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Turkey Time! The Wild Turkeys Among Us November 28, 2019

A Special Look with Christine Heinrichs,
Board Member and Certified California Naturalist -



Turkey isn't just on everyone's mind in Cambria on Thanksgiving. Thanks to our wild turkeys, we have the opportunity to live beside them.

Turkeys are native to the American continent and range across the landscape. Turkeys enchanted me, and I've had many opportunities to share that excitement with others. Turkeys get a chapter in my book, [How to Raise Poultry](#). Since turkeys are America's unique contribution to livestock, they hold an important place in American cuisine and history.

Wild turkeys are found in every state except Alaska, as well as in Canada and Mexico. Because the turkey was important to Native American cultures, it holds



invade his Farm Yard with a red Coat on," although he conceded that turkeys are "a little vain and silly, but not the worse emblem for that."

Turkey Traffic Around Town

Turkeys wander past my chicken yard on their rambles around Cambria. As they perch above the chicken yard, I wonder whether they are figuring out how to get to the chicken feed, attracted to those pretty hens, or pondering the enigma of captivity vs. ranging free. My best broody hen, Fanny, a Speckled Sussex, hatched and raised two turkey poults from eggs discovered by a local wildlife admirer.

A Cambria resident adds, "On the drive to drop off my son to school in the morning, sometimes we'll see wild turkeys everyday and then none for awhile as they roam around the forest. We enjoy observing the wild turkey families. Baby turkeys are surprisingly small and it's fun watching them grow up. Most recently, there were three big male wild turkeys in the middle of the road. Everyone stops to ensure they make it safely across. Usually the ride to school takes 4 minutes. On turkey days, it takes five. Gotta plan ahead."



a place in many tribes' mythology. Turkey taught the Apache how to raise corn. Cherokees have

tales about how the turkey got its wattles and why it gobbles. The Tewa Pueblo Indians tell about it as a food source.

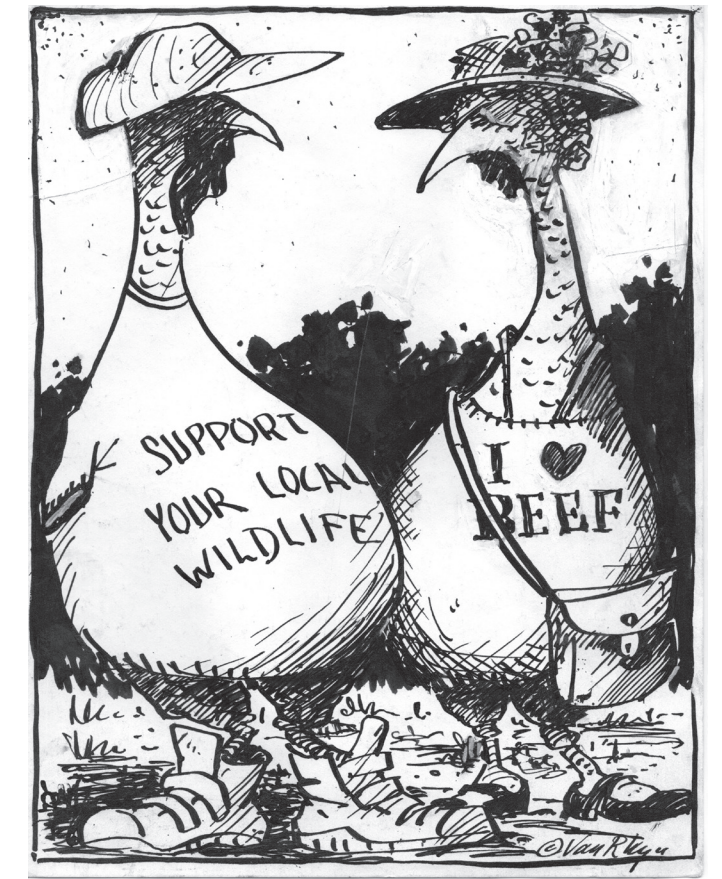
A Navajo legend, as retold by Ani Rucki in [Turkey's Gift to the People](#), tells a story of mutual help for survival.

A flood was coming, and the people and the animals were afraid. Bear said to go to high ground in the mountains, but Butterfly said that the mountains were too far away. The nearby hills were not high enough to save them. Mouse pointed out the giant hollow reeds that were larger than any cave, and Beaver began to gnaw an opening to let the people and the animals in. As the hollow reed chamber became crowded, Moose invited Beaver on to his back, and Spider spun a web to boost Beaver higher to gnaw another entrance to an upper chamber. Ground Squirrel was the first to notice that the Turkey couple were missing. Eagle flew out and found them and guided them back to safety inside the reed. Wasp sealed the opening to keep everyone safe from the flood. Inside the reed, everyone wanted to know what the Turkeys had done that kept them outside in danger. "We were finding

the seeds and spreading them across the land, so that the plants will grow back to feed us all after the flood is over," they said.

