



BIG MORONGO CANYON PRESERVE

NEWSLETTER

Friends of Big Morongo Canyon Preserve

Spring/Summer, 2025

Teamwork Makes the Dream Work!...

The song title, *The Times They Are a-Changin'*, is so appropriate to Big Morongo Canyon Preserve. Our Trails and Maintenance team has been making improvements by repairing the old benches for the enjoyment of our visitors. Our Education Team met with the new assistant superintendent for elementary schools at the Morongo Unified School District to introduce our field class programs with intent to engage with more of the elementary schools. Now that neotropical birds have begun to arrive at the preserve, the weekly bird walks have surged in attendance with over 50 birders per week.

Speaking of birds, we created a new partnership with [Desert Recreation District](#) to produce the program, "Birding for Kids". Desert Recreation District has passenger vans and they will transport kids from Mecca, Thousand Palms, Thermal, Oasis, and North Shore communities in the east Coachella Valley, all underserved communities. We will provide the venue and the education docents. In addition, we will give each child with Nocs binoculars so they can continue their birding experience in their backyards and public parks. "The compact binoculars will be a sweet treat for our youth! This will allow for continued birding experiences in their communities. Many of the kids we are serving with this program live in Northshore, which is on the Pacific Fly-

way for wintering birds; they see lots of white birds visit during colder months," said Sarah Baltazar, Outdoor Adventure Specialist, Desert Recreation District.

Thank you to the Paul and Roxanne Evans Education Foundation for providing the funds to purchase the binoculars for this event which will take place on Monday, April 21st. Due to the popularity of the program, we have scheduled a second "Birding For Kids" on May, 10th. Funding for additional binoculars for the children is provided by the Conservation Lands Foundation.

The Native Plant Garden at the Education Center will get a revitalization. Our plan is to redesign the garden as an educational opportunity, having the garden serve as a sample of the plants people are likely to see on three main trails in Big Morongo Canyon Preserve. These will include the Mesquite Trail, the Desert Willow Trail, and the Marsh Trail. The native plant garden will be designed for elementary school-aged youth on organized field trips and family visitors to the preserve. This would give the garden themes, and the signage for youth and adults would show the plants, the ecological relationships, and relationships between people and plants (including Indigenous peoples). We also plan for better signage to highlight the pollinator garden, which is not part of the revitalization project and provide more explicit take-aways for visitors to the pollinator garden. This whole effort would not require adding too many new plants (maybe 40-60), but placing them well and in groups. Last, adding matching signs to plants on the trails that match those found in the garden will create links between the garden and the preserve. While there is signage currently on the trails, it is sparse. We have applied for grant funding for this project.

For over two years, you have seen a lot of progress in upgrades to the infrastructure of the preserve. Much of the credit is due to the passionate and dedicated volunteer team that exceeds 55 individuals.

by Kevin Wong



Least Bell's vireo, a BMCP Endangered Species.

Photo by Dan Ward

They are the "heart and soul" of the Friends of Big Morongo Canyon Preserve, and with only two paid employees, we could not fulfill your expectations of this community-based preserve without them. So, if you see any of our volunteers in the preserve clearing the trails, teaching the children, maintaining the native plant and the pollinator garden, leading bird walks, and providing our visitors valuable information at the entry kiosk, please say "Thank You".

The long-awaited repairs to the storm-damaged boardwalks have proceeded in the planning department of San Bernardino County. Recently, we were asked to consider where in the preserve we wanted to stage all of the building supplies and lumber. The county is projecting to begin repairs in the fall of 2025 after the nesting season of the Least Bell's Vireo. This little bird is a federally endangered species due to declining riparian areas in California and it nests in thickets about a meter above ground, especially near the boardwalks. So as not to disturb the bird, the repair project will take place after September 15th, which is the end of their nesting season as defined by US Fish and Wildlife. We are encouraged to have a tentative timeline for repairs to our wonderful boardwalks. Once the repairs to the boardwalk have been completed, San Bernardino County will improve the parking lot and the entry driveway with grading and a layer of asphalt.

