

OSA Outlook



Coyote Valley Open Space Preserve to Open June 27

New 348-acre preserve protects wildlife corridor and invites hiking, cycling, riding, and views

Wildlife in the Coyote Valley has had some tough breaks. The lush valley once offered thousands of acres of habitat for critters large and small. As the land has been subdivided, developed, and crossed with roads and highways, many of these species have become imperiled.

Wide-ranging animals such as tule elk, mountain lions, bobcats, deer, coyotes, and badgers have been especially affected by habitat fragmentation. These animals need wide swatches of habitat to find food, shelter, and mates. One of the Open Space Authority's goals is to connect remaining native habitats and maintain corridors that allow animals to move between patches of habitat and find the resources they need.

ALLOWING SAFE PASSAGE

The new 348-acre Coyote Valley Open Space Preserve does just that. Located at the western edge of Coyote Valley, the preserve provides a key connection for wildlife looking to traverse the valley from Mt. Hamilton and the Diablo Range to the Santa



Cruz Mountains. In addition to securing the wildlife corridor, the preserve helps prevent sprawl between San Jose and Morgan Hill.

Since the Open Space Authority purchased the land in 2010, our staff has inventoried the site's resources including wildlife, water, plants, and trees, and prepared a plan to manage the preserve and protect those resources while also allowing for public education and enjoyment.



A PIECE OF THE VALLEY'S PAST

Heritage valley oaks and serpentine grasslands dot the preserve. The land's rolling hills, oak woodland, and outcrops of serpentine soils host remnant native grasslands, and the preserve is blanketed by wildflowers in the spring.

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Coyote Valley Open Space Preserve Grand Opening Celebration

Saturday, June 27
11 a.m. to 2 p.m.
550 Palm Avenue
Morgan Hill

Space is limited.
Register now at
cv-opening.eventbrite.com.

Free and family-friendly!

Bring a blanket and picnic and enjoy docent-led hikes on the new trails, programs with live birds and animals from the Wildlife Education and Rehabilitation Center, children's activities, and speakers.

An Exciting Discovery at Sierra Vista!

The Open Space Authority recently conducted the first-ever thorough assessment and survey of the six stock ponds at Sierra Vista Open Space Preserve. Over the past fifty years, ranchers have created these ponds for their cattle. Now, these ponds provide important aquatic habitat.

The survey team, led by the Open Space Authority's Resource Management Specialist Galli Basson, turned up something exciting: six adult California red-legged frogs! Surprisingly, they also found California tiger salamander larvae — in the same pond. Both of these species are listed as "threatened," and are in danger of extinction.

"It is unusual to find both of these species occupying the same pond," said Basson. "This indicates that the ponds and surrounding habitat are high quality, meaning they provide breeding and foraging (food) sources."

The team will continue to monitor the ponds, and respond with management techniques that protect the habitat and the threatened species. This might include, says Basson, managing bullfrogs and other invasive species that prey upon the frog and salamander, and ensuring that the dams stay intact so that the ponds retain water.



In our survey at Sierra Vista, we found two threatened amphibians: California tiger salamander larvae and California red-legged frogs – in the same pond!



Open Space on OpenRoad

Bay Area TV legend Doug McConnell is back with a new series, exploring the natural and cultural treasures of the area – with a special focus on protected lands. He recently spent time with Open Space Authority General Manager Andrea Mackenzie at the Coyote Valley Open Space Preserve. To learn about upcoming episodes of the show, which airs Sundays on NBC 3, visit nbcbayarea.com/openroad.



COYOTE VALLEY OPENING

(continued from page 1)

The land is habitat for some of the Bay Area's most important special-status plant and animal species, including the Bay checkerspot butterfly, Opler's longhorn moth, golden eagles, Santa Clara Valley dudleya, Smooth lessingia, and Most beautiful jewelflower. The Open Space Authority is managing a lease for a small herd of cattle to graze the pastures, enhancing the preserve's habitat for the special status species.

MULTI-USE TRAILS OFFER SWEEPING VISTAS

Just a mile south of Bailey Avenue in San Jose, the preserve offers recreational opportunities close to residents in those cities. The four-mile-long multi-use Arrowhead Loop Trail leads to a ridgetop with stunning views across the entire 7,400-acre Coyote Valley, across to Mount Hamilton, Mount Umunhum, and all of Silicon Valley.

