



# Friends of Pinole Creek Watershed

August 2004

## Help for Weed Warriors

by Kimberly Fung

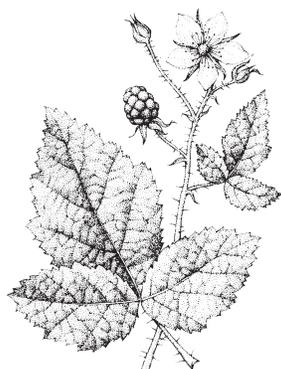
For several months, the Friends of Pinole Creek Watershed has been removing invasive non-native vegetation along a stretch of Pinole Creek behind the Pinole Library. After the invasives are removed, the banks will be controlled for erosion and planted with native plants.

The two most problematic invasives that volunteers have been removing from the site are English ivy and Himalayan blackberry. English ivy (*Hedera helix*) is native to Europe, and is commonly used as a ground cover. While the ivy vines form thick blankets along open soil, they can also cover native vegetation, which essentially suffocates the plants by depriving them of light and nutrients. Even large trees can be killed by ivy climbing into their canopies.

Himalayan blackberry (*Rubus discolor*) is a perennial shrubby vine that is native to Eurasia. While its berries make great pies and jams, the plant's dense mounds displace native vegetation by shading out light. The Himalayan blackberry has long, thick stems that are fairly short-lived, so a build-up of woody stems and leaf litter increases the risk of fire. Its thorny stems also prevent wildlife access to water.

If you'd like more information about how to remove these and other invasive plants, pick up a copy of *The Weed Workers' Handbook: A Guide to Techniques for Removing Bay Area Invasive*

*Plants*. This 128-page book, published by the Watershed Project and the California Invasive Plant Council, explains the most effective and least toxic ways to control 35 of the Bay Areas worst weeds. To obtain a free copy contact the Watershed Project at [staff@thewatershedproject.org](mailto:staff@thewatershedproject.org) or (510) 231-9430.



*Western blackberry, a California native, has 3 leaflets. Himalayan blackberry commonly has 5 leaflets.*



## Survey Pinole Creek with GPS

Wednesday, August 18, 6:00 - 9:00 P.M.  
Public Safety Building, Alex Clark Room  
880 Tennent Ave., Pinole  
AND

Saturday, August 21, 9:00 A.M. - 1:00 P.M.  
Meeting Location TBA

Summer is upon us and it's the perfect time to wade into Pinole Creek! This August, FOPCW will be participating in the Contra Costa County coordinated effort to collect data in our local creeks. On Wednesday, August 18, volunteers will learn how to use handheld GPS units to survey Pinole Creek and map important creek features including bank composition and slope, vegetation and canopy, and man-made structures such as outfalls. The training will be followed by a creek survey using those newly acquired GPS skills, on Saturday, August 21. Ten to twelve feisty folk prepared to get wet and meet fellow creek enthusiasts are needed! Attendance at the Wednesday training session is highly recommended and RSVPs are appreciated for both events. Refreshments will be served. To RSVP, contact Nicholle Fratus at (510) 231-5784 or [nicholle@thewatershedproject.org](mailto:nicholle@thewatershedproject.org).

## Pinole Creek Watershed Vision Plan Released

After more than two years of effort, the Urban Creeks Council is pleased to present the Pinole Creek Watershed Vision Plan. The plan, developed through a consensus-based community process, includes multiple priorities for achieving and maintaining a healthy watershed. The Vision Plan can be downloaded from the Urban Creeks Council Web site at [www.urbancreeks.org/Current\\_Projects.html](http://www.urbancreeks.org/Current_Projects.html).

*The Pinole Creek Watershed Vision Plan was prepared by the Urban Creeks Council and the Restoration Design Group, LLC, in partnership with the City of Pinole Redevelopment Agency and the Contra Costa County Flood Control & Water Conservation District. Funding was provided by the California Coastal Conservancy.*



the watershed project

1327 South 46th Street  
155 Richmond Field Station  
Richmond, CA 94804

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**ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED**

**Dated Material - Please Deliver By August 12**



*Friends of Pinole Creek Watershed*

Join us at the next **Friends of Pinole Creek Watershed** meeting  
Wednesday, September 8, at 6:30 p.m. at the Pinole Library

Printed on recycled paper

**Look for Pinole Creek Watershed Signs**

Many Bay Area residents may have noticed storm drain inlet signs that request, “No Dumping, Please—Drains to Our Creeks.” Unfortunately, all too often residents who read the signs are unaware where these creeks are located.

Now, Pinole, and every other municipality in Contra Costa County is benefiting from a grant to the Contra Costa Resource Conservation District (RCD) that funded the creation of creek identification signs. The signs, designed by FOPCW volunteer Melissa Lawton, have a simple illustration of a creek flowing between two hills, with the accompanying text: *Pinole (or other creek) Creek Watershed: Ours to Protect*. The purpose of this RCD project is to build support for restoring the waterways to healthier, cleaner, and more scenic environments. As RCD District Manager and FOPCW cofounder Carol Arnold stated “If more people know about creeks, more people will want to take care of them.”

The signs are being acquired by each of the cities and are currently being installed. Look for Pinole Creek signs throughout the watershed—including at the FOPCW native plant demonstration garden and creek restoration site at the Pinole Library.

*Adapted from an article by: Maya Rappaport, Orinda Stormwater Program Manager*



**Just Announced: The Watershed Project’s Fifteenth Annual Fall Conference**

The Watershed Project’s 2004 Creeks, Wetlands, and Watersheds Conference registration brochure is available now. The conference, a series of interactive institutes promoting stewardship of our land and water, will be held on weekends in Oct. and Nov. For more information or to receive a brochure please visit [www.thewatershedproject.org](http://www.thewatershedproject.org) or call (510) 231-9430.

**Upcoming Events**

For more information contact  
**Nicholle Fratus at (510) 231-5784**  
or [nicholle@thewatershedproject.org](mailto:nicholle@thewatershedproject.org)

**August**

- Wednesday, August 18  
GPS Creek Survey Training  
6:00 - 9:00 p.m.  
Alex Clark Room,  
880 Tennent Ave., Pinole
- Saturday, August 21  
GPS Creek Survey  
9:00 a.m - 1:00 p.m., Pinole Creek
- Saturday, August 28  
Creek & Garden Work Day  
9:30 - noon, Pinole Library

**September**

- Wednesday, September 8  
Monthly Meeting
- Saturday, September 25  
Creek and Garden Work Day

**Whom to Call for Dumping and Spills in the Creek**

- For dumping in progress, call 911.
- For spills and dumping in Pinole creeks, storm drains, and waterways, call (510) 724-9010.
- For spills and dumping in Hercules creeks, storm drains, and waterways, call (510) 799-8252.
- For spills and dumping in Contra Costa County creeks, storm drains, and waterways, call (800) NO DUMPING.

Support for the Pinole Creek Watershed Awareness Program is provided by the Contra Costa County Watershed Program, the Pinole Redevelopment Agency, and the California Bay-Delta Authority.