

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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*“Dedicated to Education
and the Environment”*

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The Claremont Courier : 1420 N. Claremont Blvd., Suite 205B,
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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?

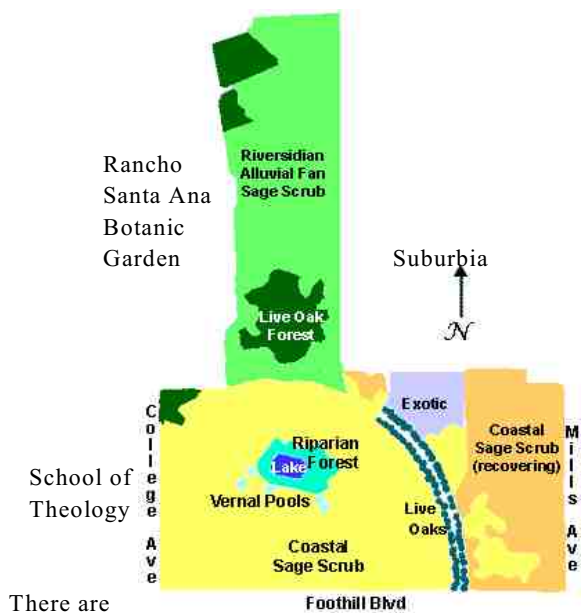
The BFS is used by Claremont Colleges faculty and hundreds of students every year, as well as by many schoolchildren from Claremont and the surrounding areas. It has also been used by college classes from as far away as Long Beach, by scout troops, and by members of the public.

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.

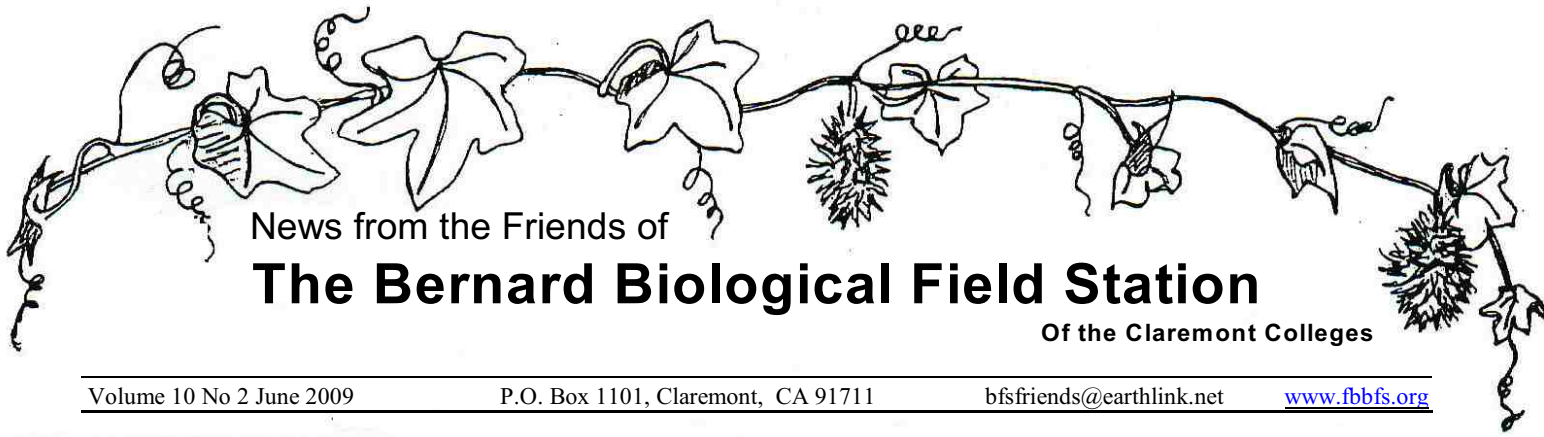
Since much of Claremont was originally covered with coastal sage scrub, it is a fascinating window into our past.

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.