Wild turkeys were hunted by Native Americans across the continent, but they were also domesticated by Southwest and Central American people around 2,000 years ago. In the early 1670s, wild turkeys were hunted to extinction in their traditional ranges as settlers cleared woodlands and population pressure moved west. Wild turkeys were gone from Connecticut in 1813, New York by 1844, Kansas by 1871, and Iowa by 1907.

As hunters shot and the land was deforested, turkeys in the wild reached a low in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. One estimate puts the total wild turkey population at 30,000 around the turn of the nineteenth century. Government programs for wildlife habitat restoration and private organizations have helped wild turkey populations recover. Benjamin Franklin campaigned to make the turkey the national bird in 1784. He described it as "a Bird of Courage ... that would not hesitate to attack a Grenadier of the British Guards, who should presume to



Artwork by: Art Van Rhyn, Greenspace board member



and of Greenspace’s efforts to promote a healthy forest. We had just that experience recently when touring our CNPS guests at the Creekside Reserve, Native Plant Demonstration Garden, Covell Ranch roadside, Strawberry Canyon and the hills of the East/West Ranch (Fiscalini Reserve).

While we know about the native Monterey Pine as our charismatic flora, and it’s rarity along California’s coast (diminishing more with climate change), we talked about the different micro-regions of native stands which have evolved to produce different sized cones.

Cambria’s pines produce the largest (and anyone whose had some land on their deck would agree), but science does not yet know exactly why?

What’s the evolutionary advantage of the larger cones?

Nikki Nedeff with the Big Sur Land Trust, and part of our CNPS visiting group, was actually presenting to the San Luis Obispo CNPS meeting that night on the variance of cone size, and lucky she was as we

stumbled across some jumbo Monterey Pine cones in Strawberry Canyon that more than illustrated this point!

A healthy forest, and a healthy environment relies upon the essential flora and fauna mix that we are fortunate to have. But that healthy ecosystem can be easily disturbed, and is one of Greenspace’s most important initiatives, supported by organizations like CNPS and others.

So... if it’s a rare plant, or even a common one, stop for a moment and observe.

Where is it growing and what’s growing around it, what stage of life is it in, carefully smell it (not poison oak though...) and leave it behind as undisturbed as you can.

CNPS is a great resource in learning more about the amazing and diverse flora of California and its many different regions, and particularly here along the Central Coast where conditions include marine, grasslands, rolling oak lands, conifer forests and higher elevation mixed forest.



**A Forest Only Cambria Offers
December 4, 2019**

A Walk in the Forest with the California Native Plant Society

Recount from Bob Reid, Board Member

Taking a walk in our local forests is not the same when accompanied by members of the California Native Plant Society (CNPS).



The beauty and simplicity of the forest is only enhanced with a better understanding, from top to bottom, and not only of botanical names, but what’s native, what’s not, what’s invasive and what’s rare.

It’s even more interesting to learn why certain plants are growing where they are, why others are not growing where they should, both bringing a greater appreciation of our local resource



Greenspace and CNPS have an important partnership that goes beyond a single visit. We share many concerns including invasive plant management, land stewardship, protecting water resources and balancing the needs of fire safety with adopting best practices in managing healthy forests, and thriving plant, animal and yes, even human communities.

Thank you to CNPS board members attending our tour and to Greenspace board members Wayne Attoe for presenting at the Creekside Reserve, and Amanda Gowdy for telling the Native Plant Demonstration Garden’s story, and Andrea Wogsland, Greenspace Executive Director, who joined me in representing Greenspace and taking a walk in the forest with CNPS!

For more information about CNPS including great plant guides and local chapters, go to <https://www.cnps.org/>. Better yet, take your own walk through Strawberry Canyon!

Nature Club: Getting Our Feet Wet in November
December 2, 2019

Nature Club notes from Sue Davis, Nature Club Facilitator - A group of adults and children explored Greenspace's Creekside Reserve together on Sunday the 17th of November.

We paid attention to the textures in nature as we chose leaves to create rubbings. Heading down to the creek the youngsters didn't hesitate to wade in, connecting with the rocks and gently moving water in a way that unselfconscious children do.

The adults exchanged stories of their childhoods and we were lucky enough to have an enthusiastic sharer who had spent his childhood floating down this very same creek. "It was deeper then and we floated from the high school downstream and our mom couldn't catch us!"

The children taught us about patience as they fashioned "fishing poles" out of sticks and found a slug for bait.



We looked for life in the water that we collected in our magnifying containers. The wild watercress was growing in abundance but we refrained from tasting after doing research that it could contain a parasite called a liver fluke due to having cattle upstream.

Only the darkness descending on us led to our saying goodbyes....till next time, when we might explore where the creek escapes to the ocean and the "treasure" it carries downstream for us to discover.

Greenspace's Nature Club meets on the third Sunday of every month from 3-5pm. There is no cost to attend. To receive alerts on Nature Club locations and details, contact Sue Davis at natureclub@greenspa



Announcements

Imagine living near a coastal forest where you have walked for years but are no longer able to explore due to physical limitations. Or perhaps you've never had a chance to take a nature hike. Greenspace would like to create more opportunities for others to be renewed by our rare Monterey Pine forest. Virtual tours use video conferencing to enable people isolated by illness or disability to travel the world in real time.

