

POINT LOBOS

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Point Lobos Foundation

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*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.*

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Ray's "Green Seas, Blue Seas" exhibition opens SATURDAY, OCTOBER 1, 10 am
at Pacific Grove Natural History Museum

THE SISTER ANNA VOSS MEMORIAL FUND

A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Skip Flohr

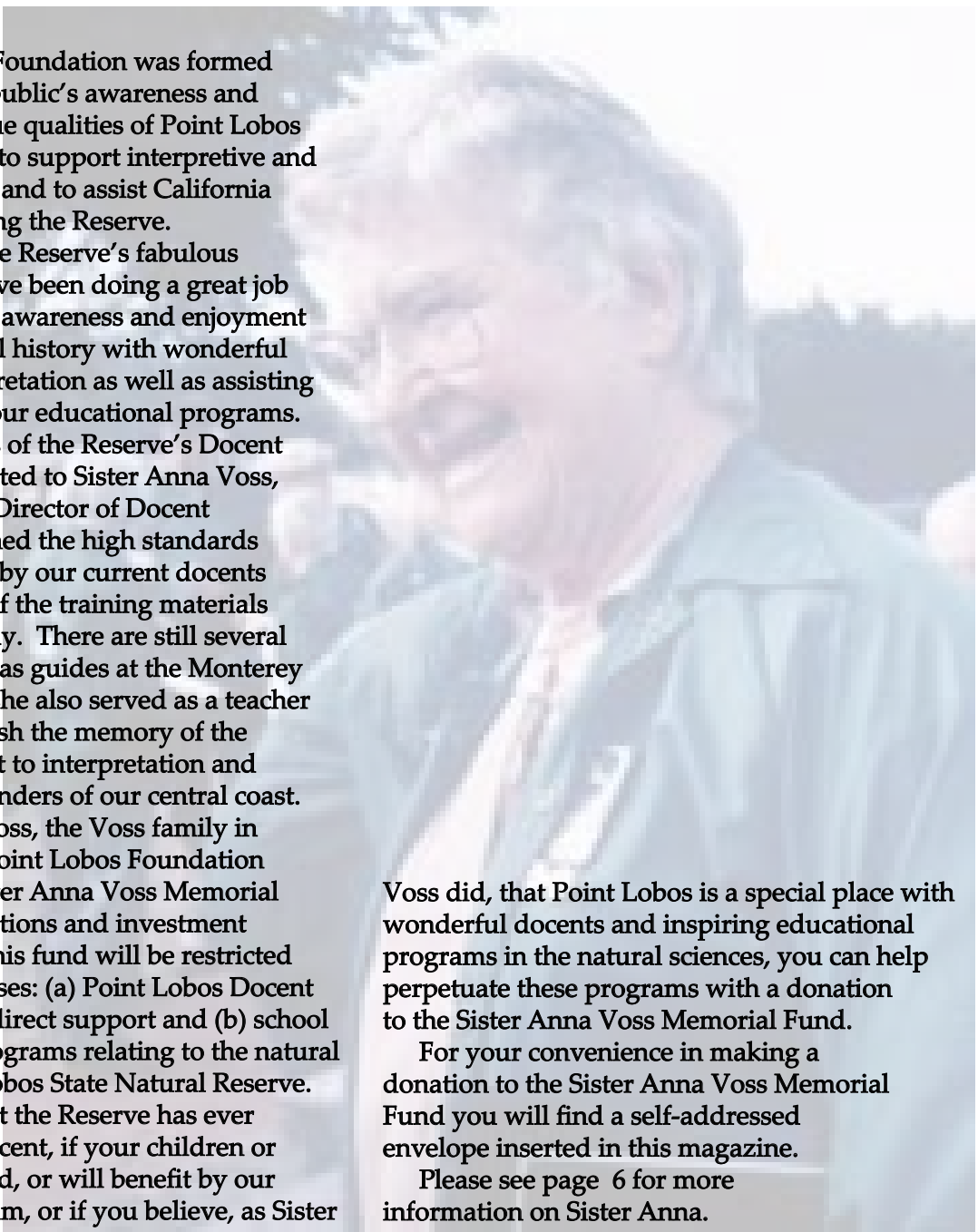
The Point Lobos Foundation was formed to enhance the public's awareness and enjoyment of the unique qualities of Point Lobos State Natural Reserve, to support interpretive and educational programs, and to assist California State Parks in preserving the Reserve.

As we know, it is the Reserve's fabulous core of docents that have been doing a great job enhancing the public's awareness and enjoyment of the Reserve's natural history with wonderful and meaningful interpretation as well as assisting Ranger Bancroft with our educational programs.

