

Oak Notes

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March 2021

NEWSLETTER OF THE CALIFORNIA BOTANIC GARDEN VOLUNTEERS

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FROM THE PRESIDENT Marla White, Volunteer President

"Study nature, love nature, stay close to nature. It will never fail you."

— Frank Lloyd Wright

As March begins, the beauty of Spring with her palette of colors comes alive in our Garden, homes, and landscapes. Spring is my favorite season as I can see the changes taking place and watch the plants awaken from their winter slumber. Our Garden is at its best during this time and I encourage you to walk not only the Mesa but in the Communities, which offer wide spaces—often in quiet solitude.

With the COVID-19 vaccine being available to more and more Californians this month, I hope CalBG departments will be reaching out for certain volunteers to return and help during the coming months. Health guidelines will continue to direct when and how this happens. Sadly, I do not expect a return to leading school tours until at least the Fall.

Previous Enrichment Webinars are archived on the Digital Content page <https://www.calbg.org/visit/blog>. This is a terrific reference, especially if you could not join any of the live sessions. There are some great classes scheduled through Community Education on Using Native Plants in your Diet and Garden, and Watercolor Painting and Nature Photography. I am especially excited to dust off my digital camera and try my hand at macro photography. I have come to rely on my cell phone, which does a fair job in most cases.

Our March *Oak Notes* will begin a series of articles about each of the Volunteer Executive Board positions, plus the Volunteer Committees that also serve on the Board. An organization stays fresh and effective when more people become involved, bringing their new ideas, creativity, and strategic ways of implementing change. My hope is that as you become more aware of these opportunities, you will consider joining a committee and ultimately accede to a chair level.

Looking forward to seeing you around our Garden soon.

—Marla

The deadline for articles to be submitted for the April 2021 issue of OAK NOTES is **Monday, March 15**. Thank you for your prompt submission!

Volgistics reminder:
Please submit your monthly volunteer hours to Volgistics. Every volunteer minute counts.



FROM THE DIRECTOR

**Lucinda McDade, CalBG
Executive Director**

Hello Faithful Volunteers!

First, I hope that many of you—certainly those in the eligible age categories—have gotten or will soon be getting the vaccine against COVID-19. Of course, that will not put us entirely out of the woods but it will let us rest easier in terms of the well-being of many of you! It is clear that we will be masking and distancing for quite some time to come.



A Very Happy March Birthday to:

Mark Kay	Harmut Wisch
Lee Boss	Sid Tice
Michelle Small	Lisa Broderick
Sharon Thompson	Lynn Miller
Kathy Roth	Natasha Khanna-Dang
Christopher Jarosz	Paul Mann
Lee Waggener	Olga Lobaco
Arlene Noreen	Charles Gale
Elijah Bonnemere	Pauline Assaria
Hevelynn Nealy	Dipaali Reddy
Gloria Slosberg	
Joan Sweeney	

Second, *California in a Vase* is out! We have received many copies of this wonderful book, which of course is based on, and entirely features the work of, our volunteer Native Designs group. It is now available at the Poppy Shop and also on-line. At \$29.95, it is a steal but, by now, you should have been notified of a discount code to enable volunteers to acquire the gorgeous book even more inexpensively. If not (or you need a reminder), contact me, Amanda or Ming.

Third, with the vaccine and (finally!) decreasing caseloads of the virus in our area, I have asked all staff leaders of areas that rely on volunteers to begin planning for bringing you back safely. We are so looking forward to having you volunteers back among us! I trust that you will understand that this will happen sooner in some areas than in others, and will also be incremental. Outdoors on the grounds, it is happening as I write. Also outdoors, some of you will soon be helping us with another batch of exit interviews associated with the interpretive master planning process. These interviews will be designed to help us understand what our guests are appreciating (or not appreciating!) about our signage, much of it still very new. Your PR committee is taking the lead in working with staff on that process and only those who are fully vaccinated will be helping. Still, everyone will be behind plexiglass, masked and distanced.

