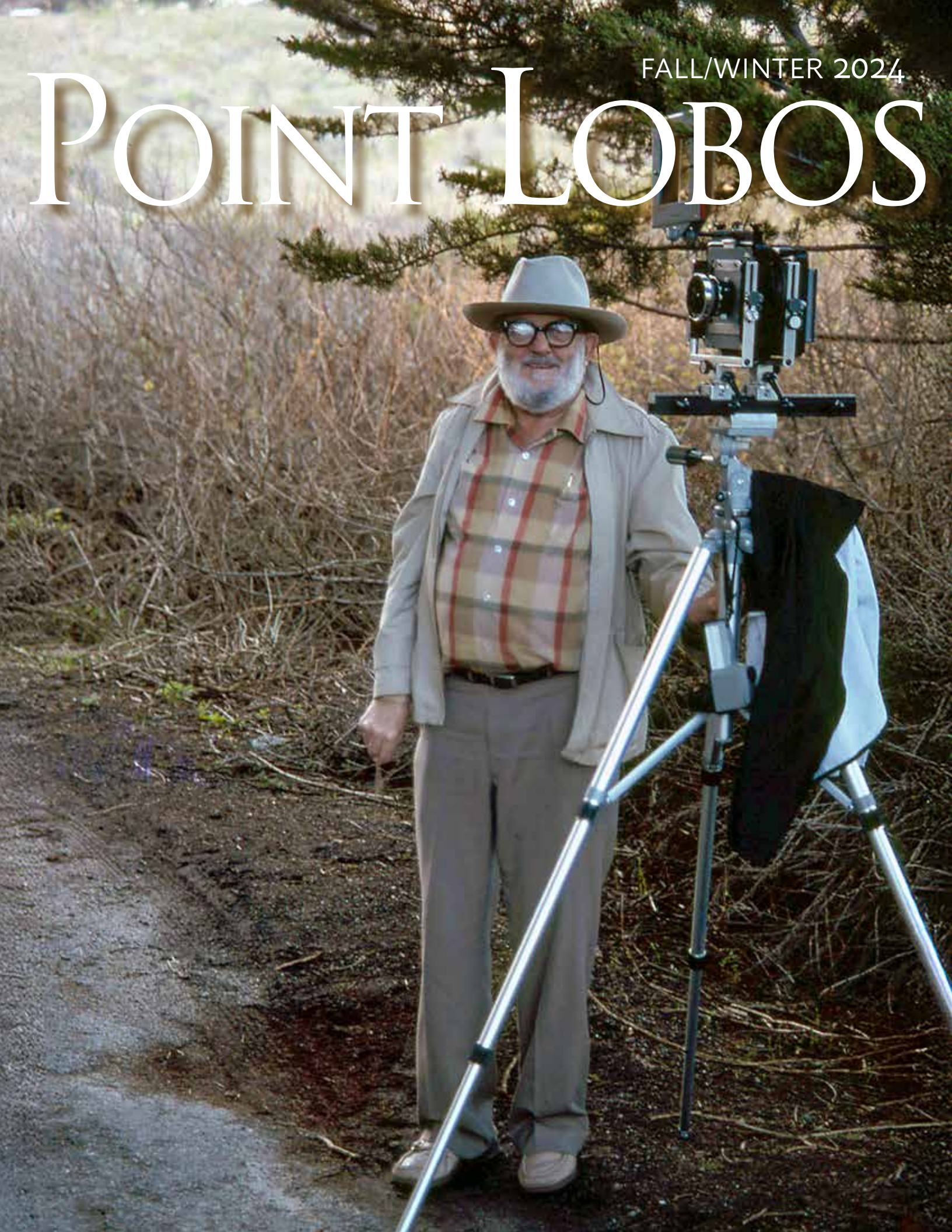


FALL/WINTER 2024

# 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](http://pointlobos.org)



Mealtime for the otters. Photo by Susan Lambert.

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Cover: Ansel Adams at Point Lobos, 1977. Photo by Doug McCall, from his private collection.

Center Spread: A flock of pelicans at the mouth of Carmel River. Photo by Chuck Bancroft.



*Steffanie Gamecho, the PLF Executive Director, made a career change from private-sector corporate strategy and marketing to nonprofit strategy and business consulting two years ago. A lifelong nature enthusiast, volunteer and conservationist, Steffanie has spent time in Thailand, Costa Rica, Mexico and the U.S. working on volunteer conservation projects. She has three adult children — Pete, Elena, and Morgan.*

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# Preserving a legacy

## Different time, similar opportunities

*by Steffanie Gamecho*

Point Lobos State Natural Reserve has a long and rich history of conservation, driven by individuals whose passion and foresight helped shape the land we enjoy today. Recently, our archivist docents shared a piece of this history with me: field notes kept by George Vaughan, whose Master Plan Report in the 1930s designed the future for Point Lobos. The notes, filled with photographs and meticulous details in Vaughan's distinctive handwriting, felt like a portal to another time, revealing the care he gave to the Reserve's preservation.

Vaughan wasn't alone in his dedication. Frederick Law Olmsted Jr., a renowned landscape architect, worked alongside Vaughan in preserving Point Lobos' natural beauty. His father designed Central Park, but Olmsted Jr. extended his legacy by advocating for the protection of natural landscapes, including Point Lobos. His work reminds us that conservation is a long-term investment, one that spans generations.

John Campbell Merriam, a distinguished paleontologist, also recognized the value of preserving Point Lobos. His love for the natural world went beyond fossils and geology; he understood the importance of protecting ecosystems like the ones found here. His funding resources for Vaughan and Olmsted's work ensured that Point Lobos would be safeguarded from the rapid development threatening California's coast in the early 20th century.

Before these men, there was A.M. Allan, the property owner whose family sold the land to California State Parks. Did you know that he gated the property at Point Lobos and charged an entrance fee to minimize the growing pressures of over-visitation? Concerned that this special place would be

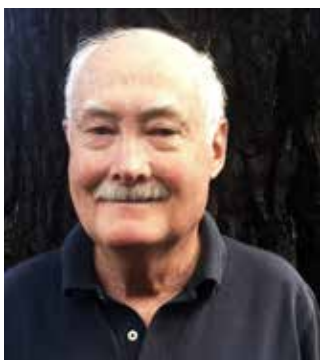
trampled by too many visitors, Allan took steps to protect it.

