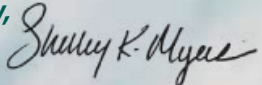




Interpretive Graphics-

Signs, Exhibits, Pamphlets, Brochures and Cards

I love nature, art and taking care of special places! I feel that my work on interpretive graphics is meaningful. It is my hope to continue to work on these projects. Please consider me to work with you on your next project! Panels, printed materials, graphics for web, merchandise, I do it all!

Sincerely, 

There are two very good reasons to have interpretive signs and exhibits in nature preserves, parks, refuges, tourist attractions and heritage places. First, interpretive signs can **enhance the quality of visitor experiences** and secondly interpretation can help in the **management of visitor behavior by explaining how visitors should behave and encouraging them to care for the places they visit.**

Engaging the visitor and providing information is essential to create a space that is respected, revered and of course enjoyed!

Key ingredients of quality interpretative signs are excitement and delight and awakening of senses, to connect to human spirit, beliefs, experiences, hopes and dreams!

The signs can inform visitors about places, species, environments, eco-systems, objects, cultural practices that in turn give visitors a sense of place, and inspire, excite, teach, to conserve natural and cultural resources.

It is important to make a personal connection with the audiences and provide unique and varied experiences. Interpretive signs should be organized with clear, easy to follow structures, and be based on a theme.

A take home card, or brochure can reinforce the message. Conservation organizations can utilize the take home piece for fund raising, and volunteer recruiting.

The take away pieces should be thoughtfully designed and produced, sustainable, and as a keepsake. Field trips from schools can utilize these printed take home pieces to get the info to the entire home-



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“Visual Solutions Graphic Arts created a wonderful set of public display panels for our Sweet Springs Nature Preserve in central California. Shelley was a joy to work with, and collaborated closely with our team from initial design to final installation. We’ve received many positive comments from visitors!”

Jay Carroll
Morro Coast Audubon Society

Sweet Springs Nature Preserve Entrance Sign, in Los Osos, CA.




Visual Solutions completed the design, bird paintings, typography, background photoshop collage, and final artwork for print sent to Fossil Industries for print and production. FossilGraphics.com manufacture "The Worlds Most Durable Graphics". FOSSIL is the #1 solution for many city, state and national parks, bike paths, trails, and recreation facilities and can be found on every continent. All FOSSIL products are "Proudly Made In the USA".



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Tale of a Special Snail



The Morro Shoulderband Snail is an endangered species found at Sweet Springs. Its population has become so low it is in danger of becoming extinct.




The snails prefer the coastal dune scrub habitat which has been severely reduced.


Morro Coast Audubon is helping the snail recover by restoring the coastal dune scrub habitat here at Sweet Springs Nature Preserve.

This will also help other species that depend on coastal dune scrub habitat.

Restoration efforts at Sweet Springs involve removing non-native, invasive plants such as Velvet Grass and planting native coastal dune scrub species, such as California Sagebrush, Sticky Monkey Flower, Hummingbird Sage, Dune Buckwheat, Deerweed, and Dune Lupine.

You can help by staying on established pathways and trails here at Sweet Springs Nature Preserve. Learn more about the rich diversity of natural habitats on the Central Coast. Morro Coast Audubon Society is just one of many local groups devoted to protecting the environment.



www.morrocoastaudubon.org

THIS PANEL SPONSORED BY AFFILIATION OF THE MCVTA/INTER-BOARD MEMBERS
RUT, PRINCE & FITZGERALD

Hidden Nests and Hungry Chicks










Look for the Wonders of the Preserve

The Preserve provides important breeding habitat for dozens of different types of birds. Successful nesting is the only way bird species can survive.

Spring is nesting season and bird song fills the air. Adult birds are busy collecting twigs, grasses, and other materials to construct their nests, large and small.

Eggs take constant tending and once hatched, the chicks must be fed. Parents bring a steady supply of insects and other food items to their hungry broods.

By early summer the young birds have developed the wing feathers they need to fly and can now leave the nest, but many will depend on the adults for food.

Even the largest Red-tailed Hawk was once a tiny chick!












www.morrocoastaudubon.org

THIS PANEL SPONSORED BY DR. Libbie Agran & Guy Fitzwater

Visual Solutions completed the design, snail and baby hawks paintings, typography, background photoshop collage, and final artwork for print sent to Fossil Industries for print and production.



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Imagine the Past

People have lived along the shoreline of Morro Bay for thousands of years. Looking towards Morro Rock, imagine these people pursuing tasks such as gathering plants for food, medicine and basket making, fishing, hunting, preparing meals or making tools.

HUMAN HISTORY

The earliest coastal inhabitants lived in the Morro Bay area for at least 9,000 years, prior to the peak of the Mayan and Aztec civilizations and many millennia before European colonization.

An archeologic of studies have uncovered an array of tools made from stone, bone and shell. It is likely that many more were manufactured from more perishable materials such as plant fibers and wood.

The people moved seasonally from the coast inland and back to hunt and collect food. They may have fashioned small tule boats to fish offshore in the kelp beds.

Descendants of these ancient people continue to live on California's central coast today.

www.morrocoastaudubon.org

THE MORRO COAST AUDUBON SOCIETY
The Glegg Family

Visual Solutions completed the design, gather painting, typography, background photoshop collage, and final artwork for print sent to Fossil Industries for print and production. We worked thru a few options for gatherer image, below was "working" art.



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Focus on the Flyway

Waterfowl & Shorebirds on the Move

The central coast of California is just one part of the Pacific Flyway. This spectacular aerial highway is an important migration route used by hundreds of species – about a BILLION birds each year!

