

February

WACONIAH

2026



WASHINGTON . ARIZONA . CALIFORNIA . OREGON . NEVADA . IDAHO . ALASKA . HAWAII

By the time you read this we are well into the year 2026 already. Still, I am wishing all of you a Happy, Healthy, and Hopeful New Year!

Have you ever watched the Rose Parade on New Years Day? I am sure many of you have. It is such a beautiful tradition. In 2029 our National Garden Club will for the first time ever enter a float! That will be the year that NGC celebrates its 100th anniversary! I think it will be wonderful!

During my term as the Oregon State Federation of Garden Clubs President 2019-2021 nothing was as usual. Of course, we had to deal with Covid and from that we learned how to use Zoom.

During the summer of 2020 it seemed like all of Oregon was on fire. At that time OSFGC started the Promise Trees project, and we continue to hand out \$50 vouchers for trees to people who lost their homes and are rebuilding. Also the victims of later fires. When I

was asked to be the Pacific Region Director I thought "Firewise Communities" was a natural subject for my special project.

We want to help people after they lose everything during firestorms, but wouldn't it be better to prepare our members and anyone else before a fire?

To perhaps minimize the horrors of losing everything?

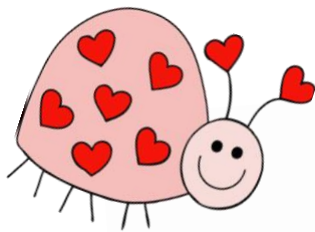
We are so lucky that Sue Piper offered to put together a series of five one-hour long webinars that will get you enthusiastic about being Firewise. She went through a fire that destroyed her neighborhood in California 30 years ago and has been involved in all sides of being prepared for fires and actually any disaster ever since. That is why she was able to put together a team of experts for all five programs in just a short time.

These are all professionals who know what they are talking about. Please look at the schedule! It would be nice if we get as many people as possible to attend these webinars. Tell all your members about them, but also anyone else you can think of: neighbors, friends, family, doctors' offices, grocery stores, fire stations, Firewise Communities that you know of. By now all your clubs should have started thinking about how and where to plant red, white and blue flowers for this year's fourth of July display for the 250th anniversary of the United States. I came to America when we celebrated the 200th anniversary! If you

have big plans but can't afford the cost there are grants available through PLANT AMERICA! They will be handed out on March 1st this year. Look on the NGC website. This whole project is a collaboration between NGC and Keep America Beautiful. Of course, Blue and Gold Star Markers are a perfect place to plant red, white and blue, but any public place is good!

I am looking forward seeing a lot of Red, White and Blue wherever I go this year!

Love from Tanja Swanson
2025-2027 PRGC Director





Pacific Region's Firewise Webinars



Five 1-hour webinars to help you reduce your risk of loss from

Firewise Communities is my special project while I am the Pacific Region Garden Clubs Director. I am thrilled to announce these webinars and hope that not only Garden Clubbers but anyone else will take advantage of this opportunity to get up to date information from these expert professionals.

Tanja Swanson
PRGC Director 2025-2027

1. **Monday, February 9, 2026, 2 pm - 3 pm**
Firewise Webinar #1: Firewise Landscaping
Priscilla Robinson, President,
Clackamas County Master Gardeners
Register here:
<https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/0IVg32PgTBCZS26dayGa9w>
2. **Monday, March 9, 2026, 2 pm - 3 pm**
Firewise Webinar #2: Making Your Home Fire Resistant (Hardening Your Home)
Laura Blaul, Senior Wildfire Fellow,
Insurance Institute for Business and Home Safety
Register here:
<https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/x1b-M1pB4RTiIRkEz9BOQTQ>
3. **Monday, April 13, 2026, 2 pm - 3 pm**
Firewise Webinar #3: Insurance Matters: Understanding and Renewing Your Insurance
Emily Rogan, United Policyholders
Register here:
<https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/d51CBVxwQaO6KN7PjB2ncw>
4. **Monday, August 10, 2026, 2 pm - 3 pm**
Firewise Webinar #4: Personal and Family Preparedness Before a Disaster
Todd Lando, President, Fire Safe Marin and
Central Marin Battalion Chief
Register here:
<https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/ahABCgwzTfeTFpu1c-MzvA>
5. **Monday, September 14, 2026, 2 pm - 3 pm**
Firewise Webinar #5: Organizing Your Neighbors (Firewise Communities)
Joele Frazier, Diablo Fire Safe
Council and Macy Cornell, Oakland's CABS
Firewise Neighborhood.
Register here:
https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/Hu32W-2nROmVkZUH_3pPdw

