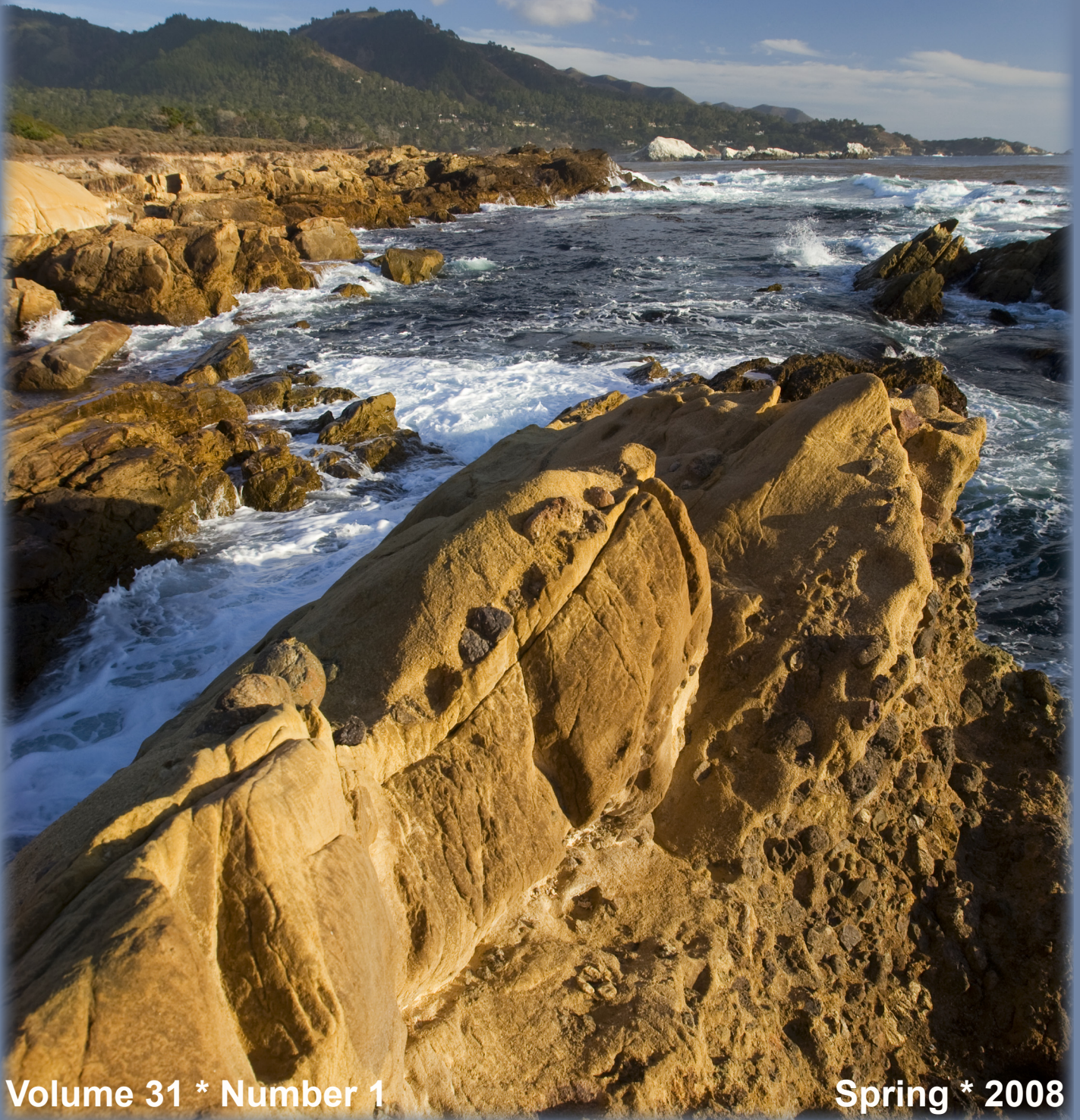


POINT LOBOS

*Celebrating 75 Years
1933-2008*



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Point Lobos Association

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The mission of the Point Lobos Association is to support interpretive and educational programs that enhance the visitor's experience, and to assist California State Parks in preserving Point Lobos State Reserve.

