



POINT LOBOS

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Point Lobos Foundation

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Marlene Testaguzza



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Special thanks to Pat Gadban, editor of
There are Middens and Then There Are Middens.

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

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MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT: REASONS TO FUND POINT LOBOS

Skip Flohr



The Point Lobos Foundation invites you to join us in our mission of conservation, preservation, recreation, and outreach.

Our 130 docents shoulder much of the responsibility for successfully completing this mission. This year, pending the meeting of our revenue goals, we have budgeted \$34,700 to fully support our docents. This money will fund docent training (including training for selected docents as certified interpreters with the National Association of Interpreters); maintenance of the Docent Center (built with Foundation funds), the Visitor Information Station, Whalers Cabin museum; provision of interpretive resources such as binoculars, reference books, and audio-visual equipment; and administrative support.

Many of our docents have been involved with our school outreach program that brings approximately 5,000 school children (many of them under-served) to the Reserve each year. Depending on our revenue, we have budgeted \$17,000 for this and other outreach programs. We also support the Point Lobos

Summer Adventures program, an environmental camp for youths of middle school and high school age (see back page). This latter program is funded almost entirely from individual donations and grants.

Marine mammals, such as the sea otter, California sea lion, harbor seal, and often, whales, are central to visitors' experiences of Point Lobos. With support from the Foundation, our docents conduct a monthly census of sea otters at Point Lobos, and provide information to the state and other organizations to assist in the conservation of these engaging animals. With a grant from the Monterey Bay Marine Sanctuary Foundation, we also educate the public about the benefits of protecting fish, marine mammals, and other species in Marine Protected Areas.

Also funded by our Foundation is the publication of 30 different brochures that are available to visitors at no charge to aid in their enjoyment and education. These include *Welcome to Point Lobos* in 18 different languages, and

educational brochures such as *The Southern Sea Otter*.

Finally, we assist with the stewardship of trails, habitat (including removal of invasive plants), historical buildings, and other Reserve infrastructure. Again, depending on revenue, we have budgeted \$27,500 for these essential tasks.

As you can see, maintaining the Point Lobos State Natural Reserve as the "Crown Jewel of the California State Parks" keeps the volunteers and staff of Point Lobos busy. We are in need of generous people so we can continue to fund conservation, preservation, recreation, and outreach goals.

The Point Lobos Foundation is organized as a 501(c)(3) non-profit corporation. Contributions to the Foundation are exempt from federal and applicable state income taxes. The Foundation's tax identification number is 94-2546064.

Thanks go to Judd Perry, Sandy Hale, and especially Lynne Miles for their contributions to the above.

NEWS



New Membership Categories and Rates

The Point Lobos Foundation board members unanimously adopted the following membership categories and dues schedule that will be effective upon notification of our members with this issue of the Point Lobos Magazine.

We value your generous support, and encourage you to renew your membership at the highest level your financial circumstances will allow.

<i>Student</i>	\$25 to \$49
<i>Harbor Seal</i>	\$50 to \$99
<i>Sea Otter</i>	\$100 to 249
<i>California Sea Lion</i>	\$250 to \$499
<i>Gray Whale</i>	\$500 to \$999
<i>Cypress Grove Steward</i>	\$1,000 to \$2,499
<i>Point Lobos Steward</i>	\$2,500 to \$4,999
<i>Point Lobos Benefactor</i>	\$5,000 and above

Save the Date! Moonlight Walk October 23, 2010

Our always popular members-only event will be held this year the evening of October 23. This is a superb opportunity to meet Point Lobos Foundation board members, State Park rangers and other employees, and fellow Foundation members. Other folks who love Point Lobos and want to become members are welcome to attend and join that evening. Point Lobos under a full moon is gorgeous, and this is a can't miss opportunity to experience the Reserve in a new light.

Point Lobos Foundation Subcommittees

The Point Lobos Foundation counts on a number of dedicated individuals to run various aspects of the Foundation that help support our mission to help preserve Point Lobos State Natural Reserve. They are:

Executive Committee: Skip Flohr
Membership: Gael Gallagher
Budget and Finance: Steve Dennis
Facilities and Equipment: John Hudson
Fund Development: Skip Flohr
Invasive Plants: Carl Voss
Merchandise: Judd Perry
Planning: Sandy Hale
Point Lobos Magazine: Dida Kutz
Publications: Jeff Johnson
Trails: Rick Pettit

UNDER MY BRIM

Ranger Chuck Bancroft



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

1898 - On January 14th, A.M. Alan purchased 640 acres of Point Lobos owned by the Carmelo Land and Coal Company. Allan immediately began buying back all of the lots that had been sold within the subdivision project. Dairying and a limited amount of farming were part of the economic background at this time. Realizing the scenic and recreational value of the area, Allan put up a toll gate and charged for admission.

