

OAK NOTES

Volume 38
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October 2019

NEWSLETTER OF THE RANCHO SANTA ANA BOTANIC GARDEN VOLUNTEERS

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OAK NOTES

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FROM THE PRESIDENT Marla White, Volunteer President

“A garden requires patient labor and attention. Plants do not grow merely to satisfy ambitions or to fulfill good intentions. They thrive because someone expended effort on them.”

—Liberty Hyde Bailey

Our Garden thrives because of the many volunteers that participate in its every aspect, from the Grounds Crew, Native Designs, Public Relations, Herbarium, educational materials preparation, tour guides, library acquisitions, membership, to various horticulture programs (just to name a few).

Deb Woo has shared beautiful *Around the Garden* photos with our volunteer group documenting animals and plants that thrive in spite of the relentless high temperatures in September. I hope you have enjoyed her photos as much as I have. Lucky Friday, September 13th, was our Fall “Buckwheat Bash” Quarterly Luncheon providing the opportunity to catch up with old friends and hear about the many changes happening now and those to come. RSABG 101 offered new volunteers the opportunity to learn about the many facets of the Garden that the public is often not aware of. Most of the volunteer committees began their monthly meetings. Please consider joining one of the teams and broadening your awareness and understanding of the Garden.

Many activities are scheduled for October that will need our support and participation. These include *Things That Go Bump in the Night*, Nature Interpreter Training, Volunteer Information Sessions, and the GNN Fall Plant Sale and Opening. Another activity is the Enrichment Speaker Series kicking off with Stuart Wood from Sustainable Claremont. At our first Sunset Social, we will meet the new volunteers in the Class of 2019. It will be held in Johnson’s Oval, November 14 at 5 p.m.

I look forward to seeing all of you in the Garden and thank you for all you do!

—Marla

The deadline for articles to be submitted for the November 2019 issue of OAK NOTES is Tuesday, October 15. Thank you for your prompt submission!!



FROM THE DIRECTOR

**Lucinda McDade,
RSABG Executive
Director**

Prepare to Bump!

As this issue of *Oak Notes* is going to 'print,' *Bump* is in our near-term future. The event will take place on Friday and Saturday evenings, October 11th and 12th. Among our family educational events, *Things that Go Bump in the Night* is, I think, my favorite—and I love them all so the competition for my favor is tough! What could be more special than being in our Garden after dark in the early fall when the evenings are just starting to have the possibility of a chill? What could be better than a few hundred children and their grown-ups (plus a number of unaccompanied grown-ups) exposed to the wonders and intricacies of nature as they navigate our trails after dark?

We will have wolves, birds (emphasis on owls), and as many creepy arthropods as can be found and held for the event (we already have a tarantula). Moths, snakes, bats, and the world's best spider show are repeat favorites, as are carnivorous plants. We are always working to get the crafts that are offered just right, which means (1) easy for staff and volunteers to master themselves and then to teach our guests to execute successfully, (2) not too productive of materials that will end up in the waste stream, and both (3) fun and (4) educational.

In recent years, thanks to key staff and students, we have increased the plant content of *Bump*, which is wonderful and entirely appropriate. Thanks to Bryce Kunzel, we now have a poisonous plants station – it looks like a harmless green plant but—WATCH OUT! There are so many ways for a plant to be dangerous: from seriously unpleasant dermatitis (think poison oak and poodle dog bush) to vomiting and even death – it is all very strange and fascinating. Thanks to Ph.D.

student Dylan Cohen, we now have a fungus station. Who doesn't love a weirdly colored, slightly sinister fungus? Who doesn't love learning about the fungi that live inside of insects—feeding on them from the inside out until the insect is dead and the fungus is ready to emerge and reproduce?