Greenspace piloted our version, "Introduction to the Forest" last week, a program supported by our partnership with the Harold Miossi Charitable Trust. Through the platform, participants can live an experience formerly inaccessible to them and engage with fellow virtual nature walkers.

Stay tuned for future announcements on this exciting endeavor.

CALIFORNIA COASTAL ART & POETRY CONTEST

For California Students
Kindergarten through 12th Grade

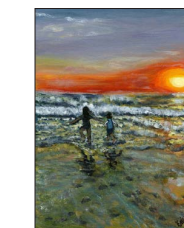
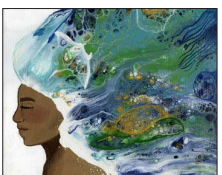
Winners in art and poetry will be selected in each of five grade-level categories (K-1, 2-3, 4-6, 7-9, and 10-12) to receive a \$100 gift certificate to **Blick Art Materials** or a book store. Each winner's teacher will receive a \$50 gift certificate from **Acorn Naturalists**. Winners, winners' teachers, and honorable mentions will receive tickets to **Aquarium of the Pacific** and **Seymour Marine Discovery Center**. All winning and honorably mentioned art and poetry will be part of a travelling exhibit.

Entries must be postmarked by January 31, 2020

Winners will be announced in April. To receive an email when the winners are announced, sign up for the contest mailing list at: www.coastal.ca.gov/contest_signup
You will not receive an email if you don't sign up for the mailing list.

Art and poetry must have a California coastal or marine theme. Please see the Contest Guidelines on the entry form, and the contest page at coastforyou.org for complete rules. Art entries: please include a short statement of a paragraph or less on how the coast or ocean inspired your art. Students may dictate poetry or their art statement if needed, but it must be their own words or an English translation of their own words. Poems do not need a statement.

On the Winter Sea
On the Winter Sea
Icy waves crash against the shore
Shivering dolphins leap from the silver water
North winds blow the crystal sand
onto my cold bare feet
from the salt water sea
onto my feet
again and again
the sun sets against the shining water.
Zoey Biondini, grade 5



Complete a contest Entry Form and submit it with your art and artist's statement or with your poetry to:

California Coastal Commission
Coastal Art and Poetry Contest
45 Fremont Street, Suite 2000
San Francisco, CA 94105

For more information, tips, and entry form in Spanish or English: visit coastforyou.org or email coast4u@coastal.ca.gov



Artwork from the 2019 contest by Isabelle Gonzales, grade 8, and Eden Yuen, grade 4



Photo Credit: Joe Burnett in a Condor's Redwood nest.

returned to their habitat. The species is recovering, although condors still face challenges from lead contamination, plastic pollution and DDT residues. Biologists like Burnett and the interns he supervises have helped condors turn the corner, and are working to help them reach recovery in their wild home.

Condor chicks hatched and raised in captivity are released into their native habitat: Big Sur, Pinnacles National Park, and Hopper Mountain National Wildlife Refuge. Those three flocks have expanded and are now considered one large flock, about 170 birds.

The birds are doing so well that some have nested and wild chicks have hatched. Condors lay only one egg every two years. Both parents help raise the chick for about 18 months, to independence.

Juvenile birds released in San Simeon spend two to three

months in a flight cage, getting used to the surroundings, before they are released. The flight cage allows older birds to visit and the birds get to know each other.

The social hierarchy is important to condors. Young birds obey older, more dominant birds.

All condors are tagged and tracked. Following the birds, and collecting and studying the ones that die, is important.

Condors are obligate scavengers, which rely entirely on eating dead meat. Along the Central Coast, that may be sea lions.

The main threat to condor survival now is lead ammunition. They consume animals shot with lead ammunition and get poisoned by the lead. The Central Coast's open landscape offers more clean food for the condors.

Condors can fly 200 miles in a day. Expect to see them in Cambria.

