



WEEK OF OCTOBER 12, 2020 #42/52

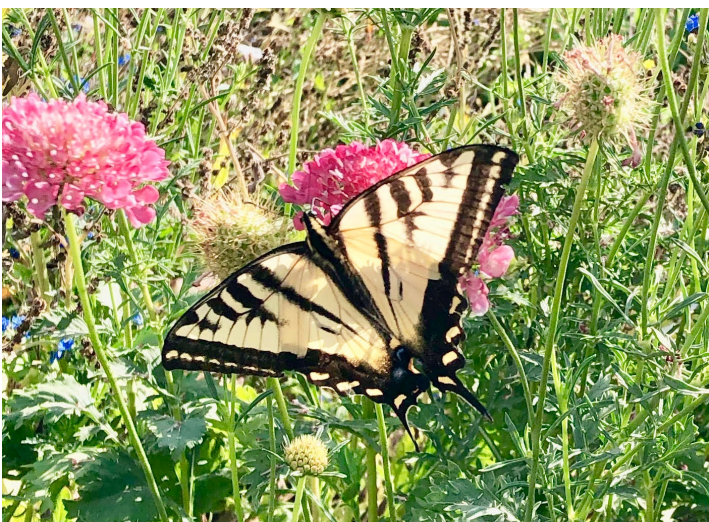
### Farm Wanderings

Sometimes I am really surprised by what I find out on the farm. One morning I was in the orchard and



spotted this little rose bush growing in the line of fruit trees. It caught my eye because it is covered in gorgeous hips. How the heck did it get there? I know Nigel didn't plant it. We do have dogwood roses planted years ago as part of our hedgerow on the West side of the farm, but this rose is at the other end of the orchard. Sometimes I will spot a single sunflower standing tall and proud in one our fields. That I get. But roses? Figs also seem to be moving about on the farm; we now have a couple of "volunteers" in the event space, and another one growing outside the office. I am sure that is happening because so many birds and animals love them.

One of the things I have learned living on the farm is life wants to happen. Nature's inclination is to fight hard for survival, really hard. We will see that in the recovery of the redwoods in our beautiful forests that burned this summer. Everywhere we go, if we let nature do what it does, we will find life happens. Because our farm is so diverse, we are a perfect home



for many native bees, and some incredible butterflies, and loads and loads of birds. It is an amazing example of nature doing what nature wants more than anything, and that is to thrive.

This past weekend I watched the movie *Kiss The Ground*. If you haven't seen it, I think it is worth your time.

One of the key figures in the film is rancher/farmer Gabe Brown from Browns Ranch. Nigel took a few classes from Gabe at farming conferences we attended. He was so impressed with Gabe's work, it changed how we put together our pasture system for healthier chickens and soil. One of the things we learned from Gabe came from an experiment he did on his ranch where he planted fields with single varieties of pasture, plus one field where he grew a mix, a wide variety of pasture plants. The difference was pretty astounding, the "community" of plants did so much better than the mono-crop fields. That taught us the importance of community and diversity out in the field.

Nature can teach us so much if only we take the time to step back, listen, watch and learn. Life truly does want to happen, and when we let nature do her thing, it can happen quickly. That is what should give us hope for our future. But we can't just sit back and rely on Mother Nature to take care of business, we must turn that hope into action, because even though she will work fast, we need to stop working against her. I bring this up because too often we feel helpless, making it hard to move forward, but the truth is we



aren't helpless. Your choice to support a CSA farm is a really big step. Subscribing to our CSA means you are supporting a farm that grows over 150 crops each year, so much of our farm is planted year round. Yes, we let some fields rest, because even the earth needs a break, but we don't leave hundreds or thousands of acres of barren soil to blow or wash away. We let most of our resting fields just go, covered in weeds, until we are closer to using them. We are getting back on track with our pasture planting, and I hope this mix will improve our egg production while playing an important role in feeding and improving the health of our soil. As for *Kiss The Ground*, parts of the movie could be a little depressing, but I found it filled with promise and answers to change our current trajectory. There is so much to learn, but what was so exciting, was the realization that there are steps we can take to make our world a better place, and all of us are playing a part in that work.