Starting June 27, the preserve will be free and open to the public 365 days a year. We invite you to visit the Coyote Valley Open Space Preserve — and to keep your eyes peeled for wildlife!



who
am I
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I was named for part of an animal, and have long been thought to bring good luck. One of the first plants to leaf out each year, I am also one of the first to drop my leaves — an adaptation that helps me survive the dry California summers.

Open Space Round-Up



Staff Botanical Workshop on Coyote Ridge

This spring, a record 480 hikers visited the outstanding wildflower displays on Coyote Ridge. Our staff spent some quality time there as well, learning more about the unique serpentine habitat and its rare species. In a botanical workshop led by Lech Nauvomich of the Creekside Center for Earth Observation, staff learned to identify the unique plants found in what Nauvomich calls "one of the most important ecosystems in Santa Clara County." The group was lucky enough to find several regionally and state listed plants, including Most beautiful jewelflower and Santa Clara Valley dudleya. The popular Bay checkerspot butterfly even made an appearance.

Do You Love Nature and Numbers?

If so, the Expenditure Oversight Committee might be the right volunteer role for you!



This seven-member committee will provide public oversight for all funds collected and allocated by Measure Q.

Annually, the committee will: 1) review plan expenditures; 2) review annual audit and report prepared by an independent auditor; and 3) submit an oversight report. Each member will contribute unique talents; as a whole, the committee will reflect the vibrant cultural diversity of the Authority's jurisdiction.

Measure Q is a \$24 parcel tax that provides \$7.8 million annually to invest in open space land, public access, recreation and protection of water, wildlife and working lands.

Applications are due at 5 p.m. on July 6, 2015. To apply, visit openspaceauthority.org or call 408-224-7476.



Galli Basson Resource Management Specialist

As a Resource Management Specialist, Galli tends to our preserves' natural resources: what we have, how best to protect them, and where we can restore or enhance them. "I have always loved being outside," she says. "Preserves give all of us the opportunity to co-exist and co-mingle with rare species," she says. "Being out in them allows us to experience what being part of an ecosystem feels like — and it feels great!"

With a Masters degree in environmental studies from San Jose State University, Galli previously worked as a planner for the San Francisco Bay Area Water Trail and for the Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District. In her role with the Open Space Authority, Galli is making a difference for plants, animals and amphibians by protecting and restoring their habitats — and helping to restore and maintain the health of the ecosystems in open space preserves.

When she's not working, she loves spending time hiking, kayaking, and exploring the outdoors with her husband and their dog, Spark.



Mountain Lion Afoot at Rancho Cañada del Oro

When he received reports of multiple mountain lion sightings at Rancho Cañada in April, Field Operations Manager Derek Neumann recognized that something was afoot. Mountain lions are reclusive, and sightings are normally quite rare.

"The mountain lion's continued presence in an area frequented by humans is unusual," said Neumann. "The animal could have had a nearby food source such as a recent deer kill, had a litter of cubs that needed tending, or perhaps had claimed this territory as its home."

For the safety of the animal and the public, we temporarily closed the preserve. Our staff partnered with Santa Clara County Parks, the California Department of Fish and Wildlife, and researchers from University of California Santa Cruz to study the animal's movements. When we ascertained that the lion had left the immediate area, we reopened the preserve.

We continue to study and track mountain lions in the preserve. If you see one, stand tall and pick up children so you appear larger. Do not approach the animal, run, or make sudden movements. You can report any sightings to us at 408-224-7476.

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Activities in Your Open Space

GRAND OPENING AT COYOTE VALLEY OPEN SPACE PRESERVE Saturday, June 27 | 11 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Bring the family, a blanket and a picnic!
Hikes • Wildlife demonstration • Speakers • Games
Space is limited. Register now at cv-opening.eventbrite.com.



COYOTE VALLEY FAMILY HARVEST FEAST Saturday, September 19 | 11 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Coyote Valley Open Space Preserve just south of San Jose
Delicious fresh foods • Docent-led hikes and walks
Activities for all ages

Free! Reserve your spot now at cv-family-farm-feast.eventbrite.com.

who
am I
?



ANSWER: I am a California buckeye, *Aesculus californica*. Found on dry slopes, I am a small deciduous tree with showy white flowers that look like a candelabra. These form dry, leathery husks that split open to reveal the shiny, dark brown “eyes” for which I was named. Though beautiful, my seeds contain tannins that are toxic to people and animals. Local Native Americans blanched the seeds to leach out the toxins, and then ground the seeds into delicious meal.