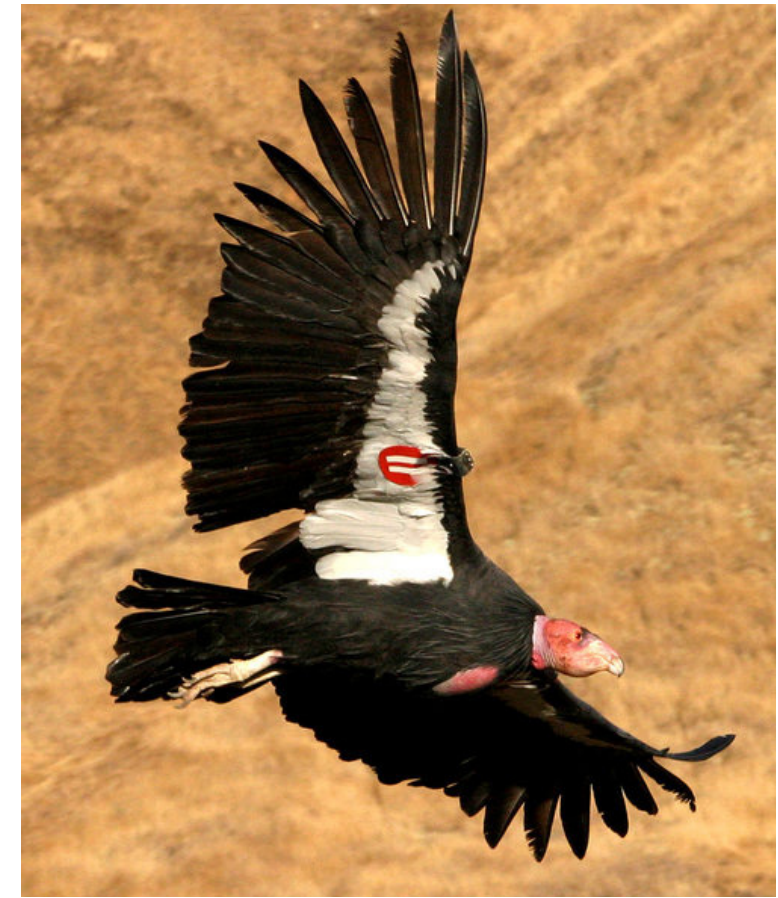


Photo credit: Richard Neidhardt

Cambria Welcomes Condors November 11, 2019



Six more young birds to be released! Feature by Christine Heinrichs -

Christine Heinrichs, Board Member and certified California Naturalist

As condors recover from nearly becoming extinct, they are making homes in their historic

range on the Central Coast. Six more young condors will be released in San Simeon this fall. Speaker, Joe Burnett, Ventana Wildlife Society's Condor Project coordinator and senior biologist, talked

with Cambrians about the condors, Sunday, October 27, 3-5 pm at Mechanics Bank, 1070 Main Street, Cambria, CA. His visit was sponsored by Greenspace - The Cambria Land Trust.

Condors nearly became extinct in the 1980s. Through a captive breeding program, they are being



Bob Reid Joins Greenspace Board of Directors . October 28, 2019

A New Face at Greenspace Introduction from
Andrea Wogsland, Executive Director

We are pleased to welcome new Greenspace board member Bob Reid. Most recently Bob was the President and CEO at the Tejon Ranch Conservancy, responsible for stewardship of 240,000 conserved acres of California landscape. Prior to that he was a member of the Executive Team at the Catalina Island Conservancy, and also previously worked at the Trust for Public Land in Southern California. Bob has volunteered as a board member of the LA Neighborhood Land Trust and the Lieblich Foundation, a supporting foundation of the California Community Foundation.

A third generation Californian, Bob says " I fell in love with the California coast many years ago and am still amazed and thankful for how much we have saved. The Central Coast and the environment of Cambria are very special places we are obligated to care for. I look forward to helping Greenspace continue their tradition of stewardship and conservation in our won-

derful community”.

Greenspace has been lucky to have Bob as a volunteer before he joined the board. His interests, background, and values will serve the organization to new levels of success.

Photo: Bob Reid with “Owlbert”, in England at a raptor rescue facility.

NEW! California Naturalist Column



Greenspace is delighted to introduce a special column to the Insider; a place for certified California Naturalists to share their inspirations and projects. We hope you enjoy the adventures with nature from throughout the state.

Chocolate Ducks Lure Young Nature Fans
Mary Feliz, certified California Naturalist

Beginning Birding
Monterey Bay and Wetlands

What Bird is That?

By Mary Feliz



I’m not the first person driven to share the beauty of our area with visitors. Our complex boasts a small nature center sponsored by Watsonville Wetlands Watch. It’s interactive and beautifully constructed, but it’s inside a windowless building. I wanted to get kids and their families outdoors.

Greatest hits

To do that, I gathered a list of the “greatest hits” of local and visiting birds with easy to identify features. I designed a card for each bird that included its name, photo, favored habitat, and a few key facts that would appeal to a young crowd.

I included the often irreverent memory aids my husband and I had developed to describe the birds to each other.

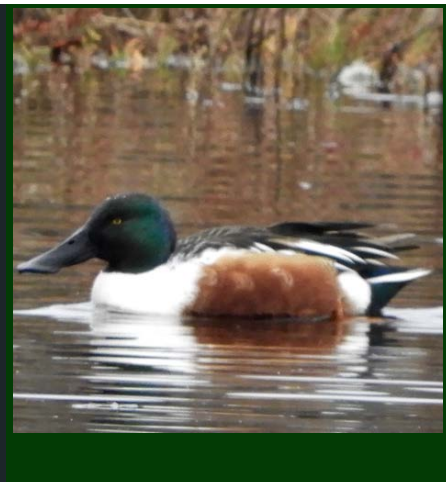
Overcoming the skeptics

“So far, so good,” I thought, but requesting permission to install a display met unexpected opposition.

