



Photo: Craig Sojin

Rush Creek Preserve in Novato.

Discover

We ♥ Hawks

The Marin County Department of Parks and Open Space has a new name and a new look. We're now, simply, Marin County Parks, and you'll be seeing our new name and logo in more and more places—signs, website, newsletters, business cards, and vehicles, to name just a few—over the coming months.

About our Logo

Stable and strong. Timeless. Distinct. Recognizable. Memorable. Marin. These are some of the qualities we sought to capture. Our hawk will serve us well. We all stop to admire the hawk in the wild, whether she is soaring overhead or surveying the landscape from her fence post perch. She can be found throughout Marin, but this makes the sight of her no less memorable and thrilling. She is a powerful symbol and icon, as the bear is to California State Parks, and the bison to the National Park Service. And she is a living creature, something with a heartbeat. Her universal appeal is akin to that we in Marin County have for our treasured parks and open space lands. We are proud to be associated with her.

Why the Change?

We are and always have been one county department, a department that offers two different kinds of land for public enjoyment—"parks" and "open space preserves". Despite the name change, the distinction between the two will remain. Open space preserves will continue to be managed primarily for natural resource protection, parks will continue to be managed primarily for recreation. This distinction is also reflected in the tag line—"Preservation • Recreation"—accompanying our new logo. The name change is consistent with the direction provided by our strategic plan. When the plan was adopted



Coming in September, our website will feature the new logo!

in 2008, a new, single mission statement began to guide and unify the department, one that references both our natural resource protection and recreation functions. Despite our name change, rest assured that the Marin County Open Space District continues to exist, as do all 34 open space preserves and our commitment to preserving the natural resource and habitat values of those lands. Also, look for more preservation and restoration activities in the rare and special habitats of the county parks, like the salt marsh and wetlands at McInnis.

Win a Membership to Cal Academy of Sciences

You can if you enter and win the Name the Hawk Contest. Everyone is eligible. The contest ends September 30, 2011 and the winner will be notified by November 1, 2011. Visit marincountyparks.org to enter and view the contest rules.



Photo: Kris Dickinson

A volunteer crew helps build the 680 Trail.

680 Trail Construction Update

It's been a busy and productive summer on the 680 Trail! Staff, Conservation Corps North Bay members, contractors, and volunteers excavated over 11,000 feet of tread and are in the process of building eight bridges and four wet crossings. Through early August, 37 volunteers—part of a new specialized crew known as the Trail Maintenance Team—participated in five events racking up 338 hours of community service. Thank you Access 4 Bikes for feeding this hardy group. Construction activities will continue through mid-October, focusing on completing all major structures, finishing the trail route, establishing final Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan measures, and developing a monitoring schedule. The trail will remain closed to the public through the winter to allow soils to settle and compact naturally. The opening of the 680 Trail in spring 2012, after the cessation of seasonal rains, will restore a critical link between the Terra Linda/Sleepy Hollow Divide and the Loma Alta Preserves. For more information, visit marincountyparks.org or contact Superintendent **Chris Bramham** at cbramham@co.marin.ca.us or **(415) 499-3639**. Subscribe to the 680 Trail webpage to receive project updates by e-mail.

San Geronimo Valley Upland Habitat Restoration

San Geronimo Creek watershed provides some of the best remaining Coho salmon habitat in the state. Since the 1950's, salmonid populations have declined substantially in Marin and across

the state. Recent studies identify excessive fine sediment as the principal culprit, degrading water quality and habitat. In 2007, Marin County Parks embarked on a multi-year effort to reduce the volume of sediment reaching San Geronimo Creek from the Giacomini Open Space Preserve. In 2008, staff began repairs on the Sylvestris Fire Road and, in 2009 and 2010, completed projects on the Contour and Candellero Canyon Fire Roads. This summer and fall, work is proceeding on the Sylvestris Fire Road, on new sites on the Hunt Camp and Conifer Fire Roads, and on the Willis Evans Trail. Crews are repairing stream crossings, replacing failed culverts, and reshaping problem sites. When completed, the enhancements will prevent more than 3,000 cubic yards of sediment from entering the creek. The California Department of Fish and Game's Fisheries Restoration Grant Program generously provided over \$500,000 in support of our restoration efforts. Following the work on the Willis Evans Trail (October 15), we will host a volunteer event to replant native plants along the trail. Details will be posted on marincountyparks.org. Subscribe to the announcements webpage to receive e-mail notices about this event. For more information, visit our website or contact Resource Specialist **Matt Sagues** at msagues@co.marin.ca.us or **(415) 507-2686**.