It is so profound and inspiring to me that almost 100 years ago, our predecessors faced some of the same considerations we face today. These individuals — protectors, planners, scientists, and funders — represent a critical intersection of opportunity and foresight. The groundwork they laid has allowed future generations, including us, to enjoy the beauty and wildlife of Point Lobos State Natural Reserve. Today, we stand at a similar crossroads. The Reserve is being "loved to death," as we say, with over-visitation straining the very resources we strive to protect.

Now, the torch is in our hands. It is up to us — the Point Lobos Foundation, our members, California State Parks, docents, funders and partners like ParkIT! — to be the stewards for future generations. We are actively working to build and fund the infrastructure needed to support sustainable visitation while preserving the land and wildlife that people have revered for more than 7,000 (recorded) years.

I am deeply thankful for the financial support we have received from our members, local businesses and grant-making organizations. Your generosity protects, conserves and safeguards the Reserve.

I invite you to join me in donating to the Point Lobos Foundation during the Monterey County Gives! campaign, running from Nov. 14 through Dec. 31. Please share this opportunity with your friends and family, so that together, we can ensure that Point Lobos remains a sanctuary for generations to come.



*Reg Henry, a Point Lobos Docent, is editor of the Point Lobos Magazine. In a newspaper career of more than 35 years, he worked at the Courier-Mail in Brisbane, Australia, The Times of London, the Pittsburgh (Pa.) Post-Gazette, and The Herald in Monterey, where he was the editor from 1988 through 1993.*

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# The photographers are given their due

by Reg Henry

Words come and go in the English language and in my observation these seem to have disappeared: “Say cheese” and “Watch the birdie.”

Older readers will recognize these words, which have nothing to do with dairy products or bird watching in nature. They used to be common directions that a photographer gave to his subjects after telling them to smile.

A great many photographs are taken at Point Lobos State Natural Reserve on any given day, mostly with cell phones, and oftentimes docents like me offer to take the photos for the visitors if they are twisting themselves like pretzels to take a selfie. Not once have I heard “Say cheese” or “Watch the birdie” from anyone.

Then there are the professional or aspiring photographers who are easily recognized by the huge lenses and other equipment they carry. All they need are pith helmets to look like they are on safari. I don’t think they say “Watch the birdie” either, especially as many take pictures of the actual birdies and it would be a silly thing to say in the circumstances.

As you may have guessed, the central theme of this fall/winter issue of the Point Lobos Foundation Magazine is photography and photographers at the Reserve, starting with the famous ones who visited in the past. They are photographers like Edward Weston, for whom Weston Beach is named.

If you are a longtime reader of the magazine, you may recognize the author of our lead story, Cynthia Wagner Weick, a docent and an academic who studies local art and artists. In the fall of 2019, she wrote about the famous painters who came to Point Lobos.

Her return is for me the fulfillment of a promise (usually I restrict my promises to ones made standing in front of an altar wearing a tuxedo). As I wrote at the time: “While our focus in this edition is on painters, everything I have said about how artists uncover greater truths also applies to photographers. In a magazine that regularly showcases wonderful photographs, we need no persuading that great photographers are also great artists. They will be given their due in a future edition.”

And here we are. I know, the future took a while to arrive but Point Lobos has a way of slowing down time. I hope you think this edition was worth the wait.

For those of you who are inspired amateurs and like taking photos with cell phones or conventional cameras, Docent Lisa Lapin has interviewed talented docents who know how to take great pictures and have tips for you about their favorite places to shoot. Their photos have regularly graced the pages of this magazine.

And how about those birdies?

Former Ranger Chuck Bancroft, one of our best and most prolific photographers over the years, focuses on kites in his column. You can’t fly kites in our park but we have kites that do their own flying.

Stan Dryden, a Point Lobos birder of soaring achievement, writes about the California Brown Pelicans, those fascinating pterodactyl lookalikes with the voluminous beaks.

Say cheese if you want to, but I want this magazine to make you smile naturally.





*Cynthia Wagner Weick is a professor emeritus at the University of the Pacific, where she taught in the business and engineering schools for 27 years and authored over 30 articles and books. Dr. Weick has a lifelong interest in art and art history. Now residing in Carmel, she teaches OLLI seminars, gives talks and writes on topics related to art in the Monterey Bay region. As a docent, she offers a monthly public walk focused on historical artists who were inspired at Point Lobos.*

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# Point Lobos through the aperture

Photography has a long tradition in the Reserve

by Cynthia Wagner Weick

Professional and amateur photographers visit Point Lobos daily — some sport multiple lenses of various sizes and others rely on cell phones. The roots of their craft extend back at least 140 years.

While Edward Weston is the photographer identified most closely with the Reserve, he is among several pioneers who captured its beauty: Carleton Watkins and William Edward Dasonville; Imogen Cunningham, who photographed Weston at Point Lobos in 1945; and Ansel Adams. These five talents demonstrate how photography evolved from a medium of documentation to one of fine art. Through their masterful power of observation, they enhance our ability to see Point Lobos and the world beyond.



*Imogen Cunningham, Edward Weston at Point Lobos, gelatin silver print,  
© 1945 ImogenCunningham Trust / [www.ImogenCunningham.com](http://www.ImogenCunningham.com)*



Carleton Watkins' (1829–1916) photograph of Old Veteran in the 1880s depicts the iconic tree's generous canopy and gnarled roots clinging to the granodiorite. His photographs throughout the American West in the 1860s to the 1890s were mainly documentary, as much of photography was at that time. "Cypress Tree at Point Lobos," however, hints at a change in the medium, as photographers endeavored to elevate their work as an art form — the tree casts an intriguing shadow behind, and the ocean expanse gives an infinite sense of the horizon.

The artistic shift away from documentation is further illustrated in the work of William Edward Dassonville (1879–1957), who was known for his portraiture, as well as mountain and coastal landscapes. His 1920 photograph of the Cypress Grove Trail leads the viewer on a winding atmospheric stroll through a natural archway towards gauzy cliffs of rock. This photograph is exemplary of the painterly and romantic pictorialist style that dominated photography in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Driven by prominent East Coast photographers, notably Alfred Stieglitz, pictorialists' techniques included using lens filters, manipulating negatives and printing with diffusion layers.



