

POINT LOBOS



Volume 33 * Number 1

Spring * 2010

Point Lobos Foundation

Route 1 Box 62
Carmel, CA 93923
831-625-1470
www.PointLobos.org

Features

- 6 What's That Orange Stuff
Killing the Trees On
the Cypress Point Trail?
Gary Davis
- 8 Encounters with a
Beautiful Beast
Peter Hemmings
- 11 I Splash Giddily
Larry Alan Brown



Officers

<i>President</i>	Skip Flohr
<i>Vice President</i>	Steve Dennis
<i>Secretary</i>	Judd Perry
<i>Treasurer</i>	Sandy Hale
<i>Assist. Treasurer</i>	Jay Sinclair

Directors

Joe/Pat Bova	Dick Dalsemer
Gael Gallagher	Sharon Hoffman
John Hudson	Lynne Miles
Joyce Olcese	Rick Pettit
Carl Voss	

Departments

- 3 Message from the President
Skip Flohr
- 4 Under My Brim
Ranger Chuck Bancroft
- 5 Observations
Sparky Starkweather
- 12 Quotes from the Docent Log
edited by Stan Dryden

Docent Administrators

Joe & Pat Bova

Administrative Assistant

Kristina Rosado

Docent Coordinator

Melissa Gobell

Cooperating Association Ranger Liaison

Chuck Bancroft

Copyeditor

Charles Schrammel

Point Lobos Magazine Editorial Director

Dida Kutz
dida@didakutz.org
queries welcome

Photo Contributors

Chuck Bancroft	Steve Dennis
John Dungan	Jeff Johnson
Peter Kahn	Art Muto
Rick Pettit	Celie Placzek
Derek Sedillo	Ken Schafer
Alison Towner	Lindsay Truman

**Help support the Reserve by purchasing
Point Lobos 75th Anniversary t-shirts, caps,
and more online:**

<http://www.cafepress.com/pointlobos75wc> and
<http://www.cafepress.com/pointlobos75>

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

Point Lobos Magazine
is printed on recycled paper
and published four times per year
by the Point Lobos Foundation.
Copyright 2010. All rights reserved.
PDF versions available at
www.PointLobos.org.

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Skip Flohr

On January 16th I accepted the presidency of the Point Lobos Association. I owe thanks to many for bringing us through an unusual and difficult year in good shape to meet the challenges of 2010. They include the members of our Association for their generous support; the docents for their almost 19,000 hours of volunteer service; the Association board of directors, especially my predecessor Judd Perry; Monterey District Superintendent Mat Fuzie and Sector Superintendent Dana Jones; and of course Ranger Chuck Bancroft. Additionally, I wish to thank Ranger Matt Buonaguidi; our park aides Melissa Gobel and Kristina Rosado; our maintenance staff, and all the other state park employees that make Point Lobos great.

We will miss outgoing board members Ed Clifton, Lyle Brumfield, Brandi Katz, Glen McGowan, and Paul Wineman. They served with distinction.

Newly elected board members are docents Sharon Hoffman, Jeff Johnson, and Rick Pettit. New "at large" members are Dick Dalsemer and Jay Sinclair.

It is not news that California's budget crisis has profoundly affected our state parks. In many parks, operating hours, reduced services, cutbacks in youth programs, personnel layoffs, and park closures have been ordered.

Members of our Association should be proud that because of our efforts, most of these reductions have been avoided at Point Lobos. We have assumed the funding of many activities so that Point Lobos can remain the "crown jewel" of the state park system.

We have funded a summer youth program and continuation of our school outreach program. We have provided additional funding for trail and facilities maintenance so visitors can continue to appreciate our Reserve in a safe and healthy environment. We are forecasting additional expenditures of about \$100,000 a year to continue these programs. While our finances are healthy, we plan to inaugurate a fund development campaign this spring.

And we need to overcome a lack of name recognition. Although I have been in love with Point Lobos for over twenty-five years, I knew nothing of the Point Lobos Association until about two years ago. Since becoming a member of the Point Lobos Association Board of Directors I have learned that most of my friends share this ignorance. Obviously you are aware of the Point Lobos Association, but are your friends? One of our challenges is to make ourselves known. We must do this if our fundraising campaign is to be a success. Please, in con-



versations with friends, let them know of the Point Lobos Association and the good things we have accomplished and hope to continue with in the future. You may even want to share this magazine with them. Let's no longer keep our Association a secret.