Golden Eagle

Aquila chrysaetos



The Golden Eagle is the largest and fastest raptor in North America. It is the most widely distributed species of eagles found throughout the northern hemisphere, more common in western America. Golden Eagles soar at 11,000 feet, dive at 150 mph and cover 100 miles a day. Adult Golden Eagles are mostly dark brown all over with grayish brown tail and have striking, lustrous golden feathers on the crown, nape and sides of the neck. Juveniles have dark brown bodies with white flecking and patches on the wings and white on the base half of the tail feathers. Adult plumage is acquired over a 3 to 4 year period with a body length of 2.3 to 2.8 feet and a wingspan of up to 7 feet. The females are larger than the males: females up to 14 lbs. and males less than 10 lbs. They have large, hooked bills with dark tips and yellow at the base. Their legs are feathered all the way down to their toes; the feet are yellow with black talons. Their eyes are dark brown. The voice of the Golden Eagle is a high pitched kee-kee-kee and also a high scream, but the birds are mostly silent. Their life span is 14 -20 years. They are found from Alaska to Northern Mexico. Their habitat is in the forests, tundra, canyons, shrub lands, grass lands, oak woodlands and in arid deserts.

Golden Eagles fly with slow wing beats and soar on thermal currents. They are powerful flyers and often hunt from the air. Their hunting territory is 60 square miles or more. Main prey for the Golden Eagles: rabbits, ground hogs, rodents, Arctic fox, squirrels, birds, reptiles and other small mammals. Carrion (carcasses found in the landscape) are also part of their diet especially during the winter months. Golden Eagles can lift/carry about 3-4 lbs. They can lift a little more if they swoop down with some air speed. Not all Golden Eagles migrate but most go south when food supplies decline.

Golden Eagles are monogamous and mate around 4 years of age. They breed from late June through August. They lay 1-3 creamy white eggs with brown spots. The female incubates the eggs for 41-45 days. The male will bring the female her food. After the eggs hatch, often only one young survives. Both parents care for the young birds and the young stay in the nest around 10 weeks before fledging. It takes 90-100 days before the hatchlings become independent of their parents. The nest of the Golden Eagle can be as large as 10 feet across and 4 feet thick.

The stick nests are lined with fine wood material and are constructed on

platforms on steep cliffs or in large trees. There are estimated to be 30,000 Golden Eagles across the United States. There is a concern that the population numbers may be declining across the country.

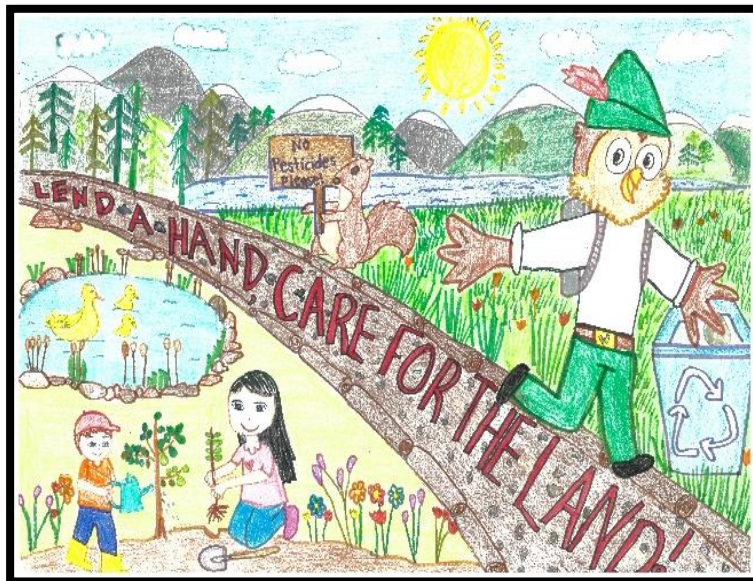
Threats: loss of foraging areas, loss of nesting sites, pesticide poisoning, collision with man-made structures and wind turbines and the electrocution by power lines due to the Golden Eagle's large wingspan.