Allan and Gennosuke Kodani, a Japanese pioneer in the area, became partners and set up an abalone cannery at Carmelo Cove. Long hooks and nets were used in the beginning, with fishing done near shore in water less than 10 feet deep. Later, hard hat diving suits were used and deeper waters were explored. The cannery was built and developed on the site of the old whaling station.

The Japanese Whaling company was organized with Capt. Manuel Phellips in command and Capt. Joe Pedro as second-in-command. One of the last gray whales was taken during this time

period.

1899 - A report came in that the Carmel Whalers had brought in a "sulfur bottom whale" (Joseph Hitchcock later corrected this claim and identified it as a fin whale). The Monterey Whalers put in a claim for the whale. "This claim was hotly contested for several years, costing both sides a pretty penny." The whale, whose value was perhaps \$5,000, was finally awarded to the Monterey crew. But by this time it had passed its usefulness and all that was left of it, a splendid skeleton, was mounted upon many posts and lumber at Point Lobos.

Seizo Kodani (son of Gennosuke Kodani) said, "The whale was not caught during the heyday of the whaling industry." His father told him that the dead whale washed ashore at Point Lobos. The odor was so bad they buried it. Several years later, when the

bones were clean, they dug it up and assembled it at Cypress Grove.

1900 - A meeting was held in the little museum at Pacific Grove with a number of scientists and Sierra Club members present. The preservation of Point Lobos and Cypress Point as national parks or reserves was discussed.

During this time gravel was being removed from Point Lobos for use in San Francisco.

The steam schooner *Chico* was seen loading gravel from San Jose Beach. Gravel was also removed from the beach between Granite Point and Coal Chute Point. The only legacies of this industry is a road cut down to the rocky beach, and the name "The Pit" assigned to this area of the Reserve.

When the coal days came to an end, the equipment at Point Lobos acquired new uses; the bunker now held gravel. Railroad tracks were shipped to Point Lobos to connect Point Lobos with

the coal mines at Malpas Canyon; the railroad was never built. According to Mr. L.J. Hudson, the coal in the mines had been removed and carried in wagons drawn by four-horse teams. The railroad track was used instead to transport gravel in cars from the beach south of San Jose Creek to the Coal Chute Point bunker. The cars were drawn by horses to the top of a hill overlooking Whalers Cove, and continued their course by gravity to the bunker.



Observations

Sparky Starkweather, State Park Squirrel



On Sunday the week before Easter, a horrific storm hit the central coast. Rain and hail were pushed horizontally by tremendous winds. On the northeast side of Coal Chute Point a standing dead pine tree broke off, falling into a dead tree housing three great blue heron nests. An inspection on Monday revealed all three nests on the ground and the eggs smashed to pieces. Ranger Chuck talked with local Audubon expert and long-time friend of the Reserve, Brian Weed.

Brian said if the herons had not expended too much energy there was a possibility they would rebuild. Several of our volunteers watched the area over the next few days and sure enough, the herons started rebuilding but now live in other pine trees at Coal Chute Point.

The storms brought about by the El Niño weather patterns have been causing much concern about the Brandt's cormorants and the possibility of another failure in their nesting this year. We've been watching the Bird Islands at the south end of the Reserve for weeks, and finally the birds have started to arrive and begin the nesting process.



Lots of display by the males sporting their beautiful blue gular throats, and lots of battles over prime nesting locations. The big island is not yet overloaded with birds, but is looking better every day. The arrival of a pair of pigeon guillemots at the Bird Island area is a real treat. These pelagic birds spend nine months at sea and come to rocky outcroppings for the nesting season. Look for them at Sea Lion Point as well as Guillemot Island on the north shore.

Several pairs of black-crowned night herons have arrived at Pelican Point for nesting. You'll see our docents out frequently photographing all these birds during the season. Stop and say "hi." I'm sure they will provide lots of information and good viewing of these wonderful birds.





There are Middens, and Then There are Middens

Marlene Testaguzza

Within Point Lobos State Natural Reserve there are several known midden sites left by the Rumsien Ohlone people who lived here for about 2,500 years. Hidden among vegetation, sometimes spilling onto trails, the midden material sparkles with broken pieces (sometimes whole) of shell. We are indeed in rich midden country

What are middens? Middens are deposits of discarded material. They may contain discarded artifacts, structural remains, and rock. Or they may contain organic matter, such as food refuse, bone, or even human remains, which contribute to their dark color and often greasy feel.