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Message from the President

Judd Perry

The BIG headline this issue is that this year we celebrate the 75th Anniversary of Point Lobos State Reserve, which was established in 1933. And what an anniversary it's going to be. As you will see elsewhere in this issue, the PLA, the docent group, and State Parks are pulling out all the stops for this one. The month of May will be a period of non-stop celebration, with five weekends dedicated to enhancing visitors' appreciation and enjoyment of the Reserve. Join us for as many of these informative and fun-packed weekends as you can. It will not happen again – at least not for another 25 years. See page four for all of the details.

If that were not enough, we are now moving into the peak of “prime time” at the Reserve, so don't wait until May to come out and enjoy it. We've had an extraordinary amount of rain this winter, which means the spring wildflowers should be both abundant and brilliant. Point Lobos decked out in her spring finery is a sight to behold – and not to be missed. Bring your wildflower book and see how many of these beautiful jewels you can identify – or join a guided walk and let one of the knowledgeable Docents do the identifying for you.



And it's not just wildflowers that make their appearance during the spring. It is also the time when you can personally witness one of the longest mammal migrations on earth, as the majestic Gray Whales make their way back to their northern feeding grounds from the warm birthing waters of Baja Mexico. Mothers and calves will be close to shore to gain protection for the calves from the marauding orcas (“killer whales”) that patrol our coast during this period. March and April are also the months to witness the birth and parental training of harbor seal pups on the beaches around Whalers Cove, Bluefish Cove, and other secluded spots along the coast, and with a pair of field glasses you might even spot our nesting Great Blue Herons in the trees near Coal Chute Point. It is a truly wonderful time to be at Point Lobos, so come soon and often.

I want to thank all of our members who attended the Annual Meeting on January 5, 2008, and participated in the election of directors of the Association. In addition to electing six directors who are returning for successive terms, you elected three new directors to replace directors retiring from the Board. I want to thank our retir-



ing directors, Elaine Fox, Jean Grace, and Lynne McCammon, for their dedicated service on the Board and to welcome to the Board three new directors, Robert (“Skip”) Flohr, Samuel (“Sandy”) Hale, and Brandi Katz. Sandy Hale and Brandi Katz were elected as Docent Directors and Skip Flohr is an At-Large Director. While they have varied backgrounds, each brings to the Board an abiding interest in and love for Point Lobos, and we are very fortunate to have them with us.

Following the Annual Meeting, the Board elected Association officers for the coming year. They are: President, George (“Judd”) Perry; Vice President, Lyle Brumfield; Secretary, Brandi Katz; Treasurer, Kerstin Jones; and Assistant Treasurer, Samuel (“Sandy”) Hale. I want to thank each of them for their willingness to serve, and also to thank Paul Wineman and Joyce Olcese for their previous service as officers of the Association.

I hope to see you soon at Point Lobos State Reserve.

You're Invited to the Point Lobos 75th Anniversary Diamond Jubilee Celebration!



Whalers Cove photo courtesy Peter Kahn

May 3: Point Lobos and the Sea

Celebrate the "...greatest meeting of land and water..." highlighting the coastal and underwater features of Point Lobos. At Whalers Cove see displays of historic diving gear and underwater photographs. Learn ocean safety from State Lifeguards. A variety of ocean conservation organizations will be joining in the celebration, including the Monterey Bay Aquarium, Monterey Bay Aquarium Research Institute (MBARI), and the Maritime Museum. Docents will have spotting scopes along the coast to watch for harbor seals and pups, sea otters, and migrating gray whales.



May 10: Point Lobos Family Fun for Everyone

Discover the wonders of Point Lobos with activities the whole family can enjoy together as a kick-off to Mother's Day weekend. Fun activities include dressing up in a tree costume, adventure hikes, painting a watercolor landscape, tidepool walks, and hiking in a wildflower meadow. Become a Junior Ranger when you do one or all of the activities!

May 17: People of Point Lobos

Honor the many people who have lived, worked, and loved Point Lobos throughout history. This includes the Ohlone, Spanish/Mexican ranchers, Chinese fishermen, Portuguese (Azores) whalers and

dairy farmers, and Japanese abalone divers. We will recognize those who had the foresight to protect Point Lobos for future generations. There will be living history demonstrations and activities, guided walks, and talks by descendants of those who lived here.

