



Monthly Meetings

February 16—Pete Alexander, Fisheries Program Manager for the East Bay Regional Parks District, will give a talk on trout and trout restoration projects in East Bay creeks.

March 16—Laura Castellini, Environmental Protection Specialist at the Golden Gate National Recreation Area, offers a slide show presentation on aquatic invertebrates and will explain how monitoring efforts of these creatures can be used to quantify stream health. In conjunction, Emma Brown, volunteer leader of the FOSC Aquatic Insect Monitoring program, will present a review of data gathered over the past six years at Sausal Creek.

April 20—Simone Whitecloud, local naturalist, will give a slide presentation on resident birds of prey who will be in their peak breeding season in April.

A Perspective on Herbicides

We've been there, we've done that, we know the enemies. Broom. Acacia. Non-native blackberry. And towering over them all: eucalyptus.

Any Oakland resident can legally purchase and use herbicides on their private property, but herbicide use is prohibited on City-owned property. For many of us, our immediate reaction is to shun pesticides in any form. In some cases, however, the extremely limited use of herbicides can benefit our watershed restoration efforts. How many times have we attacked the same stands of blackberry or those elm sprouts in the restoration area?

When the Wildfire Prevention and Assessment District (WPAD) was formed, members of its Citizens Advisory Board began discussing the role of herbicides in controlling eucalyptus, broom, and pampas grass. FOSC's restoration committee became involved in a task force that looked at the role herbicides could play in controlling invasive, fire-prone non-natives. We advocated an integrated pest management (IPM) policy with very limited use of herbicide for woody, invasive, non-native species. We believe such a policy could reduce fuel loads, and simultaneously aid in restoration efforts.

The result of months of meetings is a resolution that will soon be presented to the Oakland City Council. It is very restrictive: it allows herbicide application only directly to cut stumps, limits the herbicides to only two types, and lists the species on which herbicides can be used. These species are the "dirty dozen" of invasives, including eucalyptus, acacia, broom, gorse, pampas grass, and non-native blackberry. The resolution requires

an integrated vegetation management plan before herbicide use can begin.

(continued next column)



HERBICIDE APPLIED TO LIVE TISSUE OF FRESHLY CUT TREE.

All other nearby land management agencies currently use herbicides on eucalyptus as part of an IMP strategy. The passage of this resolution would allow the WPAD to make headway against eucalyptus, the major accelerator of the 1991 Tunnel Fire, and would provide another tool in the tool box for Oakland creek restoration projects.

All use of herbicides on Oakland city property is governed by city, state, and federal regulations and only trained applicators can use herbicides. FOSC has no immediate plans to use herbicide. Perhaps in the future, the membership of FOSC will consider the use of herbicides in select situations. One consideration is that limited use of herbicide could reduce our maintenance efforts by hundreds of volunteer hours.

FOSC has supported this resolution, in principle, as long as the strict usage provisions remain in place. We'll be following it closely during its progress through City Hall, and will monitor its implementation.
—Karen Paulsell

All A-Board Members!

Winter's short days yield to longer, warmer days; spring is around the corner. And FOSC is changing and growing, too. We are looking for four or five new Board members to participate in reaching our goals for the next three years. Fundraising, financial management, watershed restoration, education, community and volunteer engagement, strategic planning—these are some of the skills we are seeking to add to our Board. This spring promises some exciting new directions for FOSC: completion of our first ever three-year business plan, hiring of an executive director, new restoration projects, and ongoing education of Oakland school children at our native plant nursery and on the trails of Joaquin Miller Park. If you would enjoy working with committed volunteers, our skilled staff, and a highly regarded community-based watershed group, then the Friends of Sausal Creek needs you! Please contact Linda Morse, FOSC Board member who leads our Board Development Committee, by sending an email to lfmorse@covad.net. Thank you!
—Linda Morse

SUPPORT THE WORK OF FOSC

Please help the Friends maintain and expand our efforts in the Sausal Creek watershed by making a donation today!

Mail this form with check made payable to:
Friends of Sausal Creek, P.O. Box 2737, Oakland, CA 94602.
FOSC is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization and your contribution is fully tax-deductible. A receipt will be sent for your records.

Name _____

Address _____

City/State/Zip _____

Telephone _____

Email _____

AMOUNT OF DONATION

\$100 \$50 \$25 \$12 Other: _____

This is the fifth article in a series about FOSC's Biodiversity Project.