Much of the success of the Reserve's Docent program can be attributed to Sister Anna Voss, who served as its first Director of Docent Training. She established the high standards that are still being met by our current docents and developed many of the training materials that remain in use today. There are still several of our docents, as well as guides at the Monterey Bay Aquarium where she also served as a teacher and mentor, who cherish the memory of the inspiration she brought to interpretation and conservation of the wonders of our central coast.

In honor of Sister Voss, the Voss family in cooperation with the Point Lobos Foundation has established the Sister Anna Voss Memorial Fund. The use of donations and investment income generated by this fund will be restricted to the following purposes: (a) Point Lobos Docent Group education and direct support and (b) school education outreach programs relating to the natural sciences at the Point Lobos State Natural Reserve.

If your experience at the Reserve has ever been enhanced by a docent, if your children or grandchildren benefited, or will benefit by our school outreach program, or if you believe, as Sister



Voss did, that Point Lobos is a special place with wonderful docents and inspiring educational programs in the natural sciences, you can help perpetuate these programs with a donation to the Sister Anna Voss Memorial Fund.

For your convenience in making a donation to the Sister Anna Voss Memorial Fund you will find a self-addressed envelope inserted in this magazine.

Please see page 6 for more information on Sister Anna.



MEMORIAL & TRIBUTE GIFTS



June 2011 through August 2011

MEMORIAL GIFTS

In Memory of Francis "Bud" Whisler

- Law office of Horan, Lloyd, Karachale, Dyer, Schwartz, Law and Cook Inc.
- Frank Farella
- Edwin and Joan Lowry
- Albert Simpson
- Ed and Elaine Good
- A. L. Labbe
- Dorothy Kay
- Leona Smith
- Mr. and Mrs. Roy Eisenhardt
- Ruth Louis
- George and Ann Chapman
- Margot McCormick
- Jane Cobb
- Linda Bizzarri and Jeff Abbett
- From friends of his daughter, Diane Johnson—From Maureen Garrity, Katey Bastian, Sue Waller. We know he loved Point Lobos and all it stood for.
- Karen Fetherston for Diane in sympathy for the loss of her father Francis "Bud" Whisler.

Walter and Joanne Newman in memory of Helen Lind

Norma Davis in memory of Claire Reordan

Correction from summer edition:

In Memory of Polly Thomas

- Norma Davis
- Winston and Joan Elstob
- Betty Jean Stallings

TRIBUTE GIFTS

Tribute gifts honor friends and loved ones on their birthdays, anniversaries, or other special occasions.

- Jacolyn Harmer in honor of Chuck Bancroft 30 years
- Caren Morningstar in honor of her son George Sloan's birthday
- Anonymous donation in honor of Clinton Bauder
- Docent Class of 2012
- Bill Esaki in celebration of marriage of Thomas Reid and Melia Childress DiKodani
- Joyce and Ken Esaki in celebration of the marriage between Thomas Reid and Melia Childress DiKodani
- Lillian and Eugene Kodani in celebration of the marriage between Melia DiKodani and Thomas Reid
- Allison Barrett in honor of the marriage between Melia Childress DiKodani and Thomas Reid

Corporation and Business Support

- Qualcomm
- Nordson Corporation
- Pebble Beach Corporation

Foundations:

\$5,000 Anonymous for trail maintenance and improvements

Under My Brim

by Ranger Chuck Bancroft



Banasa sordida. Sounds terrible, doesn't it? Small, brown and green, eaten by rodents, birds, reptiles and amphibians, it can't fly and it doesn't move very fast. Its scientific name poetically hints at its bland, yet descriptive, common name: stink bug. While we may traditionally assume all stink bugs to be black, shiny, and the size of a peanut shell, there are over 250 different species in North America in a variety of shapes, sizes and colors. When threatened this minute beetle stands on its head, lifts its rear end, and sprays a bad-smelling black liquid, driving away its enemy. Some mice avoid the beetle's spray by quickly stuffing the insect's abdomen into the sand, and starting with the head, devour the beetle. Now that you have the background information for our subject we can get to the story of how I found our subject at Point Lobos. Early in March of this year a film group from Clemson University came to the Reserve to film one of their acclaimed episodes of Expeditions with Patrick McMillan. Patrick is a professional naturalist, lecturer, and director of the Campbell Museum of Natural History at Clemson University. I had the pleasure

of spending time with the group pointing out the natural wonders of the Reserve. Late in July I received a telephone call from Professor Al Wheeler of Clemson University. He had been talking with Patrick about how helpful I was back in March and wondered if I could help him find a stink-bug. He told me the story of this unique bug and told me he was flying out on the 28th and hoped we could get together; he would be accompanied by a graduate student from UC Davis and they wanted to look for the stink bug in groves of Monterey cypress. I said I would be more than happy to help; then I called Amy Palkovic, our sector environmental scientist, to advise her of the visit. On a Friday morning Amy, Al, Billy, and I met at the Whalers Cabin to inspect the Monterey cypress there. No luck. Off to the Allan Memorial Grove and on the very first tree we inspected it was there in all its glory.

