



# San Mateo County Parks Foundation

inspiring people to care for,  
learn about and enjoy our parks

Summer 2016

## Ahead of Its Time: The San Bruno Mountain Habitat Conservation Plan

Once upon a time, not that long ago, there were plans to level a portion of San Bruno Mountain and use it to fill part of San Francisco Bay and create new housing developments along San Mateo County's shoreline. Needless to say, Brisbane residents and groups like Save the Bay put an end to this ill-fated idea in 1980 and things took a turn for the better: a plan was put in place that respected the Mountain's unique habitats and rare plant and animal species. This was the first Habitat Conservation Plan in the United States.

A Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP) is a long-range conservation strategy that enhances ecological diversity and habitat. If a proposed development results in the harm or harassment of endangered or threatened species, this action must be mitigated by conserving the habitat upon which the species depend.

The San Bruno Mountain HCP was crafted to preserve and enhance habitat for the endangered Mission Blue butterfly, in conjunction with limited development on the mountain. The other endangered butterflies included within the HCP are the San Bruno



*View to San Francisco from San Bruno Mountain's Summit Loop Trail*

Elfin, Callippe Silverspot and Bay Checkerspot. Bay Checkerspots disappeared from the mountain in the 1980s, but County Parks is considering their reintroduction in the next few years.

In an urban setting, preservation of open space lands is not enough; they must be actively managed. San Mateo County Parks is growing its Natural Resources Program, building its in-

house, hands-on knowledge with a focus on San Bruno Mountain.

"It is exciting to work on the first Habitat Conservation Plan in the country; to see the wildlife and understand the ecosystem and its challenges," says Ramona Arechiga, the County's first natural resource manager. "This plan was ahead of its time, as it looks holistically at the diversity of life

that comes together on the mountain."

Scrub encroachment is one of the biggest hurdles to a thriving butterfly population. Without fire or grazing, nothing prevents the non-native annual grasses and their dense thatch from invading the areas where butterfly host plants thrive. The *Viola pedunculata* (Johnny

**Continued on page 6**

## We Moved!

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Coyote Point.  
Our new address:

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**1701 Coyote Point Drive,  
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Coyote Point Recreation Area

Crystal Springs Trails  
San Andreas Trail  
Sawyer Camp Trail

Edgewood Park & Preserve

Devil's Slide Trail

Fitzgerald Marine Reserve  
Pillar Point Bluffs  
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Flood Park

Friendship Park

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Memorial Park  
Pescadero Creek Park  
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Heritage Grove

Mirada Surf

Moss Beach Park

San Bruno Mountain Park

Sanchez Adobe

San Pedro Valley Park

Quarry Park

Woodside Store

Wunderlich Park

### Contact information

#### San Mateo County Parks and Recreation Foundation

1701 Coyote Point Drive,  
San Mateo, CA 94401

650/321-5812 voice

info@supportparks.org  
www.supportparks.org



Newsletter designed by Shannon Corey  
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# Finding community while taking care of our parks: Marvin's experience

by Marvin Nieto and Michele Beasley

It was the opportunity to go camping and partake in a resume-building adventure that made joining the Student Conservation Association (SCA) summer crew so appealing to Marvin. Marvin grew up in Redwood City and attended Sequoia High School, where for three seasons he was an SCA crew member.

"I had never considered the environment to be important. It was family, money and an education that mattered to me. However after working in the parks, I came to see the value of our environment. I saw this firsthand when we camped at Half Moon Bay State Park. The beach was beautiful, but ice plant and mustard plant covered the park. These plants are non-native and crowd out native plants. The crew leaders taught us how to use the trail maintenance tools. We played games and hiked around. The crew and leaders became friends and we learned how to work together as a team."

Marvin was the only student from his high school to join SCA, which meant he was meeting and working with youth from around San Mateo County and also from the East Bay.

"At first, I didn't really feel like I belonged. When you are taken to places far from your home, without smartphones or expectations, the crew just has each other and you end up developing a seamless bond. We were all different, and after spending three nights camping, we found our own community, which is essential for a crew working together.

I got to work on San Bruno Mountain with an SCA crew from Oakland. After camping for two days, it felt like I had known them for a long time. We cheered each other on during a ropes course and shared stories around a campfire. We pulled out invasive plants, piling them up for park rangers to dispose. We gathered on top of that mountain of invasive plants for a group photo and when I look back at it, it reminds me of the power and magnificence of people who care about each



*Marvin, in the foreground, helps set up camp as a crew member of Student Conservation Association (SCA).*

other and their environment."

The close bond Marvin formed with his crew members and the knowledge he gained from working in the field infused him with a new sense of confidence. This propelled him to take what he learned and apply it to his daily life. Today, Marvin is a student at Cañada College, taking Environmental Science classes. He is also an Apprentice SCA crew leader, leading activities and mentoring crew members.

"It is important that programs like SCA are offered to youth, so they can volunteer and learn about social and environmental issues. When you take the initiative to learn things and solve problems, a whole new world opens up for you. And when you make the most out of a new experience, a great appreciation comes over you and you realize you can be a leader too."