*William E. Dassonville, Point Lobos, c. 1920, gelatin silver print, The Cleveland Museum of Art, Gift of George Stephanopoulos*



Carleton Watkins, *Cypress Tree at Point Lobos*, 1883-1885, albumen print, Courtesy of the Phoebe A. Hearst Museum of Anthropology and the Regents of the University of California.

The medium soon took another turn that leveraged the camera's unique artistic capabilities. "Straight" or "direct" photography focused on sharp images, lines, shapes, textures and light. Among the first West Coast photographers to make the transition from a pictorialist to the straight approach was Imogen Cunningham (1883-1976). Her striking 1921 photograph "Succulents, Point Lobos," is detailed, precise, almost hyper-realistic. The oblong *Dudleya* leaves – ranging from white to varied shades of gray and black – lie on grainy, pitted rock. A vertical flower stem joins the two shapely succulent clumps.



Imogen Cunningham, *Succulents Point Lobos*, gelatin silver print, © 1921 Imogen Cunningham Trust / [www.ImogenCunningham.com](http://www.ImogenCunningham.com)

In 1932, Cunningham was among the founding members, along with Adams, Weston and several other prominent West Coast photographers, of the group called f/64, named for the small-sized camera aperture conducive to producing sharp images. Although the formal group was short-lived, its profound influence set the course of photography ever since.

A colorful personality and tireless artist, Cunningham experimented with various techniques and subjects throughout her 70-year career. She resisted attempts to analyze her instinctive approach to identifying what to photograph as well as to taking and developing pictures.

In addition to plants, she photographed many subjects in the United States and globally, arguably favoring people. "I like to think that the study of art means the cultivation of the eye, to try to acquire a vividness and intensity of perception," Cunningham wrote, "... Interpreting one's seeing magnifies the beauty in the world around us."<sup>1</sup>

While Cunningham's photos of Point Lobos are few in number, the Central Coast was among her favorite places to visit. She was drawn by the scenery and also the presence of her friends and colleagues Weston and Adams. She posed for a photograph with Adams at Point Lobos in 1969 and at his home in 1975, a year before she died.

<sup>1</sup> Martineau, Paul. *Imogen Cunningham: A Retrospective*. Los Angeles, CA, Getty Publications, 2020, p 11.



Ansel Adams, *Surf Point Lobos*, 1963, gelatin silver print, Collection Center for Creative Photography, University of Arizona: Ansel Adams Archive. © The Ansel Adams Publishing Rights Trust

Ansel Adams (1902-1984) created the 1963 photograph “Surf, Point Lobos” around the time he moved to the Carmel area from the San Francisco home he had lived in since childhood. The crashing waves are powerful, emotive, the spray leaping from the darkened ocean below and sky above. A camera’s shutter speed is rapid, but Adams’ images are timeless. And they are as much about feeling as they are vision. “A great photograph,” he said, “is one that fully expresses what one feels, in the deeper sense, about what is being photographed, and is, thereby, a true manifestation of what one feels about life in its entirety.”<sup>2</sup>

Adams was explicit about the technical aspects of his approach. While he chose subjects for their emotional impact and aesthetic qualities, his “Zone System” detailed a process that began even before opening the shutter, working backward from the final print he envisioned, step by step. His guidance remains seminal in the teaching of photography today.

Adams visited the Reserve often, and yet his photographs of Point Lobos are surprisingly sparse. Why? Mary Alinder, coauthor of Adams’ 1985 autobiography, noted that by the time he had moved to the Central Coast he was deeply immersed in environmentalism and education, among other activities, which left less time to make photographs. Alinder has also argued that he focused on photography beyond the Reserve out of deference to Edward Weston (1886-1958), Adams’ elder by 20 years, who had become as integrally linked to Point Lobos as Adams had to Yosemite.<sup>3</sup>

Given the success of Adams’ 1949 collection “My Camera in Yosemite Valley,” he recommended that Weston create a book of his own work at Point Lobos, which was published soon thereafter in 1950. “My Camera on Point Lobos” comprised photographs Weston took between 1929 and 1948, including “Cypress and Stone Crop,” from 1930. His natural collage of cypress deadwood curving around a rock, and dots of Dudleya, all situated against a darkened background, was abstract, just as he intended.

<sup>2</sup> Adams, Ansel and Mary Street Alinder. *Ansel Adams: An Autobiography*. New York, NY, New York Graphic Society Book. 1985, p 198.

<sup>3</sup> Pridgen, Andrew. *Why Ansel Adams never photographed his Central Coast home of Carmel*, SFGATE.com, March 19, 2022.





*Edward Weston, Cypress and Stone Crop, 1930, gelatin silver print, Center for Creative Photography, University of Arizona: Gift of Ansel and Virginia Adams. © Center for Creative Photography, Arizona Board of Regents*

Weston was an uncompromising artist, meticulous and disciplined. He “previsualized” a final print before clicking the shutter; however, in contrast to Adams’ theoretical and systematic doctrine, Weston described his approach as intuition based on experience.

He adhered to a mantra of simplicity throughout the photographic process and in his lifestyle. Weston employed a limited number of cameras, lenses and filters. His darkroom, still intact at his rustic home in the Carmel Highlands, is ascetic. Weston applied his approach to many subjects across the country, mostly landscapes. But Point Lobos drew him back again and again. His ashes were scattered on the beach that now bears his name.

His spirit remains. “If my work has vitality,” he wrote, “it is because I have done my part in revealing to others the living world around them, showing to them what their own untrained eyes had missed.”<sup>4</sup>

Carleton Watkins, Edward Dassonville, Imogen Cunningham, Ansel Adams and Edward Weston do more than convey the story of modern photography. The poet Mary Oliver expressed the keen sense of sight their stunning works impart in the poem “Sometimes.”<sup>5</sup> Her words offer guidance to us all.

*Instructions for living a life:*

*Pay attention.*

*Be astonished.*

*Tell about it.*

<sup>4</sup> Weston, Edward. *My Camera On Point Lobos*. Boston, MA, Houghton Mifflin Company, 1950, Foreward.  
<sup>5</sup> Oliver, Mary. *Red Bird: Poems*. Boston, MA, Beacon Press, 2008, p. 37.



