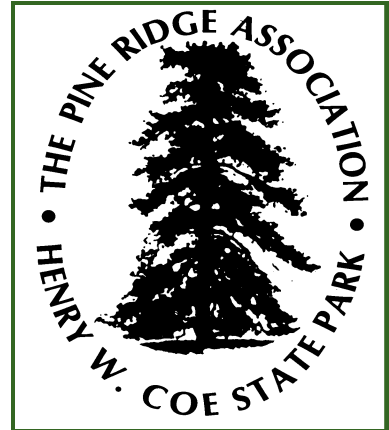


The Ponderosa

The Pine Ridge Association Newsletter
Henry W. Coe State Park



Early Spring 2016



Photo by Wes Grey, Environmental Scientist at Asilomar.

Monument Prescribed Burn

By Mason Hyland, Environmental Services Intern,
California State Parks, Monterey District

On November 19th 2015, State Park staff, with the assistance of CalFire, performed a long-anticipated prescribed burn in Coe Park. The plot where ignition took place is aptly named the "Monument Plot" for the monument to Henry W. Coe that lies within the fire lines. This 630 acre plot is only one of a complex of five plots in the western zone of the park, and is now the third successful burn in the series. The plot lies on the top of Pine Ridge and extends down one slope into the drainage of the Little Fork of Coyote Creek. The landscape is diverse, spanning grasslands, oak woodlands, mixed oak and pine forests, and stands of towering Ponderosa pines.

It is difficult to understate the importance of prescribed fire. Though many see fire as destructive, it is an irreplaceable component of most ecosystems throughout California. Fire is a naturally occurring phenomenon that has been prevalent ever since plant communities have been significant enough to support fire.

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Monument Prescribed Burn, continued....

Almost every plant community in California is adapted to fire in some way, at some interval. Not only is fire an important process in our natural ecosystems, it is an event that will inevitably occur as fuels build up in our wildlands. The two main goals of any prescribed fire are to replicate this important ecological process, and to do so in a timed and controlled manner to help prevent uncontrolled wildfires.

The success of any prescribed fire relies largely on the expertise of the crew, preparation, coordination, and good timing. A prescribed fire is exactly that: a proposed fire that has a prescription—a set of parameters for environmental conditions under which the behavior of the fire will meet the objectives of the burn. Wind speed, relative humidity, air temperature, fuel moisture, and precipitation all need to be within a certain range so that the fire behavior will safely obtain the desired results. In addition, other atmospheric parameters need to be met to effectively manage the output of smoke and prevent particulate matter from settling in populated areas. If any one of these conditions is outside of the parameters set in the prescription, either before or during the burn, ignition is halted until conditions change. If conditions don't change, the burn is shut down completely.

All personnel helping with the Monument burn were staged in the entrance parking area at Coe Headquarters early Thursday morning. Personnel included burn team members from the Santa Cruz and Monterey District, CalFire, San Jose City Fire, and two fire weather researchers from San Jose State University. Though many prescribed fires in the State Park system are performed in-house, the chain of command for this burn was unique. Generally, CalFire will provide resources to a prescribed fire only under the conditions of a vegetation management plan (VMP) that places them as the responsible party for the fire (incident command). In this case, the VMP was not processed in time, so CalFire agreed to give California State Parks the responsibility of incident command while still providing support.



Photo by Susan Ferry, Environmental Scientist at Henry Coe.

After the briefing of the incident action plan, crews and engines were separated into their division assignments along the fire line. A division chief yelled "fire on the ground!" and the coordinated ignition operation began. Ignitions continued throughout the day with the fire intensity remaining low, due in part to the 3.75 inches of rain the plot received before the burn day. The ignition operation was completed without incident as the sun was setting behind rising smoke.

The fire burned into the night, with the Monterey District engine and a single CalFire engine patrolling the fire line. As the night time winds increased, this became a more difficult task than anticipated. Within the plot, the fire intensity was much higher than it had been during ignition. Flanking lines of fire crisscrossed the ridges, while flaring trees lit up the plot. With the help of high humidity, the two engines worked into the night and maintained the fire inside the lines.

Morning brought a beautiful but smoky sunrise. The winds continued into the morning, as did the effort to mop up along the line. More State Parks and CalFire resources came to relieve the overnight crews as the fire continued to burn through available fuels within the plot. The following nights were calmer both for the crew and the winds. Though the fire continued to burn slowly through duff and logs, the trails were reopened on Saturday, November 21st.

There's a Story Here

By Teddy Goodrich, Historian, Pine Ridge Association

In all the years I have spent at Coe Park, I have never looked at the historic ranch complex in its larger context, but when Matt Bischoff (State Historian III, Monterey District) told me “there’s a story here,” all the parts fell into place. The white barn, the corrals, the blacksmith shop, the mowing equipment, and even the old ranch house, all tell the story of Pine Ridge Ranch, and how it came to be.