In a related item, at our January board meeting we discussed ways to help people easily associate our name with fund raising activities. It was concluded that "foundation" would more clearly communicate this than "association." We therefore decided to phase in "doing business as" the Point Lobos Foundation rather than Point Lobos Association until the name can be formally changed.

Your board of directors needs all the help we can when we inaugurate our fund development campaign. If you have suggestions or ideas that might help, I invite your comments. You can email me at skipflohr@comcast.net, or mail me at:

Skip Flohr
10633 Hillside Lane
Carmel, CA 93923

UNDER MY BRIM

Ranger Chuck Bancroft

The history continues:

1880 – David Star Jordan, in an official report, informed the government that the Carmel Bay area, including Point Lobos, was in his opinion, “the most picturesque spot on the Pacific Ocean.”

(Jordan was born in Gainesville, New York, and studied at Cornell University, Butler University, and the Indiana University School of Medicine. During 1885, he was named President of Indiana University, becoming the nation’s youngest university president at age 34. During 1891, he became president of Stanford University, serving there as president until 1913, and chancellor until his retirement during 1916).

1882 – Whaling had become a poor business; the large animals had gradually declined in numbers. The industry finally closed down at Point Lobos.

1885 – On December 24 the Castro appeal to the US District Court was confirmed, which gave legal title to the divisions of the Rancho San Jose y Sur Chiquito that had been decided in 1882.

1888 – On May 4th President Grover Cleveland signed the patent to the Rancho after 35 years of doubt and uncertainty. The Castro claims were at last recognized as the undisputed legal owners of their various parcels of land at Point Lobos.

1888 - On September 6th the various undisputed owners of land at Point Lobos whose claims did not depend on the Castro

claim banded together and sold their interests to the Carmelo Land and Coal Company, for the sum of one dollar. For the first time in almost half a century, the Rancho San Jose y Sur Chiquito, including Point Lobos, came under a single owner.

1890 – Later in the year the Carmelo Land and Coal Company decided that the beauty and unused land at Point Lobos warranted the construction of a resort. Plans began to subdivide most of Point Lobos into streets and lots. (Was this competition with the Del Monte Corporation?) When the Hotel Del Monte opened in 1880, Point Lobos became an increasingly popular tourist attraction. It was hoped at this time that many of the visitors who came out for the day in the “hotel’s slick tally-hoes” would succumb to the charm of the place and stay to build.

1891 – The Carmelo Land and Coal Company continued with its subdivision of Point Lobos. The community was known as Point Lobos City. It was made up of 25 foot and 50 foot lots. Mrs. Robert Louis Stevenson and her sister, Mrs. Sanchez, owned one or more of these lots. Many of the parcels were sold but selling began to falter as a recession began moving across the United States.

1891 - On May 29th a revised plan of Point Lobos was laid out and known as Carmelito, beside Whalers Cove. The main street was called Basset Avenue, and other streets bore the names of

Emery, Doble, and Baggett, members of the company. A reservation or park marked Point Lobos Park was indicated at Cypress Point. Even in those economic times, the beauty of Point Lobos was well known. The continued decline of the economy gradually slowed the Point Lobos development until finally the plan was abandoned with many people owning lots in the middle of nowhere.

About that time residents in the Monterey area became alarmed about the Point Lobos subdivision, and the notion that that this area should be made a public reserve was first proposed.

1896 - Economic conditions in Monterey and California were gradually growing worse causing a rise in expenses. This, and the fact that the coal in Monterey was of a poor grade, brought the close of the Carmelo Land and Coal Company operation.

The owners of the Company made many efforts to salvage their declining income. One such effort led Joseph Emery to A.M. Allan in Oakland. Allan knew about the practical aspects of coal mining and through this became interested in Point Lobos. From this time forward, Mr. Allan began having ideas about purchasing this area for his own needs.

1897 - A.M. Allan moved into his ranch house at Point Lobos at the age of 37. (The home is on the east side of Highway 1.)

Observations

Sparky Starkweather, State Park Squirrel



The weather conditions over the past few months have brought much needed rain, huge waves, cold temperatures, and a great variety of wildlife hiding from the storms or just traveling through to warmer, less chaotic conditions. As the



cold fronts moved south of us and circled in their counter-clockwise motion bringing devastating storm waves and winds to pound the south shore of the Reserve, sea otters hid out at Whalers Cove avoiding those harsh conditions, allowing me to see sea otters up close and personal. On any given day during January there were up to fourteen otters, some with pups. On almost all of those days I was watching these two pairs just off the rocks near the divers' access point.