*Lisa Lapin, a native Californian, grew up in our state parks and has visited Point Lobos since childhood. She has always loved nature, the environment and being outdoors, with hiking at the top of her list of favorite activities. In her career, she has been a professional journalist and public relations executive and has worked for major universities, nonprofits and news organizations. Now a consultant, she assists complex organizations with communications strategy and execution.*

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# No such thing as a bad location

## Photographers find a wealth of subjects in Point Lobos

by Lisa Lapin

Great Blue Herons in flight. Microscopic fungi. Sea otters cuddling pups. Twisted layers of Carmelo Formation sediment. Underwater kelp forests. Wildflower arrays of red, orange, yellow and purple to rival Monet's garden. These are just a few of the favorite subjects for photographers who find Point Lobos to be one of the most inspiring locations to practice their craft.

With abundant wildlife, dramatic rocky shores and continually shifting light conditions, Point Lobos provides the perfect natural studio for amateur and professional photographers alike. Longtime Point Lobos photographers, who collectively spend hundreds of hours each year with their lenses trained on flora, fauna and landscapes, attest that there isn't any such thing as a bad location within the Reserve boundaries.

"Every trail in the Reserve can yield beautiful photos. Even after spending countless hours in Point Lobos week after week, year after year, I always find something new to photograph," said Point Lobos Docent Administrator Don Blohowiak, who admits a fondness for the colors of poison oak in the fall.

And for most aspiring photographers, no special gear beyond a good mobile phone camera is necessary to capture the magic.

"Since the cell phone cameras have improved, they are almost foolproof for amateur photographers," said former Ranger Chuck Bancroft. "For serious photographers, nothing beats a single-lens-reflex camera with multiple lenses for wide angle landscapes, a telephoto lens for close-up images of the wildlife." Bancroft trains an 80-400 mm telephoto lens on wildlife.



Great Blue Heron and the great blue sea. Photo by Don Blohowiak.





*A mantle of sea mist. Photo by Sara Courtneidge.*

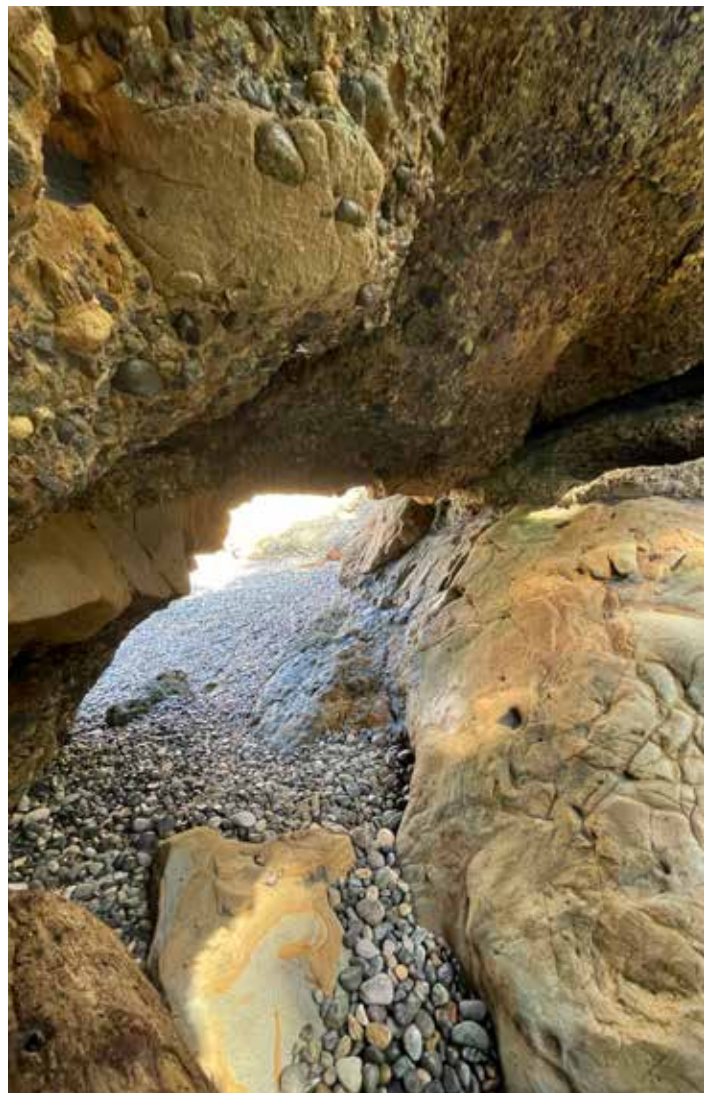
Docent photographers emphasize that capturing what most interests you results in the most interesting photographs. Then you can explore your subject from a host of different angles and perspectives — low, high, zoomed in and zoomed out.

“One of the best bits of advice about photography I ever received was from famed National Geographic photographer Galen Rowell. He told me that you’ll make much better photos if you photograph the things that catch your eye,” Blohowiak said. “Take lots of pictures of whatever interests you. And then shoot it from a variety of angles. Get down on the ground. Raise your camera or phone above your head. Get very close. Back up. Circle it. Try seeing the object of your interest from different perspectives. Very few striking photos are taken while standing and holding your camera at eye level.”

Point Lobos can be photographed at any time of day, in part because of the variety of habitats, north- and south-facing landscapes, and ample shade opportunities. The dense Monterey Cypress grove can gleam in broad daylight, with sunlight peering through the canopy and making interesting shadows. Mornings can be best for the nesting birds at Bird Island, so that the sun is at your back and more likely to be shining on the subjects. Late afternoon can offer more golden light for landscapes. And don’t let a foggy day be a deterrent — it eliminates shadows and can create an ethereal effect.

As for the best locations? Everyone has a favorite.

“For the wildlife, particularly birds, one of the best locations is, of course, Bird Island during the spring and summer. Here is where you will see nesting Brandt’s



*Geology on display. Photo by Lisa Lapin.*

Cormorants, Black-crowned Night Herons and Pigeon Guillemots,” said Docent Sara Courtneidge. “These birds are all very close, affording great views, but you will still want to use a long lens to do them justice.” Courtneidge uses a 100-500 mm zoom lens.

“For my other love, the rocky shore, you can use any equipment you have, including a phone camera,” Courtneidge said. “I like to capture the views during both low and high tides, and in any weather conditions. It really is up to the imagination of the photographer whether to emphasize the sweeping vistas or to focus in on particular rock formations.”