The Coe brothers, Henry and Charles, were not the first to occupy Pine Ridge. Twenty years before them, in the late 1870s, John Jordan built corrals and a barn up near what is now the backcountry gate. Jordan was succeeded by Wesley Boden and his family. His mother, brother, sister, and brother-in-law homesteaded most of what is now the original Coe ranch. Their enterprise was short lived and Pine Ridge was sold to other owners twice before the Coe brothers purchased it in 1892.

According to the best sources available the white barn was built about 1903. A barn is a major necessity for any ranch: it’s a place to keep hay and grain, farm equipment and wagons, stable horses, and even when necessary provide shelter for people. Corrals for cattle and horses were built next to the barn. In 1905, the ranch house was constructed. It appears Henry Coe made use of existing cabins, perhaps those belonging to previous owners, to build his home. None of the windows in the house match, two doors, one entering the front bedroom and one the back bedroom, have been boarded over, and workmen installing a heater during State ownership discovered one of the interior walls was actually an outside wall. In 1927, Henry’s son added indoor plumbing and the “modern” kitchen and bathroom to the house. About 1932, Sada, living at Pine Ridge with her husband Charles Robinson, added the nursery wing to the west side of the house for their first child.

Pine Ridge was always the Coe’s summer range; cattle were brought up from the home ranch, San Felipe, in the spring so they could graze on grass until the fall, when they were driven back. Steers that were ready for market were separated out and driven down Metcalf Road to the train depot in Coyote. Crossing Monterey Road required the cooperation of the San Jose Police Department who held up traffic until all the cattle were safely across and in the corrals at the depot. By 1931 automobile traffic had increased to a point where this was no longer practical, but cattle trucks were coming into widespread use and provided a solution.

Sada and Charles built a corral out near the Fish Trail where cattle could be picked up by truck and taken to market. Unfortunately they didn’t realize that a large cattle truck would never be able to negotiate the hair-pin turns in the road, and the corral was never used.

By the late 1930s, Sada and Charles had moved to a ranch of their own in Gilroy. In 1943, Henry Coe died, leaving the ranch to his son, Henry Sutcliffe Coe, who sold it to a Fresno County rancher, Oliver Beach. Beach had the old buildings at Madrone Soda Springs torn down and shipped the lumber to Fresno to be used for other purposes. He also graded Madrone Soda Springs Road and graded and rerouted what old timers called the government trail, now known as Hobbs Road. In 1948 he sold Pine Ridge to Sada Coe Robinson.

Sada, now divorced from Charles, had plans for Pine Ridge. By 1950 she had the large metal barn built, and added corrals behind and adjacent to the white barn, including a metal squeeze chute where cattle could be branded, castrated, and vaccinated. A squeeze pen and loading chute were built next to the road where large cattle trucks could easily load the animals going to market.

And then she changed her mind. It certainly wasn’t her age. In 1950, Sada was only 40 years old. Was it the isolation? The hard work? Negotiating the long dirt road? No electricity? Personally, I don’t think it was any of these; Sada came from sturdy pioneer stock was able to cope with the hardships of “living off the grid.” I believe she changed her mind because of the changes she saw coming to the Santa Clara Valley, the end of an era of farming and ranching. She decided to give Pine Ridge to Santa Clara County as a memorial to her father. She wrote that her heart was heavy with her choice, “but there was peace in the knowledge of a great and lasting gift to the world, and a monument worthy [of] a passing episode in the history of [this] country.” (Sada Coe Robinson, *My Log from the Hearth*).

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A Visit with Sada's Youngest Daughter

By Peter Verbica



On the brisk, winter day of December 31, 2015 traffic on our drive to Carmel Valley is surprisingly light despite the countdown to New Year's Eve. Quietly pulling up to a house on small side street off Carmel Village, we arrive at the single-story home of Irene Coe Robinson Lim, Sada's youngest daughter. Her residence is bounded by enclosed porches and evokes the spirit of architect William Wurster. With its whitewashed wood, enclosed porches, and gated garden, it is practical, unassuming, and unabashedly early Californian.

Ms. Lim approaches us graciously and opens her yard gate. We feel like expectant pilgrims and after an exchange of informal pleasantries we are invited into her home. I am reminded of past family get-togethers and realize quickly that Ms. Lim still illuminates a room when she laughs. The sound is pleasant, but without airs, like champagne being poured casually in the kitchen for a good friend. And to take the analogy farther, true to her country roots, champagne is served in a coffee cup rather than a fluted glass.

