

Guild Natural Sciences News

September 2007

REPORT FROM THE ROGUE RIVER

JEAN TORCOM

An intrepid group of senior adventurers, 10 women and 1 man, assembled in Ashland, Oregon on June 28, prepared to sally forth on a three-day raft trip sponsored by the Natural Science Guild. Our fearless, and highly competent, leader was Ellen Paisal. We gathered that evening at the home of Dianne and Jim Fristrom for wine, hors d'oeuvres, and a briefing by the leader of our trip—Noah, of Noah's Rafting. We learned about wet bags and dry bags and how to pack them and what NOT to take (“no hair dryers, ladies”).

Next morning, as we gathered up our gear at the “put-in” place north of Grants Pass, Noah cautioned us that “the most dangerous part of the trip is the 10 yards between the van and the rafts—watch out for the loose rocks on the beach!” While climbing into my gear, your faithful reporter, with Noah's warning about the rocks fresh in her ears, tripped over one of them, hitting her forehead and scraping a couple of other parts. The big egg that formed was treated promptly with ice and the lump receded faster than her embarrassment.

Kayaking was an option at several points on the trip and who should step right up to try it first but our one hearty male, Arturo. Although fit and adventurous he IS eighty years old. After my incident with the rock, our guides must have been thinking, “Oh good—one LOL goes bop on a rock and now this geezer is going to try the kayak! This is a scary group!”

But in fact Arturo was expert with the kayak and with the rafts packed to the gills we set out. Our guides, Andy, John, (and owner Noah) were highly skilled, good-natured, patient, and fun. Andy had a special penchant for sharing all kinds of information about the river and “facts” about the local wildlife. One thing we “learned” is that Canada geese carry a poison in their tear ducts which they can shoot an incredible distance! Thus he explained, he had to keep the raft away from these dangerous birds! His audience was skeptical to put it mildly. We who were riding in Andy's raft think he was keen on some “payback” and were heavily drenched on more than one occasion. But for real we saw Blue Herons, Ospreys, Bald Eagles, a Golden Eagle, lots of turtles, the occasional otter, a bear, and a mink! And, of course, numerous poison-spitting Canada geese!



Rogue River Photo: Ellen Paisal

Weather the second and third days was beautiful. At a peaceful stretch we were invited to get in and float feet

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REPORT FROM THE ROGUE

first down the river and enjoy the view. The guides weren't really expecting any takers but five of the group got right in. Wow! It was "way cool." The final day was also a good one for kayaking and there were five takers for that activity.

The food and accommodations were first rate. Imagine pie a la mode on the banks of the river in this roadless, motorless wilderness! The river lodges were beautiful and comfortable and the scenery gorgeous. Back in Ashland at our final meal together, the mood of the group (with an average age of 72.5) was distinctly self congratulatory.

We sum up our feelings about this experience with a nod to Shakespeare's Henry V:

*Guild members in Oakland now abed
Shall think themselves accurs'd they were not here;
And hold their timid tongues silent whiles any speaks
That fought the Rogue's rapids with us these hallowed days!*

SIGNING UP FOR GUILD TRIPS

Guild membership is required for all our trips and hikes. Check the front of this newsletter for June '08 or beyond to see if your membership is current

Short trips (one to four days). Please fill in the registration form on page 7 and mail it with a check for the amount indicated to the contact person for the trip of interest. If you want to sign up for more than one trip, simply copy the information required on a separate piece of paper. You will receive confirmations and further trip details by mail.

Extended trips (more than four days). Participants must be museum members as well as guild members. Call the trip coordinator for further information, brochures, and registration material.

THIRD THURSDAY LECTURES

The Guild sponsors a guest lecture in Natural Sciences on the third Thursday of the month, from 12:30–1:30 p.m. in the Lecture Hall. The talks are free and open to the public.

Thursday, October 18, 2007

Climate Change and Biodiversity Conservation in Northern California

Dr. Mark Schwartz, Conservation Biologist, University of California, Davis will discuss what California can and should be doing to protect native species, especially plants and insects. He will address the issue of "assisted migration," but will also talk about opportunities for the urban populace to become better involved in conservation of local diversity.