May 24: This Land Called Point Lobos

Explore the terrestrial plants and animals of Point Lobos, and the unique geology of the land itself. The day's activities will include guided wildflower walks, bird watching, and information on the native and invasive plants of Point Lobos. Learn how to protect the natural environment in your own backyard.

May 31: Point Lobos - the Arts, Painters, Poets, & Photographers of Point Lobos

Artists inspired by the natural beauty of Point Lobos will be on hand to display their diverse work. The traditions of plein-air artists will be shared. You can hike a trail accompanied by poets, learn the how-to's of nature photography from local professionals, and enjoy the opportunity to create your own artistic impression of this beautiful place.

UNDER MY BRIM

Ranger Chuck Bancroft

One of the greatest rewards and pleasures of working at Point Lobos is being able to go at a moment's notice to see a "happening" as it takes place. My camera sits next to me in my patrol truck and I try to be ready to capture the spontaneous.

During the storms in early January, Whalers Cove on the northeast side of the Reserve

is well protected from the ravages of the winds and rain coming out of the southwest. Even though there are still swells rolling in and pounding the rocky outcroppings, the corner of the cove below the Cabin was one of the best locations to see a variety of birds escaping from the storm's fury. The great blue heron was hanging out on

the rock rip-rap at the water's edge. The great egret was startled and flew to sit on the rock island. Snowy egrets came to sit on the kelp and wait for lunch. People walking along the road from parking to the Whalers Cabin were treated to a nice group of birds paddling back and forth looking for food and waiting out the storms.



Clockwise from top left: double crested cormorant, great blue heron, eared grebe, surf scoter,. snowy egrets, great egret. Photos courtesy Chuck Bancroft.

Observations

Sparky Starkweather, State Park Squirrel



The rains were torrential in early January. Tree limbs were falling constantly from the gale force winds coming from the southwest. Several very large Cypress came down on the North Shore Trail. The Carmel River began to swell and plans were being made by several human government agencies to breach the river mouth in case of potential flooding. The wetlands and the enlarged lagoon were filling rapidly. Gulls, pelicans, coots, egrets, mallards, geese, were all trying to find refuge from the horizontal downpour and buffeting winds.

I overheard a radio call from my perch in a pine tree by the office. Ranger Chuck and Lifeguard Kevin were called by Central Coast Dispatch. A woman at Carmel River State Beach was reporting a turtle walking across the beach and she was worried that people walking their dog might harm the slow wandering omnivore. Chuck and Kevin

drove to the beach and sure enough they found the woman and the turtle. The Western pond turtle was in fact walking slowly farther and farther away from the lagoon. Overwhelming winter rains probably washed it down stream from its haven in the lagoon behind the Odello barn. The rising river was so strong it breached the sand bar at the mouth all by itself without any help from people. Ranger Chuck naturally took pictures of the turtle with Point Lobos in the background. The wanderer was collected and transported back to a safe location at the east end of the lagoon.

* * *

From the website www.pacificbio.org: The Western pond turtle rarely lives in ponds. This is due to the fact that before the construction of farm ponds and

reservoirs there were relatively few ponds in the western United States. The turtle's habitat includes streams, large rivers, and slow-moving water. They are most common in areas with large rocks and boulders, where they go to bask in the sun. Although the turtles need to live around water bodies, they can survive drought in the more arid regions by digging into the mud in dried up riverbeds.

The Western pond turtle is an omnivore and a scavenger. Its diet consists mainly of insects, including the larvae of caddis flies, dragonflies and nymphs. The pond turtles also eat small fish, frogs, and some plants. Predators of adults include raccoons and coyotes. Young turtles are preyed upon by a wider range of creatures, such as raptors, weasels, large fish species and bullfrogs (an introduced species).

Western pond turtles breed from mid to late spring. Fe-



males deposit a clutch of up to 11 eggs in sand or loose soil, usually near a pond.



A California State Parks and Point Lobos Timeline

Carol Bloner

The year 2008 marks the 75th anniversary of Point Lobos as a California State Reserve. It was among the first parks in the California State Park System, which itself was created only five years earlier. Environmentalists pushed for legislation that established and funded State Parks, and caring rangers, citizens, and scientific experts oversaw the development of Point Lobos. From the onset, care was taken to shape Point Lobos into the “crown jewel” of the State Park System.

