

Celebrating Milestones in Your San Mateo County Parks!

by Michele Beasley

One hundred years ago, in the spring of 1923, County Superintendent of Schools Roy W. Cloud visited the one-room Wurr School located between La Honda and Pescadero. Enchanted with the giant redwood trees and all that grew on the forest floor, Cloud was alarmed to learn from teacher Natalie Hanson that the forest was slated for immediate destruction by the Peterson Lumber Company, its new owner.

This did not sit well with Cloud who was already bothered by the despoilment of scenic wonders throughout California. He pleaded with the San Mateo County Board of Supervisors to purchase 314 acres of this peaceful glen. With unusual haste, the supervisors appointed a citizens committee to consider the proposal, which they in turn approved.

San Mateo County paid the lumber company \$70,000 for the land and named it in honor of county residents who died in the line of duty during World War I. **Memorial County Park** opened to its very first campers on July 4, 1924. At the dedication ceremonies, the names of 52 service members were read aloud to designate 52 of the tallest trees.

In the century since, generations of families have escaped to this cherished redwood park to relax, swim in the creek, share campfire stories and explore the park's eight miles of trail. Clearly well-loved, Memorial Park had been showing its age – but that's not the case anymore. Over the last several years, San Mateo County Parks made significant investments at this park, including new water and wastewater treatment plants, new restroom and shower buildings and repaved park roads.

The San Mateo County Parks Foundation complemented the County's investments with improvements to the Visitor Center and restrooms, new pic-



Memorial Park has charmed generations of families. Photo by Caroline Day.

nic tables and barbeques, and accessibility upgrades. The Foundation will also fund a Memorial Park Naturalist intern who will promote the Crumb Clean campaign to protect the endangered marbled murrelet, a seabird that nests in redwood trees.

Turning 100 is a big deal! Beyond Memorial Park, **San Mateo County Parks** will have much to show off and celebrate

during its centennial. Spruced up playing fields and picnic areas are coming to Flood Park. The soon-to-be-newest county park, Tunitas Creek Beach, will open up a gorgeous stretch of coastline. And recently completed forest health work at Huddart and Wunderlich parks demonstrates a commitment to protecting land and people in the face of extreme weather.

(Continued on next page)

San Mateo County Parks

Cowell – Purisima Trail
Coyote Point Recreation Area
Crystal Springs Regional Trail
San Andreas Segment
Sawyer Camp Segment
Edgewood Park & Preserve
Devil's Slide Trail
Fitzgerald Marine Reserve
Pillar Point Bluff
Flood Park
Friendship Park
Junipero Serra Park
Huddart Park
Memorial Park
Pescadero Creek Park
Sam McDonald Park
Heritage Grove
Mirada Surf
Moss Beach Park
Quarry Park
San Bruno Mountain Park
Sanchez Adobe
San Pedro Valley Park
Tunitas Creek Beach
Woodside Store
Wunderlich Park



Friends of Edgewood's docent training resumes during spring wildflower season.

(Continued from page 1)

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Turning 50 is Pretty Cool, too

Wunderlich Park celebrates a half-century in 2024. This hillside area of redwood forest, open meadows, and beautiful oaks and madrones is popular with horseback riders and hikers. The still-operating Folger Stable and surrounding buildings are listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Its Carriage Room Museum highlights the area's history of lumbering, the "Great Estates" era and development of the Folger Coffee Company.

Folger Stable is restored thanks to the efforts of the **Friends of Huddart and Wunderlich Parks**. The Friends have now turned their sights on restoring the Dairy House, which you see as you first enter the park. Constructed near cooling spring waters and made of thick masonry walls, the Dairy House kept goods fresh in an era before refrigeration. We love how the Friends of Huddart and Wunderlich Parks turn historic assets into valuable learning experiences. Well-known for their docent-led hikes for youth, the Friends of Huddart and Wunderlich Parks share with all their love of turret spiders, gold-backed ferns and more.

The San Mateo County Parks Foundation supports volunteer groups like the Friends of Huddart and Wunderlich Parks, Friends of San Pedro Valley and Friends of Edgewood. Through our Youth Environmental Field

Trip program, we cover the transportation costs for school groups and after-school programs to visit the parks for docent-guided lessons in nature.

30 Years of Edgewood Park and Natural Preserve

Edgewood Park was declared a Natural Preserve in 1993, protecting it from future development. Edgewood's rare serpentine grasslands drive the Preserve's extraordinary ecological diversity. Its mosaic of habitats supports approximately 550 species of plants including over a dozen that are rare, threatened, or endangered—all within just 467 acres.

Edgewood could have become a golf course if not for the tireless advocacy of conservation-minded volunteers. Those volunteers became the **Friends of Edgewood**. They have remained committed to their all-volunteer model for 30 years, with 150 active volunteers and 40 programs. The singular Weed Warriors program has eliminated or effectively controlled many invasive plant species, including yellow star thistle and bristly ox-tongue. "A Generation of Restoration" is the theme for Friends of Edgewood's 30th Anniversary, which will be celebrated with a variety of events throughout the year.

It is really quite impressive to witness and learn about all the efforts the Friends of Edgewood put into protecting and celebrating Edgewood as a unique treasure. We are



The Friends of Huddart and Wunderlich Parks are raising funds to restore the stone Dairy House at Wunderlich Park, built in 1874.

grateful for their good work! **The San Mateo County Parks Foundation has long supported the Friends' habitat restoration efforts like their ambitious Green Grass Initiative, which aims to restore Edgewood's non-native grasslands to their former floral beauty and species diversity.**

Happy Quarter Century to Us!