Courtneidge has recently been interested in long-exposure photography, which gives water a silky look and captures its movement. Her mystical rocky shore images have graced the cover of this magazine. For these special shots you will need a camera, a tripod and a neutral density filter (which acts as sunglasses for the lens to allow long exposure times).

When he was an underwater photographer, Docent and former Ranger Jerry Loomis says his favorite spot to dive was an invertebrate-covered pinnacle in outer Blue Fish Cove, which comes up to 20 feet of the surface with the bottom 170 feet away. The bottom drifts away into the depths and eventually connects with the Carmel Submarine Canyon. Today he roams the land for his subjects.

Docent Yvonne Wright loves to take pictures in the less traversed trails, like Pine Ridge and Whalers Knoll, where wildlife can surprise. On a recent photo outing, she found an adorable family of pygmy nuthatches in a used woodpecker hole on the Pine Ridge Trail. “Since we have both resident and migrant birds throughout the year, you never know what you might see! Being able to capture these moments of awe is part of what makes photography so special,” Wright said.

Docent and photographer Susan Lambert said that if she had to pick just one spot, it would be Weston Beach. “It’s hard to choose one spot but maybe Weston, especially at sunset. It’s got lots of colors and textures in the rocks that make it special. Ed Weston certainly had some stunning compositions.” Lambert said that one of her favorite seasons is the fall, when the Reserve’s later closing hours coincide with sunset.

All of the docent photography experts are unanimous in this advice: Take your time, be patient, relax and enjoy the process.

“Slow down, look closely around you,” Bancroft said. “There are wonderful shots everywhere. Be patient and try to compose your shots. One or two well-composed shots are much better than 50 poorly planned ones. Be patient. Move slowly and speak in low voices if at all. Be ready for those once-in-a-lifetime opportunities.”



*Wilson's Warbler near the Gate House. Photo by Jerry Loomis.*



*Great Horned Owl on Lace Lichen Trail. Photo by Yvonne Wright.*

*The work of two other photographers quoted in this article can be found elsewhere — Susan Lambert, page 1 and 22, and Chuck Bancroft, pages 13-14 and 17-18.*





Stan Dryden, a winner of the 2017 Jud Vandevere award, has been a docent since 1999 and served on the board of the Point Lobos Association, now the Point Lobos Foundation, including two years as its President. He also served as Docent Administrator. In 2009, he published "Birding Lite, a Humorous How-to Guide for All who Enjoy Watching Birds" and has written several articles for this magazine in the past.

# A beak full of wonder

Brown Pelicans bring joy to all except fish

by Stan Dryden

*A wonderful bird is the pelican*

*His bill can hold more than his belican*

*He can hold in his beak*

*Enough food for a week*

*But I'm darned to see how the helican*

This limerick, often but perhaps mistakenly attributed to Ogden Nash, sums up the joy and wonder we often feel when these wondrous birds fly by in small numbers or in a long line over the water.

*Continued on page 15*



California Brown Pelican.  
Photo by Dave Evans.













*It's a laugh to be in a tree with webbed feet. Photos by Dave Evans.*

I have read where the numbers of these birds have declined, but that doesn't match up to my experience. They are seen regularly at Point Lobos.

We have only the Californian Brown Pelican at Point Lobos. But you can see the American White Pelican in winter at Elkhorn Slough, and occasionally, if you are lucky and someone else is driving, at the Salinas River mouth.

You see them at Point Lobos flying with their long bills out front, in a line that rises and falls slowly as they glide just above the swells, flapping in unison, and plunging headlong into the water. Like modern cars, they have an airbag that cushions their impact with the water.

So, what can I tell you about the Brown Pelican? For one thing, in breeding plumage the adults show a lot of white on their heads, and some people confuse them with the White Pelicans elsewhere.

Brown Pelicans are amazingly intelligent birds and are active only during the day, feeding close to shore and scooping up the fish just below the surface. They are very gregarious, hunting cooperatively and often perching together in large numbers.

These big birds nest in trees but also on the ground or on vegetation. The Point Lobos pelicans are visitors; the closest breeding colonies are in California's Channel Islands. Their young fledge in 71 to 88 days and they reach sexual maturity from 3 to 5 years of age.

They are said to be starving and dying off, but there is little or no evidence of that at Point Lobos, where you can see them mostly along the southern coast.

As this article was being written, they showed up by the hundreds on Gibson Beach just below the Bird Island Trail. I hope you enjoy seeing plenty of them on your visit.





*What a wonderful flyer is the pelican.*



*Standing room only for pelicans at Bird Island.*



Chuck Bancroft spent 31 years of his 35-year career as a State Park Ranger at Point Lobos and, in retirement, has led programs and nature walks for the Point Lobos Foundation.

His email address is [sparkystarkweather@gmail.com](mailto:sparkystarkweather@gmail.com).

# The masters of hovering

## White-tailed Kites ride the wind to hunt and play

by Chuck Bancroft

The rules of the Reserve prohibit flying kites. Can you imagine the disturbance they could cause during the nesting season? And the rest of the year they would intrude on visitors' enjoyment of this beautiful landscape. White-tailed Kites are an exception to the rule. They are fascinating to watch and provide endless joy for the observant visitor.

The White-tailed Kite is a small to medium-sized raptor. I've spent many hours sitting and watching these kites flying and hovering over Big Mound Meadow and over the wetlands and willows at the restored riparian area adjacent to the Carmel River (also known as Odello West).

The kite is easily recognized by its white body, black shoulders and red eye. The wings are slate gray with the black shoulder epaulets. Size can vary between 12 to 15 inches in length with a wingspan of 39 to 43 inches. The juveniles have a light brown coloring on their breasts.

The standout feature from other raptors is the hovering and flapping of their wings to stay in place, making them appear like a kite on the wind. Then they pull back their wings and make a plunging dive to catch the prey.



Above. A kite's distinguishing black epaulets and red eye. Below. The familiar hover.



A juvenile kite receives a vole from its parent in midair. All photos by Chuck Bancroft.