(continued on p. 7)



Young birdwatchers learn how to identify birds (and so much more!) during visits to Big Morongo Canyon Preserve.

Photo by Kevin Wong

Visitors Leave Feedback

Some recent visitor comments:

"As Canadians enjoying our 19th season in the desert, we wish all the best in support of one of our favorite places to bird and hike. Today, we are hiking down the Canyon Trail to Indian Avenue."

"Thank you for all of your work maintaining this magical place. I enjoyed many walks here this winter during a difficult time, caring for my dad with early dementia."

"I wish to share some pictures from our hike yesterday in your lovely preserve! Thank you for conserving this area and making it accessible to the public!"

"I'd like to thank Dan Ward, who I met first and he led me to the roosting owl and pellets of another, plus Dan Baumann, who I met later. As well, two beautiful large deer bounded in front of me. I love Big Morongo Canyon Preserve."

(see. p. 3 for more visitor comments)

Friends of Big Morongo Canyon Preserve

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NEWSLETTER

Editor: Joe Zarki

Spring/Summer, 2025

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Kaeliegh's Korner...

This winter has been pretty interesting. It felt more like spring, temperature-wise. It was warm and dry, and I'm curious to see how that will affect the wildflower bloom. The trees seem to be budding early, likely due to the mild winter, but I don't have past data to compare, so I can't say for sure. Last year at this time, mustard plants were everywhere, and we were constantly pulling them out. So far, I've only seen a few thistles, but no mustard. Although it's nice not having to pull as many invasive weeds, it does make me a little concerned for the upcoming flower season— if the weeds aren't growing, the wildflowers might struggle too.

Another odd observation: I haven't seen any slugs in over a year. I suspect last summer's extreme heat and dryness weren't favorable for them, and their populations may have died off. However, their eggs are probably lying in wait for the right conditions to emerge again. Typically, I see slugs all over the boardwalk on rainy days or early mornings, and I occasionally find dried-up ones that didn't make it underground before the sun and heat picked up. The most I've ever seen in a single day was 99 back in January 2024, which is also around the last time I spotted them. We've started getting a little more precipitation, and each time, I excitedly look for slugs— only to be disappointed. I'm hoping to see my slug friends soon!

There are plenty of fascinating animals at the preserve, but slugs are definitely my favorite. My second favorite would probably be the spotted skunk. I was lucky enough to hold a skunk after it wandered into a building— one of the coolest experiences ever! It was adorable but definitely stinky. The smell is ingrained in my nose, and I love catching that familiar scent while walking the preserve. Even if I don't see them, it's nice to know they're around. Reptiles and amphibians are starting to wake up. So



BMCP photo

far, I've seen two skinks and plenty of other lizards. The frogs are croaking loudly, though I do feel they were more boisterous last year. I haven't spotted a snake yet, but I think it's just a matter of time. The last one I saw was a rattlesnake on the side of the Canyon Trail in early December, the latest I've ever seen a snake still active.

With temperatures rising, it's important to be cautious when exploring nature. Watch where you place your hands and feet—

most snake bites occur on hands, followed by feet and ankles. Although snake bites do occur, they are rare. Snakes are docile creatures that just want to be left alone and only strike when they feel threatened. I commonly find rattlesnakes resting in the middle or along the sides of trails. If you encounter one, keep your distance and let it pass. If it's basking in the middle of the trail, either walk around it if there's enough space or turn back. I usually hear them rattle before I actually see them. I'm looking forward to my first snake encounter of the year!

These are just some of my observations and speculations. As the environment continues to change, so does the Preserve. While some of these changes may be concerning or even a little sad to witness, change is inevitable—and it's fascinating to observe how nature adapts and evolves over time.



A red-diamond rattlesnake suns itself along the side of the Marsh Trail.