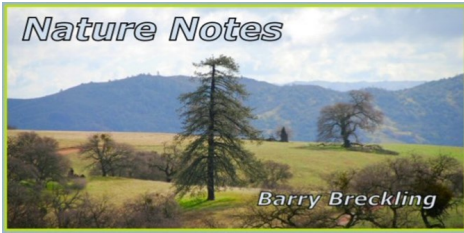
As an artist, Ms. Lim remains a person who appreciates a measure of solitude in her life. One is instantly reminded of her mother and the lean, self-assured carriage Sada had in later years. True to form (and, perhaps, her genes), Ms. Lim also has a reverence for the contemplative lifestyle. Like her mother, she is an active listener and prefers to spend time making observations. More often than not, she patiently lets others, including family with

big personalities, fill up a room with opinions on politics and regale listeners with stories of garden weddings, deer hunts, or Arabian horse shows. All the while, Ms. Lim will ask periodic, encouraging questions and demur with a patient and discreet grace.

To say that Ms. Lim is timid, though, would be a major understatement. While she may hold back in conversation, she unleashes a fury of color and excitement in her art. Her paintings are bold and dynamic, often powerful images of animals, including tigers in motion that appear ready to jump out of their frames. Her paintings have an exotic undercurrent due perhaps in part to the influence of another active painter in her family, her husband, Y.S. Lim. His paintings also adorn her home, and include magnificent peacocks and mysterious Siamese cats. The artistic torch has also been passed down to their daughter, Mae Lim Harrison, an avid photographer with an eye that consistently transmutes the everyday into the sacred.

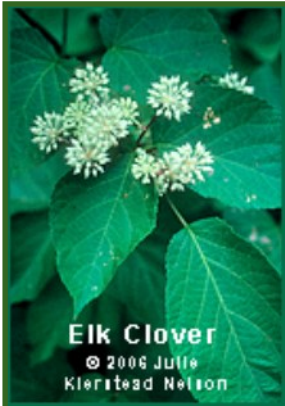
Though now in her seventies, and supporting her determined gait with a cane, Ms. Lim takes walks to Carmel Village to retrieve mail, restock supplies, and engage in conversation with shop keepers. After a healthy brunch, she allows a review of her family photo albums, including one prepared and labeled by her mother. Knowing about Sada's love of working with deer hides, it's no surprise that an album's cover is buckskin. The leather is tooled with ornate floral design, features an American Indian riding horseback at full gait, and signed "Sada S. Coe Robinson." The collection is a treasure trove of family history including a photograph of her grandfather, Henry "Harry" W. Coe, Jr., carefully holding her sister, Carmen "Bonnie" Coe Nazarenko as a baby. In addition, the medley contains photographs from the Gilroy ranch (run by her father, Charles Robinson), Rancho San Felipe in San Jose, as well as Morgan Hill's Pine Ridge ranch, now part of Henry W. Coe State Park.

Among the memorabilia is a touching letter written to her mother by her grandfather, Harry. The handwriting is unmistakable and the content heartfelt. It's written just after Sada gave birth to Ms. Lim's older sister, and wishes Sada a speedy recovery. Included in the postscript are anecdotes of ranch life. When asked if scanned copies can be made for family and historical preservation, Ms. Lim is supportive, but asks for such activity to be set for another day. After carefully turning around in the long driveway to head home, there's a sense that there will be more to this story.



Plants of Madrone Soda Springs

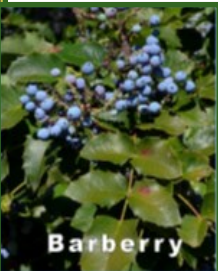
Numerous non-native plants grow in Soda Springs Canyon, several of which were cultivated on the grounds of the Madrone Soda Springs Resort back its heyday. English Ivy, Spearmint, Black Locust trees, Lilac shrubs, and Periwinkle vines are some of the more noticeable cultivated ornamentals. Also of interest in the canyon are several native plants that are not known to grow anywhere else in the park and others that are uncommon elsewhere.



Elk clover (*Aralia californica*) is a leafy perennial that grows up to 10 feet tall and then loses all its foliage down to ground level each year, only its roots remaining to carry on the next growing season. Elk clover grows in the creek bed downstream from the hotel site.



Dutchman's Pipe (*Aristolochia californica*), with its strange-looking flowers, was reported to be growing near the Keeney Cabin by a state botanist, but it has not been seen by others who have diligently searched for it.



A species of Barberry (*Berberis sp.*) grows not far from the hotel site. Plants in the *Berberis* genus are sometimes called Oregon Grape because of their grape-like fruit.



Feathery False Solomon's Seal (*Maianthemum racemosum*) has more than 20 flowers in its inflorescence, and Starry False Solomon's Seal (*Maianthemum stellatum*) usually has fewer than 15 flowers; both plants grow in Soda Springs Canyon.



