

GOOD DIRT

The Newsletter of the Anderson Valley Land Trust
Spring - Summer 2008

Fritillaria & Fritillaria... by Jane E. Miller

What a puzzle that one being is so outgoing while its close relative is so shy...such is the case for two lovely wildflowers that grace Anderson Valley in springtime. Both are in the genus *Fritillaria*, a member of the lily family. *Fritillaria affinis* (formerly known as *F. lanceolata*) could be thought of as a partygoer, pleased to be seen out and about, readily encountered not only here, but much further south as well as north to British Columbia and east to Idaho. Called Mission Bells by some and Checker Lily by others, *Fritillaria affinis* is variable, growing from 1 to over 3 feet tall, with whorls of narrow leaves on its upper stem. The nodding flowers resemble upside-down bowls, usually brownish-purple mottled with greenish and purplish spots.

Fritillaria biflora (aka *Fritillaria roderickii*)

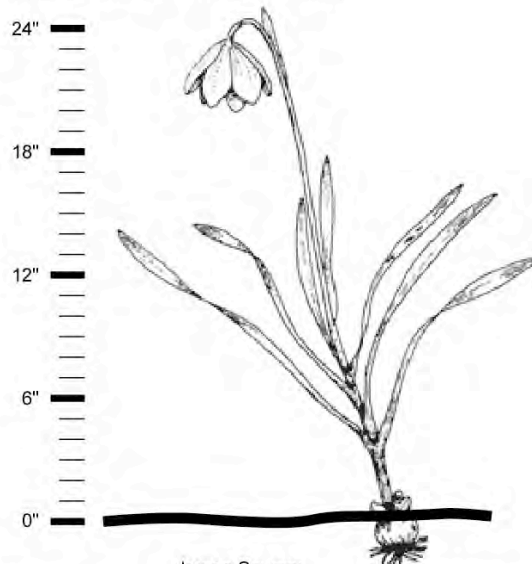


Image Source:
California Department of Fish and Game



Image Source:
California Springs Wildflowers
Phillip A. Munz

By contrast, *Fritillaria biflora* is more reclusive; its appearance is quite uncommon, but we are fortunate in that these rarely encountered plants do occur locally.

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A letter from the President:

Dear Friends,

The evolving beauty of Anderson Valley at this time of year is a good reminder of our need to protect this natural legacy whenever possible. We signed three new conservation easements last year, the finale being the signing of the Snyder easement (see page 4). This easement will protect property that has been in a family for generations and will allow future generations to enjoy land their family has always loved. Every property that is protected not only has a benefit for the owners, but enhances neighboring properties and the entire Anderson Valley community.

We are well into a very busy year and hope to close several new easements this year, with a goal of protecting a total of two thousand acres by the end of December. We hope you can join us on a Wildflower Walk the 19th of April (see page 8) and that you will be interested in participating in one of AVLT's interpretive walks along the Navarro on Mendocino Redwood Company land this year. Our all-volunteer board has begun the annual monitoring of our many easements, and with the additional resource of Shelly Englert, our new administrative assistant, we are looking forward to our most productive year ever.

As AVLT expands our efforts to protect the Navarro River watershed our expenses increase and we continue to look to the community for support. We appreciate your past contributions and hope you will use the enclosed envelope to renew your support or become a new donor.

Thank you,

Karen Altaras
AVLT President

Map and Compass Reading Workshop

AV landowners, hikers, and a few members of the Comptche Fire Department were among those who attended AVLT's November 2007 Map and Compass Workshop. Local Anderson Valley fire chief, Colin Wilson, led the group through comprehensive instruction on compass usage, topographical map reading, assessor map configurations, and latitude and longitude calculations as well as regaling us with the history of local surveying. All attendees agreed it was a productive session and well worth scheduling a follow-up workshop in the field at some later date.



Lee Serrie and Jean DuVigneaud

Welcome, David

By Bill Chambers

David Hopmann is the most recent addition to the AVLT Board of Directors. Dave has a long history with Anderson Valley, dating back 30 years to when he started visiting friends who were then recently-arrived “back-to-the-landers.” Like so many of us, he recognized the authentic rural character of this beautiful place, but also the unique community of people – old timers and newcomers alike – who lived in harmony, supporting activities as diverse as the Methodist Ladies pie sales and the Simple Living Workshops. He also loved the bounty of the Valley, starting with Gowan’s Oak Tree apples and vegetables, and quickly expanding to include the quality wines produced by the emerging local wineries.