Fourth, related to those exit interviews, we are about to mount large format maps in each of the three welcome gazebos. The maps will be just for the area to which the gazebo in question welcomes and orients guests. They will prominently identify special gardens worthy of visiting. I will be very curious to have your feedback on these maps!

And, lastly for this edition of Oak Notes, construction projects—The Forest Pavilion continues to advance! The gabion walls are essentially done; all utility lines are in the ground, have passed inspection, and are now underground. The support building does not seem to have changed very much of late but a lot has gone on that is not readily apparent.



And WHAT is going on behind the administration building? The rather significant happenings behind the administration building are to do with the renovation of the California Courtyard. It is to be paved and hardscaped beautifully. The landscaped 'island' between it and the parking area in back of the building will be expanded a bit to serve as a rain garden to receive and retain the water that will run off of the paved surface. The stairs on the west have been eliminated, to be replaced with a gently sloped entryway for full ADA access. The entryways on both the west and east will be marked with natural flagstone 'patches' stylistically mirroring the Oval in front of the building. The seat wall around the courtyard will be refurbished and the electrical outlets will be recessed into the wall. These and a number of other improvements will give us a beautiful courtyard that is perfect for events and parties of all sorts. Specifically, NO MORE horrible DG colored astroturf (aka burlap)!



It may look to you like more is happening there than 'just' the above and you would be right. We knew about a natural gas line that runs more or less diagonally across the courtyard from west to east. We did NOT know that there is a high voltage electrical box right in the center of the entryway on the west side. This powers the scanning electron microscope and the box must be moved. Actually, it is to be replaced by two boxes on either side of the paved area (if you are as interested in infrastructure as I am, I can explain further—just ask). This electrical work will be done in the third week of February.



We also did NOT know about a magnificently creative looking 'element' of the old irrigation system that was just south of the end of the seat wall on the east side of the courtyard and not very deep underground. We will never know why it was

assembled as it was (like a big ugly pretzel). However, what we DO know is that the east end of the building turns out—unbeknownst to me (and I thought I knew all about the hidden wonders of the old irrigation system)—to have been on the old irrigation system. NOT good and had to be corrected.

Yes, you read that last passage correctly: past tense. The trench down the middle of the driveway in back of the building now accommodates a water pipe that takes water from the central/west wing of the building to the east wing. This water line is part of the dedicated domestic water system that comes to us from a meter on College Avenue (vs. from the north of the property which is the source of the irrigation water). All that remains to be done is to cover the trench and then repave.

When it comes to underground surprises at our Garden, it is really only surprising when there are no surprises. Faithful readers will remember the giant cube of bricked space that we discovered under the footings for the westernmost gabion wall of the Forest Pavilion. Really, the surprises in the courtyard pale compared to that!

Of course, these additional surprises add to the expense of the project and that makes me very happy that I have set aside a small 'director's discretionary account' that enables me to cover such expenses without cutting in to programming. Special thanks to a handful of donors who have been kind enough to help establish and sustain that fund! It may sound like a slush fund but there is nothing slushy about plumbing, electricity and paving!

Onward into spring! Let's all do whatever we can to encourage nice winter rain storms to drop into So Cal before much longer!

Thanks, as always, for all that you do!



COMMUNITY EDUCATION

Kristen Barker, Coordinator

Hello All!

It is starting to look like spring in the Garden! You can see new buds bursting and more flowers blooming every day! Hope you all are able to come for a walk to see the Garden come alive in person.



We had a great time putting together the classes and activities for Bird Month in February. We received wonderful pictures for the photo contest, had many participants making observations for the iNaturalist contest, and saw many people of all ages take part in the scavenger hunt! The Introduction to Birding class by Tina Stoner was a

major hit! You can watch the recording on the Digital Content page of the website if you missed it. As I write this, we are about a week away from Chip Grubb's Habitat Gardening for Birds class and the class is filling up!