“People will steal them,” administrators said. Their

NORTHERN SHOVELER

- Pond
- Winter
- Beak flattened like a shovel
- Green head (Male)
- White body with brown central splotch makes it look like a saddle shoe (Male)



Capturing the attention of young nature fans means speaking their language without talking down to them.

Chocolate ducks. Legs like red tights. Butter butt.

Short, pithy, and humorous descriptions are easily recalled. Yet, traditional bird guides are often densely packed with long-winded descriptions minutia that turns off many enthusiasts, let alone newcomers. I’ve long wanted to see if I could change that, designing a simplified, lightweight, but still accurate booklet that might help create lifelong nature stewards.

Dreams into action

The recent confluence of three events helped me galvanize my plans.

1. I took the immersive California Naturalist course at Camp Ocean Pines in Cambria. It was eight days of delight, discovery, and learning that provided everything I’d ever wished for in a science program.
2. I’d recently moved full time to Pajaro Dunes, a

rental vacation resort near Watsonville that is popular with young families. The property offers diverse avian habitats including sage chaparral, meadow, slough, marsh, pond, river, dune, shoreline, and open water all within a one-mile radius.

3. I needed to design and complete a capstone project for the California Naturalist course.

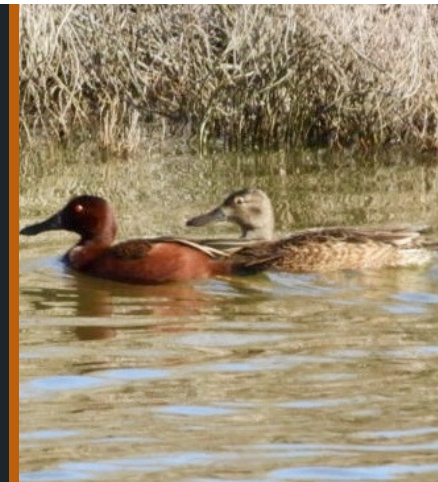
Challenges and competition

My efforts to capture the attention of visiting youngsters would have to compete with other area attractions, including boogie-boarding, sandcastle construction, and precious family time. A tall order, but I had more than 250 native and migratory birds on my side, many of them stunning.

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CINNAMON TEAL

- Pond, bridge, slough
- Year round
- Cinnamon body, bright red eye (Males)
- Smaller than a Mallard
- Looks like it could be made of chocolate



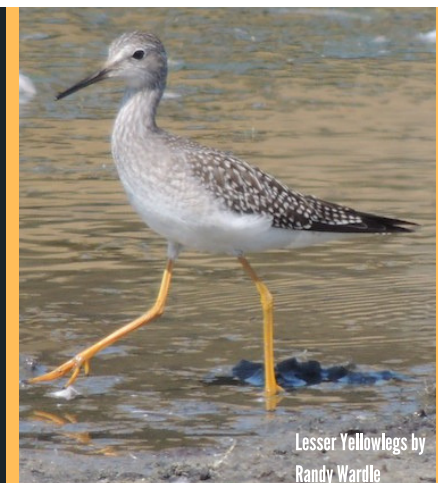
SANDERLING

- Beach
- Late fall to early spring
- Tiny shorebird
- Easy to confuse with Snowy Plovers, which are even smaller.
- From a distance a group of these busy birds can look like ping-pong balls rolling around on the beach.



YELLOWLEGS

- Pond edges or slough
- Late fall to early spring
- Bright yellow legs
- “Lesser” Yellowlegs has a shorter bill, just a little longer than its head.
- “Greater” Yellowlegs has a longer, slightly upturned bill.

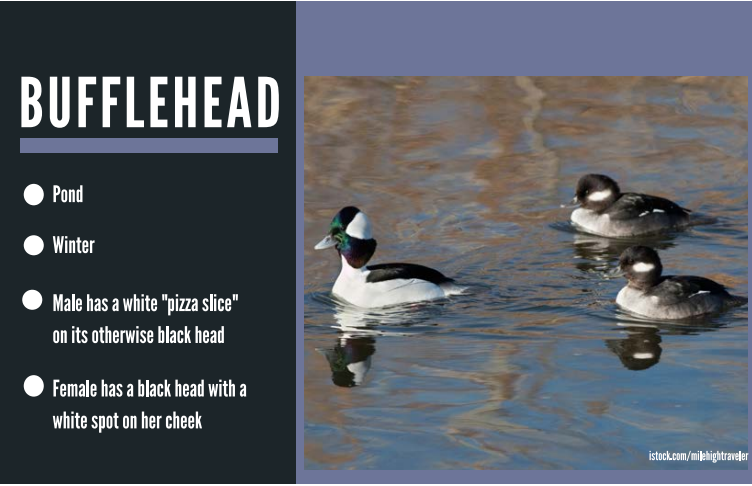


Lesser Yellowlegs by Randy Wardle



YELLOW-RUMPED WARBLER

- Fall to early spring
- In bushes and scrub
- Yellow splotch on rump most visible when flying
- Often called a "Butter Butt"



BUFFLEHEAD

- Pond
- Winter
- Male has a white "pizza slice" on its otherwise black head
- Female has a black head with a white spot on her cheek

Treasure beyond measure

My 10-hour capstone project grew to a 60-hour labor of love that requires ongoing care and repair. I love every minute of it. The best part? Watching kids and their parents point out birds by name, giggling over their memorable features.