Dave graduated from Yale Law School in 1972, and after returning from a tour of duty in Vietnam, started practicing law in San Francisco at Pillsbury, Madison, and Sutro. Five years ago he began to contemplate cutting back from full-time practice for the additional free time that this would provide him. Dave and his partner of many years are inveterate travelers, but they wanted more than living out of a suitcase. They owned property in Napa Valley, but somehow it did not attract them the way Anderson Valley did. So began the search and shuffle that resulted in his move here three years ago. Dave continues his part-time practice at Pillsbury Winthrop and represents his firm on the boards of several Bay Area non-profit organizations, but he now spends more time in the Valley and is putting down roots and seeking to contribute to his new community. He is also currently on the board of KZYX, an organization with which we are happy to share his time, energy, and expertise.

Fritillaria – continued from page 1

Documented sightings have been recorded from only one valley location (if you know of others, please contact the Land Trust!). Also identified as *Fritillaria roderickii*, it is listed under that nomenclature as being so rare in the wild that it is considered endangered. Known by the common name of Chocolate Lily in a nod to its blossom color, or as Peter Stearns in his lovely book on the County’s wildflowers has dubbed it, Anderson Valley Mission Bells, *F. biflora* differs from *F. affinis* in having its foliage crowded at the base of its stem. While its blooms are similar in shape, they tend toward a brownish hue, although they may appear greenish-purple to yellow-green depending upon environment or whim. The characteristic beige blotch at the tip of each petal may be helpful in distinguishing this flower from others in the genus.

While *F. affinis* occurs in a surprising variety of habitats and elevations, it is most often seen in grassy or brushy flats and open woodlands. *F. biflora* prefers heavier soils, although they must drain readily, and is found on grassy slopes, plateaus, and even serpentine barrens. Each species flourishes in the wild on available rainfall, so neither responds well to supplemental summer watering when under cultivation. They are both noted in the Jepson Manual: Higher Plants of California as “DFCLT” (read “difficult”) to grow in a garden setting.

Sources note that original inhabitants who co-existed with *Fritillaria* cooked and ate the roots and bulbs, or dried them to save for future use. The name *Fritillaria* is derived from the Latin word for “dicebox”, a reference to the short wide shape of the seed capsules.

A New Conservation Easement on an Old Valley Ranch

By Kathy Bailey

When AVLT Board member Alan Porter arrived at a summer party hosted by his neighbors Steve and Janet Snyder, he had no idea that fun and good food would be only part of the day's event. Then Steve took Alan aside and asked about putting a conservation easement on the property, which had been in Steve's family since 1893. Alan was, of course, delighted. By mid-December 2007, the Snyder's 161+ acres six miles northwest of Yorkville was permanently protected by a conservation easement tailored to the family's wishes and needs.

One of the joys of working with Steve and Janet on their easement was to see the land through Steve's eyes. He had been roaming his grandparents' 800-acre ranch since he was a boy and knew every swale and view. He also knew the history of the land: how his great grandfather Spencer Beasley, who had purchased the property in the 19th Century, had run sheep; that the timber had been partially harvested in 1950-51, and hardly at all since; and how his grandfather Ed McMullin had maintained and cared for the ranch. He took us to a narrow finger of land where a small oak tree poised at the edge of the bluff apparently had been bent and trained by Native Americans to indicate a trail heading off to the Coast (see photo below). And nearby, he showed us how in a notch between the hills, improbably, we could see Mount Saint Helena far away on the boundary of Napa and Lake Counties. We silently thanked Steve's mother Margaret Snyder for passing on to Steve 160 acres of the ranch that had come to her from her mother Angenetta McMullin. No one could have been a better steward of this land.





View of Mount St. Helena from the Snyder property

Steve and Janet knew they wanted, most of all, to protect the forest from severe logging. So one of the principle features of the easement is a set of performance goals and specific protection measures that will allow timber management that improves the forest while avoiding harm to the landscape and wildlife habitat. The forestry plan maintains the property's Timber Production Zone status, keeping taxes reasonable. The water in the seasonal streams will be left to flow downstream into Rancheria Creek.

The Snyders also wanted to maintain the option of having a home on the property in the future in addition to their barn. They identified two sites for that purpose near existing roads and developed water. An orchard is also part of the plan. As is typical of AVLT easements, restrictions in the residential zones are minimal, with the primary goal being to avoid activities that would harm resources in the conservation zone.

With their conservation easement in place, Steve and Janet can rest assured, knowing that the forests and streams that Steve and his family have loved for well over a hundred years will be protected for another century and beyond.

Thank you, Susan

The AVLT board wishes to extend our profound **THANKS to Susan Addison** and wish her all the best in her new endeavors. At the beginning of this year the AVLT board, with great regret, accepted Susan's resignation as a board member. Over the 10-year period Susan has been associated with the Land Trust, she has lead us in our transformation from a small grassroots organization into a professional land trust actively assisting Anderson Valley landowners in fulfilling their conservation goals. She excelled at community outreach, and the work Susan did on our Standards and Practices procedures will help us to become accredited on a national level. We hope she takes great pride in the strong and vibrant organization she has been so instrumental in developing. Thank you, Susan! We plan to honor Susan in August at our Donor Thank You event at Goldeneye Winery.