A few more inspections and Amy took the entomologists to Lobos Ranch to inspect the Gowan cypress; the bug was even more prolific on these trees well away from the effects of the salt spray.



Now I am waiting for a paper from Professor Wheeler documenting our excursion among the cypress of the Reserve. When I had searched on line for literature there was virtually nothing after 1981 on any stink bugs in North America

and absolutely nothing on *Sordida* on cypress. If you want to read more here is the citation for the paper from 1981: JOURNAL OF THE KANSAS ENTOMOLOGICAL SOCIETY 54(2), 1981, pp. 233-248. A Review of the Nearctic Species of the Genus *Banasa* Stal (Hemiptera: Pentatomidae) 1 D. B. Thomas and T. R. Yonke Department of Entomology, University of Missouri-Columbia 65211.

WEREN'T WE THE LUCKY ONES!

SISTER ANNA VOSS REMEMBERED

Carol Bloner

Something about a milestone year invites remembrance. This 30th anniversary of the founding of the Point Lobos Docent Association is such a year. Docents are teachers, so it is fitting to remember a teacher who trained our docents for 15 years and whose legacy enriched docents long after her retirement from Point Lobos.

Sister Anna Voss (1907-1998) had a lifelong passion for learning and teaching. After graduating from Notre Dame High School in 1925, she entered the teaching order of the Sisters of Notre Dame. She earned a Bachelors of Science in Chemistry in 1938 and a Masters of Science in Biology in 1951, both from Stanford University. She taught high school and college students in Hawaii and California, creating the statewide science program for all Hawaii Catholic schools. When Sister Anna retired, after teaching for 50 years, she brought her passion to her second career as a volunteer at the Monterey Bay Aquarium and Point Lobos State Natural Reserve.

In 1981, Sister Anna became a docent, graduating with the first class of Point Lobos Docents. Using her skills and knowledge, she easily stepped into the Training Director position, a demanding task she kept for six years. There were no training tools, so Sister Anna, with her friend and fellow classmate Helen Lind, produced them. Within one month they had made a tape on spring wildflowers. Within one year they had produced five training tapes, three on Point Lobos wildflowers, and one each on the Reserve's mushrooms and geology. These tapes, now converted to DVD, remain a potent reference tool for new and seasoned docents alike. For the 15 years Sister Anna remained a

Point Lobos volunteer, she showed these tapes on a regular basis to docents and conducted almost monthly wildflower or geology walks. In 1986 Sister Anna, again with Helen Lind, created the Wildflowers of Point Lobos poster still sold today.

Over 20 current and former docents and rangers were asked what they remember about Sister Anna and the role her teaching played in docent training. The rangers said her participation was "huge," and docents remember continually learning from her but not in formal settings. Some comments included, "Sister Anna had a passion to learn about the natural world and she passed on that knowledge with a sense of wonder"; she "was such a strong personality, yet such a gentle, kind person"; "she was a wonderful teacher who could pass on her delight in nature"; "Sister Anna had tremendous presence. She was always quiet but commanded a great deal of respect just by her presence".

Every respondent used the words respect and presence; Sister Anna earned respect everywhere, and her presence remained wherever she taught.

In 1992, Sister Anna was recognized for her extraordinary contributions with commendations from the California Senate and the Assembly, the city of Carmel, the California State Parks Department, and the Point Lobos Natural History Association (now Point Lobos Foundation).

Docents agree "Sister Anna instilled in us a sense of wonder and appreciation of our surroundings. Most important was her ability to teach us how to share that with our visitors." One docent captured the thought of all when she said of their mentor, "Weren't we the lucky ones!"





SISTER ANNA VOSS, 85-year-old retired nun, was honored Saturday for her role in establishing the docent corps at Point Lobos Reserve. Above, she is congratulated by Bill Nye, chairman of the Point Lobos Natural History Association, at its annual meeting.
Sun Photo by Stan Hall

Sister Anna Honored for Her Point Lobos Docents Program

The Point Lobos Natural History Association paid tribute Saturday to Sister Anna Voss, an 85-year-old retired teacher who developed the training that produced the strong docent system at the state reserve south of Carmel.

At the association's annual meeting, Sister Anna received commendations from the state Senate and Assembly, the City of Carmel and the state Parks Department. Assemblyman Sam Farr, Mayor Jean Grace, Chief Ranger Glen McGowan and Bill Nye, chairman of the association, did the honors.

Still bright and lively, the retired nun from the order of Sisters of Notre Dame told about 60 people on hand for the meeting, "I loved teaching."

