

# Rancho del Oso

Nature and History Center

News

October–December 2013



Volume 28/4



## Mystical Lives of Bats



with Monique Smith Lee

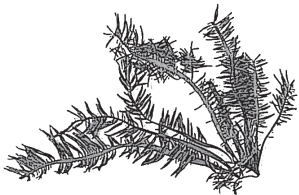
Saturday, October 5 • 5 pm • Nature Center

Join **Monique Smith Lee**, of the Bat Conservancy of Coastal California, for a night of learning about bats. She will dispel myths, reveal secrets of their fascinating lives, and share why they need our friendship. In cooperation with Native Animal Rescue, Monique will bring live bats. We will also go on a short hike to observe bats in the wild. Bring a flashlight.

## Earthquakes, Ranches and Bears, Oh My!

Sunday, October 13 • 2 pm • Nature Center

Come along on this one and a half hour, one mile loop to learn about the different forces that have sculpted this area of the coast—from the Ocean Shore Railroad's plans to connect the north to south, to grizzly bears that roamed the hills, to farming that continues to shape the Waddell valley and its future.



## Life in the Tidepools

with Morgan Dill

Saturday, December 14 • 2 pm



Explore the wonders of the tide pools just south of Waddell Beach, from anemones and sea stars to hermit crabs and kelp. Join Interpretive Specialist **Morgan Dill** for this minus-tide adventure, but be sure to bring warm clothes, binoculars, and tide pooling shoes! We'll meet at the Waddell Beach parking lot and make our way down the beach towards Greyhound Rock.



Nature and History Center Fall Hours

October through December, Saturday–Monday, 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)



The earth and ocean seem  
To sleep in one another's arms, and dream  
Of waves, flowers, clouds, wood, rocks, and  
all that we  
Read in their smiles, and call reality.

—Percy Bysshe Shelley

## Berry Creek Falls

Sundays, October 27 ❖ November 24 ❖ 10 am

Join the adventure of hiking to Berry Creek, and other upstream falls. Hiking from the Ranger Station to the three splendid waterfalls is an all-day affair, so bring lunch, water and energy. We'll walk seven miles each way over moderate terrain; wear good hiking shoes for a long fourteen mile hike. Arrive early at the Highway 1 gate across from Waddell Beach, and walk in about a mile to the Ranger Station to meet your guide.

## Clark Connection to Westridge Trail

Saturday, November 9 ❖ 10 am

Team up with Interpretive Specialist **Morgan Dill** on a hike up to the Clark Connection Trail where it meets the Westridge Trail. We'll travel from sea level to views of Pigeon Point and coastal valleys atop the ridge on this strenuous eight mile hike. Arrive early at the Highway 1 gate across from Waddell Beach, and walk in approximately one mile to the Ranger Station to meet your guide. Bring plenty of water, lunch, and energy!

## ☞ President's Report ☞

It's been a long process, but we now have an enhanced web site! We have had the site for a long time, but despite many valiant efforts, no one could figure out how to make it work, resulting in a lot of frustration. So, I'm extremely happy to report that since our last meeting the problem has been solved.

Carol Fuller introduced us to **Ted Altenberg**, a local teacher who does web work on the side, and he convinced us to switch our web site software system from Drupal to WordPress for ease of use for our dedicated volunteers, Mark Levine and Linda Brodman. A totally worthwhile investment!

Check us out at: [www.ranchodeloso.org](http://www.ranchodeloso.org). Among other things, the web site now includes an updated list of events, electronic versions of newsletters, and an invitation to join and or donate using PayPal.

Carol also came up with a great idea for docent enrichment—a video of Sandy Lydon interviewing Hulda in her nineties. The video clearly captured her dry wit and love of nature, and is a great resource for volunteers who never had an opportunity to meet her in person. —*Walt Hays*

## Wildflower Moseys

**Saturdays, October 12 ☞ November 9 ☞ December 14 ☞ 10 am**

Want to explore the variety of wildflowers in Rancho del Oso? Within Rancho del Oso's seven different habitats, there are easily over fifty species of flowers you can view in a day. This hike is great for photographers who want to slow down and take photos. Please wear sturdy shoes, bring a lunch and water. Docent **Scott Peden** will lead this four and a half mile hike beginning at the Nature and History Center.