WE SINCERELY THANK AND APPRECIATE OUR DONORS

AVLT is able to continue our conservation work in Anderson Valley due to the generosity of these friends and neighbors:

Michael & Susan Addison
 Mary Stuart Alvord
 Karen Altaras
 Eric Anderson
 Steve Anderson
 Deanna & Mark Apfel
 Evelyn Ashton
 Rene & Judith
 Auberjonois
 Nikki Ausschnitt & Steve
 Krieg
 Stephen Barlow
 Justin & Lisa Barnett
 Pete & Flo Bates
 Connie Best & Laurie
 Wayburn
 Moira Johnston Block
 Robert & Marion Blumberg
 Richard & Alice Bonner
 Maureen & Michael
 Bowman
 Hayes & Linda Brennan
 Briana Burns
 Brian Button
 Cakebread Cellars
 Wendell & Stephanie
 Carlson
 Carol & Lyman Casey
 Cheryl Cathey & Peter
 Gillespie
 Bill Chambers
 Lisa Chen & Robert
 Finkelstein
 Wallace Conroe
 Corby Vineyards/Bob &
 Camille Corby
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 Chris & Buffy Maple
 Robert Mandel
 Mac Marshall & Margery
 Wolf
 Frances & Frederick Martin
 Dixie Lee McCarthy
 Michelle & Rolf Mehlhorn
 John Merz & Carole Ross
 Patrick & Jane Miller
 Marshall Newman
 Michael & Bonnie
 O'Halloran

Gilman Ordway/Fish Creek
 Ranch
 Judy Palmer
 Dave & Helen Papke
 Lanny & Sandy Parker
 Wendy Patterson/
 Hallomas, Inc
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 Alan Porter
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 Norman & Joan Rudman
 Nona & Thomas Russell,
 MD
 Mary Santana
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 Leona Walden
 Gary Wandrey
 Clare Rolph Wheeler
 Kirk & Cindy Wilder
 John Wiley & Sons, Inc
 Peter Wiley
 Toni & Dale Wise
 Deborah & Steven Wolfe

Thank You MRC

Anderson Valley Land Trust would like to thank Mendocino Redwood Company (MRC) for allowing us to conduct walks on MRC property along the Navarro River last year. AVLT initiated three docent-led walks covering different sections of the river most people have never had the chance to see. All received rave reviews. The walkers were very appreciative of MRC allowing us to enjoy this beautiful area of the Navarro watershed.

AVLT will be conducting interpretive walks again this year. They will be limited to 15 – 20 people and carpooling is required. If you are interested in participating, please call (895-3150) or email the Land Trust at avlt@mcn.org and give us your name, phone number, and email address. We will contact you when we have a date and the details for an outing.

Thank you, MRC, for allowing us this wonderful opportunity to lead walks on your property.
(see photo on page 8)

AVLT 2007 Financial Statements

The Following summary of unaudited financial statements for 2007 was prepared by the AVLT
Treasurer, Lee Serrie, and bookkeeper, Amy Soderman.

Statement of Financial Position as of December 31, 2007

Assets	
Operating Accounts	33,120
Pioneer Stewardship Fund	17,401
Stewardship Endowment	131,769
Furniture Equipment	2,501
Timber Rights *	430,400
Total Assets	615,191
Total Liabilities	0
Net Assets	
At Beginning of Year	593,408
Change in New Assets	25,182
At End of Year	618,590
Total Liabilities & Net Assets	618,590

Statement of Activities as of December 31, 2007

Support & Revenue	
Donations	24,525
Stewardship Endowment	14,400
Interest & Dividends	6,793
Total Support and Revenue	45,718
Expenses	
Dues, Maps & Subscriptions	920
Insurance	3,170
Miscellaneous	448
Office	527
Payroll	4,318
Postage	1,540
Printing	2,525
Professional Fees	1,549
Rent	6,580
Special Events	1,408
Utilities	1,319
Total Expenses	24,304

*Timber Rights: Asset for bookkeeping purpose; no logging allowed.

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

**Spring Wildflower Walk
Saturday, April 19th**

Clare Wheeler, the co-author of *A Flora of the Vascular Plants of Mendocino County, California* and AVLT Advisory Committee member, will lead an interpretive wildflower walk on Saturday, April 19th at 2:00 in the afternoon. The walk will take place on land where AVLT holds a conservation easement that assures that the woodland and meadow ecosystems will remain forever wild.

If you would like to walk with us, please email AVLT at avlt@mcn.org or call 895-3150 for more information, directions, or carpooling details. There is no fee.



**AVLT fall walk along the Navarro River
Photo by Tom Hunter**