Serving as a docent at Point Lobos and the Monterey Bay Aquarium has allowed her to continue to teach even after her retirement from the classroom, she said. "It has been a joy for me."

When the docent system for Point Lobos was started in 1981, Sister Anna developed and supervised the training program for the first five years. Her program is based on continuing education for docents, with a new training session every month.

"Now with more than 100 active docents, it (the Point Lobos program) is one of the largest in the California state parks," Nye said, "and we've been told, one of the best."

While she headed the docent train-

nearly every plant and geological formation on the 554-acre park to illustrate her training lectures. As a docent herself, she still leads nature walks through the coastal park which attracts some 300,000 visitors annually and presents her slide show on the reserve to various groups.

In his presentation, McGowan called her "a great old gal," saying that term reflected the kind of warm relationship that existed between the reserve's professional staff and Voss.

Addressing her fellow docents, she praised them "as a wonderful group of educated and caring people; they care both for the environment and each other."

After earning a B. A. in chemistry and an M. A. in biology from Stanford, Voss taught chemistry, mathematics and natural sciences for 50 years at elementary, secondary and college levels in California, Massachusetts and Hawaii.

While teaching near the Central Coast, she said she first brought classes to Carmel and Point Lobos in the 1930s. Point Lobos became a part of the new state parks system in 1933.

Sister Anna moved to the Carmel area on her retirement at age 71, living with her order at Villa Angelica just off Monastery Beach from 1978 to 1984.

She took special note of the help the Sisters of Notre Dame still provide her, and in closing said, "God bless the

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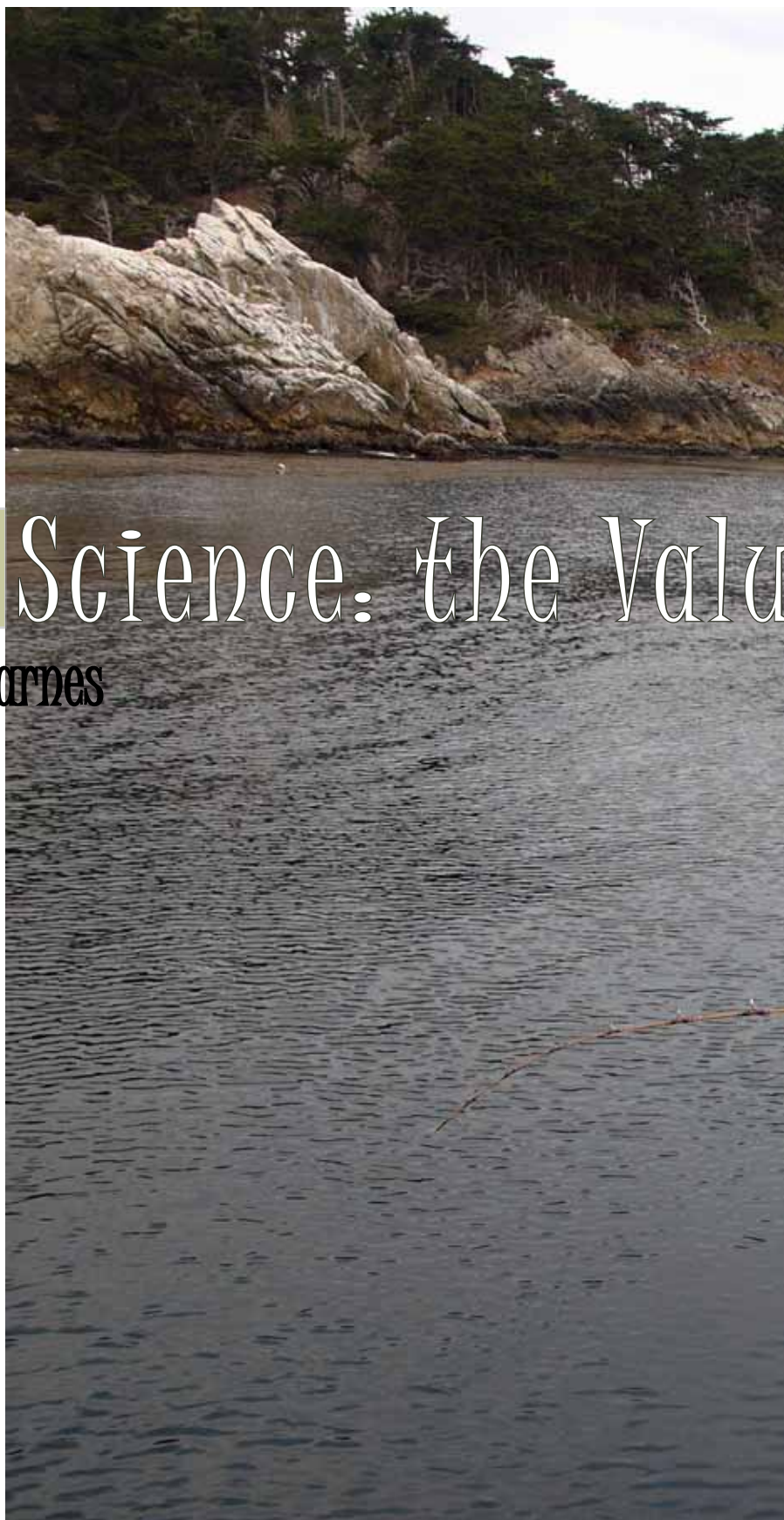
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Fishing for Science: the Value

