FEB, MAR, APR OUTINGS

What would you do to save an endangered species?  

p. 2

Explore, enjoy, and protect the planet
Get involved with Chapter issues

This year the Chapter will focus on parks, wilderness, and coastal issues, and we hope you will help us spread the word. Currently we are asking members to volunteer to circulate initiative petitions to collect signatures of registered voters to ensure that the State Parks will have permanent, stable, long-term funding. The campaign kicked off in January and will last until April 17. We are urging you to help gather enough signatures to get the measure on the ballot for next November. If you are unable to circulate a petition, be sure you sign one. For more information contact Mary Gale, 626-3565 (Monterey County) or Patricia Matejeck, patachke@juno.com (Santa Cruz County).

Ten years have passed since the last big assembly of grassroots wilderness advocates met in California. April 8-11 the Ventana Chapter will be a sponsor for the Western Wilderness Conference at UC Berkeley. The focus of the conference is on wilderness preservation in today's historic time of climate change. There will be a program of over 40 speakers, workshops, hikes, films and other activities. Consider attending this gathering to learn more about how you can help preserve these lands and wildlife, make new friends, and effect political change. See page 6 for more information.

Later this year, the Chapter is planning to have a celebration of the 50th anniversary of the National Wilderness Preservation System. It is the scene of some of the most hard-won victories in America’s will to protect special places from the economic juggernaut. The legal battle for ESHA was one of the most remote places on earth — the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge — recently the scene of some of the most hard-won battles for the environment and a symbol of America’s will to protect special places from commercial exploitation. We will have presentations, slides, and film clips of the Arctic’s rolling tundra, deep lakes, sparkling coastal waters, and wildlife. Home to over 200 species of visiting and nesting birds, caribou, muskoxen, wolverines, grizzly and brown bears, this fragile area remains under threat of oil drilling and climate change. If you are interested in helping with this program, please contact the chapter at chapter@ventana.sierrachul.org.
—Rita Dalessio

The Ventana has a new office

The Ventana has moved from its office in the Art Center in downtown Santa Cruz to a new office at 511 River Street, Santa Cruz. Previously, the Sierra Club was sharing office space with the Open Space Alliance (OSA), another environmental group. When OSA dissolved last fall, the Club could no longer afford the rent. The Santa Cruz Group decided it no longer needed an office space, and so the Chapter found space to rent for Ventana production.

Thanks to everyone involved in finding the new office space, especially Paul Erlicher, Mark Sullivan, and Debbie Bulger.

What would you do?

Here’s a choice for you. What if you could reduce motor vehicle traffic and resultant greenhouse gas emissions, but in the process seriously harm an endangered species? Would you do it? Could you still call yourself an environmentalist if you did?

You may have guessed that I am talking about the proposed paved bikeway through Arana Gulch. You may also be aware that, in this case, we don’t have to choose between saving an endangered plant and having a better bicycle connection. There are other options.

One option that would have added a mere ½ minutes to a bike trip was through Frederick Street Park. This option would completely avoid sensitive habitat. Would you spend an extra 90 seconds to save an endangered species?

Another option, widening the bike lanes on the Murray Street Bridge, is scheduled to be constructed next year.

The best option would be to put the bikeway on the railroad right of way. The County of Santa Cruz is in the process of buying the railroad right of way with the intention of building a bicycle-pedestrian trail the entire length of the county. The future rail trail is only one quarter mile south of the proposed route.

What are the facts?

• The proposed bikeway would go right through the middle of rare coastal prairie habitat and habitat for the endangered Santa Cruz Tarplant.
• The EIR for the bicycle project stated that the proposed bikeway would cause “significant and unavoidable impact” to the endangered Santa Cruz Tarplant.
• The EIR for the bicycle project stated that the proposed bikeway would cause “significant and unavoidable impact” to the endangered Santa Cruz Tarplant.
• Building on ESHA (Environmentally Sensitive Habitat Area) must be resource dependent, not for transportation purposes. (That’s why the City calls it an “interpretive rail.”)
• The City has stated that the path will provide access for disabled persons. No one is saying that there should not be accessible paths on Arana Gulch. To the contrary, such access can be accommodated onsite without destroying an endangered species. It is the bike path’s alignment that is the problem, not access for people with disabilities.
• The California Native Plant Society opposes this destruction of habitat which is home to the endangered Santa Cruz Tarplant.

Well, if Arana Gulch were a person and that 2% were the heart, it would be fatal. Bisecting habitat is about the worst thing one can do and could indeed prove fatal to the tarplant. In the past the Department of Fish & Game and expert biologists have all said that bisecting the habitat with the path would be destructive.

While the revised bicycle project is improved from what was first proposed by eliminating lighting at night and eliminating access to motorized vehicles, the fact remains that it will damage ESHA for a non-coastal-dependent use (transportation). With better alternatives available, it is senseless harm of an endangered species.

It is easy for someone in Santa Cruz to fight to save a rainforest in Brazil or Thailand. Do we have the courage to fight to save an endangered species in our own back yard?

Write the Coastal Commission and ask that they approve the Arana Gulch Master Plan without the paved Broadway-Brommer bike trail. Explain that the bikeway can be located on the already graded railroad right of way instead of on ESHA (Environmentally Sensitive Habitat Area).

Address your letters to Dan Carl, District Director, California Coastal Commission, 725 Front Street, Suite 300, Santa Cruz, CA 95060. You do not have to be a Santa Cruz resident to write. Do it today. The Coastal Commission meeting will most likely be in Santa Cruz, March 10-12.

Come to the meeting if you are able and speak up for the Santa Cruz Tarplant. Call the Coastal Commission 427-4863 in early March to see the exact date, time, and location for the Arana Gulch hearing.
—Debbie Bulger
Letters

The Ventana welcomes letters
Send to:
LETTERS TO THE EDITOR
The Ventana, 1603 King Street,
Santa Cruz, CA 95060
email: dbulger@cruzio.com
Please include a phone number
with your letter. Anonymous letters are not
accepted. Letters may be edited for length.

Vegetarians protect the planet

Years ago, I moved here from Uruguay,
where most people eat red meat three times
a day. It’s tradition. There, most people
can’t conceive of cooking without beef.

In the 1980s, being a vegetarian in Ur-
uguay was an aberration. It was unheard of.
My family and friends thought I was going
to die because I didn’t share their dietary
choices. I’m still alive and happy that I met
a traveler who pointed out that beef is grain
modified by the cow’s digestive system into
the meat my people consume in enormous
quantities.