Thursday, November 15, 2007

Modern Discovery of Cordell Bank

Cordell Bank National Marine Sanctuary protects a very productive offshore area in the region of Cordell Bank, a submerged rocky feature on the edge of the continental shelf. The logistics of conducting research within the Sanctuary can often be challenging, given the distance from shore, rough ocean conditions, and deep depths. New tools and technology are aiding researchers in their efforts to collect data to better understand, protect, and manage this special and unique place. Dr. Lisa Etherington, Research Coordinator, Cordell Bank National Marine Sanctuary, will highlight some of the recent findings on various aspects of the marine environment within the Sanctuary, including oceanography, benthic habitats, seabirds, marine mammals and fishes, as well as some of the technology that is helping researchers in the modern discovery of Cordell Bank.

MUSEUM HAPPENINGS

Both the Art and the History Galleries will close on January 1, 2008 for a major renovation, estimated to take approximately 18 months. A temporary, combined exhibit, *The Art and History of Early California*, will be installed in the Natural Sciences Special Gallery (at the very back of the NS Gallery). This exhibit will allow Art and History Docents to continue to provide some school tours during the extended closure of their galleries. The new exhibit should be in place by the end of November. Check it out—you might find it gives you a different insight into both Art and History.

Also, if you have favorite pieces in either Art or History, you might want to schedule time to visit them before they disappear!

The Oakland Museum of California has received a \$500,000 grant from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration that will help with the renovation of the Natural Sciences Gallery. The money will be used for a new Cordell Banks exhibit. To find out what the new exhibit might include, you'll want to attend the November 15 Third Thursday lecture!

RECEIVE YOUR NEWSLETTER AS AN EMAIL ATTACHMENT

- You'll conserve paper!
- You'll get your newsletter earlier than by snail mail!
- You'll never lose paper copy again!
-

Send an email request to Arlyn Christopherson (arlync@pacbell.net) with "Email NSG Newsletter" in the Subject line.

SPACE STILL AVAILABLE!

NORDIC WALKING

Friday, September 14, 2007, 1 p.m. to 4 p.m.

Nordic Walking is walking with oomph! Specially-designed poles allow you to involve 90% of all your muscles in one, simple-to-learn, fitness activity. You develop greater overall strength, improve cardiovascular function, increase caloric use by up to 40% over regular walking, and it's FUN! Nordic Walking has become a popular fitness activity in many European countries. While the results of Nordic Walking are impressive, your perceived exertion is no greater than a brisk walk.

Imagine being able to get a full-body workout, connect with your buddies, and enjoy the outdoors—all at the same time. This seminar is designed for anyone who likes to walk. We'll discuss the benefits of walking and show how you can use your muscles to help preserve your joints and improve posture, endurance, and pace. We'll also learn some warm up movements and some stretches targeted to your needs.

Instructor **Jayah Faye Paley** (www.AdventureBuddies.NET) is the creator of the award-winning DVD, *POLES for Hiking, Trekking & Walking ~ Techniques & Tips for ALL Ages and Abilities*. Jayah also teaches our very popular trekking-pole seminars.

Specifics: Cost is \$25. Top quality poles provided for use. Location: Lake Merritt. **Three spaces available.** To reserve a space, send a check made payable to NSG/OMCF and a completed registration form to Nancy Stryble, 1736 Gouldin Road, Oakland, CA 94611. For questions, contact Nancy at (510) 339-1139 or stryble@earthlink.net.

CURRENT GUILD TRIPS

MIDDLE HARBOR SHORELINE PARK BIRDING RAMBLE

Wednesday, September 19, 2007, 10 a.m.

Join us on a morning exploration of Oakland's new park and only beach. An area that once served as the Oakland Naval Supply Depot has been largely restored to shallow tidelands and salt marsh habitat. Testament to the notion "if you build it they will come" numerous species of shore birds and waterfowl now congregate here, right in the heart of an active container port. Arlyn Christopherson will be our birding guide on a ramble of 2-3 miles on a level paved surface. In addition to birds, enjoy spectacular views of the Bay Bridge and the bustling activity of the Port of Oakland. Wheelchair accessible.

Bring water, snacks, and lunch if you want to "hang out" at this charmingly designed haven.

Specifics: Cost \$10. **Limited to 12 people.** Send a check payable to NSG/OMCF and a completed reservation form to Dianne Fristrom, 1555 Lakeside Dr., #171, Oakland CA 94612. Please provide an email address if you have one (or a SASE if you don't) so we can provide meeting details. Non-drivers will be met at Lake Merritt BART station. Contact Dianne Fristrom (510) 625-9867 if you have questions.

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

Interested in arranging a trip or lecture series for the NS Guild? Want to do a small, discrete task that would help the Guild put on parties or raise money?

