

# AUDUBON CANYON RANCH

Number 42

BULLETIN

Spring 2008



## WHY THE NEWT COUNT COUNTS

by Jeanne Wirka

It is 8:30 on a Saturday morning in February, and another windy Pacific storm is pelting the Bouverie Preserve of Audubon Canyon Ranch. I am deep in Stuart Canyon with a group of young scientists, ages 13 to 19, searching for newts. The annual Bouverie Newt Count is underway, a yearly effort to gather data on these most beloved of amphibians. My young companions are all graduates of the Bouverie Preserve's Junior Naturalist ("Juniper") training classes and active members of the Juniper Program. They have eschewed the pleasure of a dry, warm Saturday morning sleep-in to come out in the cold and count newts. And they couldn't be more cheerful.

Few animals inspire loyalty as fiercely as does the red-bellied newt (*Taricha rivularis*), the Bouverie Preserve's unofficial mascot. Typically, Newt Count sign-up sheets begin showing up in our mailbox about 72 hours after we send them to the Junipers—and that's by snail mail! It is an eagerness easy to understand. Holding a newt in



one's hand is among the most intimate wildlife encounters any of us will ever have. Newts, toxic to most predators, have a very laid-back approach to life (I am always tempted to greet them with "Yo, duuuuude"). They don't run away, hide, bite, scratch or sting. They don't slime you with mucus or smear you in musk. The red-bellied newt, with its characteristic black iris, even seems to look you directly in the eye. Plus, they're just plain fun to watch. Because of the rain this morning, the newts have fir needles and tiny bits of debris stuck to their feet, making them appear as oblivious and comical as one of us coming out of a restroom with toilet paper stuck to our shoe.

So what exactly is a newt? Technically, there is no biologically meaningful difference between a newt and a salamander. To confuse things further, in England, most animals we call salamanders are called newts. Salamanders differ from other amphibians because they retain a tail throughout their lives and have four limbs held at right angles to

Above:  
Laurel  
McCaul  
holds a Red-  
bellied Newt.  
All newts are  
salaman-  
ders, but  
not all sala-  
manders are  
newts.  
PHOTO:  
JEANNE WIRKA

32 percent  
of all amphib-  
ians are  
threatened  
with ex-  
tinction.

PHOTO:  
GERALD MUGELE

➤ Please turn to **Newts**, page 4

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*ACR's Time-honored Mission Inspires Growth*

**A PLAN FOR THE FUTURE**

*by Bryant Hichwa*

Last month, I attended the graduation of 37 new docents at the Bouverie Preserve, where I was inspired by a new group of enthusiastic and well-trained teaching volunteers. I was particularly struck by the diversity of individuals within the class. In addition it was heartening to see the number of “seasoned” docents who attended to wish their new colleagues well.

With the spring season upon us, ACR’s research and restoration programs are in full swing. Up and down the coast, we see signs of migration – both winged and marine mammal, as ACR enters the year 2008 with high expectations and enthusiasm for continued strong and vibrant environmental education and conservation science programs.

The ACR Board of Directors has been dedicating its time to spearheading an organization-wide planning effort. The strategic plan – a 5-to-10-year roadmap for organizational growth – is helping ACR to recognize what it does well, what can be improved, and how we can move forward together. It has been an exciting and invigorating process.



ANE CARLA ROVETTA

Four strategic issues have emerged:

- ◆ Ensure the protection and restoration of ACR properties, as well as expand land protection and restoration in the region,

- ◆ Advance the ACR mission within the Bay Area’s diverse communities,

- ◆ Maintain a volunteer corps that supports ACR’s education and other activities at an optimal level, and

- ◆ Improve ACR’s ability to make scientific contributions needed to solve issues in conservation science, natural resources management, and ecological restoration.

The Board of Directors and staff of ACR are working together to bring these four strategic issues into sharp focus, both financially and programmatically. As ACR implements these strategic initiatives, the organization will undergo change. Our fundamental mission and ACR’s focus on preservation, restoration, and environmental education remain at the core of its values.

On behalf of the entire ACR Board of Directors, thank you for supporting our commitment to safeguarding and teaching about the natural resources that thrive in our 2,000 acres of nature preserves.

*Bryant Hichwa is ACR’s Board President.*

ACR extends a heartfelt congratulations and warm welcome to the graduates of two recent volunteer classes:

**The Bouverie Preserve 2008 Docents**

Nina Antze  
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Audubon Canyon Ranch protects the natural resources of its sanctuaries while fostering an understanding and appreciation of these environments.

*In Gratitude to ACR Supporters*  
**PROTECTING OUR NATURAL HERITAGE  
 AND EDUCATING OUR CHILDREN**

by Skip Schwartz

It is always a pleasure and an honor to update you, our supporters and volunteers, on what we are up to at Audubon Canyon Ranch. Reading through this Bulletin, you'll get a glimpse into an exciting project at the Bouverie Preserve, where environmental education and conservation science work together in perfect synchronicity as junior naturalists gather data on the preserve's newt population. At the heels of the Cosco

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*We are pleased to announce that Partners in Conservation is growing rapidly, and ACR has received a matching grant challenge of \$50,000 from the Dennis and Carol Ann Rockey Fund of the Marin Community Foundation.*

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Busan oil spill in November 2007, John Kelly reminds us of the importance of Bolinas Lagoon to nesting herons and egrets. Thankfully, Bolinas Lagoon did not experience major contamination during this most recent oil spill.

