

Acorn Soupe Update from the Field

Continued from page 1

of these three volunteers helps us achieve more with students and restoration projects.

At Araujo Estate Winery, Heather and Debbie had their hands in the soil planting trees with high school students. At Bothe Napa Valley and Sugarloaf State Park, Kay and Debbie sang songs in Spanish while dancing with kindergartners. At Dave and Nancy Garden's Heath Canyon property, Heather and Debbie recorded measurements from 3rd, 4th, and 5th graders' re-vegetation plant monitoring project.

Just like the kids, Debbie, Heather, and Kay do not seem to mind the dirt. Motivated by relationships with youth and naturalist staff alike, volunteers find many rewards for donating their time to Acorn Soupe. "There is a great group process that encourages all of us to use the gifts and talents we have and to respect each other. Acorn Soupe feels like a healthy, positive place to put our energy," says Kay.

Kay Robbiano-Chlebda is a registered Nurse and certified nurse midwife who volunteers at the Pregnancy Resource Center in Novato and at St. Anthony's Farm, a drug and alcohol recovery center in Petaluma. "Every time... I learn from the kids. I am inspired by them." She adds, "I think it's so important for people to spend time outside, take care of the Earth and learn how it can take care of you."

Debbie Baker studies Environmental Education at Napa Valley College and receives college credit for her time with Acorn Soupe naturalists. "Jeff and Jonny [Acorn Soupe Naturalists] make it look so easy because they are so natural at it," she says. As a mother of two who attend Snow Elementary, Debbie knows how to communicate well with young students.

Heather Huffman works with her fiancé's family business, Clark-Claudon Vineyards. She is inspired by Acorn Soupe's focus on empowering youth and families to be stewards of the land. "I like the fact that it's local and the focus is educating kids to actively take part in improving what is in their own backyard. They have the capabilities to make it better and Acorn Soupe makes them aware of how their actions affect their environment. They learn they can make a difference."

Every member of Acorn Soupe's team is deeply grateful for the time and effort offered by these volunteers in the field! Interested in volunteering? Call Alison Hicks at 707.227.8316.



Debbie Baker volunteers time to help Acorn Soupers

Sulphur Creek Flood

Acorn Soupe Scoop contributor Joe Wheaton recently surveyed the impact of the New Year's Eve flood on Sulphur Creek. He found that this single event deposited about 3,500-4,000 tons of gravel in the 280 meter long reach between Crane Street Bridge and Harold Smith's new bridge.

To put that quantity in context, this is roughly half of what Harold Smith and Son used to historically extract each year from their yard all the way up to Heath Canyon (a distance of 1,600 meters... and a substantially wider channel).

Recall that their extraction each year was roughly equivalent to what the river was naturally depositing each year as bed levels remained roughly constant through time. We can only wait to see how this will affect the coming salmon runs.



St. Helena Primary School worked with community elders from Vineyard Valley to restore parts of the Sulphur Creek habitat



Volunteers Spice Up the Soupe

By Alison Hicks, Program Director

As Acorn Soupe's youth programs continue to grow, we thank the many volunteers who help make our program a success. Parents, teachers and community members support Acorn Soupe in a variety of ways and we are grateful for this involvement.

As Program Director, I'd like to recognize three volunteers who offer hands-on involvement and stellar support to our naturalists. Volunteers Debbie Baker, Heather Huffman, and Kay Robbiano-Chlebda are a team of dedicated community members who donate their time and skills to Acorn Soupe's mission. Their ongoing assistance and dedication help us connect kids and the community to nature through education.

Serving over 1,500 youth annually, Acorn Soupe's programs are offered at *no charge* to students, but these programs do require funding and support. The valued contribution

Continued on page 6

Calendar

April 12-22

Battery Roundup

Donate car batteries to benefit kids

April 22

Earth Day at Skyline Park 11am-4pm

May 20

Spring Hike at Annadel State Park with Life Learning Center - Free!

July 22

di Rosa Preserve Family day

June 11-15

Acorn Soupe's Summer Camp, Session I

June 18-22

Acorn Soupe's Summer Camp, Session II

September 23

Tree of Life Gala at Spottswode Estate

COMMUNITY

KIDS

NATURE

EDUCATION

ACORN SCOOP SOUPE

100% POST-CONSUMER PAPER - NO NEW TREES - NEUTRAL PH - 100% CHLORINE FREE - SOY INK

Sorry Parents...

