



# SSA Speaker Series— Live and Zoom



## Tree Decisions. Why do we prune? What is right and what is wrong.

A PRESENTATION BY  
**BLAIR GLENN, LOCAL ARBORIST**

Blair Glenn, the owner and founder of Saratoga Tree Service, is a long-time resident of the South Skyline area. Much of his tree work has been for landowners in the foothills and summit of the Santa Cruz Mountains. He began his tree service 50 years ago as a transition from his lifestyle as an experienced and avid big wall rock climber in Yosemite National Park. In both climbing big walls and trees, Blair has persisted in maintaining his principles of safety, quality work and respect for nature.

[www.saratogatreeservice.com](http://www.saratogatreeservice.com)

### Friday, November 3, 2023

**TIME** 7:00 pm – Refreshments  
7:30 pm – General Meeting announcements followed by the featured presentation and Q&A

**PLACE** Saratoga CDF Summit Fire Station  
12900 Skyline Blvd.

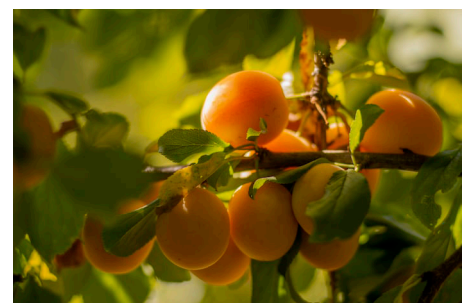
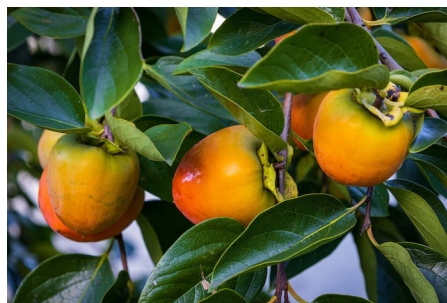
**DIRECTIONS** Located on the west side of Skyline Blvd. approximately .6 of a mile north of the intersection of Skyline Blvd. and Highway 9.

*Note: Parking at the fire station is limited, and overflow will have to park along Highway 9. Be safe, use a flashlight.)*

**PLEASE BRING** A sweet or savory dessert to share. SSA will provide beverages.

**ALSO ON ZOOM** To join click on the link:  
<https://zoom.us/j/95405566717?pwd=Tkt5cFRLYkNkakROckVMZTdsdms3Zz09>

*(This link is also available on our website: southskyline.org )*



### IN THIS ISSUE

SSA General Meeting .....	1	Fire and Rescue News .....	3	Pescadero Marsh .....	6
South Skyline Association News .....	2	Bracken Ferns.....	4	Classified Ads .....	7
SPUG Report.....	2	Las Cumbres Holiday Bazaar .....	5		
SSA Membership Report .....	3	Visitor Center Revitalization .....	5		

# What the SSA Board is Doing...

BY DEBRA BORN, MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE CHAIR

## IT'S FALL AND IT'S BEAUTIFUL!

As the leaves turn and the days shorten, we have been blessed with a cool and moister summer this year and thankfully very few fire scares. We now can begin to think about the upcoming heating season when we snuggle under blankets and tackle more of our indoor projects. Hopefully the winter weather this year won't be as extreme as last year so we can avoid the inconveniences of the many storms.

The Annual SSA Community Picnic was the highlight of the summer when we learned about raptors and again delighted in the beauty of Ami Jaqua's ranch, which she has so generously hosted for many, many years. There were about 75 people in attendance this year.

Our free "911 Address Sign" program has gotten off to a strong start. This program is described in our newsletter and is intended to provide all in-boundary members with a reflective sign so emergency personnel can easily find your home. If you haven't already ordered your sign, you can find the link to the order form on the homepage of our website. <https://southskyline.org/events/free-address-signs-application/>

Although we have a healthy number of active members, we have a great need for new board members. If you're interested in volunteering to be on the SSA Board of Directors, contact our President Evan Dellor at [President@southskyline.org](mailto:President@southskyline.org).



