

Fall/Winter 2020

POINT LOBOS





Our mission is to protect and nurture Point Lobos State Natural Reserve, to educate and inspire visitors to preserve its unique natural and cultural resources, and to strengthen the network of Carmel Area State Parks. pointlobos.org



A honeybee on an artichoke plant in the community garden at Hacienda Carmel, a few miles from Point Lobos, which also attracts domesticated bees and native bees. Photo by Chuck Bancroft.

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Melissa Gobell
Docent Coordinator &
School Group Coordinator
melissa.gobell@parks.ca.gov

Sean James
California State Parks Liaison
sean.james@parks.ca.gov

Publication

Reg Henry
Point Lobos Magazine Editor
regwriter43@gmail.com

Tracy Hopper
Designer
tracy@hopperopolis.com

Front Cover:
A Western Tiger Swallowtail
on coyote brush in Point Lobos.
Photo by Chuck Bancroft.

Center Spread, pages 11-12.
A solitary California Brown
Pelican flying alone was almost
an exception at Point Lobo this
year, where untold numbers of
pelicans flocked.
Photo by Dave Evans.



Kathleen Lee is the
executive director of the
Point Lobos Foundation.

Her email address is
kathleen@pointlobos.org

A message from the executive director

by Kathleen Lee

Greetings! 2020 has certainly brought many changes to our world and the rapid-fire pace can be unsettling. Point Lobos remains a place of refuge and rejuvenation, where the reassuring ebb and flow of the waves against the shore provides an opportunity to breathe deeply, reset and relax. The natural changes in the Reserve are also encouraging to see; while our world seems to be chaotic, there is a rhythm to life within the Reserve.

We are in a season of gratitude and there is much to be grateful for at the Point Lobos Foundation. Our donors continue to support the work of the foundation to educate and inspire visitors about the unique natural and cultural resources of Point Lobos State Natural Reserve and we are grateful for your ongoing support. The docent corps continues to work to redefine how best to engage with and educate

visitors in ways that maintain social-distance guidelines and their dedication is inspiring. State Parks personnel are nimbly enhancing virtual education programs to support K-12 students in California and elsewhere, sharing the wonders of Whalers Cove from atop a kayak and streaming content into classrooms throughout the state.

I am grateful also that the Point Lobos Foundation is able to participate in the Monterey County Gives! campaign, a collaborative philanthropic campaign between the Monterey County Weekly, Community Foundation for Monterey County and the Monterey Peninsula Foundation that runs between Nov. 12 and Dec. 31.

Organizations like the Point Lobos Foundation receive 100 percent of our donations as well as a prorated match on the first \$75,000 raised. The opportunity to make donations grow with the match dollars will have a tremendously positive impact on the Point Lobos Foundation, funding work to preserve the unique natural beauty of Point Lobos State Natural Reserve.

I hope we can count on your donation to the PLF in the MCGives! campaign starting on Nov. 12 at www.montereycountygives.com/lobos. I am so very grateful for you.



The elusive Smith's Blue, a small species that has been rarely reported at Point Lobos and would be a big find for any visitor. This male was found in Malpaso Canyon, not far south of the Reserve. Photo by Chuck Bancroft.



Jan Austin is a freelance writer/photographer and a fourth-generation Monterey County resident. Her photography website is: amie800.wixsite.com/janaustinphotography

Her email address is janaustinjj@gmail.com

Chris Tenney is a retired math/science teacher with a lifelong interest in natural history. After birding for 30 years, he has devoted the past 10 years to studying intensively the butterflies of Monterey County and focusing on the genus *Speyeria* throughout the western states.

His email address is tenneyx2@me.com

Wonders on the wing

What you can find in the butterfly gardens of Point Lobos

by Jan Austin and Chris Tenney

Of the many wonders and miracles of nature, perhaps the most fascinating is the magical metamorphosis that creates a butterfly from a caterpillar.

Powerful symbols of transformation and hope, butterflies help us believe in change. Their life cycles show us that we too can shed our former selves and stretch our new wings. From them we know that transitions and new beginnings are possible.

In order to survive diminishing natural habitats, pesticides and other human-caused threats, butterflies need protected spaces like Point Lobos State Natural Reserve.

In nearby Pacific Grove, the Monarch count went from 17,000 in 2017 to just 642 in 2019.

As you meander through Point Lobos, keep your eyes open for wings in a rainbow of colors.

While they are not as magnificent in size as other winged ones such as pelicans or egrets, the butterflies of Point Lobos are resplendent in their beauty and diversity.

Eighteen or more species can be spotted throughout the year with late summer and early fall being optimum. Sunny days over 60 degrees provide the best chances of seeing a variety of species. Meadows with flowers and forest edges yield the best results.

Mound Meadow and Moss Cove Trail were excellent for butterflies in the summer of 2020. Patches of buckwheat along Bird Island Trail can also harbor small winged treasures.

Perhaps the best-known butterfly in the Monterey area is the **Monarch** (*Danaus plexippus*). Reminiscent of a brilliant stained-glass window, Monarch wings are orange with black veins. Overwintering Monarchs hang together in a grape-like cluster. As noted earlier, their numbers have been drastically reduced.

If you're a home gardener, you're probably familiar with the ubiquitous **Cabbage Whites** (*Pieris rapae*). Their larva, called the cabbage worm, likes to munch on cabbage, kale, broccoli and other crops of the mustard family. Introduced to North America around 1860, they are widespread and fly throughout the year. They are recognizable by the black tip on their white wings.

Similar in appearance to Cabbage Whites, the **Veined Whites** (*Pieris napi*) present a bold, dramatic look due to the lined dark scales on the underside of its wings. They are rare strays to Point Lobos.

The smallest butterfly in North America and possibly the world can be found here. The **Western Pygmy-Blue** (*Brephidium exile*) with open wings is smaller than a dime. Tops of the wings are a two-toned copper brown color while the undersides are a dull blue/gray.

Aptly named for their preference for open fields with flowers and the row of crescent-shaped spots along the outer wing, **Field Crescents** (*Phyciodes pulchella*) are small orange and black beauties. Males patrol just above vegetation in pursuit of love. Females lay eggs in large batches on the undersides of their host plant leaves, usually asters.

