

# Rancho del Oso

Nature and History Center

News

January–March 2014



Volume 29/1



## Fungus Foray

with Trent Pearce • Sunday, February 2 • 2 pm

Join East Bay Regional Park District Naturalist and fungophile **Trent Pearce** to see the bounty that the rain brings to the forest. We'll head out on a two hour, three mile hike where we'll discover places that mushrooms like to nestle, and how they survive and flourish in the Santa Cruz Mountains. Be prepared to get down and look around on this no-take fungus foray! This hike starts at the Rancho del Oso Ranger Station, located less than a mile in from the gate across from Waddell Beach.

## Mills, Wharfs, and Tramways

The Story of William Waddell

Saturday, February 22 • 4 pm • Nature Center

The name Waddell is commonly known along our coast, but who was this Kentucky born lumberman? What happened to everything he built? Did he really lose his arm? Come listen to State Park Interpreter **Mike Merritt** and discover the story behind the man, the mill, and day he came face to face with one of the last grizzly bears in the Santa Cruz Mountains.



## Bug Chase!

Saturday, March 29 • 11 am and 2 pm

Come enjoy a day devoted to bugs at Rancho del Oso as we look for different colorful insects near the Nature and History Center. Search for pollinators, parasitic flies, butterflies and dragonflies as they hop, crawl, hide and fly on the trail. Meet at the Nature and History Center for your guided pursuit of these six-legged friends at Rancho del Oso!

Nature and History Center Winter Hours

January through March, Saturday–Sunday, 12 noon to 4 pm

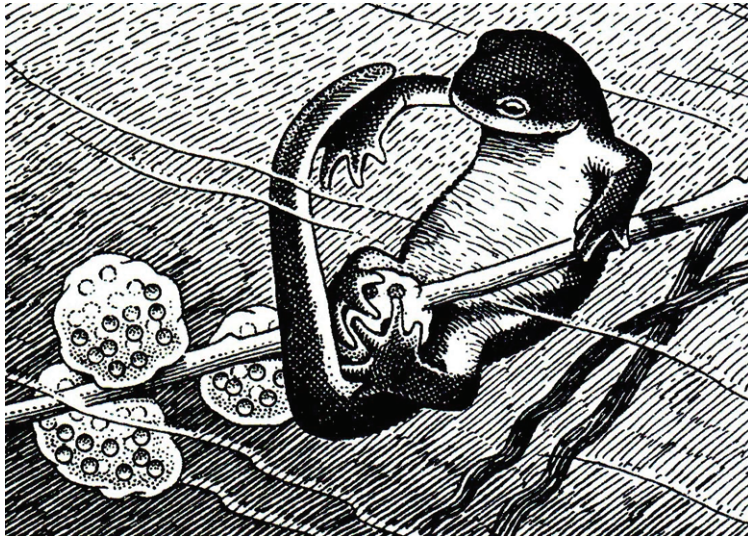
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[www.ranchodeloso.org](http://www.ranchodeloso.org) and [www.facebook.com/RDOSP](http://www.facebook.com/RDOSP)

# From Sea to Ridge

Saturday, January 25 • 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 for views of Año Nuevo and coastal valleys from atop the ridge on this strenuous six 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!



## Salamander Stories, Crafts, and Scavenger Hunt

Saturday, March 8 • 11 am to 4 pm • Nature Center

Join us as the Ranch of the Bear becomes “Ranch of the Newt,” celebrating our amphibian friends that make their way from beneath rocks and under logs to the creeks, wetlands and puddles of the park. Start out your day with salamander story time at 11 AM, where children will learn all about salamanders and their habitats.

Drop in at the Rancho del Oso Nature and History Center from 12 NOON to 4 PM for a free family-friendly salamander craft. At 1 PM, meet at the gate across Highway One from Waddell Beach for a three mile guided salamander scavenger hunt on the trail.

## Newt Night!

Saturday, March 8 • 5 pm • Nature Center

Come hear tales and songs of toes growing back, barking salamanders and poison so deadly it could kill you in a campfire-style program held at the Rancho del Oso Nature and History Center.



## President's Report

This has been a great year for the Rancho del Oso Section of Big Basin, and a lot of it is due to our outstanding Interpretive Specialist, **Morgan Dill**. Morgan has arranged appealing programs, greatly increased attendance, trained new docents, and always greeted everyone with enthusiasm and assistance. She has made good use of the services of the Waddell Creek Association; for example, upgrading programs by asking us to acquire our own projector instead of having to borrow one.