A New Partnership with The Nature Conservancy

This spring, Marin County Parks began a multi-year stewardship and habitat restoration program on the Ring Mountain Open Space Preserve. The ambitious program, funded by a grant from The Nature Conservancy (TNC), will allow us to enhance some of the most unique and sensitive habitat in the county. The 405-acre preserve was originally acquired by TNC in three purchases between 1982 and 1984, to protect its exceptional biological diversity and ecological values. TNC entrusted Ring Mountain to the Open Space District in 1995. Today, it continues to be home for a number of rare plants, including the Tiburon Mariposa Lily, which is found nowhere else on earth. But the preserve faces significant threats from invasive plants, encroachments, and surrounding land uses. The partnership between Marin County Parks and TNC marks a new era of protection and restoration. The project's goals are to identify and restore degraded habitats, monitor and enhance rare plants, and offer the public volunteer opportunities to take care of the land. To accomplish these outcomes,

Subscribe

Stay up-to-date with Marin County Parks! Learn about the projects we're working on as well as the free programs we offer. Visit marincountyparks.org and click "subscribe" to sign up.

the grant is supporting a new Stewardship Coordinator dedicated solely to implementation of the program.

Road & Trail Management Plan/Environmental Impact Report Update

Progress continues on the RTMP. Over 50 people attended the June 18 community workshop. After presentations by General Manager Linda Dahl and Elise Holland, staff led an exercise to record participants' recommendations to alter the existing Open Space District network of roads and trails. Currently, staff is compiling this information for use in the next phase of analysis, and consultants are inventorying 250 miles of roads and trails. The next community workshop will be held on Saturday, October 29, from 8:30 am to 12:30 pm at the Marin Health and Wellness Campus Connection Center in San Rafael. Doors will open at 8:00 am. For more information, visit marincountyparks.org or contact Planning and Resources Chief **Elise Holland** at eholland@co.marin.ca.us or (415) 507-2820. Subscribe to the RTMP webpage to receive project updates by e-mail.

Vegetation and Biodiversity Management Plan Update

This fall, the planning firm Nichols • Berman will begin environmental review of the Draft Vegetation and Biodiversity Management Plan (VBMP). Marin County Parks will hold Notice of Preparation meetings, though dates, times, and locations have yet to be determined. For more information, visit marincountyparks.org or contact Planning and Resources Chief **Elise Holland** at eholland@co.marin.ca.us or (415) 507-2820. Subscribe to the VBMP webpage to receive project updates by e-mail.

Stafford Lake Bike Park

The Stafford Lake Bike Park Master Plan is nearly complete. The project is currently undergoing environmental review. The final Master Plan will be presented to the Board of Supervisors later this fall. An aggressive fund-raising campaign will be launched shortly to secure money for construction, which is scheduled for summer 2012. The bike park will serve beginner, intermediate, and advanced cyclists with exciting features, including jumps, elevated trails, and pump tracks. For more information, visit staffordlakebikepark.com or contact Principal Park Planner **Steve Petterle** at spetterle@co.marin.ca.us or (415) 499-6394. Join the Stafford Lake Bike Park e-mail list at staffordlakebikepark.com.

Aramburu Island Enhancement is Underway

In August, the Richardson Bay Audubon Center and Marin County Parks began restoration of Aramburu Island, located in the north-west region of Richardson Bay on the east side of Strawberry Point. The purpose of the project is to stabilize the island's eastern shore to reduce erosion and create a diversity of wetland and shoreline habitats for wildlife and many other species. Construction will continue through October 15, 2011 and resume next summer. The restoration of Aramburu Island is linked to the Cosco-Busan oil spill and is funded primarily from private and public grants. Visit tiburonaudubon.org or marincountyparks.org for information about this project.



Photo: Sam Abercrombie

Rare plants flourish on the rocky serpentine soils of Ring Mountain Preserve.

National Public Lands Day

Come celebrate with us on September 24! We're waiving entrance fees at Paradise Beach Park and at Black Point Boat Launch. Local retailer Demo Sport will lead a stand-up paddleboard clinic at McNears Beach Park. And to cap the day off, rangers will guide you and yours up the slopes of Mount Burdell for a stargazing adventure. Visit marincountyparks.org for details.

COMMUNITY VOLUNTEER DAYS

Volunteer days offer hands-on land stewardship experience. We provide a forum for the community to help us take care of the parks and preserves that we all enjoy.

Opportunities include habitat restoration, trail improvement, and maintenance. Though the work varies in physical demand, a variety of activities are available for all ages and abilities. We provide water, gloves, tools, and training. Bring snacks or a lunch, sunblock, a hat, and a water bottle. Wear sturdy shoes and layered clothes.

