



THE DRIPPING FAUCET

OAK GROVE NATURE CENTER AND DOCENT COUNCIL

Volume 1, Issue 1

President's Message-New Nature Center Coordinator

The Oak Grove Docent Council is delighted to introduce James Rexroth to all our docents, friends, and other supporters, as our new *FULL TIME* Nature Center Coordinator. James is coming to us from Micke Grove Zoo, where he has worked for the last 25 years. In addition to his regular animal care duties, James has

aided the zoo's Education department over the years by giving tours, doing outreach programs, teaching docent classes and kids' summer classes on herpetology (the study of reptiles and amphibians), and participating in Jr. High and High School career days. He even taught one of the early Oak Grove Docent classes, provid-

ing our group with information about our local herps. James brings his love of the natural world and enthusiasm to the Nature Center. We wish him all the best and encourage you to stop by and say hello!

We are looking forward to the upcoming school year and the chance to expand our (continued on p.2)



James Rexroth
New Nature Center
Coordinator

The Coordinator's Corner

My first words to all of you should be hello, but instead I'm going to say thank you. THANK YOU! Without all your efforts over the years to keep the center open and moving forward, I would not now have this opportunity to participate in the renewed growth of this wonderful facility. In the short time I've been here, we have already made a major change to the main ex-

hibit room. The old animal corner (where the fish were and the snakes had moved into) has been completely redone. All of the old room was removed and a new one was built in its place, thanks to Evan Watson and Troop 199 from Galt. Evan was working to earn his Eagle Scout Award and this project helped him and the center. The animal room now **has room** to move

around in and work. It features two rows of tanks to allow us to display a wider array of living native creatures. While Evan's part is done, we are still working on the finishing touches needed to complete the display. Another Eagle Scout candidate is already lined up to work on the service area. In the future, by working with other Eagle Scout candidates, we

should be able to make more of the improvements and upgrades that we've wanted to see done for some time. I welcome your thoughts and suggestions in this area. Once again I wish to thank all of those folks, County, Docent Council, and Friends, that worked so hard to keep the Oak Grove Nature Center open and an important asset to our local community.

James Rexroth

President's Message-continued

programs and outreaches to the local schools. Educating our local students and adults as to the importance of this living example of an oak woodland and the diversity of life in it is our main goal.

We are planning to upgrade some of our exhibits, adding more artifacts to the Yokuts and Miwok collection. Changes are already taking place to the live animal 'room'. It's been rebuilt by an Eagle Scout candidate, giving us

more room to work and more tanks to exhibit local creatures. Look forward to more of these kinds of changes as the year progresses.

Lastly, I'd like to thank everyone for their efforts over the last



several months, staffing the center and leading tours for school groups and others that have requested them. Job well done!

David Marraccini

Special Focus - Black Phoebe

Sayornis nigricans, the Black Phoebe, is a year round resident in our area. This flycatcher is generally black in color on the upper body, wings, and tail, the belly and vent areas are white. They are fairly common, found in open areas, usually in association with water. They like low perches, sometimes very near the

ground, where they 'hawk' for flying insects. Nests are similar in make-up to the Barn Swallow, *Hirundo rustica*, being made of grass and mud. Occasionally more than one clutch of eggs may be laid in a season. These birds have a characteristic tail pumping, consisting of a down/up motion. They regularly visit

"They like low perches, sometimes very near the ground, where they 'hawk' for flying insects."

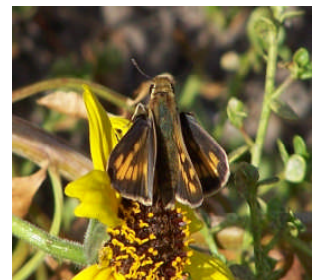
the area around the Nature Center, so keep your eyes open.

Butterflies

On June 17th Kathy Schick and 14 other counters, including 5 kids under 10 yrs. of age, met at Oak Grove Park to go looking for *Lepidoptera*. Most of their time was spent at Lodi Lake and Woodbridge Regional Park,

though there were some access problems at Woodbridge. They found 18 species and 144 individuals. This tied the species high in the last five years. Thanks to the San Joaquin Audubon Society, SJC Parks Department, and

the UC Cooperative Extension for all their help in making the count possible.



WILDFLOWERS OF THE WORLD UNITE!

Dear Landlords and Ladies,

When we leased the vacant lot next to the Nature Center we were assured of an adequate water supply. The choice streamside plots were quickly settled by the Willows, Berry families, and Mugworts, leaving the rest of the species dependent on hose irrigation.

Where's our water? The Rose family guarding the perimeter from mowers and herbicidal maniacs is currently parched as are the Redbuds, Snowberries, and Deer Grasses gracing the northern slopes.

We're doing our best to conserve water: 1) The Lupines are wearing white hairs on their leaves to reflect the sun and inhibit air circulation and evaporation of moisture. 2) The Buck-

eyes are going dormant but keeping their dry leaves attached to shade the branches. 3) The Coyote Brush is becoming "sunburned" as the south-facing sides of their stems turn red with anthocyanin molecules to shade the interiors of the stems.

But our drought-tolerant adaptations aren't enough to get us through this globally warmed summer. We need water!!! We don't like to complain, but if water doesn't come soon we'll be forced to protest to the AFL (American Flowers of the Lowlands) or the UAW (United



WE NEED SOME WATER, PLEASE!

American Wildflowers). Please Help! Call 477-3966 if you can help us get a drink.

Thank you, the Floristic Tenants at the Oak Grove Nature Center Native Plant Garden.

OGNC Wish List

If you won big in Vegas, or hit the lotto, or just feel generous, the Nature Center would like to request consideration for the following items:

1. Chest type freezer, 13 to 18 cu. ft. Energy-star to store potential future exhibit specimens.

2. Binoculars, old or new, for use by kids visiting the Nature Center and school tours on the trail, about 20 pairs.

3. Color printer/scanner, photo quality, up to 11" x 14" paper.

If you can help, call the Center at 953-8814. Thanks!

MARK YOUR CALENDARS

July 3: OGDC meeting, 6:30 at the Nature Center.

July 6: School group to work on tule hut, 8:30 AM

July 14: “Sparks in the Park”
SJHM at Micke Grove

August 1: OGDC meeting, 6:30 at the Nature Center



Common Checkered Skipper

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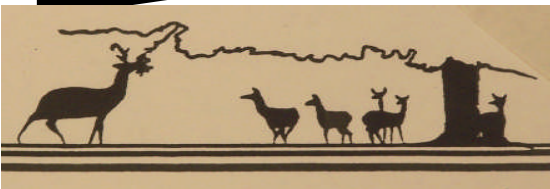
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The Dripping Faucet

COMING SOON LOOK
FOR US ON THE WEB



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