Mary Feliz is a certified California Naturalist and delights in introducing readers to her state's natural beauty. Her fifth book, *Cliff Hanger*, is set on the shores of Monterey Bay where Mary lives.

Mary writes the Maggie McDonald Mysteries featuring a professional organizer and her sidekick golden retriever. Address to Die For, the first book in the series, was named a Best Book of 2017 by KirkusReviews. All of her books have spent time on Amazon bestseller lists.

To learn more visit maryfeliz.com.

Education: Four Years of Partnership November 4, 2019



Greenspace and Harold Miossi Charitable Trust's Youth Ecology Field Education Program

Highlights from Robert S. Cichowski, Education Program Coordinator

The fourth year of Greenspace-Miossi's Monterey Pine Forest Field Education program saw the program continuing to expand. We doubled the outreach participation, reaching approximately 100 students in academic year 2018-2019 versus approximately 50 students in academic year 2017-2018.

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We doubled the outreach participation, reaching approximately 100 students in academic year 2018-



faces telegraphed their belief that only the nerdiest of visitors would have any interest.

I constructed extra copies, made it clear that the books were loaners, and added several different ways to return them. The administration granted their grudging permission. So far, none of the books have gone missing. For those who desperately want a booklet to take home, [I offer a link to my website where personal copies can be downloaded.](#)

It's not Pokemon

Over the past six months, 88 people downloaded the book. More than 200 people used the checklists that are part of the display. On the path around our pond, kids regularly juggle books and binoculars. It's not Pokemon Go, but my booklet reaches children and parents who appear to enjoy the time they spend with it. That's a win for me.

Our primary bird-watching season is December through February, which coincides with several school vacations. The books should get a workout!



2019 versus approximately 50 students in academic year 2017-2018.

The Greenspace-Miossi Field Education Program gives students much greater than a typical ~5 hour field trip experience. Greenspace doubles the contact time by providing pre-field trip classroom learning experiences and post-field trip classroom experiences. Symbolic of this time commitment is the fact that we get to know the students by name.

Additionally, because of the way Santa Lucia Middle School has restructured its Environmental Science class, we have provided a two year and, in a few cases, a three year Strawberry Canyon Monterey Pine experience to some of the students. To meet the needs of the student "repeats," we have created new forest research projects to broaden and deepen their understanding of our natural world. Our Transect Study has the students collect data on pine and oak populations in Strawberry Canyon and later Seedling Survival.

In our fourth year, we expanded our outreach to two classes of 5th graders at Cambria Grammar School.

They participated in a special Pine Seed Bank Viability Research Project. Greenspace has a Monterey Pine seed collection from 77 trees going back 18 years. In academic year 2019-2020 we hope to involve these same, now 6th grade middle school students in a planting program on local State Park land.

The students will plant some of the approximately 500 seedlings from seeds that the students planted and nurtured.

We also were invited to work with Coast Union School District's Leffingwell Continuation High School. We met with the 10 students two to three hours/week over five weeks spread between the end of January and the beginning of April. In addition to experiencing field experiences in the Strawberry Canyon's Monterey pine forest, they harvested seeds from pine cones and planted the seeds. They participated in Strawberry Canyon trail maintenance and seedling planting.

Lastly, in anticipation that they might participate in the future as Greenspace volunteers working with middle school students, they learned how to analyze



care for the seedlings, instead of being deterred, he became excited about the opportunity to do something positive for himself and the community.

He was assigned flat 42, which is his favorite number so that was an auspicious beginning.

Daniel decided that the seedlings needed names to make it more personal but remembering 98 different names seemed a bit daunting. So, he named them all Steve. Knowing that plants (and people) respond to positive feedback, as he planted each Steve seed, he told it he loved it and wished it well.

He watered and watched and watered and watched. Until one day the first sprouts started to punch through the soil. That was thrilling as he had never grown a tree from a seed. "The Steve's are all needles at first with a little seed hat on top...pretty cool."

During watering Daniel talks to the seedlings and gives them encouragement (I do this, too). After a while, he noticed that only about half the tubes had Steve's growing in them so he obtained more seeds from Greenspace. While planting the second batch of seeds, Daniel daubed a bit of paint on the tubes



planting area soil. We are pleased to report that two of the students did the soil test training a second time and helped with the end of April's Cayucos 7th grade field trip to Cambria's Strawberry Canyon.

Greenspace volunteers are amazing. Our Education Program gives special meaning to the term "Citizen Scientist."

To accommodate 20 Cayucos 7th grade students in the forest at a time, we doubled our volunteer base. 16 Greenspace members participated in the Cayucos event. We are looking forward to our continuing partnership with the Harold J. Miossi Charitable Trust.