As we look into March, I am very excited about the virtual classes we are offering. Antonio Sanchez, Nursery Manager of the Santa Monica Mountain Fund and former RSABG

staff, will be leading a class on edible native plants called Eating California! Using Native Plants in your Diet and Garden. It is not to be missed! Aleta Jacobson, artist and instructor, will be back to teach Meditative Art, which is a perfect way for all of us to harness moments of peace. And Kier Morse, botanist and photographer will lead a Nature Photography class to help you capture the beauty of spring!

Be sure to check the Classes and Events page of the website for more information and for a look at what's ahead!



VISITOR EXPERIENCE COORDINATOR

Danielle Wildasinn

Hello everyone,

I hope the new year is treating you well! Our exhibition, *Clayifornia: Ceramic Sculpture in the California Sunshine*, is still up and shining in the Garden. Staff from AMOCA (American Museum of Ceramic Art) recently hosted CalBG Research Scientist Carrie Kiel, Community Education Coordinator Kristen Barker, and me for a behind-the-scenes tour of their current exhibits, their permanent collection, and their Ceramics Studio! We collaborated on planning joint programming for the remaining duration of the exhibition, so keep an eye out for exciting announcements relating to *Clayifornia*!

In early February, the Visitor Experience department had to say goodbye to Visitor Experience Associate Michelle Fraley. Michelle accepted a full-time position from her other employer, so no longer works in the kiosk. She assures us she will be back in the future to volunteer, but until then we will miss her!

Following an eventful Bird Month, we look forward to a beautiful and colorful March. Walking through the Garden, I'm already noticing wildflowers blooming and we are expecting a busy Spring!

Thank you,

A BRIEF HISTORY OF NATIVE AMERICANS IN CALIFORNIA—PART 1

by Shaunna Gygli

California Indians have been here for at least 15,000 years and there is evidence of people arriving even earlier. This evidence also suggests that the First People either crossed over a land bridge connecting Siberia and Alaska or by traveling the “kelp highway.” The original Californians were a diverse population separated by geography and language into at least 135 distinct dialects. They were hunter gatherers. An ample food supply and absence of war made for a largely healthy population estimated at 300,000. These people continued to develop highly successful cultures until the advent of the Spanish Mission period. Captain Juan Rodriguez Cabrillo was the first European to explore the coast of California. In 1542, he claimed the land for the King of Spain. Because

Spain was busy colonizing Mexico, Alta California was forgotten for the next 200 years.

The mission system in Alta California started when the Russians, hunting sea otter in Northern California, became a threat in the King of Spain’s eye. Father Junipero Serra was sent to Christianize the Indians, “civilize” them, teach them agriculture, and ultimately make Spanish citizens of them. He started the San Diego Mission in 1769, and with other Franciscan fathers encouraged Indians to relocate to the missions. This led to the death of thousands through disease and loss of their culture. The Franciscans and the military used coercion and punishment to keep the Indians at the mission where they toiled to support the system’s economy.

Mexico gained independence from Spain in 1821 and in the 1830s under Mexico the missions were secularized and abandoned. Although the original plan was to give the land and assets to the Indians, large land grants were given to non-Indians. The

ZOOM WEBINARS FOR MARCH

All courses require pre-registration with discounts for CalBG members. More information on the CalBG website <https://www.calbg.org/events-programs/events>

Eating California Using Native Plants in Your Diet & Garden. Saturday, March 13, 11a.m.–noon. <https://11213.blackbaudhosting.com/11213/tickets?tab=2&txobjid=36c75623-4d95-4d4f-bd51-1967d0481e44>

Native food enthusiast Antonio Sanchez, Nursery Manager of the Santa Monica Mountains Fund, discusses the ancient and emerging field of California native foods and their cultivation. Learning from and paying honor to many living traditions to find a place in local gardens and kitchens. Explore some of the many native California plants that you can grow at home and incorporate into your diet.