Photography this page by Jan Austin



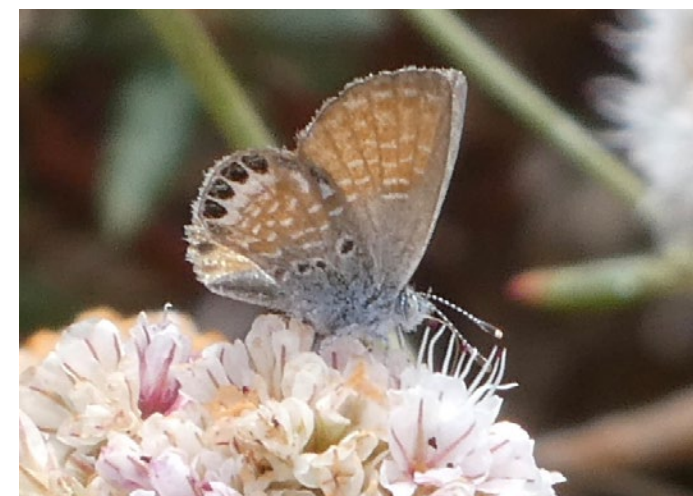
Monarch



Cabbage White



Veined White



Western Pygmy-Blue



Field Crescent



Mylitta Crescent

Less common at Point Lobos than the Field Crescent is the **Mylitta Crescent** (*Phyciodes mylitta*). Its wing tops are bright reddish-orange with dark markings. Territorial males perch and wait for passing females or patrol vegetation in search of mates.

Given its name because of its target-shaped eyespots, the **Common Buckeye** (*Junonia coenia*) exhibits a quick, erratic flight pattern and often perches on bare earth. The eyespots attract predators to the wings, away from vital parts, as evidenced by many wing-damaged adults.



Common Buckeye



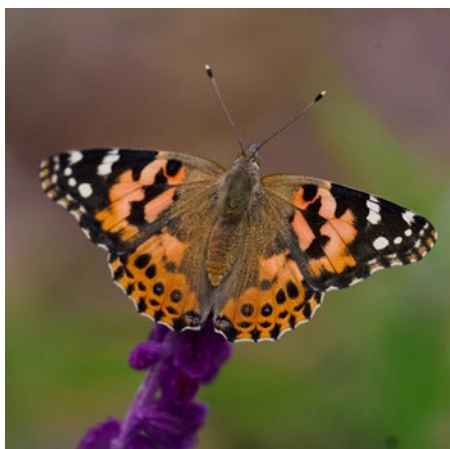
Gray Hairstreak



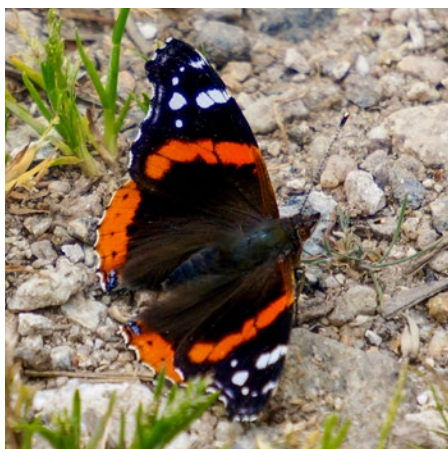
Bramble Green Hairstreak



Acmon Blue



Painted Lady



Red Admiral

Photography this page by Jan Austin

The hind wing of the **Gray Hairstreak** (*Strymon melinus*) presents a small tail-like protrusion that somewhat resembles an antenna. Combined with a wingtip that is head-like, this “false head” is believed to distract predators away from the actual head. With wings open, the dorsal side reveals a gray/blue coloration with bright orange spots near the protrusion.

The **Bramble Green Hairstreak** (*Callophrys perplexa*) is most often seen on vegetation with wings closed, showing only green undersides rather than the brownish top.

The **Acmon Blue** (*Plebejus acmon*) is small and blue (males) or brownish (females) with an orange band at the base of the hindwing. Like other Lycaenid butterflies, it has a mutualistic relationship with ants who protect the caterpillar in exchange for a drop of sugary honeydew that it secretes. The caterpillar gets protection and the ants get a snack.

Painted Lady butterflies (*Vanessa cardui*) have the widest distribution of any species. They inhabit every continent with the exception of Antarctica and Australia. These medium-sized butterflies migrate without regard to seasonal or geographic patterns. Covering up to 100 miles in a day and reaching 30 miles per hour, these orange and black beauties are common in Monterey County from March through November. Migration peaks in late March. Occasionally their astonishing numbers result in local news coverage.

Red Admiral (*Vanessa atalanta*) butterflies, previously known as the “red admirable,” are of medium size with black wings with red bands and white spots. Extremely territorial, males patrol their areas seven to 30 times per hour. Females will only mate with a male that holds territory. Males will court their ladies for several hours prior to mating. They are common all year in urban areas and tend to be a calm butterfly.

The tiny **Western Tailed-Blue** (*Everes amyntula*) is found as far north as Alaska. Males sport a blue upper side, while the females are brownish gray. The base of the hindwing has orange spots and antenna-like tails resembling a false head to confuse predators.

Woodland Skippers (*Ochlodes sylvanoides*) are small and brownish orange. Like other skippers, they were named for their “skipping” mode of flight.

The **Common Checkered-Skipper** (*Pyrgus communis*) received its name because of the checkerboard pattern on its wings. Males are territorial and will aggressively chase other males.

Common (California) Ringlets (*Coenonympha tullia*) are easily identified by their lazy, wavering flight pattern close to the ground.

The **Western Tiger Swallowtail** (*Papilio rutulus*) has a wingspan of 3 to 4 inches and sports yellow and black wings with orange and blue spots near the “tail” on their hind wing. They glide majestically in riparian areas and they are “puddlers,” which means they drink from mud, thus extracting minerals and nutrients.

Yellowish-orange with a black outer margin, **Orange Sulphurs** (*Colias eurytheme*) have a rapid, haphazard flight pattern. Their courtship differs from other butterfly species in that it is brief and doesn’t involve elaborate displays.

Other possible butterfly species at Pont Lobos include: Anise Swallowtail, Checkered White, California Dogface, Moss’s Elfin, Brown Elfin, Western Pine Elfin, Silvery Blue, Smith’s Blue, Variable Checkerspot, Gabb’s Checkerspot, Coronis Fritillary, California Tortoiseshell, West Coast Lady, American Lady, California Sister, Propertius Duskywing, Fiery Skipper, Rural Skipper, Umber Skipper, Sandhill Skipper and Sachem.

