

News from the

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P.O. Box 1101, Claremont, CA 91711



**FRIENDS OF THE
BERNARD
BIOLOGICAL
FIELD STATION**

Of the Claremont Colleges

Silent Auction: *Mark your calendar to stop by and bid!*

Our annual fundraiser of items by local artists will take place as usual during March at the Folk Music Center on Yale Ave in Claremont (www.folkmusiccenter.com/)

Meet the Inhabitants



Western Poplar Clearwing Moth

Paranthrene robiniae

As you can see, this moth is an excellent wasp mimic! The smaller male has a wingspan of about an inch, with the larger female about an inch and a quarter. They are uncommon but have a wide range from Alaska to southern California and east to Kansas. Adults appear in our area in spring. After mating, the female lays eggs on cottonwood, poplar and willow. Newly-hatched larvae chew holes in the bark of the host tree and make 'galleries' in the wood. They feast on the sugary sap and wood for about two years and then pupate the second winter for two to three weeks in chambers closed off with silk. The method these moth larvae use to digest the lignin in wood is different than that used by termites and is being studied with an eye to using it in industry.

Sightings

- ✓ Fluffy fruit from cattails
- ✓ Energetic volunteers with saws and clippers, clearing trails
- ✓ A silver sheen covering the placid waters of the lake
- ✓ Coyote brush brandishing huge white plumes
- ✓ Insects darting, sipping yellow pinebush blooms
- ✓ Tables and stools in the open south of the lake, displaced from the outdoor classroom
- ✓ Ripening toyon berries on crown-sprouting plants
- ✓ Drought-shriveled cactus pads beginning to plump with the rain
- ✓ A carpet of spring green beginning to sprout
- ✓ Acorns dotting oaks
- ✓ Russet deerweed clumps dotting the east field
- ✓ The first, bright flowers on golden currants
- ✓ Yellow-green lichens on rain-darkened wood
- ✓ Hummers and others



Cotton thorn

Tetradymia comosa

If you want a really gray shrub for a really dry area, then cotton thorn (also called “hairy horsebrush”) would be a good choice. This member of the aster family is a short shrub with narrow, hairy leaves up to 3 inches long. These get stiffer as they age and the tips can become sharp spines. Groups of small, yellow flowers appear in spring and are very attractive to insects. The flowers are followed by seeds with fluffy hairs that aid in wind dispersal. Our BFS population may be one of the few left in the Pomona/Riverside area. Some Native American tribes used a decoction of stems and leaves to treat colds and stomachaches.

Our Latest Donation to the BFS

We will be adding a copy of “**Weeds of California and Other Western States**” to the BFS library. A two-volume treasure put out by the University of California to help separate the native from the invasive—invaluable!

BFS Director Resolutions for 2017 by Wallace “Marty” Meyer

I would like to wish the greater BFS community a happy new year! Like many of you, at the beginning of each year I like to reflect on what has been accomplished and set new goals. While the BFS has been an important educational resource for the Claremont Colleges and the neighboring community for over 40 years and an increasingly important research facility, there are still many ways we can expand our impact. In addition, 2017 marks an interesting transition year for the BFS as it marks our last year of student research support from the Henry Thoreau Foundation, the final year of our National Science Foundation planning grant, and expanded interactions with the Redford Conservancy with completion of the infirmary renovation.

My main focus for this year is to continue and expand research opportunities for Claremont College students and incorporate opportunities for community and K-12 students to become involved. As such, my goals for the year are to:

- (1) obtain funding to continue offering many students research opportunities
- (2) establish more diverse relationships with the Claremont Unified School District and other school districts nearby
- (3) initiate a new citizen science program

I have already begun efforts towards these goals. To provide funding for student research, I have submitted a grant application to the Lawrence Foundation and I am preparing two pre-proposals for the National Science Foundation. Also, I am planning to hire students to assist me in initiating a new citizen science program that will conduct bi-monthly surveys of the diversity and phenology of flying insects at the BFS. (Let us know if you are interested in helping with the survey)

Please visit our website (<http://www.bfs.claremont.edu/>) and become friends with us on our Facebook page (<https://www.facebook.com/BernardFieldStation/>) to stay abreast of everything that is happening. All the best in 2017.

Recent Photos from Nancy Hamlett



Left to right:

- Mountain Mahogany Hairstreak (*Satyrium tetra*) on buckwheat. This was a new sighting for the BFS -- the host plant is mountain mahogany, so we wouldn't expect many at the BFS
- A California Quail
- A Great Purple Hairstreak (*Atlides halesus*) nectaring on Scale-Broom. A lovely butterfly that is not often seen at the BFS
- A native praying mantis (*Stagmomantis limbata*) with a prey on Pine-Bush
- A Cassin's Kingbird
- A bee-killer (*Mallophora faulx*) with a yellowjacket prey
- A Red-tailed hawk with prey



Robert Redford Conservancy Update



Pitzer College has begun renovation of the Infirmary.

The outdoor classroom is closed and tables and stools moved to the area south of the lake. Conservancy Director Brinda Sarathy sent the photos above with this info: "There has been much progress at the site including: Internal demolition of walls in the infirmary building, completion of much of the framing, and installation of the new roof sheathing and barrier (clay tiles will be put back on later). Rough-in of plumbing and electric continues, as does abatement work on the sunroom windows. The landscape plan was approved by the City and exterior work will begin sometime in the next week or two." You can see more on the RRC Facebook page.

Why No Change in BFS Protection?

Again we ask: If the center part of the BFS which the lawsuit settlement calls the "temporarily restricted property" is now permanently protected as CUC promised, why not say so? If it isn't, then why not? Please email the colleges and ask.

→Wouldn't it be nice if the Colleges also preserved the 5.7 acres west of the TRP that Harvey Mudd returned to CUC?

→Alums:, you might mention that efforts to preserve the BFS could affect donations!.

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Scripps: President Lara Tiedens

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CUC: CEO Stig Lanesskog

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And More Recent Photos



Volunteers; coyote brush in bloom; reflection on lake; oak; pinebush bloom; oak; temporary home of garden tools; toyon berries ripening; insect holes; shriveled cactus; cattail fluff; acorns; deerweed and buckwheat clumps

Tours of the BFS

Community and school groups can arrange to take tours. If you are interested in bringing your group to the BFS to learn about what is there, contact the Director: 909-398-1751 wallace.meyer@pomona.edu

BFS Volunteer Days

First Saturday of the month, 10:00 a.m. until noon, followed by a tasty pizza lunch for the volunteers. If you have questions or want to be added to the volunteer list, please contact the BFS Volunteer Coordinator: Nancy Hamlett (909-964-2731) (hamlett@hmc.edu)

Claremont Garden Club

Free and open to everyone interested in any type of gardening. Meetings are second Wednesday of most months, 6:30-8:30 pm at the Napier Center at Pilgrim Place, 660 Avery Rd. Talks start at 7pm. For more info gardenclub@sustainableclaremont.org www.sustainableclaremont.org

See the Friends website

www.fbbfs.org for past newsletters and a map showing which colleges now own which parts of the Field Station.

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*The Friends is a non-profit,
grassroots organization*

*“Dedicated to Education
and the Environment”*

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. 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.

The current 85 acres from College to Mills is just large enough to maintain reasonable stability in the existing ecosystems. The center bit of the BFS alone, which is all that is currently protected, would not be sustainable if Harvey Mudd, Scripps, and Claremont Graduate University build on the parts they have now purchased.

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 and for research by other institutions.

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. 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.

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



“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