CANCELLATIONS To find out if an event is cancelled, call (415) 499-3778 (Open Space) or (415) 507-2823 (Parks) after 7am on the morning of the event to hear a recorded message.

To learn more about volunteering contact:

Greg Reza at greza@co.marin.ca.us or (415) 499-3778 (Open Space); or **Kirk Schroeder** at kschroeder@co.marin.ca.us or (415) 507-2823 (Parks).

SEPTEMBER 12 THROUGH SEPTEMBER 17

Week of Caring

We're partnering with hundreds of corporate volunteers and community organizations across the Bay Area to celebrate United Way's Week of Caring. Plant bulbs at McInnis Park, pick up trash, or lend a hand landscaping. Visit weekofcaring.org for more information or contact Chief Park Ranger **Rob Ruiz** at r Ruiz@co.marin.ca.us or (415) 507-4045.

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 17. 9AM TO 12PM

California Coastal Cleanup

Call **Greg Reza** at (415) 499-3778 to find a collection site in Marin or to become a Beach Captain. Volunteers are invited to a free BBQ at the Bay Model Visitor Center in Sausalito from 12noon to 2pm (2100 Bridgeway).

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 15. 11AM TO 2PM

Volunteer Recognition Picnic

We truly appreciate the citizens who donate their time helping us! Volunteers are invited to enjoy a meal and an afternoon of family fun including prizes, snow cones, and a jumpy house. Feel free to bring a favorite dish to share. (McNears Beach Park, 201 Cantera Way, San Rafael). *Parking fee waived for volunteers.*

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 15. 9AM TO 1PM

Ball by the Bay at Bothin Marsh

Let's celebrate Save The Bay's 50 years of championing the San Francisco Bay—from halting fill and illegal dumping, to restoring wetlands, and engaging thousands of people in protection

Program accommodations

Programs and/or locations may have limited accessibility to persons with disabilities. If you require program accommodations to participate in an activity, or materials in alternate formats, contact **Steve Petterle**, not less than four work days in advance of the event, at (415) 499-6387, TTY (415) 473-2495, CRS dial 711, or spetterle@co.marin.ca.us.

efforts. After a short stint weeding around the marsh, volunteers will enjoy a county-style fair including face painting, a bean-bag toss, wetland bingo, food, treats, and music. *Due to the sensitive nature of the restoration site, space is limited and registration is required at savefbay.org.* If there are more than nine people in your group, contact **Natalie LaVan** at (510) 463-6809 or bayevents@savefbay.org. Participants will receive a free T-shirt, so be sure to indicate shirt size when registering.

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 5. 9AM TO 1PM

Horse Hill Work Party

The Alto Bowl Horseowners Association and Bay Area Barns and Trails host this broom-busting pizza party, raffle, and equine interpretive event. Participants will learn about the herd that calls this hill home, see them up close, and discover their unique and entertaining personalities. Meet near the intersection of Lomita Dr and Greenfield Ct (Mill Valley). **GETTING THERE** From E Blithedale Ave, turn right at Tower Dr, stay right at Meadow Dr, and turn left at Lomita Dr.

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 13. 9AM TO 12PM

Fennel Fest at McInnis Park

This is a critical follow-up visit in our quest to eradicate fennel and other non-native, invasive weeds from the slopes surrounding the skatepark. Though the majority of the work will be on steep and uneven terrain, there's work to do on the flat ridgetop. Meet at the skatepark parking lot (350 Smith Ranch Rd, San Rafael).

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 3. 9AM TO 1PM

Broom Bust at Old St. Hillary's

Once again the Broom Busters of Old St. Hillary's host this annual party. After the work, volunteers will be served lunch while Naturalist David Herlocker describes the wildlife that benefits from our habitat restoration work. Meet at the Tiburon Peninsula Club parking lot (1600 Mar West St, Tiburon).

ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION PROGRAM

Welcome to the Environmental Education Program's naturalist-led outings. We offer these outings for people who wish to enjoy the diverse natural wonders of Marin County. These outings are free of charge and no registration is required. Come to learn, or come to share what you know about the plants, animals, and wild places of this unique and beautiful county.

LUNCH Pack a lunch if you plan to stay all day (you don't have to stay for the entire walk) and remember to bring plenty of water.

CANCELLATIONS Heavy rain, high wind, and/or high fire danger may cancel outings. To find out if an outing is cancelled, call (415) 893-9527 on the morning of the event to hear a recorded message.

QUESTIONS If you have questions or desire additional information, contact Naturalist **David Herlocker** at (415) 893-9508 or dherlocker@co.marin.ca.us.

Naturalist walks

Our walks cover a variety of topics; some are quite specific, others are more general, but we never fail to take a moment to marvel at whatever natural wonders we encounter. Binoculars, a pocket sized magnifying lens, and your favorite field guide(s) are recommended for all walks.

