

Rancho del Oso

Nature and History Center

News

October–December 2016



Volume 31/4



Nature Wander

Sundays, October 9 • November 6 • December 11 • 1 pm

Find out what's growing, living and blooming right now in the Waddell Valley on this approximately one mile, one-hour-plus guided walk with docent naturalist **Ann Garside**.

Ann will share information about the plants and habitats of Rancho del Oso, as the group walks from coastal scrub through one of the remaining five distinct populations of Monterey Pine left in the world. Show up with curiosity and energy. Hikes start at the Nature Center.



Need holiday gifts for your outdoor enthusiast, plant and animal lover?



Want to avoid the traffic and shopping malls?

Help a great cause and get a nature experience too!

We have field books, hand made cards, bear t-shirts, and sweatshirts. And lots more educational gifts and fun functional items like our new gift-boxed stainless steel water bottles with our logo.

Stop on by the Rancho del Oso Nature and History Center and check us out!



Come visit the Nature and History Center

Open Saturday–Sunday, 12 noon to 4 pm

Check us out on the Web and join us on Facebook!

www.ranchodeloso.org and www.facebook.com/RDOSP

Waddell Valley Wildflower and Nature Hike

Saturdays, November 12 † December 10 † 10 am

Join docent **Scott Peden** and learn to identify many of Waddell Valley's plants within Rancho del Oso's seven diverse habitats. Observe the monthly change of the ecosystems. Each walk is unique as blooming flowers and pollinators are constantly in flux. This walk is a leisurely four-hour amble that is great for learning while experiencing the native habitat. Bring lunch, questions and spirited fervor! Hikes start at the yellow gate across the parking lot at Waddell Beach on Highway 1.

Snake Park Saturdays

Saturdays, October 8 † November 12 † 2 pm

Why are snakes important to us? How do they see, smell, taste, hear? What and how do they eat? What does a snake feel like? Several snakes will be on display and native reptile adaptations will be discussed in the beautiful backdrop of Waddell Valley. We will meet up at the Ranger Station, a short hike in from the yellow gate across the parking lot at Waddell Beach on Highway 1.

Waddell Valley Birding

Saturday, December 10 † 8 am

Join Interpretive Specialist **Jeremy Lin**, for an approximate two mile hike to observe, listen, and enjoy late fall time happenings at Rancho del Oso. We will take our time and move slowly. No previous experience necessary. Bring binoculars, a bird guide, and readiness for silent observation, as we witness wildlife awakening on a lovely morning in Waddell Valley. We will meet on the deck in front of the Nature Center.



Join the Waddell Creek Association!

Membership categories; please check one:

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Associate \$25 | <input type="checkbox"/> Sustaining \$100 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Family \$40 | <input type="checkbox"/> Patron \$250 |
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Name _____

Address _____

City, State, Zip _____

Telephone _____

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Please cut out and mail this form
with your check, payable to:

Waddell Creek Association
c/o Joyce Rosenstiel
227 Blakewood Way
Woodside, CA 94062

Reminiscing Rancho del Oso

The thirty year celebration banner at the Nature and History Center reminded me that I have been volunteering for twenty five years. When I retired, I envisioned sitting at my desk with a pile of books, finishing one and starting another. Instead, I enrolled in Diane West Bourke's Nature and History class at Foothill College. Diane was the resident naturalist at Rancho del Oso (RDO), and I soon found my way there as an inquisitive volunteer. At a board meeting, I met Hulda Hoover McLean and learned that RDO had been her home.

The Hoover family bought this land around the time of World War I, and after the war spent summers on the property. When school was over, her father left Stanford (where he worked), loaded up wagons with supplies, and made the two day trek to the coast with his wife and three daughters. They roamed free on this beautiful land. Years went by, they grew up, married, but still maintained their connections to the land. Hulda Hoover McLean and her husband built their home on the site of the Nature and History Center and raised their children at RDO.

As time went on, her family moved away, Hulda became a widow, and she worried about how RDO could be maintained as both a family area and shared with the public. Thus, began negotiations with Sempervirens Fund, whose mission was to raise funds to purchase private land that was in danger of becoming developed, and keeping it as nature intended. Hulda sold a right-of-way that allowed public access from Castle Rock State Park through Big Basin, and down to the coast of RDO on what came to be known as the Skyline to the Sea Trail. At the same time, the Hoover land remained in family hands.

Hulda did not find that selling the land lessened her interest in being totally involved in its future. State Parks was the logical land steward, and they moved a mobile residence on site with a prefab building that became the ranger station. When I came on the scene, the resident ranger was close to retirement and not receptive to volunteer help. Hulda wanted to help, and decided if he could not spend hours every weekend in the ranger station, she would provide volunteers. She set up their duties, and found a way to get access to keys. However, there seemed to be a problem with who should have keys.

Not to be discouraged, Hulda acquired a key to the ranger station, bought a fake (hide-a-key) rock, and plunked it in the dirt by the front door. We were all given instructions about where to find it. I'm not sure how the ranger thought we all got in, but he did not seem to discover the rock until two years later. When he did find it, he was upset, but Hulda just picked it up and placed it by the front gate. Maybe it is still there; I haven't looked in years.

A new ranger came on board, and liked the idea of volunteer help, so she put up the key box that still works so efficiently. I don't know if Hulda was the first with the volunteer idea. A few years ago, at a thank you lunch for coastal volunteers, we were told that in our area alone, volunteer hours would cost the park service twenty million dollars a year without their help. So, I am glad that I am not just sitting at my desk with a mountain of books. Volunteers make a difference, provide a public service, and learn a lot about RDO. If you want to help, let us know.

—Joyce Rosenstiel





Waddell Creek Association

3600 Highway 1
Davenport, CA 95017

Return Service Requested

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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.

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 parksrdopis@parks.ca.gov.

Go Green!

If you would like to go paperless, please send your full name and email to judybugg46@yahoo.com.

Rancho del Oso News is published quarterly by the Waddell Creek Association, a nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization.

Editor: Judy Buck. **Writers:** Jeremy Lin, Joyce Rosenstiel.

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Our Mission

The Waddell Creek Association, in cooperation with California State Parks, works to educate and inspire public appreciation and stewardship of the extraordinary natural and cultural resources of the Waddell Valley, by providing resources and support for volunteer and educational programs at Rancho del Oso/Big Basin Redwoods State Park. Your membership helps us achieve these goals.