What amazed me most was the female with the

very large nursing pup. And more amazing was the number of red abalone she got while hunting along the rock-rip-rap. Not once, but on several different days.

She knows abalone is a rich source of protein, so why go after snails and urchins when you can find an abalone? It took the pair about 10 minutes to completely devour a big red abalone.

Mixed in with different groups on different days was this female with a younger pup. I immediately noticed her orange tags on the hind feet. This indicates an animal that was rescued and rehabilitated,

then released back to her natural environs. Ranger Chuck took pictures and sent them along to Michelle Staedler at Sea Otter Research and Conservation (SORAC),



Monterey Bay Aquarium. Michelle wrote back:

This tagged otter is female 1120. She was tagged as a pregnant female in June of 2009 in the vicinity of Cypress Point. We couldn't instrument her for the Big Sur-Monterey Comparative study because she was pregnant, so she is part of the long-term survival study group! The pup's birthday is 8/6/2009!





Docents are often asked that very question, to which we reply:

“Oh, that’s *Trentepohlia*, a type of green algae. It has a high level of carotene, which makes it orange (like a carrot), and it actually doesn’t harm the trees.”

Being an adventurous docent I decided to find out more about this curious and beautiful phenomenon. Beyond the patter quoted above, all I knew was my own observation that *Trentepohlia* definitely seems to favor the habitat on the Cypress Point Trail where the Monterey cypress trees and underlying rocks are the most susceptible to sea spray driven up Pinnacle Cove and other rocky defiles by northwesterly winds. I have not seen it elsewhere in the Reserve, or for that matter, anywhere else that I can recall in my travels up and down the coast from here to SE Alaska.

So, what else have I learned from combing the dozens of scien-

tific monographs on the internet, the shelves of the Pacific Grove Library, the catalog of the California Native Plant Society, the *Jepson Manual of Higher Plants in California*, the Encyclopedia of Life, the U.S. Department of Agriculture digital depository, back issues of the Point Lobos Magazine, and the docent’s newsletter?

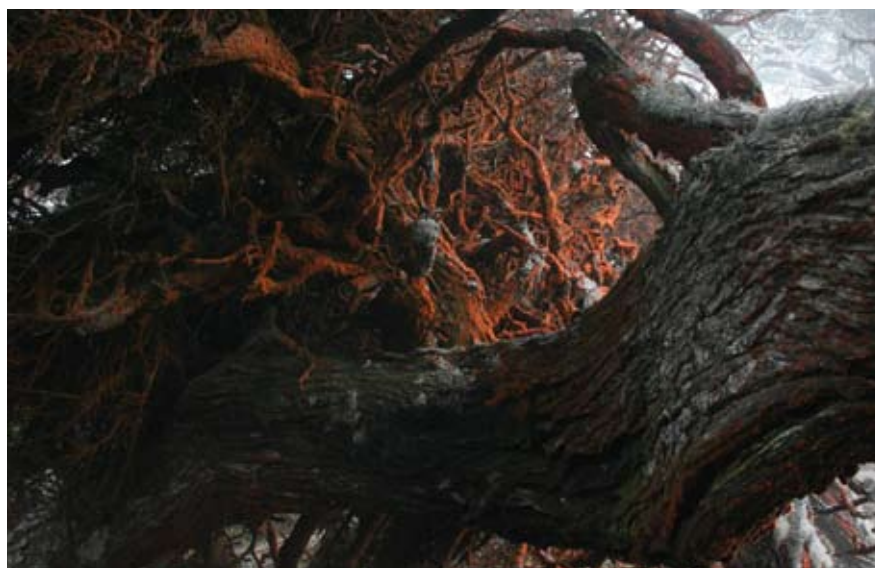
The answer is, “not much!” Indeed, it would seem that I am

not alone, and that not much is in fact known about this curious stuff.

While I learned that the species we have has been identified as *Trentepohlia aurea* v. *polycarpa*, I found few facts about it. It shares its membership of the genus *Trentepohlia* with some 34 species, but there seems to be a great deal of overlap and taxonomic confusion not only between species but between the six genera of this “subaerial green algae” order. Indeed, the whole world of classifying these algae would appear to be in a state of uproar—

(how uproarious can the world of algae be?)—if one is to believe a 2006 article in the *International Journal of Systematic and Evolutionary Microbiology* on “the molecular systematics of the ...order Trentepohliales.” I do not recommend this article as “light” reading.