by Rick Starr and Cheryl Barnes

photos by Robin Robinson

It's an early summer morning at Fisherman's Wharf in Monterey, CA. The streets are quiet and the fog thick while a dozen anglers carrying sack lunches and sipping hot coffee stumble aboard the sport-fishing vessel F/V Caroline. Graduate students from Moss Landing Marine Laboratories (MLML) quickly shuffle around the deck, setting up fishing tubs and tagging stations while welcoming volunteers. The captain and crew are preparing for departure when Katie Schmidt, MLML grad student and today's chief scientist, yells over the engine, "We're heading out to the Point Lobos



e of Collaboration



State Marine Reserve today!" She continues by providing information about trip logistics and the day's research objectives for enthusiastic volunteers.

We are headed to the Point Lobos State Marine Reserve because 29 marine protected areas (MPAs) were established in central California in 2007, and scientific monitoring is needed to evaluate the effectiveness

of the newly implemented MPAs. The California Collaborative Fisheries Research Program (CCFRP), a partnership of people and communities interested

in fisheries sustainability, was formed in part to fulfill this requirement. By combining the expertise and ideas of fishermen and scientists, CCFRP has successfully established standardized protocols to gather information for fisheries management and the monitoring of Central Coast MPAs. To date, CCFRP has successfully completed 148 days of fishing, enjoyed 15,070 volunteer hours from 467 individuals and caught, tagged, and released a total of 27,441 fish from 43 different species. 2011 marks the fifth sampling season for the project, and 150 volunteers are expected to join forces with local scientists to fish for data collection purposes.

After the boat pulls away from the dock, we approach the Monterey Coast Guard Jetty and the sound of sea lions barking breaks the otherwise silent waters. Once out of the harbor, people begin to settle down for the 60-minute steam to Point Lobos. A few anglers are chatting, while others are getting some much-needed shuteye in preparation for the activities to come. Whether talking or dozing, everyone is eager to see the fish at Point Lobos. Underwater, Point Lobos is as magnificent as it is on land, and has long been known for spectacular scuba diving and big fish.

Arriving on station, the skipper calls out over the loud speaker, "Anglers, get ready to fish!" Everyone quickly collects their belongings and approaches their individual fishing stations, indicated by a numbered plastic tub filled with fresh seawater for their prospective catch. Within 45 seconds of the announcement, twelve lines are hovering just

above the water's surface, waiting for instructions to..."Start fishing!"

MPAs are defined as regions of the nearshore environment where extractive activities, such as sportfishing and commercial harvest, are either restricted or prohibited in an effort to maintain ecosystem structure and function. It is a special treat for many

CCFRP volunteer anglers to have an opportunity to fish in such an area. The original Point Lobos Ecological Reserve, created in 1973, is one of California's oldest and most well known no-take reserves, supporting high levels of biodiversity and large concentrations of fishes. Because of this, the Point Lobos Ecological Reserve was a prime target for expansion as part of the Marine Life Protection Act (MLPA). The MLPA, designed to protect marine populations and preserve ecosystem health by requiring the creation of a well-managed, statewide network of MPAs, was enacted in 1999. Through years of collaborative planning, stakeholders worked to produce a network of MPAs that would both maximize conservation benefits and minimize economic impacts on the fishing industry.

Two whole minutes have passed in silence since



the order was given to begin fishing. All of a sudden, "Fish on the line!" is heard from the bow and a rockfish is reeled in. A member of the science crew briskly and carefully removes the hook from the rockfish's mouth. Firmly grasping the lip of the fish, he transports it to the stern where it is measured and tagged with a dart tag that looks like it should be attached to clothing sold by retail stores across America. Written on the tag are an ID and the phone number of Moss Landing Marine Labs so we can learn about fish that are tagged and recaptured outside the reserve. "Vermilion rockfish, good condition...44 cm total length," says the tagger to someone recording data nearby. "Tag number 14353," she continues. Only 2½ minutes after the initial bite, this fish is quickly placed overboard and swims off. The tagger looks down to make sure the fish has made it to deeper water and returns to find another that has just arrived from Angler #7. Before that fish has arrived to the tagging station, five more shouts of "Fish on!" are heard and the boat and science



crew are scrambling to keep up with the incoming fish. Sometimes in Point Lobos we have to stop fishing because our science crew is overwhelmed with fish and we need to slow down so we make sure that fish are released unharmed.