## Fireside Stories

**Sundays, October 13 ☞ November 10 ☞ December 8 ☞ 11 am**

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

## Critter Crafts

**Saturday, October 19 ☞ 12 noon to 4 pm**

**Sundays, November 17 ☞ December 15 ☞ 12 noon to 4 pm**

Drop in for fun nature-themed craft time at the Nature and History Center. We will have a **free** make-and-take-activity that most children can complete independently, although parents may need to assist preschool-aged children. All children are welcome to participate.



# Summertime in Waddell Valley

Summer has been a pleasurable, engaged one at Rancho del Oso, with plenty of visitors coming to the park from all across the world. While out on the trail, at the beach, and around the park, many visitors have been greeted by Rancho del Oso volunteers roving around, sharing information, maps, advice and knowledge. This expansion of our volunteer program allows us to reach even more visitors each weekend. Look for our amazing volunteers out in the park, staffing the Ranger Station and Nature and History Center.



The Nature and History Center has been filled with people, soaking in the Waddell Valley. On Fridays, visitors could be found making critter crafts—from beaded lizards and bottle fish to magazine mosaic animals and ribbon jellyfish. A lot of glue sticks were used this summer! Critter safaris, wildflower walks and fireside stories also filled the days with fun and exploration.

In July, California State Park Environmental Scientist Portia Halbert gave a talk about the Marbled Murrelet. Even though California's remaining old-growth redwood trees, nesting site to the bird, are now protected, the murrelets continue to disappear. The culprit? The egg and chick-eating Steller's Jay and Raven. Currently, one of the projects Portia and her team are working on is a taste aversion program for these birds. We can help out the Marbled Murrelet by making sure we are crumb clean, by never leaving food unattended or intentionally feeding animals.

August brought the return of the Grizzly Bear Festival, and more than 100 people came out to join in the fun. Visitors compared themselves to grizzly bears out in the courtyard, seeing how they sized up when standing next to cutouts, weighing themselves and checking handprints. Young and old transformed themselves by making their own set of grizzly bear ears! There was a self-guided Grizzly Bear Loop, and stories of the California Grizzly Bear were told by Susan Snyder of the Bancroft Library at Berkeley. It was a fun day imagining what the Waddell Valley would be like if grizzlies still roamed these hills, but we'll have to wait for next year for the mighty grizzly bear to return at our next festival!

—Morgan Dill



# Wide-eyed at Waddell



This summer brought plenty of opportunities to head out on the trails at Rancho del Oso, with some new views to enjoy, up the Clark Connector Trail at Westridge, and exciting discoveries—fresh mountain lion scat on the Marsh Trail. There were many moments of appreciation this summer as well—a Western Pond Turtle plopping into Waddell Creek at the sound of my footsteps, a fawn caught mid-snack with a lichen beard, watching soap plant bloom in the quiet evening hours, California Quail family on the front deck of the Nature and History Center, and watching dragonflies over the marsh.

As we head into fall in the Waddell Valley, and the days become shorter, I find my transplanted Michigan heart thankful for the most unexpected thing, poison oak. I have had poison oak many times since moving to California six years ago, and have said many an unkind thing about its existence, but during this time of year, I long for the fall colors of its crimson hue.

The shorter days are responsible for starting the process of shutting down photosynthesis in the plant, as sunlight becomes less abundant and poison oak prepares for winter. It is thought that as the leaves die, the poison oak attempts to salvage as much energy as it can, producing red pigment molecules that are effective at blocking some of the light and reducing levels of photosynthesis.

Once the leaves fall off the poison oak plant, you can still get an itchy rash by touching the barren plant in the winter. Urushiol oil present on the stems is the culprit that causes the rash. It is best to stay on the trail to avoid any problems.

The change of seasons in the Waddell Valley is a subtle shift, and taking the time to slow down and notice these nuances allows me to feel more connected to this place throughout the year. And while I used to jump in fall-colored leaves each year as a kid, I will not be doing that at Rancho del Oso! —Morgan Dill



## Join the Waddell Creek Association!

### Membership categories; please check one:

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Associate \$20  | <input type="checkbox"/> Sustaining \$100 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Family \$35     | <input type="checkbox"/> Patron \$250     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sponsoring \$50 | <input type="checkbox"/> Benefactor \$500 |

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

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

Telephone \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

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



## Waddell Creek Association

3600 Highway 1  
Davenport, CA 95017

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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 [parksrldopis@parks.ca.gov](mailto:parksrldopis@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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