Most of the walks included in this schedule are moderately paced and cover less than five miles; walks that are longer or more strenuous are noted in the descriptions.



Photo: Richard Wasson

A scorpion mother found hiding under a log.



Photo: Len Blumin

Some Black-necked Stilts remain in our marshes all year around.

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 2. 10AM TO 3PM

Fall Migration at Point Reyes

This is the time of the year when the outer point can be visited by an immense variety of birds including some species not usually found along the west coast. Be prepared to travel to various locations, and bring plenty of extra layers of clothing. This walk is for adults; we request that no animals (except service animals) attend. Meet at Drakes Beach parking area. **GETTING THERE** Follow Sir Francis Drake Blvd toward the lighthouse. Look for the Drakes Beach turnoff on your left, about 2 miles past the North Beach turnoff.

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 10. 10AM TO 3PM

Birds and Flowers at Abbotts Lagoon

This is a great fall destination, lots of habitat for shorebirds, waterfowl, and others on their way down the coast. There are usually some interesting plants still flowering on the bluffs and in the dunes. This walk is for adults; we request that no animals (except service animals) attend. **GETTING THERE** Meet at Abbotts Lagoon Trailhead, on Pierce Point Rd, Point Reyes National Seashore.

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 16. 10AM TO 2PM

Spiders at Lake Lagunitas

This is a great place to see many species of spiders that illustrate the various arachnid lifestyles. We will discuss the biology of spiders in general and learn how to identify many common species and discuss their life histories. This walk is for adults; we request that no animals (except service animals) attend. Meet at the Lake Lagunitas parking area. **GETTING THERE** From Fairfax, take the Fairfax-Bolinas Rd about 1.5 miles and turn left at the Lake Lagunitas/Bon Tempe sign. *Parking fee.*

ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION PROGRAM

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 18. 9AM TO 3PM

Mount Burdell from Every Angle

We visit this preserve often, but today we'll take the grand tour—a sweeping loop that will include a visit to the ancient oaks at Joske Grove, then a trek to the summit, Hidden Lake, and a series of perennial springs along the south slope (7 mi, 1,200 ft elevation gain). This walk is for adults; we request that no animals (except service animals) attend. Meet at the San Andreas Trailhead (Mount Burdell Preserve). **GETTING THERE** From Hwy 101, take the Atherton Ave/San Marin Dr exit west on San Marin Dr about 2.3 miles and turn right at San Andreas Dr. Trailhead is near the end on the right.

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 20. 9AM TO 12PM

Birds at Las Gallinas

The ponds at the Las Gallinas water treatment facility are a fabulous place to get close looks at a variety of waterfowl and

shorebirds, plus there are usually plenty of hawks hunting for rodents and other prey in the surrounding fields and marshes. This walk is for adults; we request that no animals (except service animals) attend. Meet at the Las Gallinas water treatment ponds in San Rafael. **GETTING THERE** From Hwy 101, take the Lucas Valley/Smith Ranch Rd exit east on Smith Ranch Rd and follow to the end (Smith Ranch Rd turns left just before the entrance to McInnis Park).

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 24. 9AM TO 3PM

Birds of Point Reyes with David Wimpfheimer

This particular time of year is when we see the greatest variety of birdlife, as some species migrate through, others are leaving for the winter, and many of our winter residents arrive. We'll travel to various locations, so be prepared for any sort of weather. This walk is for adults; we request that no animals (except service animals) attend. Meet at the end of the large parking area across from the Bear Valley Visitor Center. **GETTING THERE** From Olema go north, take the first left at Bear Valley Rd, and follow the signs to the visitor center.

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 29. 10AM TO 2PM

Birds of Bolinas Lagoon

We'll start the day in the willows and alders of Pine Gulch Delta, an area that attracts a variety of land birds. Then we'll look for waterfowl and shorebirds in this unique estuary that is one of the most important stopover points for many species during migration along the Pacific coast. This walk is for adults; we request that no animals (except service animals) attend. Meet at the Bob Stewart Trailhead. **GETTING THERE** From Hwy 1, follow Olema-Bolinas Rd west, the trailhead is just east of the nursery.

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 4. 10AM TO 2PM

Autumn at the Top of Tam

We'll let the weather dictate our course and destination. We might seek the shade of the forested north side, or we could explore the chaparral that cloaks the south facing slopes. No matter which route we choose, this is a lovely place to spend an autumn day. This walk is for adults; we request that no animals (except service animals) attend. Meet at Rock Spring on Mount Tamalpais (the junction of Pantoll Rd and Ridgecrest Blvd).