# SPUG Quarterly Report

Month/Year	Amerigas	Ferrellgas	Kamps	Suburban/SV
September 2023	2.750	2.610	3.330	3.840
August 2023	2.750	2.487	3.240	3.840
July 2023	2.750	2.556	3.240	3.600
June 2023	2.750	2.951	3.650	3.600
May 2023	2.750	3.331	3.650	3.950
April 2023	2.750	3.335	3.650	4.350
March 2023	2.750	3.379	3.650	4.350
February 2023	2.750	3.405	3.650	4.400
January 2023	2.750	3.435	3.650	4.500
December 2022	2.750	3.146	3.240	4.150
November 2022	3.250	3.031	3.240	4.410
October 2022	3.250	3.058	3.540	4.410
September 2022	3.250	3.045	3.540	4.380

Skyline Propane Users Group (SPUG) was formed to benefit SSA members. For information about joining, or for members wishing current information on the agreement go to our website: [www.SouthSkyline.org/spug/](http://www.SouthSkyline.org/spug/). If you have questions, please email [propane@southskyline.org](mailto:propane@southskyline.org).

SSA has agreements with Amerigas, Ferrellgas, Kamps, and Suburban Propane Scotts Valley. Existing "Associate Members" will continue to enjoy SPUG discounts, and long-time SPUG members who switch to Ferrellgas will also be eligible for the SPUG discount. **Please note: Prices are subject to change as frequently as wholesale prices change. The prices SSA posts are for the first of the month. Our SPUG rate is based on a keep-full basis, not will-call service.**

You are not required to pay sales tax on propane if you do not have natural gas available where you use propane. If you get your propane from Amerigas, you will need to submit a sales tax exemption form. Contact Amerigas for the form.

**Membership dues are due every January. Those whose SSA membership has lapsed can be disqualified by our propane providers from receiving the benefit of the SPUG price. Membership can be renewed at <http://SouthSkyline.org/membership/>. If paying by check use the Membership Application on the website.**

# SSA October Membership Report

We did experience a few distressing moments this year with respect to membership issues. There was a short period this winter when our online payment system was out of order causing member frustration when trying to renew. Also, later in the summer our system erroneously sent out messages to quite a few members who had renewed but who received an email notice telling them they had not. Our website committee is heartily sorry for these inconveniences, which were of course addressed as quickly as possible, but which caused heartburn for many of our members.

Finally, it's not too early to think about renew your annual membership for 2024 (\$20 due by the end of January). Many of you have discovered you can renew for multiple years, so you do not have to think about renewing each year. We do not send out paper invoices but we do put a renewal reminder in the January newsletter. To learn when your membership expires you can look on the Membership

page of our website [southskyline.org](http://southskyline.org) and click on the "Renew" button and enter your email. At the bottom of the page will be a message telling you when your membership expires. You can also renew before the end of the year if you've already renewed for 2023, and it will automatically apply to your 2024 dues.

Remember, we do not prorate dues if you renew or join later than January. For help with renewal or joining, contact us at [membership@southskyline.org](mailto:membership@southskyline.org).

Renew your membership!  
[www.SouthSkyline.org](http://www.SouthSkyline.org)

## South Skyline Fire & Rescue News

BY ANDY SEIGEL, CAPTAIN, SSF&R

We had a busy summer, with higher-than-average call volume, but below average fire activity. Stay vigilant! If you see smoke where it doesn't belong, do not hesitate to call 911.

### Recruiting

As of this writing, we have a few candidates making their way through the application process for the 2024 volunteer fire academy. By the time you read this, we'll be starting to look at 2025 recruiting. There is always information on our website about the program under the "Join Us" tab. We're happy to answer any questions at any time; email us at [interest@southskylinefire.org](mailto:interest@southskylinefire.org)

### Firefighter Spotlight!



In the spotlight this month, we welcome Andrew Clark. I first met Andrew at one of our earliest pancake breakfasts. At the time, he lived in the Deer Creek area and had many questions about fire response in that neighborhood. Years later, in 2019, he became a Defensible Space Inspector for CAL FIRE. He has since performed hundreds of inspections, including many in the South Skyline area. Two years after that, he added EMT and Forestry Technician to his credentials. Last fall,

he trained very hard prior to entering the 2023 volunteer academy. Shortly after graduating, he secured a position as a seasonal firefighter for CZU. Between shifts, he responds and trains with us. This is all in line with his pursuit of a childhood dream to "be in the fire service and contribute to the community". Perhaps a career with CAL FIRE in Fire Prevention? We'll see!

Visit us at: <http://southskylinefire.org>



# Bracken Ferns are Well-Adapted

BY SARAH SCHOEN

Bracken fern (*Pteridium aquilinum*) is most noticeable three months out of the year. In spring, tightly coiled fiddleheads emerge from underground rhizomes.

These unfurl into a stem-like stipe, with severally laterally-branched fronds. The overall plant is usually 1 to 4' tall.

The fronds themselves are a nearly equilateral triangular, 1 to 3' long. They are pinnate, with feather-like side fronds, themselves also pinnate. In the late fall, fronds and stipe turn brown and fall to the ground. This frond litter helps to insulate the underground rhizomes from winter cold and also to delay the emergence of the fiddleheads before the chance of late frost has passed.