Photo by Joe Zarki

Executive Director's Report: Creating Success Despite Limitations... by Kevin Wong



As the executive director of the Friends of BMCP, one of my key duties is, with the Board of Directors, to create long-term strategies for the Friends group and for the nature preserve that we

co-manage with San Bernardino County Regional Parks and the Bureau of Land Management. Long-term strategies include:

- Increase funding to provide adequate resources to meet future challenges
- Increase staffing to address and resolve future challenges
- Recognize effects of climate change which include extreme weather, wildfire mitigation, and its effects on the preserve,
- Effectively collaborate with our partners which include San Bernardino County Regional Parks and the Bureau of Land Management.

We have been very effective improving the infrastructure of the preserve along with expanding our education programs for children, families, and adults. As a "small, but mighty" nonprofit, we accomplish with just two employees what other regional nonprofits do with 10 or more staff members. In 2024, our volunteers provided 10,228 hours in service to the preserve, and we don't have a volunteer coordinator. We produce quality

newsletters, both digital and print, along with social media posts, and we don't have a communication coordinator. Every year, our "End of Year" donation appeal has raised money that exceeds the previous year, and we don't have a development director. We are awarded grants and we don't have a grant writer/manager. I could go on and on, but you get the idea.

In a recent interview, I was asked, "In your last two and a half years managing the preserve for the Friends group, what was your most impactful accomplishment?" Without hesitation, my answer was hiring Kaeliegh Watson as our first educa-

tion ranger. Ranger Kaeliegh is a delightful woman who has an incredible appetite for learning. You may not know that she was exposed to the preserve through her elementary school field trip. Kaeliegh had a high school teacher, Cindy Zack, who saw in her the potential of a great outdoor educator. At Copper Mountain College in Joshua Tree, Kaeliegh received two internships, one with Mojave Desert Land Trust's Women in Science Discovering Our Mojave (WISDOM) and with Joshua Tree National Park's Minerva Hamilton Hoyt Internship. Currently, Kaeliegh is enrolled at Arizona State University studying Conservation Biology and Ecology.



Ranger Kaeliegh conducts an educational activity with some visiting school children. BMCP photo

Kaeliegh has enthusiasm and passion in sharing her knowledge of the preserve with children, families, and adults through her Science Sundays and Beginning Birding programs. She is a member of the "Purple Shirt" team, who weekly clear trails and repair benches for our appreciative visitors. She attends community outreach programs to share her passion for the preserve and its wildlife. Weekly, she maintains the water monitoring historical database for the preserve. And, she delights in seeing a new bird, reptile, or mammal. I couldn't successfully do this job without Ranger Kaeliegh!

So, circling back to the four strategic goals, we recognize the value of great employees and when the time is right (contingent on funding opportunities), we will look to increase our staff with more wonderful young career-minded individuals, like our Ranger Kaeliegh.

From the Computer of the 'Prez, It's All About Zen!...



Lately, I've been hearing many guests say, "This is my Zen place." It got me thinking—what exactly is Zen?

Merriam-Webster defines Zen as "relaxed and not worrying about things that you cannot

change." That makes perfect sense when you consider one of the greatest gifts our preserve offers: a place to let go and simply be.

I've never specifically thought of the preserve as my Zen place. But it's true, no matter what challenge the day brings, they all fade away when I sit on a bench, listen to the birds, and feel the peace that surrounds me. Whatever burdens the world hands you, this is a place to set them aside.

But this peace does not come without effort. While you sit and take in the serenity, send a grateful thought to the dedicated volunteers who keep the preserve pristine and to the staff—just one and a half employees—who keep daily operations running smoothly.

by Maureen McCarty

And when you return home, consider what a \$25 (or more) donation could do to help sustain the sanctuary.

Truly a place of peace, Big Morongo Canyon Preserve is made possible by many hands and generous hearts.

(cont. from p. 2, 'more visitor comments'):

"We've been enjoying the bird walks."

"Great guide at the kiosk!"

"We love the Preserve!"