These programs are among the dozens that are funded by our new Partners in Conservation Donor Circle. Launched in December, we are pleased to announce that Partners in Conservation is growing rapidly, and ACR has just received a matching grant challenge of \$50,000 from the Dennis and Carol Ann Rockey Fund of the Marin Community Foundation! I hope that many new supporters will join us. For more information on Partners in Conservation, don't hesitate to contact me at 415/868-9244.

Through ACR's nature-based environmental education programs, schools continue to depend on ACR for our free field trips to the Bolinas Lagoon and Bouverie preserves. Just recently, I

***Announcing Partners in Conservation***

**ACR's Partners in Conservation directly support exciting conservation science and habitat protection work being conducted on ACR's 2,000 acres of protected wildlands in Marin and Sonoma counties. With gifts of \$5,000 or more annually, Partners in Conservation are helping ACR scientists provide solutions to regional problems in conservation biology that affect the ecological landscapes in central coastal California. Become a Partner in Conservation today and join these supporters to help ACR meet a challenge grant of \$50,000 by June 30, 2008!**



ANE CARLA ROVETTA

- |                       |                    |
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heard from the principal at Starr King Elementary School in San Francisco confirming his teachers' transportation scholarship for their class trip this spring. He said that if it weren't for our free programs and scholarships, his students would have had to cancel their trip. Fueled by your support, we are able to help Bay Area schools meet their students' science curriculum and learning needs and face the challenges of more budget cuts. For this, I thank you.

*Skip Schwartz is ACR's Executive Director.*

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- Bolinas Lagoon Preserve (BLP)  
 Bouverie Preserve (BP)  
 Cypress Grove Research Center (CGRC)

Juniper David  
Ciardiello learns  
to measure a  
newt with Docent  
Louise Bielfelt.  
Bouverie  
Preserve is  
uniquely located  
at the precise  
overlap of the  
three newt  
species that  
occur west  
of the Rocky  
Mountains.

PHOTO:  
JEANNE WIRKA

## NEWTS, from page 1

their body (a feature that gives newts their adorable, awkward gait). Taxonomically, newts are a group of rough-skinned salamander species in the family Salamandridae, one of ten families of salamanders (Order Caudata). In other words, all newts are salamanders, but not all salamanders are newts. Unless, of course, you live in England.

In the U.S., there are only three species of newt that occur west of the Rocky Mountains; the red-bellied newt (*Taricha rivularis*), the California newt (*Taricha torosa*) and the rough-skinned newt (*Taricha granulosa*). Although their ranges differ from north to south and east to west, the Bouverie Preserve is uniquely located at the precise overlap of all three. Red-bellied newts are especially fond of Bouverie because, unlike their pond-breeding relatives, they need moving water in which to breed and prefer a cool north-facing slope in which to live. Stuart Canyon offers both in abundance.

The western newt species share another common feature beyond a fondness for the Bouverie Preserve. Their skin is impregnated with one of the most potent toxins known to science—tetrodoxin, or TTX. Combined with the newts' brightly colored underbellies, which they'll display when provoked, TTX has proven a highly effective deterrent to most predators. A notable exception is the common garter snake which has been engaged in an "evolutionary arms race" with the rough-skinned newt, upping its own resistance as the newts got more toxic (recent evidence suggests that the snake has currently "out-evolved" the newts, as reported in a March 2008 San Francisco Chronicle article). Fortunately for hands-on environmental educa-



tors, a newt has to actually be ingested to poison humans. Apart from those who may go in for, say, fraternity party dares, most of us can assume we will never be harmed by a newt as long as we don't lick, kiss, or swallow them (As a precaution, we recommend that our newt handlers wash their hands before handling food).

As fascinating it is in its own right, how TTX initially came to newts' defense is even more interesting. TTX is the same chemical found in pufferfish, infamous for its fatal poisonings among Japanese *fugu* diners. It is also found in a number of other fish, marine invertebrates, Central American toads, and salamanders. Because it is present in so many divergent animal groups, evolutionary biologists have all but ruled out convergent evolution (where organisms evolve the same trait independently of each other). Rather, most scientists now believe that TTX is actually produced by bacteria that live symbiotically in the tissues of its hosts. The bacteria get a safe haven to live and grow, and the host animal uses the toxin either as a defense or even as venom to subdue prey.

### Recording data with Louise

Back at the Newt Count, Junipers are catching newts faster than the data can be recorded. The Canyon Trail is sectioned into 100 meter transects; an hour into the Count, we have scarcely covered 400 meters. A line of Junipers, newts in hand, forms beside Louise Bielfelt, the long-time Bouverie Docent who first recruited Junipers for the Newt Count in 1995 and has since been its greatest champion. Louise holds a clipboard with a laminated metric ruler that the Junipers use to measure the newts. "We used to do this right on the data sheets, but the newts

kept peeing on them” she explains as she shows a Juniper how to straighten out a newt to its full length. Junipers measure from nose to vent (the pre-tail opening through which waste products and unfertilized eggs pass), note whether the skin is smooth or rough and whether there is any swelling of the vent. As the pace speeds up, data comes in fast and furious. One Juniper shouts “Seventy-five, smooth, swollen” describing a large newt with smooth skin and a swollen vent, two indications that it is a male getting ready to breed (the skin of male newts becomes smooth and hydrophobic before breeding in anticipation of a long soak as they wait for females in the creek).