On the underside edge of the fronds are the sori, structures which contain the spores. The spores are released into the wind, sometimes travelling quite far away. They form the gametophyte generation. These tiny plantlets create the next sporophyte generation (what we think of as the adult plant) by sexual reproduction.

Bracken ferns have been around at least 53 million years. This has given them time to evolve several strategies for survival.

The first strategy is a series of poisons to discourage herbivory by animals of all sizes and competition from some plants. Bracken ferns contain the following:

- Ecdysones, a class of hormones, cause molting in insects. This interferes with the insects' life cycle and greatly reduces their chance of survival.
- Thiaminase is an enzyme that breaks down thiamine, or Vitamin B1. When eaten in quantity by livestock, especially horses, this can result in symptoms called "the staggers", or even seizures.
- Hydrogen cyanide is produced when crushing of the fronds releases an enzyme that converts nontoxic prunasin (also found in apricot and cherry pits) into hydrogen cyanide. Cyanide is toxic to all animals, but in these quantities is especially effective at deterring insects eating young fronds.
- Tannins are bitter and astringent and discourage herbivory. They can also make food less nutritious by interfering with stomach enzymes responsible for protein and carbohydrate digestion.

- Ptaquiloside is known to cause hemorrhagic disorders in nonruminants, tumors and liver disease in ruminants, and cancer in small animals.
- Allelochemicals can leach out of bracken ferns into the soil. This is especially true of the dead fronds from the previous season. These compounds inhibit some other plants from competing with bracken ferns for sunlight and nutrients.

Many human cultures use the fiddleheads as food. Fortunately, cooking destroys or at least greatly reduces these poisons. Unfortunately, cultures such as Japan and England where people ate larger quantities of fiddleheads also had larger incidents of esophageal and stomach cancers. Moderation, or even avoidance is recommended.

Bracken ferns produce fewer spores than some other fern species. They primarily reproduce vegetatively from underground rhizomes and grow in colonies. This type of reproduction requires less water than sexual reproduction. Rhizomes are of two types. Long, straight lateral rhizomes store water and starch and extend the colony's overall size. Shorter branch rhizomes grow to the soil surface and start a new plant. Thin, brittle roots extend underground from the rhizomes, absorbing water and nutrients. So, what look like individual plants in a colony can all be connected underground. Colonies can live to be hundreds of years old.

Bracken ferns are adapted to fire. During the fire, the above ground portion of the plant is destroyed. The deeply buried rhizomes are insulated, able to resprout after the fire has passed. Regrowth is best after a spring or fall fire when starch



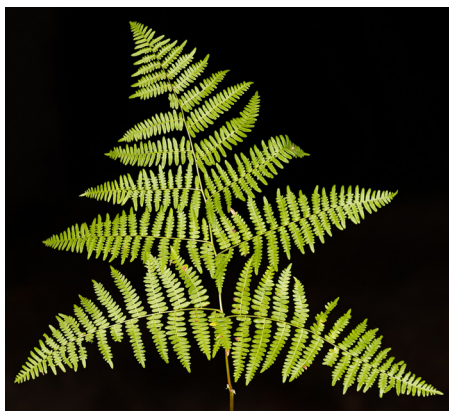
Bracken Fern

levels are highest. Fire also kills some of the plant competitors. New bracken fern spores can also arrive on the wind from an unburned area. They sprout well in the alkaline soil expected from ash deposition.

Bracken fern was used by many native peoples for food, medicine and as a material of construction. Ohlones ate the fiddleheads. They used a decoction of the root as a hair rinse and roots were rubbed on the scalp to encourage hair growth. They also used the fronds as roof thatch.

According to Rumsien Ohlone Linda Yamane, a historian and basketry artist, bracken ferns were used as umbrellas, and lining berry baskets, earthen ovens, and leaching pits. "Using the rhizomes for basketry was not straightforward. Only the dark, flat, woody band was used and it was a messy job to extract and clean it. You have to scrape, and scrape and scrape some more, but after soaking with acorns for a blackening, the processed strands make beautiful, black basketry designs."

Bracken fern is found on all continents except Antarctica. It is well-adapted to survival and dispersal. There are a number of varieties, some well on the way to speciation. Ours is var *pubescens* with hairs on the underside.