Archaeological testing of several sites shows that although a variety of shellfish material dominates (mainly abalone and mussel), the remains of fish, birds, terrestrial mammals, sea mammals, stone and shell tool fragments, obsidian flakes (the obsidian would have been obtained

through trade), charcoal and ash, as well as other physical and cultural remnants are also found.

The accumulated layers are put down over time, sometimes thousands of years. If they have remained relatively undisturbed (free of rodent burrowing, human intrusion, earth movement, etc.), an archaeologist can interpret the story of human life ways; an ecologist, the history of ecological change. These middens are just a few feet deep because the people only hunted, gathered, and processed food seasonally. But they do indicate long-term use.

Zooarchaeological studies conducted on the Monterey Peninsula have shown that mussel shell dominates in the deeper, older strata of shell middens, while abalone shell dominates in the upper, more recent strata.

Outside the Reserve boundaries, but nearby on Point Lobos Ranch, there exists what may be the largest archaeological site in Monterey



Map of the main Ohlone groups, based on Kroeber (1925) as amended by Levy (1970). Courtesy wikipedia.org.

County. The “Hudson mound proper” midden encompasses three shell mounds. Twenty-foot depths and several human burials have been recorded there.

These middens tell the story of a people who enjoyed an abundance and diversity of plants and animals that enabled them to provide well for their needs over the centuries. Starvation was evidently unknown.



There are other middens on the Reserve composed of discarded material, but these are seldom, if ever, seen. They belong to dusky-

footed wood rats, medium-sized rodents, sometimes known as pack rats or trade rats, native to California and Baja California (see sidebar).

These middens are often hidden within the conically-shaped stick houses that the rats build both on the ground and in the trees. These houses can be found, if carefully sought, in dense bush and closed wood areas on the reserve. Food supply, ample screening from predators, and building materials are of considerable importance to the wood rat when selecting a home site. Nearby, arboreal runways and undergrowth are also important. Depending upon the size of the house (they can be monumental – up to six’ high!), there might be multiple passageways, entrances, nest chambers, food storage areas, and middens.

Indeed, midden material for the pack rats might include discarded plant parts, bone-laden carnivore feces, parts of skeletons, decayed vegetable refuse, rat fecal material, and rat “burials.” Midden deposits that are found at the inner base of rat houses are easily obtained. In the coastal



Wood rat stick house. Photo courtesy Marlene Testaguzza.



communities of California, they were harvested for use as garden fertilizer. From one to twenty sacks could be gathered from a single house.

In the Monterey Bay area of California, the dusky-footed wood rat and the indigenous people of yesterday were well acquainted. It was rather a one-sided relationship, however, since the animal was liable to be killed, pounded into "hamburger" in a bedrock mortar, then cooked and eaten. But, things have changed.

Today on Point Lobos State Natural Reserve, the wood rat is protected, and the descendants of the Rumsien Ohlone come to visit. In fact, on Saturday, October 29th, 2010, from 10 am-5 pm, there will be a special day at the Reserve, recalling the culture of the indigenous people. And while the visitors learn how acorns and soap root were used, make tule boats, mats, and flutes, dance, and listen to stories, the nocturnal wood rats will be resting, perhaps sound asleep, secure in their houses made of sticks.

The dusky-footed wood rat inhabits a range restricted to the Pacific coastal areas from the Washington/Oregon border south to Baja California. There are 20 other species living from within two degrees of the Arctic Circle to the tropics of Nicaragua. Among these are several that inhabit the arid Southwest United States. Their dens are often built in caves, between rock ledges, and in boulder piles. They are occupied, perhaps intermittently, for many, many centuries. Their middens provide a record of environmental change for the last forty thousand years! As a result, much of the biogeography of the western United States during this period is well known.

Quotes from the Docent Log

Steller Sea Lions; Storm-Tossed Herons; a Seal Pup Makes Its Debut

February 22: Jon Dungan

Five otters were floating and grooming in Whalers Cove. Three were swimming close together near the parking lot. It looked like mom plus a pup, plus another large one. I didn't understand what that third otter was doing. Was it a male waiting until the female was in estrous? Possibly last year's pup reluctant to leave? At any rate, the small raft floated close to the shore, so visitors got good looks. A fourth otter was wrapped in a small kelp bed. A fifth was in the middle of the cove. Harbor seals were everywhere. A pair seemed to be playing as thought in a water ballet. Two Canada geese, a snowy egret, and several cormorants shared space on "otter rock." Further out in the bay, a half dozen brown pelicans were diving and rising into the air only to dive again like arrows into the sea. It looked to me as if there was a lot of food for them.