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 8. 9AM TO 3PM

Azalea Hill to White Hill

We'll utilize a car shuttle to walk one way over the east end of San Geronimo Ridge. We'll start with the ascent of the Pine Mountain Fire Rd and then head along the ridge to the trails that lead down White Hill (7.5 mi). This walk is for adults; we request that no animals (except service animals) attend. Meet at the trail-



Photo: Joyce Abrams

Hands-on learning provided by a docile Gopher snake.

head on Brown Bridge. **GETTING THERE** From Fairfax, head west on Sir Francis Drake Blvd, the trailhead is at the big gravel parking area just below the top of the hill.

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 12. 4PM TO 8PM

Tarantulas!

This walk coincides with the annual mating season of the California Tarantula, but to see them, we'll have to travel to the East Bay (there are no tarantulas in Marin County). We'll start with a brief talk about the biology of these hairy beasts. Then we'll take a leisurely stroll to see if there are any amorous males wandering about in search of willing females, while keeping an eye out for the distinctive burrows in which these animals usually hide. After our walk, we'll return to the shaded picnic area for a potluck dinner. This walk is for ALL interested participants, including families with kids. We request that no animals (except service animals) attend. For details, directions, and to RSVP, contact **David Herlocker** at (415) 893-9508 or dherlocker@co.marin.ca.us.

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 14. 10AM TO 2PM

Tennessee Valley

We'll take a leisurely walk down the valley looking for owls roosting in the trees, bobcats and coyotes on the hillsides, and migrating hawks overhead as we make our way to the beach for lunch. This walk is for adults; we request that no animals (except service animals) attend. Meet at the Tennessee Valley Trailhead. **GETTING THERE** From Hwy 1, go west on Tennessee Valley Rd to the end.

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 16. 10AM TO 2PM

Oaks of Marin

Oaks and their acorns are vitally important to a broad spectrum of animals (including humans). We'll discuss the role of these trees in local ecosystems as we compare five oak species and several interesting hybrids. This walk is for adults; we request that no animals (except service animals) attend. Meet at the San Andreas Trailhead (Mount Burdell Preserve). **GETTING THERE** From Hwy 101, take the Atherton Ave/San Marin Dr exit west on San Marin Dr for 2.3 miles and turn right at San Andreas Dr. Trailhead is near the end on the right.

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 19. 10AM TO 2PM

Raptor Migration in the Marin Headlands

Each year, thousands of raptors funnel through the peninsula just north of the Golden Gate as they head south. We will discuss raptor biology and identification while we witness the spectacle of migration. This walk is for adults; we request that no animals (except service animals) attend. Meet at the east end of Rodeo Lagoon. **GETTING THERE** From Hwy 101, take the Alexander



Photo: Len Blumin

A Marbled Godwit searches for its next meal.

Ave exit and follow the signs to the Headlands. Follow Bunker Rd (through the tunnel) and continue west down the valley. The meeting place is next to the end of the first building you encounter *just after* Bunker Rd crosses the bridge.

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 22. 10AM TO 2PM

Limantour Estero

An autumn day and an outgoing tide are the perfect combination for watching all kinds of wildlife from shorebirds, waterfowl and raptors, to sharks and rays in this unique coastal location where ocean, salt marsh, and freshwater habitats converge. This walk is for adults; we request that no animals (except service animals) attend. Meet at the Limantour parking area. **GETTING THERE** From Olema, go north on Hwy 1, turn left at Bear Valley Rd, turn left at Limantour Rd, and follow to the end.

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 26. 9AM TO 3PM

Big Rock Ridge

We'll ascend this rugged ridge slowly to appreciate the birds, late blooming flowers, and gorgeous scenery along the way. On this moderately strenuous 6 mi hike we'll take in some of the most pristine open space in the eastern portion of the county. This walk is for adults; we request that no animals (except service animals) attend. Meet at the Queenstone Trailhead. **GETTING THERE** From Lucas Valley Rd go north on Las Gallinas Ave, turn left at Miller Creek, and turn right at Queenstone. *Car shuttle, please be on time!*

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 28. 10AM TO 2PM

Cascade Canyon Open Space

This preserve is a great place to enjoy nature any time of the year. We'll stroll among Big-Leaf maples and a variety of oaks as they display their fall colors. This walk is for adults; we request that no animals (except service animals) attend. Meet at the gate at the end of Cascade Dr. **GETTING THERE** From Fairfax, follow the Fairfax-Bolinas Rd to Cascade Dr. *Parking is limited, so carpool if you can.*

ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION PROGRAM

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 30. 10AM TO 2PM

Estero Trail

This trail takes us through an old Christmas tree farm (a good place to look for owls) then we'll head down to the waterside to find waterfowl and shorebirds. We'll stop for lunch on a bluff that gives us a great view of this unique estuary. This walk is for adults; we request that no animals (except service animals) attend. Meet at the Estero Trailhead. **GETTING THERE** Follow Sir Francis Drake Blvd and look for the marked turnoff on the left, about a mile past Mt. Vision Rd.