Otherwise, I learned that despite its ancient appearance, it evidently is not all that old geologically. The fossil record indi-





What's That Orange Stuff Killing the Trees on the Cypress Point Trail?

Gary Davis

cates the order first showed up in the Eocene era, dating back only 30 to 40 million years ago.

While our lovely orange stuff is rumored to be rare, I found no evidence of that other than my own observation. Other species are definitely found in the British Isles and northern Europe, and other members of the order are said to be widespread, particularly in the tropics and “pantropics,” with known species in Brazil, Suriname, South Africa, Taiwan, Hawaii, New Zealand, and many other places.

As to whether they damage the trees, once again, I found very little—though other species are definitely cited as causing long-term damage to buildings in both tropical and temperate settings. If that is the case, how do we know *Trentepohlia* isn't hurting the cypress trees on Cypress Point? Do our trees look beaten up from the sea spray alone, or is the algae

having some impact?

Part of our docent lore at Point Lobos is that the existence of lace lichen is evidence of a clean environment, with clean air. Evidently, that is very much the case with our funny orange stuff—as an “aerial” algae it is more exposed to adverse environmental conditions than its cousins living in the sea. Thus it can be seen as a useful biological indicator of good environmental conditions, and we should be

pleased that our colony seems to be thriving.

Another reason to be happy we have it around is that it seems to have particularly high concentrations of carotenoids, which soak up the blue light spectrum and make our algae look so bright orange. Evidently carotenoids are an excellent source of vitamin A, which the human body does not manufacture on its own. In turn, carotenoids are difficult to synthesize, and so someday our bright orange algae may prove useful in biotechnology, one of California's next leading industries.

So, as we cherish our “bright orange stuff” on the trees at Point Lobos, perhaps we will learn more about it from knowledgeable visitors and expand our limited knowledge about this curious and obscure algae.





ENCOUNTERS with a BEAUTIFUL

On June 30, 1995, Marco Flagg of Watsonville was enjoying a leisurely day of scuba diving with two friends at Bluefish Cove. After a late start the trio made a second dive from their Zodiac at 5:30 p.m. In seaman's vernacular, the water was dead calm. Swimming along the bottom at 90 feet, the divers split up—two going one direction and Flagg on his underwater scooter heading into deeper water. After one or two minutes steering his little craft northward, "I see this massive tail fin, maybe five feet or so," Flagg recalled. At first he thought it was a dolphin or tuna but then realized it was a great white shark. He watched the fin as it disappeared into the murky water.

Wishing to warn his companions of possible danger, Flagg maneuvered his scooter upward and slowly made his way up the anchor line toward the boat. "After ten or twenty seconds I looked

down and I see the white, open mouth of the animal coming at me," Flagg said calmly. "The next thing I know it had a hold of me." The shark bit him along his mid-section, its upper jaw biting down on the metal scuba tank and the lower teeth catching on Flagg's dive tracker, an underwater tracking and communications device. Then, just as suddenly as the shark had come to Flagg, it released him. The encounter lasted less than five seconds. Had it not been for the protection of the dive tracker (an experimental dive computer), Flagg's injuries may have been more severe, requiring more than the 15 stitches he received along his shoulder.

"White shark," are words that usually instill the most primitive fears within the human psyche. White sharks feed on local pinnipeds such as sea li-



FUL BEAST

Peter Hemmings

ons and harbor seals, occasionally mistaking humans for prey. Though not permanent residents along the Monterey coast, white sharks are found from Mexico to the gulf of Alaska, congregating chiefly around the Farallon Islands 28 miles west of San Francisco, and Guadalupe Island in Mexico.

Will an encounter with a white shark always end in violent death? Not necessarily; in the early 1950s two Monterey boys paddled out into Whalers Cove floating on inflatable rafts. Far from shore they were suddenly faced by the dorsal fin of a large white shark that surfaced just a few feet in front of them. The boys were more fascinated than fearful. Who knew what a white shark was in the 1950s? The shark circled the boys and then disappeared into the depths without any incident. The shark was no threat, and merely curious about these strange intruders in its territory.

The last recorded shark encounter along the Monterey coast was in 2007. Twenty-four-year-old surfer Todd Endris was at Marina State Beach waiting for a wave. A 12-foot shark came up under Endris' surfboard and tore a wound into Endris' middle that required 500 stitches. A pod of dolphins had surrounded Endris during this incident, possibly preventing the third recorded shark attack death in Monterey County since 1952.