There are 3 parts to the BFS:

Owned by HMC	←	Owned by CUC	→
		Temporary protection	No protection



News from the Friends of

The Bernard Biological Field Station

Of the Claremont Colleges

Volume 10 No 2 June 2009

P.O. Box 1101, Claremont, CA 91711

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www.fbbfs.org

Update on HMC plans

At a study session for the City Council, city staff suggested that the parking requirements for institutions be revised so that for each group of students prohibited from having cars, the colleges could receive a 20% reduction in the number of parking spots required. If HMC restricts freshmen and sophomores from having cars, that would essentially remove the need for a parking lot on the BFS. However, HMC representatives made it clear at the meeting that the college bought the land for future expansion, so building has not been prevented, only postponed.

On June 15, HMC held a community forum to talk about changes it is making to its master plan, including a mention of 'the north property' which is what they are calling the part of the BFS they own.

→See inside for notes on the meeting.

Assorted Information

4th of July booth and parade

If you can help staff the booth or join us to walk in the parade, we would love to have you do so.

Art Competition

The Friends sponsored the first annual 'Art and the BFS' competition for Claremont Colleges students this spring. The entries were exhibited in a Pomona College gallery as part of Earth Week.

Powerpoint Presentation Available

Send us an email if your group would like to arrange for a presentation about what is on the BFS and how it is used.

Earth Day Celebration

FBBFS was one of the sponsors of the first annual Claremont Earth Day Celebration in April. Lots of people stopped by our booth—many thanks to those who staffed it!

New on the BFS website

(bfs.claremont.edu)

Website blog

The BFS website now has a blog with terrific photos and interesting information—check it out!

Lichens galore!

Kerry Knudsen, Curator of Lichens for the University of Riverside Herbarium has now found 40 lichens species, some rare! Although lichens generally flourish in areas with clean air, some are more tolerant of nitrogen in the air and this is true for most found at the BFS. They can be found on rocks and dead branches, as well as on the soil. Photos on the website.

Photo database

The BFS website now has a beta version of a searchable photo database for people to try out. Please visit and send along your comments.

Photo key to BFS Plants

There is also a downloadable key to BFS plants on the BFS website. It is also in a beta version, so suggestions are welcomed.

Teachers and Group Leaders

To arrange a tour, call the station manager
Stepher Dreher, (909) 447-5052

HMC plans (continued)

The Good:

If the City of Claremont parking ordinance is modified as anticipated, Harvey Mudd will not need to build a parking lot on the HMC portion of the BFS. They have no other immediate plans to build on that property, and will not build for at least 10 years and maybe longer.

→Do continue to let the City know that you approve modifying the parking requirement for residential colleges. (It's not a done deal yet—city website address for emails on back).

The Bad:

The sale of half of HMC's part of the BFS to Claremont Graduate University appears to be going through. Maria Klawe, the HMC President, reported that CGU has come up with the money and plans to take HMC up on their agreement to sell half the property to CGU. They are in the process of subdividing the property into parcels, and they expect to have that process done and the sale completed within a year. Klawe reported that CGU does not have immediate plans to build.

→CGU has just torn down its old graduate housing on Dartmouth and 12th. Building here rather than on the BFS would be in keeping with the City's General Plan and Sustainable City Plan which both call for using already developed properties before destroying natural habitat.

The Ugly:

CGU and HMC have agreed to each preserve one (1) acre in perpetuity for biological research and to serve as a 'buffer zone' for the central strip (Temporarily Restricted Property or TRP, see map on back of newsletter) that is reserved for Field Station use until 2051. The shape of these parcels is completely ineffectual in terms of enhancing the ecological viability of the TRP (that's why this is 'ugly') and really is an attempt at 'greenwashing' loss and destabilization of the habitat.

→HMC agreed to post the presentation slides, and when they do you can see for yourself (hmc.edu). It was pointed out that it was decidedly peculiar that a 'premier science school' like HMC chose to ignore science in designing their 'ecological reserve'.

Favorite Quote:

"In the end, our society will be defined not only by what we create, but by what we refuse to destroy."
John C. Sawhill

Sustainable Claremont

sustainableclaremont.org

FBBFS was the first organization to become a member of Sustainable Claremont!

