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- **Communications/
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- **Education:**
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- **Membership:**
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- **Native Plants:**
Martha Mallery
- **Publicity:**
Pamela Reyes

**NATURE
CENTER
COORDINATOR:**
JAMES REXROTH

The Dripping Faucet

VOLUME 3, ISSUE 3

FALL 2009

Miwok and Yokuts Baskets on Display

Through a generous loan from the State Indian Museum, California Indian Heritage Center, the Oak Grove Nature Center now has a collection of Miwok and Yokuts baskets on display.

The loan is scheduled to last for one year with the potential to extend it for an additional year (or more).

On display we have examples of both coiled and twined baskets. Coiled baskets are made by starting with a central 'knot' of grass, sedge or willow (or several other basketry plant types) and 'coiled' around itself. The coils are stitched together with sedge root or sometimes other plant fibers. The stitching

can be so tight that the basket will hold water. Redbud and some other plants or dyed sedge



Several of the baskets that are on loan from the State Indian Museum. Photo by J. Rexroth

root may be used to stitch or over-stitch designs on the baskets.

Twined baskets tend to be more open in their weave but can (by experienced basket makers) be made tight enough to hold water. The warps of twined baskets generally radiate out from the center knot of the basket and the wefts are twined around these to make the basket.

Be sure to get out to the Nature Center to see these lovely baskets before they must return to their home at the State Indian Museum.

We all know how time flies, so why not come out and have some fun.

James Rexroth,
Nature Center Coordinator

PLANTS GONE WILD!

Over a decade ago the California Native Plant Society, Oak Grove Docents, and Parks and Recreation Department established a habitat garden next to the Nature Center. The native plants

in the OAK WOODLAND are

thriving, the GRASSLAND vernal pool was a springtime beauty, but the STREAMSIDE habitat is success gone wild.

California roses, elderberries, sedges and mugwort have so overgrown and intermingled along the creek that I almost get

lost. Help! We need some folks who can come to the garden for a few hours to trim the roses and overzealous berries. Please call Martha at 477-3966, and we can arrange a time. No experience necessary.

Martha Mallery

Remembering Bob Easton

Memories of Bob will carry on in the minds of the children he introduced to the Oak Grove. He shared his enthusiasm and wonder for Nature as they walked together on the Yokuts trail. He will truly be missed.

Pamela Reyes, Docent Council President

With happy memories of Bob as my mentor on the Yokuts Trail, teaching me (by example) how to guide elementary school students on an informative and enjoyable walk. The children especially enjoyed Bob's explanation about how a wasp's "spitting" contributed to the creation of an oak gall.

Nancy Shephard, Docent

I knew Bob Easton all too briefly as a retired ranger, writer and park volunteer. His ability to introduce young visitors to the flora and fauna of the oak woodland with soft-spoken good nature was admirable.

I recently learned that he also cared about the feral fauna of our community and served as a member of the Abandoned Cat Team.

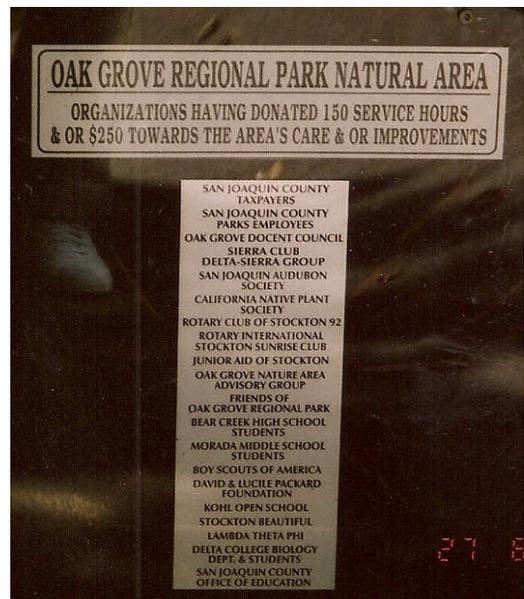
Bob's gentle personality is deeply missed.

Martha Mallery, Docent Council Treasurer

I always enjoyed my conversations with Bob, whether we talked about his adventures as a ranger or the goings on at the Nature Center. I will miss those talks and him.

James Rexroth, Nature Center Coordinator

Photos from the Contributors Oak Rounds Unveiling



WOODPECKERS ARE REAL



"I never knew there were such things as hawks and woodpeckers. I thought they were made up."
 —excerpt from a student's letter thanking volunteer trail guides.

We want students to walk the woodland trails listening for the tapping of woodpeckers and watching the hawks fly overhead. We also want young folks to learn that centuries ago Native Americans hunted for tule elk and competed with grizzly bears for the acorn crops from the valley oaks.