Why not eat the grain itself? For the fla-
vor? For the tradition? Not only do vegetar-
ians help abate world hunger and decrease
the rampant destruction of precious rain
forest for cattle grazing, vegetarians also
have an important role in denouncing and
stopping animal cruelty. Until recently I
would eat eggs. Then I learned that even or-
iganic egg farms grind up male chicks after
they would eat eggs. Then I learned that even or-
iganic egg farms grind up male chicks after
debeaking them alive! Becoming a vegetar-
ian or—even better—a vegan helps to pro-
tect the land, the air, the animals, and the
planet. Not to mention your own health!
—Brenda Barcelo
Santa Cruz.

Coastal Commission denies dunes project

In a unanimous 8–0 vote at its Decem-
ber meeting, the California Coastal
Commission denied the massive resort
proposed for rare coastal dune habitat in
Sand City. The developer, Security Nat-
ional Guarantee, had proposed a 360,000 square
foot mixed-use 341-unit complex including
161 hotel rooms, 180 condominiums, con-
ference center, spa, three swimming pools,
a restaurant, and surface and underground
parking for 841 vehicles on 39 acres.

Commission staff recommended deny-
ing the project in a 138-page report stating
the project was “inconsistent with the wa-
ter supply, hazards, visual resource, natural
resource, traffic, and public recreational ac-
cess provisions of Sand City’s certified Lo-
cal Coastal Plan, as well as the Coastal Act’s
public access and recreation provisions.”

The development plan would have re-
quired 693,000 cubic yards of grading and
the removal of 417,000 cubic yards of sand. Negative impacts included disrup-
tion of habitat for western snowy plover,
Smith’s blue butterfly, and sensitive native
dune plants such as the protected Monterey
spineflower.

Ventana Chapter members traveled to
San Francisco to attend the Coastal Com-
mission hearing and to speak against de-
velopment in fragile habitat. Club member Ed
Thornton, a coastal engineering scientist,
pointed out that the setback for the resort
building was based on erroneous assump-
tions of the coast erosion rate. The error
would have placed the proposed building
in a hazard zone based on historical erosion
rates. In addition, erosion is expected to in-
crease due to sea level rise.

Thornton cited erosion rates presented
in the Regional Sediment Management
Plan for southern Monterey Bay released in
2008 that range from 2.7 feet/year for the
period 1984-2004 to 3.9- 6.4 feet/year for
the period 1970-2002. These data suggest
that the value of 2.4 feet/year adopted by
the developer for the proposed project un-
derestimated the erosion rate and, hence,
the setback.

The Chapter noted that the proposed
development plan used a 50-year econom-
ic life as required by the Sand City Local
Coastal Plan, but should more properly
have used a 100-year economic life for the
project. The Club believes that using a 50-
year economic life is outdated and unreal-
istic both in terms of the economics of the
project and the actual planning for such a
project.

Sierra Club lawyer Larry Silver, spoke on
the lack of water available for the project.
The proposed resort was denied a water
distribution permit by the Monterey Pen-
insula Water Management Board last April.
Since that time the State Water Resources
Control Board has issued an order requir-
ing significant reduction of unlawful divers-
ions of the Carmel River as first ordered
in 1995.

Thank you to all who wrote letters or
spoke at the hearing requesting denial of
the project including the Santa Cruz Coun-
ty Group, Surfrider, LandWatch, ORCA,
Monterey Dunes Coalition, Coalkeeper,
California Native Plant Society Monterey
Bay, and many others.

The developer, Security National Gar-
antee, has filed a lawsuit against the Coastal
Commission regarding the denial.

World meat production is steadily rising.
Livestock are responsible for 18% of green-
house gas emissions.

Coastal Club thanks dealer for donation

The Sierra Club thanks Long Beach
Alphabet Inc. for a $1,000 donation.

Contact your representatives

President Barack Obama
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Ave. NW
Washington, D.C. 20500
Comment Line: 202-456-1111

U.S. Representative Anna Eshoo
698 Emerson Street
Palo Alto, CA 94301
408-245-2339; FAX: 650-323-3498
go to website to email

Vice President Joe Biden
202-456-1414

Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger
State Capitol Building
Sacramento, CA 95814
916-445-2841
FAX: 916-445-4633
http://gov.ca.gov

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San Francisco, CA 94104
go to website to email

Senator Barbara Boxer
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samfarr@mail.house.gov

The Sierra Club  Ventana Chapter, Volume 49, Number 1, 2010 3

Please recycle this paper again
National Club election coming this spring

The annual election for the Sierra Club’s Board of Directors is now underway. Those eligible to vote in the national Club election will receive in the mail (or by Internet for those who chose the electronic delivery option) your national Sierra Club ballot. This will include information on the candidates and where you can find additional information on the Club’s website.

The Sierra Club is a democratically-structured organization at all levels. Your Board of Directors is required to stand for election by the membership. This Board sets Club policy and budgets at the national level and works closely with the Executive Director and staff to operate the Club. Voting for candidates who express your views on how the Club should grow and change is both a privilege and responsibility of membership. Members frequently state that they don’t know the candidates and find it difficult to vote without learning more. You can learn more by asking questions of your group and chapter leaders.

You should use your own judgment by taking several minutes to read the ballot statement of each candidate. Then make your choice and cast your vote. Even if you receive your election materials in the mail, please go to the user-friendly Internet voting site to save time and postage. Alternatively, you will find the ballot is quite straightforward and easy to mark and mail.


New Club director

Michael Brune has been named executive director of the Sierra Club, succeeding Carl Pope who will now serve as executive chairman. Brune, 38, is the author of Coming Clean—Breaking America’s Addiction to Oil and Coal, published by Sierra Club Books in 2008. Brune holds degrees in Economics and Finance from West Chester University in Pennsylvania, and comes to the Sierra Club from the Rainforest Action Network, where in his seven years as executive director he earned a reputation for using bold but respectful confrontation to encourage corporate responsibility. At age 26, he led a historic consumer-education campaign that ultimately persuaded Home Depot to stop selling wood from endangered forests. Brune will be the Club’s sixth executive director. He assumes his duties in March.

Stop clearcutting

The Center for Biological Diversity has filed lawsuits against the California Department of Forestry in seven California counties to halt clear cutting projects. “Clearcutting is an abysmal practice that should have been banned long ago due to its impacts on wildlife and water quality,” said Brian Newicki, CBD’s California climate policy director. “Now, in an era when all land-management decisions need to be fully carbon-conscious, there is no excuse to continue to allow clear-cutting.”

Salinas creeks

Our own Steve Zmak from Marina has five photographs in an exhibit titled, “The Creeks of Salinas: The Gabriall Watershed Experience” at the Steinbeck Center. The exhibition celebrates the ecology of Salinas, Prunedale, and Castroville by following the course of the water that lands on the Pacific side of the Gabriall and Fremont Peak. The exhibit runs until April 22.

