

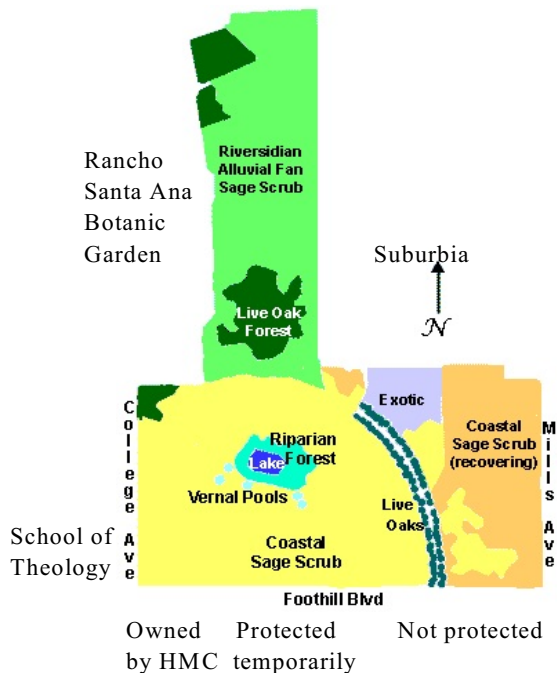
Friends of the Bernard Biological Field Station
 P.O. Box 1101
 Claremont, CA 91711
The Friends is a non-profit, grassroots organization.

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www.fbbfs.org

*“Dedicated to Education
 and the Environment”*

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 P.O. Box 880, Claremont, CA 91711 City Clerk: 399-5460
Claremont Colleges: www.claremont.edu
The Claremont Courier : 1420 N. Claremont Blvd., Suite 205B,
 Claremont, CA 91711 Phone: 621-4761
Inland Valley Daily Bulletin: 2041 E. Fourth St, Ontario CA 91764



How big is big enough?

A field station is land left in its natural state for use in the study of complex interactions between plants and animals. The usefulness of such natural laboratories depends on size and shape. Extinctions occur frequently in small areas, due to smaller populations. The current 85 acres is just large enough to maintain reasonable stability in the existing ecosystems. Narrow shapes increase the amount of pollution by noise, air, water, and pesticides from surrounding areas, and increase the chances of competition from exotic (non-native) species.

Who uses it?

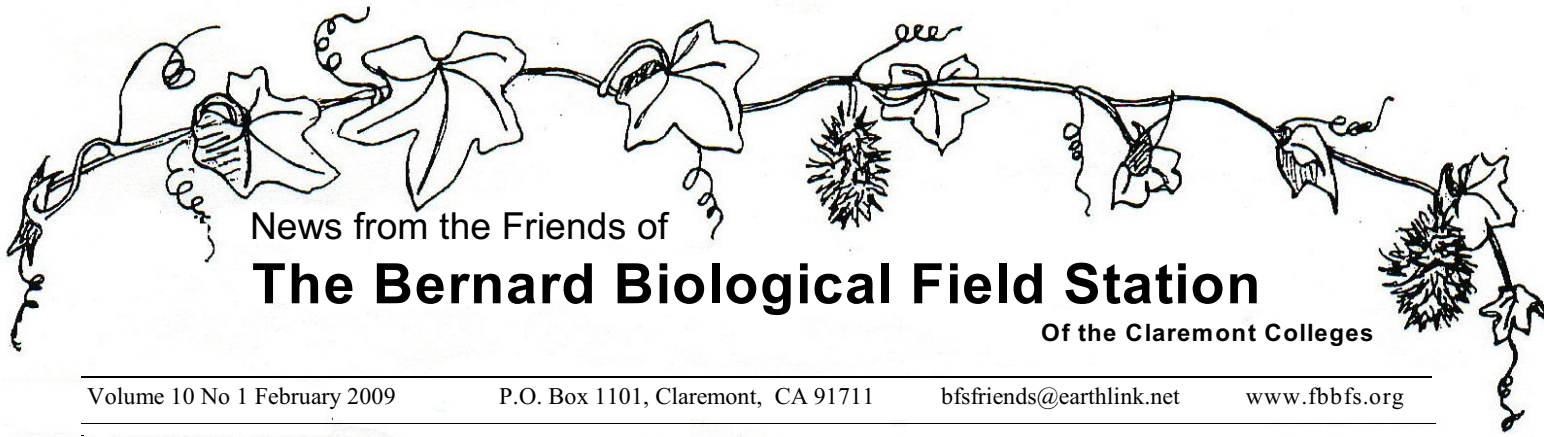
The BFS is used by Claremont Colleges faculty and hundreds of students every year, as well as by many schoolchildren from Claremont and the surrounding areas. It has also been used by college classes from as far away as Long Beach, by scout troops, and by members of the public.