If you happen to spot any other species in the Reserve, please email the authors.



Western Tailed-Blue



Woodland Skipper



Common Checkered-Skipper



Common (California) Ringlets



Western Tiger Swallowtail



Orange Sulphur

Photo of Western Tailed-Blue, Common (California) Ringlets and Orange Sulphur by Chris Tenney. All other photos this page by Jan Austin

Monarchs losing their realm

By Connie Masotti

Many agencies, including California State Parks, are worried about declining Monarch numbers in the West. Point Lobos is one of the various places in Monterey County where Monarchs are counted every year around Thanksgiving and New Year.

According to the Xerces Society, the long-term decline has been linked to such factors as habitat loss and degradation, pesticide, climate change and other pressures on the migratory cycle not yet fully understood.

On Nov. 12, 1990, 3,000 Monarchs were counted at the Whalers Knoll overwintering site at Point Lobos. As a volunteer with the Xerces Society and their Western Monarch Counts in 2013, I helped to count 486 Monarchs clustered in a meadow around Whalers Knoll. In the last six years as a volunteer and the last two years as Monterey County regional coordinator for Western Monarch Counts, I can report no Monarchs have been discovered at this overwintering site, better known as No. 3186.

This is sadly not surprising. The 2017-18 Western Monarch Counts conducted by Xerces found that Monarch numbers dropped 97 percent from the year before. Numbers statewide remained about this level last year. And reports from contacts in the breeding habitats across the West have scientists and advocates crossing fingers that the counts will not dip lower this year.

While everyone wants to help, most people do not realize that Monarchs are not the simple creatures that we think

them to be. Monarchs have much in common with the fairytale character Goldilocks, who wanted everything “just right.” And that Goldilocks habitat for Monarchs is very different for an overwintering habitat such as Point Lobos versus a breeding habitat which should be more than five miles from the coast and the overwintering site.

Go to scientific sites such as xerces.org and MonarchJointVenture.org to learn all the wonderful nuances of the Monarch. There will also be information about the native milkweeds and other plants that can be planted to encourage them.

Will there be any Monarchs this year at the Point Lobos overwintering site?

Hard to know, but the trees that fell in 2019 around Whalers have made the wind protection that Monarchs need while overwintering an issue. Fewer fogs, very few nectar plants and warmer temperatures overnight at the site may have stacked the deck against the Monarchs. But I will always be hopeful and looking for those wonderful butterflies.

Connie Masotti is a docent at Point Lobos.
Her email address is conniemasotti@msn.com



The way they were: Until fairly recently, clusters of Monarchs like this were a familiar sight on the Monterey Peninsula and Point Lobos. Photo by Chuck Bancroft.



Reg Henry, a docent, is editor of the Point Lobos Magazine.

His email address is regwriter43@gmail.com

The worst of times, the best of times

by Reg Henry

History records that in the year 1816 the world suffered what became known as “the year without a summer.” A volcano in Indonesia – Mount Tambora – had exploded with tremendous force the previous year, sending ash circulating around the world and cutting off sunlight.

The result was crop failures around the hemisphere, food shortages, epidemics, deaths and snowstorms in June and July. In Switzerland, hunkering down put Mary Shelley in such a melancholy mood that she wrote “Frankenstein.”

As we all know, history was back at its writing desk in 2020 and only the nature of the calamity was different. This time a pandemic exploded. Many of the same litany of ills soon overtook the world, with shortages of toilet paper thrown in as a modern touch. No throne was left unaffected.

Although snow in June was not a feature of 2020, this was the Year Without Normality. That was the case at Point Lobos too, which was closed off and on three times for a total shut down of about three and a half months. The docent corps had to stay away, and State Parks, docent leadership and the Point Lobos Foundation strived to keep optimism and interest alive.

COVID-19 wasn’t the only reason for closures. Wildfires raged in the district, requiring Highway One to be kept clear for emergency vehicles and turning the air quality into a fair impersonation of 1816. As many scientists believe climate change linked to human activity is behind the upsurge of wildfires in California and elsewhere, humanity arguably has devised its own Frankenstein monster.

But history teaches lessons about resilience. And like many ill winds that blow, some good occurred in 2020. The animals appeared to love the general absence of people at the Reserve. When the people were away, the cats came out to play. As related elsewhere in this issue, Laura Franklin, on a PLF-sponsored project to survey land mammals, caught on camera three mountain lions taking a stroll.

In an abnormal year of tumult and stress, places like the Point Lobos State Natural Reserve became more important as oases of calm. In this edition of the magazine, we have not let the big picture eclipse small wonders, even if we must peer out of masks to see them.

We have taken as our text that old Sunday school hymn in praise of divine creation: “All things wise and wonderful, all creatures great and small.” We recently focused on whales and otters in this magazine. Today we recognize the small creatures that are great in their own way: butterflies and bees.

In their enduring beauty, we find reassurance that the Year Without Normality is not the Year Without Hope.



Joan K. Brennan has loved Point Lobos since visiting as a child. She is currently developing a business to combine professional development with the benefits of being in nature. Her professor at San Francisco State University, Gretchen LeBuhn, assisted in developing this article.

The author's email address is joankbrennan@gmail.com

Point Lobos abuzz

by Joan K. Brennan

Visitors to Point Lobos often enjoy wildlife sightings of birds and marine mammals, but if they pause to look closer they may discover another type of wildlife: bees! These essential pollinators include a multitude of species far beyond the well-known honeybee — California has approximately 1,600 species of native bees.

Bees are the most important pollinator of native and crop plants in most habitats, including the California coastal region. The Reserve is bee-friendly, home to nearly 400 plant species in a variety of plant communities that include coastal scrub, coastal prairies, coastal bluffs, forests of Monterey pines and stands of Monterey cypress.

Two great places to view the spring and summer blooms (and the bees that pollinate them) are the trail from Whalers Cove out to Coal Shute Point, and the Bird Island Trail. Both of these trails are flanked by many species of wildflowers including stands of bee-favorites ceanothus (*Ceanothus thyrsiflorus*), dune buckwheat (*Eriogonum parvifolium*) and lizard tail (*Eriophyllum staechadifolium*).