"Bravo to a terrific year! I believe Greenspace and the Harold J. Miossi Trust are making a difference!" - Howard Carroll, Trustee, Harold J. Miossi Charitable Trust"

#3000 Tree Initiative

The Story of Flat 42 . September 26, 2019

Narrative by Linda Poppenheimer - Daniel Garnett and I are two of thirty-five individuals and families growing Monterey pine tree seedlings from

seeds to reforest a section of our local forest. Greenspace provided the seeds, soil, and growing tube racks at Earth Day on April 21, 2019. We are each attempting to grow 98 tree seedlings that we will plant during November.

I have been recounting my tree growing experience on my website, Green Groundswell. If you would like to read the latest installment, click here to visit: [Imagine if Everyone Planted One Tree.](#)

This is Daniel's story.

When Daniel first heard of the tree seedling project, he thought he would be putting his name on some trees and perhaps donating money to care for them. Upon discovering that he was expected to grow and





Coastal Cleanup Results for Moonstone Beach September 27, 2019

With Site Captain Dave Bidwell -

40 volunteers joined Greenspace on Saturday September 21, 2019 from 9am-noon for the SLO County Creeks to Coast cleanup, part of the 35th annual Coastal Cleanup Day, an international day of cleanup efforts for our coastlines, creeks and lakes. Over 35lbs of trash was collected over a one mile area off Moonstone Beach at Santa Rosa Creek. Participants ranged from students from Santa Lucia Middle School, members of the California Conservation Corps, and many traveled from other areas in San Luis Obispo County and the greater Central Valley for the effort.

Volunteers picked up refuse in teams, with one person serving as the recorder. This is an important piece as we can use the data as a whole to make strides in changing policy.

Plastic bags used to be in the top ten most common-

ly collected items in California. This data was pivotal in pushing through the ban on plastic bags, its effectiveness now proven by its absence from the top ten.

During my past six years serving as site captain for Moonstone Beach, we've noticed how little trash we collected this year in comparison. We had a big group, all of the areas covered, which means our area is staying cleaner! Also over this time we've seen a dramatic decline in the number of plastic 6-pack holders while unfortunately cigarette butts have held somewhat steady.

Given that a large portion of our cleanup site gives guests a front row seat to the Moonstone Beach coastline, there is an opportunity to come up with solutions with local businesses, perhaps offering receptacles for cigarettes--making a huge difference--and the cost of doing so is minor.

Residents and visitors are in Cambria because of the natural and spectacular beauty of our pristine beaches. Huge thank you to all of our fantastic volunteers and to Soto's True Earth Market for generously providing snacks for the morning!



and gave the seeds his love and best wishes. He decided to mix things up and named this batch Loretta.

Now flat 42 is mostly full of tiny Monterey pine tree seedlings. Daniel is looking forward to planting the seedlings in the forest and then visiting the trees as they grow and mature.

Taking on this adventure led Daniel to learn about Monterey pine trees including that there are only three native stands remaining in California. He waters his seedlings every other day or so and makes sure they get enough sunshine.

Daniel included this quote in his correspondence with me. "A society grows great when old men plant trees whose shade they know they shall never sit in."
—Greek proverb

I look forward to meeting Daniel (in person) and the other tree growing enthusiasts in November as we plant our trees.



Water Supply: Coastal Commission Unanimously Agrees September 26, 2019

With Their Staff and Appellants at September Meeting - Feature from Mary Webb, Greenspace President -

From the California Coastal Commission Staff Report: *Cambria's water supply depends entirely on the ground-water aquifers associated with*

the Santa Rosa and San Simeon Creeks (collectively, "the Creeks").

The Creeks flow from their respective headwaters and both terminate into lagoons, which ultimately connect to the Pacific Ocean. In addition to the domestic and agricultural demands for water upstream, environmental demand in the form of adequate in-stream flows is necessary to sustain the Creeks' high quality habitat for a variety of aquatic and terrestrial species. The United States Fish and Wildlife Service

(USFWS) designates the Creeks as critical habitat because they provide habitat for federally threatened south-central coast steelhead and federally endangered tidewater goby.

Locals appealed the Peoples' Self Help Housing project and recently attended (at our own expense) the Coastal Commission hearings held in Newport Beach to defend our local coastal creeks and wildlife from being destroyed by continuing development pressure in Cambria without a new water supply. This latest assault was under the guise of an "affordable housing" project in an effort to bypass our decades old moratorium.

The project was appealed on the grounds that, "the County-approved project is inconsistent with our Local Coastal Plan's groundwater resources and water supply policies. Specifically, they contend that Cambria's water supply is severely inadequate to serve even existing development and because Cambria's sole source of water is already overdrafted and extracted at a level that has been found to impact sensitive habitats associated with Santa Rosa and San Simeon Creeks, therefore the proposed 33-unit apartment complex is inconsistent with



CCSD's retrofit program designed to offset water use, but such offsets would be inadequate to meet LCP tests and the CCSD's program does not appear to actually offset such water use even if it were to be deemed an appropriate tool to meet LCP tests, which it is not.