Bee killer

Laurel Hopwood, Chair of the Sierra Club Genetic Engineering Action Team, reports that there is mounting evidence that chemical seed coatings are deadly to bees. The Club is urging the EPA to ban use of nicotinyl insecticides. France, Germany, and Italy have already suspended use of these pesticides. In Italy, honeybee populations rebounded when the chemicals were suspended. For more information check out the documentary, Nicotine Bees. For more information see http://NicotineBees.com.

Game Warden Stamp

Since the Department of Fish & Game’s budget has been significantly reduced, advocates have suggested selling a “Game Warden Stamp” to raise funds to help wardens enforce the law. Statewide, 385 game wardens patrol and protect 159,000 square miles of California’s habitat. That’s 414 miles of California’s habitat. That’s 414 square miles per warden! The decals cost $5. To purchase one go to www.dfg.ca.gov/WardenStamp.

World population is 6.8 billion, the highest it has ever been.
Local organization sues Caltrans over Highway 1 widening

The Campaign for Sensible Transportation, a Santa Cruz based coalition, filed suit in October against Caltrans. The basis for the suit is the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) which prohibits breaking up a larger project into pieces without adequate environmental analysis.

The Sierra Club, while not a party to the suit, is a member of the coalition. The Club’s National Transportation Policy opposes widening highways and states that carpool lanes (HOV lanes) should come from converting existing highway lanes rather than from new construction.

The Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission had been working on Highway 1 widening for eight years until Caltrans filed suit to stop the project. The Commission had been working on the project since 2003 and was preparing to go out to bid on the project in 2010. The suit was filed by the Sierra Club in March 2004.

To reduce traffic congestion, the Sierra Club advocates the most energy- and land-conserving and least polluting solutions including better bicycle and rail connections and transportation demand management. Numerous studies have shown that widening roads does not work and relieves congestion for only a short time. Other strategies which have been shown to work, such as ramp metering and congestion pricing, are not part of the widening project.

Campaign members are working to raise community awareness and contributions for the lawsuit. To learn more visit sensibletransportation.org.

Monterey feed lot gets renewed permit

Despite the fact that the Salinas River is already listed as “impaired” under the Federal Clean Water Act, the Central Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board renewed the permit for a Concentrated Animal Feeding Operation (CAFO) in Monterey County. The operation, Gallo Feed Lot, is located on Johnson Creek near the city of Gonzales. It has the capacity to hold 30,000 head of cattle.

The Ventana Chapter commented on the permit renewal and requested a 90-day extension so that the public would be better informed and would have a chance to comment.

The excessive size and density of animals on CAFOs pose problems with air and water pollution from manure and the overuse of antibiotics. At full capacity the 30,000 cattle confined by the Gallo operation would produce as much waste as 600,000 people, but unlike a large city, a CAFO is not required to treat this sewage.

The Water Board did not require a groundwater monitoring plan before issuing the permit. Instead, the discharger will develop such a plan in the future, a sequence which the Chapter believes is inappropriate.

The Gallo Feed Lot potentially will discharge into Johnson Creek, a tributary of the Salinas River. The calculations for the adequacy of the sewage lagoons (discharge ponds) are suspect because they contain data from November to February, omitting March, which can be a rainy month. Additionally, the sewage lagoons drain to ponds adjacent to crop land where contamination by E. coli is a possibility.

Most sections of Monterey County’s major watersheds fail to meet water quality standards set by the Federal Clean Water Act. We expect the Central Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board to act wisely by using these standards and providing clean water for Monterey County residents.

Employees can be notified if there is a change in the permit.

To get involved in this issue contact Julie Engell, engellj@comcast.net, 920-2734.

Correction

The plant identified as a red currant in the last Ventana is actually the highly toxic Baneberry. Eating just a few berries could cause serious illness or even death.

Doors, Windows, & More

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The Banff Mountain Film Festival World Tour returns to Santa Cruz on February 26 and 27 at 7:00 p.m. each evening as a benefit for the UCSC Recreation and the UCSC Recycle Program. Santa Cruz climber Chris Sharma is showcased in First Ascent: The Impossible Climb. Star sport climber Sharma takes on his greatest challenge yet: the unclimbed, 90-metre limestone cave on Mt. Clark, California. Chris dangles from one finger, jumps between minutce handholds and takes 30-metre free falls as he endeavors to make the first ascent of what will be the most difficult rock climb in the world. Finding Farley, winner of both the Grand Prize Award and the People’s Choice Award, documents the journey of Karsten Heuer and Leanne Allison with their two-year-old son Zev and indomitable dog Willow, as they retrace the literary footsteps of Farley Mowat. Their 5000-kilometre trip—trekking, sailing, portaging and paddling—is captured in this film. For listings of which films are shown each night and ticket information visit ucscrecreation.com or call 459-2806.

Banff Film Festival comes to Rio Theatre

The following activities are not sponsored or administered by the Sierra Club. The Club makes no representations or warranties about the safety, supervision, or management of such activities. They are published only as a reader service.

Sierra Club Events

Saturday, February 27

Film: Black Wave
This film tells the story of the Exxon-Valdez oil spill and the struggle of the people of Prince William Sound to recover. Learn how people in the little town of Cordova, Alaska have their lives changed forever. Sponsored by Woman’s International League for Peace and Freedom, Live Oak Grange, and Sierra Club. FREE Live Oak Grange, 1900 17th Ave., Santa Cruz, 7:00 p.m.

Friday, March 12

Slides: Australia
Don Nielsen will present this slide show from his trip to Australia last summer. He will cover Southern Australia and the Red Center. Note: this is not a potluck. We will gather beginning at 7:00 p.m. and the slide show will begin at 7:30 p.m. For directions call George, 531-2909.

Thursday - Sunday, April 8-11

Western Wilderness Conference
Join wilderness enthusiasts from all over the western states at UC Berkeley. Speakers will address the role of wildlands in an era of climate change and how to gain new allies in preserving wild places. Plenary sessions, workshops, films, music, networking. For more info and to register online visit westernwilderness.org.

Friday, April 9

Slides: Tibet and Nepal
This presentation is by member and world traveler Jann Cord. Note: this is not a potluck. We will gather beginning at 7:00 pm and the slide show will begin at 7:30 pm. For directions call George, 531-2909.

Spring and Summer

Channel Islands Trips
California’s Channel Islands are Galapagos USA! Three and 4-day fundraiser cruises on May 7-9, July 16-19, August 6-9, and September 10-12 sponsored by Sierra Club. All depart from Santa Barbara. Fees: $590 for May and September and $785 July and August include bunk, meals, snacks, beverages, plus the services of a ranger/naturalist who will lead hikes. For more info contact holzhzinh@comcast.com. To make a reservation mail a $100 check payable to Sierra Club to leaders: Joan Jones Holtz & Don Holtz, 11826 The Wye St, El Monte, CA 91732.