*Two juveniles roll and tumble in a playful dance.*

Kites can be found in a variety of habitats including grasslands and marshes. Their diet consists of small mammals like the vole and, on occasion, they eat small birds, insects and lizards. Kites are always on the lookout for predators who use the same territories: Peregrine Falcons, Red-tailed Hawks and Great-horned Owls. Eggs of the kites are fed on by crows, gulls and small mammals including the long-tailed weasel.

I've seen and photographed adults with their kids at both Point Lobos and Odello West. Many times I've seen the adult returning to a spot atop a tree where the juveniles hang out and drop a meal to the hungry kids. I've heard tales of this behavior but never thought I would actually see it in real life.

But on one of my excursions, I spotted an adult hanging in the air with a vole in its talons. I started to take pictures when to my amazement a juvenile approached. I kept shooting as the juvenile flew up to the adult and took the



vole from its parent and flew off. I captured 15 images of the transfer and couldn't believe my good fortune.

On another day, I saw two juveniles circling when they approached each other and began a playful dance in the air but never really touching. They were rolling and tumbling and giving off a loud, squeaky whistle. I watched enthralled by this playfulness until I assumed they tired of each other and flew off in different directions.

Photo essays are much easier when you can capture 10 plus frames per second. And a good telephoto lens is mandatory, especially when you know where it is likely to see the subject and have infinite patience and lots of luck. I hope you enjoy my wanderings and these images as much as I do.







## MOONLIGHT WALK 2024

# Appreciation for Foundation Members

On the evening of September 16th, members of the Point Lobos Foundation gathered at Point Lobos State Natural Reserve for the annual Moonlight Walk member appreciation event. Following a day of gentle first-season rain, the skies cleared, setting the stage for a memorable evening as members trickled into the picnic area after enjoying guided walks at Bird Island, Cypress Grove, and Whalers Cove.

At Piney Woods Picnic Area, nestled among towering trees, the evening unfolded like a vibrant tapestry. The smooth sounds of jazz floated through the air, the sultry notes of Andrea's Fault weaving a magical backdrop for the gathering. Guests were settling in, their laughter mingling with the gentle rustle of leaves and the rhythmic whisper of distant waves.

Fort Ord Brewing set up a charming little bar under a canopy, serving up a rich red ale with deep, malty flavor that paired perfectly with the relaxed atmosphere, inviting patrons to linger and savor each sip. Nearby, the elegant bottles of wine from Folktale Vineyards shone in the dappled light, showcasing their exquisite Reserve Chardonnay and

Ventana Pinot Noir. Each pour was a celebration, a toast to friendship and the beauty of the moment.

As the sun dipped lower in the sky, casting golden rays that filtered through the branches, guests were drawn to the Point Lobos Dessert Bar. Tala Baking Co. had outdone themselves with a spread of decadent cupcakes, each a little work of art, adorned with swirls of creamy frosting. Beside them, the famous sea salt brownies from Trader Joe's beckoned, their rich, fudgy texture promising indulgence. And to balance the sweetness, bowls of plump, fresh Driscoll's berries sparkled like jewels, inviting guests to taste their vibrant flavor.

As people mingled, sharing stories and laughter, the golden light of the impending sunset began to peek through the trees, casting a warm glow on the faces of those gathered. Friends raised their glasses, in joyous unison, celebrating not just the food and drink but the simple pleasure of being together.

It was more than just a gathering; it was a celebration of community and the moments that linger long after the last note of jazz fades into the night.

*Event photos by Manny Espinoza. Background photo by Ernie Long.*









*Emily Hull-Parsons, originally from Illinois, arrived on the Monterey Peninsula over 40 years ago. During those years she ran an active consulting practice in the areas of management and philanthropy. Now retired, she has found time to enjoy serving as a Point Lobos Docent and has become an avid landscape artist, as well as a very enthusiastic grandparent.*

# Notes from the Docent Log

*Compiled by Emily Hull-Parsons*

Visitors were delighted to witness the birth of a beautiful, healthy harbor seal pup on solar eclipse day. Gulls quickly came in to do their midwifery duties and many turkey vultures were attracted to the event as well. A nurse from Seattle, who came down for a few days to visit her mother, took a wonderful video. She said that experiencing the birth together was a special memory that they will always cherish. Fellow Docent Kathy Ryan and I feel the same!

**Lorna Claerbout, 04/09/2024**

Docent Marcy Alan Craig and I were scoping at Sea Lion Point this morning and spotted at least a dozen whales. We were able to confirm at least several were humpbacks and we saw at least one breaching humpback on the horizon. The humpback splashes were seen by the naked eye, and we got a much better view of the breaching whale with our binoculars so we handed them around for visitors to use as well.

**Jennifer Alexander, 05/16/2024**

It was a fun morning at Weston Beach. It always takes time to acclimate to the small scale of tide pool life, but once your eyes adjust there are wonderful discoveries. The colors were vibrant.

**Karen Wagner, 05/28/2024**

In the no-man's land between the Rat Hill road and Mound Meadow Trail there are lots of non-native grasses. But look closely! There is also an amazingly abundant drift of dwarf brodiaea — hunkered down low in the grasses. Tiny little sapphire jewels!

**Katherine Spitz, 07/08/2024**

Today, to celebrate American Artist Appreciation Month, the MINT Team offered a very special “Public Walk” at Bird Island. The interesting artifacts were framed with examples of poetry, photography and paintings, all emphasizing the beauty of Point Lobos. The team will continue to stretch the interpretation thread to show connections between the biodiversity of Point Lobos and future topics. Well done, MINT Team! (MINT is an acronym for Mobile INterpretation Station.)

**Jeri Passalacqua, 08/25,2024**



*Photo by Karen Wagner.*

Gibson Beach was mobbed with Brown Pelicans this afternoon. A visitor estimated 1,000. Also saw a few more near two Black-crowned Night Herons.

**Stan Dryden, 06/21/2024**





*Photo by Susan Lambert.*

Things took a turn for the violent at the Black-crowned Night Heron nest today. There was one parent watching over the four chicks when we arrived. The chicks were hungry and yelling at poor mom or dad to feed them and finally the parent's temper frayed and it yelled right back. That was cute. Then a night heron intruder landed right on the nest. The parent reacted by challenging the intruder and a knockdown drag-out fight ensued in which it seemed like the intruder got the upper hand. The chicks were scared and huddling together

**Susan Lambert**, 07/10/2024

China Cove lies almost still under a dove-gray sky, drawing my gaze down toward the emerald waters, and up to the wooded ridge, and to the sea, merging with the distant sky. Ripples back off the pocket beach and arc, stacked, like tree rings. To the west, guillemots hurry, pelicans stand mutely on guano-whitened ledges, otters doze. The brash clatter of gulls. On the rock below a sudden seal adjusts slightly, then settles and fades back into the pattern.