Meditative Art. Saturday, March 20, 10 a.m.–noon. <https://www.calbg.org/event/meditative-art>

Learn to harness that feeling of Zen through Meditative Art, the practice of mindfulness in

creating small pieces of art that will bring you peace and relaxation. Aleta Jacobson, artist and instructor, guides us through this practice. Learn how to make loose watercolor washes and then enhance the work with decorative pens.

Nature Photography. March 27, 11 a.m.–noon <https://www.calbg.org/event/nature-photography>

Nature comes in such a diversity of intriguing patterns and colors! Learn to get the most out of your camera as you explore the natural world around you! Keir Morse, botanist, and photographer, introduces the basics of photography. Gain insight into camera settings such as aperture, shutter speed, ISO and more. With the use of example photographs, you will be able to visualize the effects of these settings and begin to understand when and why you may want to use them.

25,000-acre Rancho San Jose, which now includes Claremont, La Verne, Pomona, and San Dimas, was given to Ygnacio Palomares and Ricardo Vejar. Following the Mexican American War in 1848, the Gold Rush, and the influx of U.S. citizens, the remaining Indian population was further decimated. The people were stripped of the meager rights they had under Mexican rule and forced from their ancestral homes.

Part 2 will consider the history of the California Indians from the late 19th century to the present. In following articles I'll feature: cultural traditions, technologies, ceremonies, art, trade, and the natural resources (plants!) the people used. Biographies of the local Tongva tribe past and present, including those of other California Native Americans, will also be featured.

PHOTOS TELL HISTORY OF CALBG

by Joan Sweeney

These stunning aerial photos in the California Botanic Garden collection were taken more than forty years apart. The black-and-white photo shows the nearly completed administration building in the Garden's new location in 1951. The 1994 color photo captures the Garden and the surrounding Claremont neighborhood.

Susanna Bixby Bryant created Rancho Santa Ana Botanic Garden in the 1920's on her ranch in Orange County. The mission of the Garden was to preserve California flora, "foster scientific research" and "promote public welfare." She even had the foresight to provide in the founding legal documents for "the removal of the botanic garden and herbarium...to some other location" if necessary. According to a history of the Garden by Dr. Lee Lenz, after Mrs. Bryant's death in 1946, the Garden's board of trustees decided an affiliation with the Claremont Colleges would help fulfill the original mission. The Garden's relocation to Claremont was announced in 1950.

Indian Hill Mesa, the site of the administration building, was part of a tract of land Ellen Browning Scripps donated to the Claremont Colleges. She

supported the vision of James Blaisdell, the president of Pomona College, to create an "Oxford-type" group of colleges. She then founded Scripps College for Women in 1926. Claremont Graduate School had opened in 1925. Claremont's Men's College (now Claremont McKenna) opened in 1946, Harvey Mudd in 1955, and Pitzer College in 1963. The Graduate School became Claremont Graduate University and the Keck Institute for Graduate Studies was founded in 1997.



Claremont's population in 1950 was 6,327. There were citrus groves and very few houses north of Foothill Boulevard. At the top of the black-and-white photo, a citrus grove is visible. A road through that grove became Radcliffe Drive. The city's population doubled to 12,633 by 1960 and doubled again by 1970 to over 24,000 as housing replaced the groves. Development continued toward the foothills and the current population is about 36,000.



In the 1994 photo the green, tree-dotted expanse adjoining the Garden is the Claremont Golf Course. It opened in 1959 on land leased from the colleges and closed in 2013. Across Indian Hill Boulevard from the golf course is the “new” Claremont High School, completed in 1971.

Photo credits: b/w photo on 10/23/1951 Robert C. Frampton, color photo (5/10/1994) Ken Gray.