My favorite recent bit of evidence of the impact of *Bump* is from a child who came to the gift shop after the event to retrieve a forgotten item – when asked what her favorite station was, without hesitation, she said: FUNGUSES (correctly should be fungi but she was small enough to get a pass for a few more years). Her mother said she'd talked of little else since coming to *Bump*. Is mycology in her future? I am glad that we supported her natural curiosity, thus encouraging her to be an avid student of the natural world.

As those of you who have volunteered for a while know, *Bump* is an all hands on deck sort of event. We will be calling loud and clear for volunteers to help both nights. Please respond if you are able! Don't worry if you are not an expert on the topics presented at any of the stations – there are plenty of things for volunteers to do that do not involve such expertise (e.g., crowd management, trail monitoring) and/or we can team you with a knowledgeable person (think how much you will learn!). If you are crafty and have ideas for optimizing our craft stations, please raise your hand! If you have volunteered with *Bump* long enough to have a lot of knowledge and expertise regarding one or more stations, please consider letting Lisa Pritchard and Stephanie Smith know this. This is their first outing as the organizers of *Bump* and they will be grateful for your assistance.

Bump is always special and memorable in one way or the other, and last year was no exception. Who remembers what the weather contributed to *Bump* last year? About half-an-hour before the event was over on Friday night, a thunderstorm was suddenly upon us. Reports are that it contributed to the

special evening (we have joked that guests this year will be expecting that we conjure a thunderstorm as one of the things that go bump in the night!). It then proceeded to rain for most of the day on Saturday, stopping just an hour or so before “gates open” time. Staff and volunteers scrambled to bring indoors the stations that had to be under cover and to deploy all of our pop-up shelters as effectively as possible over the rest; maintenance flew into action to deploy DG over the wettest, soggiest places on our trails. AND, the event was a smash hit! Children arrived in rain boots and rain coats and had a glorious time jumping in puddles. Adults were clearly enjoying the first chance to wear cool season jackets in quite a while. Most importantly, thanks to the undaunted efforts of volunteers and staff, the content of *Bump* was top flight as always.

Join in the fun this year and I will see you on the trails!



**COMMUNITY
EDUCATION
COORDINATOR**
Lisa Pritchard,
Coordinator

Happy Fall to you! In my second year here at RSABG with a new job title of Community Education Coordinator, I have morphed what I was doing previously with some of what Judy used to do. I now share the Community Education office space and responsibilities with Stephanie Smith (see last months’ *Oak Notes*). Please stop in and say hello if you haven’t already.

The fall brings fresh winds filled with activity here at the Garden. I’d like to invite all of you to take part in our Community Educational classes this season. We’re offering a **Natural Dyeing class on Saturday, October 26 from 10 a.m.–12 p.m.** with a native plant-dyed silk scarf to take home This workshop will be taught by Allison Alford who graduated from Claremont

Graduate University with a Master of Fine Arts. She is co-founder of Next of Kin Studio, a boutique studio connecting people to nature through plant-dyed products and workshops. She also teaches natural dyeing at Armory Center for the Arts in Pasadena.

Coming back for his second time at the Garden on **Saturday, October 5 from 8–10 a.m.** will be Ben Page from Shinrin Yoku LA. His **Forest Therapy** class is very popular and a way of connecting to the Garden through stories, visualizations and meditative time. It is a two-hour program that can be truly transformative!

For children, I’ll be teaching another round of **Preschoolers with Parents on Wednesday mornings from 10–11 a.m.** Children can come with an adult to hike, make a craft, and hear a story based around a weekly garden theme. I’m always looking for beloved nature “read-alouds” to share with the kids. If you have any suggestions please let me know!

I hope to be seeing you this fall season and thank you for always being there for us!

