



# Rancho del Oso



Nature and History Center

Volume 35/1

News

January–March 2020

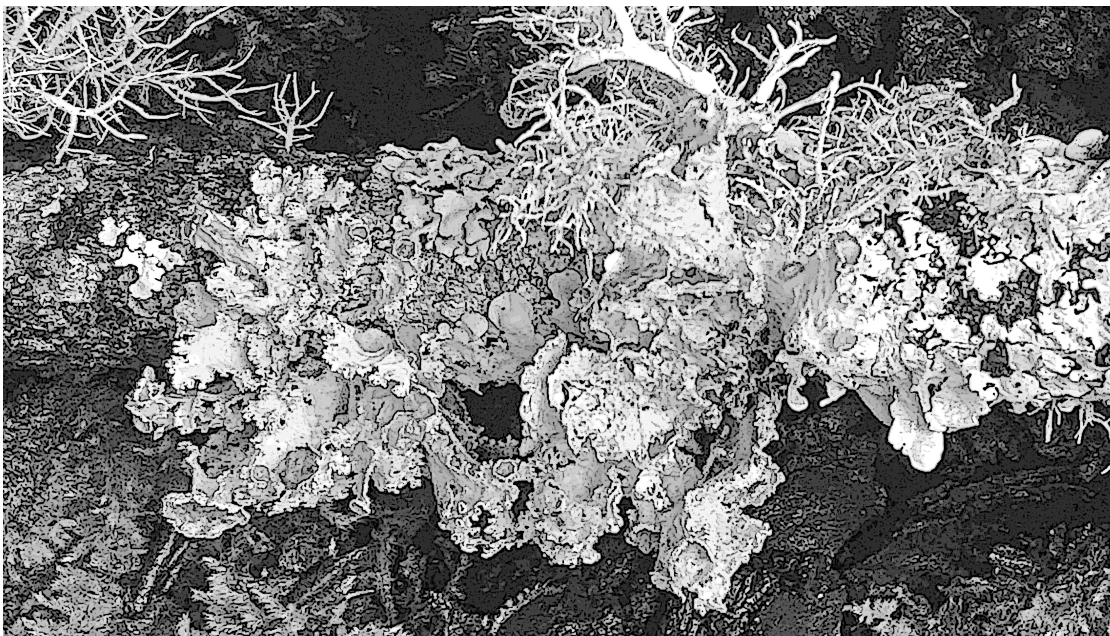
## Salamander Saturday!

**Saturday, March 7 \* 12 noon to 4 pm \* Nature Center**

Join us for our annual celebration honoring the often overlooked, but heroically well-adapted amphibians native to the Santa Cruz Mountains and other moist habitats. Live amphibians will be on display for viewing, with all-age crafts, and activities. **Naturalist-led salamander hike** will start at 3 PM to search for these regal creatures on the Marsh Trail. Learn about salamanders and their ecosystems on this short one mile hike! For more information: (831) 427-2288.

**Herpetologist Amy Patten** will present her talk, Salamanders of the Santa Cruz Mountains, at 1 PM.

The diverse habitats of the Santa Cruz Mountains are home to a number of spectacular salamander species. Colorful newts, minute slender salamanders, and the impressive California Giant Salamanders are just a few of the species that you might see on a walk through the woods or even in your own backyard. Each salamander has special adaptations to meet the challenges of escaping predators, finding food, breeding and surviving harsh weather conditions. This presentation covers the natural history and behavior of these salamanders, and highlights their importance in our local ecosystems.



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



## When Species Collide

Sundays, February 16 \* March 15 \* 12 noon

How did Rancho del Oso become the park it is today? Who are the plants and animals that live here? Why are they here? How did humans influence the natural history of the Waddell Valley?

Join Rancho del Oso docent **Ken Koll** ([kenneth\\_koll@yahoo.com](mailto:kenneth_koll@yahoo.com)) for a hike on the beautiful Skyline to Sea Bypass Trail. Along the way we will pass through the varied habitats of the Waddell Valley and explore topics like natives vs. non-native, invasives, and adaptations.