LOCAL MILKWEED SPECIES FOR MONARCHS IN INLAND SoCAL VALLEYS

by Steve Bryant



Asclepias fascicularis (Narrow-Leaf milkweed): Narrow, smooth leaves and growth to about six feet. Top growth generally dies off in Fall, new growth starts some weeks after the rains start. In my

garden’s alluvial soil it doesn’t spread much and goes dormant on schedule, with new growth starting Feb–Mar. In heavy loam it spreads invasively and new growth often starts before old growth dies. Blooms generally start in Mar–Apr and continue until Fall, producing plentiful seed. Dead growth can be unsightly. Sow seeds ~1/4-in deep outdoors in Fall before the rains and wait for germination around March. Start seeds indoors at any time. Potted plants usually survive transplanting any time, though TLC is often needed in hot weather. Stake if needed. Plants usually bloom from seed in the first to third years. Nectar may attract Tarantula Hawk wasps.



A. eriocarpa (Kotolo): as above except for large, fuzzy leaves. New growth may not start until March–April. Often blooms later, May–July. Seedlings may not go completely dormant the first winter.

F. cynanchoides (Climbing Milkweed): In my garden, this vining milkweed is not as attractive to monarchs

as the two preceding species. As an evergreen vine, it can still lose its small leaves during drought. Stems can overgrow nearby plants; trellis-growing is suitable. Blooms nearly all year with garden water, otherwise starts to bloom after the first rains.

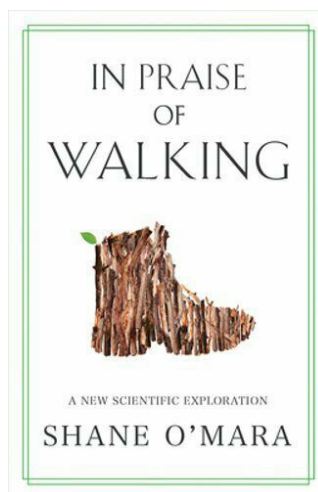


Local is best: plants growing in the wild have adapted to local conditions, usually over long periods of time. Mixing gene pools can lead to diminished local adaptation, so best to plant milkweeds that are from seeds collected locally. Try to buy plants and seeds from native plant growers (e.g., CalBG, Theodore Payne) but even then, ask about the native locale (usually unknown when bought over the internet).

Next issue: Milkweed and Monarch Eaters

BOOK OF THE MONTH

Christine Ilgen, Volunteer Library Committee



In Praise of Walking, a new scientific exploration. By Shane O'Mara. Random House, 2019. 218 pp.

About the author: Shane O'Mara is from Dublin, Ireland, where he is professor of brain research at Trinity College.

Language is often identified as a distinctly human trait. O'Mara argues that the ability to walk upright is another. It is the ability to walk that led to human mobility and for our species to move out of Africa and populate the globe. He compares humans to the primitive sea squirt that begins an aquatic existence

as a free-swimming animal and eventually, after eating its major organs, including its brain, becomes a vegetative organism fixed to a surface. O'Mara frequently digresses from his initial point: once he explains the virtues of walking (especially outdoors), while walking, new ideas that demand elaboration spring to mind. The digressions may go on for a substantial portion of a chapter.

In Praise of Walking is a neuroscientist's detailed analysis of the exercise of walking and the role of the brain in walking. It is also an explanation of the creation of the hippocampus's map of where

one started, the route taken, and the finish: The hippocampus, the brain's cognitive center, is the GPS of walking. O'Mara cites experiments with objective measurements such as brain size or blood lipid (triglycerides, HDL, LDL) levels as the basis for analysis. Subjective measurements such as mood are also tallied. The effects of walking are listed as: walking improves mood, helps counter depression, improves cognitive function, and improves the interaction between skeletal muscles and the brain. His advice to all: "Get out, (walk), and interact with the environment."

PROJECT BLISS

Kyra Madunich

Call for Community Science Volunteers!