### Understanding trends

The Newt Count was initiated in 1987 by John Petersen during his first years as the Bouverie Preserve Biologist. Petersen recognized the unique opportunity to initiate a long term monitoring project at a place where all three western newts co-occur. “At that time, we were looking for basic ecological information,” he explains. “We didn’t know what our species percentages were or how the newts were distributed along the creek.” Between 1987 and 1995, Petersen and his team of six docent field assistants established that red-bellies rule the roost, consistently comprising well over 90 percent of the population. Although we typically expect to see more newts on rainy days, these early studies surprisingly found no correlation between weather and the number of newts on the trail. Furthermore, during the wettest year of the study (1995), the counts were down significantly, suggesting the possibility (as yet untested) that extremely wet weather makes prey items like earthworms easier to catch, reducing the amount of time the newts had to come out to forage. Data were analyzed again in 2004 by docent Linda Alwitt who found that “April is the sweetest month.” This confirmed Petersen’s earlier observations that newts come out in droves in April, even in years in which the rain had stopped weeks earlier.

Hormones, apparently, trump comfort in the newt world.

One of the most important purposes of the Bouverie Newt Count today is to monitor local population size in the face of global amphibian declines. Amphibian population declines have out-paced those in other taxonomic groups worldwide. Of the 6,300 species of amphibians known to science, 32 percent are threatened with extinction. Causes of these precipitous declines are complex and interconnected. Habitat loss is the leading culprit, but does not explain the drops in populations that live in pristine habitats. A world-wide outbreak of a fungal pathogen among frogs is another known culprit. Because amphibians are very sensitive to changes in temperature and moisture, climate change has come to the forefront of concern, either as a direct or indirect cause (by facilitating the spread of disease, for example). Indeed, some herpetologists have dubbed amphibians “canaries in the global coal mine”. Sad, but true—our newts may now be our best early warning system as major environmental changes take effect.

Back at Bouverie Preserve’s Gilman Hall, Louise and the Junipers fill in a poster chart with the day’s data. Today, the Junipers caught and measured 132 newts. As I enter the data in the database, I realize that it is but a tiny snapshot of a complex world. Even so, today I learned a few things. I learned a tiny bit more about the newts at Bouverie Preserve and a whole lot more about the Junipers. Earlier, I had asked one middle school student why he came today. “This is the best place to just, you know, be out of the city, in the fresh air. No cars, no people.” At the end of the hike, another boy asked for a letter of recommendation for a science-oriented high school to which he is applying. Does the Newt Count count? I think so.



*A young naturalist measures a young newt. Herpetologists have dubbed amphibians “canaries in the global coal mine”.*

PHOTO:  
JEANNE WIRKA

## *Herons and Egrets Depend on a Healthy Estuary*

# THE HERONRY AND BOLINAS LAGOON

by John P. Kelly

On January 18, 1971, two oil tankers collided near the Golden Gate Bridge, spilling 840,000 gallons of crude oil into San Francisco Bay. The next morning, tidal currents swept the huge slick northward, devastating the Marin County coast and killing tens of thousands of birds. Inspired forces of volunteers quickly placed makeshift booms across the mouth of Bolinas Lagoon and labored against repeated tides to keep out the massive oil slick. In recognition of their efforts to protect the lagoon, Audubon Canyon Ranch renamed a part of its Bolinas Lagoon Preserve just southeast of the heronry and alongside the lagoon “Volunteer Canyon.”

When bunker fuel from the Cosco Busan spill washed up the Marin Coastline this past November, though Bolinas Lagoon was spared major contamination, we were reminded of the spirited responses of volunteers to the 1971 oil spill. Their actions solidified a key principle in how local residents perceived nature—that herons, egrets, and other waterbirds depend on the health of this fragile estuary. Bolinas Lagoon has received national recognition by many observers as a biological treasure, and it is now recognized as a Wetland of International Importance by the intergovernmental Ramsar Convention.

Conservation Science at Audubon Canyon Ranch has confirmed the importance of the lagoon to nesting herons and egrets. In a paper published in 1980, ACR’s long-time research associate Helen Pratt found that nearly half of the foraging flights of nesting herons terminated

in the lagoon. More recently, scientific papers by other ACR biologists have demonstrated that herons and egrets prefer to establish colonies within a kilometer of important feeding habitat and that nesting birds forage primarily within a few kilometers of their nests.

Year-long surveys conducted by ACR have further revealed a dramatic influx of Snowy Egrets into Bolinas Lagoon during fall and winter. So, fishes and other prey in the lagoon are important not only for provisioning hungry nestlings but also for supporting birds from other areas that may depend on the mild climate

and rich feeding areas to survive winter. The value of winter food resources in the lagoon is strengthened by evidence from other ACR research that the dynamics of regional heron and egret populations may hinge on the survival of young birds during their first winter.