"Time's up...reel 'em in!" calls the captain over the loud speaker. The 15-minute drift has concluded and anglers begin to bring in their

final catches. Angler #10 shouts, "Double header!" and lifts both a copper and canary rockfish attached to the two shrimp flies tied to his line over the rail. After about 5 minutes of processing, releasing the remaining fish onboard, and taking the necessary environmental data, a member of the science crew tells the deckhand, "We're good to go." With this, the boat starts up and heads on to another promising

fishing spot inside central California's oldest MPA.

CCFRP represents a joint effort among researchers from CA Sea Grant at Moss Landing Marine Laboratories (MLML) and SLOSEA/Center for Coastal Marine Sciences

at Cal Poly San Luis Obispo as well as the captains and crew of F/Vs Admiral, Caroline, Fiesta, Huli Cat, New Captain Pete, Pacific Horizon, Patriot, Princess, Queen of Hearts, Rita G, Salty Lady, and Tigerfish. The data collected regarding species compositions, sizes, and catch rates of fishes in the region will help resource managers to evaluate the effectiveness of MPAs and can be used for fisheries management.

For more information, visit our web sites at:

<http://seagrants.mlml.calstate.edu/research/ccfrp/>

<http://slosea.com/initiatives/sf/sustainfish.php>

Also, you can see some of the incredible underwater creatures inhabiting Point Lobos State Marine Reserve at:

<http://seagrants.mlml.calstate.edu/wp-content/uploads/2009/04/subimpactreport.pdf>

Rick Starr is the Director of California Sea Grant Extension Program and the Principal Investigator, CA Collaborative Fisheries Research Program

Cheryl Barnes is a Program Representative, California Sea Grant Extension Program and Research Assistant/Volunteer Coordinator, CCFRP

Quotes from the Docent Log

Breeding birds aplenty, acrobatic arachnids, and...treasure at Sea Lion Point?

April 22: Carol Bloner

Today was a day of treats. Whalers Cabin was visited by lots of locals, as well as by foreign visitors; and mom harbor seals and their and pups covered the Whalers Cove pupping beach. A pacific loon in full breeding plumage plied the waters in the cove; fortunately Ranger Chuck was there with his camera to capture its image.

May 6: Jeff Johnson

I was scoping at Sea Lion Point the other day and saw something unusual. A sea otter, hauled out during low tide on one of the rocks below the point, was munching on mussels. Visitors observed the feast for at least thirty minutes. We were treated to a close-up view of an otter dining out of the water. What an easy meal for the otter!

May 13: Carol Bloner

Eight members of the newly formed Point Lobos bird-watching group visited Bird Island to see who was nesting where. We had a ranger escort through the trail's barriers, as it is under construction. Five visible black-crowned night heron nests were occupied. A chick in one of the nests was walking its perimeter, to the seeming annoyance of its parent, who finally succeeded in corralling it under a wing. A black oystercatcher's nesting spot

is visible, thanks to the bright red bill of the bird sitting there. Brandt's cormorants occupy about half of Bird Island, and the commotion and their guttural purring sounds delight the eye and ear. A pigeon guillemot swam in and out of view from its probable nesting crevice at the base of the cliff. The best sighting for me was western gull courtship. At least two gulls were already sitting on nests, so, barring disaster, in about a month we'll have adorable, little polka-dotted chicks running around.

May 20: Dave Evans

I joined Kerstin Jones' bird walk—we started at Whalers Cove, then went along the North Shore Trail, and up and over Whalers Knoll. Who knew that pigeon guillemots had striking, bright red mouths? Or that house finches live at Point Lobos (shouldn't they be in a house somewhere?) and have such a striking song. Or that a silent pause at the top of the knoll would reveals so many bird songs, and so many woodpeckers tap, tap, tapping. Kerstin must have orchestrated the walk in advance, as she closed with a bang: a great horned owl was waiting for us as we descended Whalers Knoll.

May 22: Kathy Ryan

During our last training class we headed down Carmelo Meadow Trail on a training walk with nature interpreter extraordinaire Jim Covel. He suggested we pace off about



twenty steps, then stop and simply observe. At our first stop, I looked down and spotted what at first looked like a mouse—it was actually a vole! She was extremely busy creating a new nest—or possibly she was doing a major remodel? We watched her for several minutes, then went on to observe leaves, spider webs, pine cones, spittle bugs, and a dusky-footed woodrat's nest. Jim's gentle whimsy, and his joy and enthusiasm as he trained us in interpretation, made me reflect back to the vole that began our walk. Jim referred to her as Mrs. Vole, or *Microtus*, but for me, she is "Victoria"!

