

Friends of Sausal Creek

Promoting Watershed Protection

www.sausalcreek.org
(510) 501-FOSC (3672)

August–September '04

August and September Monthly Meetings!

FOSC monthly meetings are held the third Wednesday of the month, 7-9pm, at the Dimond Library, 3565 Fruitvale Ave. Everyone is welcome! Highlights of upcoming meetings include:

August 18—Maggie Hooper of the California Bat Conservation Fund will dispel myths about bats and explain how these creatures are essential to ecosystems around the world. Featuring live indigenous bats!

September 15—FOSC board member and bird outing leader Mark Rauzon will show slides revealing just exactly where in the south birds go for the winter and whom they meet on their vacation. Join us in anticipation of our Birder Barbecue (details in the next newsletter) and fall migration bird count day on Sunday, October 9.

Our friend in need, the pallid manzanita

Pallid manzanita (*Arctostaphylos pallida*) is the only endangered plant species found in the Sausal Creek watershed. It has a very limited distribution in chaparral habitat in the hills just east of San Francisco Bay; it occurs nowhere else. *Arctostaphylos pallida* was listed as endangered under the California Endangered Species Act in 1979 and threatened under the Federal Endangered Species Act in 1998. The California Natural Diversity Database lists a total of 11 occurrences of pallid manzanita, seven of which are located within or adjacent to the Sausal Creek watershed.

Pallid manzanita is a fire-adapted shrub that requires the maritime climatic influence found in the East Bay hills. Summer fog supplies moisture, lowers evapotranspiration rates, and reduces solar energy, thereby reducing the stress on plants during otherwise dry summer months. Pallid manzanita grows on rocky ridges and outcrops where there is little or no topsoil and where the nutrient supply is low. The largest, most dense stands occur in shales and cherts, with smaller populations in sandstones. Fire is the only reliable method of reproduction; the species needs fire sterilized soil and scarification of seeds to germinate.

Thorough surveys of pallid manzanita populations have not been performed since 1985. Recently, members of FOSC visited all known populations of pallid manzanita and prepared a report documenting the current status the populations in the Sausal Creek watershed. We concluded that the population of pallid manzanita in the Sausal Creek watershed has declined 40 percent over the last 15 years. Development, vegetation management activities, shading by trees and fire suppression are all causes of the decline of pallid manzanita in the Sausal Creek watershed. Addressing these impacts is crucial for the survival of the pallid manzanita.

—Ralph Kanz

For Ralph Kanz's full report on the pallid manzanita, go to www.sausalcreek.org/sausal/nature_pdf/Pallid_manzanita.pdf.

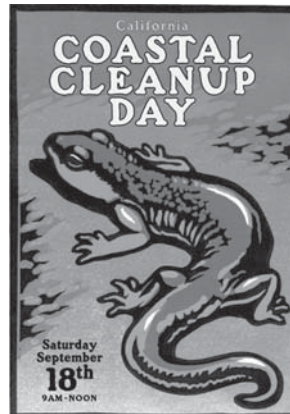
Another Treasured Friend of the Month

The greatest assets of the Friends of Sausal Creek are the amazing people that have come together to make our mission a reality. This is especially true as we acknowledge Diana Surber for her generous gift of time and attention to our bottom line. As Treasurer, board member, and Administrative Committee member, Diana has helped grow FOSC into a solid organization supported by consistent leadership with identifiable and attainable goals toward the overall mission of the protection and restoration of Sausal Creek. Her efforts have helped FOSC obtain necessary funding for our restoration and education activities, further solidifying our effectiveness as a community-based environmental organization.

Diana came to us during our big year of planting out the canyon after the large Restoration Project of 2001-02. She and her family, Richard and Alex, were regular planters throughout that wet winter, and they established roots both literally and figuratively having been with the Friends ever since. Diana's professionalism and superior skills in budget and financial management have taken our organization to a new level, and we are eternally grateful for her steadfast efforts.

—Sally Kilburg

Look deep into nature, and then you will understand everything better.
Albert Einstein



Creek-to-Bay Day 2004

This year's City of Oakland-sponsored Creek-to-Bay Day (CTBD, held annually in conjunction with Coastal Cleanup Day) is on Saturday, September 18. Come on out and help work toward the improved health of the Sausal Creek watershed! Meet at the Scout Hut in Dimond Park at 9am. We will work until noon. Lunch, snacks and water will be provided. (As always, extra credit for bringing your own water bottle.)