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 3. 9AM TO 12PM

Birds at Stafford Lake

This Novato reservoir is a great place to see waterfowl, shorebirds, raptors, and more. Some are just passing through; others will be staying for the winter. This walk is for adults; no dogs allowed (except service dogs). After you pass through the entry to Stafford Lake Park, turn left and we'll meet at the parking area (3549 Novato Blvd, Novato).

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 6. 10AM TO 2PM

Birds at Rush Creek

These tidal wetlands and evergreen woodlands by the Petaluma River Delta are a great place to appreciate our winter birdlife. The road sometimes gets quite muddy, so bring appropriate footwear. This walk is for adults; we request that no animals (except service animals) attend. Meet at the Binford Rd gate. **GETTING THERE** From Hwy 101, take the Atherton Ave/San Marin Dr exit east on Atherton Ave and turn left at Binford Rd, the gate is on the right at the edge of the marsh.

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 12. 10AM TO 3PM

Autumn at Point Reyes with David Lukas

Enjoy the fall season with a lovely 5.5 mi hike in the hills above Limantour. We'll ascend the Laguna Trail above the Clem Miller Environmental Education Center, crossing through coastal chaparral and Bishop Pine forests, then descend on the Bayview Trail to Muddy Hollow and back to the trailhead. This walk is for adults; we request that no animals (except service animals) attend. Meet at the Laguna Trailhead. **GETTING THERE** Go west on Limantour Rd and turn left toward the Clem Miller Environmental Education Center, the trailhead is about a half mile in on the right.

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 18. 10AM TO 2PM

Focus on Gulls

Gulls are certainly challenging but with a few tricks and a little patience we'll learn to differentiate between the species we regularly see here in winter. We will discuss identification, plumages, and life-histories of our local gulls as we attempt to demystify these beautiful birds. We'll carpool to several different locations in Pt. Reyes. This walk is for adults; we request that no animals (except service animals) attend. Meet at the parking lot across from the Bear Valley Visitor Center. **GETTING THERE** Follow Sir Francis Drake Blvd to Olema, turn right (north) at Hwy 1, take the first left at Bear Valley Rd, and follow signs to the visitor center.

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 30. 10AM TO 2PM

Mushrooms of the Point Reyes Peninsula

We'll start with a look around the Bear Valley area, then we'll carpool to one or more spots where we might find a completely different cast of fungal characters among the bishop pines. This walk is for adults; we request that no animals (except service animals) attend. Meet at the end of the big dirt parking lot next to the picnic area across from the Bear Valley Visitor Center.

GETTING THERE Follow Sir Francis Drake Blvd to Olema, turn right (north) at Hwy 1, take the first left at Bear Valley Rd, and follow signs to the visitor center.



Photo: Shannon Burke

A captive audience enjoys the outdoor classroom.

Family walks

These outings are intended for families that want to explore nature together. Bring your kids, grandkids, nieces, nephews, neighbors, or any other inquisitive youngsters in your life who would appreciate a deeper connection to nature. This is not a drop-off program, we want you to stay and enjoy the experience too.

These programs aren't formal—no lectures or lesson plans. We set out to search for natural wonders and share what we find. The most important take-home message is that animals and the habitats in which they live are fascinating and delicate things that should be treated gently.

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 9. 10AM TO 1PM

Nature for Kids: SPIDERS!

Spiders are everywhere, and this is the perfect time of year to see spiders of every shape, size, and color. We'll learn how they hunt, how they make their webs, and how to identify many common species. We request that no animals (except service animals) attend. Meet at the Lake Lagunitas parking area. **GETTING THERE** From Fairfax, take the Fairfax-Bolinas Rd about 1.5 miles and turn left at the Lake Lagunitas/Bon Tempe sign. *Parking fee.*

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 1. 5PM TO 7:30PM

Nature for Kids: Evening at Deer Island

We'll take a slow walk up to the ridge top where we can enjoy a picnic dinner while we look and listen for creatures of the night. We'll talk about owls, bats, coyotes, and many other animals that start their "day" just as the sun sets. We request that no animals (except service animals) attend. **GETTING THERE** From Hwy 101, take the Atherton Ave/San Marin Dr exit east on Atherton Ave, turn right at Olive Ave, and turn left at Deer Island Lane.