Some folks lead school tours through the oak woodlands during the week, others staff the Nature Center on weekends, and many volunteers help with Nature Night crafts and programs.

No experience is necessary. Training is available, and a love of nature the only requirement. For more information please phone the Oak Grove Nature Center at 953-8814.

With additional volunteers we will be able to teach more youngsters that woodpeckers really do exist and that hawks still alight in the gnarled old oaks as they did in the valley of long ago.
 by Martha Mallery
 photo by James Rexroth

There's a dedicated group of volunteers at the Nature Center who think it's every youngster's birthright to know that hawks and woodpeckers are real.

But we need more volunteers to help out for a few hours a month. All talents are

"No experience is necessary. Training is available and a love of nature the only requirement."

CONGRATULATIONS CONTRIBUTORS

On a hot afternoon last August, three decades of contributors to the Oak Grove Nature Area gathered with friends and relatives at the Yokuts trail head. The happy occasion was the unveiling of "Contributor Rounds" honoring their service. Parks Administrator David Beadles had come up with the idea of placing names on oak rounds as a fitting tribute compatible with the ambiance of our valley oak woodland. Charlie Ruiz and his park crew cut the rounds from one of our very own felled oaks. After a brief reunion of about forty folks, many of whom hadn't seen each other in years, the rounds were unveiled.

One oak round was for individuals who had donated funds or braved the foxtales, voles and mites to preserve the natural area. Some volunteers had planted and watered native grasses or nurtured new saplings to replace drought-stricken valley oaks. Others had conducted mistletoe surveys, installed bluebird houses or counted butterflies.

Our Docent Council members had guided thousands of young students along the Yokuts Trail, and in the heat of the afternoon, a couple of early docents told stories of close physical encounters with an explosive vole population.

A second Contributor Round honored



the many community organizations that had worked in the nature area or donated funds for benches, educational signs and trail guides.

David Marraccini, President of the Oak Grove Nature Area Advisory Group, thanked the volunteers and pointed out that there is still plenty of space on the rounds to add more names. (Contributors are asked to donate 150 hours of service or \$250 cash.)

At the conclusion of the ceremony, David Beadles led members of the group who hadn't yet wilted down the Yokuts Trail toward the Verna Johnston Bird Oasis to plant three young valley oaks, one for each decade that volunteers had worked so diligently to preserve our historic oak woodland.

Congratulations Contributors!

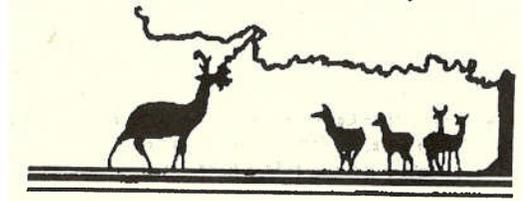
By Martha Mallery

Photos by David & Marraccini

The Dripping Faucet



**Oak Grove Nature Center and
Docent Council
San Joaquin County Parks and
Recreation**



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Committed to preserving the natural environment of the Oak Grove and educating others to the values of continuing such preservation.

Dates To Remember

Sept. 18, Fri. 7 pm: Nature Nights—
Dr. Kathy Schick presents “Galls, a
Walk and Talk”

Sept. 26, Sat. 6:30 pm to 9:30:
“Astronomy in the Park” Hosted By
the Docent Council & Nature Center
presented by the Stockton
Astronomical Society

Oct. 5, Mon. 4:30 pm: Docent
Council Mtg. All are welcome.

Oct. 16, Fri. 7 pm: Nature Nights—
speaker TBA.

Oct. 24, Sat. time TBA:
Fall Educational Seminar: topics to
include valley soils and native plant
propagation.

Oct. 24, Sat. 6 to 9:30 pm:
“Astronomy in the Park” Hosted by
the Docent Council & Nature Center
presented by the Stockton
Astronomical Society

Oct. 30, Fri. 5:30 to 8 pm: “A
Haunted Trail Walk”, come get your
pre-Halloween scare on.

Nov. , Mon. 4:30 pm: Docent
Council Mtg. All are welcome.

Nov. 7 & 8, Sat. & Sun. : Sandhill
Crane Festival. Be sure to visit the
O. G. Nature Center and CNPS
tables, staffed by our volunteers, and
say “hello”.

Nov. 20, Fri. 7 pm: Nature Nights—
speaker TBA.

Dec. 1, 6 pm (tentative date & time):
“End of the Year Celebration and
Recognition Dinner”. Join us in cele-
brating our accomplishments during
2009 and thanking those that helped
make it happen. RSVP by Nov. 20.

Please contact the Nature Center at
(209) 953-8814 or

jrexroth@sjgov.org for more details
and to confirm dates and times. Life
has a way of happening and some-
times changes are necessary. Thank
you for understanding.