ENRICHMENT& FIELD TRIPS **Lynn Miller, Volunteer** **Enrichment Program**

Enrichment Speaker, Stuart Woods from Sustainable Claremont

On Monday, October 28th at 12:00 p.m., we look forward to hearing from Stuart Woods, the Executive Director at Sustainable Claremont, a local nonprofit that “engages people in education and action to create a more sustainable community.” With a focus on environmental, social, and economic sustainability, his position includes overseeing urban forestry grants, a new Adopt-a-Tree program, maintaining contact with Claremont officials, overseeing all aspects of an Annual Earth Day Celebration, the fund raiser Gala, and other events. Before working for Sustainable Claremont, Dr. Woods was a writer for Eco America, a

climate communication organization that researches and provides guidelines that will improve communication for public leaders. In 2014, at Claremont Graduate University, his Ph.D research focused on how climate misinformation affects public discourse. For ten years, he taught American Government, Political Science, and Environmental Science at a number of Southern California colleges and universities. In addition to his work in climate and environmental communications, Stuart's interest in Claremont includes his service in development and grant writing for Shoes That Fit, the Claremont non-profit that provides shoes for children in need. Please mark your calendars for Monday, October 28th at 12:00 p.m., and then plan to join your fellow volunteers in the East classroom for our first Enrichment program of the year. Feel free to bring a lunch; drinks and snacks will be served.



VOLUNTEER PROGRAMS **Kathleen Noll,** **Manager** **of Volunteer Programs**

Save the Date:

Things that Go Bump in the Night: Friday & Saturday, October 11 & 12, 5:30–9:00 p.m.

Fall Plant Sale: Saturday, October 19; for RSABG Members 8:00–10:00 a.m., for the General Public 10:00 a.m.–4:30 p.m.

Recruiting:

RSABG needs your assistance! The Garden Shop and Grow Native Nursery need volunteers—can you help?

Garden Shop Assistant: volunteers wanted for switchboard, greeting guests, cashiering, directing visitors to their area of interest. Be the “Face of the Garden.” Morning shifts 9:00 a.m.–1:00 p.m. and afternoon shifts 1:00–5:00

FROM DAVID BRYANT **Director of Visitor Experience**

Things are about to go Bump! The time is drawing nearer for everyone's favorite nocturnal festivity, Things That Go Bump in the Night, hooting and howling off on October 11 and 12. As many of you know, this beloved education event offers families the chance to explore and experience nature at night. It is wonderful to see our community in the Garden during these magical hours, connecting with the oft-unseen sides of our environment.

A parliament of owls, a pack of wolves, a creep of tortoises, a clutter of spiders, and many other night-loving animals will share the magic of their twilight worlds. A Moon Garden, befit with night-blooming flowers, carnivorous plants, and other delightfully

eerie flora will welcome guests to experience the botanically unexpected. Themed crafts, natural science collections, night hikes, and many more stations and activities will further reveal “what comes out when the sun goes down.”

Judy Hayami and you, our great volunteers, have brought this special event to life each year for well over a decade. It has become a treasured community event and one that provides illumination and education through thoughtful and enriching experiences. I look forward to stewarding this next Things That Go Bump in the Night together.

If you would like to volunteer for one or both evenings, please visit [Volgistics](#) to review opportunities. We will be offering a volunteer orientation on Thursday, October 10 (time to be announced). If you have any questions, I am happy to chat!

p.m. are available throughout the week. The gift shop also needs volunteers for special events like Bump in the Night and Luminaria Nights.

Grow Native Nursery Assistant: volunteers wanted for weekly shifts Thursday through Sunday mornings, 9:00 a.m. – 12:30 p.m., or afternoons 12:30 – 4:00 p.m. Duties include greeting customers, watering, plant grooming, and maintaining neatness in the nursery area. GNN opens Saturday, October 19 and operates through May. This is a great way to support the Garden and learn about California native plants!

Coming up:

Acorn Harvest Festival: Sunday, November 17, 11:00 a.m.–3:00 p.m.