Coastal Scrub

The Bay Area's shrub lands can be divided into two broad categories: chaparral and coastal scrub. Chaparral is a varying mixture of evergreen shrubs growing densely on hot, dry, rocky slopes and ranging in height from six to 15 feet. The chaparral canopy is characterized by species such as California lilac, manzanita, chamise, mountain mahogany, toyon, coffee berry and silk tassel. Coastal scrub contains varying mixtures of lower growing, semi-deciduous shrubs in somewhat moister areas with deeper soil. Plants characteristic of coastal scrub are California sagebrush, sticky monkey flower, creambush, ninebark, blue witch and various currants and gooseberries. Both types of shrub lands are excellent habitat for insects, birds, reptiles, and mammals. Within these two broad categories, there are many different assemblages of both chaparral and coastal scrub, depending upon the direction the slope is facing, the degree of slope, type of soil, and amount of available moisture.

The Sausal Creek Watershed Assessment, prepared by Martha Lowe, describes two different types of chaparral



STICKY MONKEY FLOWER
(*Mimulus aurantiacus*)

and four different types of coastal scrub. Lowe points out that "coastal scrub is a complex and highly variable community in which species vary along a longitudinal gradient and are often drawn from adjacent vegetation types." The presence of a few small remnant

stands of shrub land and adjacent less disturbed landscapes indicate that the headwaters of the Sausal Creek watershed once hosted a wonderful quilt of shrub lands, perennial bunch-grasslands, riparian corridors, wet meadows, and stands of redwoods. Over the past century, as a dense exotic canopy became dominant in the upper reaches of Sausal Creek, shrub lands and grasslands disappeared.

Coastal Scrub areas are so rare in the watershed that the Restoration Committee has had a difficult time identifying an appropriate site to adopt. After a year of scratching our heads we've decided to attempt to establish a small band of coastal scrub in an opening in the oak canopy in the Dimond Canyon restoration area. During our winter solstice planting this past December, intrepid volunteer Karen Paulsell led a group of high school students in planting coastal scrub species in the chosen spot. If the plants thrive, we know we've chosen our site well and will continue to add a diverse array of plant goodies for the critters.

—Kristen Hopper

FOSC ACTIVITY CALENDAR

Unless otherwise noted, call 501-FOSC or email coordinator@sausalcreek.org to get information about all activities. Also, for details about ongoing projects, check the Volunteer section of the Friends' website at www.sausalcreek.org.

Monthly Meetings

3rd Wednesday of the month.

- Wednesday 2/16, 3/16, 4/20.
7pm-9pm at the Dimond Library,
3565 Fruitvale Ave.

Board of Directors Meetings

2nd Wednesday of the month.

- Wednesday 2/9, 3/9, 4/13.
7pm-9pm at the Chabot Space
& Science Center. All welcome!

Saturday Workdays

Most, but not all Saturdays.

Check website or call for details.

- **9am-noon:** Restoration Activities. Call 387-9744 for location.
- **1:30-4pm:** Nursery Activities
Info: Kristen Hopper, 387-9744
or field@sausalcreek.org
go to www.sausalcreek.org/volunteer/calendar.html.

Aquatic Insect Sampling

3rd Sunday of the month

- Sunday 2/20, 3/20, 4/17.
9:30am-noon; info: Emma
Brown, 527-2507.

Water Quality Monitoring

3rd Sunday of the month;

please call first to confirm e³ for location

- Sunday 2/20, 3/20, 4/17.
9am-noon; info: Mark Lane,
219-8036.

Outdoor Education Docents

Tuesdays e³ Thursdays, 9am-noon

- Work with Oakland students doing restoration/propagation in the Sausal Creek watershed. Preschedule with Sue Morgan at jmpnpnenviroed@yahoo.com or 531-6293.

New Directions for FOSC Staff

After a rewarding year of working with the Friends of Sausal Creek, I am bidding farewell to take a full-time position at the Marin Headlands Native Plant Nursery. But you aren't getting rid of me yet! I will be transitioning out of the FOSC Operations Manager position over the course of a few months, and plan to stick around as a volunteer after that. I have grown to love this organization and the folks who make it tick.

In the meantime, the Board and staff are rethinking the open position and the current organizational needs of FOSC. We will be looking to fill this opening in the very near future. Likely qualifications include non-profit fundraising experience, experience with volunteer organizations, computer skills, ability to represent the organization in a variety of settings, and an interest in environmental restoration and education. If you are interested in learning more about the position, and would like to receive a complete announcement and job description as soon as it is finalized, please contact: coordinator@sausalcreek.org or (510) 501-3672.

—Alisa Shor

February-March'05 newsletter contributors:

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The Friends are sponsored by the Alameda County Flood Control and Water Conservation District and the City of Oakland, with additional support from private citizens . . . like you!