Some native bees resemble honeybees and some look nothing like them. The native bees you may see at Point Lobos range from the huge yellow and black bumble bee *Bombus vosnesenskii*, which can be the size

of your thumb, down to the tiny, metallic green-black *Ceratina nanula* that is the size of a grain of rice.

Native bees do not form large hives like honeybees do and the majority of native species are solitary, meaning they live alone in individual nests. Some native bees do form hives. Bumble bees live in colonies consisting of a queen and female workers who forage for nectar and pollen and care for the young. However, their colonies are generally only 50 to several hundred bees, not tens of thousands like the honeybee.

Native bees make their nests in various locations. Ground nesters excavate burrows in patches of bare ground or exposed cliff face while cavity nesters make their nests in old tree trunks, hollow stems of dead brush or grasses, or other wood.

Some of the most common native bees that you may see at Point Lobos and nearby areas such as Fort Ord include:

Ultra Green Bees (*Agapostemon texanus*): About half the size of a honeybee, these bees are a spectacular bright, metallic green. The females are all green; the males have a black and yellow striped thorax and the same brilliant green abdomen.

Small Carpenter Bees (*Ceratina species*): These small, slender bees are a metallic green-black and nest in dead wood, stems



Member of the *Diadasia* genus.

or pith. They are closely related to the very large Carpenter bee (*Xylocopa* sp.) that you might find nesting in a wooden fence.

Yellow-Faced Bees (*Hylaeus maritimus*): These small, shiny, black bees have a white face that gives them a “masked” look. These bees are interesting because unlike most other bees, they do not have scopa. Scopa are patches of hair used to carry pollen. These bees transport their pollen in a part of their stomach called the crop.

Diadasia Bees belong to a genus of medium-sized, fuzzy, often gold and black bees that are oligolectic, meaning they specialize on only one or a few species of flower.

Sweat Bees (*Lasioglossum* species): These bees are often the most common bees in a habitat, but are frequently overlooked because of their small size. *Lasioglossum* are closely related to the genera *Agapostemon*. The members of this family are commonly called “sweat bees” because they are known to be attracted to human sweat, which they drink for its salt content.

You may also see the familiar fuzzy form of the bumble bee. Several species are native to California and the species common to the Central Coast are:

Yellow-Faced Bumble Bees (*Bombus vosnesenskii*): The most common bumble bee species in this area. As the name reflects, you can identify B. vos by its yellow face. Interestingly, this bee is named after the Russian scientist Ilya Vosnesensky, who came on an expedition to California from 1839-1849 and collected many previously unknown species of plants and animals.

Red-Belted Bumble Bees (*Bombus rufocinctus*): This bee has a black face, yellow and black stripes, and often has a stripe of reddish hairs on its abdomen. This species has many different color forms and the bees from Washington and Oregon have different color patterns from what we



Red-Belted Bumble Bee (Photos by Nevin Cullen).

find here.

Bees are ecologically important as pollinators of crops and plants but they are also an indicator of ecosystem health and serve as a source of food for other animals. As bees travel from flower to flower collecting nectar and pollen for their young, they carry pollen from one flower to another, which pollinates the flowers. While there are other pollinators such as hummingbirds and flies, the majority of wildflowers at Point Lobos are pollinated by bees.

Some of the biggest threats to native bees are habitat loss, invasive plants, pesticides and climate change. Habitat loss results from the development of formerly vacant or wild land, landscaping and invasive plant species that crowd out the flower species that bees forage on.

For my master's degree in Ecology at San Francisco State University, I conducted a study at Fort Ord on the effect of coastal habitat restoration on native bees. In areas where the Park Service had removed large areas of invasive ice plant (*Carpobrotus species*) and planted native dune plants such as dune buckwheat (*Eriogonum parvifolium*), mock heather (*Ericameria ericoides*), and bush lupine (*Lupinus arboreus*), we found an overall greater number of bees and also a wider variety of bee species. Restoration creates a “Field of Dreams” effect for bees – when you restore it, they will come!

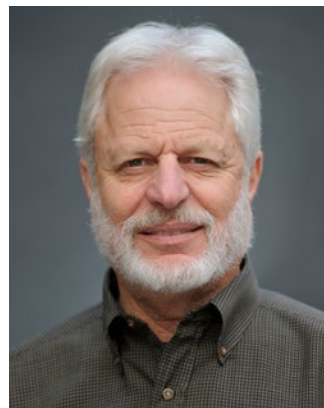
As my work in Fort Ord showed, preserving and restoring native habitat — as Point Lobos does — is important and effective. You can also help bees in your own garden by providing floral and nesting resources.

If you are interested in learning more about bees in California, I recommend the “Field Guide to Common Bees of California” by Gretchen LeBuhn and Noel Pugh and “The Bees in your Backyard” by Joseph S. Wilson and Olivia Messenger Carril. And both adults and kids can participate in a community science project on pollination by joining the Great Sunflower Project (www.GreatSunflower.org).



Honeybee and Yellow-Faced Bumble Bee on an Italian thistle (Photo by Chuck Bancroft).





Chuck Bancroft spent 31 of his 35-year career as a State Parks Ranger at Point Lobos. In retirement, he still does programs and nature walks for members of the Point Lobos Foundation.

His email address is sparkystarkweather@gmail.com.

Let's take a closer look!

by Chuck Bancroft

As a brand new ranger in 1977, I got my first real camera, a Nikon FM with a 105 mm macro lens. I used Kodachrome 64 and settled in to learn what I was doing. After training while assigned to the Mendocino area, I was transferred to southern California to Topanga State Park and Will Rogers State Historic Park.

Los Angeles Pierce College is in the San Fernando Valley. They have a most remarkable photojournalism school. Most of the classes I took were black-and-white themes and I learned how to develop and print my images. For two plus years I worked and took a class each semester. I did get better.

