



Embrace Winter with a Sense of Place

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New Year Long Course Starts in April!



Connect with the Earth, others and yourself.

Are you....

yearning for a sense of belonging to the place where you live?

interested in obtaining a deeper understanding of our ecosystem and watershed?

concerned about climate change and how to make a positive response?

Join Exploring a Sense of Place in a year-long exploration of our local region with some of the area's most gifted naturalists. Our program meets one Monday evening and one Saturday per month, and begins with:

**A FREE Introductory evening,
RSVP NOW as space is limited
Monday, April 20 from 7 – 9 p.m.
1023 Corporation Way, Palo Alto**

*For more details visit us online at
www.exploringsenseofplace.org,
To RSVP, call 650-938-9300 ext 12 or
email jronin@exploringsenseofplace.org*

Greetings!

Exploring a Sense of Place could not be more excited about the changes happening right now. With the new year comes a chance to refresh ourselves and make change. One of our biggest goals this year is to become more closely identified with *Conexions*, our mother organization whose focus is on bringing regenerative ecological and social practices into our region and everyday lives.

Other items on our 2009 agenda are offering another successful yearlong program, filling our June leadership training with incredible people, and designing a new program that focuses on our foodshed over the course of a year. We are determined to make the next twelve months our best year yet by embracing new ideas and seizing new opportunities!

We are so happy to be a part of this window in time, and feel that our efforts speak endlessly to the new administration and Washington's updated to-do list. We look forward to another successful year, and to your being an important part of it!

Our newsletter is getting a makeover!

Don't be surprised next month when you receive a *Conexions* newsletter instead of the usual issue of *Seasons*. Our mother organization will be publishing an enews that will encompass *Sense of Place* as well as our sister projects!

What's in season now?

Brussel Sprouts	Pomegranites
Chestnuts	Rutabaga
Citrus	Sunchokes
Guavas	Sweet Potatoes
Kiwi	Turnips
Kumquats	Walnuts
Parsnips	Winter Squash
Pears	

Spiced Pears and Pomegranate



This tasty dessert stars two of our favorite winter fruits, and goes great with wine and cheeses! (Serves 4, Prep time is 10 minutes, Refrigeration time is 1 hour)

Ingredients:

3 pears - peeled, cored and sliced into wedges
1 pomegranate- skin and membrane removed
1 tablespoon of fresh lemon juice
2 tablespoons brown sugar
1/4 teaspoon ground nutmeg
1/2 teaspoon ground cinnamon
2 tablespoons finely chopped almonds
3-4 sprigs fresh mint leaves

Preparation:

Place the sliced pears and pomegranate seeds into a bowl. Coat the fruit with lemon juice. In a separate bowl, combine the brown sugar, nutmeg, and cinnamon. Sprinkle the mixture over the fruit and mix in. Cover and refrigerate for at least an hour before serving to blend the flavors. Garnish with a sprinkling of chopped almonds and a sprig of mint.

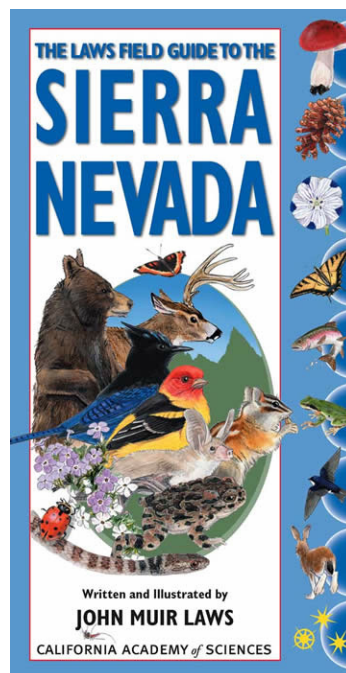
Jack Laws: Naturalist, Artist and Educator



On December 8th, *Exploring a Sense of Place* had the honor of hosting an evening with John (Jack) Muir Laws. Jack Laws is an environmental educator who works as a wildlife biologist and research associate at the California Academy of Sciences. His most recent book, *The Laws Guide to the Sierra Nevada*, is an illustrated field guide with more than 1,700 species of plants and animals and contains 2,710 beautiful watercolor paintings.

During our evening with Jack Laws, over 60 people were treated to his drawing lessons, enthusiasm, and great sense of humor. Laws took the audience through the steps of sketching, from drawing a simple line of posture to adding feathers, leaves, and fur. Even those that came into the presentation with artistic hopelessness left the Conexions center with a "can-do" attitude, feeling inspired to get outside and start sketching wildlife.