Here are some important events since the inception of California State Parks:

- 144 years ago (1864) – California’s first State Park established at Yosemite. The property was transferred to the federal government in 1906.
- 81 years ago (1927) – California State Park System established.
- 80 years ago (1928) – Voters approved California’s first park bond act, providing \$6 million for park acquisition. Olmstead Brothers, a renowned landscape architecture firm, published a report that became the blueprint for statewide land acquisition and development. Point Lobos was identified as “the

most important scenic and scientific preservation project on the entire coast of California.

- 75 years ago (1933) – Point Lobos State Reserve established. During the same years of 1934-35, Grinnell and Linsdale, luminaries in Vertebrate Zoology at UC Berkeley, compiled a yearlong account of vertebrates in the Reserve.
- 50 years ago (1958) – Park system managed 615,000 acres that include some 150 beaches, parks, and historic monuments.
- 48 years ago (1960) – Point Lobos became first underwater state park in the nation, adding 775 underwater acres with establishment of California Underwater Parks program.
- 30 years ago (1978) – Park system administered 200 miles of coastline, 500 miles of lake shoreline, 87 miles of riverfront, and 1,500 miles of riding and hiking trails.
- 30 years ago (1978) – Point Lobos Rangers and interested local citizens created Point Lobos Natural History Association (now Point Lobos Association) to support interpretive and educational programs for the benefit of visitors, and to help California State Parks preserve Point Lobos State Reserve.
- 25 years ago (1983) – Ranger Chuck Bancroft

moves from Whalers Cabin; he is its last resident.

- 20 years ago (1988) – State Parks is comprised of 1.3+ million acres that includes 260 park units, 280 miles of coastline, 625 miles of lake and river frontage, and 3,500 miles of hiking, biking, equestrian, and off-road vehicle trails.
- 20 years ago (1989) – Whalers Cabin opened as a museum.
- 15 years ago (1994) – Whaling Station Museum opened.
- 7 years ago (2001) – Sea Lion Point ADA trail opened.
- 1 year ago (2007) – Whalers Cabin is added to National Register of Historic Places.
- 1 year ago (2007) – State Parks owns 1.5 million acres of land, almost 1.52% of California’s total area. It includes 278 park units, 640 miles of lakefront, 320 miles of ocean front, and more than 320 miles of riverfront.
- 6 months ago (Sept. 2007) – As a result of passage of the Marine Life Protection act, Point Lobos State Marine Reserve triples in size, and a new Point Lobos State Marine Conservation Area is added.

With continued State and community participation and oversight, the care shown Point Lobos State Reserve over the past 75 years will remain the blueprint for its future.



SHARING THE VIEW: An Interview with Kip Evans

Pat Gadban

I absolutely love what I do," said Kip Evans, our featured photographer. And that's abundantly clear when you see his work: its luminosity is striking and its composition powerful. The overall effects are breath-taking. His photographs are not just snapshots in time, but fine art created by a man who has applied his talents, passion, and knowledge to capture the "eloquence of the mountains and sea...in the underwater garden setting..."

Born and raised along the California coast, Kip, who has lived on the Monterey Peninsula

since 1995, is an internationally known photographer and diver. Introduced to diving as a youngster by his father, he developed a lifelong passion for the sea, eventually graduating from UC Santa Barbara with a degree in Environmental/Marine Studies. His research and photography projects have taken him all over the world; he was, for example, chief photographer for a National Geographic Society project called Sustainable Seas. I asked how he viewed the creation of the Point Lobos Marine Protected Area (MPA). [See the spring issue of the Point Lobos

magazine for a detailed description and history of this MPA.]

"Many changes have occurred to this environment, noticeably the decline of certain fish species... When I was diving in Carmel Bay as a teenager, it was common to run into large schools of rockfish... numbering in the hundreds. Now, if I see them at all, there will only be about 30 to 60 fish. The MPA is vital to the success of diminishing species. The MPA will give them the possibility of rebounding."