May 27: Rick Pettit

This morning I encountered a particularly cheerful visitor, Carolyn Espinoza, who was spending every single day of her week-long vacation at Point Lobos. She was reveling in the abundant wildlife, the lovely flowers, and the sheer beauty of the Reserve. She had spent six hours here yesterday, wandering, looking, photographing. And lo, here she was again, rarin' to go when the gates opened



at 8 am. She was kind enough to later send me some of her expert and lovely photos.

May 30: Paul Reps

The young great blue herons have been spreading their wings, and looking like any day they are going to test them!

May 30: June Banks

At Weston Beach I saw two visitors with binoculars peering at something. So I asked, and was told that they had heard killdeer calls, and after much hunting with their binoculars, finally

spied two adults on the beach below. The only way to spot the birds was if they moved, as they are so perfectly camouflaged amidst the large pebbles and flat rocks, the driftwood, etc. And then: baby killdeer were spotted! First, one popped up from behind some driftwood, then another, and finally a third. All the while they were being protected by both adults, who were hovering about and following them. What a privilege to watch wildlife up so close.

June 3: Connie Dallmann

Had a great group for a school walk. They enjoyed the brush bunny eating breakfast, the doe and her twins, the otters, etc., but what surprised me was at Cypress Cove. I pointed out the easily seen nesting cormorants right below our lookout, but then I looked across the cove and realized there were at least one hundred more all over the rocks. I've never seen them nesting there before.

June 4: Cindy Mattos

I was doing a trail watch after a very rainy shift at Whalers Cabin, and because it had been raining, I left my camera in the car, thinking it was too wet and cloudy to see anything "cool." Lo and behold, the sun came out. That small voice in my head said, "Go get your camera," but I ignored it. After all, I have hundreds of pictures of Point Lobos already—what could I possibly see today to add to my collection? As I was walking along, I saw all sorts of animals coming out for a bit of sun. A juvenile brush rabbit

was hanging out on the trail, oblivious to my presence, and a mother quail with her nine (yes, nine) newly hatched chicks was running along a log. There were harbor seals with their pups in Bluefish Cove—one nursing while in the water, as mom was sunning herself on a rock! Also, numerous birds flitted from tree to tree, singing their varied songs. Last but not least, happy, smiling humans enjoying the day. Moral of the story... always bring your camera to Point Lobos!

June 5: Carol Bloner

Walked Whalers Knoll trail today. Delighted to meet seven visitors walking this under-used and very lovely trail. Near the entry road I followed a flicker with my binoculars as it flew to a nesting hole. It took off after delivering its food to the nest occupant. Either its mate or a large chick peered out from the substantial, round hole.



June 12: Stan Dryden

Sitting in Whalers Cabin between visitors I heard the familiar clacking of great blue heron chicks yelling "feed me, feed, me" when a parent flew in with the groceries. According to the scale of the map, the nests are a quarter mile away!

June 14: Greg Crawford

One of my enjoyments on the second Tuesday of every month is participating in the monthly otter count. It is really neat to walk the Reserve with fellow docents, and engage in sharing our collective knowledge and stories as we count the otters and greet visitors. On a recent count, our group on the Granite Point Trail was privileged to see several pygmy nuthatches flying in and out of their nest in the hole of a pine tree. They were brought to our attention by a group of landscape artists from Florida who were visiting the Reserve for the second time in the past two years to paint our incredible scenery. When we asked the painters why they return each year, they simply stated that they have nothing to paint in Florida that is as beautiful as Point Lobos. We could only agree!

June 18: Fred Brown

While working the Info Station I noticed three young adults at the very top of Sea Lion Point crawling into a small cave and spending some time there. They were passing around a piece of paper, making notes, looking around the immediate area, and not seemingly taking anything from the rock outcropping. Sometime later when they appeared at the Info Station, I asked what they had been doing in the cave. They said they had drawn up a treasure map, and put it in an obscure crevice inside the cave. I forgot to ask if they left any treasure.

July 5: Jim Fremgen

I was at the Information Station. A woman was feeling the

otter pelt. She said, "Oh, how soft it is. Why don't they make coats out of these?" When I recovered from that, I replied, "Because they go to jail if they do."