We also feel grateful for our many dedicated volunteers. **Scott Peden** who offers exceptional service, was honored at our annual holiday party on December 7, for his many contributions.

We expect the new year to bring more of the same. However, there are still improvements that could enhance the experience at Rancho del Oso; for example, a permanent bridge on the Marsh Trail. Park personnel are developing a master plan for such improvements, with the idea that the Association could apply for grants to implement it. Any such grants will most probably require matching, so your contributions are still needed and appreciated.

—Walt Hays

## Rancho del Oso Needs YOU to Volunteer

### Docent Training Classes begin in April 2014

Have you ever dreamt of afternoons spent in the company of a Grizzly Bear? Wondered what it would have been like as logger in the Waddell Valley? Planned to ride your bike to see a nearly seventy foot tall waterfall? Join our family of naturalists and enjoy the many benefits of being a volunteer at Rancho del Oso, Big Basin Redwoods State Park! As a volunteer at Rancho del Oso, participants attend a multiple-week training session to become docent naturalists skilled in interpreting the natural and cultural history of the area. Docents lead guided walks, provide roving naturalist duty, and host the Nature and History Center and Ranger Station. Training will be held Saturdays in April and May.

To participate, please contact Morgan at the Rancho del Oso Nature and History Center at (831) 427-2288 or email her at [parksr dopis@parks.ca.gov](mailto:parksr dopis@parks.ca.gov)

—Morgan Dill



## Wildflower Saunters

Saturdays, January 11 • February 8 • March 8 • 10 am

Take a hike 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 something exciting in bloom! Photographers are easily accommodated. Hike starts at the Rancho del Oso gate located along Highway 1, across from the Waddell Beach parking lot. Show up with lunch, water and energy to hike.



## Helping Hands

Volunteer **Scott Peden** is an invaluable resource at Rancho del Oso, sharing his abundant knowledge of the environment around him with park visitors, as well as volunteers and staff. He leads popular monthly wildflower walks, and is actively involved in the annual Wildflower Festival.

Scott is always ready to take the time to tell visitors about everything from the flashy flowers in spring to the smallest flies to be found on the trail. He meticulously documents his observations. His photography has provided wonderful imagery for creating fliers, posting on Facebook and the Web, and learning more about the park. Scott is always eager to jump up to help out, and in the year 2013 volunteered over 150 hours to Rancho del Oso, Big Basin Redwoods State Park. Thank you Scott!

—Morgan Dill

## Fireside Stories

**Sundays, January 12 ❖ February 9 ❖ 11 am and Saturday, March 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

**Sundays, January 19 ❖ February 23 ❖ ❖ March 16 ❖ 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.

# Wide-eyed at Waddell

Winter sunsets cloaking the valley in a golden hue, low tides that expose treasures along Waddell Beach, and vivid green moss that unfurls lush and triumphant on trees with the returning rain are all a part of winter at Rancho del Oso. As you hike on the trails, you can hear the creek's flowing murmur louder than the summer trickling whispers of just a few months before. The ground is anxious to spring forth with fungus; slight mounds of subtle duff rising up for the careful observer to discover the fungus that lies below.

As I travel to and from the park this time of year, the abundance of Red-tailed Hawks along Highway 1 and at Rancho del Oso serve as a welcome guide along the way. Common and widespread, these birds of prey are more numerous in winter, when birds from the far north arrive to join the birds that live year round in the Waddell Valley.

Choosing the same sentinel perch from day to day, you will start to notice the "regulars" at their posts, rich brown from above, with a streaked pale belly, and on the wing underside, a dark bar between shoulder and wrist. The name comes from the tail that appears cinnamon-red from above, and pale from below.

Often you can hear the fierce, screaming cry—cheeeeeeeeeew—falling in pitch and intensity of the Red-tailed Hawk while hiking at Rancho del Oso. This sound is frequently used as a generic raptor sound effect in television shows and other media, even if the bird featured is not a Red-tailed Hawk.

The next time you make your way to Rancho del Oso, watch for the Red-tailed Hawk, and stop in the Rancho del Oso Nature and History Center to get a closer look and hear their call. Many people have been fooled into thinking we have a hawk right outside after the button has been pushed! —Morgan Dill

## Hike to the Falls

**Sundays, January 26 ❖ February 23 ❖ March 23 ❖ 10 am**

Join the adventure of hiking to Berry Creek, and other upstream falls. Hiking from the Ranger Station to the three gorgeous 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.



### 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 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Family \$35     | <input type="checkbox"/> Patron \$250     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sponsoring \$50 | <input type="checkbox"/> Benefactor \$500 |

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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