What's there?

There are over 30 acres of the fast-disappearing coastal sage scrub community along with a number of species of state or federal concern.

Since much of Claremont was originally covered with coastal sage scrub, it is a fascinating window into our past.

There is a stand of oak woodland in the north where water wells up along an earthquake fault, there is annual grassland slowly returning to coastal sage scrub in the east, and there is a one-acre, man-made lake excavated in 1978 which is a sanctuary for western pond turtles displaced by development.



News from the Friends of

The Bernard Biological Field Station

Of the Claremont Colleges

Volume 10 No 1 February 2009

P.O. Box 1101, Claremont, CA 91711

bfsfriends@earthlink.net

www.fbbfs.org

City Council candidate statements inside

New plans to build on the BFS

The newsletter has been delayed as we waited for more definitive information about Harvey Mudd College's proposal to buy the western 11.4 acres of the BFS from Keck Graduate Institute and put a parking lot on the southern portion. HMC has now completed the purchase and has replaced the KGI signs with its own. HMC has agreed to sell half of the property to Claremont Graduate University, which is considering it as a location for its new School of Community and Global Health or other structures.

→ Because paper newsletters are costly and take time to send out, please visit the Friends website for updates on the situation.

→ In addition, if you would like to receive updates by email, please send a note requesting this to bfsfriends@earthlink.net

Summary of the situation:

HMC has secured a promise of funding for a new classroom building. Currently, the college has fewer parking spots than the City requires. New building means they need to address this deficit. In addition, portable classrooms will be used during the new construction and these are planned to go on some existing parking lots. The total number of spots needed at least temporarily is about 150. The City has a requirement that parking be within 800 feet of new construction. Although HMC has a multi-level parking structure in its strategic plan, this is outside of the 800 ft. The eastern corner of the former KGI part of the BFS is within 800 feet, thus this is one reason for the decision to buy the property.

The City parking ordinance is currently under review, so it is not clear if this '800feet' requirement will continue. If it does, the City has provisions for granting variances. In addition, there is some evidence that HMC has enough unused parking at this point to satisfy City requirements.

Parking could of course be constructed below or at ground level for any new building as has been done at Scripps and Pomona, but HMC President Maria Klawe has said that this is too expensive for HMC.

Sightings

- drifts of the starry blue flowers and needlelike leaves of *Eriastrum*
- yellow, orange, and coral cactus blooms, filled with beetles and bees
- flashes of white bunny tails
- painted lady butterflies sipping nectar from small, white cups of yerba santa
- fat yellow bees nestled in purple penstemon flowers, waiting out the cloudy morning
- tiny, limpet-like orange snails at the lake
- crusts of yellow and orange lichens on dead branches
- fancy gray and maroon fingers of liverworts next to mats of moss
- lovely spires of verbascum with red-centered bright yellow blossoms
- round, scarlet galls on the willow leaves, housing sawfly larvae
- excited laughter of elementary school children
- branches of golden currant bending under the weight of yellow, red, and black fruit
- quail sounding "kuh-kaw-kaw", erupting from cover
- lizards lazing in sunny spots
- beautiful leaves of gold-backed fern
- pink balls of milkweed flowers hosting Monarch caterpillars
- young hawks watching from the oaks
- the first blossoms of purple nightshade and golden currant in January
- coots and ducks pairing up
- carpets of tiny green succulents
- an explosion of gray-green leaves on the sagebrush after the rain

What constitutes the BFS

The entire 86 acres between College Ave and Mills Ave has been in continuous use as field station since 1976 and this entire area constitutes the Bernard Field Station (see map on back).

The western 11.4 acres were given to KGI in 2004 who leased them back to CUC until December 2008 for continued use as part of the field station. The 2001 lawsuit settlement with the Friends defines the entire area as the BFS and the narrow center portion as the Temporarily Restricted Property (TRP). The TRP is set aside for use as a field station regardless of the fate of the parts of the BFS to the east and west of it. In addition, the settlement agreement specifies that the portion to the east of the TRP can be part of the field station until some other use is approved.

Some people speak as if the TRP is the entire field station but this is incorrect and misleading, allowing statements such as “The effect of this parking lot on the adjacent field station will be minimized.” The parking lot will not be next to the BFS, it will destroy part of it.

It is entirely possible of course for HMC not to lease their part to CUC, fence it off, and therefore remove it as part of the BFS. This would affect the ability of the undergraduate colleges to use the resource. HMC has fortunately not decided to take the area out of field station use at this time.

Teachers and Group Leaders

If you are interested in bringing your class to the BFS, get in touch with Dr. Susan Schenk (sschenk@jsd.claremont.edu).