**Rick Pettit**, 07/29/2024

Today, this beautiful family from Massachusetts was walking toward me on the Cypress Grove Trail, and I started flirting with the baby, who had just been transferred from stroller to her dad's arms. The mother recognized me and told me that she was pregnant when they visited last year. This was definitely the most poignant experience I have had on the trails in a long time, if not ever.

**Stan Dryden**, 08/23/2024

A visitor had taken a picture of a sea lion flipper in Monterey. She was curious what the "things" that look like finger nails were. I got her information and offered to send an answer. Thanks to Docent Sue Nogare, who did the research, we were able to let her know these "finger nails" are used by the sea lion for grooming!

**Don McDougall**, 08/27/2024



*Photo by Don McDougall.*

Members of the Native Plant Patrol were greeted (and treated) early this morning along the South Shore Trail.

**Derek Daley**, 08/28/2024



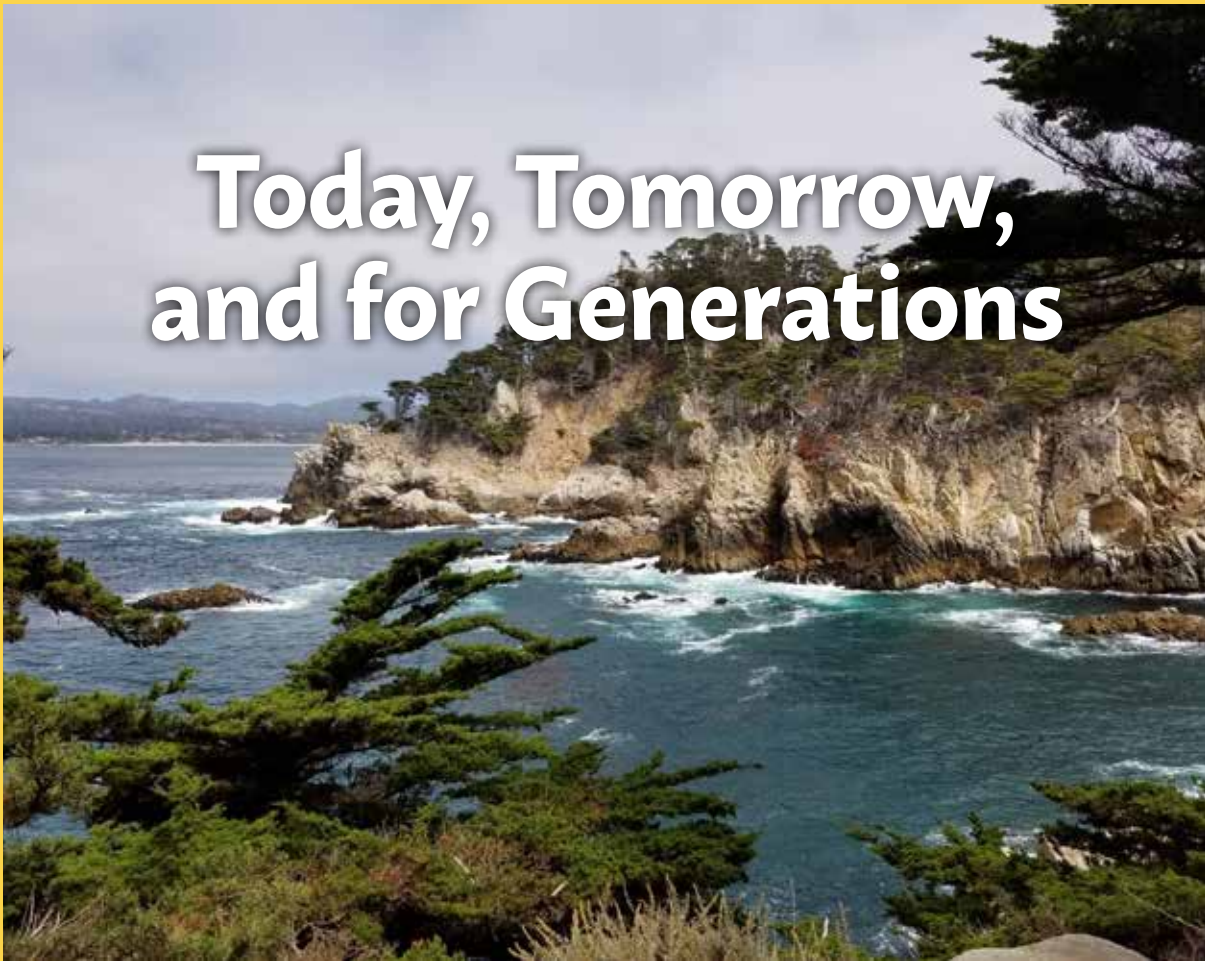
*Photo above by Derek Daley, below by Yvonne Wright.*



Just in time for the start of Sea Otter Awareness Week, otter 878 (a rescued and tagged otter, with white face) showed up yesterday with some companions.