This year, the San Mateo County Parks Foundation celebrates 25 years of inspiring people to care for, learn about and enjoy San Mateo County Parks. This is really a celebration of you, our park champions. You demonstrate love for the parks in a multitude of ways.



Together, we inspire people **to care** for San Mateo County Parks by supporting volunteers and habitat restoration efforts. Thanks to our park ranger grant program, we can respond quickly to unanticipated needs and support rangers' creative endeavors like the new grey whale display at Fitzgerald Marine Reserve.

Together, we inspire people **to learn** about San Mateo County Parks by funding the production of videos, creation of interpretive displays and translation of park brochures. Many children would never know about our wonderful parks were it not for our field trip program, which connects them to an outdoor classroom. It is well-documented that nature enhances education outcomes.



It's all about perspective. The new grey whale display at Fitzgerald Marine Reserve is coming together nicely, thanks to the efforts of park rangers. Photo by Rob Cala

Together, we inspire people **to enjoy** San Mateo County Parks by holding events, leading hikes and encouraging creativity and play. This includes Bicycle Sunday, our Park Pics photo contest and the Quarry Park pump track. Our series of history hikes and picnics in partnership with San Mateo County Pride Center and Peninsula Family Service serve as a welcoming entry into the awe-inspiring world of SMC Parks!

Key to our mission is addressing the barriers that prevent people from knowing and loving the parks. We are here to support the next generation of conservation-minded volunteers! This is why we place

free annual park passes for check out at libraries across the County. It is why we fund the removal of unhealthy trees near picnic areas and make accessibility upgrades to paths of travel. It is why we funded the Parks Department's new Strategic Interpretive Plan as well as a bilingual park intern position focused on Flood and Friendship parks.

It is why we exist. Later this year we will be celebrating our 25th anniversary at Huddart Park — which has its own milestone. It turns 75. We hope you will join us in marking this occasion. Thank you for all of your support these last 25 years!



In partnership with SMC Pride Center and Peninsula Family Service, the San Mateo County Parks Foundation hosted a history walk at San Bruno Mountain during a break in the rain. Photo by San Mateo County Pride Center.

The Storms Have Left Their Mark



Hundreds of eucalyptus trees came down across the park system including here at Mirada Surf East.



Bird's eye view of the destruction at Coyote Point. Our office is



Power is down for everyone at Coyote Point thanks to this culprit.



Sawyer Camp Trail remains closed as it has suffered a lot of damage from the storms. Earth is sliding out from underneath the trail in multiple

Parks on San Mateo County Parks

All photos courtesy of San Mateo County Parks



in the Captain's House pictured here.



Right, Brooks Creek Trail at San Pedro Valley is sliding away and closed until further notice.



Damage from our back-to-back fire locations causing instability.



Park rangers are working hard to clear the mess left behind. Trees came down across roads, trails, bridges and power lines.

Thank you to our generous supporters!

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Every effort was made to ensure that this list is complete and accurate. The Foundation regrets any errors or omissions. Please contact us so we may make the proper correction.

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Test Your Birder Knowledge!

by Leslie Holzman, Membership and Communications Coordinator

Identify the species described here and then check your answers at the bottom!



1

Douglas Brown, Coyote Point Marina

This stout, short necked bird will brood any chick placed in its nest, whether its own offspring or not. Aptly named, this bird mostly feeds at night.



4

Jeremy Andersen, San Pedro Valley Park

This common owl with its classic, yellow-eyed stare, is covered in extremely soft feathers, which provide not just insulation from the cold but also help it fly very quietly in pursuit of prey.



7

Herb Hwang, Coyote Point

Often found in mudflats and tidal wetlands, these birds have yellow facial skin and yellow feet but during mating season, the feet can turn a brighter yellow-orange while the face can look reddish.



2

Suzanne Coberly, Crystal Springs Regional Trail

This common woodland predator flies at high speeds through vegetation in pursuit of other birds, often resulting in injury. One study found that almost 25% of these birds' skeletons showed signs of fractures, especially in the wishbone.



5

Rob Cala, Pillar Point Bluff

This raptor possesses a reversible outer toe that allows it to grasp with two toes in front and two behind, as well as barbed pads on its soles to help hold slippery fish. In flight, it lines up its catch headfirst for less wind resistance.



8

Leslie Cavaliere, Edgewood Preserve

The stout hooked bill of this bird gives it extra power and grip for hammering open acorns. They are also notorious acorn thieves!



3

Selwyn Quan, Memorial Park

These striking forest birds dig characteristically rectangular holes in trees that can be so broad and deep as to cause small trees to break in half. Not surprisingly, they prefer the larger trees in the forest.



6

Michael Pagano, Crystal Springs Regional Trail

This common hawk returns to its nesting territory year after year. In flight, distinctive translucent crescents near its wing-tips make it easier to identify.



9

Michael Pagano, Crystal Springs Regional Trail

This tiny bird can lay a lot of eggs — up to 12 in a single nest! Characterized by near constant flicking of its wings, it can appear nervous as it flits amongst vegetation.



10

Parham Pourahmad, Devil's Slide Trail

Commonly reaching speeds of 70 mph when chasing prey, this predator can even reach speeds of 200 mph when swooping from heights in its pursuit.

- 1. Black-Crowned Night Heron
- 2. Cooper's Hawk
- 3. Pileated Woodpecker
- 4. Great Horned Owl
- 5. Osprey
- 6. Red-shouldered Hawk
- 7. Snowy Egret
- 8. California Scrub-Jay
- 9. Ruby-crowned Kinglet
- 10. Peregrine Falcon