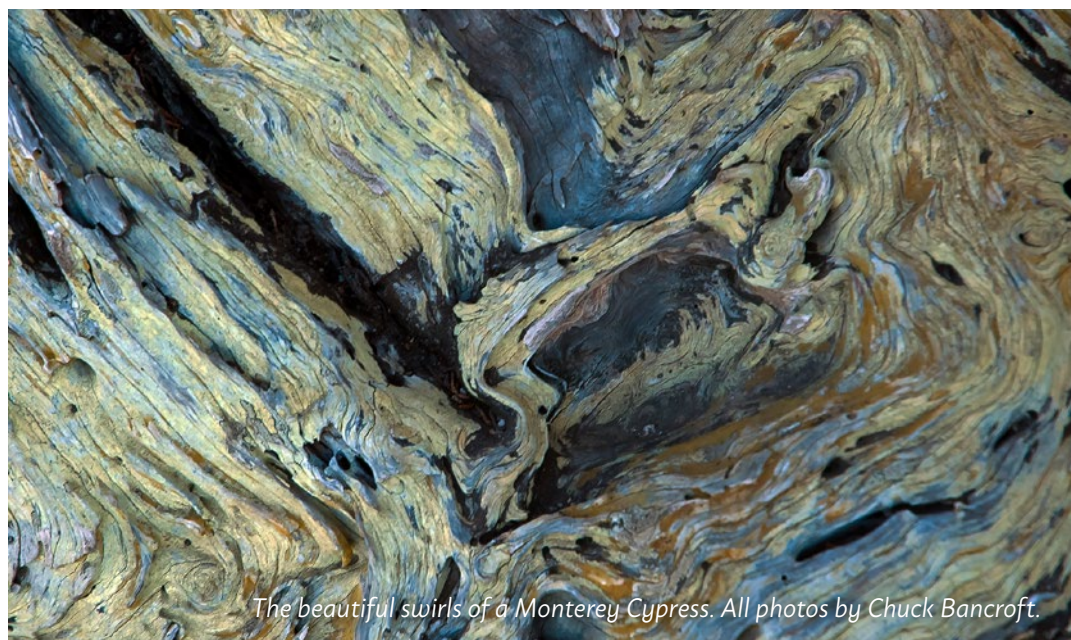
My good fortune brought me to Point Lobos in January 1981. Point Lobos and the Big Sur coast are among the many incredible landscapes around the world that invite photographers to experience their uniqueness.

I can imagine my local heroes — Ansel Adams, Edward Weston, Bob Kolbrener and John Sexton — out on the trails with their large format cameras patiently waiting for just the right light so they could capture this landscape in black and white. Oh, they also had their talent and discerning eye for the perfect images. One can only dream.

As a ranger I was now learning about all the flora and fauna of the Reserve. Camera in hand I would take pictures to document what I was learning about. Can you imagine waiting two weeks to get the slides back and see the mistakes you made?

Along came the digital world and I got my first digital camera — a little simple point and shoot. I did graduate to better cameras that now include a Nikon D300 and D200. My lenses are an 18-70 mm wide angle, 60 mm macro, and 80-400 mm telephoto.

The subjects that I really like best are close-ups of wildflowers, butterflies, insects, mushrooms and images that are more abstract and unidentifiable. One of my favorite images of all time is found in the Allan Memorial Grove. On the trail, go left at the fork and around the cliff overlook to the stone steps on the north side. Overhanging the first step is



The beautiful swirls of a Monterey Cypress. All photos by Chuck Bancroft.



Flowering Jimson Weed.

a wonderful windswept and contorted Monterey cypress. The burl at the base of the tree is a magnificent collection of lichens and colorful swirls. Take time to inspect this and, as you venture down the steps, enjoy the hanging gardens of the succulent *Dudleya farinosa*.

Where my wife Sheryl and I live there is a big field behind us. A unique plant grows in profusion: *Datura* or Jimson Weed. The flower will be in a tight spiral and slowly opens into a beautiful bloom. When mature, the pod is compactly filled with big black seeds that create the opposite texture from the flower. These flowers are reminiscent of paintings by the American artist Georgia O'Keeffe (1887-1986).

One of my many adventures takes me to the Carmel River State Beach and the Carmel River Lagoon and Wetland Natural Preserve. Birding is exciting; you never know what you'll see. The lagoon is a major stopover for both spring and fall migrations. During the winter months, 50 or more Snowy Plovers can be found hunkered down in the footsteps of visitors.

At times, the Elegant and Caspian Terns come by the hundreds. When startled, they take flight and circle and circle, calling loudly above the lagoon until things calm down and they resume their resting on the smooth surface



Seed pod of the Datura.



Pelican feathers, stunning even in death.

of the water. One day in the fall I was on the trail above the beach looking for different angles to photograph the birds. At that time of year, hundreds of pelicans soar about and then bathe in the lagoon. I came across a poor pelican lying in state. I always have both cameras so I switched to the macro lens and studied the feathers of this poor bird.

The South Bank Trail is just off Carmel Valley Road. Beginning at Rancho San Carlos Road and heading west you eventually end up in Palo Corona Regional Park with its wildflowers, butterflies, a great variety of brush species and trees, and, of course, lots of birds.

The California buckeye is quite prevalent in one section. The beautiful flowers of this tree in spring are beyond description and in the fall the now leafless tree's buckeye ball fruits look like so many undecorated Christmas tree ornaments. I spent some time studying the intertwined branches and the base and root systems coming off the hill. On one tree I saw this incredible mixture at the base of the tree. So many different planes, angles, lines and textures.

I hope you have enjoyed my ramblings and the variety of places where I like to wander. Amazing images appear when you really take the time to stop and see the "forest through the trees."



The intricate patterns at the base of a buckeye tree.



Laura Franklin is a graduate student at California State University Monterey Bay and her study was funded by the Point Lobos Foundation.

Her email is lfranklin@csumb.edu.

Land mammal study brings Eureka moment

by Laura Franklin

It's late May in Point Lobos and I'm crouched on my knees on the Bird Island Trail, hunched in a position that I probably haven't attempted since I was 11. One hand is fiddling with a pair of calipers while the other holds a field guide open — I'm trying to decide what sort of paw print is in the dirt in front of me.

Why am I here? Well, while there is a growing body of information regarding the shorebird and marine mammal populations in the Reserve, far less is known about Point Lobos' terrestrial mammals.

There is no published research that explores the species richness or distribution of the terrestrial mammalian species here; the relationship between their behavior and human activity in the Reserve is also not well understood. Filling this knowledge gap will serve as a benchmark for Point Lobos' land managers to better balance wildlife protection with outdoor recreation. So, that's why I'm here — to find some answers.

During my three-month graduate internship with the Point Lobos Foundation,

I embarked on an incredible journey to observe and document the Reserve's more elusive residents. My mission was threefold: 1) develop a baseline inventory of medium and large terrestrial mammals; 2) design a repeatable protocol that could be used to monitor these species annually and collect comparative data; and 3) produce a report making recommendations for future wildlife and land management.