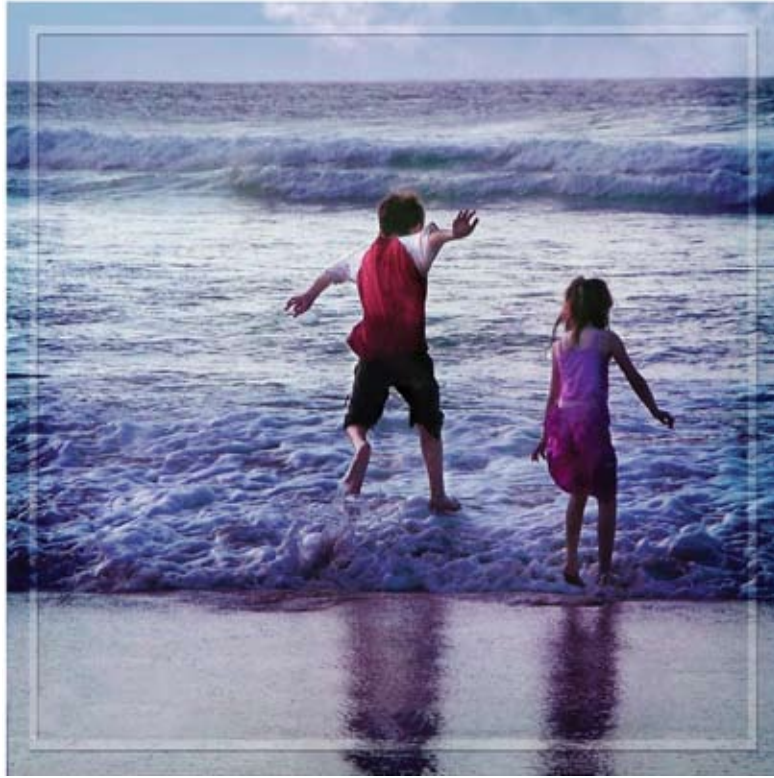
In 1994, Scott Tims, a scuba instructor from Santa Cruz, was instructing a class from his boat near Monastery Beach when he saw a 16-foot white shark heading straight for him. "At first I thought it was a basking shark until it came into full view and I saw it was a white shark," Sims later recalled. "As the shark swam by, his eyeball turned and looked at me; there was no aggressive posture and that was pretty much about it."

White sharks are as much a part of the fauna of Point Lobos as the bobcat is on land or the red-tailed hawk is in the sky. Like any great predator, the white shark serves a purpose by contributing to nature's balance. Swimming silently past our shores, hidden by crashing surf and rolling seas, the white shark holds a unique, if stealthy presence on the central coast.

Ed. notes:

- *A first-hand account of Flagg's encounter with the white shark can be read here: <http://web.ncf.ca/bz050/HomePage.gwsattack.html>*
- *There have been 11 fatal shark attacks reported in California since 1952. The white shark, *Carcharodon carcharias*, was either positively identified or highly suspect in all 11 fatalities. (from http://www.sharkresearchcommittee.com/fatal_attacks.htm)*
- *White sharks have been protected in all California waters since Jan. 1, 1994.*
- *The IUCN lists white sharks as "vulnerable."*
- *CITES gives white sharks an Appendix II listing, meaning they cannot be transported across international borders unless extensive research permits have been obtained.*





I SPLASH GIDDILY

LARRY ALAN BROWN

I splash giddily in the chilled March surf,
My remembered toes and feet and ankles naked,
To the late winter currents of Monterey Bay,
The pools invigorate my cells, my disjointed nerves,
I seek outward, spirit gazing in dull sunlight.
To the north, the land is a low plateau,
Carpeted emerald, ending at a rocky ledge,
The sea surface undulates gracefully,
The water is pale green nearest shore,
Turning azure in the deeper reaches.

Buoyant, I peer to the horizon and Mistress Oceana,
I sense and smell her cool, inviting breath,
It comes as swift bracing breezes, sea winds kissing,
Perfumed in saline splendor, licking shadows of my hair,
Reddening skin on cheeks and chin transformed,
Mistress Deep, whose endless curves I've well-travel'd,
She, with whom I've pitched and rolled in exotic places,
She, who in all her moods, caressed me roughly and softly,
She, whose swollen crests I've sailed, explored 'til spent,
She, in whose tides I've seen the firmament of stars reflected.