Please come join us—the Executive Committee always welcomes new members and new ideas.

Contact Gay Auerbach at (510) 654-2725 or gayauerbach@hotmail.com

DJERASSI RANCH HIKING AND ART RAMBLE

Thursday, October 4, 2007, 10 a.m.

What a great combination! On October 4, we will have the opportunity to explore the Djerassi Ranch in the hills above Woodside. Our docent-led "Walk in the Wild" sculpture tour will cover two hilly miles of unpaved trails. During the tour we will see approximately 25 installations of original art nestled in the hills of the ranch.

Dr. Carl Djerassi (developer of the birth control pill) dedicated his ranch to the memory of his deceased artist daughter, Pamela. Artists from all disciplines live on the ranch for a month at a time and create their works in splendid semi-solitude. You can investigate the Ranch at www.djerassi.org.

The topography is very steep, so wear sturdy shoes, bring hiking poles, a snack, and lots of water.

We will meet at Purisima Park Trailhead (4.5 miles south of Highway 92), carpool to the ranch, and return to Purisima for our bag lunch.

Specifics: Cost is \$20. **Limited to 20 people.** To reserve a space, send a check made payable to NSG/OMCF and a completed registration form to Nancy Stryble, 1736 Gouldin Road, Oakland, CA 94611. For questions, contact Nancy at (510) 339-1139 or stryble@earthlink.net

CURRENT GUILD TRIPS

KAYAK DRAKE'S ESTERO

Saturday, October 20, 2007, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.

This paddle takes us to the heart of Point Reyes and a scenic and wild coastal lagoon. October is a fantastic month to kayak this quiet shoreline and see migrating shorebirds, cruising leopard sharks, white pelicans, and one of the largest haul-outs of harbor seals on the coast. We will arrive at high tide and let the dropping water pull us to the ocean. We will stop for lunch and walk the beautiful white sand of Drake's Beach. Then with the afternoon wind and rising tide at our backs we will paddle to our starting point at Drake's Bay Oyster Farm. Join us for a great day out in the wilds of the California coast!

Participants should be able to swim and have the strength to paddle. Instruction will be given before departure and we will be using stable, double sea kayaks equipped with a rudder and comfortable seat backs.

Biologist Greg Meyer has been kayaking and leading natural history tours since 1985. He has led kayak trips in Baja, British Columbia, Costa Rica, Alaska, Hawaii, and Patagonia. His extensive experience in the outdoors will help you learn the basics of kayaking, while you experience the beauty of Drake's Estero.

Specifics: Cost: \$100. Includes all equipment. **Limited to 16 people.** To reserve a space, send a check made payable to NSG/OMCF and a completed registration form to Nancy Stryble, 1736 Gouldin Road, Oakland, CA 94611. For questions, contact Nancy at (510) 339-1139 or stryble@earthlink.net

CRANES AND COSUMNES

Thursday and Friday, November 8–9, 2007

The sight of sandhill cranes dancing and tossing sticks with exquisite grace should be on any nature lover's list of things to do in California. We will visit the Lodi area for a two-day, one-night, guided visit to the site where fabulous numbers of sandhill cranes congregate in the autumn to feed, loaf, and fly. We will also take a guided tour at the Cosumnes River Preserve to learn about the ecology of one of the last truly riparian habitats in the state.

On Thursday, November 8, an hour and a half before sunset, we'll meet at the Isenberg Crane Reserve (formerly the Woodbridge Ecological Reserve). Led by a trained docent, we will watch the cranes until sunset. There will be a spotting scope set up, but bring your binoculars, too.

We will spend Thursday night at the elegant Wine & Roses Hotel in Lodi. After breakfast the next morning, we will meet at the Cosumnes River Preserve for a 3-hour interpretive walk by Black Diamond Regional Park ranger extraordinaire Mike Moran. Mike is familiar with the entire ecosystem of the Cosumnes River. We will see wetlands, riparian forests, grasslands, and views of the tidal sloughs that would have been typical in the Delta 100 years ago.

Specifics: Cost is \$110 per person (double occupancy) or \$175 (single room). Includes two guided tours, accommodations, and continental breakfast. **Limited to 30 people.** Neither transportation to Lodi nor Thursday dinner is included. We will offer information about restaurants and make dinner reservations for those who request it in advance. To reserve a space, send a completed registration form and check made out to NSG/OMCF to Gay Auerbach, 110 El Camino Real, Berkeley, CA 94705. For more information, contact Gay at (510) 654-2725 or gayauerbach@hotmail.com.