Mammals are difficult to study because of their low densities, nocturnal habits and wariness toward humans. I spent days poring over journals that would give me the best sense of how I could non-invasively track the species at Point Lobos. After much trial and error, I settled on using a combination of wildlife cameras and track/scat surveys.

In addition to rotating a series of wildlife cameras around the Reserve, I looked for prints, scat, scent scratchings and fur. I scoured the game trails — rugged paths made by animals — and where the animals went, I went.



A coyote (at left) and three mountain lions, the last in line only barely visible as eyes in the night.



Map shows where cameras were set up in the Reserve. The main trails are orange, the game trails are red and the camera sites are yellow.

After setting up 54 camera sites along game trails and three monthly scat and track surveys of the main trails, I detected eight different species: coyote, black-tailed deer, bobcat, opossum, raccoon, striped skunk, long-tailed weasel and, very late in my research, mountain lion.

On a sunny September afternoon following a week-long hiatus from the Reserve due to the Dolan Fire, I was finally able to check on my last set of cameras. I arrived at my last camera site for the day, sat down in the tall grass and pulled out my laptop. I opened up the camera, pulled out the memory card and began scrolling through the photos. Bobcat. Jogger. Bobcat. Coyote.

The next picture was harder to tell. I squinted and shifted, hoping that the glare of the screen would go away. "MOUNTAIN LION!" I stood up and yelled, jumping up and down in excitement. Even though every day at the Reserve had been special to me, this was the moment I had been waiting for.

From the photos I identified three individual mountain lions — most likely a mother and her two sub-adult cubs — that had traveled through the Reserve during the dark morning hours of Aug. 30. Mountain lions move through what are called home ranges — large territories where they

utilize a wide variety of habitat for cover and hunting — which can be anywhere from eight to 400 square miles. Although they are probably not permanent residents, it is thrilling that this majestic family of predators can, at least to some degree, call Point Lobos home.

Carnivorous mammals are fundamental drivers of important natural processes and have wide ripple effects within ecosystems. Documenting and understanding their distribution is important for many reasons. Mountain lions and bobcats are of particular importance, as research shows that isolation due to habitat fragmentation causes inbreeding and genetic loss that pushes small populations closer to extinction. This problem is so pressing that in April the California Fish and Game Commission voted to extend the legal protection of the Central Coast and Southern California populations of mountain lions back to "endangered" under the California Endangered Species Act.

The summer of 2020, although a strange time for all of us, was one of discovery and growth for Point Lobos. My research will be used by State Parks in an Environmental Condition Assessment that will help land managers to monitor progress in maintaining and restoring our ecosystems here in the unique and beloved Point Lobos State Natural Reserve.



Notes from the Docent Log

Compiled by Beth Kurzava

Wouldn't It Be Nice (*The Beach Boys*)

Wouldn't it be nice if we were open
And we wouldn't have to wait so long?
And wouldn't it be nice to be together
In our cool reserve where we belong?

You know it's gonna make it that much better
When we wear our green jackets together

Wouldn't it be nice there in the morning
Greeting all the folks the whole day through?
And after having spent all day together
Be dreaming of the great things that we do

Happy times together we've been spending
I wish those days were never ending
Oh, wouldn't it be nice?

Fred Brown, 06/16/2020

So much of the training for Docent Class 41 got rained out last year that we named our class "The Raindrop." We were disappointed because Point Lobos had to close for a couple of weeks. Never could we have imagined that we were fortunate compared to this year's Class 42.

We missed seeing each other and decided to get together on Zoom to share what we've been doing. We heard some great updates on wildlife sightings and hikes in other places but can't wait to wear our green vests and jackets again!

Susanne Nilsson, 06/12/2020

Out at Whalers Cove and Bird Island Sectors this morning. At Whalers, a beautiful, sunny, cool day — felt like autumn. Several divers, not much wildlife evident. Spied a kayaker, then saw him gesticulating with hands, then arms, then saw him talk to kelp — it was Daniel Williford, a Point Lobos interpreter for California State Parks, doing a session of a distance learning program for teachers and students, of course! I could feel his enthusiasm from the trail. No Black Oystercatchers around, and all Great Blue Herons off their nests. Later at Hidden Beach/Bird Island, air was warmer. Saw the (later reported) elephant seal on the beach, partly covered with sand, and didn't take a close look — duh! Bumped into another docent with guests and had a nice chat. No Peregrine Falcons evident, but got my first look at a Say's Phoebe this season, just past the bridge. Regarding visitors wearing masks, I offered lots of thank-yous and a few reminders. A great morning!

Jim Rurka, 9/24/2020

posted on Slack, an app docents use to communicate



Class 41 Zooming together.



China Cove

Good to get back to Point Lobos yesterday, despite the funky air. Otters lolled picturesquely in the waters around Bird Island, mock heather in bloom adorned the trails, brush rabbits ventured out to nibble and birds were everywhere. A lone Peregrine Falcon stood sentinel on the ridge snag. Pelicans rhythmically skimmed the still waters. Woodpeckers, jays and nuthatches enlivened the pine forest with their idiosyncratic voices. And two kingfishers deftly disputed the waters off Gibson Beach.

Rick Pettit, 09/12/2020

When the Reserve opens up again, go take a look at Granite Point. It's nearly mustard-free right now. It looks beautiful, and the asters and corethrogyne are blooming with glowing lustrous small pale violet and white flowers. Plantophile Docent Peggy Grier once mentioned that in all the Reserve, Granite Point is so beautiful that it's garden-like. I couldn't agree more.

Katherine Spitz, 08/29/2020



California aster.