She calls and wakens my life force willing,
Her million-voice song is at once a roar and whisper,
At once a terrible shout and lullaby,
At once a primordial thunder and soothing hush,
Her scented song emerges from the deepest places,
From submerged and secret, shadowed canyons,
Spiraling up and up, through dark layers and living tendrils,
A million songs, through the surface bursting!
"Rise up, O wave children!" she cries, "Gather speed!"

I see them! Wave children rising!
In great fluid ridges, they form, row after row,
Beautiful in their rolling, gliding power,
They leap swiftly, laughing and shouting,
In a joyous, riotous, rush to shore!
I laugh and shout, too! I beckon wildly!
The wave children surge from the boisterous sea,
Their glassy-mirrored blue-green faces shining,
Dashing and racing from Mother Ocean's anxious lap.

In their headlong haste, the wave children bow,
Too far forward leaning, brightly beaming,
Wave tops crystalline in watery whiteness,
Headfirst, they cascade into a roiling, spreading sheet,
Foaming bubbles and spitting-fizzing spray!
They swirl and eddy 'round my sundered motes,
My altered dust in cool delight, embracing,
Leave tickling slicks of froth on my flesh reborn,
"O, Father!" they cry, "Mother sends her love!"
"I know, I know, I feel her," I sigh.

I hear their Mother's tender chant, ancient as terra,
Summoning, gentle, warm, compelling,
"Come, Father! Come with us!" the children kiss,
Smiling, we cling and slide back down the beach together,
Wet, dark sand glistening in our hallowed wake,
My scattered earthly bread, coaxed outward by the loving tide,
Spreads and swells and revels in the amniotic sea,
A timeless sacrament to life and mortal seasons,
My joyous shout echoes through and fills the endless void!
"*I fill the void! I am the sea!*"

Quotes from the Docent Log

edited by Stan Dryden

Nov. 7: Terry Tellep

Restless surf, deep swells. Magnificent crashing waves gilded by a molten, setting sun as I walk down the granodiorite stairs at Hidden Beach to behold the sunset. Head toward a ledge in the cove walls on which to rest—find a fresh, deep red rose tucked in a rough-edged, smooth-pebbled crevice of Carmelo Formation; scarlet petals, velvet-soft. After sunset, I look down to find a white rose bud mixed among the wet and gleaming kelp. I contemplate the story. I place my hand on the Carmelo rock—still warm and holding the sun's rays as it sleeps beneath a waved horizon.

Nov. 10: Joe Bova

Today I had the pleasure of meeting a very nice couple visiting from Arizona. Janice Webb Akin was here to celebrate her 70th birthday and to see some family history. She had been told that some rocks off of the Point Lobos coast were named after one of her ancestors, Marcelino Escobar. I opened up the Point Lobos map and showed her the location of Escobar Rocks. Janice is a direct decedent of Marcelino Escobar who received the original Spanish land grant for the Carmel River tract. He was also an early alcalde of Spanish Monterey.

Nov. 10: Lynne McCammon

As we drove past Monastery Beach on our way to the otter

count the ocean appeared calm. In the Reserve it was a different story. There was a great deal of wave action on the south shore. The north shore

must have been calmer because the majority of the otters were hanging out there. Our total count for the month of November was 27 adults and 2 pups. A peregrine falcon was watching over China Cove, but moved to Bird Island later. A bird-watching visitor stopped one of our otter counters asking if there were any interesting birds. About that time a Say's phoebe made an appearance. The visitor was duly impressed.

Nov. 19: Jeff Johnson

I was scoping at Sea Lion Point this morning and spotted a Steller sea lion! He (my assumption) was on the plateau to the right of the high peak on the largest rock where the sea lions tend to congregate. He was approximately twice the size of the sea lions a few feet away. He had a thick black mane, and was significantly darker than the sea lions. What a



treat for me and for several visitors!

Full grown males can average lengths of 10 ft and weigh as much as 2,200 pounds. You can learn more about sea lions on the Point Lobos web site, pointlobos.org. – Ed.

Nov. 22: Stan Dryden

I heard the sweetest little twittering coming from the small cypress tree behind the Info Station pelt shelter. Upon investigating, it turned out to be coming from a usually-raucous western scrub jay. Many visitors who live in the range of the blue jay asked about this bird, a decidedly different species.

