

V. 6 No. 1

June 30, 2019  
Summer Edition



## BEE PATCHES TAKE OFF



Energized youth planted our largest bee patch yet in this program in 2018/2019—over 2,500 square feet of pollinator habitat at one location! See inside for more info.



*We believe that everyone can make a difference! Small changes cumulatively make for BIG impact!*



## SOUTHWEST SANTA ROSA IS BUZZING.....

The NCRC&DC relocated our office from downtown Santa Rosa to Todd Road last year and has been networking in our neighborhood ever since. From collaborating with the **North Bay Makers 180 Studios** where we rent space to planning a “Rain Catcher” and habitat garden at Andy’s Unity Park, our activities in the southwest of Santa Rosa are growing.

Although we had worked in the Roseland and Wright School Districts with previous conservation projects, our office move focused efforts to expand our youth environmental education and action work throughout the area.

We now have several projects underway in southwest Santa Rosa, including bringing a thriving pollinator habitat, rain catcher system, and worm composter to a former industrial site where our office is located on Todd Road.

Our Bee Patches Team has designed a bountiful habitat garden to be drip irrigated by the rooftop rainwater collection and storage system, and will be built during the summer of 2019.



Stefan Stehling of our staff is leading the project, which will work with a youth team from **Social Advocates for Youth** to begin construction in July. The youth from Elsie Allen High School in southwest Santa Rosa will learn principles of ecology and conservation, and turn a barren landscape into a beautiful, sustainable pollinator habitat. The youth will learn the four basic needs for a

pollinator habitat – year-round forage, water, nesting areas, and safety from pesticides – and how to develop those needs into a perennial garden requiring little maintenance.

In this STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math) project, the youth will also learn how to calculate the roof runoff volume from rain and needed tank size for collecting the winter runoff, how to divert excess water into a designed conveyance, and how to set up a drip system for summer irrigation of the patch. From installation of orchard bee houses to painting of water storage tanks, the habitat will turn barren land into a diverse ecosystem filled with these small wildlife. Simultaneously, the youth will become junior biologists as they learn to identify and count the pollinators, uploading the data to a national pollinator tracking study. We

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## DO YOU LOVE TO TAKE PICTURES OF THE BEAUTY AROUND YOU?

Our 2nd Annual photography competition starts on July 1st and ends September 10 and is made for YOU! The youth division has no fee for entries, and the open division fee is \$10/image, with the grand prize being a set of photography equipment valued at over \$500. Six categories of images can have entries: North Coast Vision, Pollinators & Pollinator Habitat, Water, Fields & Forests, Recycling & Composting, and Youth Taking Action.

Category descriptions, entry forms, and competition rules are available at our website [cultivatingcommerce.org](http://cultivatingcommerce.org)



Grand Prize Winner from 2017  
by Andrew Thurber



## “Southwest Santa Rosa is Buzzing” (continued)

used Facebook’s partnership with the Network for Good last Giving Tuesday to raise the startup money for this project, have received a grant from the Santa Rosa Sunrise Rotary Foundation, and are seeking additional grant funds to expand our programs in the southwest area of Santa Rosa.

Additional projects which are in development include working with stakeholders to form an Adopt-the-Park youth group for Andy’s Unity Park at 3399 Moorland Avenue. Here, too, a pollinator habitat garden will be irrigated by a rain catcher. We will work with local youth and provide STEM training as with the project on Todd Road. We will also show the youth

how to use the online mobile application, Litterati app (<https://www.litterati.org/>), for tracking litter, while removing it at the park in regular community/family volunteer work-days. The intent is to hold outreach on pollinator habitat and water conservation at the park throughout the year after the project is completed.

We also will be presenting workshops at the 180 Makers Studio on:

- Building Bird and Native Bee Homes
- Constructing Rainwater Harvesting Systems
- Home Vermicomposting

## UPCOMING EVENTS

- ◇ *Hike for Habitat July 14*
- ◇ *Photography Contest runs July 1—Sept 10*
- ◇ *Gravenstein Apple Fair Outreach August 17-18*
- ◇ *Movie Night (date to be determined)*
- ◇ *Buzz Ball & BBQ is Saturday afternoon Oct 19th*



## HIKE FOR HABITAT JULY 14th



We are holding our first annual *Hike For Habitat* at the Kortum Trail near Jenner along the coast on July 14, 2019 at 10:00 a.m. Please gather at the trailhead Parking Lot, and you will readily see our pop-up tent and banner.

Our *Hike for Habitat* will

identify plants, pollinators, and birds along the trail, and be guided by our “Bee Patches” staff and assisted by volunteers from the Native Plant Society and local Audubon Society.

The Kortum Trail connects Wright’s Beach in the south to Blind Beach in the north,

which is about 4.6 miles round trip. The trail is part of the 17-mile long Sonoma Coast State Park, and is well-maintained and relatively easy. The Kortum Trail, named in memory of environmentalist Bill Kortum, offers sweeping views of the ocean and offshore sea stacks. There are optional side trips down to the beach or up the trailside rock outcroppings. This trail is largely level, and winds along the blufftop. It includes grassland remnants of an ancient, coastal prairie which 15,000 years ago was home to vast migrating herds of giant mammoths, zebra-like horses, huge sloths and bison, as well as predators like saber-toothed tigers, dire wolves and California lion. Now home to abundant wildlife and wildflowers, this hike is not to be missed! Email us at [nercandd@sonic.net](mailto:nercandd@sonic.net) for more information.