Non-Sierra Club Events of Interest

The following activities are not sponsored or administered by the Sierra Club. The Club makes no representations or warranties about the safety, supervision, or management of such activities. They are published only as a reader service.

Saturday - Sunday, March 6-7

Wilderness First Aid

FREE Wormshops
Learn how worms can eat your food scraps and make beautiful compost for your garden. Master composters will teach you everything you need to know. Pre-registration required. Free and below wholesale worm bins for residents of unincorporated Santa Cruz Co. and Scotts Valley. $50 charge for residents of Capitola, City of Santa Cruz, and Watsonville. Call 427-3452 or register online at www.compostsantacruzcounty.org. Sponsord by S.C. Co. Board of Supervisors; produced by County Public Works Recycling and Solid Waste Services.

Saturday, April 24

Ride-a-thon / Festival for the Environment
Hike 1, 5, or 10k in the redwoods to benefit local community organizations. Walk begins at 9:00 a.m. on the summit of Mount Madonna and ends at the 4th annual Festival for the Environment at Mount Madonna School. For more info visit wwwSummitForThePlanet.org. Festival features green businesses, organic foods, live music, and more. www.ecofest.us.

Saturday, April 10, 1-3 p.m., Grey Bears Recycling Center, 2710 Chanticleer Ave., S.C.
Sunday, May 2, 1-3 p.m., Quail Hollow Ranch County Park, 800 Quail Hollow Road, Felton
Saturday, June 19, 1-3 p.m., Grey Bears Recycling Center, 2710 Chanticleer Ave., S.C.
For more info: Karin Grobe, 427-3452, kgrobe@wormdoctor.org.

Habitat restoration
Saturday, April 10, Younger Lagoon, UCSC Natural Reserve

Habitat restoration

Habitat restoration - Watsonville
Sponsored by Watsonville Wetlands Watch. 9:30 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. Meet at the Fitz Wetlands Educ. Resource Center at Pajaro Valley HS. Gloves, tools, and snack provided. Call Jonathan Pilch, 728-4106, for more info. No experience necessary.
Watershed study critical to Pajaro River Plan

by Lois Robin

For ten years, the mantra of the Sierra Club Pajaro River Watershed Committee has been “Do the watershed study!” Members have written these words to decision makers and spoken them at hundreds of meetings. Has the Watershed Study been undertaken? No, but it is slowly making its way through the network of committees and agencies that manage the Pajaro watershed, and it may yet see the light of day. The study is crucial to planning for the River.

What is the Watershed Study? The Pajaro River Watershed courses through four counties—two upstream (San Benito and Santa Clara) and two downstream (Santa Cruz and Monterey). The flooding problems that have brought the Army Corps of Engineers to the River are downstream. But the flooding downstream is very much influenced by the flow from the Upper Watershed.

Many scientists believe that the influence is significant; yet a study needs to be conducted to quantify and evaluate the influence. For instance, the San Benito River, a major tributary of the Pajaro, has been damaged by years of sand and gravel mining and most likely can be restored so that more of its flows are detained in the Upper River. The Watershed Study would provide important data and information about how to accomplish this restoration. A leading geomorphologist has been selected to guide the study.

Although the value of studying the entire watershed to determine the best way to control flooding downstream seems transparently clear to those of us who have been chanting the mantra for ten years, plans are going ahead to select a project alternative before the Watershed Study has been undertaken. The presentation of the Army Corps of Engineers’ plan for the Pajaro is anticipated in October of 2010. At that time an Environmental Impact Study will be available to the public.

The public hearings on the alternatives will undoubtedly influence the shape of the plan. Whatever alternative is selected will be put to a vote of all those in the local watershed districts.

After several months of controversy, the downstream Project Sponsors (Santa Cruz and Monterey Counties) have worked with the Army Corps of Engineers to modify Alternative 9D so that all principle participants can agree to it. As modified, Alternative 9D would allow the Pajaro to meander like a real river. The severe sediment problem would be alleviated, and the River would return to a healthier state.

The Sierra Club Pajaro River Watershed Committee has been working on a Vision plan for the six reaches of the River between Murphy’s Crossing and the Monterey Bay. The Committee intends that the ideas for the Vision project be integrated with the work undertaken by the Army Corps. See page 8 to learn more about what an asset the Pajaro River could be to its communities.

To get involved contact Lois Robin, lotus@cruzio.com, 464-3939. Santa Cruz and Monterey Sierra Club members can add to the clamor for a Watershed Study to assure the best outcome for the River.

Sempervirens Fund purchases more redwood forest

Sempervirens Fund has announced the purchase of two tracts of redwoods, 107 acres at the gateway to Big Basin State Park and 160 acres near Pescadero. Both parcels were purchased from Redtree Properties.

One parcel is located between Castle Rock and Big Basin State Parks and was scheduled for logging this spring. Ultimately this property will be added to Castle Rock State Park.

The Pescadero parcel contains 30-40 acres of old growth redwoods which are prime nesting sites for the Marbled Murrelet, an endangered seabird. The Santa Cruz mountains is the southernmost area of the Marbled Murrelet’s breeding range.

Sempervirens Fund acquired these two properties as part of its vision to link all the State Parks and public land on the Santa Cruz coast together to create a Great Park. Sempervirens Fund plans to manage both parcels until they are able to transfer them to the California State Parks system.

A public celebration of the new acquisitions will be held on Saturday, March 13 near the intersection of Highways 9 and 236. For more information call 650-568-4509.

2009 Milestones

Human society has been living beyond the Earth’s Ecological Capacity since 1987.

World population is 6.8 billion, the highest it has ever been.

World meat production is steadily rising. Livestock are responsible for about 18% of greenhouse gas emissions.

World coal consumption is at record levels. Coal is responsible for about 40% of the CO₂ emissions from fossil fuels due to its high carbon content.

Study imagines a revitalized Pajaro River as a local asset and tourist attraction

by Lois Robin, Chair, Pajaro River Watershed Committee

In the early 1900s, the Pajaro River was dammed at the “Y” (the junction of the Pajaro River and Salsipuedes Creek) to make Lake Watsonville. Local residents swam, fished, boated and invited their friends to join them at carnivals and events inspired by the refreshing river. It was a tourist mecca.

Today when the Pajaro Valley might again become a tourist destination and provide greater resources for local residents, the river is sad and depleted. Unlike cities such as San Luis Obispo, Napa, Santa Rosa, and Redding which have taken advantage of the river that runs through their communities, Watsonville and Pajaro have turned their backs on the river. Residents rarely venture into the Pajaro riverbed with its many encampments and dangers associated with drug deals and violence. The river corridor is bereft of trees; the river often stagnant and polluted. Maintenance agreements with the Army Corps of Engineers have required counties to cut many of the large trees that could shade and beautify the floodplain.