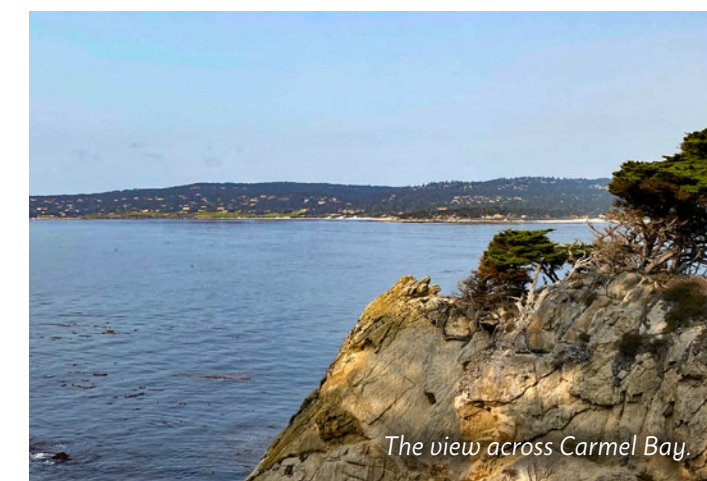
Now for a feel-good story: The waters in Whalers Cove remain open for Southern sea otters to frolic, eat and sleep. On Thursday, a mom and pup were tasting the selection of echinoderms and mollusks that she found on the floor of the cove. The youngster was more eager to play than to watch mom whack away at the reluctant lunch offerings. Using the same stone, she dove and retrieved the luncheon specials over two dozen times. School is never out for young otters. Could have watched all day.

Fred Brown, 07/03/2020

Knowing that today was the last day Point Lobos was to be open till some undetermined future date, I went to the Reserve for one last visit. Early enough to be mostly alone, I saw two pairs of Great Blue Herons building nests, two ochre sea stars in the mussel beds off Coal Chute Point, large sea anemones, mother and baby harbor seals on the beach and in the water of Whalers Cove, brilliant sunlight and puffy clouds.

I also saw other docents with the same desire to say goodbye to Point Lobos for however long and to take the beauty home to quarantine.

Robert Grace, 04/10/2020



The view across Carmel Bay.

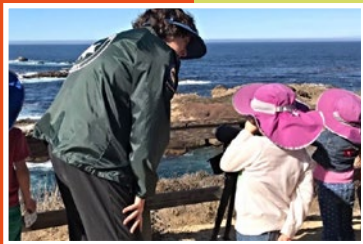
Great to be back in the Reserve this afternoon. The view across Carmel Bay from North Shore trail was delightful. Couldn't quite see any golfers on Pebble, but Carmel Beach and the course were clear. Not our favorite deep blue sky, but best in a while. The official Monterey Bay Air Resources District air quality monitor for the Peninsula is located on Highway 68 near Laguna Seca golf course. I'm thinking that air quality on the coast near the water, particularly at the Reserve, is considerably different. Let's hope it continues to improve.

Loren Hughes, 09/15/2020



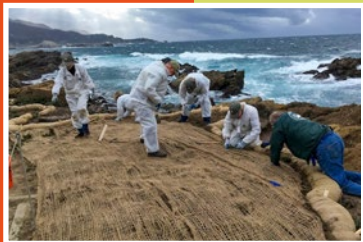
Point Lobos is a place of refuge for people during these difficult times.

Celebrate the season of giving by lending your support to the Point Lobos Foundation through the MCGives! campaign.



The Point Lobos Foundation is delighted to be a participant in the 2020 Monterey County Gives! campaign. Your year-end gift goes further through the pro-rata match each gift receives. Your support funds our education programs, school transportation programs, ADA access, habitat restoration and invasive species removal, and our dynamic docent interpretive programs. This year's program runs November 12 through midnight December 31, 2020.

Donate at montereycountygives.com/lobos or mail your check to Community Foundation for Monterey County Attn: MCGives!, 2354 Garden Road, Monterey CA 93940.



Checks must be made out to CFMC or MCGives and designate Point Lobos Foundation as your charity on the memo line.

MONTEREY COUNTY GIVES!
Joining Together for Big Ideas



Monterey County Gives! is a philanthropy-inspiring partnership between the Monterey County Weekly, the Community Foundation for Monterey County, and the Monterey Peninsula Foundation.



Photo by Dave Evans.