BIG MORONGO CANYON PRESERVE

Remembering George Helmkamp...

by Larry Rosen



George Helmkamp 1921-2015

In retirement he became heavily involved with The Nature Conservancy and played a key role in the establishment of its reserve in Big Morongo Canyon. He also continued to collect, identify, press and send plants to the University of California-Riverside Herbarium until a few months before he died. Curator and Museum Scientist of the Herbarium, Andrew Sanders, who knew Helmkamp for more than 40 years, said, "George began collecting in the 1970s and was our biggest contributor for a long time. In fact, he was one of the most important collectors in the history of California" according to a study by the University of California-Berkeley.

George Helmkamp began collecting plant specimens at Big Morongo Canyon Preserve in the early 1980s following his retirement from UC, Riverside and after he and his wife, Libby, moved to Morongo Valley. He became heavily involved with the Nature Conservancy and played a key role in the establishment of its reserve in Big Morongo Canyon. He had recorded some 400 plants within the area. His expertise in the fields of biology, ornithology, and

other fields of scientific interest remains unsurpassed, and he was a tremendous asset to the preserve.

His collection grew over the years as he added specimens from California, the desert Southwest, and other western states. It included over 13,000 specimens, making it the second largest botanical collection in California.

Years later, George donated the entire plant collection to the SummerTree Institute, a non-profit, environmental organization founded by Robin Kobaly, a former student and fellow botanist of George Helmkamp. Robin was thrilled to receive this donation, but overwhelmed with the task of housing the collection. She thought Big Morongo Canyon Preserve was the perfect place for the herbarium to reside. In 2005, Alan Cooper, a Big Morongo Canyon Preserve docent built an extension of the original cabinets to house the collection in the Education Center.



A sylvan hairstreak seeks nectar from a yerba mansa flower near the Helmkamp Deck.



A pressed plant specimen of a small-headed matchweed, *Gutierrezia microcephala*, by George Helmkamp. BMCP photo

Due to the large scale of the collection, it was decided to relocate it to a larger institution. The Friends of BMCP sought help from U.C., Riverside and thanks to Bill LaHaye, a Friends' board member, and Andy Sanders, a botanist at U.C., Riverside, a large portion of the collection was transferred to the university. The portion that was collected at Big Morongo Canyon Preserve is well-preserved and will remain at the preserve.

In this era of climate change, as plants and their seeds face increasing environmental stress, we know that the collection will become ever more valuable to science in years to come.

Photo by Joe Zarki

BIG MORONGO CANYON PRESERVE

Spring at Big Morongo Canyon Preserve, When Love Is in the Air– and, of Course, Birds!



Spring is a time of great activity for much of the flora and fauna at Big Morongo Canyon Preserve. The arrival of every species of migrating and nesting bird is greatly anticipated by visiting birders. Many birds, reptiles, and insects dress in vibrant colors as the weather warms. Newly born young of all types start to be seen as part of Nature's annual breeding cycle. All images here are from the months of March-May. Going clockwise from the upper left are a northbound dark-morph Swainson's hawk (photo by Dan Ward), a resting bobcat (photo by Dan Ward), a colorful red-lined grasshopper (photo by Joe Zarki), a great horned owllet (photo by Dan Ward), Gilbert's skink (photo by Joe Zarki), a rare rose-breasted grosbeak (photo by Dan Ward), a rarely seen Wright's metalmark larva (photo by Joe Zarki), a male lazuli bunting (photo by Dan Ward), a desert black swallowtail on yerba santa (photo by Joe Zarki), and (center image) a pair of mating American kestrels from a recent Wednesday bird walk (photo by Roxanne Evans).

BIG MORONGO CANYON PRESERVE

Community Science, Knowing Our Neighbors in Nature...

by Zoe Dagan

Hit the Mojave or Colorado desert trails on a Wednesday or Friday, and you might run into the Community Science Collaborative (CSC). You'll know you've come across the CSC if they're nose-to-the-ground with a plant or insect, if their heads are cocked to the side trying to identify a bird by sound, or if they've stopped mid-trail to talk about geology, botany, conservation biology, or another nature-related topic.