The hike will begin at the Rancho del Oso Ranger Station. *Please park (free) at Waddell Beach and walk ¼ mile past the yellow gate along the Skyline to the Sea Trail to the Ranger Station.* The hike will be approximately 4 miles. Bring water, snacks if you wish, and wear sturdy footwear. Don't forget your curiosity and inner-naturalist. It will be a great day.

## Snake Park Saturdays

Saturdays, February 8 \* March 14 \* 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? Come to the Rancho del Oso Ranger Station to learn about the fascinating world of snakes. Several snakes will be on display and native reptile adaptations will be discussed in the beautiful backdrop of Waddell Valley! Rain cancels this program. *Please park (free) at Waddell Beach and walk ¼ mile past the yellow gate along the Skyline to the Sea Trail to the Ranger Station.*



## Birding for Beginners in Waddell Valley

Saturdays, February 8 \* March 14 \* 8 am

Interpreter **Jeremy Lin** will lead an approximate two-mile hike to observe and enjoy morning wildlife at Rancho del Oso. We will take our time and explore the beautiful coastal valley. No previous experience necessary. It is helpful to bring binoculars, bird guides and a readiness for patient observation as we witness wildlife awakening on a crisp Waddell Valley morning. We will meet at the deck in front of the Nature Center. **Please RSVP to [jeremy.lin@parks.ca.gov](mailto:jeremy.lin@parks.ca.gov).**



# President's Report



A new **Welcome Center** is needed at Rancho del Oso on the most popular hike in Santa Cruz County, the Skyline to Sea trail. The Center will serve as an orientation point for hikers and other park visitors, and provide room for environmental education. The new Welcome Center would expand the original Visitor Center footprint 144 ft with a 336 ft attached outdoor classroom. We only need to raise \$50,000 to match State Park's matching grant. Will you help us with this once in a lifetime opportunity?

The existing building installed used in 1976 is in critical need of replacement. Increasing capacity would benefit: education, enjoyment, and connection between the ancient redwoods of Big Basin State Park and this world-class kite-surfing site. Our environmental educational program serves over 736 students a year, increased space would greatly increase our capacity.

Growing up at Rancho del Oso convinced Hulda Hoover McLean of the importance of this, "We always felt that owning a place like Rancho del Oso was more a stewardship than a possession. There is a responsibility to cherish and nurture its natural inhabitants, maintain its beauty and protect its ecosystem." Ultimately, this viewpoint helps us move beyond our local environment to embrace an all-encompass planetary stewardship crucial to protecting all life.

In addition to State funds, a generous local donor has provided funding for the outdoor classroom. Please help us continue the legacy of Hulda Hoover McLean by donating to the Waddell Creek Association's **Welcome Center**. Please send your donations to WCA, Rancho Del Oso, 3600 Hwy One, Davenport, CA 95017, through Paypal on our website ranchodeloso.org, or contact me at (831) 252-3806. Thanks for your support of Rancho del Oso and all the beauty inherent in our wilderness. —Lea Haratani

## Wildflower Festival coming in May

Saturday and Sunday, May 2 and 3 \* Nature Center

Spring is coming soon to Waddell Valley, so save the date now!



**Join the Waddell Creek Association!**



Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

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

Telephone and Email \_\_\_\_\_

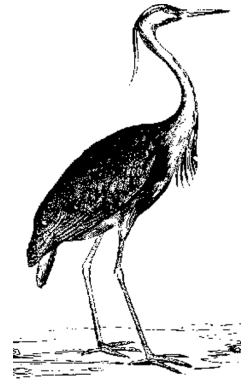
**Membership categories; please check one:**

Associate \$25  Family \$40  Sponsoring \$50

Sustaining \$100  Patron \$250  Benefactor \$500

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

Waddell Creek Association 3600 Highway 1 Davenport, CA 95017



## **Waddell Creek Association**

3600 Highway 1  
Davenport, CA 95017

***Return Service Requested***

### ***Board of Directors:***

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Diane West-Bourke  
John Working

## **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 **jeremy.lin@parks.ca.gov**.

### **Go Green!**

**If you would like to go paperless, please send your full name and email to [judybugg46@yahoo.com](mailto: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:** Lea Haratani, Jeremy Lin. **Production and Photograph:** Linda Brodman.



## **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.*