Pacific Starflower (*Lysimachia latifolia*) is a cute little plant with a distinctive whorl of leaves. Where the leaves meet, a long, slender stem ends with a dainty pink flower that usually has 6 petals but can also have 5 or 7.



Fairy Bells (*Prosartes hookeri*) are uncommon in the park and are known to grow only in the upper reaches of Soda Springs Canyon.

Pacific Ninebark (*Physocarpus capitatus*), a shrub with layers of flaky bark, grows along the creek toward the lower portion of the Mile Trail.



Creatures of Coe



Joseph Belli



Yellow-eyed Ensatina. Photo by Joe Belli.



California newt. Photo by Joe Belli.

Yellow-Eyed Ensatina

Let's begin with a bold statement: the Yellow-eyed Ensatina may be Coe Park's most amazing creature. Before making that argument, however, we'll take care of some descriptive details first.

The Yellow-eyed Ensatina (*Ensatina eschscholtzii xanthoptica*) is a lungless salamander, one of three found in Coe (Arboreal Salamanders and California Slender Salamanders are the others).

They're three to six inches long, brown on top, orange underneath, with pale yellow color on the upper portion of the iris, their namesake feature. They bear a strong resemblance to newts, but can be told apart by the presence of grooves along the sides of the body, and a constriction at the base of the tail, features lacking in newts. Though they are most numerous in moist, wooded canyons, they never enter ponds or streams, breeding and laying eggs on land. In Coe, they are probably most abundant in the lush west side of the park. Unlike Arboreal and Slender Salamanders, they are rarely found in suburbs or developed areas. The good news is that in the natural areas where they occur they are plentiful and in no danger of disappearing.

They may be plentiful, but they're seldom seen, for, like other lungless salamanders, they're primarily nocturnal, spending most of their time beneath downed logs, only rarely venturing out during the day. During the long dry season they estivate underground, emerging again when the fall rains arrive and remaining active through spring. So far, the life history and ecology of the Yellow-eyed Ensatina reads a lot like that of the other lungless salamander species in the park. It's only when you consider its evolutionary history and adaptations that things get fascinating.

The Yellow-eyed Ensatina is not a separate species, but rather a variety, one of seven subspecies of *Ensatina* (*Ensatina eschscholtzii*) that occur along the Pacific Coast from British Columbia to northern Baja California. North of California, all share a similar appearance and are classified as Oregon Ensatina (*E.e. oregonensis*).

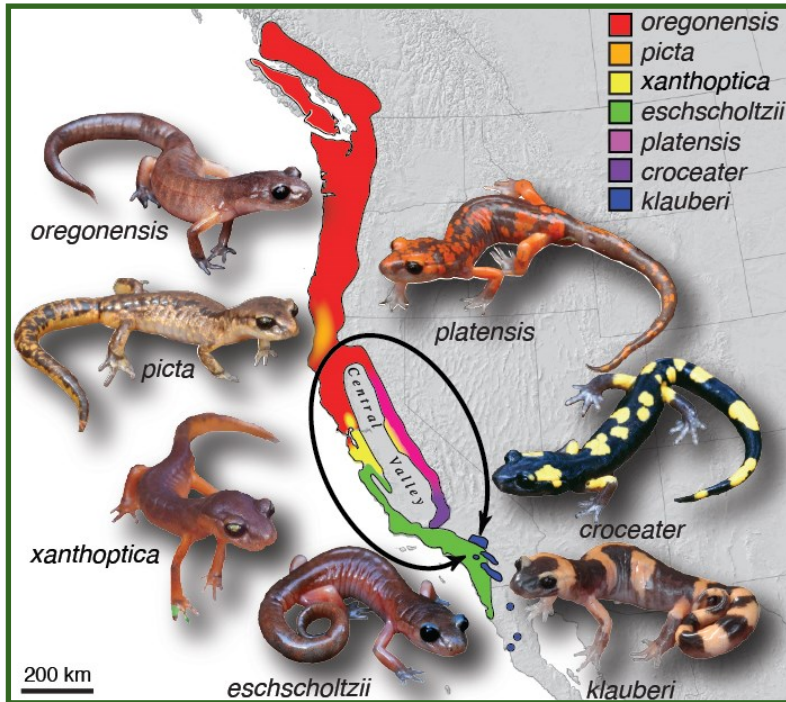
In California, things get complicated, for all seven subspecies of *Ensatina* are present, each with a distinct geographic range. The Yellow-eyed Ensatina ranges from Napa and Sonoma Counties in the north to the vicinity of the Pajaro River in the south, existing alongside other *Ensatina* subspecies. Interestingly, a separate Yellow-eyed population is also found across the Central Valley in the foothills of the Sierra Nevada, making the Yellow-eyed Ensatina the only subspecies with two populations. Subspecies vary greatly in appearance—the Sierra Nevada *Ensatina* (*E. e. platensis*) looks nothing at all like Coe's Yellow-eyed race, yet the two are considered the same species. Looks can be deceiving.