This group of California Naturalists, Climate Stewards, and others with strong affinities for the natural world, are on a mission to develop and support community science, to foster scientific research in conservation biology, and increase public awareness of the rich and fragile environment in which we live. They do this by collecting and contributing data that enhances research in conservation biology, as well as promotes a culture of learning within the natural environment.

Community Science (also called Citizen Science, though one need not be a citizen to participate) is an activity that invites people of all ages and backgrounds to participate in scientific research. Using free tools like iNaturalist, eBird, Merlin, and CalFlora, just about anyone can contribute observations and data that aid in scientific discovery.

You don't have to be a member of the Community Science Collaborative to be a community scientist. If you are walking in Big Morongo Canyon Preserve and see an interesting fungus or insect or plant, snap a photo and upload it to iNaturalist. Encounter a bird you're eager to identify? Open the Merlin app and use its step-by-step ID process to narrow it down to the likely species. The information you collect, once uploaded to any of these platforms, becomes part of an information database used by researchers to, well, do science!



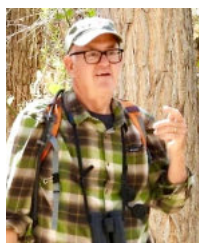
Citizen scientists can help document unusual patterns in migrating or overwintering birds, such as this year's irruption of sage thrashers.

Photo by Dan Ward

Should you come across the Community Science Collaborative during one of your wild wanderings, please say hello and let them know you read about them in the BMCP newsletter! And should you want to join the CSC, contact UC Riverside Palm Desert Center and ask about the UC Environmental Stewards program (see: https://calnat.ucanr.edu/Take_a_class/ucrpdc/).

Editor's Note: Several iNaturalist projects focused on BMCP already exist. *Birds of Big Morongo Canyon Preserve* (<https://www.inaturalist.org/projects/birds-of-big-morongo-canyon-preserve>) seeks observations of all birds from within the 31,000+ acre Area of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC). Similarly, *Lepidoptera of Big Morongo Preserve* (<https://www.inaturalist.org/projects/lepidoptera-of-big-morongo-canyon-preserve>) collects observations for all butterflies and moths from within the entire preserve. If you have an iNaturalist account, you are welcome to join one or both of these projects and add your records to them. If you don't have an iNaturalist account, consider creating one (they're free) and join more than 3.5 million naturalists worldwide who are contributing their field observations to science.

Meet New Friends' Board Member Kurt Kosek... by Kurt Kosek



Born in Wilkes-Barre, PA, I graduated from Cal State U.-Sacramento. After living in the Bay Area for 40 years and having a career in law, I retired to Palm Springs in January 2022. To learn more about the

desert, I did the Certified California Naturalist Program at UCR-Palm Desert. While I was into the redwood and oak environs, the California Naturalist program got me to shift gears and develop my love and appreciation for the desert.

As an avid hiker who happened to have a pair of binoculars, I met some birders, and the journey began. I have been birding for about 30 years but only got serious about it since retiring. I usually go birding three or four times a week. Even

if I go for a walk in my neighborhood, I am doing an eBird list.

I am also very active with the Community Science Collaborative and have been involved with lizard surveys in various places around the Coachella Valley and surrounding desert. I will admit, I am usually at the back of the pack looking for birds. The thing I enjoy most is having access to places I would not go on my own.

Most folks know me from my time co-leading the bird walks at Big Morongo. I have met so many wonderful folks this way. To bird the same place week after week throughout the year allows me to see the changes from season to season. Big Morongo Canyon Preserve is truly a gem in the California desert. I'm honored to join the Friend's Board and represent the bird walk committee.

Saying Goodbye to Tim & LiMei



"Our preserve hosts, Tim Sizemore and LiMei Dunn will be leaving us for a new 'gig' at Whiskeytown National Recreation Area in early May. They have been invaluable and we thank them for all of their work at the preserve."