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 12. 4PM TO 8PM

Tarantulas!

This walk coincides with the annual mating season of the California Tarantula, but to see them, we'll have to travel to the East Bay (there are no tarantulas in Marin County). We'll start with a brief talk about the biology of these hairy beasts. Then we'll take a leisurely stroll to see if there are any amorous males wandering about in search of willing females, while keeping an eye out for the distinctive burrows in which these animals usually hide. After our walk, we'll return to the shaded picnic area for a potluck dinner. This walk is for ALL interested participants. We request that no animals (except service animals) attend. For details, directions, and to RSVP, contact **David Herlocker** at **(415) 893-9508** or dherlocker@co.marin.ca.us.



Photo: Shannon Burke

Sharp eyes discover a spider's egg sack.

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 9. 10AM TO 2PM

Nature for Kids at Point Reyes

The wide road that heads up the creek from Bear Valley is a great place to look at bugs and other animals. We'll have lunch at Divide Meadow, a perfect spot for kids to explore among the tall grasses. We request that no animals (except service animals) attend. Meet at the far end of the large parking area across from the Bear Valley Visitor Center. **GETTING THERE** From Olema go north on Hwy 1, take the first left at Bear Valley Rd, and follow the signs to the visitor center.

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 20. 10AM TO 1PM

Nature for Kids at Blackstone Canyon

This secluded valley below the rugged east end of Big Rock Ridge is a great place to look for animals that are attracted to the creek. We'll take a slow walk to the wet places high in the canyon to see who's hiding there. Meet at the end of Valleystone Dr in San Rafael. **GETTING THERE** From Las Gallinas Ave, turn east on Blackstone Dr, and turn left on Valleystone Dr.

RANGER PROGRAMS

Rangers host a variety of family-friendly events for all ages and abilities including BBQs, bike rides, campfires, fishing clinics and derbies, horseback rides, interpretive hikes, outdoor safety seminars, skateboard contests, stargazing, trail manner classes, wildlife lectures, and more! Depending on the event, wear appropriate clothes, and bring snacks, water, and sunblock.

CANCELLATIONS Rain cancels all outdoor events, high wind cancels aquatic events, and high fire danger cancels events on affected open space preserves.

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 3. 9AM TO 12PM

Rush Creek Riders

A ranger will lead a bike ride through the scenic woodlands that dot this Novato preserve. Included in this "tour de creek" is a talk about marshland ecology, the preserve's history, and riding recommendations for Marin County. Bring snacks, water, and a mountain bike. We request that no dogs or other animals (except service animals) attend. **GETTING THERE** From Hwy 101, take the Atherton Ave/San Marin Dr exit east on Atherton Ave and turn left at Binford Rd, the gate is on the right at the edge of the marsh.



Photo: Rob Ruiz

Paddleboarders lined up for the 2nd Annual SUP.

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 10. 8:30AM TO 11AM

3rd Annual McNears Stand-Up Paddleboard Race

Quickly becoming a classic in the Bay Area paddleboard scene, this is the crown jewel of our SUP race series. The course starts and finishes on McNears' quarter-mile long sandy beach and circles the islands off Pt San Pedro and China Camp State Beach (approximately 4 miles). Registration begins at 8:30am and the race starts at 9:30am. Winners will receive prize packages courtesy of Demo Sport. Spectators are welcome; paddleboards will be available for rent. Call **Adam Craig** at **(415) 446-4423** for more information. Meet at the snack bar (201 Cantera Way, San Rafael). *\$10 parking fee.*

SUNDAY SEPTEMBER 18. 10AM TO 12PM

Flora and Fauna of Whitehouse Pool

Nestled along the Lagunitas Creek, in the lower reaches of the Tomales Bay watershed, Whitehouse pool provides lush habitat. We'll explore the area to discover and learn about its native plants and animals. This walk is perfect for beginners; experienced birders and nature lovers are welcome. We request that no dogs or other animals (except service animals) attend. **GETTING THERE** From Pt Reyes Station, go 1 mile west on Sir Francis Drake Blvd, and turn right at the Whitehouse Pool parking lot.

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 24. 7:30PM TO 9:30PM

Outer Space from Open Space

After an easy half-mile hike up Mount Burdell, we'll settle in to watch the evening sky explode into a stargazing adventure. We'll pinpoint the major constellations and discuss the legends behind them while astronomer Larry Brodtkin gives participants a deep view of the heavens with his 8" Meade Telescope. Wear warm, layered clothes and bring binoculars or a telescope, a flashlight, a blanket, and star charts. Meet at the San Andreas Trailhead.

GETTING THERE From Hwy 101, take the Atherton Ave/San Marin Dr exit west on San Marin Dr about 2.3 miles and turn right at San Andreas Dr. Trailhead is near the end on the right.