Dec. 8: Lynne McCammon

How many layers of clothes can you wear when there is frost on the pumpkin? If you ask the team of otter counters your answer would be "never too many." We were all decked out to do the December count, and by the end

of the day several layers had been removed. As we finished our daily rounds the otter count totaled 23 adults and 3 pups. Most of the otters were feeding with a few just sleeping in the small amount of kelp. I must thank my very loyal crew of otter counters for a job well done.

Dec. 13: Stan Dryden

I love watching the fauna of Point Lobos, but some of the best experiences for a docent can come from observing the human visitors. A woman walked into Whalers Cabin with members of her family. She said that she was hoping to see some otters today. It just so happens that the docent before me had set up a scope on a raft of three otters floating in a small patch of drift kelp in the cove, and I invited her to take a look. She went into rapture and said, "Now I can be happy." The other members of her family roamed around inside and outside the cabin, but she stayed, and stayed, and stayed by the scope murmuring sweet nothings to the otters. I didn't know what it would take to get her out of there, but eventually her family prevailed upon her to leave.

Dec. 19: Barbara Baldock and Phil Butler

When we arrived at the top of the stairs leading to China Cove a couple had a peregrine falcon in their spotting scope. The falcon was perched high on the rocks above where the cormorants nest. That area was empty but there were pelicans at the other side and cormorants below, near the water. The bird stayed there for a full twenty minutes while we

walked around by China Cove and Gibson Beach to get closer to Bird Island. Just as we were about to get as close as we could, the falcon flew to the top of a pine tree near China Cove. What a beautiful bird. It was still there 30 minutes later when we left the area.

Dec. 22: Marty Renault

Today at the Information Station I had a nice conversation with Debra See, docent emeritus from the famous first class of 1981. She had trained me at an Information Station shift on a windy winter day 10 years ago. After volunteering here for 20 years she left in 2001 when her husband, Ranger Bill Moffat, was transferred from Big Sur to the Tule Elk Reserve near Buttonwillow in Kern County. While she still misses Big Sur, Point Lobos, and her friends here, she says they have found many interesting and beautiful places near their new home.

Dec. 23: Rick Pettit

A bright, cool, quiet, perfect morning at the Information Station; only one car in the lot—perhaps everyone is still recovering from winter woldstice festivities. A calm cobalt-blue sea neatly edges the horizon, and is flecked with the pure white of gulls picking up the slanting light. But where are the great migrating grays? A fellow docent stops by, and, straight-faced, suggests that perhaps the state's budget crisis is somehow responsible. A covey of quail whirl onto the parking island, where they comb the ground, bobbing and clucking, flinching in unison as I threaten-

ingly raise my binoculars for a closer look. Two deer erupt into the parking lot and canter across, heading up the trail toward Cypress Grove, then veer off into the scrub, ignoring the poison oak warning sign. A thrasher emerges for a look-see atop the coyote bush, then submerges to resume his clandestine business.

Dec. 30: Lyle Brumfield

Bob Snyder and I were hiking Point Lobos this afternoon around 3:30-4:00 pm, and as we approached the stairs going up from Bird Island parking lot, we glanced over to our right and saw an adult sea otter lying on a rock formation right next to four harbor seals. As we continued on to Bird Island, we saw a beautiful peregrine falcon high in a Monterey pine tree to the right of the trail. When we arrived at the trail's closest point to Bird Island, we found at least four, and possibly five more sea otters lying on the rocks at the base of Bird Island, possibly 6-10' above the water line; wow, what a treat. As more people started to gather, we shared our discovery with our guests, and the sea otters got a bit spooked, eased back into the water, but still stayed in the area.

Jan. 1: Carol Bloner

New Year's Day at Point Lobos, I can't think of a better way to start a year (or month or week). Shirtsleeve weather, happy visitors, harbor seal-draped rocks, and two early wild flowers—one zigadene lily on the path to Cypress Grove and one Douglas iris at the entry to the loop trail around the grove.

Jan. 10: Stan Dryden

Three people, a gentleman and his two daughters, were in the cabin when I arrived and set off shortly thereafter—he in his wheelchair—on the Granite Point trail. Fortunately for me, I was out in front of the cabin when they came back to get their car. They were so elated to have been able to get him all the way out to the end of the accessible trail at the Pit that I was able to share in the elation. Nice start on a new year at Point Lobos!



to head for Point Lobos anyway. The Sea Lion Point parking lot was empty of cars, but soon after arrival two other docents showed up, and we headed out to see the gigantic waves

Jan. 10: Chris Stone

Scoping at Sea Lion Point. Whales and more whales—mostly pods of 5 or 6 spouting several times and showing flukes to the delight of the crowd that had gathered. They were passing by at a rate of 4 to 6 every 10-15 minutes. A very rewarding two hours.

