

GOOD DIRT

NEWSLETTER OF THE ANDERSON VALLEY LAND TRUST

SUMMER 2021

***Vitis californica* - California wild grape**

By Jane Miller

If you had an interest in where California wild grape grows locally and do an internet search on '*Vitis californica* in Anderson Valley, CA', your most likely results would come up as things like "The Mystique of Anderson Valley", or articles describing wineries and vineyards. Not quite what you were looking for! But the wild grape does play a vital part in the wine industry as the vines are robust and sturdy, and often used by viticulturists as rootstock for their wine grapes.



Vitis californica is a deciduous vine that grows along seeps, streams and rivers throughout much of northern and central California. It can cover banks, fences or small structures fairly quickly with its woody, twisted, ropy stems climbing by small curling tendrils. Without support, it forms a spreading groundcover. When leafed out, wild grape sports large, lush green leaves with shallow lobes, similar in appearance to cultivated wine grapes. In the autumn, foliage usually turns to shades of yellow and red, providing that coveted fall color that is elusive in many native plants (one local exception being *Toxicodendron diversilobum*, poison oak, that can give the grape some competition here).

The spring flowers are small and not visually significant, but bees love them and some sources note their fragrance. These flowers are followed in autumn by hanging clusters of small purple grapes (much smaller than the commercial varieties) that are edible and may be sweet or a bit sour... but can transformed into tasty wines or jellies. Birds are very fond of the fruit, and the foliage and stems provide thick cover for other wildlife.

Vitis californica is an attractive enough plant to be popular in landscaping, especially in native plant gardens. The plants like moisture, but can get by on little summer water, although at the expense of lushness and copious fruit production. The vines like full sun but will tolerate part shade, and aren't particularly fussy as to soil. Cultivars are available that provide even more reliable fall color: 'Roger's Red' (obvious), 'Walker Ridge' (yellow) and 'Russian River' (red/purple); this last one stays smaller and is better suited to limited spaces. All are fairly easy to control with pruning.

Locally, extensive swaths of California wild grape are easily spotted from Highway 128 just south of Yorkville, covering trees along the sides of the road - especially noticeable in the fall when foliage is showing off its fall color. Enjoy the display in a few months!

AVLT is considering an email newsletter. Please voice your preference (email or paper) by contacting us at avlt@mcn.org or call 707-895-3150. Newsletters are archived at: www.andersonvalleylandtrust.org under News and Announcements (links are live).

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE: 30 YEARS, AND LOOKING FORWARD...



It is hard to believe it has now been well over a year since “business as usual” and any sense of “normalcy” was turned on its head with the arrival of the pandemic. I’m sure many of you will agree that Anderson Valley, with its expansive rural beauty and close-knit community, has been a very special place to shelter during this time. With the advent of vaccinations, longer days, and the lovely afternoon symphony of chirping cicadas, we are feeling ever more hopeful of the prospect of a return to more and more activity in the coming months. AVLT recently had a virtual meet and greet with our neighboring Mendocino Land Trust, which was a wonderful opportunity for each of us to share our work and goals with one another. We are excited to continue fostering this connection, and to begin finding ways in which we may be able work with and support one another.

It has been a pleasure to be able to continue working with landowners on the creation of new easements during these uncertain times. We are very fortunate that Patrick Miller, the Board’s president of the past four years, has taken on a temporary voluntary position as our first Conservation Coordinator. While Patrick will be missed as a valuable member of our Board, we are thrilled that he will be lending his expertise in the continued development of new easements and the monitoring of those already existing. This is giving us the opportunity to take a step back and consider any next collective steps we take in our organization. We would like to acknowledge and thank Patrick for all that he has done to move our organization and conservation goals forward over these past years.

This year marks a very special landmark for AVLT, as it is our 30th anniversary. Our organization has been working with landowners since 1991 to protect 2,400 acres in our beautiful valley. While this is quite a feat, we feel there is still much more that can be done to continue preserving the unique ecosystems and rural character of Anderson Valley. What is more, the next 30 years will likely bring new challenges we have never faced before. AVLT remains committed not only to the preservation of our surrounding lands, but to the resiliency of these lands and of our community in these changing times.

As always, we are grateful to all our generous supporters for being such an essential part of our work. To the next 30 years!

Sincerely,

Rachel Turner Williams

President, AVLT Board of Directors



Thinking Forward

As AVLT turns 30 years old it may be time to look forward to the next 30 years and reconsider what we have accomplished. Will Anderson Valley and our rural lifestyle change? Here are some local conservation facts that may be worth considering.