Golden Eagles are protected by three Federal Laws - The Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act, the Migratory Bird Treaty Act and the Lucey Act. The possession of an Eagle feather or other Eagle body parts is a felony with fines up to \$10,000 or 10 years in prison. Native Americans are exempt from this law. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Services operates the National Eagle Repository, a clearing house for eagles and eagle parts to provide the Native Americans with eagle feathers for religious and cultural use.

Ann Kronenwetter, PRGC Bird Chairman



NGC and USFS partner to offer this youth contest to help teach kids about their environment. Both Smokey “Only You can Prevent Wildfires” and Woodsy “Give a Hand, Care for the Land” are mottos encouraging our youth to be aware of the needed care and promote good stewardship of the world around them.



2nd grade Adaleen Sooa, artist from Folsom CA.

**Terry Critchlow, NGC
Chairman
2025 Smokey Bear Woodsy
Owl poster winner.**

A MESSAGE FROM THE CGCI STRATEGIC PLANNING COMMITTEE

By Jane McKee, Member & Web Advisor

ARE YOU PREPARED?

Does your organization have an online presence (website, bank account, PayPal, email, social media as well as IRS and California Franchise Tax Board) with access to each limited to one individual per account? What happens if the individual becomes unavailable due to illness or sadly, death? Recovering access can be difficult and time consuming. This is not an uncommon occurrence. It happened to at least three garden club related organizations just this year.

Please consider the following options:

- ✦ Check to see if the account(s) can have multiple users - more than one individual with unique usernames and passwords.
- ✦ If multiple unique users are not possible, can there be “shared access” i.e., one username and password shared by more than one individual.
- ✦ At the very least, share the information with select members of your organization, perhaps the Executive Committee. This should include account name, log in screen URL, username, password, pin number/code, security question response(s), email address, phone number and any other information associated with the account.
- ✦ Consider creating an “organization email address” to use with online accounts rather than one’s personal email. That email and access can then be passed to new officers or chairmen as needed.
- ✦ We all want to protect our online access, but in the case of organizations, it is prudent to share the access information as much as possible.



Hello everyone,

Well, winter has come at last. The rain is coming sideways and blowing in sheets across the valley outside my window. The long arm of Father Winter is reaching across our wonderful state. These are the days when we start wondering “where are those catalogs of seeds and plants? Isn’t it time to start planning for next year’s garden? Enough already of winter.” It is during these quiet days that our gardens rest and rejuvenate for the coming year. It is also during this quiet time that we start planning for programs, speakers, conventions, and designing our gardens for the coming year.

In Oregon we have welcomed a new editor for our state newsletter “The Mahonia”. Sue Piper brings many years of experience in the publishing industry along with enthusiasm and new ideas. Her first edition has been very popular with our members. Check out “The Mahonia” and see what Oregon has been doing!

Oregon gardeners have been busy during these winter days. Our meetings are filled with ideas and fellowship that will bloom in the coming months. I hope all of you have quiet days this winter that will bring new ideas and enthusiasm to your members and clubs.

Stay cozy, warm, and dry.
From the wet and wild Oregon Coast.

President Becky Cook

Oregon State Federation of Garden Clubs, Inc.