Of course, numerous other bird species depend on Bolinas Lagoon, including thousands of wintering and migrating shorebirds and other waterbirds. Although the seasonal travels of local herons and egrets remain a mystery, Conservation Science at ACR substantiates and extends the local wisdom generated decades ago: the health of Bolinas Lagoon is likely to be critical to the heronry at ACR’s Bolinas Lagoon Preserve and is important to an even broader network of these elegant birds.

*John Kelly is the Director of ACR’s Conservation Science and Habitat Protection Program, which is based at the Cypress Grove Research Center on Tomales Bay.*

*A Great Egret foraging in Bolinas Lagoon.*  
PHOTO: WYN HOAG



## *Cypress Grove Preserve*

# NEPHEW'S BEQUEST SUPPORTS UNCLE'S DREAM

*by Phil Murphy*

Peter Caldwell of San Francisco has named ACR's Cypress Grove Preserve as a beneficiary of his estate.

"I've been going up there for more than fifty years," Peter said, recalling lively parties and earnest work projects on the buildings, garden and marshlands hosted by his late uncle, architect and ACR benefactor Clifford Conly, Jr. The property is now a conservation science center at Audubon Canyon Ranch's Cypress Grove Preserve.

Clifford Conly purchased the ten-acre property on the east shore of Tomales Bay just north of Marshall in 1952. The original parcel, a complex of small white Victorian cottages from the 1870s that had fallen into disrepair, is now the heart of the Cypress Grove Research Center. The property utterly charmed him as a boy when he first visited the site in the 1920s. He restored the cottages, added electricity and running water, and planted hedges against the sharp Tomales Bay winds. The protective landscaping gives visitors the feeling of entering into a magic garden.

"He was a gregarious person who loved to entertain," Peter said of Clifford Conly. Peter recalled Saturday afternoon picnics and overnights as a boy at Cypress Grove, accompanied by the mellifluous voice of Milton Cross introducing Metropolitan Opera broadcasts over outdoor speakers his uncle had installed on the cottages. Live bands showed up for evening parties.

"I just love the place," Peter said. "I watched the whole thing transform from its humble beginnings to its social peak under his care." He recalls visiting with his grandparents, Clifford Conly, Sr., and Irma Conly, on one Independence Day, the fireworks barely visible in the Cypress

Grove fog through the bay window in the living room.

"One of my favorite Cypress Grove events was clamming," recalled Peter. "On a low tide we could go out on the beach and bring in buckets of clams, which my uncle would steam for lunch or serve as a wonderful chowder in the evening." His uncle would also motor friends and family in a small boat to picnics at nearby Hog Island and Pelican Point.

Raised on a prune ranch in Saratoga, Peter shares his uncle's environmental interests. Peter is also a birder, as is his wife Eugenia, whom he describes as "a truly avid birder who has always enjoyed the great birding at Cypress Grove". He said the family was delighted when his uncle told them of his plans to deed Cypress Grove to ACR and permanently protect it from development.

"We knew we couldn't afford to keep the place up," Peter said. He and Eugenia still enjoy day trips to the site. The bequest in his will specifies support for the Cypress Grove Preserve, with a preference for the upkeep and maintenance of cabin number two. "That's where we always stayed," he said.

Audubon Canyon Ranch is honored to have Peter and Eugenia Caldwell as members of its Clerin Zumwalt Legacy Circle, which honors those who have included ACR in their estate plans. For Legacy Circle information, call Cassie Gruenstein at 868-9244 ext. 13.

*Phil Murphy is ACR's planned giving consultant.*

*ACR owns and protects about 500 acres of important habitat on Tomales Bay.*



*Left to right: Peter and Eugenia Caldwell with Clifford Conly, Jr., ACR benefactor.*

PHOTO:  
PETER CALDWELL

## THANK YOU ACR VOLUNTEERS

Audubon Canyon Ranch salutes the hundreds of individuals listed below for their dedication to ACR and for generously donating time and energy as Docents, Ranch Guides, Ranch Hosts, Field Biologists, Researchers, Habitat Restoration and Work Day Volunteers, Directors, and Advisors. You are the backbone of this organization! For all you do, we thank you!



Bryant Hichwa  
President, Board of Directors



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Daria Bauer	Janet Bruno	Robyn Contini	Marjorie Everidge	Marilyn Goode	John Hirten
Helen Beale	Adriana Buck	John Conway	Jeff Fairclough	Anne W. Goodwin	Wyn Hoag
Frank Benadaret	Thanhtam Bui	Glenda M. Cook	Nancy Falk	Gerri Gottbraith	Joan Hoffman
Douglas C. Bender	Kay Bullock	Jim Cooke	Peter Fallon	Laurie Graham	Ingrid Hogle
Gordon Bennett	Shannon Burke	Mickey Cooke	Bob Farnham	Jessica Gray	John Hoke
Martha C. Bentley	Joseph Burns	Patti Cooke	Lisa Farnham	Tina Green	Ellen Holden
Betty Berenson	Elizabeth Burridge	Bob Cossins	Jane L. Ferguson	Philip Greene	Marjorie Hollinger
Peter Berger	Mimi Burton	Sue Cossins		John Grennitteer	Jim Horan
Evelyn Berger	Neil T. Burton	Hugh Cotter		Dr. L. Martin Griffin, Jr.	Rich Horrgan
Gail Berger	Phil Burton	Cindy Craig		Erik Grijalva	Terri Horrgan