Coastal Commission staff recommended that the Commission find that the County's action raises a substantial LCP conformance issue and that the Commission take jurisdiction over the CDP application. Due to the above LCP water supply inconsistencies, and the lack of available water to serve even existing development in Cambria let alone new water service to facilitate new development, staff further recommends that the Commission, on de novo review, deny the CDP."

The staff said, "Due to LCP water supply inconsistencies, and the lack of available water to serve even existing development in Cambria let alone new water service to facilitate new development, staff further recommends that the Commission, on de novo review, deny the CDP." That means that the staff also recommends the Coastal Commission deny the



the LCP (Local Coastal Program). Furthermore, the Appellants contend that the retrofits applied by the County are inadequate to offset the project's future water demands, and that the project will lead to increased water use and further adverse impacts to the Creeks." Traffic and fire hazard were also brought up as concerns.

Coastal Commissioners unanimously agreed with their staff and appellants, that the affordable housing project raised 'substantial issue' due to the following reasons:

"The County's action raises substantial LCP water resource and sensitive habitat issues because:

- (1) the County did not determine that there was an adequate sustainable water supply to serve the project as is required by the LCP, but rather relied solely on a Cambria Community Services District (CCSD) intent-to-serve (or 'will serve') letter for this purpose;
- (2) the LCP explicitly prohibits the CCSD from issuing will serve letters until an affordable housing program is in place that allocates water from an adequate sustainable water supply, and no such program exists;

(3) there is not an adequate sustainable water supply to provide new water service to serve new development in Cambria (and it is not adequate even for existing development), a fact that has been repeatedly determined by the Commission in relation to Cambria development through multiple actions, including certification of LCP policies (specific to the lack of available water and imposing specific water supply requirements) and CDP (Coastal Development Permit) actions;

(4) the sources of Cambria's water supply (i.e., Santa Rosa and San Simeon Creeks) are environmentally sensitive habitat areas (ESHA) that are currently being adversely affected by existing water extractions to support existing development in Cambria; and

(5) the County found that the project could be served by the community's already oversubscribed water supply (a) because the project is for affordable housing, but the LCP only allows allocation of water supply when it is from an adequate sustainable water supply, which it is not; and (b) because the project would be required to comply with the





Appeal No. A-3-SLO-19-0033 (Peoples' Self-Help Affordable Housing, Cambria, San Luis Obispo Co.)

SUBSTANTIAL ISSUE FOUND, de Novo Hearing CONTINUED

project altogether once we have the de novo hearing. Peoples' Self Help Housing requested a postponement of their de novo hearing so that hearing will be held in the future - unless Peoples' Self Help Housing 'withdraws' their request which is possible. No one from SLO County or from Peoples' Self Help Housing attended the hearing.

The Cambria CCSD enacted a moratorium on new water connections in 2001. Cambria is still in a moratorium. The County says we have ZERO percent growth rate - ZERO. It is beyond irresponsible that past Cambria CSD directors and SLO County continue to approve new construction while Cambria is

in a moratorium. These decisions negatively impact our coastal creeks and wildlife, costing ratepayers millions of wasted dollars in legal fees and staff time in pursuing projects that are not consistent with our local planning guidance and the Coastal Act. As we've said all along - we all support affordable housing. It should be a priority when we solve our water supply issues, which we have not done.

Thank you all for your wonderful letters of support.

*Mary Webb, President of Greenspace appealed the project as an individual along with other locals.



Pocahontas Park

Native Plant Demonstration Garden Opens!

Special report by Sydney Torres, Greenspace Intern

On Saturday, August 17, 2019, Greenspace unveiled the Native Plant Demonstration Garden at Pocahontas Park. Located at the corner of Wilton and Newton in Cambria, this once vacant lot now

flourishes with native plants ranging from California Fuchsia to Bishop Manzanita. Greenspace board member Amanda Darling Gowdy, who headed the development of the garden, wanted to raise awareness of the importance and beauty that native plants can bring to a garden. "It was exciting to share my passion and it was wonderful to see the support of our members and community," said Gowdy. As community members arrived to the opening, they were met with a thriving garden

filled with beautiful native plants, most of which are primarily native to the Cambria area.

Throughout the garden, each plant is accompanied by its own sign. Each sign displays the plant's name, its common and scientific name, the habitat in which it grows, and the amount of sunlight that the plant requires. Intrigued by the success of the demonstration garden, attendees asked questions, expressed their interest in the garden's future, and how the garden can be kept open to the public.

On behalf of Greenspace, we would like to thank those who volunteered and helped in the restoration of the Pocahontas Native Plant Demonstration Garden. Special thank you to generous donors Brian Mueller Landscapes, Scenic Coast Nursery and Las Pilitas Nursery and others for their support!

The garden will be open on Saturdays from 1-3pm during September and October 2019. Beginning in November, the garden will be open on Sundays from 12-2pm. Contact the Greenspace office for additional viewing opportunities.