Besides being "a step to preserving the California coast, this protected area definitely ... benefits divers, fisherman, and anyone who has a stake in the ocean." Scientists will have a

better chance to demonstrate what is happening environmentally. Asked what he

thought might be the effect of projected state park budget cuts, Kip noted that Point Lobos was not currently on the list for possible closing. "Point Lobos is an incredible resource and very popular." However, funding for the MPA could still be a problem, given limited resources. Available funds must not only serve the need for research and exploration, but for park maintenance.

Bringing the interview to a more personal close, I asked how he felt about the risks of his work. He noted one close call, when he'd been in a one-person submersible stuck on the ocean floor. But, after describing the





incident, he simply added, “ It’s scary, but you have to keep your wits about you.” End of story. Although many divers have a similar attitude, it’s hard not to wonder if they don’t experience something special – given the risks and the setting. While looking at the photo of the gi-

ant kelp forest off the Central Coast, with the shafts of light penetrating through the surface, creating an eerie and almost cathedral-like setting, I asked about this. “I definitely have a spiritual connection ... (to that environment...To extend yourself down in the water is spe-

cial...I’m lucky to (be able to) explore.)”

While Kip has often been involved in projects which take him away for substantial periods of time, he is not doing as much expedition work these

days. He and his wife Jacque, who manages the Mountain & Sea Gallery in the Barnyard, Carmel, have two young children, Tucker, aged 5, and Savannah, aged 3, of whom Kip spoke with obvious delight and pride. “I’m concentrating on my family life and kids. I want to be there for them... I’m doing shorter duration projects, shooting along the coast and working on content to create a book. I want it to be more than a coffee table book...not just photos of the area but including information on different habitats, both underwater and on the coast.”

Kip Evans combines his diving heritage and experience, his education, and his extensive knowledge of what photography can do to create works that



“I definitely have a spiritual connection . . . to that environment. . . To extend yourself down in the water is special. . . I’m lucky to be able to explore.”



go beyond “real life”. In one of his gallery photos he creates a framing focus with stratus clouds that mirror the eddies of waves hitting the shoreline. In another, a pelican gazes at the viewer, draped in sunset colored wings. Whatever the subject of his work, there is a stunning luminosity embedded in some aspect of each photo, whether

craggy rock formations, winding branches, or the white bellies of a flock of pelicans. Here is not only the biologist and diver, but the photographer as fine artist.

To see more of Kip Evans’ work, visit his website www.MountainSeaGallery.com or the Mountain & Sea Gallery in the Barnyard, Carmel.

1 These sun rays are often called “God’s Beams,” “Buddha’s Fingers,” or names with a similar sense of the sacred. Scientifically, they are called crepuscular rays. They stream down through holes in the clouds, appearing to spread out from a single source whereas they are actually parallel.

DANCING ON THE BRINK OF THE WORLD: SELECTED POEMS OF POINT LOBOS

Debora Streeter

Illustrations by Sally Smith

*To visit Point Lobos is to become a poet.
Each visitor hears, in wave against
granite, the language of the soul.*

So begins my editor's introduction to the collection of 55 poems by 30 poets from over a century of Point Lobos inspiration.

Robinson Jeffers, Robert Bly, tourist visitors, locals and school kids all write of this "brink," where meet land and sea, wild lilac and algae, mountain lion and sea lion, people and nature, body and soul.

Finding the poems was a detective search in local libraries and word of mouth from poets and rangers. Sally Smith added pen and ink drawings, not just illustrations, but visual poems.



CLIFF CYPRESSES

Food from the granite
Stone for the hungry root -
Storm for the rugged shoot.
What slow flame
Struggles to triumph here
Year upon difficult year?
What desperate faith
Writhes in these twisted limbs,
Sings in the wordless hymns?
When the rock splits
They wrestle with each other,
Brother contrives with brother
For writhing's sake.
No peace can smooth or define
A curve, a delicate line.
Summers burn blue -
Yet the torture wrought in the seed
In anguished form is freed
Torture and triumph!
These for whom pain is duty
Stand in their desperate beauty.

- Dora Hagemeyer, 1947

We wanted people to take the book on the trail, become poets and artists themselves. A small inexpensive volume, we added blank pages for their own poems and pictures.

The phrase, "Dancing on the Brink of the World," is a lost fragment of an ancient American Indian Ohlone song. Poetry is also about brinks, doorsteps between body and soul, beauty and terror. Exterior landscape evokes our interior landscape. Point Lobos takes us to the brink, and invites us to cross over.