Ann Howard	Barbara Leder	Macell Millard	Ann Piper	Robin Sharp	Susan Van Der Wal
Donald K. Howard	Charlotte Lee	Audrey Miller	Bob Pitts	Carol Joyce Sheerin	Lee Van Giesen
Helen Howard	Louis N. Lee	Jean Miller	Richard Plant	John Shellenberger	Carol Ann Vellutini
John Howard	Edgar G. Lehmann	Paula Miller	Sally Pola	Mary Lynne Shimelk	Natalia Vicino
Joan Howarth	Frederick A. Leist	Flavia Millikan	Dr. Katie Pollard	Richard B. Shipp	Sylvia Victor
Lisa Hug	Lamar Leland	Eileen Mitro	Julia Pollock	Allen Shirley	Linda Vida
Ann Hughes	Kathryn Lemieux	Jan Moffet	Grace Pratt	Mark Shirley	Norma Vite
Shelly Hughes	Dick Lemoy	Christopher Moi	Helen M. Pratt	Robert Sholtz	Sasha Vitomski
Robert Hulbert	Stephanie Lennox	Jim Moir	Susan Preneta	Will Shonbrun	Nancy Vizi
Claire Hunter	Robin Leong	Carol Moller	Katherine Prescott	Rachel Simpson	Linda Votteri
Robert Hunter, Jr.	Sue Leong	Corinne Monahan	Jane Sinclair	Jane Sinclair	Mary C. Wagner
Diane Huntoon	Gail Lester	Mark Monroe	Judy Prokupek	Paul Skaj	Sandra Wald
Wanda Huot-Morgan	Keith Lester	Stephen Moore	Lauri Puchell	Una Skelly	Liz Walker
Lynda Hutton	Bev Leve	Elaine Moreno	Barbara Ragan	Christina Sloop	Susan Walker
Ellie Insley	Joshua Levine	Angela Morgan	Bretta Rambo	Daphne Smith	Robert Wall
Charlotte Irvine	Elizabeth Lewis	Beverly Morgan	Barbara Ramsey	Ernestine I. Smith	Varia Walle
Jenifer G. Jackson	Kate Lewis	Susan Moritz	Patricia Randall	Joe Smith	Tom Walsh
Joli Jacobs	Seela Lewis	Ian Morrison	Ashley Ratcliffe	Marjorie Smith	Julie Walters
Diane Jacobson	Marguerite Li	Paul Moschetti	Barbara Ray	Mary Smith	Tanis Walters
Jeri Jacobson	Michele Liapes	Lourdes Murillo	Alison Rayner-Hooson	Pat Smith	Christine Walwyn
Kristi Jacobson	Eileen Libby	Anne Murphy	Paula Rector	Robert Smith	Thomas Warton
Barbara Janis	Karin Lienart	Anne Murphy	Joan Regan	Jan Gerrett Snedaker	Cara Wasden
Norma Jellison	Mike Lippman	Dan Murphy	Jeanne Reggio	John Somers	Richard Wasson
Rosemary Jepson	Wayne Little	Joan Murphy	Linda Reichel	Karen Sommer	Kathleen Watson
Ann Joergenson	Karen Loida	Phil Murphy	Rhio Reigh	Noellene Sommer	Ron Watson
Lorraine Johnson	Ruth Lombard	Margaret Murray	Don Reinberg	Amy Southwick	David Watt
Rick Johnson	Steve Lombardi	Karen J. Nagel	Jean Rhodes	Kryss Speegle	Wesley Weathers, Ph.D.
Gloria Jones	John Longstreth	Angela Nardo-Morgan	Diana Rhoten	Linda Spence	Anna Webster
Marlene Jordan	Susan Luber	Kim Neal	Bill Richardson	Anne Spencer	Lynn Webster
Diana Jorgensen	Teri Lunn	Mike Nelligan	Rudi Richardson	Sue Spofford	Fay Weimer
Twyla Jorgensen	Arthur Lyons	Allison Nelson	Lynn Robbie	Jean An Sprague	Judy Weiner
Linda Josephs	Nancy MacDonald	Leonard Nelson	Christine Roberts	Craig Spriggs	Arlene Weis
Linda B. Judd	David Machamer	Jan Neufeld	Arthur L. Robinson	Jane Spriggs	Jim Wellhouse
Gail Kabat	Laurie Mackay	Wally Neville	David Robinson	Betsy Stafford	Jan Wellington
Gerald Karr	Flora E. MacIcise	Linda Nicoletto	Gaius Robinson	Mel Stagnaro	Martha Wessitsh
Chris Kasman	Barbara Madick	Kenneth E. Niehoff	Tom Robinson	Barbara Starke	Mildie Whedon
Guy Kay	Art Magill	Spencer Nielsen	Ramona Robison	April Starke Slakey	Jim White
Carole Kelleher	Lyn Magill	Cynthia Nikzad	Curt Rocca	Jean Starkweather	Tom P. White