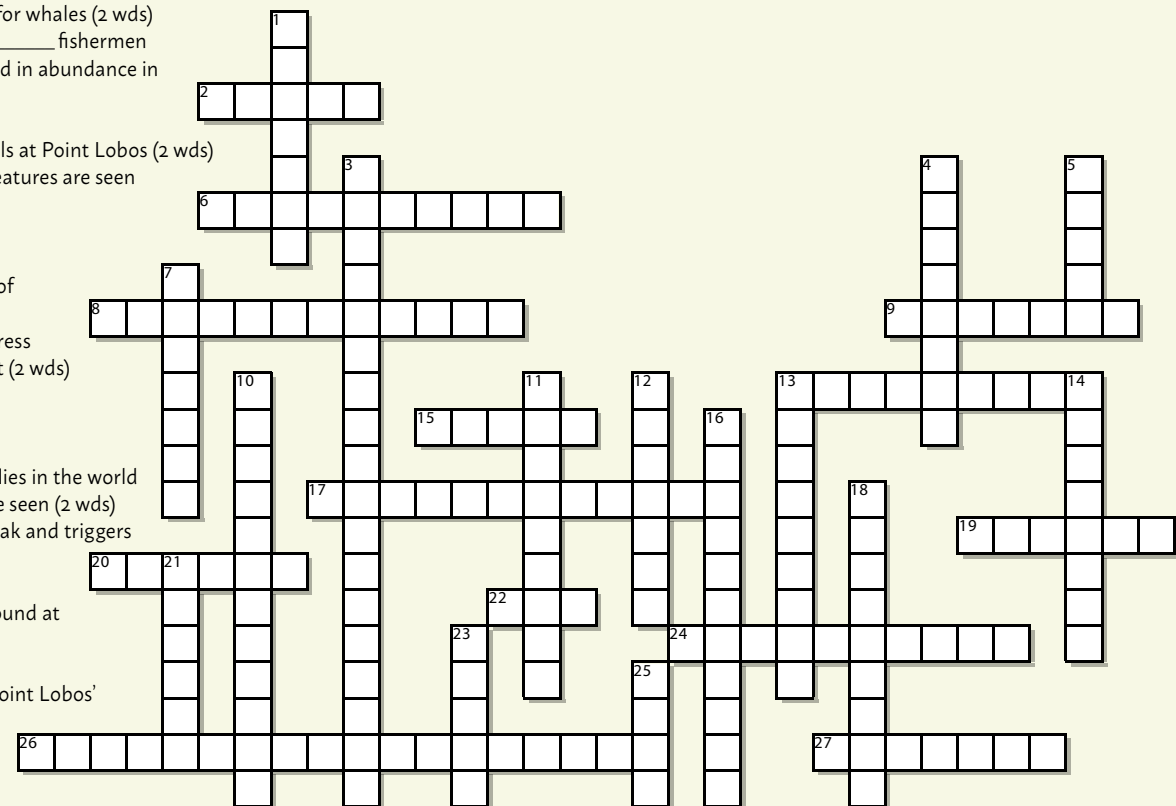


Across

- 2 Most common hummingbird found at Point Lobos
- 6 Often mistaken as moss by visitors (2 wds)
- 8 Where whalers used to watch for whales (2 wds)
- 9 Whalers Cabin was built by _____ fishermen
- 13 Plant in the sumac family found in abundance in Point Lobos (2 wds)
- 15 State bird of California
- 17 Lizard found darting along trails at Point Lobos (2 wds)
- 19 Deposits from these cultural features are seen throughout Point Lobos
- 20 Small lynx
- 22 Geese flying formation
- 24 _____ forms southern area of Carmel Bay (2 wds)
- 26 Nest made of sticks in the Cypress Grove could be a _____ nest (2 wds)
- 27 Flies in a squadron

Down

- 1 One of the best known butterflies in the world
- 3 Shore bird usually heard before seen (2 wds)
- 4 An oil that is found in poison oak and triggers an allergic reaction in many
- 5 Food for deer, jays & fox
- 7 Sedimentary rock formation found at Point Lobos
- 10 AKA cougar, puma (2 wds)
- 11 This isn't a plant, but creates Point Lobos' wettest forest (2 wds)
- 12 Who screeches at night? (2 wds)
- 13 Sits on his very own snag near Bird Island
- 14 A bird who says his own name
- 16 The scent of a skunk in the tree could be a _____ owl (2 wds)
- 18 Very busy black and yellow insect native to CA (2 wds)
- 21 Has larvae parasitic to bees (2 wds)
- 23 Spanish for wolves
- 25 A bird that is also a toy



Puzzle by Ann Pendleton

Answers at pointlobos.org/crossword

Acknowledgments

Memorials, tributes and grants May 1, 2020 - October 15, 2020

BIRTHDAYS	IN HONOR	GRANTS & RESTRICTED GIFTS	IN MEMORIAM	JOE VARGO MEMORIAL FUND
For the birthday of Shoub-Ju <i>Helen Ju</i> <i>Grace Ju</i> <i>Shirley Keenan</i>	In honor of Sandy Hale <i>Michael Cary</i>	Experience Point Lobos 2020 <i>Pebble Beach Company Foundation</i>	In memory of Claire Louise Reordan <i>Nancy Spear</i>	In memory of Cyndie Adams <i>Mickey McGuire</i>
For the 100 th birthday of Jean Kukulan Reilly <i>Annis and Nick Kukulan</i>	In honor of Maureen Mason <i>Eric Stauffer</i>	For Reopening Safely <i>Parks California</i>	In memory of Don Patton <i>Gari Patton</i>	In memory of Donald S. Williamson <i>Nancy Collins</i> <i>Mary and Tim Conway</i> <i>Rosa Beth and Terry Gibson</i> <i>Hans Lehmann</i> <i>Suzanne Taunt</i>
For the birthday of Susan McDonald <i>Rachael McDonald</i>	In honor of all docents <i>Suzanne Taunt</i>	For Restoration Work <i>Nancy Eccles and Homer M. Hayward Family Foundation</i>	In memory of Donna Hutchinson <i>Susan Stempson</i>	
IN CELEBRATION	In honor of Eric and Mary Jo Brazil <i>Sally Brazil and Don Bendernagel*</i>	For Special Exhibits <i>Lawrence Smith and Grace Rogers Fund</i>	In memory of Doug Winans <i>Catherine Winans</i>	SISTER ANNA VOSS FUND
In celebration of the 17th birthday & senior year of Thalia Anne Hubbard <i>Mom, Dad & Niko</i>	In honor of Vicki Duke <i>Janet Rodgers*</i>	For General Support <i>Anonymous donor of Tides Foundation Arkay Foundation</i>	In memory of Dr. Ralph Williams <i>Ann Wall</i>	Donations made to the Sister Anna Voss Memorial Fund, and the income generated by it, are restricted to the education and direct support of the Point Lobos Docent Program and the school education outreach programs. <i>Molly Hammerstrom</i> <i>Holly Hein</i> <i>Sally and George Hoover</i> <i>Wayne Kelley</i>
In celebration of Dale and Barbara Hopwood's anniversary <i>Dale and Barbara Hopwood</i>	In honor of Bettye, Linda, Bob, Connie, Sunny, Pete & Bonny <i>Edward Dickson and Peggy Gill*</i>		In memory of Janet Cornford <i>Roy Cornford</i>	
In celebration of James and Molly Sears' anniversary <i>Robert and Janet Canning</i>	In honor of Kit Armstrong <i>Hank and Julie Armstrong*</i>		In memory of Johnny Minsoo Chun <i>Kelly Davidian</i>	In memory of Joe Vargo <i>Sue Addleman</i> <i>Tom and Eileen Fukunaga</i> <i>Stella Rabaut</i>
In celebration of Betsy DeLong <i>Miles DeLong</i>	In honor of The Schilling and Thompson families <i>Cynthia McAra*</i>		In memory of Julie A. Floyd <i>E.Scott Royce</i>	
	In honor of William Bombeck <i>Matthew and Jackie Bombeck*</i>		In memory of June Blum <i>Antoinette Blum</i>	In memory of Carl Voss <i>Carol Voss</i>
	In honor of Christina Theodore-Oklota <i>Elizabeth Hoover-Story*</i>		In memory of Louis and Eugenia VanTyle <i>Scott Van Tyle</i>	In memory of Sister Anna Voss <i>Henry Imwalle</i>
			In memory of Mark Hild <i>Mary and Tim Conway</i>	
			In memory of Mary and Allan Hudson <i>Margaret Hudson</i>	
			In memory of Mary Whalen <i>Frank Pajerski</i>	
			In memory of Paul E. Hansen <i>Paula Hansen</i>	
			In memory of Putnam Payne <i>Thomas Payne</i>	
			In memory of Richard M. Jacobs <i>Linda R. Jacobs</i>	

*Tributes made during the 2019 MCGives! campaign.



80 Garden Court
Suite 106
Monterey, CA 93940
866.338.7227
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a gift that gives back!*



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