Early researchers noted the unusually high degree of variation among *Ensatina* subspecies and sought to better understand it. *Ensatina* occur in a circle around the Central Valley but are absent from the valley itself. The three subspecies along the coast, despite their differences in appearance, all have solid color on the back. The three subspecies east of the Central Valley are all blotched although the color and pattern of blotching varies among them. The seventh subspecies, the Painted Ensatina (*E. e. picta*), found along the coast near the Oregon border, shows elements of both traits—a more or less solid coloring with mottling toward the tail. In the 1940s, Dr. Robert Stebbins of U.C. Berkeley began researching *Ensatina* and after several years of fieldwork throughout the state arrived at the following conclusion: today's *Ensatina* subspecies all evolved from a common ancestor much like the Painted Ensatina. As they spread, those along the coast adopted a solid color, while those migrating around the Central Valley developed blotching, evolving and adapting as they went, over millions of years.

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Yellow-Eyed Ensatina, continued...

Stebbins came to his conclusions by studying morphology, the physical appearance of specimens. He didn't have the benefit of genetics labs to aid and inform his research—in fact, DNA was being discovered about the time Stebbins was trekking through California's woodlands. It would be decades before researchers



Ensatina range map. ©Tom Devitt.

were able to analyze Ensatina proteins and DNA. Studying nuclear DNA was particularly problematic because the Ensatina genome is six times larger than the human genome and wasn't sequenced until the 2000s. When genetics labs did tackle the Ensatina mystery, their findings in large part validated Stebbins' conclusion—Ensatina evolved from a common ancestor roughly 20 million years ago along the current California/Oregon border from an ancestor most similar to today's Painted Ensatina. Of all subspecies, Painted Ensatina showed the most variations in proteins and in mutations, just what you'd expect from an older lineage. Genetics also showed that coastal forms were more similar to each other than they were to varieties east of the Central Valley, while those blotched inland subspecies had more in common with each other than they did with the solid-colored coastal races. By the time both forms met up again in southern California, they were acting like separate species because they only rarely interbred despite an extensive contact zone.

DNA evidence supported Stebbins but provided more detail and revealed more complexity to the situation, challenging the way we define species. If two forms don't interbreed where they come in contact, doesn't



Young Ensatina that has dropped its tail. Photo by Joe Belli.

that make them separate species? If the answer is yes, then what if the two forms are so closely related that if they did cross, fertile offspring would result? If that's the case, how separate could they be? What if they only occasionally interbreed, or interbreed only under specific conditions? For example, researchers analyzing hybrids of two adjacent Ensatina subspecies (*E. e. croceator* and *E. e. eschscholtzii*) found that all hybrids were the result of subspecies #1 males breeding with subspecies #2 females, never the reverse, for subspecies #1 females would not accept subspecies #2 males as mates. Ensatina evolution provides few clear-cut answers. Perhaps the best summation is to consider Ensatina a species complex of seven different forms in various stages of evolving into separate species.

Continued on page 8....

Pine Ridge Association Annual Awards

The annual meeting of the Pine Ridge Association was held in Morgan Hill on January 30th, 2016. We'll have a full writeup of the meeting in the next issue of the Ponderosa, but two highlights of the gathering are the awards to outstanding volunteers for all their contributions. Patrick Goodrich received the Volunteer of the Year award from Ranger John Verhoeven. Patrick's name will be added to the plaque of recipients of this fine award that hangs in the visitor center. Paul Liebenberg received the Golden Bear award from Ranger Cameron Bowers.



Photos by Dick Rawson.

Yellow-Eyed Ensatina, continued....

Back to Yellow-eyed Ensatina. What do genetics reveal? The population in the Sierra foothills turns out to be almost identical to specimens from the East Bay, despite being separated since the last Ice Age, but has much less in common with their neighbors, the Sierra Nevada Ensatina, with which they only rarely interbreed. Yellow-eyed Ensatina spread across the Central Valley from the East Bay at a time when the climate was cooler and moister.