**Yvonne Wright**, 09/23/2024

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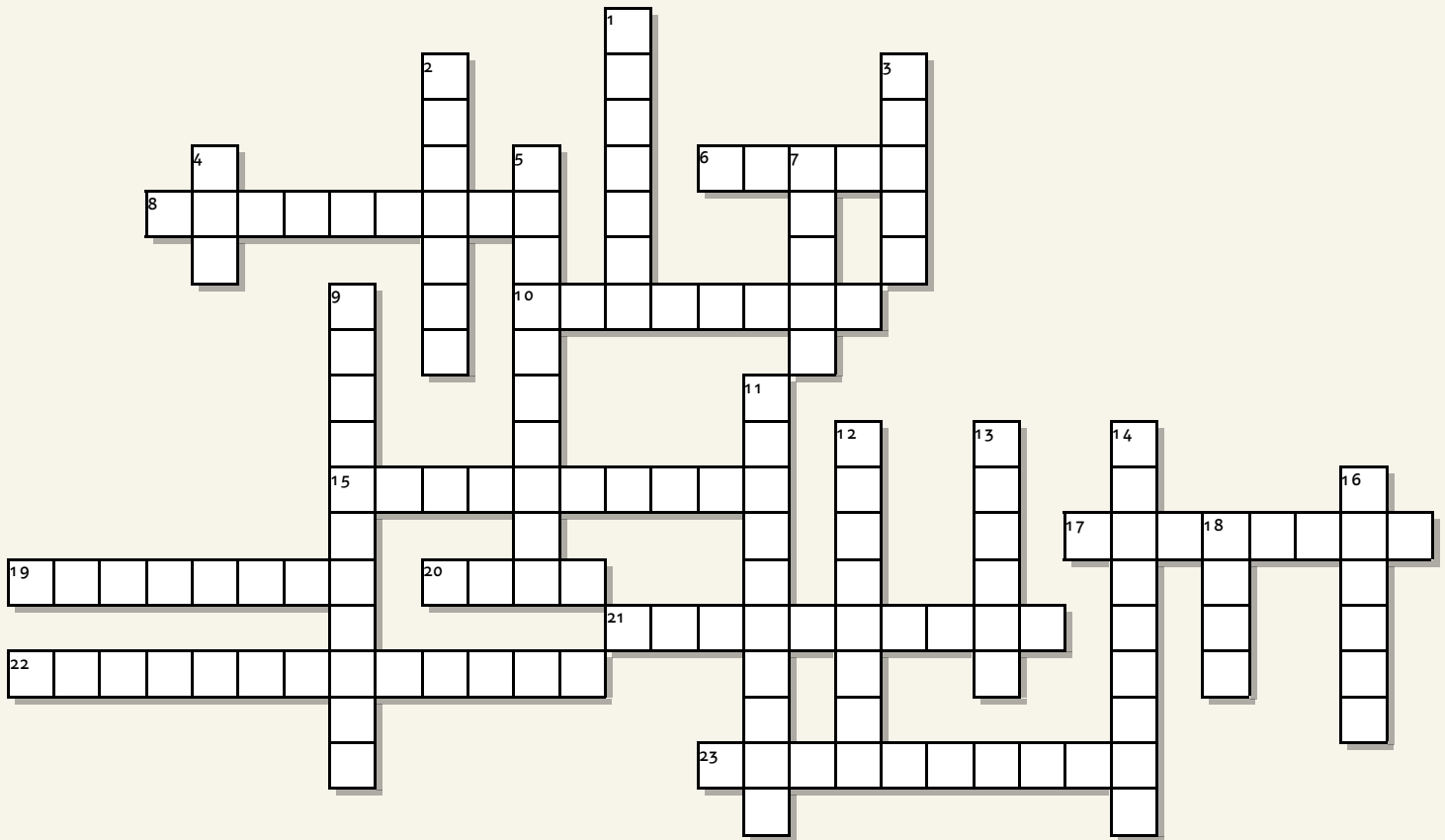
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# Puzzle: The Beauty of Point Lobos

by Ann Pendleton



## ACROSS

- 6 What is the seed of the Coastal Live Oak?
- 8 What is the very busy, black and yellow pollinating insect native to CA?
- 10 The "order" of sea lions and harbor seals is \_\_\_\_\_?
- 15 Carleton Watkins photographed \_\_\_\_\_ the only named tree in Point Lobos. (2 wds)
- 17 What oil in poison oak triggers an allergic reaction in many humans?
- 19 Brown \_\_\_\_\_ are frequently seen at Point Lobos.
- 20 A bird that is also the name of a toy.
- 21 Edward Weston is the photographer most closely identified with \_\_\_\_\_. (2wds)
- 22 \_\_\_\_\_ have captured the beauty of Point Lobos for a long time.
- 23 What is the official CA state lichen? (2 wds)

## DOWN

- 1 What CA animal is featured on the PLF logo? (2 wds)
- 2 Whales and seals have \_\_\_\_\_ to insulate them from the cold waters.
- 3 Trees make 2 of these every year, one in the spring and one in the summer.
- 4 Sea Lions have thick skin and short \_\_\_\_\_.
- 5 What is the wettest forest in Point Lobos? (2wds)
- 7 The mammal with the thickest fur found at Point Lobos.
- 9 Otters, sea lions and \_\_\_\_\_ are yearlong residents of Point Lobos. (2 wds)
- 11 Several pioneering photographers were associated with Point Lobos; one famous female is Imogen \_\_\_\_\_.
- 12 Planting native plants in your home garden can help \_\_\_\_\_ survive.
- 13 What beach at Point Lobos is named after a famous photographer?
- 14 The \_\_\_\_\_ falcon is known to be the fastest bird.
- 16 In English "Lobos" translates to \_\_\_\_\_.
- 18 It's important to \_\_\_\_\_ on the path while visiting Point Lobos.

# Acknowledgments

Memorials, tributes and grants April 16, 2024 - October 15, 2024

## IN HONOR OF

Lura Migdal, Jessica Walsh, Mariana Arredondo, Adam Young, Matt Beaudin, and Hector Felix

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*Cameron and Fran Wolfe*

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*Cathy Gordon*

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*Libby Cervantes*

Becky and Phil Korchek

*Elizabeth Taylor and Ben Guillette*

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*Kristin Nisewaner*

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Pati Carothers

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*Patrick Nevis*

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*Gail Griffin*

*Robin Aeschliman*

Nancy Grady McInnis

*Margie Matthews*

*Jeffrey Suslow*

*Steve Dyer*

Paul Johnson

*Kris Toscano*

*Karen McKay*

Professor Margaret FitzSimmons

*Ellen Porzig*

Warren Chin

*Martin Rokeach*

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*Lana Hathaway*

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*For Stewardship*

Carmel Rotary Club Fund of the

Community Foundation for

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*For Youth Programs*

William McCaskey & Adaline Dinsmore

Chapman Foundation

*For Experience Point Lobos*

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Bill and Cindy Stewart

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*Philip Hauger*  
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### In memory of

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Paul and Marcia Shortt

### In honor of

Collin Goltzene: "Happy 26th Birthday!"  
*Jennifer Goltzene*

### In memory of

Mike Turbow  
*Dan Turbow*  
Warren D. Chin  
*Sherrie Yeung-Kong*

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