The Navarro River watershed encompasses approximately 201,600 acres (315 square miles). Of these, approximately 23,000 acres (12%) have been protected through ownership by government agencies or conservation easements with private property owners by AVLT and other land trusts. This includes the 27 conservation easements we manage and the recent agreement between Mailliard family and the Save the Redwoods League to safeguard the entire Mailliard ranch from the threat of subdivision and development.

Another statistic to mull over is that in the entire Navarro River watershed only 1% of what might be described as open space land is open to general public use. These lands are located in Hendy Woods State Park, Indian Creek County Park, and Navarro River Redwoods State Park that includes Navarro Beach. Think about it . . . 1%. That is it. If you add to that the Galbreath Preserve owned by Sonoma State University that protects headwater area of Rancheria Creek and open only for scientific research and limited use by reservation, that brings the total of public lands in the watershed to 2.5%.

For what most people visually think of as “Anderson Valley” extending from the Cal Fire station on the south to the Navarro Store on the north, and between the first ridgelines on the east and west, the area encompasses about 20,500 acres. Of this approximately 985 acres of private lands (5%) have been protected from additional development through conservation easements with private property owners. That percentage goes up to 9% when Hendy Woods State Park and Indian Creek County Park are included.

The point is, these low percentages leave room for a lot of change in the future for the vast majority of our Navarro River watershed and Anderson Valley. There are literally hundreds and hundreds of private undeveloped parcels greater than 20 acres in size that could be individually sold and developed.

What many visitors to Anderson Valley see as undeveloped open space land that makes such a spectacular landscape setting likely think that this is because these lands are in public ownership. This is a fallacy. Many new and long-time residents to Anderson Valley came here because of its rural character and lifestyle that may be, no . . . is likely to be in the big scheme of things, short lived and transitory.

The opportunity to keep Anderson Valley “unique” in northern California lies in a more robust conservation program and more significant public investment in open space lands. Without these, how will Anderson Valley develop in the next thirty years? How do we as a community conserve the goose and keep the golden egg? Perhaps it is time to start an AV Conservation Fund to save the egg.

Sustainable Agricultural Land Conservation

With a Strategic Growth Council's Sustainable Agricultural Lands Conservation Planning grant, the Mendocino County Sustainable Agricultural Lands Committee (SALC), with help from AVLT board members, has been actively promoting the protection of Mendocino County's farm and range lands.



To increase the participation of farm and range landowners in the Williamson Act and the implementation of conservation easements, SALC has produced two webinars on each, describing their requirements, benefits, and limitations. The full-length recordings of all four webinars and other useful references are available on the Mendocino County Resource Conservation District's website under Programs at <https://mcrd.org/project/mendocino-county-sustainable-agricultural-lands-strategy-program>. The conservation easement webinars also have a lot of general information about conservation easements. If you go to www.andersonvalleylandtrust.org, choose News and Announcements, and then Newsletters, you will be able to click on the SALC link.

SALC is also in the process of developing an agricultural component for the Mendocino County Climate Action Plan; expanding the Carbon Farm Planning Program and local Soil Health Initiative; and increasing communication with diverse stakeholders regarding the coalescence of agricultural land conservation and sustainable housing development.

Welcoming Our Newest Board Member



Engaging. Caring. Highly capable. AVLT is happy to announce that Yoriko (Yo-ree-ko) Kishimoto has joined the AVLT board of directors.

Yoriko's appreciation of nature began in her childhood, hiking in the mountains with her dad and an aunt who knew all the plants. She served on the Palo Alto City Council for eight years including a term as the city's Mayor. She is also a board member of the Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District, which has founded extensive public preserves and trails in the Bay Area. With Yoriko's help, they passed a \$300,000,000 bond measure to provide open space, public trails, and recreational areas for outdoor activities as well as living spaces for native species of plants and animals. Recently she became a Councilor for Save the Redwoods League. Yoriko is also an accomplished painter and you can check out her work at a future Anderson Valley Art Guild open studio event.

Yoriko and her husband Lee have two adult daughters and live in Anderson Valley because of its natural beauty and active community. Her consummate leadership skills are a real asset to our board.

Low Flows and High Hopes

All of California is facing an historic drought crisis, heightened alerts for wildfire, and epic water shortages for people and natural resources—this is the “low” part of the picture. It’s an “all hands-on deck” scenario that will drive water use and water conservation for the foreseeable future. The Navarro Watershed Flow Enhancement Partnership (Partnership), formed in 2016 to address critical low flows in the Navarro River, consists of the Mendocino County Resource Conservation District, The Nature Conservancy, and Trout Unlimited. On April 22nd, the State Wildlife Conservation Board (WCB) awarded the Partnership a \$1.3M grant to expand streamflow enhancement strategies to the mainstem Navarro and North Fork Navarro, building on their efforts in Mill Creek, and to export those strategies to Outlet Creek in the Eel River watershed. This is the third WCB grant for the Navarro, and the Partnership has high hopes for engaging with community members to develop water-saving, flow enhancement projects that benefit fish, including salmon and steelhead, farms and people. A sample of recent work includes:



Blue Meadow Farm’s 29,000-gallon rainwater catchment tank and 63,000 gallon off-stream storage tanks were installed (paid for through Prop 84 and WCB funds). These projects offer Blue Meadow Farm the ability to capture and store water during the winter months for use to water their 1-acre market vegetable farm over the low flow summer months. Blue Meadow will forgo pumping from Mill Creek during the low flow season, helping to conserve instream flows for the benefit of steelhead and Coho salmon while increasing on-farm water security.



To improve salmon habitat and increase infiltration, large woody debris was installed on Flynn and Mill Creeks and in the North Fork Navarro. This provides protection for young of the year salmonids from predators, helps develop deeper pools, and sorts the gravels for improved spawning habitat.

If you’re interested in learning more, please contact... MCRCD Watershed Coordinator Linda MacElwee (707)895-3230 or Conservation Programs Manager Patty Madigan (707) 937-3082

Anderson Valley Folks Share Observations of Our Valley's Wild Things in the Mendocino County City Nature Challenge



For the 2nd year, Mendocino County joined City Nature Challenge – a global “bioblitz” of participatory science that took place this year from April 30-May 3.

What a great way to be in nature and make photo observations of wild plants, insects, animals, fungi and other organisms – even during our pandemic restrictions! Using the iNaturalist app or website, Anderson Valley folks got out, observed, photographed and uploaded their observations, contributing to a database of organisms that are found in our amazing county. The count so far for our county – with observations still coming in as this is being written - is 1,832 observations and 708 species!

Anderson Valley Land Trust joined other county organizations in getting the word out to encourage participation, including a zoom orientation to the project and iNaturalist. Mendocino Coast Botanical Gardens, UC Hopland Research and Extension Center, Point Arena Lighthouse, Mendocino County Museum, Grace Hudson Museum and Redwood Coast Land Conservancy all hosted self-guided outside participatory events in support of the project. Other participating organizations were UC California Naturalist, Latino Outdoors North Coast, Sanhedrin Chapter California Native Plant Society, Redwood Valley Outdoor Education Program, Mendocino County Resource Conservation District and Peregrine Audubon.

Take a look at the Mendocino County iNaturalist project page to see the contributed photos from the coast, our valley, and inland areas (see link below). Species found range from Ochre Sea Star to Ornate Tiger Moth, Variable Checkerspot butterfly and Mountain Lion. An impressive array of flowers, trees, fungi, birds, insects, reptiles are included, displaying the wonderful biodiversity of our area.

If you did not have a chance to participate in this year's event, no worries, you can enjoy using iNaturalist year round and learn about the natural beauty surrounding you. It can be fun to learn the names of wild things you have been wondering about. If you have an internet connection from your phone, the Artificial Intelligence (AI) function of the app will answer the “what did I see?” question right away with suggestions for you to consider. Then, through “crowdsourcing” within the iNaturalist community, other identifiers will confirm or suggest another identification, hopefully leading to a confirmed, research-grade identification. It's easy to learn and a great outdoor activity.

Enjoy the detailed information and photos on City Nature Challenge 2021: Mendocino County and get ready for next year. <https://www.inaturalist.org/projects/city-nature-challenge-2021-mendocino-county>

KZYX Ecology Hour host Hannah Bird, also of the Hopland Research and Education Center, featured the Mendocino County City Nature Challenge on her May 4th show. It's in the KZYX archive if you want to have a listen and get inspired.

THANK YOU TO OUR GENEROUS DONORS

Janice Allen
 Smile Foundation Amazon
 Castello di Amorosa
 Deanna Apfel
 Cynthia Arbanovella
 Eric Arbanovella
 Nikki Ausschnitt & Steve Kreig
 Kathy Bailey & Eric Labowitz
 Stephen Barlow
 James Barstow & Susan Ensign
 Ronald Blum & Maria Mendoza
 Richard & Alice Bonner
 Lindsey Brown & Gina Fontana
 Richard Browning
 David Bunim
 James Chanin
 John Clouston & Andrea Lum
 Douglas & Vivi Collier
 Robert Crochelt
 Mary Curtis
 Steve & Francie Curtiss
 Daniel Dodt & Linda Blacketer
 Bruce & Griswold Dragge
 Elizabeth Dusenberry
 Leonard Feinstein
 Robert Finkelstein
 Basil Gavin
 Gail & Ron Gester
 Robert Giuliani
 Barbara & Robert Goodell
 Theodore & Martha Griffinger
 Roger Gross
 Allen Gummer
 Henry & Heidi Gundling
 Lynn Halpern
 Kathleen Harberer
 Laurel Headley
 Charles Hochberg
 Eliot & Margot Holtzman
 Walter & Susan Hopkins
 David Hopmann & James Taul
 Nancy & John Hornor
 Martha Hyde
 James & Cynthia Johnson
 Robert Jones
 Kathleen Kinzie
 Yoriko Kishimoto & Lee Collins
 Benna Kolinsky
 Thomas Lacey
 David Lakes
 Katherine Lee
 Edward Lemon