All subspecies of Ensatina, no matter how dissimilar in appearance or distant geographically, share a defense strategy to foil predators: they can shed their tail when attacked. The tail exudes a milky secretion that, if not toxic, is unpleasant. Predators devouring the tail are unlikely to proceed to the next course. Yellow-eyed Ensatina, however, have acquired an additional defense strategy: mimicry. They have evolved to resemble newts, which are highly toxic and roundly avoided by predators. But while they look like newts, they lack the poison, and as such are Batesian mimics. Mimics that possess the toxins of the model species are known as Mullerian mimics. Mullerian mimicry benefits both the model species and the mimic species, while Batesian mimicry is a one-way street, good for Ensatina, but bad for newts, whose credibility suffers every time a predator eats an Ensatina. In order for Batesian mimicry to succeed, the toxic model species—newts—must be encountered far more frequently than the mimic. As it happens, that's the case. Yellow-eyed Ensatina may be common, but they don't press their luck. Unlike newts, they're rarely abroad during the day. If you're hiking and come across something that looks like a newt, 99 times out of a hundred it will be a newt. What I'd like to know is why newt mimicry evolved only in the Bay Area instead of throughout the entire Ensatina complex.

So there you have it, my pitch for anointing the Yellow-eyed Ensatina as Coe's most fascinating creature. It's a story rich in sex, duplicity, family secrets, immigration, and DNA evidence, one that puts the Kardashians to (further) shame. And you probably thought mountain lions were more interesting.

News from the Volunteer Committee

By Manny Pitta,
Chair,
Volunteer Committee

During the PRA annual meeting on January 30, the committee introduced 12 new uniformed volunteers who have completed the new volunteer training program. Each member of this year's new volunteer class has been paired with an experienced volunteer to help them settle into the program. Thanks to all of the volunteers for their hard work in making this year's volunteer training program a great success.



Rick Casey, Don Clare, Ed Fox, Shae Collinge, Doris Kramer, Kat Levine, Joe Navratil, Pauline Wood, Manny Pitta (Training Coordinator), and Ranger John Verhoeven. Not shown: Philip Ambler, Kelly Kersten, Stu Nuttall, and Eric Pape. Photo by Dick Rawson.

In January, the volunteer committee reviews the

hours logged by volunteers during the previous year. The report for 2015 was compiled and presented by Bill Frazer. Twenty eight volunteers logged more than 200 hours during the year, earning a State Park Volunteers In Parks (VIP) pass. Forty two volunteers logged between 72 and 199 hours, securing a Monterey District VIP pass. Two volunteers completed their 30th year as volunteers, while four completed 20 years of service, and three finished their 10th year. Thirty seven volunteers logged 48 or more visitor service hours earning a Visitor Service Award gift. Ten volunteers were eligible for thousand-hour awards with one, Kitty Swindle, turning in 9000 volunteer hours since 1993. Six volunteers completed their first 50 hours beyond the volunteer training, advancing from trainee to volunteer.

The total volunteer hours logged during 2015 was 17,437—up almost 19% over 2014. This included a 7% jump in visitor service hours, 5,359 for 2015.

The volunteer committee worked with State Parks staff to update the volunteer records, including CoeSign. Paul and Allene Liebenberg produced the 2016 volunteer parking tags while Dave Flack produced the 2016 volunteer directory.

With Mike Hundt's leadership, the Henry Coe State Park Outdoors Meetup group continues to grow, with membership now at 430. Mike is now busy enrolling leaders for walks, talks, and hikes with a goal of 75 activities for 2016. This is in addition to the goal of having 500 members by the one-year group anniversary date of March 24. If you have not yet joined the group, dive in at <http://www.meetup.com/Henry-Coe-State-Park-Outdoors-Meetup/>.

The volunteer committee will be searching for a new coordinator for the Tarantula Fest beginning with the 2017 event and for Mother's Day Breakfast beginning in 2018. Anyone interested should contact Sue Dekalb or any volunteer committee member for more details and information.

The volunteer committee meets bimonthly with this year's meeting dates set for March 2, May 4, July 6, September 7, and November 2. See any committee member for details.

Coe Thanksgiving 2015

By Sue Dekalb

For some, Coe Thanksgiving is our only Thanksgiving celebration. It is really nice to sit down with a bunch of fellow volunteers and some park friends to enjoy their company and the great park we all enjoy.

The amount and quality of the food people bring to the Thanksgiving potluck is amazing. Everyone has their own method for delivering hot food to the white barn; newspaper, towels, and coolers come in handy for most. Some even cook their food after they arrive. I have had hotter food at the Coe Thanksgiving than at my relatives' houses. There is turkey, dressing, mashed potatoes, veggies, salad, rolls, and every dessert imaginable. There is always vegetarian food for those who don't eat meat.

A crew of volunteers sets up the tables and lighting for the event. Without Bruce and Rosemary Rideout leveling the ground in the white barn for the tables and hanging the lanterns above the tables for the meal, it would be a lot less festive. It's easy to forget how dark it is at park headquarters where there are very few outside lights and those lights hanging in the white barn enhance the evening atmosphere. We also have a crew of volunteers to wash all the dishes and help put everything away in PRA storage room.



Photo by Dick Rawson.