PUT SOME EXTRA SPICE IN YOUR LIFE



Do you cook with spices? Of course you do, who doesn't? Open your spice cupboard and take a look. What herb is your go-to when cooking? If you notice, some jars of herbs remain full for years while others are used more frequently. Most of us use powdered or chopped dried garlic as a staple just like pepper but take a closer look at your spices. What is the next most used? I find my basil is used a lot in many recipes including scrambled eggs but wait! I am overlooking parsley. Salads get topped off with a sprinkle of parsley, and many main dishes, and if fresh parsley is used, it adds a decorative touch that can't be beat. Some of the easier herbs to grow indoors

that give you a quick full plant with a zingy flavor include parsley, oregano, and Spicey Globe Basil, a compact busy plant that grows 8-10" tall. Dwarf fern-leaf dill gets half the size of normal dill plants. Let's get ready to grow our own fresh herbs indoors. Use a good sterile soil mix, and clean flat trays covered with plastic. Make sure you can provide moderate even heat. Remove the plastic cover soon as the herbs germinate. Some take longer - read the seed package! Herbs grown indoors will need a lot of bright light to produce a full compact crop of leaves. To improve your chances of success with growing herbs indoors, provide some artificial light. If using fluorescent lights, they need to be about a foot above the plants and set on a timer for about 15 hours a day. Herbs do well with normal household temperatures of 65-70 degrees. Water most herbs when the soil is dry down to the first finger joint. Try to avoid using cold water, and don't leave standing water around the plant. Herb plants benefit from a higher humidity, and you might provide this with a humidifier. Fertilize lightly through the winter with a good balanced water-soluble fertilizer. Check plants regularly for bugs. If you find any, take your herb plant to the sink and give it a good shower. It will do wonders especially in an over-heated house. Once you have a stocky, busy plant, start using it. Be careful not to clip too much at one time as this weakens the plant and slows its growth; experiment until you find a good balance. Most people find the flavor a pleasant surprise from the cupboard spices. Remember, it is a food crop but can be an attractive foliage container plant also. The advantage of herbs growing in containers - they can be moved outdoors for the season after the danger of frost has passed.

Happy Herb Gardening!

Marva Lee Peterschick

Pacific Region Herb Chairman





Arizona Federation of Garden Clubs Landscape Design School Series 1

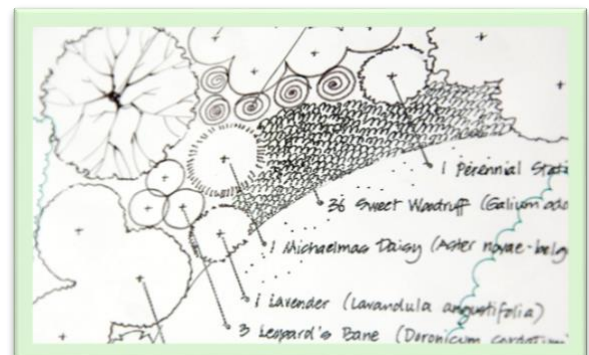
By the time you read this article, the Arizona Federation of Garden Clubs (AFGC) will have conducted their Landscape Design School Course 1 which took place on January 30th and 31st, 2026. Over forty gardening enthusiasts joined in via Zoom to learn about such topics as Ecosystems, Landscape design principles and elements, Site planning, Xeriscaping in the Desert, and Edible Garden planning to name a few. What a fantastic way to begin the New Year! Special thanks to our amazing Instructors: Alba Rodriguez, Erin Hutton, Kristen Battafarano, Noelle Johnson, and Liz Lonetti! So much gardening information was shared! And Thanks! to our AFGC Schools Chairperson, Peggy Ahola for getting the Arizona Schools back up and running!

And now, AFGC is pleased to announce that the Landscape Design School (LDS) Course 2 is on the schedule!