Summer Camp is for Kids

Acorn Soupe's Summer Camp is a kid-venture that connects kids and nature with loads of fun on 485 acres of gorgeous coastal redwood forest in Sonoma County.

This summer includes two week-long programs. The first session is June 11-15. The second session is June 18-22. Both sessions are open to children ages 8 through 14.

"That's months away!" you exclaim, but space is limited, so register now to ensure a unique and memorable summer experience for your children!

"This camp is an adventure! It opens your eyes and your heart to nature."

- Daniel Kuleto, Age 10



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David Yamate-Morgan (left), with mentor Mike Forte, monitors the health of Salvador Creek as part of David's Senior Project

David measured devastation and debris left by the New Year's Eve Flood



Postcards from the Edge (Of Salvador Creek)

A letter from High School Senior David Yamate-Morgan

My name is David Yamate-Morgan, and I am a senior at Vintage High School. I was inspired by my 11th grade Earth Science teacher, Mr. Auld. From his class projects we learned about Crusher Creek, its watershed, and what makes a creek healthy. (Crusher Creek is Vintage's name for that part of Salvador Creek that runs through the school.)

On October 22nd Acorn Soupe hosted the Watershed Awareness Day at Salvador Creek where I met a lot of friendly people dedicated to the health and safety of the creek. This got me more excited about a project to help restore and protect the creek.

Then the flood hit!!

After much research, I decided to undertake a stewardship project at Salvador Creek for my Senior Project. As part of my restoration efforts, on December 12th I planted live oak acorns, buckeye, black walnut, and seedlings of toyon and spice bush with Mike Forte [of the Napa County Flood Control District].

Then the flood hit!! As soon as I could safely monitor the creek again, I took pictures near the creek by Vintage High School. I helped to record how high the creek had reached by measuring the debris' height in the shrubs and trees.

Since then, I have been cleaning up the trash and unnatural objects in the creek. Some of the items I have found are parts of desks, chairs, plastic bags, cages, and clothes. I even found a shopping cart which I have not been able to dislodge.

Overall, Salvador creek needs more attention than ever. One thing that we can do right away is place a small fence near the school to help prevent the school trash from blowing into the creek from the parking lot and student paths.

There is a lot to do. It has been an interesting project and I have enjoyed meeting so many people dedicated to the watershed. One day I hope to teach a small class at an elementary school about watersheds and keeping creeks healthy.

Sincerely,

David Yamate-Morgan, Senior, Vintage High School



David restores the banks of Salvador creek near Vintage High School by planting oaks, buckeye, and black walnuts



Julie Wagner joins Board of Trustees

Acorn Soupe Welcomes Julie Wagner to Board of Trustees

We are delighted to announce that Julie Wagner has joined Acorn Soupe's Board of Trustees. Julie brings many talents, a wealth of Board experience, and a unique perspective to Acorn Soupe.

Julie was a Founding Member of the American Institute of Wine and Food and led visual efforts for both the Celebration of American Women Chefs and the Napa Valley Wine Auction. For fourteen years, she served as a Napa Valley Museum Board Member and is now an Emeritus Trustee of the Museum. As a member of the Executive Board of the Parent Group of La Jolla Country Day school, she assisted with many aspects of the elementary school community. Currently, Julie is Chairman of the Livingston Foundation for Cancer and Related Diseases.

Julie is now working with the Novak Family, honorary event chairs and hosts of Acorn Soupe's annual fundraiser, Tree of Life, to support Acorn Soupe's youth development and environmental education programs. The event will be held on Saturday, September 23, 2006 at the Spottswoode Estate.

With four children and eleven grandchildren, Julie and her husband, Gary, remain active in the community. They have lived in St. Helena for over twenty years and share Acorn Soupe's vision for a better understanding of our natural world through environmental education and stewardship for our children. Julie is a tremendous asset to our organization. We are honored to have her join Acorn Soupe!