Sometimes it rains and sometimes it is very cold, but we have also had nights where it seems like summer is just around the corner. Having the event in the white barn can be challenging with all the holes in the roof but we always manage to have a fun event.

If you haven't ever been to the Coe Thanksgiving gathering please come and join in. There isn't much publicized about the event so sometimes new volunteers have no idea what to expect. It was a couple of years before I joined in but now I wouldn't miss it for the world. Coe Thanksgiving is always held the Saturday after Thanksgiving so mark your calendars for November 26th, 2016. I look forward to seeing you there.

Photo by Dick Rawson.

Park Events and Information

Mark your calendars—important dates and other announcements

Also visit www.coepark.net for more information about all activities.

Fungus Fun Hike

Sunday, February 28, 9:30 at Hunting Hollow. Join a docent-lead hike in search of fungi. For more information, call Chere at 408-683-2247 or Kitty at 408-842-6215, or visit www.coepark.net. Reservations required.

Raincoats and Rubber Boots

Saturday, March 5, 10.00am at the Hunting Hollow entrance, rain or shine. We'll hike down the creek, have a scavenger hunt, perhaps enjoy a boat race (toy boats furnished) or a duck race. Bring a picnic lunch. For more information, please call Chere at 408-683-2247 or Kitty at 408-842-6215, or visit www.coepark.net.

Trail Work Days

Saturday, March 12, 8:30 am at the Hunting Hollow entrance and seasonally every second Saturday. For more information, please call Chere at 408-683-2247 or visit www.coepark.net.

Guided Horseback Rides

March 26 Gilroy Hot Springs and Historic De Anza Trail Tour

Saturday, April 9, Wildflower Ride

Bring your own horse. For more information, please call Chere at 408-683-2247 or Kitty at 408-842-6215, or visit www.coepark.net.

Coe Backcountry Weekend

Friday, April 29 through Sunday May 1. Check the park website, www.coepark.net for details or email coebackcountry@verizon.net.

Ranch Day

Saturday, May 14 10:00am-3:00pm at Hunting Hollow. For more information, please call Chere at 408-683-2247 or Kitty at 408-842-6215, or visit www.coepark.net.

Mothers' Day Breakfast

Sunday, May 8, 8:30—11:00 am. Once again this event will take place at Ridgeview campsite. The event sells out very quickly, so get your tickets early! Tickets go on sale March 16. For more information, visit www.coepark.net.

Coit Camp Weekend

Friday May 27 through Monday May 30. Campout for equestrians and hikers. For more information, please call Chere at 408-683-2247 or Kitty at 408-842-6215, or visit www.coepark.net.

Hunting Hollow 5K/10K Fun Run and Walk

June 10, 9:00 am. It's time to dig your dusty running shoes out of the closet and get outdoors to enjoy spring flowers and be ready for the Henry Coe 5K or 10K on Saturday June 13 at 9:00am. Hunting Hollow is a lovely place with ridges along both sides. Oak, sycamore, and bay trees are scattered throughout the canyon floor. And the sound of Hunting Hollow creek may be enjoyed while you run or walk. For registration details, see coepark.net/hh-10k.

Monument Prescribed Burn, continued....

Tuesday the 24th brought .34 inches of rain, putting most of the fire to rest. However, logs and roots will continue to smolder for weeks or months in the mosaic of burned and unburned landscape within the plot. Of the 630 acres encompassed by the fire lines, an estimated 300 acres were consumed by the fire. Though the intensity of the fire picked up the first evening, the overall consumption of the fire was fairly low, leaving the moist lower layer of duff untouched and some larger fuels uncharred.

The fire burned in the mosaic pattern that is often desired during any fire event. A mosaic burn is a pattern that is incredibly important to the preservation of biodiversity and fire is probably the best way to achieve it. Some areas were untouched, some areas were completely consumed. Some trees were spared, some trees succumbed to the heat and intensity of the fire. Space was opened up for new growth in the ever-crowded real estate market that is the natural landscape. Just three short weeks after the fire, bunch grasses are sprouting wildly and seeds are germinating, speckling the blackened ground with a vibrant green. A necessary natural ecological process was played out. And it was played out safely in a timed and organized fashion thanks to the collaboration of the Monterey and Santa Cruz District burn crews, CalFire, San Jose City Fire, the Bay Area Air Quality District, and fire researchers.



News from Gilroy Yamoto Hot Springs

By Laura Domínguez-Yon

2016 events. Save the dates!

- Saturday, April 23, GYHS volunteer work day, open to the public, limited to 20 adults. No fee.
- Saturday, May 28, 9am-4:30pm, Children Through History, a public event highlighting children at GYHS who they were, activities they may have enjoyed, activities for children to enjoy today. \$15/person; bring a picnic lunch and pack it in, pack it out.
- Saturday October 15, 9am-4:30pm, Women of GYHS. Women of distinction who visited, owned, or lived here. \$15/person; bring a picnic lunch and pack it in, pack it out.
- Guided tours continue the second and fourth Saturdays of most months. \$10/person.