LDS Course 2 will be hosted via Zoom on Friday, March 6th and Saturday, March 7th, 2026, from 9:30am MST until 4:00pm MST. ONLINE REGISTRATION DEADLINE IS FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 27TH, 2026. Click here to go to our website: <https://azgardenclubs.com/schools/> to see the Course 2 Brochure and for the Online Registration. We hope you will join us for this second Course and know that Course 3 will be coming in November 2026, and Course 4, in December 2026. For any questions about any of these Courses, please contact Peggy Ahola at azgardenschools@gmail.com.

Jan Wells

AFGC Schools Marketing Coordinator



Greg Pokorski, Chairman

GregPokorski@earthlink.net

Parliamentarian & Organization Study Committee
Pacific Region Garden Clubs, Inc.



Parliamentary News

It's again that time of year for clubs, districts, states and regions to hold elections and installations.

I continue to suggest and recommend that clubs hold elections every two years, not every year. This aligns club administration with district, state, region and national administrations. I know that it is increasingly difficult for many organizations to find members willing to hold office, but once officers are in position it is often reported that it is much easier to serve a second year in a position than it is to serve the first year in which you are learning what to do and how to do it. The work of Nominating Committees is much easier when they do not have to find candidates every year. The amount of club time devoted to finding officer candidates, electing and installing them is cut in half when you do this every other year and not every year. Having officers serve two-year terms keeps the organization from using up the supply of potential leaders as rapidly as it happens with one-year terms. We continue to see that many garden club members want to focus on the educational and social activities of clubs, not the business. NGC's Membership Mondays *last* year reinforced that point with many asking how to simplify and shorten meetings and reporting that the business aspect of clubs is a turn-off to many members and does not help to attract new members. Of course, bylaws changes will be needed if you currently have one-year terms and want to change to two-year terms.

If you have co-officers (not recommended by *Robert's Rules*), be sure that your bylaws specify that co-officers are permitted. Follow your bylaws in the administration of your nominating committees and elections. Amend the bylaws as needed.

Installations can be festive and celebratory occasions. They can honor those willing to take on leadership positions and help acquaint the membership with those in new leadership roles. However, installations are generally ceremonial, and in most cases are not strictly necessary. They are necessary if your bylaws state that officers assume office upon installation. Bylaws should state when officers take office and the term of office. Terms might begin upon election or at the close of the meeting where the election occurs or may be effective with

the new fiscal year or upon installation. If your bylaws do not specify when officers take office or begin their duties this happens as soon as the election is final, whether or not there is an installation.



Get



your calendar out – go

on, go get it now....got it? Now turn to [October 2026](#)

[and ink in “Travel to Thousand Oaks, California for the PRGC Convention” on October 11 through October 14, 2026.](#) But we want to entice you to come early and enjoy our hospitality and the fun workshops and tours that have been planned especially for you, so, [plan to arrive on Friday, October 9, 2026.](#) The hotel is 35 miles from Burbank Airport, but we have a chairman to arrange transportation between the airport and the hotel. We are excited to share with you some points of interest in our area. We think you’ll be glad you came to enjoy our [“Palm Trees n’ Ocean Breeze.”](#) See YOU in October!

Robin Pokorski
California Garden Clubs
Registrar & some other stuff



NGC Membership Monday

The National Garden Club Membership Committee invites you to attend a Membership Monday session. We are honored to have a presentation of **Parliamentary Procedures** by NGC's Robin Pokorski. Please join us as we learn how to run more efficient club meetings with this important presentation.

Come and join us on **Monday, February 23, 2026, at 2PM Central Time!**

Gale D. Thomas
Membership Chair
galedthomas@gmail.com

MEMBERSHIP MONDAY ZOOM LINK

PRGC 2026 Convention Tours

Alexis Slafer

California Garden Clubs is looking forward to welcoming you to the PRGC 2026 Convention. We are currently planning exciting and fun tours around Southern California...so mark your calendars and **arrive on Friday, October 9** – to take advantage of these adventures.

Our tour on Saturday, October 10, takes us to two unique sites with a stop for a delicious lunch.