Helen Longino
 Kathleen MacDonald & Michael Nissenberg
 Kathleen McKenna
 Patrick & Jane Miller
 Hopes Mohr & Mathew Zinn
 Ali Nemo (Bee Hunter Wine)
 Leona Walden (Pacific Ridge)
 Ann Panttaja
 Sandra & Leonard Parker
 Margaret Pickens
 Jed Pogran & Gary McGregor
 Margot Rawlins
 Rhys Vineyards
 Ann & Roger Romani
 Peter & Collette Rothschild
 Jonathon Rubenstein
 Norman Rudman
 Debra & Brent Salmi
 Dario Sattui
 John Scharffenberger
 R. Thomas Scully

Ilene & Richard Sheng
 Daniel Sicular
 Phillip Smith
 William Stewart
 Robert & Constance Stoops
 Michael Teitz
 Dean Titus
 Virginia & Walden Valen
 Karin Vargervik
 Laurie Wayburn & Connie Best
 Cynthia Wilder
 Bradford Wiley
 Peter Wiley
 Rachel Williams
 Dale & Toni Wise
 Deborah & Steven Wolfe
 Gene Zanomi

AVLT 2020 Financial Statement		
Statement of Activity as of December 31, 2020		
	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds*
Current Assets		
Operating Accounts	\$22,134	
Pioneer Stewardship Fund		\$29,054
Stewardship Endowment*		\$369,049
Total	\$22,134	\$398,103
Portfolio Increase		\$54,862
Donations	\$31,324	
Grants	\$820	
Other Income	\$3,544	
Total Support & Revenue	\$35,688	
Expenses		
Operating Expenses	\$30,221	
Easement Expenses		\$2,022
Special Events & Workshops	\$1,255	
Total Expenses	\$31,476	\$2,022
* restricted funds for the continuing protection of our easements.		

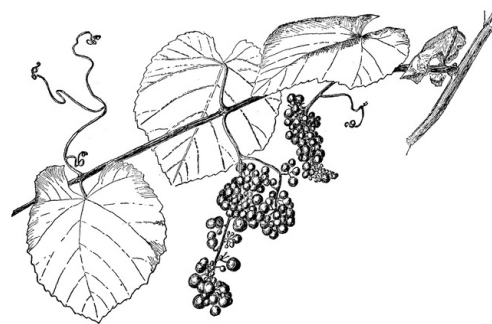
RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

**ANDERSON
VALLEY
LAND
TRUST
INCORPORATED**

P.O. BOX 141
BOONVILLE, CA 95415

Non-Profit Org.
US POSTAGE
PAID
EXPRESSIT

“Dedicated to the Preservation and Restoration of Our Unique Rural Landscape”



INSIDE DIRT

**VITIS CALIFORNICA (CALIFORNIA WILD
GRAPE)**

A LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

THINKING FORWARD TO NEXT 30 YEARS

SALC/ WELCOMING YORIKO KISHIMOTO

LOW FLOWS AND HIGH HOPES

COUNTY CITY NATURE CHALLENGE 2021

FINANCIAL STATEMENT

CONTRIBUTORS:

JANE MILLER, PATRICK MILLER, BARBARA GOODELL
LINDA MACELWEE, NANCY HORNOR

PRINTING: PSPRINT.COM

MAILING: EXPRESS-IT, UKIAH

PRINTED ON RECYCLED PAPER

GOOD DIRT IS PUBLISHED TWICE A YEAR
BY ANDERSON VALLEY LAND TRUST,
A NON-PROFIT, TAX-EXEMPT ORGANIZATION.



AVLT BOARD OF DIRECTORS

KAREN ALTARAS
BARBARA GOODELL
DAVID HOPMANN
NANCY HORNOR
GLYNNIS JONES
YORIKO KISHIMOTO
JESSE RATHBUN
RACHEL TURNER WILLIAMS
STEVEN WOOD

ANDERSON VALLEY LAND TRUST
14150 HIGHWAY 128
BOONVILLE, CA 95415
707-895-3150
avlt@mcn.org
www.andersonvalleylandtrust.org