The Sierra Club Pajaro River Watershed Committee decided over a year ago to imagine ways to improve the connection of the River with its communities. The Committee obtained grants and hired professor Matt Kondolf, a hydrologist and planner at the Berkeley School of Urban Planning and Landscape Architecture, to help consider the River’s potential. On several exploratory trips to the River, Dr. Kondolf brought a recent graduate of the program, Jennifer Natali. Jennifer, it turned out, had all the skills, talents, and training necessary to envision a revitalized Pajaro River.

Natali spent many hours riding her bike on the levees and around the communities. She camped in the vicinity and talked with dozens of residents. Then she went to work and did what the Committee requested. She visualized many ways for people to interact safely and enjoyably with the River, and she documented her ideas with maps, charts, and beautifully-detailed drawings.

The Pajaro River Watershed is huge, so Jennifer envisioned only the area from Murphy’s Crossing to the Monterey Bay where the Army Corps would eventually rebuild the levees. Jennifer mapped out many biking and hiking trails between the River and target destinations in Watsonville, thus creating transportation benefits as well as access to the River. She found a place for a tree-lined paseo where people could interact with each other at the River’s edge. Restored wetlands and bioswales could provide opportunities for bird watching and kayaking.

The City of Watsonville invited the Committee and Jennifer to present the plan to several of their departments and to the City Manager who liked the ideas but made no commitments to include them in the General Plan. On November 10, the Committee showed the plan to the Watsonville City Council, asking them to support projects as their various departments presented them. This time the Santa Cruz Sentinel picked up the story, and the Connectivity Vision gained more visibility. The Council members expressed interest.


You can become part of the process to Revitalize the Pajaro River. To schedule a presentation about the plan contact Lois Robin, lolotusi@cruzio.com, 464-3939.
Few people have seen the flower of Fetid Adder’s Tongue (*Scoliopus bigelovii*), one of the earliest to flower in the spring. What appears to be petals are actually the sepals, stamped with distinct dark purple veins. The petals are erect, dark purple, and horn-like. Fetid Adder’s Tongue has large oval leaves with purple blotches. In bloom, it has an unpleasant smell.

The flower pictured on our first page and in two views left and above on this page is the Checker Lily, also called Mission Bells (*Fritillaria lanceolata*). It is usually found in shade in redwood and mixed evergreen forests.
Farr introduces new wilderness bill for Big Sur

by Vicky Hoover and Rita Dalessio

Representative Sam Farr (D-Carmel) has introduced legislation that is currently wending its way through the approval process. The bill, HR 4040, would create a separate funding source for the Big Sur portion of the Los Padres National Forest and add portions of five local rivers to the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System.

Titled The Big Sur Forest Service Management Unit Act (HR 4040), the proposed legislation would protect public lands in the northern Santa Lucia Mountains by multiple measures, including:

- Designation of over 90 miles of Wild and Scenic Rivers including portions of the Arroyo Seco, San Antonio and Carmel Rivers, as well as Big Creek;
- The designation of the Horse Canyon and Horse Pasture additions to the Ventana Wilderness Area, along with several technical boundary adjustments resulting in a net increase of approximately 2,000 acres of federally designated Wilderness;
- Establishment of the Big Sur Management Unit (BSMU), which would replace the present Monterey Ranger District of the Los Padres National Forest—which is located quite far from the large southern portion of the Los Padres—California’s largest national forest. A separate management unit would provide greater management and budgetary autonomy desirable to address concerns unique to the Big Sur Unit.
- Designation of the BSMU as a Wildland Urban Interface Special Study Area with the requirement that a Fire Management Plan be created within one year, in compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act. This NEPA requirement is innovative in that it would provide for public participation in the wildfire management planning process.
- Conversion of the Arroyo Seco–Indians Road (already closed to motorized vehicles by landslides) to the Arroyo Seco–Indians National Recreational Trail, a public thoroughfare offering unparalleled opportunities for hiking, equestrian use, bicycling, and other forms of non-motorized recreation;
- Establishment of the Jeff Norman Botanical Area, a plant community rich in endemic maritime chaparral on National Forest lands immediately south of Pfeiffer Beach.

With its focus on wild and scenic river protection, this bill complements, and completes, the wilderness protection for additional Forest Service lands in Representative Farr’s district that was achieved by his Big Sur Wilderness and Conservation Act of 2002. Unlike other recent California wilderness bills, the 2002 Big Sur legislation contained no wild and scenic rivers.

Tom Hopkins of the Ventana Wilderness Alliance, who has been working with Farr’s staff on this bill since 2003, said, “This legislation will provide permanent protection for the last free-flowing wild rivers in the Ventana Region and implement other safeguards to protect these public wild lands and rivers for future generations. We all thank Congressman Sam Farr for his visionary leadership to protect the Big Sur Coast and Ventana backcountry.”

Other individuals and groups who have been key to the development of this legislation include Gordon Johnson, Director of the California Wilderness Project, and Steve Evans, Conservation Director of Friends of the River.

Our national parks: a vision for the second century

by John Byrne and Vicky Hoover

In 2016, America’s National Park Service will celebrate its 100th birthday. The Sierra Club’s National Parks and Monuments Team wants to share with you our exciting vision for the second century of the National Park Service. National parks are America’s marvelous contribution to the world.

Our vision focuses on three major concerns that people didn’t have 100 years ago, but that today are prevalent in our society: natural areas disappearing, people separated from nature, and the onset of global climate change.

Disappearance of our natural areas

It used to be that development occurred as islands in a sea of nature, but today national parks are natural islands in a sea of development. We see that national parks are needed to preserve important representative places of our natural environment. We envision a significant expansion of our National Park system, so that every major natural eco-region in our country will be represented by at least one national park or equivalent reserve.

A preliminary gap analysis shows that we must create 38 new national parks or similar areas, and expand or change designation in 28 others. This will protect habitat for the biodiversity of our flora and fauna that make up our natural world as ecosystems evolve and adapt to global climate change. By protecting natural areas that represent all parts of our natural world, we cannot only better enjoy nature, we can also learn what we must do to protect the world in which we and our fellow species live.

An expanded network of parks is also needed to provide nearby places for more people to visit—both to lessen generation of greenhouse gases from flying and driving to parks and to provide convenient close-to-home places for people to appreciate their natural and cultural heritage.

Connecting people with nature

We envision national parks able to coax people, especially young people, out into nature. Our heavily urbanized society is losing its connections to nature. A generation of children is growing up mostly indoors and often glued to the Internet. Childhood obesity is more of a problem.

We need to expand education programs in national parks to help all visitors learn about our natural world. These programs should be connected to the Internet so national parks can be learned about and appreciated by everybody, all the time. Online programs should attract teachers and students. Classrooms should be linked to parks through the Internet throughout the academic year.