Jan. 12: Lynne McCammon

This was our day to go out and count otters. On the south shore the ocean was quite rough so consequently the otters were not in their usual places. They moved over to the north shore where it is calmer and sheltered from the rough waves. The final count for this month is 17 adults and 7 pups.

Jan. 16: Carol Lin

A son of former Supervising Ranger Glen McGowan came into Whalers Cabin with his family. He was quite

entertaining, telling of growing up at Point Lobos and surrounding area. I encouraged him to consider becoming a docent so he could share his stories with others. He didn't say no!

Jan. 19: Stan Dryden

The overnight squalls and lightning shows abated in time for my scheduled 10:30 guided walk. Although the park aide reported there were few visitors, I decided

crashing on the rocky shores. As we headed along the South Shore Trail, the word, "Wow!" was uttered countless times, as spumes shot to heights well above our heads.

Feb. 2: Carol Bloner

Saw the peregrine falcon on the wing today! Four times he left his perch atop Bird Island and each time followed the same route. He dropped behind the





island, flew toward Gibson Beach, sped through the narrow opening parallel to the path, rose over the flats of Bird Island, and back to his perch. Flight could not have taken more than 25 seconds. Maybe he caught dinner on the fifth try.

Feb. 7: Carol Bloner

So much activity at Whalers Cove this windy afternoon; eleven species of birds were in the water, on the small island, and in the air. Two otters (one with a pup) and bobbing harbor seals dotted the cove.

Learned that not all harbor seals are skittish. One seal remained on a rock at the end of the boat ramp, closely accompanied by Herrmann's gulls. Nothing

seemed to faze this seal: not the extended loading of diving equipment, not the loud shrieks of a diver discovering the temperature of our waters, not even the arrival of a fire truck, ambulance, speeding CHP car, and State Park's vehicle. Long after the injured visitor was cared for, this seal still maintained its spot on the rock.

Feb. 9: Ed Clifton

A soggy day at the Reserve with intermittent rain and occasional downpours; there were few visitors. Some wore rain gear, some carried umbrellas, some had both, and a few without either were totally soaked (and unaccountably happy). As often happens on such a day, the few visitors who did drop by were fun

to talk to. Most were disappointed in not seeing whales. I had to explain that the gray whales were enjoying their warm bath in Baja, and had not started back to the feeding grounds. I was about to close the Information Station, but suddenly the sun broke out over the ocean. And then, like magic, there were spouts, several of them, just beyond the rocks where the waves first break, beautifully back-lit by the sun. The few visitors still in the parking lot were enchanted, as was I. Then we turned to landward and a brilliant, perfect rainbow encompassed the sky above the Reserve. I love this place!

Point Lobos Foundation



Route 1, Box 62
Carmel, CA 93923
831-625-1470

NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATION US POSTAGE PAID PERMIT NO. 35 CARMEL CALIFORNIA
--



DIDA KUTZ - EXPLORER

We are extremely proud of Dida Kutz, Editorial Director of this magazine, who has been inducted into the Explorers Club, the world's premier non-profit organization "dedicated to scientific exploration and field research," founded in 1904 in New York.

This is especially notable as Dida is one of only 685 women of just under 3,000 members worldwide.

Dida's membership card carries this note: "The individual whose name appears on this card is an elected member of the Explorers Club. In the name of exploration, please grant all possible assistance and protection to the bearer."

We of the Point Lobos Foundation will certainly do so.

Skip Flohr



Excerpts from the Marina Technology Cluster's (10/28/09) press release:

"This is a real honor," said Kutz, who started and maintains BluePlanetDivers.org [founded in 2005], a website for research divers of all levels to connect to what is going on within research diving. "I have always seen the Explorers Club as a special group of men and women, and it's hard to believe I'm now one of them."

... "She walks the talk," said Frank Handler, former program chair of the Pacific Northwest Chapter of the Club who co-sponsored Kutz's membership nomination. "Dida has a boundless enthusiasm for the sea and conservation of its natural resources as evidenced by her conceiving of, developing and publishing a website for the international research diving community."

(Peter Hemmings, a contributor this month [pg. 8], is also a Member National [2004] of the Explorers Club-DK)