Kevin Wong, Executive Director

BIG MORONGO CANYON PRESERVE

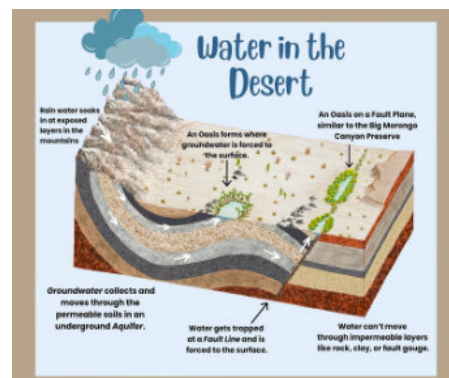
Teamwork Makes the Dream Work! ...

(cont. from p. 1)

There has been a lot of chaos and turmoil in Washington D.C. and we have felt the repercussions. On Friday, Feb 21st at 1:00 a.m., we received an email from the Bureau of Land Management with a "Temporary Stop Work Order" for the grant that was awarded to Friends of Big Morongo Canyon Preserve late last year. The first paragraph of the email stated, "The BLM has determined that language in your original project proposal or scope of work for the subject-referenced agreement *may not* (my emphasis) comply with the President's Executive Orders (EO) *Ending Radical and Wasteful DEI Programs and Preferencing* and/or *Defending Women from Gender Ideology Extremism and Restoring Biological Trust to the Federal Government*. Terminology and project components that may conflict with EOs could include references to diversity, inclusion, justice, equity, equality, and underserved populations. The BLM is issuing a

temporary partial stop-work on all project components that conflict with these EOs."

So, basically our five-year grant to replace aged and outdated signage, to create new displays at the kiosk, and expand quality education programs is in jeopardy even though we did not use the acronym DEI in our grant application. We did use the term "underserved populations," but so many of the populations in our desert regions are underserved! On Friday evening of the same day, a Federal judge temporarily blocked a series of executive orders which are aimed at gutting diversity, equity and inclusion initiatives within the federal government. We are waiting for further direction from the Bureau of Land Management concerning the disposition of our grant. It's been quite a rollercoaster ride!



A new exhibit design on water is being planned for the visitor entry kiosk. BMCP graphic.

We will stay focused on these three goals with a shift from the government grant to financial support from our friends, visitors, and donors. And, of course, we will keep you informed on how you can help.



FRIENDS OF BIG MORONGO CANYON PRESERVE

PLEASE RETURN YOUR TAX-DEDUCTIBLE DONATION TO:

FRIENDS OF BMCP
P.O. Box 780
MORONGO VALLEY, CA 92256

Yes, I Want to Help!

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Secure Credit Card Donations and Monthly Gifts May Be Made at:

www.bigmorongo.org

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☐ \$ 50.00
☐ \$ 250.00
☐ \$ 1,000.00

- ☐ \$ 35.00
☐ \$ 100.00
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NEWSLETTER (WINTER, SPRING/SUMMER, FALL)

☐ EMAIL ☐ MAIL ☐ NEITHER

SUPPORT

FRIENDS OF BIG MORONGO CANYON PRESERVE

Friends of Big Morongo Canyon Preserve is a nonprofit 501(c) (3) association organized for the support of programs at Big Morongo Canyon Preserve. We are dedicated to the exploration, preservation, and stewardship of the preserve by protecting and managing its resources, and by providing educational programs, access for wildlife viewing, and recreational opportunities for the enjoyment of its visitors.

Credit card donations can be made at www.bigmorongo.org. Donations may also be tax deductible.

New Studies Show Ongoing Declines in Birds and Butterflies ...

by Joe Zarki

Two recently published studies highlight continuing losses in two of North America's most popular faunal groups—birds and butterflies. The *2025 State of the Birds Report* asserts that 229 bird species show low populations, declining trends, and face other threats. The report designates 112 of these birds as “tipping point” species—birds that have lost 50% of their populations over the last 50 years. These tipping point species need research documenting specific causes of their decline as well as proactive conservation measures to help stem their continuing population losses.