If you are concerned about the endangered pallid manzanita (see article left), CTBD is a great opportunity to familiarize yourself with its plight. The work of the day will focus on FOSC's new Biodiversity Project (see article on the reverse). This winter, we are going to be planting oak and coastal scrub in Dimond Canyon; we will begin preparing sites on CTBD.

Please join us!

—Kristen Hopper

The Friends are sponsored by the Alameda County Flood Control and Water Conservation District and the City of Oakland, with additional support from CH2M Hill and private citizens. Like you!

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RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Don't miss our next monthly meetings on August 18 and September 15, 7-9pm at the Dimond Library. Newsletter printed on recycled paper. Thanks for recycling!

This is the second article in a series on the six sites program, recently renamed the "Biodiversity Project."

The pallid manzanita site

Last Creek-to-Bay Day, a group of hard-working volunteers began the important task of removing the encroaching Monterey pine saplings from our Manzanita Site in Joaquin Miller Park. Since that day, long time Friend Sam "The Saw" Cohen has led two additional groups in continuing the efforts to improve the habitat of this strikingly beautiful endangered shrub. Our regular Saturday morning Restoration Program has visited the site twice as well. The Saturday morning restorationists have concentrated on clearing around the

individuals that cling to life in the less than optimal conditions at the head waters of Sausal Creek. Our task as stewards of this stand of pallid manzanita is to improve growing conditions by reducing competition and shading from other plants. Perhaps one day



Before FOSC's efforts: this grandmother manzanita was competing for sunlight.
Photo, Karen Paulsell.

we will be able to create the conditions that are thought to be necessary for the population to thrive.

In the meantime, dedicated Friend Karen "The Map Maven" Paulsell has mapped, tagged and recorded the general health, height and canopy width of the individuals within FOSC's adopted Manzanita Site. A cheering thing to behold at this important site is the recruitment of a few young plants. With the growth of new pallid manzanitas there is a sign that perhaps recovery is possible. Somehow, against all odds, a seed has germinated. The work ahead requires input and cooperation between many different agencies—with luck and tenacity this seedling will grow.

—*Kristen Hopper*

August-September '04 newsletter contributors:

Kristen Hopper, Ralph Kanz, Sally Kilburg, Karen Paulsell, Alisa Shor.
Editing and design, Jennifer Stanley.

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

~5rd Wednesday of the month~

• Wednesday 8/18, 9/15, 10/20, etc. 7pm-9pm; Dimond Library, 3565 Fruitvale Ave. All welcome!

Aquatic Insect Sampling

~5rd Sunday of the month~

• Sunday 8/15, 9/19, 10/17, etc. 9:30am-noon; info: Emma Brown, 527-2507.

Board of Directors Meetings

~2nd Wednesday of the month~

• Wednesday 8/11, 9/8, 10/13, etc. 7pm-9pm at the Chabot Space & Science Center. All welcome!

Water Quality Monitoring

~now, 5rd Sunday of the month; please call first to confirm e³ for location~

• Sunday 8/15, 9/19, 10/17, etc. 9am-noon; info: Mark Lane, 219-8036.

Saturday Workdays

~On vacation, to resume September 11.~

• **9am-noon:**
Restoration Activities

• **1:30-4pm:**
Nursery Activities
Info: Kristen Hopper, 387-9744 or field@sausalcreek.org or go to www.sausalcreek.org/volunteer/calendar.html.

Seed Gathering

~times and locations vary~

Help gather native seeds for propagation efforts. Info: Kristen Hopper, 387-9744 or field@sausalcreek.org or go to www.sausalcreek.org/volunteer/calendar.html.

Bird Monitoring "Fall Migration Bird Count"

• Sunday 10/9. Info: Mark Rauzon, 531-3887, birds@sausalcreek.org.

Garden tour seeks host gardens

The *Bringing Back the Natives* garden tour, to be held in the spring of 2005, will showcase Alameda and Contra Costa County gardens that contain at least 30% native plants, don't use synthetic pesticides or fertilizers, and provide habitat for wildlife. Featured gardens will demonstrate that beautiful California native plant gardens are possible for anyone. To be added to the mailing list, or to receive a host application, call (510) 236-9558 between 9 am and 9 pm or email Kathy@KathyKramerConsulting.net.