From the perspective of a tiny snail, our yards create a patchwork of different habitats that constitute radically different worlds. For my senior thesis as a Biology Major at Pomona College, I have set out to

work with community volunteers to make sense of how our individual landscaping choices affect the diversity and distribution of these small creatures. The project, called BLISS (Biodiversity and Landscaping—Isopods and Snails and Slugs), would greatly benefit from quick surveys of residential yards conducted by willing CalBG members. Most of you have probably seen a snail or a slug before; both are small, soft-bodied creatures, and snails have a shell used to protect themselves that slugs do not. Isopods, on the other hand, have rigid, segmented bodies (think of roly-polies) of which there are nearly 4,000 species. To identify an isopod, look for two pairs of antennae and an armor-like body with seven segments that each have a set of legs. By taking photos of any snail, slug, and isopod species you see during your survey, we will be able to help answer the following questions: how does the way you water your

residence affect what snails you find? How do the plants species you have, and the surrounding environment, affect their populations?

If you are interested in participating, choose any part of your residence that represents a single type of habitat: for example, a patch of grass by your mailbox, or a rock garden with native plants. To make sure we can make fair comparisons between surveys, each survey needs to be 30 "person-minutes" long, meaning that one person can search for 30 minutes, two people could search for 15 minutes each, and so on. Before starting the timer for your search, fill out this google form <https://forms.gle/vcnK8NaogUJkw78A7>, which will allow me to correctly classify your yard into a category for analysis. Start your timer and carefully search your area, including under rocks, between branches, and near sprinkler heads, as you're likely to find critters in unexpected places! Take photos of what you find. When you're done searching, you can either upload your photos to the BLISS project's iNaturalist page (linked below), or email me, Kyra Madunich, at kamn2015@mymail.pomona.edu. For more information, please don't hesitate to contact me via email, or visit the project page at <https://www.inaturalist.org/projects/bliss-biodiversity-and-landscaping-isopods-and-snails-and-slugs-8bf70a47-50d2-4c16-bc70-b718d876096d/>.

Happy searching!

MEET MARTY PURDY, CALBG MASTER'S STUDENT

Salutations! My name is Marty Purdy and I am a second-year master's student in the botany program here at the Garden. I began my CalBG graduate school career just over a year and a half ago (fall 2019) and should be wrapping up my research and defending my thesis within the next year—give or take a couple months!

I am a native southern Californian and have spent most of my life within this state. Raised in the expansive suburbia of Orange County, I am endlessly grateful to my parents for dragging me



Me in a subalpine meadow within my study site last summer.

into wild places near and far and instilling in me a profound appreciation for the natural world. I followed this passion in college studying Ecology, Evolution, and Environmental Studies at UC Santa Cruz. In the six years spanning my undergraduate and graduate education, I pursued a variety of jobs in the environmental and educational fields. A few personal highlights include teaching living history programs aboard a historic tall ship in Dana Point Harbor, backcountry trail work in the Trinity Alps of northern California, and six months on an ant eradication team on Johnston Atoll—a remote group of islands 800 miles west-southwest of Honolulu.

Like most recent master's students here, I have undertaken a floristic study for my research (known as a “flora” for short). Frequent *Oak Notes* readers will recall Nina House's article on her floristics research in the January 2021 issue, but in brief a floristic study involves the comprehensive documentation of plant diversity in a particular area often through the collection of physical specimens. The area I have chosen for my flora is an alpine-subalpine region of the east slope of the Sierra Nevada just southwest of the town of Bishop, CA.

I chose this area, called Coyote Ridge, for several reasons. First and foremost, childhood summers spent car camping in this region of California forever imprinted the stark beauty of the Eastern Sierra landscape on my mind, and over the years I have pursued any opportunity to work and recreate here. Second, preliminary research I conducted for this project revealed that a majority of alpine peaks in the Sierra Nevada remain botanically unexplored. This, combined with the fact that alpine plant species are disproportionately threatened with extinction from climate change, makes it urgent to collect baseline data and document the floras of alpine areas like Coyote Ridge before it is too late. Third, compared to surrounding areas of the Sierra Nevada, Coyote Ridge is unusual in two main respects: it contains large formations of uncommon rock types, such as limestone and marble, known to host rare plants species, and it lacks signs of recent glaciation and

therefore represents a potential glacial refugium. A glacial refugium is an area where plants and animals may have survived repeated cycles of glaciation (ice ages) in place while most of the surrounding landscape was scraped clean by glaciers. Probably due in part to these factors, a number of rare and unusual plant species are already known from Coyote Ridge in spite of relatively few historical collections.