We should consider reducing park entrance fees, not raising them. Entrance fees discourage use, aggravating an already significant decline in visitation. Fees disproportionately affect people with lower incomes and contribute but a nickel to the National Park Service budget dollar.

Fighting global climate change

Parks should educate visitors on climate change and how they can help out in their daily lives. We should use national parks as study sites to learn about and mitigate the effects of climate change. We must assure that the wild areas in parks stay wild through wilderness designation, so that national parks can form the core of broad protected areas to enable animal migration and adaptations essential for species survival.

We see all our national parks vigorously promoting public transportation so that people will be able to go to national parks on trains or other public transit and, once there, able to appreciate our natural world without a car. Parks can be a model of zero emissions.

The United States invented the National Park, but today we lag behind other countries in using national parks to learn about, protect, and perpetuate our natural world. Expanding our system of National Parks should be the prime goal of the Second Century of our National Park System.
Meet 1 hour before formal meeting time in order to save gas and protect the environment when participating in out-of-county outings. Informal (no leader) carpool meeting spots:

**Santa Cruz:** County Gov’t Center.

**Monterey:** K-Mart Seaside.
Bringing water and lunch. Rain cancels. Call for a space.

Leader: Monique Fargues, 384-3234.

MARCH

Wednesday, March 3

HIKE: RANCHO SAN ANTONIO CO PARK

This county park adjoins the 3800 acre open space preserve and has diverse habitat: mixed riparian, coast live oak woodlands, scrub, and grassy meadows. Two of our favorite park things are the huge bay laurel tree and the large bobcat that roams the trails and usually shows himself at some point in the hike. We’ll start from the lot in the park from Cristo Rey Dr. off Foothill Blvd. in Cupertino. We’ll hike through the Deer Hollow Farm and along the Rogue Valley Trail to the Upper Meadow Trail. Views of the entire Bay Area are great. 9 miles. Bring lunch and water. Meet at 9:30 a.m. at Sears 41st Ave. to carpool, $5, or at the parking lot near the restrooms at 10:00 a.m. Leader: Diane Cornell, 423-5925.

Thursday, March 4

HIKE: MAPLE FALLS

This 8-mile Nisene Marks hike with 700’ elevation gain takes us through a lovely forest along beautiful creeks and eventually to serene Maple Falls. Some agility is required. Stops to enjoy flora & fauna. Bring water & lunch. Arrive early; we depart at 8:45 a.m. sharp from Shell station by Home Depot in Seaside or from parking lot behind Apts Station at 9:30 a.m. sharp. Call for a reservation. Leader: Lynn Bomberger, 375-7777.

Friday, March 5

SENIOR WALK: CARMEL CIRCLE

3-mile loop in Carmel. We’ll start at the Carmel Beach parking lot, walk past Mission Ranch up Mission Train reserve through Carmel and back along Carmel Beach. Possibly hike in reverse order. Meet before 9:30 a.m. at Sears 41st Ave. To go direct, take Hwy. 1 south to Ocean exit. Turn right, go downhill to Carmello, left on Carmello about 1.5 mi. to beach parking area. Free parking with pool rinse rooms. Meet at 10:30 a.m. Bring lunch, water, $5 carpool. At end of hike, those wishing can lunch in downtown Carmel. Leader: Brooke Ewoldsen, 476-6188.

Saturday, March 6

HIKE: FALL CREEK

Third time’s the charm? Let’s message the rain gods for no rain this round! This beautiful 9-mile hike leads us on a steady uphill along the creek, then a steep climb up to the Big Ben tree where we’ll enjoy a well-earned lunch. We’ll stop at the kilt site on the way back for some history, 2000’ elevation gain. Meet at the Santa Cruz Co Government Center at 9:30 a.m. Bring water, lunch, and carpool. $ Rain cancels. Leader: Pamela Burnham, 428-2796.

Sunday, March 7

HIKE: KAHN RANCH

Steep canyons and trails climbing to ridges with great views make Kahn Ranch a fine addition to Garland Ranch Park. Our hike involves steep climbs of about 600–800’, but the pace will be slow. Not over 4 miles. After visiting a gorgeous waterfall, we’ll look up in the hills for early spring flowers—Hound’s Tongue and Mule Ears have been seen here in past years! Because access to the ranch is limited, only the first 15 hikers who call to reserve a spot can join us. Hard rain cancels. Leader: Mary Gale, 626-3565.

Tuesday, March 9

SENIOR HIKE: DELAVEAGA CREEK

3 miles to Branciforte Creek, then uphill to the Top of the World and back down. Lovely spring wildflowers. Meet before 9:30 a.m. at Sears 41st Ave. or at Twisted Tree picnic area in park off Branciforte Dr. near restrooms at 9:30 a.m. Bring lunch, water and $2 carpool. Leader: Janet Schwind, 425-3845.

Saturday, March 13

WALK: PEBBLE BEACH & ASILOMAR

4-mile loop starting on neighborhood streets and then thru dunes between fairways out to Point Joe and back along the beach boardwalk. Quiet neighborhood, beach wildflowers, possible migrating whale spouts. Meet across from the Fishwife Restaurant, 2nd & Asilomar Blvd., Pacific Grove. Call to reserve a place and for meeting time. Bring snack, water. Leader: Marilyn Scheler, 372-9215.

Saturday, March 13

HIKE: ALMADEN CANYON PARK

I think we’ll do a loop from the Mockingbird entrance; sun and shade. It will be 8+ miles, and 1600’ gain. Meet at 9:30 a.m. at the Santa Cruz Country Government Center to carpool. Call Nick for additional information. Leader: Nick Wyckoff 462-3101.

Saturday, March 13

HIKE: TORO PARK

Come explore Toro Park during its best time of the year: lots of wildflowers in bloom. We’ll hike up to Simas peak via East Ridge and East Toyon trails and get great views. 8-9 miles, about 1800’ elevation gain. Bring water and lunch, rain cancels. Meet at 9:00 a.m. outside of the entrance to Toro Park. Call for a space. Leader: Monique Fargues, 384-3234.

Saturday – Sunday, March 13 – 14

FENCE REMOVAL: CARRIZO PLAIN

Help remove fences. At this time of year there should be wildflowers. Work Saturday; camp and potluck dinner that evening. Hike Sunday. Bring leather gloves, warm clothes with long sleeves, and long pants, food and gear on the trail. Contact Leader Paul Plathe: 209-476-1498.