In the Monterey Public Library History Room I found mid-century Carmel poet Dora Hagemeyer. Her "Cliff Cypresses" reminds us that Point Lobos is more than just nice beaches, pretty trees. She asks, "What desperate faith writhes in these twisted limbs?"

We almost called the book "Dancing on the Edge of the World" because "brink" sounded so scary, perilous. People die there every year and we include poems about death. Our old selves die there too. We are changed.

Robinson Jeffers wrote often about that terror, that pain. This coast, he said, "cries out for trag-

edy." His poem "Rock and Hawk" includes my favorite line, "The massive mysticism of stone."

Local poet Josh Jossi celebrates
"this beast who rest half in Neptune's
world, and the other half in mine."

The poems are not all dark and dreary. There are odes to the otters, pelicans, dancing whales, a great kids' poem about sand. Carmel's Bohemians a hundred years ago held long drunken abalone feasts at Point Lobos, so we included George Sterling's "Abalone Song." "Oh some think that the Lord is fat, and some that He is bony, but as for me, I think that He is like an abalone.... Oh Mission Point's a friendly joint where every crab's a crony, and true and kind, you'll ever find the faithful abalone. He wanders free beside the sea where'er the coast is stony. He flaps his wings and madly sings, the plaintive abalone.

Plaintive? A cute animal, a beautiful place
plaintive? Plaintive means seeking. We are all pilgrims; plaintive, seeking meaning and mystery.

What desperate faith writhes
in these twisted limbs?

* * *

Dancing on the Brink of the World: Selected Poems of Point Lobos, edited by Deborah Streeter, art by Sally Smith, Point Lobos Natural History Association, 2003. Available for sale at the Reserve and online at www.pointlobos.org/Publications.htm.

POINT LOBOS (part two)

Oh, Whaler's Cove and Cypress Point!
Oh, forest yet unmarred!
Where the diamonds made of light all blaze
On the rolling, wave-rocked sward;
A meadow full of kelp and shells
Curved in the sandy cove
Round the great humped rocks
Where the growing flocks
Of pelicans betroth
On the rock lean shanks
Of the wolf's steep flanks,
On the sharp points of his spine,
This beast who rests half in Neptune's world,
And the other half in mine.

-Josh Jossi, 1986

ROCK AND HAWK

Here is a symbol in which
Many high tragic thoughts
Watch their own eyes.

This gray rock, standing tall
On the headland, where the seawind
Lets no tree grow,

Earthquake-proved, and signatored
By ages of storms: on its peak
A falcon has perched.

I think, here is your emblem
To hang in the future sky;
Not the cross, not the hive,

But this; bright power, dark peace;
Fierce consciousness joined with final
Disinterestedness;

Life with calm death; the falcon's
Realist eyes and act
Married to the massive

Mysticism of stone,
Which failure cannot cast down
Nor success make proud.

-Robinson Jeffers, 1939



Quotes from the Docent Log

edited by Stan Dryden

Editor's note: This issue's Quotes from the Docent Log is a bit skimpy. The docents had to move their office, and due to a delay in the opening of the new facility the Docent Log book was not available for recording sightings for a few months. The quotes below were sent to me via email. The new office is up and running, and we hope to have a nice selection for your reading pleasure in the next issue.

November 11: Shirley West

Whilst doing trail watch in the Piney Woods area, I heard a voice asking if I could find a ranger – he wanted to report a 'nude' photo shoot near the Mound Meadow and Pine Ridge Trail intersections. Was it a hoax? I drove to the Entrance Station (had no phone with me), and on hearing the reason for the request, a ranger was soon found to investigate. When I caught up with him, it was not a hoax – not being a professional, the photographer did not need a permit and could not be cited. They were, however, asked to leave the park immediately in their gleaming BMW SUV. The guy was not pleased with me; I never saw the girl. Is this a first?

November 18: Ann Muto

Don't let a gull catch you with cashews!