Although my last field season was truncated on both ends from challenges introduced by COVID-19 and catastrophic wildfires, I remain on track to finish fieldwork this coming summer! To date, I have made 14 trips to my study area resulting in 779 plant collections and 550 georeferenced iNaturalist photo observations. I am currently identifying collections made during the last two field seasons, uploading observations of collections and associated species to an iNaturalist project ([view here](#)), and preparing for my final field season. That I can pursue my professional passion for biodiversity research and conservation in one of my favorite landscapes, the alpine Sierra Nevada, still amazes me and I am humbled to have this opportunity.



Top right: Fieldwork in the alpine fellfields of Coyote Ridge.

Middle right: Curiously short statured *Mentzelia laevicaulis* growing on a marble slope at 11,000 ft.

Below: Field of *Lupinus* species with a snow-covered Coyote Ridge in the background.



BOARD HIGHLIGHTS

In its coming issues, *Oak Notes* will be highlighting volunteer board members and committees.



PRESIDENT OF THE VOLUNTEER ORGANIZATION Marla White

My favorite functions as President are to act as an ambassador for the Volunteer Organization, meet people who share my interest in the natural world, and help our renowned nonprofit become more visible and successful. The primary duties of the President include: overseeing volunteer board meetings, including writing the agendas and reviewing previous Board minutes; meeting frequently with the staff Volunteer Manager to facilitate volunteers' needs coming to and at the Garden; regularly attending subcommittee meetings on personnel, publicity, visitor education, hospitality and enrichment matters; representing the volunteer organization on the CalBG Advisory Council; assisting in the recruitment of new volunteers; speaking at new member and Volunteer Orientation sessions; writing the monthly *Oak Notes* column and providing photos; administering the Volunteers' Facebook page and publishing events on multiple sites that encourage membership; emailing updates to all Volunteers and the Advisory Council; setting up fundraisers; providing information facilitating grant applications; and serving as an ambassador for the Volunteers in other public arenas. The president

attends every public and volunteer event possible. These include: Luminaria, Bird Fest, Bump in the Night, Grapevine Harvest, Wildflower Walks, Acorn Day, Honey-Do Crew, Native Designs, and education materials workdays. The goal is to facilitate Volunteer participation and encourage member support for our unique native Garden.

SECRETARY OF THE VOLUNTEER BOARD OF DIRECTORS Wanda Ewing



Serving as Secretary of the California Botanic Garden Volunteer Organization's Board of Directors for 1.5 years has been a rewarding experience. This commitment has given me a sense of purpose and a

feeling of value. For many years I have loved wandering through the California Botanic Garden, admiring the beauty of the native plants at each season and viewing the antics of the birds and animals busy at their tasks of foraging and play. Becoming more involved as the board secretary, I have gained a deeper understanding of the Garden's purpose and functions. Through the continuing education courses available to members and the public, I have learned much about growing and preserving California native plants and their value and uses. This knowledge encouraged me to introduce natives into my home garden. I can hardly wait for my hillsides to bloom with California poppies and am excitedly watching for barn owls to move into the box placed in our pine tree a couple of months ago. I recently certified my yard as a Wildlife Habitat through the National Wildlife Federation. Friendships developed with fellow volunteers have

enriched my life, especially during these times of isolation. The secretarial duties are to keep the minutes of the monthly meetings of the Board of Directors and the Quarterly Volunteer meetings. Patricia Brooks, former board secretary, created an easy-to-use templet for typing the meeting minutes, which I send to the president, Marla White, for review. The draft minutes are then approved at the next month's board meeting. I look forward to our meetings and enjoy hearing the committee updates and about Garden activities. I highly recommend serving on the volunteer board.