Sunday, March 14

HIKE: HENRY COE STATE PARK

Northern CA’s largest state park, Coe boasts amazing views, abundance of wildlife including Collared Eagles, Mule deer and elk. Blue Oak is just one of over 12 kinds of trees there. Expect a prolific early wildflower bloom. 12 miles, 2000’ elevation gain. No rain cancellation! Meet at Sears 41st Ave at 7:30 a.m. or at the Hunting Hollow entrance at 9:00 a.m. Call for more info. Leader: John Howard, 476-4253.

Getting to outings

Sierra Club encourages outings participants to walk, bicycle, and take the bus to outings meeting places.

Monday, March 15

WILDFLOWER HIKE: POINTE LOBOS

Enjoy lovely spring wildflowers at Point Lobos and experience the new trailhead from Whalers Cabin to Ichxenta Point, just finished this year. Bring water, lunch, binoculars, and money for entrance and carpooling. Heavy rain cancels. Leader: Pamela Burnham, 428-2796.

Sunday, March 21

HIKE: PINNACLES MT DEFIANCE

For experienced hikers only, we’ll explore the fifth highest peak in Pinnacles National Monument, Mt Defiance, with a panoramic view including theideon–seen “Little Pinnacles.” Parks off-trail with some light bushwhacking, 5 miles and 1800’ elevation gain. Must call leader for further info and a reservation. Leader: Jack Glendening, 484-6929.

Sunday, March 21

WILDFLOWER HIKE: POINT LOBOS

Explore lovely spring wildflowers at Point Lobos and experience the new trailhead from Whalers Cabin to Ichxenta Point, just finished this year. Bring water and lunch, a camera, wear comfortable shoes and optional flower guide. We’ll walk in a circle around the Park, about 3 ½ miles. Meet at the park entrance station by the restrooms at 10:00 a.m. (Park outside on the road.) Santa Cruz carpoolers meet at Sears 41st Ave. (no leader) about 9:00 a.m. Call me for info about carpooling. Leader: Phyllis Hilton, 372-1714.

Tuesday, March 23

SENIOR HIKE: UPPER UCSC CAMPUS

Explore trails and fire roads on the upper UCSC campus. 3 miles on mostly flat ground along the creek, we’ll take our time to enjoy them. We might find some Checker Lilies. 5 miles with 1700’ elevation gain. Bring water & lunch. Arrive early; depart at 9:30 a.m. sharp from Rio Road Park & Ride. Call for a reservation. Leader: Lynn Bomberger, 375-7777.

Wednesday, March 24

SERVICE TRIP: BACKPACK: UTAH

Assist the National Park Service in eradicating Russian Olive from the Escalante River. Working under the direction of Park Ranger Bill Wolverton, we’ll gather up slush from previous service trips and burn it. Since 2000, over half of the river has been cleared. Meet in Escalante, Utah Sunday morning, March 14, caravan out to the trailhead and hike in. Work 4 days, dayhike one day and hike out Sunday morning March 20. Expect knee to thigh deep river crossings, overnight lows near freezing, and mild temperatures during the day. Participants will be responsible for their own leather work gloves, food and gear on the trail. Contact Leader Paul Plathe: 209-476-1498.

For more information about our special programs or to receive a full schedule and description of Clair Tappaan programs please visit our website at www.ctl.sierraclub.org or call (800) 679-6775.

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HIKE: LAND OF MEDICINE BUDDHA
6 miles, moderate loop, 500’ elevation gain. Hike includes a redwood forest and beautiful Bates Creek. Bring water and lunch. Meet before 9:30 a.m. at the rear parking lot of the Congregational Church of Soquel. Leader: Tom Davey, 331-8430.

Friday, March 26

HIKE: OLD COAST ROAD, BIG SUR
This unpaved road in Big Sur makes a lovely hike. 11 miles up and down through fern-lined redwood canyons with views out to the coast and inland to Pico Blanco. We’ll walk from Big Sur Bridge to Andrew Molera. Car shuttle. 2000’ elevation gain. Bring lunch and water; meet at the Rio Rd. Park and Ride at 9:00 a.m. Heavy rain cancels. Leaders: Cath Farrant, 372 7427 and Lynn Bomberger, 375 7777.

Saturday, March 27

HIKE: STEVENS CREEK-PICCHETTI RANCH
A new trail to me, starting on the NW side of Stevens Creek County Park in Cupertino going to Picchetti Ranch winery, a preserve. A mild 5 miles and 1000’ elevation gain. Meet at 9:30 a.m. at the Santa Cruz County Government Center to carpool. Call for more information. Leader: Nick Wyckoff, 462-3101.

Saturday, March 27

HIKE: MITTeldorf PRESERVE
A wonderful hike around the Mitteldorf Preserve. 11 miles and 2000’ elevation gain. Expect great views, a gorgeous redwood forest (the largest redwood tree of Monterey Co.), and many wildflowers. Bring lunch and water, wear a hat and bring optional hiking poles. Meet at the San Carlos Ranch Gate, 1 mile off Carmel Valley Rd. at 9:00 a.m. Call for a reservation and carpool info. Leader: Anneliese Suter, 624-1467.

Sunday, March 28

HIKE: DEVIL’S PEAK & COMINGS CAMP
From Borcher’s Gap in the NW corner of Los Padres National Forest, we’ll hike 4 miles up the steep trail into the Ventana Wilderness and on to Devil’s Peak. Another mile or so along Skinners’ Ridge brings us to the short turnoff to little-used and secluded Comings Camp. 10+ miles with 3000’ elevation gain. Bring water, lunch, hiking boots. Call for meeting time and place. Leader: Larry Parrish, 622-7455.

Tuesday, March 30

SENIOR HIKE: HARVEY WEST
4 miles with uphill climbs (some steep) from Harvey West parking lot by baseball fields. Well walk by the Sacred Tree and lunch at the ranger station. Meet before 9:30 a.m. at Sears 41st Ave. or at the Harvey West parking lot by 9:50 a.m. Bring lunch, water, $2 carpool. Restrooms available. Leader: Joan Brohmer, 462-3803.

Wednesday, March 31

HIKE: FORT ORD PUBLIC LANDS
This is an opportunity to hike some of the 7000 acres of public recreational parkland and wildlife habitat of Fort Ord. We’ll be walking over rolling grasslands that were once used for military maneuvers. Today the sandy path follows a dry creek bed bordered by eucalyptus, oak, and maple trees before it goes uphill 600’ on Guidotti Road to Skyline Road. As we pass sandstone outcroppings lining the hilltop, we’ll have views over Salinas and Toro Park. Bring lunch and water for this 8½ mile hike. Meet at Sears 41st Ave. at 9:00 a.m. or at 9:15 a.m. at the back of the Deer-
HIKE: BIG BASIN TO SEA

This gorgeous 12-mile hike has an initial 400’ climb, then it’s basically all downhill. We’ll hike the Skyline to the Sea Trail following the creek down to Berry Creek Falls for lunch, then continue down through the farming valley once belonging to Herbert Hoover’s brother, and ending up at Ranchero del Oso. If there’s time, we can visit the Nature Center. Wear sturdy shoes and bring plenty of water and lunch.