Bracken Fern Frond



Sori on the Underside Edge of the Frond

Photos by David Schoen

# Las Cumbres Holiday Bazaar—

Sunday, November 12, 10am – 3pm

Support Our Local Wildfire Safety Organizations and Our Mountain Artisans

The Las Cumbres Holiday Bazaar returns on Sunday, November 12, from 10am to 3pm, in the Las Cumbres community center just off of Skyline Blvd, 18260 Las Cumbres Road, Los Gatos, 95033. The Bazaar benefits South Skyline Firefighters (Company 29) and the South Skyline Fire Safe Council, two local volunteer-based organizations dedicated to wildfire safety here in the mountains.

Enjoy lunch and wine tasting with your neighbors and do your holiday shopping while supporting wildfire safety and local artists. You will find unique hand-crafted jewelry, wreaths, paintings, pottery, soaps, home goods and other wonderful items, perfect for holiday gifting. Muccigrosso and Baccarossa, two local family-owned wineries, are offering complementary wine tasting.

Café Las Cumbres will be serving breakfast and lunch featuring homemade scones, muffins, quiche, soup, bread and cookies, along with coffee and tea. The Las Cumbres Pantry features local jam & honey, homemade candy, fudge, applesauce, and other goodies. Little ones can explore the children's book corner, where gently used children's books are available for a voluntary donation.

New this year—an on-line bake sale! Purchase delicious pies, cakes, cookies and other homemade treats on our website, [www.lascumbresholidaybazaar.org](http://www.lascumbresholidaybazaar.org), and pick them up at the Bazaar. Check the website often—new items will be posted every few days in the weeks leading up to the Bazaar.

If you are interested in volunteering at the Bazaar or would like to donate pantry items (homemade jam, honey, etc.), baked goods or gently used children's books, please email [bazaar@lascumbres.org](mailto:bazaar@lascumbres.org).



## Portola Redwoods State Park Visitor Center Revitalization Project



**Portola and  
Castle Rock  
Foundation**



Portola and Castle Rock Foundation has teamed up with our State Parks' Portola Redwoods Staff to literally "raise the roof" and replace the windows at the Visitors Center at Portola Redwoods State Park. In a few weeks, we will undertake one of our largest projects that is desperately needed! Imagine a new fire-resistant green metal roof with tongue and groove underlayment for the inside ceiling.

Yes—the tarps will be going away! In addition, we are replacing the aging single-paned windows with double-paned windows to improve weather proofing and insulation, climate management and energy conservation, and overall aesthetics.

We'd love to have your commitment to help us and our Parks Staff to complete these improvements and preserve this treasured building. Donate Today at [PortolaAndCastleRockFound.org](http://PortolaAndCastleRockFound.org)



# Take a WALK in the Pescadero Marsh

BY KIM BORICK – WEDNESDAY WALKERS

One of the best times to visit the San Mateo County coast is during the fall. The weather is often temperate with sunny skies and the great bird migration across the Pacific Flyway is underway. Locals and tourists alike are rich in choices of public beaches to stroll along, tide pools to explore and bluff trails with stunning and expansive views. In the midst of all this, on the east side of Highway One, lies the Pescadero Marsh Natural Preserve, a tidal wetland gem abundant with wildlife.

There are four trails into the 235-acre preserve; the Sequoia Audubon Trail is an excellent path into the heart of the Marsh. Here the visitor may enjoy sightings of not only birdlife but also deer and other small mammals or members of the amphibian family. The Great Snowy Egret and Blue Herons are among over 60 species of birds that make their nests here. Situated on the Pacific Flyway, well over 200 bird species have been recorded in the Marsh as well as endangered species such as the San Francisco garter snake, red-legged frog, Coho salmon and steelhead trout.

An out and back walk along the



Sequoia Audubon Trail is a 1.5 mile trip on mostly dirt-packed levee ground but the visitor will also trek through sandy beach under the highway bridge to reach the trailhead. The trail itself narrows in some spots but also offers some wider “pull outs” to explore. Especially delightful to children about midpoint on the walk, is the lovely multi branched eucalyptus known as “The Singing Tree” where visitors claim to hear sounds akin to music when they lay their heads against it’s broad limbs. Some interpretive signage is found on the trail; one marks the area where visitors may see the Western Pond turtles sunning themselves on a log and a nice spot to stop for a snack.

Shorebird migration begins in the fall; bird lovers able to time their visits to the Marsh at low tide may be rewarded with sightings of more unusual species on the exposed mudflats seen along the way. Avid bird watchers and professional photographers are often early morning visitors in the Marsh during fall and winter, appreciative of lowered voices when passing by one another. Binoculars are a must and

close-toed shoes are recommended for this trail. An out and back walk takes about an hour and half but could be much more with wildlife viewing stops. Dogs are not permitted in the preserve.