I was disappointed there were so few visitors willing to brave the cold drizzle. There is always so much going on in the Cove, if only we can stop and look.

March 9: Fred Brown

On March 9th I gave my first "explore the tide pools of Weston Beach" walk. It started off with a couple from the East coast and another visiting from

England with their California resident daughter. Thanks to Dr. Steve Webster's instructions and observations, I went through the safety issues and then spoke of the uniqueness of the Monterey area's tide pools. Soon I looked up to see a score of little girls and boys clambering down the hillside from the parking area. It turned out to be a school outing of eight-year-olds, with five adult chaperones.

Fortunately, we found an abundance of critters to gawk at: black turban snails inched their way along, lined shore crabs darted into crevasses, ochre stars stayed glued tight under ledges, anemones waited for the next tide, sculpins scurried about, hermit crabs lumbered about in their new shells, and a small octopus with tentacles drawn in, crouched between



two rocks, drew the entire crowd. Everyone had a ball.

And you never know what you might find when you turn over a rock.

March 9: Carol Bloner

Furious, cold wind coming from the northwest. Ranger Matt says this is the sign of spring and the beginning of our upwelling. On this otter count day the wind was a sure sign to not leave our scopes unattended. Two otters found the arctic air warmer than the ocean; they had hauled out on a relatively protected rock near Bird Island. Biggest surprise was a field of zygadine lilies starting at the northern point of the path



Photo courtesy Fred Brown.

to Bird Island and continuing across the full eastern exposure. Quite impressive.

March 9: Lynne McCammon

At the first glimpse of the ocean Tuesday we knew it would be hard to count the otters. Never fear, the faithful otter spotters were up to the challenge. The worst enemy was the wind. It is very difficult when the wind blow because the legs of the scopes tend to wobble, as well as those of the spotters. The ocean was very rough, with little or no kelp, so the otters had no way to anchor themselves. For the first time in a long while some otters were spotted hauled out on rocks. They were sharing the space with the harbor seals. Some of the seals were quite plump, most likely pregnant and with pupping imminent. The final otter count was 15 adults and 3 pups.

March 17: Fred Brown

This year's birding outreach program was given by Ranger Chuck at Carmel River State Beach and Lagoon Preserve, with the help of several of our docents.

We had spectacular clear spring weather, and the pleasure of identifying many different bird species with a delightful group of boys and girls who were very knowledgeable about the birds found on the beach and in the adjacent lagoon. Of special interest was the discovery of a dozen or so snowy plovers hunkered down in the small depressions in the beach sand. The snowy plovers, which are about five

to six inches long and weigh no more than two ounces, are on the Endangered Species Act threatened list, and only 400 or so mating pairs are known to exist on the coast between Big Sur and Santa Cruz. Also spotted by our intrepid eight-year-olds were killdeers, snowy egrets, buffleheads, pelicans, and several species of songbird.

March 17: Paul Reys

I was working Whalers Cabin, talking with a group from Wisconsin who were very interested in Monterey Jack cheese. As I was sharing with them the history of the dairy and talking about the Victorines, early Portuguese settlers at Point Lobos, I noticed a woman with a tripod-mounted camera listening while she photographed many of the exhibit photos. When I asked her why she was taking photos of photos she started to cry, and told me that she was a relative of the Victorine family, and that she had several similar photos in her car. She told me to hold her camera while she ran to her car. She brought back several photos that had come from her grandmother's attic, and started to share them with all of us. I took the *Images of America, Point Lobos* book out to compare the images, and sure enough, this woman's photos were very similar, except even older than those published in the book. She said that her grandmother told her they were taken in 1856! For the next hour we became wrapped in a time of years gone by, rediscovering one of the many industries, and talking of the people who worked it, that

formerly existed at Point Lobos.

**March 18:
Rick Pettit**

On a bright and breezy morning I headed up the Cypress Grove trail with six eager second-graders who had come to the Reserve for a school walk. First order of business: we made very sure we could identify poison oak. We then speculated as to what animals might be living in the coastal scrub, and I was thus reminded that second-graders still have their imaginations intact. Next we got down real low to try to figure out what made up the surface of the trail we were walking on...hey, look, it's little tiny rocks! Diverting our attention from matters mineral, a California quail chi-ca-goed near us, and then cooperatively displayed himself on a snag; we had a quick binocular lesson, and quite enjoyed looking at his elegant markings and spiffy topknot. Then we entered Cypress Grove, and after making a spirited and collaborative decision that those layered rocks across at Headland Cove are probably sedi-men-ta-ry (did I mention that this was a geology walk?), we proceeded to closely examine the large granitic boulder in the trail. Using their four



senses - the sense of taste was declared out-of-bounds for this exercise - they proceeded to list everything they could about it. This group was enthusiastic, perceptive, very thorough, and, frankly, a bit surprising in their observations. For example, I myself had simply never noticed that that particular rock really does look rather like a giant potato.

