

Rancho del Oso

Nature and History Center

News

July–September 2015



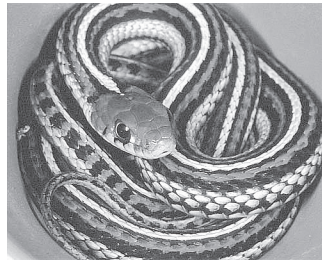
Volume 30/3



Grizzly Bear Festival

Saturday, August 15 ❖ 12 noon to 4 pm ❖ **Nature Center**

Celebrate the once-abundant California Grizzly Bear that roamed Waddell Valley. Throughout the day, there will be Native American-influenced tools and crafts, such as tule boats and cordage making, and activities with hoops, spears, and stick games. Join us at 2 pm for engaging stories about Grizzly Bears and other animals native to this region. Bring the whole family for an afternoon of crafts, activities and storytelling.



All About Snakes!

Saturdays, July 11 ❖ **August 8** ❖ **September 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? Visit the Rancho del Oso Nature and History Center to meet Docent **Diane Shaw** and learn about the fascinating world of snakes. Diane will give a talk about snakes and Naturalist **Jeremy Lin** will lead a short informative hike to find snakes and other reptiles.

Family Days

Saturdays, July 18 ❖ **September 19** ❖ **2 pm**

Children of all ages welcome! Join us for an afternoon of storytelling, creative crafts and an adventurous nature hike. One of our talented docents will engage all ages with an entertaining story about the natural world. Stay for hands-on craft projects and enjoy an educational jaunt in the forest to observe and learn about local plants and animals. This event will meet at the Rancho del Oso Nature and History Center.

 **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



Jim Mazzone, Dennis Rindi, Ed Berkowitz, and John Fox

New Berry Creek Falls Deck Completed

As reported in our last issue, the old deteriorating observation deck at Berry Creek Falls has been replaced through a remarkable community effort. The new deck was designed by Año Nuevo docent **Jim Mazzone** and initially built in his back yard. The California Conservation Corps (CCC) then demolished the old deck, disassembled the new one, transported the pieces to the viewing site, and reassembled them.

The cost of the material was covered by \$5,000 contributions from three local cooperating associations, including ours, and **Big Creek Lumber Company** who generously donated our share. Park officials estimated the project would have cost as much as \$100,000 without all the support. The outcome is a new, safe, beautiful waterfall-viewing platform that will serve hundreds of thousands of future visitors.



Wildflower Festival Weekend a Success

A profusion of colors, shapes, and forms greeted visitors who attended late April's Wildflower Weekend. After two very dry years, a surprising mix of late winter to early summer wildflowers were in bloom at Rancho del Oso—from the globe lily's delicate papery lanterns, to cow parsnip's broad lacy umbrellas, and the striking purple flower spikes of broad-leaved lupine. In all, more than sixty native species.

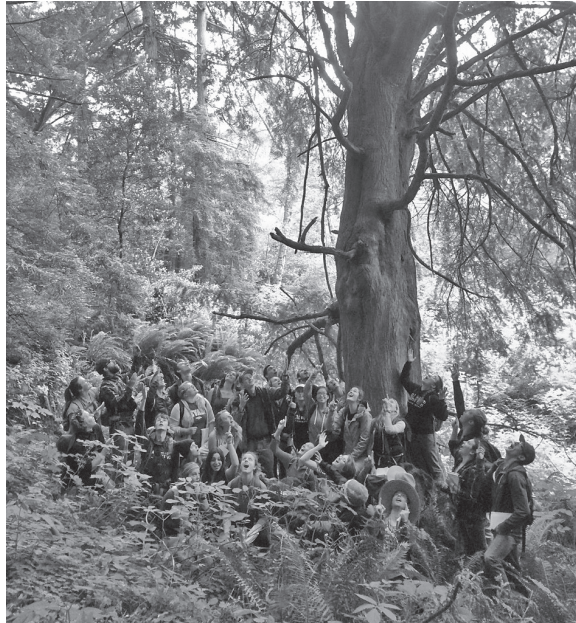
The coastal section of Big Basin State Park is small but diverse; it contains seven distinct habitats. The wildflowers are displayed accordingly, labeled with both common and latin names for easy identification. Non-natives species, including the most invasive, are also on view to help distinguish them from our native plants.

Many visitors joined docent Scott Peden on one of his wildflower hikes, then perused the displays afterward to reinforce knowledge imparted on the trail. Others just stopped by to admire the beautiful blooms, and learn a few new plant names. Children made their own colorful tissue paper flowers with help from Interpretive Specialist Jeremy Lin. And, people of all ages enjoyed the milkweeds-for-monarchs potting station in the courtyard, designed to help expand the endangered butterfly's habitat through backyard plantings. —Susan Krivin

Wildflower Saunters

Saturdays, July 11 ❖ August 8 ❖ September 12 ❖ 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 begin at the Nature Center.



The largest registered nutmeg tree (*Torreya californica*) is at Rancho del Oso! A few miles up on the Skyline-to-the-Sea Trail. The Cal Poly field botany class measured and made it official. It stands 105 feet tall! Web site: californiabigtrees.calpoly.edu/

Nature Wandering

Sundays, July 12 ❖ August 9 ❖ September 13 ❖ 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**.

Information will be shared about the plants and habitats of Rancho del Oso, as we mosey 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.

Join the Waddell Creek Association!

Name _____

Address _____

City, State, Zip _____

Telephone _____

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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 Jesse Bregman
519 Van Ness Avenue
Santa Cruz, CA 95060

President's Report

Our Board has for some time expressed interest in applying for grants for major upgrades, but been advised by Parks that such projects have to await adoption of an Interpretive Master Plan. In January, however, Ranger Ziad presented us with an Interpretive Funding Request for years 2015-2020.

The estimated costs of the request included (among other projects): \$150 to 2,000? for upgrading the Ranger Station, \$2,000 for new trail signs, \$2,000 to be combined with the State's \$3,000 to upgrade the Interpreter's office, and \$1500 for interpretive program upgrades—sandwich-board signs to be placed at the Highway to advertise our events.

The Board approved the latter three and asked State Parks to develop a conceptual plan for the Ranger Station that could be used to apply for a grant. Interpretive Specialist Jeremy Lin bought the signs right away, with immediate results—over one hundred people attended the newt and salamander events in March. Advertising of events on Facebook has also helped.

The Board greatly appreciates Jeremy's creativity and all of your contributions that make this possible. We look forward to other ways to get people to experience the beauty of Rancho del Oso.—*Walt Hays*

Guided Backpack Adventures

Saturday, August 1 to Sunday, August 2

Mandatory Pre-Meeting: Monday, July 13 from 6:30 pm to 8 pm

Friday, August 21 to Monday, August 24

Mandatory Pre-Meeting: Wednesday, August 5 from 6:30 pm to 8 pm

Travel through redwood forests to sandy shores with our knowledgeable California State Parks interpretive team. Imagine if the Santa Cruz Mountains spoke, and the stories they could tell about the people who have lived here for thousands of years. Join us on this interpretive-led backpacking excursion to learn about these stories and much more.

On the first trip, you will hike along the Skyline to Sea trail for a 1 night, 2 day overnighter. The second longer trip will take you from the rocky mountain cliffs of Castle Rock State Park to the ocean front of Waddell Beach for a three night, four day excursion.

For both trips, space is extremely limited. Sign up is on a first come, first serve basis. For more information please call Elizabeth Hammack (831) 335-6391 or Jeremy Lin (831) 427-2288. Watch our website for further details.



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.



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.

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Production: Linda Brodman.