Weekly rain cancels. Call for time and place. Leader: Pamela Burnham. 428-2796.

HIKE: BLUFF CAMP

Let’s stay in Carmel Valley all the way up the River. We’ll drive up to Princess Camp in Cachagua, walk around the Los Padres Reservoir and follow the Creek, with one crossing, to Bluff Camp. 10 miles round trip with 600’ elevation gain, mostly in shaded areas at a moderate pace. Bring lunch and water, wear good shoes and bring hiking poles for the crossing. Bathing suits? Sorry, too early. But the flowers should be lovely. Meet at Mid Valley Shopping Center near the Chase Bank at 9:00 a.m. Please call for confirmation. Leader: Anneliese Suter. 624-1467.

HIKE: SOBERANES CREEK/ROCKY RIDGE

5-mile loop with 1700’ elevation gain and great terrain variety. We will follow the Soberanes Creek Trail into a sublime redwood grove, then climb steeply to grassy knolls for a spectacular view at lunch. There will be flowers! The descent will be along Rocky Ridge with more views. Boots highly recommended; hiking poles helpful. Bring water and lunch. Call for meeting location. Leader: DJ Goehringer. 277-9908.

HIKE: GARZAS CREEK

This is my favorite hike with its little meadow, hill-sides of wildflowers, forests with woodrat nests, dark redwood canyon, and creek with young steelhead trout. We might find some Broomrape. 45-mile loop with 800’ elevation gain. Arrive early depart at 10:30 am sharp from Rio Road Park & Ride. Bring water & lunch. Call for a reservation. Leader: Lynn Bomberger. 375-7777.

HIKE: FT ORD PUBLIC LANDS

This will be a wildflower effort of about 6-8 miles and maybe 1000-1500’ elevation gain. I once again haven’t picked the route yet, so call me close to the date if you are concerned. Meet at 9:30 am at the Mar Monte exit in Aptos to carpool. Leader: Nick Wyckoff 462-3101.

HIKE: PINNACLES

A great wildflower hike. We’ll head over the hill and down the High Peaks to Chalone and return via the North Wilderness Trail. A lesser-used route, this hike should give us even more solitude in an already undeveloped area. Meet at Deer Park Shopping Center at 11:00 am. Call me for info about carpooling. Leader: Phyllis Hilton, 372-1714.

HIKE: PARADISE BAVN/RINCON TR.

We’re doing this hike in the spring this year. Many beautiful flowers in Paradise Park. We’ll walk a fire road to Hwy. 9 cross over to Rincon Trail then cross back to San Lorenzo River, 4 miles. Some steep uphill on fire road and up from the river. But you can do it!!! Meet before 9:30 a.m. at Sears 41st Ave. To go direct, take Hwy. 9 to Paradise Park entrance (about 1 mile from intersection of River & Hwy. 9) follow signs 1 mile to picnic grounds. Lunch at picnic area. Restrooms available. Bring water, lunch, $2 carpool. Leader: Pat Herzig. 458-9841.

Wednesday, April 14

HIKE: TORO COUNTY PARK

This park can have the best show of wildflowers (especially lupine) in the area. 9 mile rugged but supremely rewarding loop using the Ollason, Toyon Ridge, Coyote Spring, and East Ridge Trails. Coast live oaks, eucalyptus, and California buckeye shade the beginning of the hike. After the ascent, from the crest of the ridge, you can see the Tularcitos Ridge and the Santa Lucia Range. To the northeast is Fremont Peak. Along the trail cows can be seen enjoying the grasses. Bring lunch and water for a relaxing stop at the top of the peak. Meet at Sears 41st Ave, to carpool ($5) at 9:00 a.m. or at the back of the Deeppark parking area next to Rio Del Mar Blvd. at 9:15 am. We’ll park just inside the entrance to Toro County Park on the right in the shade for a 9:50 am trailhead start. Leader: Diane Cornell. 423-5925.

Thursday, April 15

HIKE: BIG BASIN TO SEA

For a slightly delayed celebration of John Muir’s 172nd birthday and Earth Day, please join us for this popular all-day car-free hike along the Sunset Trail route. We’ll take the Big Basin bus to get us to the park. Meet at the Santa Cruz Metro Center to catch the 8:30 a.m. bus for Big Basin. (The bus will not wait for stragglers). Please bring your favorite John Muir story or quote to share during lunch. We’ll end up at the mouth of Waddell Creek to catch the No. 40 bus, arriving back in Santa Cruz at 5:30 p.m. The total distance is about 13 miles, but it is a moderate hike, what Muir would have called a “saunter.” Bring a good lunch, water, $3 for the bus, and boots that don’t give you blisters. Please call leader Peter Scott at 423-0796 or drip@ucc.edu to reserve a space. Limited to 20 people. NOTE: Do not plan to bring your car. It will only be an encumbrance.

Tuesday, April 27

HIKE: SENIOR HIKE: WILDER

We'll climb the Baldwin Loop 3½ miles with moderately steep uphill and great ocean views. No restroom facilities, but we can stop at park entrance to use restrooms. Meet before 9:30 a.m. at Sears 41st Ave., or at Mission & King Sts. by Shen's Gallery at 9:30. Am. go back to Lotus and drop off the road at the trailhead. Bring water & lunch. Leader: Pat Herzog. 458-9841.

Saturday, April 25

HIKE: PINNACLES HARRIS PEAK

For adventurous and experienced hikers only, we will explore the northern wilderness region of Pinnacles National Monument and climb the park’s third highest peak, Harris Peak. Partly off-trail with some light bushwhacking. All day, leaving Salinas at 6:00 a.m. 13 miles and 3500’ elevation gain. Must call leader for further information and a reservation. Leader: Jack Glendenning. 484-0929.

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“Every good thing, great and small, needs defense”

-John Muir

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### Meeting Schedule

**Ventana Chapter (Monterey County)**
Information: 624-8032

**Executive Committee:**
First Thursday of the month;
Call for meeting place and time

**Conservation Committee:**
For dates and times, call 655-8586.

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**Santa Cruz Regional Group**

**Executive Committee:**
Second Wednesday of the month;
Call 460-1538 for meeting place and time.

**Conservation Committee:**
Call 761-3263 for meeting dates and times.

**Forestry Task Force:**
Third Wednesday of the month, 7:30 p.m.;
Call 566-7447 for meeting location.
The elusive Fetid Adder’s Tongue (Scoliopus bigelovii) is one of spring’s first flowers. Milkmaid or Toothwort (Cardamine Californica) blooms early in spring.