March 20: Jeff Johnson

I was scoping at Sea Lion Point when I saw five Steller sea lions! Three of them were together on the right-most plateau on the largest of the Sea Lion Rocks. The other two were among several California sea lions on the low-lying rocks to the south. It was amazing to see how puny the California sea lions looked compared to the Stellers. The Stellers max out at about 2,000 pounds, more than twice the maximum size of the

California sea lions. In addition, there was an elephant seal pup on the rocky beach below and to the right of Sea Lion Point. It was way up on the beach, and seemed indifferent to several visitors who approached to take pictures. The pup was lethargic, but was scooping up bits of gravel to cover itself, a behavior I have observed with adult elephant seals. This, and the fun I have talking with visitors, is why I enjoy scoping so much. (*Ed. note: for detailed information on the Steller sea lion, once plentiful at Point Lobos, search for NMFS Steller.*)

March 23: Connie Dallmann

Had some friendly people at the Information Station today who were admiring the beauty of Point Lobos. I asked them where they were from, and they said Hawaii. It was their impression that we were doing a better job of



preserving our natural beauty than was being done in Hawaii.

April 4: Terry Tellep

Lots of visitors at Whalers Cabin, and many natural and easy opportunities to talk about the value of Marine Protected Areas and of the Marine Mammal Protection Act. Late in my shift a young boy, probably

four or five years old, came into the cabin with a rather distressed and serious look on his face. His father explained that his son heard the humpback whale sounds coming from the cabinet in the Whaling Station display.

The boy was concerned that we had a baby whale locked inside. I reassured him that we held no baby whales captive at Point Lobos - that the sounds were coming from a CD player that played humpback whale songs behind the cabinet door. I praised him for speaking up and questioning

the adults, as he obviously cared for whales. This young advocate was such an inspiration to me - voicing his concern was the best embodiment of a Marine Protection Act ever! Have you practiced a random Marine Protection Act of kindness today?

April 5: Carol Bloner

A youngster and his grandfather visited the Whalers Cabin Museum today. While he was enjoying touching the baleen and abalone shells, the boy excitedly told me he had just pet a deer. I pointed out to the grandfather why that was not a great idea. I also said the deer seem to have become tamer with each generation and predicted that within ten years we would be selling trail rides on our deer. The boy was extremely disappointed when I clarified that I was only joking.

April 7: Rick Pettit

A young woman and her father were watching the sunset at Weston Beach. Earlier they had taken the accessible trail all the way from the Whalers Cove parking lot to the overlook at the Pit. They were ecstatic about the beauty of Point Lobos.

April 9: Dave and Gretchen Evans

At Whalers Cove all eyes were on seven newly-born seal pups, when we noticed one very rotund female rolling back and forth, back and forth at the water's edge. We could not believe our luck - we realized she was about to deliver. A few minutes later we had witnessed



the birth of the pup, watched it washed out into the cove, banged by sand and waves, and

finally retrieved by mom and nestled back onto the shore.

April 12: Carol Bloner

A distraught visitor came to Whalers Cabin Museum to report that a tree at Coal Chute Point with a great blue heron's nest had fallen, presumably in the storm of the previous night. He saw five eggs on the ground and two herons circling above. He said he would say a prayer for them. (*Ed. note: Point Lobos herons do not give up easily. See the evidence in Paul Reps' photos here, taken shortly after this incident, and Observations, pg. 6.*)





trying to get her (I believe it was a female because she had a very scarred and damaged nose) to go back into the water. The first otter would not go; the second otter left and swam away. Eventually, after a lot of scratching, the first otter slipped back into the water and started to feed.

April 29: Rick Pettit

During a morning shift at the Information Station, I talked with visitors from Santa Rosa, Minneapolis, Switzerland, New Jersey, Omaha, San Francisco, central Oregon, Paris, St. Louis, Berkeley, Israel, upper New York State, Michigan, San Diego, Kansas City, and Japan.

Point Lobos State Natural Reserve: the magnet of the Central Coast.

April 25: Kevin Shabram

I was walking among the rocks and pools north of Weston Beach about halfway to the lot, and came upon an otter lying in a small tide pool. As I was photographing this otter I noticed another one swimming and heading for the rocks. It came out of the water for a moment and then went back in. It had plainly been heading for the other otter, so I backed away to give it some space. The second otter came up on the rocks again, went over to the first one and seemed to be



Point Lobos Foundation



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