Or the station manager, Stephen Dreher, (909) 625-8701

The Decorative Vine on this Newsletter

Wild cucumber, *Marah macrocarpus*, is a perennial vine which begins growth in January, then dies back in May or June. The shoots can grow as long as 25 feet and can be seen at the Station hanging in dense sheets from oak trees and covering the ground like a blanket.

The enormous roots store food and water so the plant can remain dormant during the hot, dry summer. This storage capacity also allows the plant to be among the first to reappear after a fire when its lush, green shoots contrast boldly with the blackened earth.

Stems of small, creamy, male flowers with a female flower at the base appear in spring. The ovary develops

into a four- inch, oval, bright-green fruit covered with vicious prickles. Indians used the large, black seeds as beads. In spite of its common name, wild cucumber tastes extremely nasty to human beings and was given its botanical name in allusion to the bitter waters of Marah mentioned in the Bible.



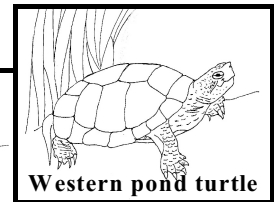
“A tour of the property readily convinces visitors of the importance of keeping such a beautiful expanse of land, shrubs, and trees for scientific purposes .”

Robert J. Bernard in “An Unfinished Dream” pg 708

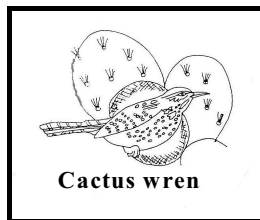
Some BFS Animals



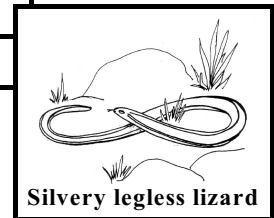
California toad



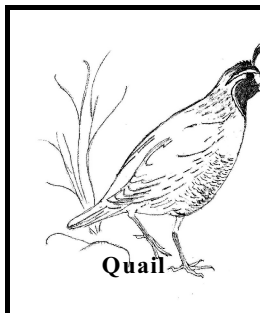
Western pond turtle



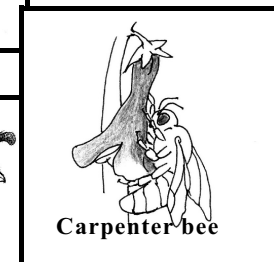
Cactus wren



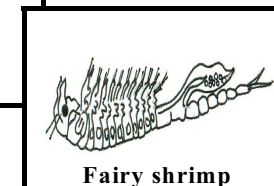
Silvery legless lizard



Quail



Carpenter bee



Fairy shrimp

Our local habitat is officially rare

- The Nature Conservancy has listed the Mediterranean Biome as rare and endangered.
- Coastal sage scrub (CSS) is one of the communities in the Mediterranean Biome
- CSS is much less common than rain forest and is disappearing at 4 times the rate
- Like old growth redwoods, 85-98% of CSS has now disappeared
- Biodiversity is very high in CSS with many plants and animals found nowhere else
- Most of the BFS is covered by CSS including the rare subtype Riversidean Alluvial Fan Sage Scrub

Small habitats are challenging

- A small area makes it difficult to maintain stable ecosystems
- Any habitat loss has a large ripple effect on what can live in an area, causing populations to crash
- Habitat forms one continuous whole, with each part depending on the resources found in the others
- Smaller areas are more susceptible to light, noise, water, and air pollution from surrounding development

The quality of our future environment depends on what we learn now

- The BFS is used by at least 28 college classes, and many hundreds of college students each year
- It provides opportunities for faculty and student research
- K-12 environmental studies benefit from a nearby field site

Natural habitat is the poster child for sustainability

- Natural habitat is more sustainable than any construction
- Natural habitat cleans and collects water, cleans air, has a low carbon footprint, causes no traffic issues, preserves biodiversity, creates no light, air or noise pollution, maintains part of our heritage
- Claremont's General Plan and the City Sustainability Plan both strongly support preserving natural open space throughout the City

Some favorite quotes: send along yours for the next issue

“For if one link in nature might be lost, another might be lost, until the whole of things will vanish piecemeal.”

Thomas Jefferson

“We do not float above the biosphere in some higher spiritual or technoscientific plane. Life swarms around us and even in us....For many reasons, not least our own well-being, we need to take better care of the rest of life. Biodiversity....will pay off in every sphere of human life, from medical to economic, from our collective security to our spiritual fulfillment.”

E.O. Wilson Foreward to *Sustaining Life: How Human Health Depends on Biodiversity*.

“When we try to pick out anything by itself, we find it hitched to everything else in the universe.”

John Muir

Statements by Council candidates on the subject of open space

As in past elections, we invited candidates to let us know their views on open space.

Corey Calaycay

I welcome the opportunity to talk to the Friends of the Bernard Biological Field Station and thank you for your commitment to open space and environmental values in Claremont.