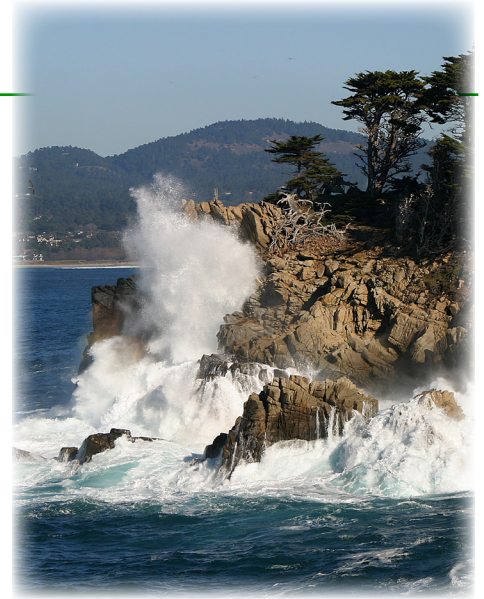
Art and I were eating lunch at a Bird Island picnic table minding our own business and definitely NOT feeding the crit-

ters. I was ending my lunch by munching on cashews and put the bag down on the table less than a foot away from me. From behind me there was a flapping of wings and before I knew what had happened, I saw my bag of cashews on the ground five feet away from me.

The gull that had snatched the bag off the table had dropped it in mid-flight. As soon as I realized what had happened, I got up to retrieve my snack. As I rushed over to pick up the bag, I cautioned myself to act "docently" and not run over screaming and yelling. As it turned out, the gull was not the least bit intimidated by my respectful "Go away!" and modestly flailing arms; he kept diving for the cashew bag even though I was a foot away. After I rescued the bag, the same gull kept picking up stray cashews that fell out when the bag dropped from his beak. Didn't know gulls love cashews that much!

November 27: Marty Renault

The fire hose faucet above the drinking fountain at the Information Station has a very slight drip, which attracted a half dozen thirsty wrentits this morning. In my seven years working out here I've never actually seen a wren-tit, though I've heard their distinctive call. These shy birds must have been parched to come and drink with humans only ten



feet away. After photographing them, grateful visitors asked that we please never fix the drip.

December 11: Dione Dawson

It was the most incredibly clear, crisp (freezing) day for the otter count today. There were no specialty sightings, but the otter count for December was good – 51 adults and 2 pups. It also backed up my theory that the otters have moved mostly to the North Shore. The North Shore contingent counted 35 adults, over twice as many as on the South Shore.

December 11: Carol Bloner

The other day from the parking lot I saw lots of birds on Bird Island, but by the time I got out there all the birds were gone. Used the binoculars to locate the Peregrine falcon hunkered against the lip of the tallest peak on the island. He was facing land, and his "moustache" was clearly visible. The birds knew he was there, too.

December 20: Connie Dallmann

At Whalers Cove I saw a great blue heron, a great egret, and a snowy egret within a few

feet of each other. Later I noted the great egret on Window Rock, so I got the binoculars and saw he was trying to eat a large fish. After several attempts and letting it flop around on the rock, he managed to get the fish into position and swallowed it. I could see the bulge working its way down his throat like a snake swallowing a gopher.

December 21: Joy Osborne

We docents had an interesting winter solstice celebration mid-afternoon at the Bird Rock picnic area (supper a bit early), although no one could quite explain what it was really all about. Well there was talk of the exact time this evening (Joe Bova), when the days would grow longer, and talk about mysterious history (just about everybody). At least there was no mention of witchcraft, and no witches seemed to show up unless there we did not recognize closet witches.

Yet there was an interesting omen- We gathered to be positioned and photographed and positioned again for more photos with the sea as a backdrop. Boy is our visit documented. At this time two adult Western Gulls flew down on the now distant picnic table and swiped a Bova pizza (but not the vegetarian one). Joe hastened to park the boxed remainders in his car trunk.

We took off to find the Peregrine Falcon. (I gather I am about the last person to hear about it.) high in the bare tree above China Cove. The bird did not look quite right to me because it was a youngster. An unimpressed vireo jumped around

in the bushes underneath quite near the trail. Then we all went out to Bird Island and checked out the pelicans and cormorants silhouetted against a setting sun. Pat B. pointed out the just-about-full moon 180 degrees away in the clear blue sky.

What a great treat the gathering was. Joe and Pat's supper club had become almost a teatime treat, and I think perhaps the next party should be an aperitif affair.

