natural Preserve

Saturdays and Sundays 9:30 a.m.–4:00 p.m.
Wednesdays 9:30 a.m.–12:30 p.m. or by appointment

To learn more about Friends of Edgewood, visit our website at foew.org, call or fax us toll-free at (1-866) GO-EDGEWOOD, or email us info@friendsofedgeswood.org.

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Upcoming Events

WILDFLOWER HIKES

- ☼ Saturdays & Sundays, March 14 – June 7.
Main entrance. Check-in (required) at 9:45 a.m.
Hike by 10.
- ☼ Saturdays, April 4 – 25 at Clarkia trailhead.
Check-in (required) at 9:45 a.m. Hike by 10.

WEED WARRIORS

Every Friday at 9 a.m.
Beginning March 11, also every Wednesday at 5:30 p.m.

ROAD WARRIORS (ADOPT-A-HIGHWAY)

March 1, April 4, May 3 at 8:30 a.m.

Learn more about these events at foew.org/events

The Edgewood EXPLORER is published quarterly by Friends of Edgewood Natural Preserve, a nonprofit organization dedicated to preserving and restoring Edgewood and educating the public about its treasures. Friends of Edgewood Board of Directors: Laurie Alexander, Sandra Bernhard, Lara Fox, Kathy Goforth, Peter Ingram (president), Bill Korbholz, Kathy Korbholz, Linda Leong, Angela Mallett, Perry McCarty, Barrie Moore, Todd Reimche. The newsletter is edited by Michele W. Conway and supported by contributions from many Friends.