July 6: Anne Mollet

The day is overcast and gray, with a hint of our familiar summer fog. That hasn't deterred the holiday crowds, however! About a dozen eager-looking first-timers from at least four different countries comprise today's group. As part of my usual welcome I make a pitch



for joining the Point Lobos Foundation [ed. note: see envelope]. There are awe-inspiring sights around every bend that keep the cameras clicking. Near the end of our tour, I bend carefully over a patch of poison oak with my plastic bag to pluck several orange peels that have been tossed to the side of the trail. One lady points out some discarded gum to add to my collection while simultaneously apologizing for John Q. Public, who, she noted, obviously had not heard the "leave only footprints" part of my introduction! A few minutes later I am winding things up and another visitor, whose English is limited, asks me to explain again

"the moonlight walk." Apparently that's the thing she remembers most from my initial plug for the PLF membership! [ed. note: PLF members are invited to a special after-hours picnic dinner and moonlight walk in the Reserve in the fall.] I leave the parking lot thinking that one can never tell what visitors are likely to take with them from our encounter. That's one of the reasons public walks are both fun and rewarding to do!

July 1: Ed Clifton

July is a magical time at Point Lobos, not least because the air is redolent with the unique, softly fragrant aroma of blooming sagebrush. Several years ago, while I was at the Information Station at this time of year, I was approached by a small enthusiastic group of senior nature lovers. "What is that wonderful scent in the air?" they asked. I suggested it was the sagebrush, but they said, "No, we know sage and it isn't that. In fact we crushed the leaves of every different kind of plant we encountered, and none of them had that wonderful smell!" I noted that crushing plant leaves at the Reserve was not the best thing to do, first because Reserve rules prohibit the disturbance of any living thing, including plants, and second, "Did you crush the leaves of that plant with the shiny three leaves?" "Oh yes," they said, "and that's not it!" I explained the issues one might have with poison oak and sent them up to the bathrooms, telling them to wash their hands really well. I didn't see them again, but I woke up in the middle of that night, thinking 1) I should have told them to wash their noses as well as their hands, and

2) I should have asked them to describe the aroma of that shiny three-leafed plant. I had lost perhaps my sole opportunity to learn what crushed poison oak leaves smell like.

July 22: Celie Placzek

On a typical overcast summer day, a group of docent photographers traveled Weston Beach with Ed Clifton, who brought alive the mysteries buried in the rocks there. Small gray scratches in the sandstone take on new meaning as Ed talks about the ancient creatures that made them. Stopping atop a ridge of sandstone, Ed points out a curious row of holes, the origin of which even he isn't positive about. Imprints of kelp, like sun prints, due to sulphuric acid in the plants, and traces that turn sharply, creating a V-shaped patterns, were among the many highlights that captivated these photographers.

July 24: Rick Pettit

A day of surprises. Soon after I park the car, a watchful male junco, tiny but determined, fiercely attacks his newly-arrived rival. *Hey: this *#!~&* is in my territory! It's an outrage!* The rival is his own image in the car's side mirror. Next, beside the trail above the cove, leavings of gray, furry scat, evidence of a seldom-seen resident, one who pads these trails mostly when the gates are closed to human visitors: a bobcat. And then: on the trail under the pines on Coal Chute Point, a fish skeleton, picked clean, its covering of tasty flesh presumably having been transformed into fledgling great blue heron

bone, or heart, or plumage.

August 6: Fred Brown

Ballooning on the breeze, constructing turrets made of leaves and pine needles, crafting double hammocks hung on trees, and walking sideways like a crab. Just some of the fascinating activities of our Point Lobos spider population that a dozen docents learned about during a "spider walk" with R.J. Adams. Some spiders were too shy to come out of their cozy tunnels, while others hung upside down in plain sight as we craned our necks to see their acrobatic activities. A hike through the Reserve is refreshing and always beautiful. A slower paced watchful stroll can be more rewarding when you discover the multitude of diverse living things all interacting with each other -- right under your feet or over your head. You can find turret spiders on the Lace Lichen Trail, and the sheet-web weavers strung between the pine trees everywhere. When we want to see something new, we just need to stop and look.

Aug. 12: Stan Dryden

I had a nice group of about ten visitors for my guided walk this morning, including a couple from a small town in South Carolina. About halfway through the walk we were overtaken by a family who launched into surprised greetings with the couple. They were from the same town and once lived across the street from them! They had no knowledge that the others were planning a trip to California.

This happenstance was particularly bizarre because less than two weeks ago I was leading some musicians from the Carmel Bach Festival on a tour of Point Lobos. As we were looking out at an otter, two men walked by and one of them recognized a violinist's voice. Big surprised greetings that time too! The violinist lives in New York City but is a visiting instructor at the University of North Texas, where the gentleman is a professor. I have concluded that Point Lobos is a magnet for people with really good taste.



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SHEEN

With weathered patina
Our five veteran cypresses
Praise the sea.

TERESA TELLEP

Celebrating 30 years as Point Lobos State Natural Reserve docents are, from the top: Joy Osborne, Wayne Kelley, Norma Davis, Reid Woodward, and Mary Beach. See the Summer 2011 issue of Point Lobos magazine for a feature on these dedicated docents.