Drew Kerr	Terry Mandel	Lena Nilsson	Jane Rodgers	Laurel Stevenson	Dave Whitridge
Richard L. Kettler	Dr. Alan J. Margolis	Madeline Nonnenberg	Dave Rodondi	Susan Stoddard	Danya Wiekalk
Diana King	Gloria Markowitz	Terry Nordbye	Jayne Rosantsson	Tina Styles	Adele Wickner
Douglas King	Don Marquis	Ed Nute	Emily Rose	Sylvia Su	Diana Wilkiemeyer
Ann Kircher	Sandra Martensen	Tilly Nylin	Marty Rosen	Stephanie Sugars	Philip Wilkiemeyer
Richard F. Kirschman	Andrew Martin	Jackie Nystrom-Parker	Glenda Ross	Judy Sullivan	Julia Wilkinson
Margaret Klein	Charlotte Martin	Patricia O'Brien	Melrose Ross	Susan Sutcl	De Williams
Ron Kline	Roz Martin	Theresa O'Brien	Paul J. Ruby	John Sutherland	Liz Williamson
Anni Klose	Virginia Martin	Edna O'Connor	Anne Ruffino	Kimiko Suzuki	Jessica Wilson
Bhavani Kludt	Lynn Mason	John O'Reilly	Mel Ruiz	Lowell Sykes	Kate Wilson
Karen Knudtsen	Peter Mason	Ivan Obolensky	Ellen Sabine	Kate Symonds	Kathy Wilson
Ece Kocak	Sherry Mason	Nancy Okada	Karina Salenger	Charles Tarkington	Ken Wilson
Gary Kohlhas	Peter Master	Mark Olson	Maryla Salt	Jennifer Taylor	Luke Wilson
Fran Korb	Kay Mauck	Carol Orme	Dianne Samples	Larry Taylor	Russ Wilson
Barbara Kosnar	Brian Maus	Janet Oyen	Ramesh Samy	Judy Temko	Shannon Wilson
Harriet L. Kostic	Nancy Mavis, M.D.	Alan Pabst	Roger Sanborn	Mike Terwilliger	Will Wilson
Martin Koughan	Betty McBrachen	Kim Paddon	Jeff Sanchez	Janet Thiessen	Marilyn Winkley
Davis Krauter	Jen McBroom	Cari Paganini	Marilyn Sanders	Arline Thomas	Lynn Winter
Ellen Falconer Krebs	Tripp McCandlish	Briggitta Page	Diana Sanson	Jennifer Thomas	Wigay Wix
Jo Kreider	Barbara McCoard	Renee Palace	Len Sansone	Melissa Thompson	Pat Wolffe
David M. Kuczora	David McConnell	Robert J. Parker	Sharon Savage	Wayne Thompson	Allison Woltering
Carol Kuelper	Gerry McDonnell	Carol Patel	Susan B. Schermerhorn	Mona Tieche	Gin Wong
Nick Kulkan	Gary McFarland	Lois E. Patton	Dr. Richard Schiller	Steve Tokar	Wendy Wood
Pat LaBerge	Chris McHale	Tony Paz	Mrs. Schilling	Alicia Toldi	Patrick Woodworth
Genevieve Ladha	Jeanne McHenry	Precious Peoples	Phyllis Schmitt	Francis Toldi	Kathryn Wright
Eva K. Laevastu	Marie McKinney	Jim Pergolizzi	Craig Schorr	Leigh Toldi	Sherry Wright
Norah J. Laffan	Bill McNicholas	Beverly Perrin	Gordon Schrepf	Ruth J. Tonascia	Robert Yanagida
Andrew Lafrenz	Leslie McQuaide	Leslie R. Perry	Alice Schultz	Joel Toste	Cindy Young
Diane Lafrenz	Rachel Medanic	Kate Peterlein	Harold Schulz	Sheila Town	Nancy Young
Maureen Lahiff	Sonny Mencher	Ross Petersen	Theresa Schulz	William Trbovich	Ingrid Zimmerman
Sherry Lambert	Lydia Mendoza	Jeff Peterson	Thea Schurer	Susan Tremblay	Suzanne Zimmerman
Joan Lamphier	Diane Merrill	Ray L. Peterson	Rob Schwartz	Louise Trudeau	Jill Zumwalt
Jean-Michel Lapeyrade	Valerie Merrin	Catherine Petru	Marilynn Scott	Kwang Tseng	Loretta Zweig
Pete Larsen	Barbara Meyer	George S. Peyton, Jr.	Sheryce Scott	Joan Turner	
Eleanor Laubly	Alice Meyers	Dominique Peytraud	Bill Seidel	Bob Tuttle	
Judy Laursen	Sheri Michaels	Marcia Phipps	Lee Seidner	Kathleen Unti	
Olin Leasher	Regina Milavec	Bill Pickard	Greg Sewell	Mariam Upshaw	
Gaye LeBaron	Bill Millard	Bill Pierce	Steve Shaffer	Julie Vader	