We will start with a visit to Strathearn Historical Park in Simi Valley. The 6½-acre park is dedicated to the preservation of many of Simi Valley's earliest buildings...as well as their museum with photos, letters and other artifacts that record the lives of the early pioneers. Docents will lead tours through the site, or you may stroll on your own.

Lunch will be at ***The Hat***.



The Hat is a beloved Southern California restaurant, famous for its "*World Famous Pastrami*" dip sandwiches. Established in 1951, in Alhambra, California, its signature pastrami quickly became a local favorite and is known for its generous portions and casual, retro-atmosphere. You can also enjoy regular classic American fast food. We will partake of our delicious **order your own lunch** at their Simi Valley location.

After lunch we will continue our tour with a visit to America's Teaching Zoo at Moorpark College. Established in 1974, it is one of only two zoos in the United States located on a college campus. America's Teaching Zoo serves as the "living classroom" for the students of the Animal Care and Training Program. This collection of 125 animals provides the students with a unique opportunity to learn about domestic and non-domestic animals and to develop the skills necessary to work in facilities caring for all types of animals.

We'll meet with the students, tour the zoo and, of course, see the animals (tigers, reptiles, Galapagos tortoise, African lion and more. If you would like to attend, there will be a Wildlife Presentation by the students in the Wildlife Theater.

Following our time at The Teaching Zoo, we will board the bus and return to Thousand Oaks and our hotel for a relaxing evening.

Sunday, October 11, will be a one-stop tour. Join us as we visit the Ronald Reagan Presidential Library and Museum, in Simi Valley. With views of the

Pacific Ocean, the 125,000 square foot museum tells the story of our 40th President. This, the largest and most visited presidential library, tells the story of his life, his career as an actor and politician...and houses the final resting place of the President and First Lady. You'll see displays and exhibits, including a chunk of the Berlin Wall; the plane the President flew in as Air Force One; Marine One and a replica of the Oval Office . As you walk the gardens look for the Blue Star Memorial Marker, sponsored by Southern California Garden Club, near the F-117 Nighthawk Stealth Fighter.

Lunch is on your own. There are several options. The Gipper's Bar & Bistro, near the gift shop, has different stations offering salad, soup, pizza and grille choices. Perhaps you might want to try President Reagan's famous chili. The Ronald Reagan Pub on the first floor of the Air Force One Pavilion offers sandwiches, salads, drinks and snacks. Enjoy your lunch while looking up at Air Force One.

And, before departing, you might want to plan time to visit the gift shop.

Following our day of history and inspiration, we'll return to our hotel and prepare for the business of the 2026 PRGC Convention.



Photos courtesy of the Teaching Zoo at Moorpark College.



Photos:
left - 2 Doctors' Colony Houses: Top-Library.
Bottom - Interior of a Colony House. Courtesy of the Strathearn Historical Society.



Photos: Top - Library Grounds; Middle - Air Force One Pavilion; Bottom - Oval Office. Courtesy of the Ronald Reagan Presidential Foundation and Institute.

Get Them Involved (and coming back!)

There's an interesting phenomenon that happens when a new member walks into a meeting. They get greeted, they get a name tag, and then they get ignored.



It's not just garden clubs – civic groups, craft groups, hobby groups, even corporate groups, all tend to distill into the people who know each other and the people who are new.

Established members are there to reconnect with friends they haven't seen in a month or so, and many of us get so caught up in getting caught up, that we unconsciously exclude the fresh faces from our conversation, thinking, "someone else will talk to them, I just need to find out how "X" is doing." Suddenly, when you look around, that new face has disappeared. They took a big step and walked into the meeting, but unless they have a reason to stay, they will walk out and find another club to join or activity to do.

To break this cycle, ask the new person to help. Is there something in your car that they could carry in for you? Could they bring a plate of cookies to the next meeting? Do they have an hour to do some weeding with you at the garden your club takes care of? We all love to feel needed.

It's so important to talk to the friends you have at Garden Club. They are likely the reason you are there. You can be the reason that someone else is there.