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 1. 8:30AM TO 11AM

Hog Island Huff Stand-Up Paddleboard Race

A new addition, the Hog Island Huff offers an unparalleled experience. With a water start, this race will be fast and furious: Racers will cruise through channels and sand bars, around the starfish-studded rocky points of Hog and Duck Islands and back (approximately 5 miles). Registration begins at 8:30am and the race starts at 9:30 am. Winners will receive prize packages courtesy of Demo Sport. Spectators are welcome; and paddleboards will be available for rent. Meet at Miller Boat Launch (adjacent to Nick's Cove), about 3.5 miles north of Marshall on Hwy 1. Call **Adam Craig** at **(415) 446-4423** for more information. *\$5 parking fee.*

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 12. 5:30PM TO 8PM

Full Moon Hike at Roy's Redwoods

Before the weather turns frosty, rangers will lead a short loop hike at this remote preserve. We promise the redwoods will be spectacular under light of the full moon, and with a little luck, we may even see things that go bump in the night. Night hikes are popular—RSVP early to **(415) 507-2816**. Wear warm, layered clothes and bring a flashlight and water. We request that no dogs or other animals (except service animals) attend. **GETTING THERE** Follow Sir Francis Drake Blvd west past Fairfax, over White Hill, and turn right at Nicasio Valley Rd. Look for the MCOSD gate approximately a quarter mile up on the right.

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 29. 6PM TO 7:30PM

Graveyard Stroll

Is that a ghost or a ranger? Come find out as we get a jump on Halloween during this one-of-a kind event to uncover the interesting, spooky, and little-known cemetery next door. Wear warm, layered clothes, bring a flashlight, and a treat bag. Meet



Photo: Craig Solin

After hatching, salmon rear in quiet pools like this one in San Geronimo Creek.



Photo: Craig Solin

High tide, Bolinas Lagoon Preserve.

at the Marin County Parks Field Office, 18 Jeannette Prandi Way in San Rafael. **GETTING THERE** From Hwy 101, take the Smith Ranch Rd/Lucas Valley Rd exit west approximately 1.5 miles, turn right at Mt Lassen Dr, turn right at Jeannette Prandi Way, and follow to the end.

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 5. 11AM TO 1PM

Family Hike at Bolinas Lagoon

Join rangers for an autumn walk along Pine Gulch Creek to learn about birding. Wear warm clothes and bring water. We request that no dogs or other animals (except service animals) attend. Meet at the Bob Stewart Trailhead. **GETTING THERE** From Hwy 101 in Mill Valley, take the Shoreline Hwy 1/Stinson Beach exit and follow Hwy 1 north past Stinson Beach. At the edge of the lagoon, turn left at Olema-Bolinas Rd and follow approximately 1 mile. The access to the Bob Stewart Trailhead is on the left at the pullout. The drive time from Hwy 101 is approximately 50 minutes.

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 20. 10AM TO 12PM

Salmon Hike

Rangers will lead a trek along the San Geronimo Creek. If Mother Nature cooperates, we'll be fortunate to witness one of Marin's natural treasures—steelhead and coho salmon. Learn about their life cycles and the efforts to restore local populations. Wear warm, layered clothes and bring water and snacks. We request that no dogs or other animals (except service animals) attend. Meet at the Leo T. Cronin Fish Viewing Area (off Sir Francis Drake Blvd), approximately 1 mile west of Lagunitas.

SATURDAY NOVEMBER 26. 8AM TO 12PM

Fishing Derby

Thanksgiving weekend is the perfect time to enter the competition and teach your kids to fish! Sturgeon, Striped bass, Leopard sharks, Bat rays, skate, and halibut should be plentiful. Prizes will be awarded for the biggest fish caught and most fish caught.

Rangers will be on hand to demonstrate the basics of salt water fishing. A limited number of fishing poles and bait will be provided first-come, first-served courtesy of Western Sport Shop and the California Department of Fish and Game. A fishing license is required when fishing from the shore, but not from the pier.

Call **Dan Sauter** at **(415) 446-4424** for more information. Meet at the pier (McNears Beach Park, 201 Cantera Way, San Rafael). *\$5 parking fee.*

Photo: Joe Williams



Reeling in the big one at McNears Beach Park.

Discover



3501 CIVIC CENTER DRIVE, ROOM 260
SAN RAFAEL, CA 94903
MARINCOUNTYPARKS.ORG
415 499 6387

♻️ PRINTED ON RECYCLED PAPER ♻️ DESIGN BY CONSCIOUS CREATIVE

Masthead Photo: Stafford Lake Park, Craig Solin