## BEE PATCHES TARGETED FIRE BURNED AREAS IN 2018/2019

We expanded *Bee Patches* in Sonoma County with grants from the Clif Bar Family Foundation, the Joseph and Vera Long Foundation, Landmark Vineyards and the Wonderful Company, and Jackson Family Wines. This large habitat planting program involves increasing pollinator habitat plantings by direct action with youth (in this case girls from local Girl Scout Troops). *Bee Patches* includes youth education, training, and community participation to achieve our goal of protecting and enhancing pollinator habitat for sustainable agriculture.

Pollinators are critical to small sustainable farms being successful in our rural area, and our Bee Patches program is a catalyst for change—with the goal of healthy pollinator habitat being embraced at all levels of our community. This particular project worked with Girl Scouts from various troops in Sonoma County, and targeted areas burned in the 2017 fires. The girls learned project design techniques for creating a pollinator habitat with several masses of similar plants, yet strategically planting multiple seasons of blooms. Guidance from our partnering Milo Baker Chapter of the Native Plant Society ensured that native plants were selected for over 95% of the plantings, and each patch plant selection was suitable for the particular micro-site ecosystem where the plantings were deployed. Sound design of each patch included providing a water source for pollinators, usually from a drip line feeder being used to establish the plants. Lastly, the area selected was located where no pesticides would be used.

The first step in the project involved a Troop meeting where each troop learned about pollinators and their habitat needs. The next session was a “meet the farmer” field excursion (girl at left is exploring a corn field) where the Troop would visit their land partner and evaluate their specific patch location to determine its ecosystem properties. The girls each had an individual “sit spot” at the farm site where they would concentrate on the natural system around them, considering what they had learned about habitat needs. In addition, they would look about and determine whether pollinators were already present, and if so, which ones. Later, the troop as a whole would consensus-design the patch, and select, with advice from the Native Plant Society, those native plants appropriate for the specific site. The youth would return for a planting day, when the actual patch was installed along with needed irrigation. A few troops also included a “weeding day” after planting. Lastly, the youth returned to count pollinators after the patch was established. The girls are encouraged by the NCRC&DC and the land partner to have a sense of “patch ownership” and will return for several years after this project to tend and care the patch, and count pollinators. When re-visiting patches after planting, the girls become junior biologists as they identified pollinators, uploading data to a national pollinator tracking study in a citizen science application.



### Fire Resiliency for Camp Meeker

The NCRC&DC & Gold Ridge Resource Conservation District are partnering on a CalFire grant for helping Camp Meeker develop a Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP) and help educate Camp Meeker residents on fire safety and resiliency best practices. Camp Meeker is a Wildland-Urban Interface community of about 1,000 residents and 350 homes, located in the coastal redwood forest roughly 15 miles west of the city of Santa Rosa and 10 miles from the coast. The project area totals approximately 2,200 acres, encompassing the community of Camp Meeker as well as forest, scrubland and grassland on parcels to the north and east.

### Build Your Legacy

We can use land and buildings—If you have property that you wish to use to build a legacy supporting sound agricultural stewardship, we will work with you to provide tax advantages while transferring ownership of the property, and provide you with naming rights to carry your legacy forward to future generations.

We also can work with your attorney when you are revising your will, and wish to include us in your estate plans. We accept gifts of stock. Contact us for further information at [ncrcandd@sonic.net](mailto:ncrcandd@sonic.net)

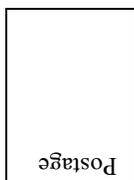
## WILLITS RESIDENTS HELP RESTORE THEIR WATERSHED



The Willits Watershed Habitat Planting project involves restoration of areas in oak woodlands in the Davis Creek watershed of the Eel River Basin in Mendocino County in areas burned in the October 2017 wildfires. The project is to rehabilitate those burned riparian areas and upslope oak woodland areas on lands owned and managed by the City of Willits with native plants suitable to the specific ecosystem. The 2-year project will encourage use of volunteers from residents in the Willits area in the replanting work to create greater linkage of the drinking water supply to the people of Willits. In addition, multi-generational family participation in the project will be encouraged.

Our first field day was held on May 12, 2019, when our Conservationist, Alina Nuebel, led a grasses workshop in one of our restoration sites. Additional outreach and habitat education and action is planned for this summer and fall.

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Summer Newsletter of the NCRC&DC



*We have established a small satellite office in Mendocino — mail us at NCRC&DC, P.O. Box 274, Mendocino, CA 95460. This office supports our Mendocino County programs including Bee Patches, Rain Catchers, Worm Wizards of Waste, the new “Turkey Tail Mushroom Inhibition of Tanoaks” project, the Willits Watershed Project, Tanoak Wine Barrel Project, Forestland Mushroom Cultivation & Harvesting Program, and others. For specific program information contact us at [ncrcandd@sonic.net](mailto:ncrcandd@sonic.net).*

Find us on the web:

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