

# Rancho del Oso

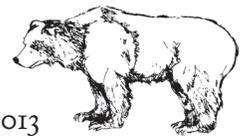
Nature and History Center

News



Volume 28/2

April-June 2013



## Celebrate Spring Wildflowers Weekend

**Saturday and Sunday, April 27 and 28 • 12 to 4 pm • Nature Center**

Spring has arrived in the Waddell Valley, and each year a unique variety of flowers appear in an assortment of colors and forms to delight the senses. Come and see what's blooming!

View flowers on display at the Nature and History Center, featuring fifty or more native and non-native species with identification and grouped by habitat. Naturalist-led walks start at 12:30 PM and 2:30 PM on Saturday and Sunday enabling you to see wildflowers in their natural setting, while learning about their unique features.



### Wildflower Walks

**Sundays, April 14 • May 12 • June 9 • 10 am**

Take a walk among the wildflowers of Rancho del Oso's Waddell Valley. Docent **Scott Peden** will lead a four mile hike to view a variety of wildflowers—there's always surprises! Photographers are easily accommodated. Show up with lunch, water and enthusiasm. We will meet up on April 14 at the Rancho del Oso gate located along Highway 1 across from the Waddell Beach parking lot, and for May 12 and June 12 date, we will meet at the Nature Center.

### Visit the newly-remodeled Nature and History Center

**Saturday and Sunday, 12 noon to 4 pm**

**Visit us on the Web and Facebook!**

**[www.ranchodeloso.org](http://www.ranchodeloso.org) and [www.facebook.com/RDOSP](http://www.facebook.com/RDOSP)**

# Volunteer at the Nature and History Center

## Docent Training Classes begin April 13 at Rancho del Oso

A legacy of nature study and conservation that began generations ago at the Hoover Family's beloved Rancho del Oso will continue with a team of park volunteers at the newly-opened Nature and History Center. The center opened in 2012 and provides an in-depth look at the natural and cultural history of the area—from grizzly bears and logging to kite surfing and presidents.

Docent training consists of a series of classes on ecology, park habitats, local history with expert-led guided walks and demonstrations on how to lead park programs for visitors. Prospective volunteers can contact the park to register for the upcoming series of volunteer trainings which begin April 13 and continue through May. To participate, please contact Morgan Dill at (831) 427-2288 or email her at parksrdopis@parks.ca.gov.

## Fireside Chats

**Sundays, April 14 • May 12 • June 9 • 2 pm • Nature Center**

Pretend, play, sing and explore! Bring the family and gather round the fireplace for storytelling followed by activities focused on the theme of the story. This thirty minute program will introduce youngsters to the wonders of nature! We recommend children be at least three years old.

## Berry Creek Falls

**Sundays, May 26 and June 23 • 10 am**

Join in the adventure of an all-day hike to Berry Creek Falls. Hiking from the Ranger Station to the three gorgeous waterfalls is an experience, so bring lunch, water and energy. The hike is seven miles each way over moderate terrain; please wear good hiking shoes for a long fourteen mile hike. Arrive early at the Highway 1 gate across from Waddell Beach, and walk in approximately one mile to the Ranger Station.



### Join the Waddell Creek Association!

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

#### Membership categories; please check one:

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Associate \$20  | <input type="checkbox"/> Sustaining \$100 |
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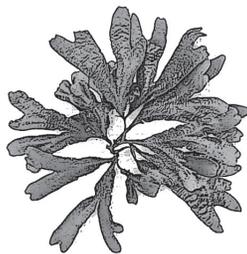
**Waddell Creek Association**  
c/o Joyce Rosenstiel  
227 Blakewood Way  
Woodside, CA 94062

## President's Report

Thanks to the lovely renovation of the Nature and History Center and the wonderful enthusiasm and creativity of Interpretive Specialist **Morgan Dill**—Rancho del Oso is full of exciting activities, and enjoying many more visitors. Examples of events include regular wildflower and Berry Creek hikes along with fireside stories on second Sundays (with Morgan playing her guitar). One recent especially popular outing (with forty participants) was the fungus walk, which featured some “charismatic” mushrooms. Morgan has also designed a very cool Facebook page, and we are now able to send our newsletters by email. Contact Judy Buck at [judybugg46@yahoo.com](mailto:judybugg46@yahoo.com) if you prefer this.

While our major financial outlays for the renovation are now over, we continue to receive requests for help from State Parks. For example, in order to keep the website and Facebook page current, Morgan requested that we buy a camera, which we did. So we're grateful for your memberships and contributions, which enable us to respond.

—Walt Hays



## Wide-eyed at Waddell

Whenever I make my way over to Waddell Beach, and walk along the shore, I delight in this place where the river meets the sea. There are always birds looking for treasures in the kelp washed up on shore, bits of sand dollars poking up from the sand, and shoreline patterns from the push and pull of the waves. This winter brought drastic changes in tides, with some of the highest and lowest tides falling on the same day.

The waves can also bring a phenomenon called bioluminescence to the sand and water as darkness covers the beach. When disturbed by waves or by stepping in the sand where they have washed up, there can sometimes be a blue glow or sparkle, as some species of single-celled plankton called dinoflagellates glow. Large numbers of these plankton may even produce light simultaneously when disturbed! The luminescence of a single dinoflagellate lasts for 0.1 seconds, and their glow is brighter after sunny days.

Not all dinoflagellates are bioluminescent, but the majority of them emit a blue-green wavelength. This is because blue-green light travels the farthest in water. Their bioluminescence can be used as a defense mechanism, as dinoflagellates startle their predators directly, or ward off potential predators indirectly by sending out a “burglar alarm.” Most organisms are sensitive to only blue light, and when the bioluminescence can attract attention to itself, it thereby brings attention to its predator making it more vulnerable to higher-level predators.

This phenomenon of bioluminescence reminded me of a line from John Steinbeck's *The Log from the Sea of Cortez*, where he speaks of “the knowledge that all things are one thing and that one thing is all things—plankton, a shimmering phosphorescence [sic] on the sea and the spinning planets and an expanding universe, all bound together by the elastic string of time. It is advisable to look from the tide pool to the stars and then back to the tide pool again.”

As the coast gets busier as the summer season begins, I am reminded how lucky we are to be beside the ocean at Rancho del Oso, seeing the connections of people, the land and the ocean each day.

—Morgan Dill



# Waddell Creek Association

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## Rancho del Oso — Coastal Section of Big Basin Redwoods State Park

The Rancho del Oso Nature and History Center is open to the general public on Saturdays and Sundays from noon until 4 P.M.

The Center is located 2 miles south of Año Nuevo (or 16 miles north of Santa Cruz) just off Highway 1.

Turn at the first road south of the Waddell Creek bridge and follow the signs. Extreme weather may cancel events; please call ahead.

For more information or to register for events, call 831 427-2288 or email [parksrddopis@parks.ca.gov](mailto:parksrddopis@parks.ca.gov).

If you would like to go paperless, please send your full name and email to [judybugg46@yahoo.com](mailto:judybugg46@yahoo.com).

We do not share your information with any other group.

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