Fall 2005 Restoration at Araujo Estate

Quotes from the field Cotizaciones del campo

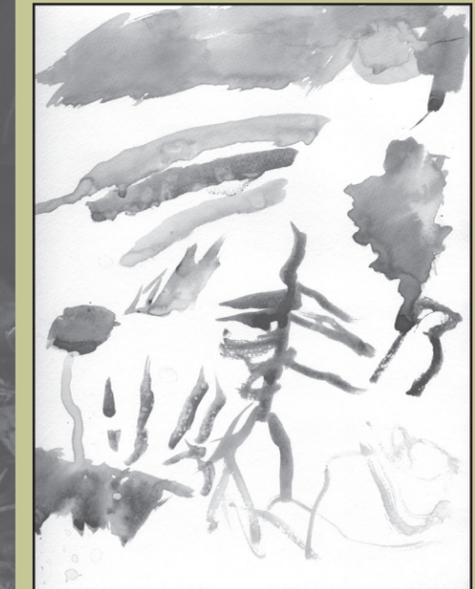
"El lago brilla con todos los arboles y el sol" -Margarita, Age 6

"Me siento feliz y me gusta agarrar los animales" - Meghan, Age 6

"A Cloud" - Pauline Zuntz, Age 9

There is water above me
That I see is white
It is pink in the evening
But dark blue at night

It is a cloud going across the sky
With the wind pushing it by.
A cloud is water
And who says water can't fly?



Watercolor on paper by Francis Aguilina, Age 5

Community + Kids + Nature + Education = Healthy Planet

April 12-22 Car Battery Roundup

Did you know?

- More than 99% of a car battery can be recycled
- The average car battery is filled with 21 pounds of lead and 1 gallon of sulfuric acid
- Acid escaping through cracks can cause painful injuries to children and animals
- Over 5 million batteries per year contaminate backyards and local creek beds

Drop off your used car, boat, and tractor batteries at designated locations like Yountville Corp Yard or Silverado Auto Service. American Automobile Association will donate \$2 to Acorn Soupe for every battery collected. Full list of drop off sites on the web at www.acornsoupe.org.

April 22 Earth Day Festival at Skyline Park - Free Admission

The theme this year is "Celebrating Our Community's Treasures: Parks & Natural Areas," and we'll do just that!

The Environmental Education Coalition of Napa County organized the event and Acorn Soupe will sponsor wildflower and natural history walks and hikes to scenic overlooks.

Enjoy refreshments and the great outdoors while learning about local efforts to restore fish runs, create a countywide parks and open space program, and educate local children about the natural world.

There is a small fee to park your car. For more information, contact Maria Trefren at 707.257.9200 x. 7769 or mtrefren@cityofnapa.org.

Good bugs make good gardens

What is an Insectary?

An insectary is a group of plants that attract beneficial insects to a garden. As part of a larger Integrated Pest Management (IPM) system, many vineyards use insectaries to combat the effects of harmful pests. Insectaries allow these vineyards to reduce their use of pesticides and reduce their operating expenses.

How do Insectaries Work?

Ecosystems function best when there is a wide diversity of living organisms and plants that are compatible to the area and each other. In essence, insectaries encourage a balanced predator/prey relationship. Some insects are natural predators to garden and vineyard pests. These natural predators are attracted to certain plants, which when planted in your garden or vineyard, act as an added layer of protection.

Are Insectaries just for IPM?

No way! Insectaries also attract pollinators! Pollinating insects and birds are essential to a healthy garden and vineyard. Hummingbirds and butterflies not only love insectaries, they bring beauty to any garden. In many cases, flowers go unpollinated due to a shortage of pollinating insects. That means fewer fruits and a lower yield.

- Background photograph and insectary information was provided by Benziger Family Winery

Create your own Insectary!

Add one or many of the following plants to your garden to create your own insectary -

Beneficial Insect Plants

- Baccharis pilularis (Coyote Bush)
- Lonicera hispidula (Western Honeysuckle)
- Salvia leucophyllia (White Sage)
- Sambucus caerulea (Elderberry)
- Achillea borealis (Yarrow)
- Erigeron annuus (Conejo Buckwheat)

Hummingbird Plants

- Delphinium cardinale (Scarlet Larkspur)
- Epilobium angustifolium (Fireweed)
- Grindelia stricta (Pacific Grindelia)
- Linaria macrocarpa (Lineria)
- Zigadenus fremontii (Freemont's Star Lily)

Butterfly Plants

- Aquilegia Formosa (Western Columbine)
- Aster chilensis (California Aster)
- Castilleja densiflorus (Owl's Clover)
- Cynoglossum grande (Hound's Tongue)
- Eremalche rotundifolia (Desert Fivespot)

- Source: Flora for Fauna, Sonoma County Master Gardeners 1999



Dear honeybees, thank you. Sincerely, the World

After every third bite of food, you should thank a honeybee. The honeybees greatest contribution is not a product; its a service - pollination, which leads to many products. Honeybees are responsible for about one-third of the food we eat.