## PHOTOGRAPHY IN THE WILD

### Learn to be a Nature Photo Pro with Wildlife Photographer Bryant Hichwa

Join ACR Board President Bryant Hichwa for two special classes this spring and learn while supporting ACR programs. Become skilled at the use of digital photographic equipment in the field and capture stunning wildlife images during your travels. Classes will include tutorials on key camera settings; how to best use natural lighting; how to capture wildlife in the field; close up/macro photography of spring wildflowers; and a demonstration of digiscoping. Dr. Hichwa is contributing 100% of his fee to ACR!

*Donation: \$300 each or \$500 for both classes – every dollar will be donated to Audubon Canyon Ranch. Please call Leslie at 415/868-9244 to register.*

#### INTRODUCTION TO DIGITAL CAMERAS

SATURDAY, APRIL 12, 2008 ♦ 9 AM – 2 PM  
BOUVERIE PRESERVE

#### INTERMEDIATE CLASS

SATURDAY, MAY 10, 2008 ♦ 9 AM – 2 PM  
BOLINAS LAGOON PRESERVE

## SPRINGTIME ARRIVALS AND A BON VOYAGE FLIGHT



Left to right,  
above: Denise  
Della Santina,  
Matej Seda,  
Christine  
Rothenbach

Cultivating native plant seedlings, coordinating habitat restoration volunteers and breathing new life into the Bolinas Lagoon Preserve's native plant greenhouse have been keeping **Denise Della Santina** busy. Denise earned a degree in Conservation Biology from the University of Wisconsin – Madison and has worked on habitat restoration projects for the San Francisco Bay National Wildlife Refuge, Lassen Volcanic and Yosemite national parks. We welcome Denise as ACR's Habitat Protection and Restoration Project Leader for Marin.

The Bolinas Lagoon Preserve also welcomes **Matej Seda** to the position of Maintenance Assistant. Hailing from Prague, Matej (pronounced Mät-ē-ā) brings his background in farm and herd management to the Preserve. Working with Land Steward Bill Arthur, Matej

helps maintain the Preserve for thousands of school-children and the visiting public.

**Christine Rothenbach** joins ACR's Conservation Science and Habitat Protection team as the new Helen Pratt Research Fellow. Chris will monitor

the nesting performance of herons and egrets at the Bolinas Lagoon Preserve and conduct key field duties needed to maintain ACR's regional investigations of herons and egrets. Chris holds a Master of Science in Ecosystem Science and Management from the University of Northern British Columbia and brings to ACR seven years of experience as a field biologist.

ACR also bids a fond farewell to former Helen Pratt Research Fellow **Mark McCaustland**. Mark leaves his haunts on the hillsides of the Bolinas Lagoon Preserve for the environs of San Francisco, where he has secured a position with the Sierra Club. We thank him for his work continuing ACR's decades-long research of Bay Area heronries and wish him all the best.

# CALENDAR OF EVENTS

## BOLINAS LAGOON PRESERVE OPENS TO THE PUBLIC

SATURDAYS, SUNDAYS AND HOLIDAYS

MARCH 15 – JULY 13, 2008

10:00 AM – 4:00 PM

Come view the nesting herons and egrets and hike the more than 8 miles of trails. On weekdays (except Mondays) the preserve is open to the public *by appointment*. Visit [www.egret.org](http://www.egret.org) or call 415/868-9244 for more information.

## GUIDED NATURE WALKS – SPRING & FALL 2008

### BOUVERIE PRESERVE

MARCH 8 AND 29, APRIL 12 AND 19,

MAY 17, OCT. 25, NOV. 1 AND 8

9:30 AM TO 1:30 PM

This is your chance to experience the beauty and rich natural history of this 500-acre preserve. Our half-day guided nature walks are on Saturdays throughout spring and fall.

Call 707/938-4554 for lottery form.

Form must be returned one month prior to the walk.

*No charge but donations appreciated.*

*Docent Council of Bouverie Preserve*

## FALL WORK DAY

### BOLINAS LAGOON PRESERVE

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 4, 2008 –

VOLUNTEER CANYON

9:30 AM – 1:00 PM

1:00 P.M. – LUNCH

We've just spruced up the Preserve this spring, but mark your calendars for the fall. Help us with trail work, library work, pulling weeds, or cooking lunch (which we provide).

Call 415/868-9244 to register.

*Free, but please call to register so we can plan on enough food!*

*ACR Staff*

## DOCENT TRAINING

### BOLINAS LAGOON PRESERVE

WEDNESDAYS, SEPTEMBER 2008 – MARCH

2009

ACR's Bolinas Lagoon Preserve's next training session begins September 3rd. Classes meet once a week on Wednesdays for 24 weeks. Included are such diverse topics as birds, insects, pond life, and teaching techniques. Upon graduation, docents have the knowledge and confidence to lead extremely valuable field trips for schoolchildren. Orientations are scheduled for May 28th and August 27th.

*Call 415/868-9244 for more information and to confirm participation in orientation.*

*There is a \$120 fee to cover the cost of training.*

## BOUVERIE BACKYARD NATURALIST SERIES

9:30 AM TO 2:00 PM

\$25.00 EACH SEMINAR

SATURDAY, APRIL 5, 2008 – FLOWERS AND POLLINATORS

SATURDAY, MAY 10, 2008 – GRASSES

The Bouverie Preserve of Audubon Canyon Ranch is offering an exciting new program of field courses designed for adults who wish to hone their own naturalist skills while learning more about the flora and fauna of the Valley of the Moon in Sonoma County. Classroom and field activities included. Sign up for one seminar or the whole series! Easy to moderate hiking required, so wear hiking shoes, a hat and sunscreen. Bring water and a bag lunch. Class size is limited. Please e-mail [leslie@egret.org](mailto:leslie@egret.org) or call 415/868-9244 to register.