Luminaria Nights: Fridays & Saturdays, December 13, 14 & 20, 21, 6:00–9:00 pm

WARNING COLORATION Fred Brooks Nature Interpretor Photos by Debbie Woo

Some animals, especially insects, have developed bright coloration or high-contrast markings to warn their predators not to attack them. If it is a valid warning because the animal is unpalatable or has a strong defense, it is known as aposematism (*apo* = away + *sema* = sign = “Stay away!”). Its evolution benefits both predators and prey. The predators avoid a mortal or unpleasant taste, sting, bite, or smell (think skunk) and the prey avoid physical damage or death.

Milkweeds (*Asclepias* spp.) feed two aposematic insects: the red and black milkweed bug (*Oncopeltis fasciatus*), and larvae of the monarch butterfly (*Danaus plexippus*) with their white, yellow, and black crosswise stripes. These insects store toxic cardiac glycosides consumed from the plant, but their bird, wasp, and mantis predators are warned by the aposematic coloration.



How warning coloration evolved in certain organisms is unknown. Did it evolve slowly over many generations and in tandem with

its predators’ aversion? Did only resistant predators survive and produce resistant or averse offspring? Can offspring inherit this aversion or reluctance from their predator parents? Dietary conservatism is another possibility; some predators have an inborn, enduring avoidance of new prey because of the unknown consequences of consuming it.

Occasionally, the successful warning coloration of one aposematic species will be “copied” by another aposematic species. An example of this type of mimicry is the colored, transverse stripes of various bees and wasps. Sometimes, however, defenseless, non-aposematic organisms develop warning coloration that protects them from predators. One illustration is the robber fly (*Wyliea mydas*), with its black body and orange wings; add the stinging



A Very Happy October Birthday to:

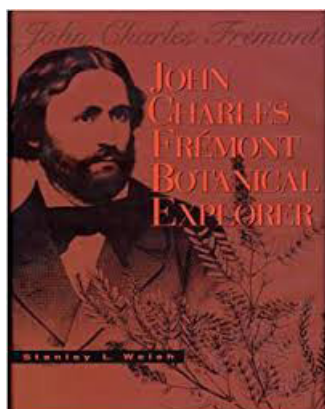
Alec Bryson	Jim Pinter-Lucke
Bob Muns	Kathy Henkins
Bonnie Shimmin	Kimberly Richartz
Carol Shafer	Linda Worlow
Carolyn Lucas	Michael Gregory
Gordon Olson	Valerie Cressy
Jeremiah Sailor	Wendy Olvera
Jim Brashler	

movements it makes with its abdomen and it mimics the deadly tarantula hawk wasp (*Pepsis grossa*). This form of mimicry is most effective when the defenseless species, the fly, is much fewer in number than the aposematic species, the wasp. Predators will have proportionally more negative experiences and be less likely to attack either the wasp or the fly.

For the novice: take care when collecting brightly colored or decorative animals.

BOOK OF THE MONTH

Joan Sweeney, Volunteer Library Committee



"John Charles Frémont Botanical Explorer," by Stanley L. Welsh. Illustrated. 449 pp. Missouri Botanical Garden Press. St Louis Missouri. 1998.

Numerous biographies have been written about the life of John Charles Fremont (1813-1890). He is a controversial figure, remembered for his military and political roles especially in the history of California. This is the only book I've encountered that focuses on Fremont's contribution to the study of botany in nineteenth-century America.

In 1842 he was an ambitious young army officer when he led the first of five topographical expeditions to map the land west of St. Louis, Missouri. He was also an amateur botanist, determined to collect plants along with his other duties. He chose to send the plants to John Torrey (1796-1873) in New York but set off before hearing back from the professor.

Fortunately, Torrey and his former student Asa Gray (1810-1888), who had been Torrey's student, were eager for new plant materials

from the American West. Torrey and Gray are towering figures in American botany.

Fremont's journals, edited by his wife and published by Congress, made him famous. His wife, Jessie Benton Fremont, was the daughter of Senator Thomas Hart Benton of Missouri. They married for love, but her family's connections often helped his career. Jessie was a remarkable woman and talented writer who became her husband's partner in most of his endeavors.