VISITOR EDUCATION COMMITTEE

**Ann Morgan and Katy Douglass,
co-chairs**

Being part of the Visitor Education Committee (VEC) is fun, educational, and gratifying. We work with the Education Department to support the Garden Guides, school and adult tour programs, and the Garden's family education events such as Bump in the Night, Acorn Festival, and Bird Fest to name a few. VEC also helps support Garden educational programs through material work parties, where materials are created and organized for specific events and school tours. Currently the VEC is comprised of Garden Guides but membership is open to any interested volunteers. The committee meets every other month on the 3rd Thursday and we have been meeting via Zoom during the pandemic.

Some VEC accomplishments before the pandemic include revisions of the one-hour school tours for pre-K through second grade, and a complete overhaul of the two-hour Adaptation and Survival Tour (grades 3–5). These revisions brought tour content in line with the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) for those grades. Our next goal is to make revisions and align the two-hour Web of Life tour with NGSS.

This year during the pandemic VEC has been providing support and feedback to Community Education Coordinator Kristen Barker as she develops worksheets, videos, and other educational materials for teachers, parents, and students working

in the online learning environment. Future activities include planning for the safe resumption of tours. Of course, at this time we don't know when that will be or what obstacles we will face—we may find ourselves planning for something completely different.

VEC is always looking for new volunteers. If you are interested in having a positive and lasting impact on our Garden community, please contact us. We would love to have you!

Contact co-chair Katy Douglass katydouglass@twc.com or Ann Morgan aemorgan451@gmail.com

VOLUNTEER LIBRARY COMMITTEE

**Ann Baumann, Barbara Nakaoka,
co-chairs**





The Volunteer Library Committee manages the Volunteer Library. This includes selecting new books that could help volunteers increase their knowledge on a variety of topics related to volunteer roles at the Garden. Committee members work together to maintain the

appearance of the library and monitor the borrowing and return of books. The committee selects yearly themes of interest that correspond to Garden events. Committee members also share the responsibility of writing book reviews for inclusion in *Oak Notes*. This writing of articles for the volunteers' newsletter has been the committee's primary focus during the past year due to the temporary closure of the volunteer library. The chairperson schedules monthly meetings, which have continued to meet via ZOOM despite the library being closed. The meetings provide a fun opportunity to exchange ideas, which are even more appreciated during this time of "staying at home." The Volunteer Library Committee provides a wonderful opportunity to learn about new books of interest to those who love nature.

AROUND THE GARDEN

Volunteers pictured right, top to bottom: Herb Boss, Peggy Perry and Yvonne Wilson, and Dean Shimek. Below: forest pavilion, restrooms, CA Courtyard revamp.





New Book Launch!

California in a Vase: native plant arrangements through the seasons

We are excited to announce the launch of *California in a Vase*!

This book endeavors to inspire people to bring California's beautiful native plants into their gardens and from there into their homes through decorative arrangements. Featuring fabulous arrangements from California Botanic Garden's very own Native Designs volunteer group and The Gottlieb Native Garden, each season is celebrated through the changing palette of native plants. The wonderful photography shows how you can achieve designs that are refined, rustic, bold, delicate, evocative and more. We hope this book inspires you to bring the wild beauty of California into your home!

A Special Discount for You!



To celebrate our love for native plants and the release of this book, all CalBG Volunteers are entitled to \$10 off your first copy of *California in a Vase* (full price is \$29.95) using the code **ARRANGEMENT10!**

- You can purchase the book on our [Online Store](#) and enter the code at checkout. Books may be picked up at your convenience at the CalBG Admissions Kiosk – just show proof of your book purchase to our staff! Note that if you shop for other merchandise or native plants from the GNN on the online store, our staff will need time to get the other items ready and have to work with you to schedule a specific pickup time.
- If you prefer to purchase books in person at the Poppy Shop, simply give the code to our Admissions Kiosk staff when you make your payment (only credit cards accepted at this time)