December 22: Marty Renault

Scanning the waters around Bird Island with binoculars, I noticed movement at the surf's edge and discovered a blonde-headed otter clambering up on the rocks exposed by the extremely low tide. When he finally struggled to a comfortable spot a few feet above the water, he shook vigorously like a wet dog, sending spray flying. Then he proceeded to groom himself for the next 15 minutes, sitting almost upright with his spine curled and tail within easy licking distance. He fluffed and scratched his fur and occasionally rubbed his paws together briskly, the way we humans do to warm our hands. Perched several feet above him another tow-headed otter snoozed peacefully. I longed for a good camera and a scope, but at least my shared binoculars allowed visitors to enjoy this rare sighting. The only other time I've seen otters hauled out was on these same rocks at the north end of Bird Island.

January 8: Dione Dawson

Am thoroughly pooped from this month's calculations as

there were **so many otters** (big complaint!). Will ask the team next time if we can't go a little slower so I can keep up with the recording! Anyway, the total is fabulous – 56 adults with all but one seen on the North Shore – and 5 pups. I have put the results of the 2007 California Sea Otter Survey that just arrived from the U.S.G.S. in the otter notebook which is on a shelf at the Information Station, and there is other information in there as stuff is sent to me. Docents should send visitors to Granite Point and eastwards as that is where the otters seem to have collected. Thinking of large rafts, Moss Landing/Elkhorn Slough had a record high count of 117 + 4 pups!!

As for other nature, we did see an osprey perched with a fish in its claws, but otherwise it was a dark and stormy day with not much activity.

February 5: Gary Davis

While doing my trainee shift at the Info Station with an experienced docent on the closing shift, two visitors approached us with the news that they had just seen a mountain lion. I looked at the image in their digital camera, and while it was several yards away when they took the picture, when it was zoomed in, it was clearly a young mountain lion. I can confirm that from a personal encounter I had with one while hiking alone on the Soberanes/Rocky Ridge trail 2 years ago. They saw it on the North Shore trail, after the little trail down to the Old Veteran viewpoint, so it was within 80 yards of the Info Station. I went back up the trail to see if I could

spot anything, but there was no trace. Very exciting – I would love to have seen it myself.

February 6: Sally Smith

When I was walking on the trails I had never been on, there was a big pine uprooted on the Pine Ridge Trail, between Lace Lichen and South Plateau. The root system made a big puddle on the trail. But in the roots you could see little stashes of acorns where critters had stored them. I thought it was nice evidence of the symbiosis of trees and critters.

(Editor's note: Gary Davis and Sally Smith are currently in training to become docents. Welcome to them and their nearly twenty classmates.)

February 8: Bob Carlisle

There was a great deal of human activity over at Pebble Beach, with the AT&T Pro-Am golf tournament in full swing. There was not much human activity at the Whalers Cabin,

but there was a lot of close-in activity in the Whalers Cove, with harbor seals, otter and pup, herons, egret, etc. at and near the Cabin in the afternoon.

February 12: Carol Bloner

It was a beautiful day for otter count and for bird watching. Lots of visitors very early this morning, some photographers and some birders. Saw two mother and pup otter pairs. One small and fluffy pup elicited many "cute" and "sweet" comments. The other pair had white heads. While I know white is not associated with otter age, this was the youngest white-headed otter I have seen. Having no birds perched on the top of Bird Island is always a clue to look for the Peregrine, and indeed, he was there. As soon as he moved to a perch in a Pine tree the usual assortment of water birds reclaimed their top spots. Met a photographer walking up the stairs and asked if he was looking for anything

in particular. "Yes," he replied; "Ed Weston's tripod holes."

February 12: Dione Dawson

A perfectly gorgeous day for the otter count, which totaled 31 adults and 7 pups. It was a rather large pup count; when we first started out it seemed as if every otter had a pup with her – a very domestic scene. We even had a mom and pup hauled out on a rocky point in Bluefish Cove snoozing in the sun until a wave came and threw them both into the water. No damage was done, as they swam around looking for another comfortable place to relax. There was a large raft of about 12 otters along the northern boundary – that seemed appropriate as we had seen several rafts along this shoreline last month. In this case they were just a bit moved over. Carmel Bay was full of Risso's dolphins glistening in the sun as they came up for air and doing a great deal of frolicking. Another wonderful day at Point Lobos!

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