To learn more about Jack Laws' work, visit his webpage: <http://johnmuirlaws.com>.



Join us for our June Leadership Workshop!



*Come and gain
the tools and
inspiration to
create your own
local program for
reconnecting with
nature!*

Exploring a Sense of Place Weekend Workshop Overview

*Tunitas Creek Ranch
June 19th-21st, 2009*

Exploring a Sense of Place is a program that gives people an opportunity to do something constructive about today's environmental challenges, while both enriching their own lives and the life of their community. Our training program and our guidebook are designed to extend our course so that its content is available to many more people, giving them knowledge, experiences and skills in order to relate authentically in what has become a threatened, out-of-balance world. Program Director Karen Harwell and co-Director Joanna Reynolds co-authored the guidebook that will serve as the training manual for our weekend-long course at Tunitas Creek Ranch.

By providing tools, support, and inspiration, this three-day workshop will enable a diverse group of proactive individuals to create their own versions of our Exploring a Sense of Place course in their own bioregions. Through a concentrated weekend of first hand experience with local guides, participants will learn how to read the landscape of place through its deep time geologic story, weather and climate, plant and animal communities, and learning from the ways of the indigenous people. They will learn strategies for teaching nature awareness through a series of experiences with themes as fine-tuned as the relationship between our food and our place and as broad as where we are in the cosmos. Throughout the weekend participants will be relating these experiences to how they apply in their own watershed or bioregion. By the final morning, working with the Exploring a Sense of Place guidebook and notebook materials, they will develop initial plans for their own local expressions and exchange ideas on how to implement these plans.

This "train the trainer" approach will include a diverse group of people who want to explore, expand and share a sense of place with their own community, organization, school, neighborhood, or family. We will follow-up this workshop with an online support system to encourage networking and to provide a platform for sharing thoughts and giving mutual support. Expansion of this program will create a wider circle of engaged citizens and teachers who contribute to the environmental health of our community and in turn entice and inspire others to protect the places they treasure.

This leadership workshop will be limited to 20 participants. If you are interested in signing up, or would like more information, please contact Laurel Smith at lsmith@exploringsenseofplace.org, or at (650)938-9300 ext. 16.

Quaking Aspen

Populus tremuloides

*Slender trunks, white, like the mountain top snow,
close together, one organism, flowing across and down the mountain,
yellow topped with hues of orange and green.*

A breeze starts the quiver and rustle of a host of golden leaves.

Circles of saw tooth edges converge in points, almost heart shaped.

*Etched with veins that reach from the flat red stem
into the leaf like filament fingers.*

*The trunks have black scars in the shape of a human eye
as if God had painted them there to remind us to look deeply,
with many eyes.*

Joyce Snyder (2008-2009 Program Participant)

Join us for an upcoming event!

You've talked to your friends and they are interested in experiencing our bioregion first hand. You can join us at the very next exploration. The monthly theme is introduced on Monday night prior to the Saturday field trip. Contact us at 650-938-9300 x12 or info@exploringsenseofplace.org.

APRIL 20: New year-long program starts!

JUNE 19-21: Weekend Leadership Training Workshop at Tunitas Creek Ranch near Half Moon Bay

All programs focus on the San Francisquito Creek watershed in and around Palo Alto. View the entire calendar at www.exploringsenseofplace.org

We Welcome Your Involvement!

Exploring a Sense of Place is growing and we welcome your help!

- 1 At our center. Volunteer to assist with mailings, filing, data entry and other tasks. We need dependable, flexible, organized people who are computer savvy to keep us up and running.
- 2 At farmers markets. Volunteer to host a table and introduce Exploring a Sense of Place. We'll handle the details and materials - all you need to do is show up!
- 3 At bookstores, libraries, kiosks, community centers, coffee shops and other gathering places. Volunteer to distribute our flyers and promote our Exploring a Sense of Place guidebook.
- 4 At your computer. Forward this newsletter to a friend.
- 5 With financial support. Write your check to Exploring a Sense of Place and mail it to us at 1023 Corporation Way, Palo Alto, CA 94303 or donate online by visiting www.exploringsenseofplace.org.

Who we are: Karen Harwell, Executive Director • Judy Cronin, Program Director •
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Kari Johnson, Technology Director