*ACR Staff*

## HABITAT PROTECTION & RESTORATION WORKDAYS

VOLUNTEER CANYON OF BOLINAS LAGOON PRESERVE

THURSDAYS, 9 AM – 12 PM

The Habitat Protection and Restoration team is looking for volunteers to help with ecological restoration throughout the Four Canyons of Bolinas Lagoon Preserve. Activities include collecting seed, propagating native plants, preparing project sites, out-planting and ensuring survival of plants, and renovating facilities.

*Call 415/868-9244 or e-mail Denise Della Santina at [denise@egret.org](mailto:denise@egret.org)*

### BOUVERIE PRESERVE

MONDAYS, 8:30 AM – 12 PM

Bouverie Stewards work intimately with the land throughout the year at the Bouverie Preserve in Glen Ellen. This dedicated crew assists with all sorts of habitat protection and restoration work, while learning about the ecology behind the project. Bouverie Stewards meet every Monday throughout the year; however, individual members may come when they are able. We welcome volunteers who can join the group at least once a month.

*Call 707/935-8417 or e-mail Sherry Adams [sherry@egret.org](mailto:sherry@egret.org)*

## MOTHER'S DAY BBQ

### VOLUNTEER CANYON OF BOLINAS LAGOON PRESERVE

SUNDAY, MAY 11, 2008

The Marin Audubon Society hosts this delightful fundraiser at Audubon Canyon Ranch on Mother's Day, bringing families and friends together for a great day of delicious food and good fun in a beautiful coastal wildlife preserve. Proceeds from the event benefit the educational and conservation programs of Audubon Canyon Ranch and Marin Audubon Society. Call Mary Anne Cowperthwaite at 415/453-2216 for information. Space is limited. Please RSVP by May 1st. Carpooling strongly encouraged!

*\$20 per adult; \$10 children under 10; payable to Marin Audubon Society. Mail your check to: MAS, 141 Oak Avenue, San Anselmo, CA 94960. Your check guarantees your reservation.*

The headquarters of  
Audubon Canyon Ranch is located  
at the Bolinas Lagoon Preserve.  
[www.egret.org](http://www.egret.org)  
email: [acr@egret.org](mailto:acr@egret.org)

## WHEN TO VISIT

### **Bolinas Lagoon Preserve**

Mid-March to mid-July: Saturday, Sunday  
and holidays. 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Weekdays by appointment only;  
415/868-9244. Closed Mondays.

Bolinas Lagoon Preserve is adjacent to  
Bolinas Lagoon on Shoreline Highway One,  
three miles north of Stinson Beach.

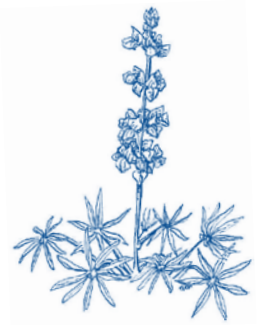
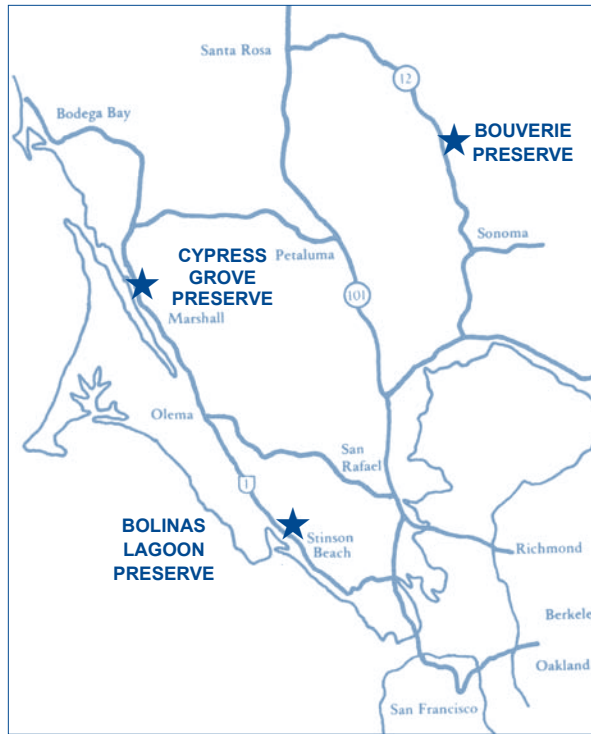
### **Cypress Grove Research Center**

By appointment only. 415/663-8203

### **Bouverie Preserve**

By appointment only. 707/938-4554

See schedule of events, inside.



ANE CARLA ROVETTA

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Designed by Claire Peaslee.  
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**The Mission of Audubon Canyon Ranch** ♦ Audubon Canyon Ranch protects the natural resources of its sanctuaries while fostering an understanding and appreciation of these environments. We educate children and adults, promote ecological literacy that is grounded in direct experience, and conduct research and restoration that advances conservation science. ♦



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