**The Pescadero Marsh Natural Preserve** is located on Hwy 1, approximately 4 miles south of the junction of Hwy 1 and Hwy 84 at San Gregorio.

Managed by the Coastside State Parks Association, the recommended (and safest) access to the trailhead is as follows: The Sequoia Audubon Trail is accessed from the central Pescadero State Beach parking lot and follows the southern edge of North Marsh. A wooden staircase on the eastern side of the **central Pescadero Beach parking lot** takes you to a pedestrian walkway along the Highway 1 Bridge that leads to another staircase down to the beach. Walking under the bridge from the beach leads to the lagoon and Sequoia Audubon Trail. Crossing Highway 1 on foot is not recommended.



# Classified Ads

## Community

### FREE FIRE FITTING FOR THOSE IN THE SOUTH SKYLINE FIRE & RESCUE PRIMARY RESPONSE AREA.

This 2 ½ inch fitting will allow the connection of a fire hose to your water supply and can be utilized by the fire department to access the water necessary for fire suppression. Blue reflectors are also available. Please visit <http://southskylinefire.org/> for more information in the "Help us help you" section.

**SC4 AMATEUR RADIO CLUB** welcomes those interested in amateur radio for emergency communications and neighborly talk. License is free. Simple exam: No Morse code. We offer classes. Visit [www.sc4arc.org](http://www.sc4arc.org) or write: SC4ARC, PO Box 237, La Honda, CA 94020

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831-419-7604 [bayareamortgages.com](http://bayareamortgages.com). I am passionate about creating a better loan process, serving happy clients, and building a foundation for financial success. This allows me to provide my clients with competitive rates, tailored financing solutions, and an efficient loan process focused on communication. Call or email me for a free consultation. [dave@bayareamortgages.com](mailto:dave@bayareamortgages.com)

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### SOLAR CONSULTATION

For a free, no obligation solar consultation from your mountain neighbor, please contact David Morgan [dmorgan@simplysolarcalifornia.com](mailto:dmorgan@simplysolarcalifornia.com) (408) 348-5781. Simply Solar is a local Northern California company installing North American made panels.

### SKYLINE BROADBAND SERVICE

Offering high-speed wireless Internet with speeds up to 50 Mbps in much of our 500-square-mile coverage area. <http://SkylineBroadbandService.com> phone: 650-712-5900

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These ads can also be used to list items for sale or items for free

When placing an ad: Please limit each ad to 45 words. Due to many requests, we will attempt to keep a list of ads that will run every issue. However, there is no guarantee that an ad won't be missed because of our changes in staff. If you want to be on the list, make a request to "run until canceled." It is best to resubmit ads for each issue. **Next deadline: December 3, 2023.**

Classified Ads are free for SSA members. Membership is \$20 per year. The online SSA membership application is at [www.southskyline.org](http://www.southskyline.org). Email ads to: [skylineseditor@yahoo.com](mailto:skylineseditor@yahoo.com)

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**SSA Calendar 2023**  
**Monthly SSA**  
**Board Meetings**  
**7:00pm**

**November 9**  
**December 14**  
**January 11, 2024**

For further updates  
 contact Evan Dellor:  
[president@southskyline.org](mailto:president@southskyline.org)

**Current SSA Board Members**

Dave Anderson	Highway 9 – Santa Cruz County	Webmaster, Public Safety
Patti Begley	Highway 9 – Santa Cruz County	Skylines Editor, Website Committee
Barbara Bekins	Highway 35 – Rocky Creek	Treasurer, Public Safety/Water, Website Committee
Debra Born	Alpine Road	Secretary, Membership Chair, SSFC, Website Committee
Evan Dellor	Portola Heights	President
Udy Gold	Portola Heights	
Rich Lee	Portola Heights	Vice-President, SSEPO, Chief Fun Officer
Julie Snyder	Skylonda	
Susan Stucky	Portola Heights	Grant Administrator
Ann Waldhauer	Portola Heights	

*Board positions are available.*

*Contact Evan Dellor – [president@southskyline.org](mailto:president@southskyline.org)*

**Skylines Ads and News Articles**

The deadline for submitting ads and articles for the next issue is **December 3, 2023**

*Skylines* is published once a quarter: January/April/July/October

*Skylines* invites individuals to submit articles and artwork.

Policy on Classified Ads: Limit ads to 45 words. Free for SSA members.

Send all ads and articles to: [SkylinesEditor@yahoo.com](mailto:SkylinesEditor@yahoo.com)

We reserve the right to edit all submissions. We assume no responsibility for omissions, incorrect information or personal opinions.