As part of the study birds were divided into eight primary habitat groupings that were analyzed for population trends: shorebirds, grassland birds, aridland birds, western forest birds, eastern forest birds, waterfowl and waterbirds, seabirds, and Hawaiian birds. The two groups most relevant to Big Morongo Canyon Preserve are the grassland and aridland birds. Sadly, these two groups have suffered the greatest population losses over the last 50 years— a 41% decline among aridland species and a 43% drop among grassland birds. Another important group for BMCP, western forest birds, showed an 11% decline over the same time span.

Aridland birds throughout the Southwest have lost 46% of their habitat due

to drought, wildfires, and the spread of invasive plants. Some aridland birds showing the greatest declines are Allen's hummingbird, cactus wren, verdin, Bendire's thrasher, LeConte's thrasher, sagebrush sparrow, and rufous-crowned sparrow. Seventeen of 31 aridland bird species have shown population declines since 1970. A Desert Thrasher Working Group has published a set of voluntary management practices for alternative energy developers that, if followed, may slow the declines of several vulnerable thrasher species.

Across all habitat groups, BMCP shows 14 birds on its revised checklist (not yet published) that are listed in the report as tipping point species. The report also describes the social and economic benefits of birds to the more than 100 million Americans who describe themselves as “birders.” It's not all doom and gloom for birds as certain groups, mainly ducks and waterbirds, have seen population increases since 1970, mostly among fish-eating species. Marsh birds continue to show declines due to habitat loss.

A similar study looking at butterflies was recently published in the journal *Science*. The authors (lead authors were Drs. Elise Zipkin and Nick Haddad of Michigan State University and Collin Edwards of Washington State University, among 30 contributing authors) looked at data

from 76,000 butterfly surveys conducted between 2000 and 2020. Those surveys showed that butterfly populations fell by 22%, suggesting that for every five butterflies in the United States in 2000, by 2020 there were only four.

Working with the USGS Powell Center for Analysis and Synthesis, the authors examined butterfly data from 35 different programs and datasets including records for 12.6 million butterflies. Their analysis showed that butterfly populations, nationally, declined by an average of 1.3% per year with only the Pacific Northwest showing an increase of 13.8%, perhaps due to a brief population boom by the California tortoiseshell.

Butterflies are the most highly surveyed insect group, although many long-term studies have focused on individual species such as the monarch butterfly. The new report documented that 107 butterfly species lost more than half their numbers over the course of the study. Habitat loss and overuse of insecticides are the prime factors driving the declines. According to lead author Edwards, “this [study] should be a wake-up call. We urgently need both local- and national-scale conservation efforts to support butterflies and other insects. We have never had as clear and compelling a picture of butterfly declines as we do now.”

CALENDAR

AT BMCP

APRIL – AUGUST

Gate open 7:30 a.m. to Sunset

365 days a year

UPCOMING EVENTS & COURSES

April 25, 8:30 a.m. - Noon. “Identifying Birds by Sight and Sound” with Robin Roberts. <https://bit.ly/4iu9Dmy>. Course fee: \$65 per person. Class size limited to 8 participants.

April 26, 7:30 a.m. Earth Day Clean Up and Bird Walk. Meet at the Main Preserve parking lot.

May 31, 8:00 a.m. Celebrating “Black Birders Week” with a bird walk. Meet at the Main Preserve parking lot.

BIG MORONGO CANYON PRESERVE BIRD WALKS

Bird walks are offered each Wednesday morning from 7:00 a.m. to 10:30 a.m. from April through September. Bird walks start at 8:00 a.m. from October through March. Meet at the Main Preserve parking area. Recently seen bird lists are updated weekly and may be viewed at: www.bigmorongo.org/birds.

Additional programs may be offered from April through August. Check <https://bigmorongo.org/educational-programs/> for future dates and times.

AMBASSADOR KIOSK

Friday, Saturday & Sunday: Ambassadors will be at the kiosk to provide information on the latest BMCP happenings. They are very happy to tell you about recent wildlife sightings, safety precautions, and make recommendations for walks based upon weather, fitness, and time. BMCP-branded merchandise is available for sale at the kiosk. The kiosk also has educational displays including historic and geologic, fauna, and bird sightings of the preserve.