The author, Stanley L. Welsh Ph.D. (1928-) wrote in his introduction that he is a botanist, not a historian. He tried to fit the extensive historical research he did about Fremont, Torrey and Gray into the format of a botanical monograph. After the abstract and the introduction, the next hundred pages are about Fremont's expeditions. The next section describes where the plants listed in the appendices were found.

There are four appendices from page 208-430 listing all the plants collected on the Fremont expeditions. Appendix II is Fremont's eponymy. It lists forty plants named in his honor. Almost half of them are native to California. This book is an impressive scholarly achievement that required years of research. It's available to be checked out of the volunteer library.

NEW BOOKS IN THE VOLUNTEER LIBRARY

As you prepare for fall planting and the Grow Native Nursery Fall Plant Sale you may want to check out *Hummingbird Plants of the Southwest* by Marcy Scott. This book was recently added to the volunteer library and offers suggestions on plants that attract hummers to your garden.

Another helpful new guide is the second edition of *California Master Gardener Handbook*. It has been described as the definitive source for practical advice for gardeners throughout the West. It can be found in the reference section of the volunteer library.



SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 2, 2019

Sign-Up At The Admission Kiosk On October 3

**Van Pool: First Come, First Served Or Private
Transportation**

**The Details: bring water, lunch, sun protection, and warm
clothes.**

Join us for a cruise (1.5 hr. one way) to Prisoner Harbor with Island Packers Cruises for a ranger-guided tour of the Nature Conservancy Area of Santa Cruz Island.

- Arrive Island Packers at Ventura Harbor at 8:15 a.m.
- Depart Ventura Harbor for Santa Cruz Island at 9:00 a.m.
- Guided tour of Nature Conservancy area (4.5-mile RT hike) at 10:30 a.m.
- Depart Santa Cruz Island for Ventura Harbor at 3:30 p.m.
- Arrive Ventura Harbor at 5:00 p.m.
- Price \$55/person (does not include cost of ground transportation).

VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT: RICH GRIFFIN



Rich was one of the first people I met when I started my volunteer career and Nature Interpreter training in 2017. His easy manner and helpfulness made me feel welcome and valued as I began my new

journey.

A Cal Poly grad, Rich is a Claremont resident and married to Linda, with a son, daughter-in-law, and two granddaughters living nearby. He enjoys travel, camping, hiking, and spending time with family and close friends. A retired paramedic for the Los Angeles City Fire Department, he spent his career as an EMT instructor in the Training Division and finished as an EMS Captain responsible for supervising emergency medical operations.

Rich began as a volunteer in 2009. He decided that leading tours would give him an opportunity to share with others his knowledge and enthusiasm for the physical world around us and the plants and animals

inhabiting it. His first event was Bump in the Night, which is still a favorite. He has also participated in the Annual Plant Sale, Acorn Harvest Festival, Bird Fest, Wildflower Show, Teacher Open House, Claremont Folk Festival, and Claremont Wine Walk. As a Tour Team Captain, he has served on the Nominating and Touring Committees.

Rich shared his favorite story: "I was leading tour for a group of young elementary age students one day and about 10 minutes into the tour as I was waxing eloquent about something of great importance, one of the students spoke-up and said, 'Mister you sure talk a lot.' Humbling as it was, that child's candid observation reminded me that we sometimes just have to keep our mouths shut, get out of the way and let the garden do the talking. I'm not always successful, but I try to remember what that child said every time I lead a tour."

Rich concluded with what he likes best about our Garden: "The sense that everyone in their own way is contributing toward an important and worthwhile mission." Ten years later, he is still having a blast. "It's fun, rewarding, exhausting at times, frustrating sometimes, but always deeply satisfying."



NEWSLETTER OF THE RANCHO SANTA ANA BOTANIC GARDEN VOLUNTEERS
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