The San Mateo County Parks Foundation has been funding SCA summer crews for eight years.

# Find time to navigate the outdoors with the Parks Foundation's newest board member

by Steve Wood

My love for the outdoors has led me to the Parks Foundation. Since 2004, I have visited each of the county parks as a geocacher and have volunteered leading family geocaching hikes on the peninsula for several years. I wouldn't be surprised to find that my GPS had taken me to nearly every trail in the county! I am the father of four great kids, so I appreciate how much the parks add to our lives.

In 2005, I joined REI to help launch the Outdoor School. As an instructor, I brought students outside to discover our parks and learn new skills, like GPS navigation. Today, as the manager for



Steve Wood

Outdoor Programs with REI, I get to share my passion by introducing Bay Area residents to the benefits of a life outdoors. My current role at REI lets me develop relationships with land managers and non-profit partners around the region. My team supports open space access and volunteer projects through grants, including a long relationship with the San Mateo County Parks Foundation.

My deepest connection to the county parks is through my advocacy for the Bay Area Ridge Trail. This iconic work in progress will bring people to the most beautiful vistas in the Bay, far above the noise of the valley.

My career has led me through a vari-

ety of operational management roles, and I hope to contribute sound business advice on the board. I also have a great deal of experience in organizing events, and look forward to helping the foundation tell its story and the stories of our parks.

## Save the Date!

The San Mateo County Parks Foundation and the Student Conservation Association (SCA) will be hosting an office-warming on **Thursday, August 25** from **5:30pm-7:30pm** at the Captain's House at Coyote Point.

**RIDE COUNTY PARKS EXPLORER**

STARTING FALL 2016, RIDE THE COUNTY PARKS EXPLORER SHUTTLE TO  
**EDGEWOOD PARK & NATURAL PRESERVE**  
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VISIT: [SMCoParks.org/Parks-Explorer-Shuttle](http://SMCoParks.org/Parks-Explorer-Shuttle)

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You can support the Foundation and our parks by making your donation today. Your gift will help us fund priority programs and projects that benefit park visitors and the parks' natural resources.

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1701 Coyote Point Drive  
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Or on-line at [www.SupportParks.org](http://www.SupportParks.org)

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For more information, please contact Michele Beasley, Executive Director, at [Michele@SupportParks.org](mailto:Michele@SupportParks.org) or (650) 321-5812.



*The Callippe Silverspot*

**San Bruno Mountain**  
(continued from page 1)

jump ups), for example, is the host plant for Callippe Silverspot and needs space to expand. However, the thatch shades it out. To manage this, County Park staff will be monitoring butterflies, crafting a rare plant management plan, and instituting a grazing trial.

The largest populations of Mission Blue, San Bruno Elfin and Callippe Silverspot butterflies are on San Bruno Mountain. The loss of their habitat here can mean the loss of these butterflies overall. Just as Coyote Ridge near San Jose provides the larvae and adult butterflies for reintroduction at Edgewood County Park in Redwood City; Mission Blues from San Bruno Mountain are provided to other parks, like Twin Peaks in San Francisco, to ensure their continued survival.

The San Mateo County Parks Foundation plans to raise needed funding to update trail signage and kiosks so as to tell the story of the endangered species that inhabit the mountain. Thanks to our many donors, we were able to supply and outfit a tool trailer that is used at stewardship events on the mountain, such as weed removal and volunteer planting days.

Today, there are nearly 1,300 Habitat Conservation Plans in the United States. San Mateo County was onto something when they led the charge for habitat planning on San Bruno Mountain over 30 years ago. This gift is right in our backyard. So plan a visit to this rugged landscape, drink in the views of the Bay, and be thankful that the top of the mountain wasn't leveled to fill the bay, but instead protected for us, and the butterflies, to enjoy.

**65 46 35 MILE BIKE RIDES**

**TOUR de MENLO** SUPPORT LOCAL KIDS

**AUGUST 20**

All proceeds go to Rotary need-based scholarships and nonprofits

presented by **Rotary Menlo Park Foundation** *The Almanac*

**Register: [TourDeMenlo.com](http://TourDeMenlo.com)**

- Fully supported ride with water, rest stops and SAG
- Free lunch provided by Lutticken's Deli
- 7am or 10am start at Menlo-Atherton High School

*A Great Bike Ride!*

# The peregrine falcon chicks, recently hatched above Devil's Slide Trail, are flying!



*This is the first peregrine nesting near the trail in years and a conservation success story. Thank you to Ranger Rob Cala for the amazing photos!*


 Friends of Huddart & Wunderlich Parks  
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**BIG BAD  
 BARN DANCE**  
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Sunday, August 28, 2016 4 P.M. -7 P.M.  
 Historic Folger Stable, Wunderlich Park  
 Tickets and info:

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*Thanks to our sponsors! There is still time to be our partner...*







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**The San Mateo County Parks Foundation is committed to providing funding to improve the quality of County Parks for our community.**

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