Pollination is the transport of pollen from the stamens of one flower to the stigma of another, producing the seeds which will make a new plant. Since they visit many flowers, honeybees are one of the most important pollinating insects.

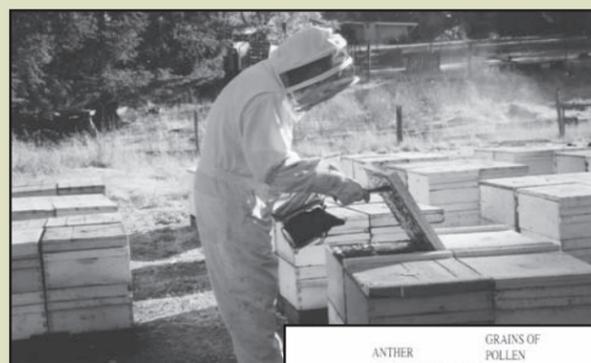
Bees are a good Bzzz

When a bee lands on a flower to collect nectar,

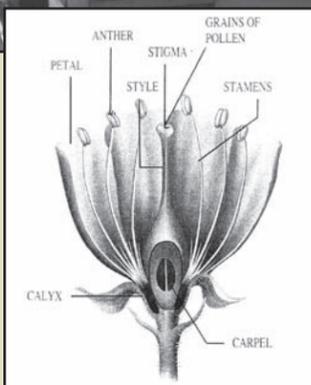
her body gets covered with pollen. As the honeybee visits from flower to flower more pollen is gathered, and some is lost, at each flower...thus pollinating that plant.

Bees are very important in agriculture. Plants such as apples, almonds, pumpkins, and many other fruits, nuts, and vegetables depend on insects for their pollination. Without pollinating insects the harvests would be very poor, relying only on the wind.

So remember when you bite into that apple or eat that ice cream...it all started with a honeybee pollinating a plant!



Bee information and photos were provided by Mark Hohmann. He and his wife Ila have worked with bees for over 40 years. He learned from his dad (George Hohmann) who took entomology classes at U.C. Davis on the G.I. Bill after World War II.



Bugs and Bees - Agricultural Update

Cover what? My Garden?

For the Home Garden

In the past, it was common to keep gardens and vineyards tilled and weed free, which resulted in "monoculture" or only a few plant species being grown.

This practice violates all of the principles of ecology and makes crops very susceptible to pests since there is no suitable habitat for the multitude of beneficial organisms that act as natural predators to these pests.

Create a "polyculture" system by planting different plant species in the garden and vineyard rows or cover cropping.

For example, over 1,000 acres of vineyards at Domaine Chandon are cover cropped with over 40 different types of plant species.

In addition to providing habitat for beneficial insects, cover cropping also minimizes erosion by eliminating the need for cultivation and increases soil health as the crops' vegetal matter puts nutrients back into the soil.

Planting cover crops as part of your IMP system also helps to avoid commonly practiced "quick fix solutions" that often rely on pesticides, which are normally very expensive, and more importantly present significant risks to the applicator and the environment.

- Contributed by Katey Taylor, Viticulturist for Domaine Chandon.

One might plant a winter annual cover crop for a garden that will be cultivated in the spring.

Legumes - Legumes can be planted as they both help fix nitrogen and provide nectar to insects. Many have showy flowers.

Peas - There are many pea cultivars with pink and reddish flowers.

Clovers - Berseem clover, bell beans, and vetches also are typically used in annual cover crop blends.

Grasses - Grasses such as oats, barley, rye and wheat can help add biomass, protect soil from winter erosion and help provide a natural "trellis" for such plants as purple vetch to climb.

When to Plant - Sowing seeds for cover crops typically takes place in the fall while they reach their true beauty in spring and early summer.

For more information regarding IPM, contact:

Napa County RCD and the Napa Sustainable Winegrowing Group

707.252.4188 or nswg@naparc.org

For more information regarding agricultural education please contact:

Acorn Soupe

707.254.7284 or www.acornsoupe.org

Ag in the Classroom

707.224.5403 or aitc@napafarmbureau.org

Connolly Ranch

707.224.1894 or cradmin@sbcglobal.net

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Cover Crops - Agricultural Update