Bernadette Sterry



Palos Verdes Blue Butterfly Makes a Comeback

The Palos Verdes Peninsula is a piece of land jutting into the Pacific Ocean near the Los Angeles metropolitan area. At one time, before urbanization encroached, the peninsula was covered with native plants and wildlife. One of those native inhabitants was the *Palos Verdes Blue Butterfly*, *Glaucopsyche lygdamus palosverdensis*. About the size of a quarter, this tiny butterfly has blue wings. Its caterpillar feeds solely on deerweed (*Lotus scoparius*) and Santa Barbara milk vetch (*Astragalus trichopodus*).

As the peninsula became developed, native plants and wildlife were pushed out. Over time, the Palos Verdes Blue population declined to less than 30 butterflies. By 1983, their remaining habitat was scraped clean to make room for a baseball field, and scientists reported the butterfly had gone extinct.

You can imagine the shock in 1994 when entomologists, Rudi Mattoni and Rick Rogers discovered Palos Verdes Blues flitting through a field while on a routine survey of insects on the peninsula. They estimated 69 butterflies were living on the peninsula in a section of land protected by the U.S. Navy. It was the only population left in the world. Mattoni and Rogers began a program raising caterpillars to help increase the butterfly's population. In 2007, Jana Johnson established the Blue Butterfly Project and also began raising caterpillars at Moorpark College where she was a biology professor.

Several thousand butterflies have been released since 1994, but many have not survived in the wild. However, the Palos Verdes Blues have been re-established on the peninsula and are surviving with the help of several organizations that have planted host plants in several locations for their caterpillars.

The Conservancy is a partnership of local organizations that uses volunteers through its Adopt-A-Plot program to remove non-native plants on the peninsula and plant host plants to feed the Blues' caterpillars. They have established the Palos Verdes Nature Preserve where native wildlife is protected. Around 2,000 host plants are grown and planted each year for the Blues, and 50,000 total native plants are grown to feed other native wildlife.

It is a challenge to increase the Blues' population since the butterflies only live about a week; and during that time, they must find mates, breed and lay eggs on host plants. To have the perfect conditions for this to occur is often difficult. Recent years of drought have decreased their population to around 200 butterflies. Renewed rain in 2025 will hopefully increase their food supply and their population.

Thanks to Mattoni and Rogers, one of our precious butterflies was saved from extinction and is now making a slow recovery. Conservancy Executive Director Adrienne Mohan stated, “Our hope is that in decades to come, the Palos Verdes Nature Preserve will be filled with fluttering blue wings each spring”.

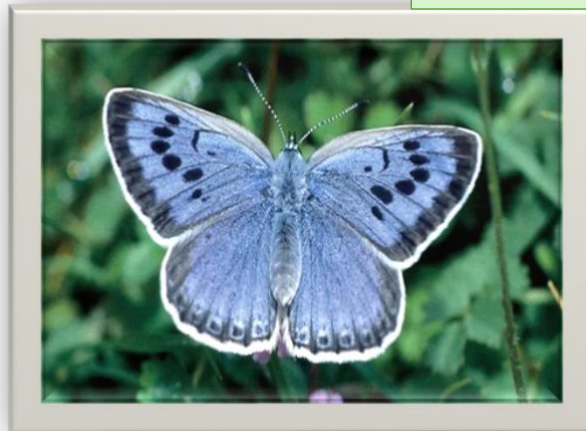
Karen Bowen

Pacific Region Butterfly Chairman



Photo 1 PA Palos Verdes Blue Butterfly

Photo 2 Palos Verdes Terranea Life



Happy 2026 WACONIAH members!

I hope you enjoy this year's 1st issue. Thank you for sending your articles during the window of time before each issue. It makes it really easier to gather your contributions. So, for the May 2026 issue, *please send in your articles between April 16 to April 30th*, with WACONIAH, May 2026 in the subject line. Thank you and until then.

Myrna Cabanban
Editor, WACONIAH newsletter
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