Sustainable Claremont debuted at the Earth Day Celebration, and Action Groups are now forming. SC has already presented letters to the City Council in support of affordable housing, and of the changes to the parking ordinance that should eliminate the need for HMC to build a parking lot on the BFS.

Please consider joining SC and helping Claremont become a more sustainable community. The Natural Habitat and Biodiversity Action Group may be of particular interest, but there are many other Action Groups. You can get in touch with any of the groups through the website.

Meet the Inhabitants



Four Spot

Clarkia purpurea, ssp *quadrivulnera*

Four spot is a lovely late spring annual found in the southeast grassy areas of the BFS. Plants are 6 to 24 inches tall, with fairly widely-spaced branches. The stems are reddish and more or less hairy. The leaves are up to 2 inches long, narrow, and arranged alternately. Solitary flowers arise from the points where the leaves join the stem. The four petals are silky and 1/4 to 3/4

inch long. The color varies but is usually pink with darker purple patches at the outer edges of the petals, hence the common name. The fruits are long, with eight ribs and grayish seeds. Seeds of the closely related species *Clarkia amoena* (farewell-to-spring) were eaten by native Americans in our area.



Bobcat (*Felis rufus*)

Bobcats, named for their short tails, are only rarely seen at the BFS, but there have been several sightings in the last year. Continuing loss of wildlife corridors and local habitat will change that.

Bobcats have large, triangular ears with tufts of hair at the tip, and longer hair on their faces which gives the impression of sideburns. They weigh between 15 and 30 lb, stand up to 2' tall, and can be up to 3' long. Their coats are more or less beige with brown and black spots and stripes on the back and legs. Their underside is white with black spots. The tail has a few black stripes on the top and the backs of the ears are black and white. This varied coloration provides good camouflage.

Bobcats tend to be solitary. They are nocturnal hunters and eat small mammals, birds, and occasionally, animal remains. If a meal is too large, the cat will hide it and come back at intervals. When stalking, bobcats place their hind feet in the prints made by their front feet which minimizes noise due to cracking twigs and suchlike. They climb well and sometimes wait in trees to pounce on prey.

Bobcats can live to 14 years old. They make dens in hollow logs, holes in trees, and holes in the ground. Those with a permanent territory normally mate and give birth in the spring. Litters of 2-4 kittens usually arrive in 50-60 days and are cute and furry. They learn to hunt on their own by the fall but stay with the mother up to a year.

Bobcats do fine living near people and rarely hunt domestic pets. They do have an impressive growl, tho!

🦉 Sightings 🦉

- ✓ new plants of endangered Nevin's barberry
- ✓ last translucent berries of golden currant
- ✓ tall spires of scarlet delphinium punctuating the landscape
- ✓ hawks soaring, circling, seeking
- ✓ orange and blue dragonflies, darting about the lake
- ✓ brilliant blue patches of starry-flowered *Eriastrum* amid pink and white *Navaretia*
- ✓ yellow and orange cactus flowers filled with pollen-seeking beetles
- ✓ evergreen mounds of laural sumac, covered in panicles of creamy-white flowers and buzzing with bees
- ✓ monarch butterfly caterpillars on fuzzy, gray leaves of milkweed
- ✓ succulent stems and bright pink flowers on prostrate mats of Red Maids
- ✓ a jaunty bobcat
- ✓ cheery blue and white spikes of lupin
- ✓ startled lizards skittering every which way
- ✓ jays chasing a hawk
- ✓ a bright blue patch of spiky delphinium
- ✓ red and yellow leaves among the green on poison oak
- ✓ a fearless ground squirrel demanding nuts from the manager
- ✓ tracks and sightings of grey foxes
- ✓ butterflies: blues, whites, ladies, fritillaries, monarchs, viceroys, and more
- ✓ last of the spiky, green wild cucumber fruits on drying vines
- ✓ footprints of green herons in the mud
- ✓ splash of western pond turtles
- ✓ scatterings of mosquito fish
- ✓ orange, yellow, and white lichens decorating rocks and dead branches
- ✓ spectacular columns of our native purple and blue penstemons



"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