I have been in frequent contact with members of the Friends and am aware that some of the City rules and policies on parking are putting pressure on land that helps the Field Station maintain "critical mass". I hope we on council have the will to make adjustments that give the Friends, the Colleges, and the City some flexibility that does not now exist.

It was a remarkable coming-together of our community just two years ago when Measure S was passed with nearly a 71% plurality. This allowed the City to purchase Johnson's Pasture and add it to the Wilderness Park. I was very pleased to be part of the effort that was finally successful. There were really two lessons here: our residents have a strong commitment to open space; and amazing things can happen when the people on all sides of an issue can be brought together.

We've had a thoughtful set of recommendations from our Sustainability Committee and it's now up to us on city council, with the ongoing advice from our community, to decide on priorities and implementations. I look forward to participating in that if you and the other voters in town allow me another term on city council.

I'm hearing from lots of residents just how much they value nature in their daily lives; it enters almost everywhere. When the idea was raised to build a sidewalk along Foothill—the residents immediately to the south reaffirmed how much they appreciate the cleansing and buffering and striking visual presence of the old trees along the street. The City recently undertook a costly but necessary rehabilitation project along Shenandoah Drive rather than cut down the large mature pines. And more people are appreciating the night environment—the Little League worked with residents near College Park when the league wanted to install additional lights.

When issues arise I will use my position on Council to encourage all parties to work together to find a solution that meets the most important needs of all stakeholders. Our citizens have made clear the great value they place on open space; my goal is to find ways to realize and implement the things we value.

You may always contact me by phone at 909-593-5913 or by email at corey.calaycay@verizon.net.

Larry Schroeder

Claremont's open spaces play a large part in defining its appeal and are important to our well being. In 2007, Claremont was number five on Money Magazine's top one hundred best places to live. Our new President will encourage the greening of America. As we move forward with this issue, Claremont should be in the forefront by implementing its sustainability plan which includes the preservation of open spaces.

Recently the importance of the Bernard Biological Field Station has been brought to my attention. I strongly believe that this sensitive ecosystem should be maintained because of its vital importance to the study of natural processes and the environment. As a member of the City Council, I would encourage a compromise between preserving this habitat and meeting the needs of the universities. This compromise should include a written agreement on the preservation of this site in perpetuity. Claremont is a community rich in resources and through a process of dispute resolution, there should be a way to bring this matter to a resolution.

Larry Schroeder Larry@Larry4Claremont.com www.Larry4Claremont.com

Bridget Healy

My stated vision for the City of Claremont includes implementing the Sustainability and General Plans and preserving and protecting open space, trees and parks. Past City Councils and community leaders worked hard and with a great deal of vision to acquire the Wilderness Park, promote our urban forest and place parks by our schools. Claremont residents of all ages are the beneficiaries of the attentive efforts and bold decisions of leaders who, as the General Plan states, created "a legacy of open space for future generations." It is the responsibility, indeed the obligation, of current and future elected officials and community leaders to continue the legacy. I gladly accept that responsibility.

Our community, thanks to the foresight of past leaders, has many treasures and amenities. We are able to celebrate the heritage of our early years through the preservation and use of the Depot, Garner House, Packing House and Padua Hills Theatre. In addition to the Wilderness Park and our neighborhood parks, we have several open space treasures and amenities including the Bernard Field Station, Rancho Santa Ana Botanic Garden and Oak Park Cemetery. It is my goal that decades from now, Claremont residents will look back on the decisions we make today with the same appreciation we have for the decisions made decades ago.

Claremont's recently adopted Sustainability Plan allows this to happen. It is a thoughtfully prepared "how to" guide for community decision makers who, as the stewards Claremont's values, are responsible for determining our future. I am committed to and excited about preserving and protecting our open space through implementation of the Sustainability Plan.

Bridget Healy www.bridgetforcouncil.org

→ *Annual silent auction* ←
at the Folk Music Center, 220 Yale Ave, March 3 to 31. ___

An Invitation for you:

“Sustainable Claremont”: Claremont citizens are forming this organization to improve sustainability throughout the City. **For more info or to help form one of the groups listed below, get in touch with Sue Schenk, sschenk@jsd.claremont.edu**

- Water** (source, reuse, conservation, etc)
- Energy** (source, conservation, climate effects, etc)
- Waste management** (reduce/reuse/recycle, environmental effects, etc)
- Transportation** (train, bikes, pedestrians, etc)
- Constructed landscape** (food, trees, composting, parks, etc)
- Natural habitat and biodiversity** (preservation, restoration, etc)
- Environmental health** (air, soil, pollution issues, etc)
- Social** (housing, health, etc)
- Economic** (jobs, businesses, etc)
- Buildings** (sustainable new buildings and remodels, preservation, etc)
- Schools** (sustainability efforts by schools, both K-12 and colleges)