If you have a group interested in a tour on another day, let us know and we will make every effort to accommodate you. The admission fees raise funds for our restoration activities. The restricted account managed by PRA is the result our fundraising efforts, and funds are used only for GYHS expenses. The PRA board approves the expenditures from this account.

Six of the new 2016 uniformed volunteers plus three other volunteers participated in the December 12th GYHS docent training. With their help and enthusiasm, we expect to see more activities and more guided tours offered in 2016, including weekdays. Did you know that PRA members in good standing may attend regularly scheduled guided tours free? And they get a discount at our all-day public events, too! Uniformed volunteers are always welcome to attend our public events at no cost when in uniform. Both the public and the uniformed volunteers benefit; you get to see what's developing at GYHS and to share your passion for Coe Park with visitors.



Pennsylvania cabin east side.

Photo by
Laura Dominguez-Yon.

We are pleased that the 2014-2015 grant from the California State Parks Foundation enabled us to purchase shade and insect screens for the pop-up canopies. We will now be able to provide protection for our volunteers and the food provided for them at events. We do not currently anticipate food sales to the public.

As part of the 2015 Coe Park master plan, an interpretive sign will be installed at the GYHS entrance between the trestle bridge over Coyote Creek and the Coyote Creek gate. The initial structure is a recycled one of minimal cost (installation by park maintenance staff). It will give an overview of the GYHS history for visitors, and it will be a test to see how long it can endure without being vandalized. If it survives with little or no damage over time, we will replace it with a new, better built one. Meanwhile, if you have ideas about what information the sign should include, please email your suggestions to us at:

info@GilroyYamatoHotSprings.org .



Septic access in roadway
beside Texas cabin.

Photo by
Laura Dominguez-Yon.

News from Gilroy Yamato Hot Springs, continued....

Although we held fewer and smaller events in 2015, we managed to raise \$4,000 for restoration efforts and expenses. We also received a significant donation from Pua Johnson for replacement and upgrades of surveillance cameras and signage. The cameras and warning signs have been the best deterrent to vandalism at GYHS. Thank you, Pua! You will also see more outreach in coming months drawing more attention to GYHS, which is a window into Coe Park. New volunteers Marie and Ed Hunter plus Doris Kramer and Ed Fox are enthusiastically learning more and engaging others to visit, support, promote, and invite people to get involved in restoring public access to this part of the park.

Matt Bischoff, State Historian, Monterey District, reports that the restoration team of volunteers J.J. Sasaki, Dan Healey, and Robert Method with contractor Tim Lantz continues to work on site most Mondays. They are stabilizing the second largest cabin, Pennsylvania, to prevent it from sliding off the hillside. Nicknamed "the honeymoon cabin" by former resort manager Henry Kato, it features an interior of beautiful first-growth redwood that has escaped being vandalized. Matt also procured end-of-fiscal-year Monterey District funding for the septic system for the Texas Cabin. Woohoo, it's closer to becoming rentable! Electricity and heat are next.

There's a Story Here, continued....

In 1958, the people of California inherited the story of Pine Ridge. Almost sixty years have passed since then, and the years have not been kind to Sada's gift. Only a few upright posts remain of the round corral she and Charles built near the Fish Trail. The corrals and the loading chute at park headquarters are barely standing. There are holes in the white barn's roof, and the supporting structure has been compromised. Ragged canvas tarps cover portions of the metal barn.



I leave you to consider, is this the how the story ends?

The white barn is in critical need of a new roof, new support structure, and new windows. To make it safe for use by visitors, there are also plans to level the floor and seal it with decomposed granite. Donations for the repairs may be made through the Pine Ridge Association website, www.coepark.net. All donations up to \$5,000 will be matched through the generosity of an anonymous donor.

PRA New Members

We are pleased to welcome the new members listed below. Thank you for your support.

We need your help to keep our membership list current and accurate. If you have any questions regarding your membership or to let us know of any change of address, please contact us. If you have chosen to receive *The Ponderosa* electronically and, for some reason, it is undeliverable, we will send the next issue via USPS.

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The Ponderosa is a quarterly publication of the Pine Ridge Association. The PRA's mission is to enhance and enrich the public's experience at Henry W. Coe State Park through education and interpretation. Articles and artwork relating to the natural history, history, and management of the park are welcome. Also, interested in volunteering? Email Manny Pitta, mannypitta@gmail.com.

Please send submissions and ideas to the editor at: PRAnewsletter2@gmail.com

Deadline for the next issue: April 30, 2016

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