Waterfowl and shorebirds migrate south mainly in fall, arriving here from their northern breeding grounds. They spend winter months in Morro Bay and similar habitats, feeding in the productive shallows and wetland environments. The bay also provides a welcome stopover for longer distance migrants. By late spring almost all of these birds will have returned north.

See if you can recognize some of these seasonal visitors.

Species shown in images: Ring-billed Gull, Golden Plover, Double-crested Cormorant, California Gull, Black-necked Stilt, Black-bellied Plover, American Golden Plover, California Golden Plover, Western Gull, California Golden Plover, Black-necked Stilt, Black-bellied Plover, American Golden Plover, California Golden Plover.

www.morrocoastaudubon.org

Photo credit: ©/Illustration by Brian Kelly

Visual Solutions completed the design, flyway graphic utilized painted textures, typography, background photoshop collage, and final artwork for print sent to Fossil Industries for print and production.



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Native Pollinators

Bees, Butterflies, even Bats

COOL FACTS:

- Most pollinators don't sting.
- There are 4,000 species of native bees in North America and 2,000 in California alone.
- Many native bees are solitary and don't make hives or live in dry place mudhills.
- Monarch caterpillars are only milkweed, which protects them from predators by making them taste bad.
- Monarchs typically spend 10 to 140 days in a day, and the longest might stay flight up to 100 days.

NATIVE POLLINATORS SUPPORT ECOSYSTEM HEALTH

Pollinators carry pollen between plants, allowing the plants to reproduce. This diverse group of animals, which includes bees, butterflies, and even bats, is critical for the health of native and agricultural ecosystems. *Pollinators are responsible for the reproduction of 90% of flowering plants and 35% of human food crops.*

While the European honeybee gets a lot of attention, *native bees can be twice as effective in pollinating crops.* When we support native bees and other native pollinators by growing a wide variety of plants, they support us through better seed and fruit production.

MIGRATION SUPPORTS HEALTHY MONARCH BUTTERFLIES

Western monarch butterflies can migrate up to 3,000 miles each year. A single migration cycle requires multiple generations to complete. In late fall, one generation of monarchs flies south to overwinter in or along the Pacific coast in California and Baja, Mexico, where they stay for the winter. In early spring, the butterflies leave those coastal sites to seek food and reproduce. The next generation disperses as far north as the western Rockies and the Pacific Northwest, multiple generations are born and the cycle begins again.

Sweet Springs Nature Preserve has historically been an overwintering site for hundreds of monarch butterflies. The nectar produced by the eschscholzia blossoms and coastal sage scrub plants support the monarchs and other native pollinators.

WHAT YOU CAN DO:

- Plant a native meadow garden with at least one plant that blooms each season.
- To help monarchs breed, seed and irrigate, plant milkweed within the miles of the Central California coast.
- It is better to plant native milkweed seeds of this area, to monarchs, native and native butterfly species.
- Participate in community science.
- Help protect and restore overwintering and breeding sites.
- Support projects that monitor, study, protect, and restore pollinators and monarch butterflies.
- Find more pollinators and monarch butterflies at www.monarchmilkweed.org

Protecting and restoring monarch and other native pollinator populations is essential to the health of ecosystems, other wildlife and people.

SENSITIVE SPECIES:
Habitat loss, disease, exposure to pesticides, and climate change have led native pollinators to decline at a dramatic rate. Most notably, the number of migrating western monarchs dwindled from millions of butterflies in 1980 to a few thousand in 2020, a loss of 99% of the population.

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Visual Solutions completed the design for this additional panel which was installed in 2022. Typography, background photoshop collage, and final artwork for print sent to Fossil Industries for print and production. We worked thru a few options for panel message, it began with focus on Monarchs.



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WETLAND ECOLOGY

What Are Wetlands?

Wetlands exist where the presence of water is the strongest influence controlling plants and animals. Water depths are usually shallow, no more than six feet deep.

Wetlands purify water! Plants and tiny organisms in the soil help filter and remove pollutants.

Although many natural wetlands across the country are being lost, hundreds of artificial and enhanced wetlands are now successfully being built to collect and purify urban wastewater, agricultural runoff, mining drainage, and urban stormwater.

How Does This Wetland Help Us?

This site previously supported several small, isolated wetlands. Wetland Specialists, the California Department of Fish and Game, and the Army Corps of Engineers were consulted in an extensive environmental planning process. These experts determined that a larger, single wetland would contribute greater benefits to all living creatures. This wetland will provide:

- Street Runoff Protection
- Native Plant Community Enhancement
- Research Opportunities
- Education
- Erosion Control
- Wildlife Habitat Improvement
- Passive Recreation
- Community Enrichment

The sun's energy combines with water and a gas called carbon dioxide giving plants energy to grow

Underwater plants, such as algae, create food and habitat for other microscopic animals

Tiny aquatic animals called zooplankton feed on submerged plants

Small aquatic insects (such as the mosquito), crustaceans, worms, freshwater clams, and mussels feed on zooplankton and/or based in algae

Wetland Cycle of Life

Bacteria, fungi, and microbes breakdown waste and release carbon dioxide, beginning the process anew.

Animal and plant debris is deposited to the wetland floor.

Large animals (such as the Great Blue Heron) feed on insects, reptiles, and amphibians.

Frogs, lizards, and large insects feed on smaller insects.



Visual Solutions completed the artwork for this and one additional panel in Morro Bay Cloisters walkway. The original panels had degraded after decades and Visual Solutions re created the artwork, and the illustrations for new production and installation to replace the old ones.



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Email:

shelleykmyers@mac.com

visit my web sites:

visualsolutionsgraphicart.com

shelleykmyersfine.art

shelley-myers.pixels.com



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