CURRENT GUILD TRIPS

CHABOT SPACE AND SCIENCE CENTER

Friday, November 30, 3 p.m. to 10 p.m.

When was the last time you visited the Chabot Space and Science Center? Have you seen "Destination Universe" with its many interactive exhibits? Have you sat in the life-sized model of the Mercury capsule, visited the Challenger Learning Center or viewed one of the new productions in the Tien Megadome Theater? Take advantage of this in-depth tour, specially organized and priced for the Natural Sciences Guild.

We'll start with a private, docent-led overview of the exhibits including the new exhibit, *Beyond Blast-off: Surviving in Space*. This will be followed by a show (TBA) on the giant screen of the Tien Megadome Theater and a chance to browse on our own. We'll have a light meal in the Lunar Café and a chance to relax before the evening activities, which include an astronomer-led planetarium show and (weather permitting) a chance to view the night sky through one of the observatory's magnificent telescopes.

Specifics: Cost \$35; includes entry fee, docent tour, Tien Megadome Theater show, planetarium show and dinner. We'll car pool to the observatory (parking is free in the observatory lot). Non-drivers can be picked up from and returned to BART. Send a registration form and check for \$35 to Dianne Fristrom, 1555 Lakeside Dr., #171, Oakland CA 94612. Please include email address if you have one or a SASE to receive further details. Contact Dianne Fristrom at (510) 625-9867.

YELLOWSTONE NATIONAL PARK

ON THE NORTHERN RANGE

May 6–10, 2008

We will be in the field with renowned tracker and author James Halfpenny, PhD learning amazing things about the charismatic megafauna of Yellowstone.

Bison, elk, pronghorn antelope, eagles, coyotes, mountain lion, otters. Even if you have been there before, you will see Yellowstone in amazing detail with Dr. Halfpenny. His published works on bears and wolves of Yellowstone are great reading and very instructive.

We will be joined by Jim Garry, MS who will add even more to our Yellowstone experience. Jim is a field biologist as well as story teller ("The First Liar Doesn't Have A Chance"). This is going to be a very special trip. Save the date!

Contact Ellen Paisal at (510) 522-8381 or elaronpaisal@hotmail.com

WILDLIFE AND GEOLOGY OF GLACIER NATIONAL PARK

July 12–18, 2008

Have you ever seen a grizzly in the wild, or a blue-green body of water at the end of a long glacial carved valley? USGS scientists estimate that there are still 27 glaciers remaining in the park out of 190 a century ago.

Hurry, we may be too late to see the remaining ones. Costs to follow. Stay tuned and mark your calendars.

Contact Marilyn Rhodes at (510) 531-0348 or RhodesRDH@aol.com

NATURAL SCIENCES GUILD MEMBERSHIP FORM
JULY 1, 2007 TO JUNE 30, 2008

Name(s) _____

(If address on other side is correct, please check here _____ or enter correction below.)

Address: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: _____

E-mail (please print clearly) _____

Your e-mail address will be used to remind you of upcoming guild or museum events and will not be shared.

Check if you would like to volunteer in the operation of the guild or its programs. _____

Renew for 1 year at \$20, 2 years at \$40
OR save time and money and renew for 3 years at \$50

Make checks payable to **Natural Sciences Guild/OMCF** and mail to Betty Kennedy, 5665 Colton Blvd., Oakland, CA 94611. If you have any questions please call Betty at (510) 339-8289.

Guild membership is required for all our trips, hikes and workshops. If your membership is current, June '08 (*or later*) will appear after your name on the front of this newsletter.



REGISTRATION FOR TRIPS AND WORKSHOPS

EVENT NAME: _____ **EVENT DATE:** _____

Name _____

Address _____

_____ ZIP _____

Telephone (important) _____ E-mail (if available) _____

Please reserve _____ places @ \$ _____ If you are not a guild member please add separate check for \$20

If applicable:

Please reserve a single room _____

I will share a room with _____ Please select a roommate for me _____

If carpooling: I am happy to drive _____ I can drive if necessary _____ I cannot drive _____

Enclose check(s) for \$ _____ payable to the **Natural Sciences Guild/OMCF** and mail to the contact person (see trip/class description for address). **Please include a stamped self-addressed envelope.**



NATURAL SCIENCES GUILD
Oakland Museum of California
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Oakland, CA 94607-1892

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TRIPS

Nordic Walking	Jayah Paley/Nancy Stryble	September 14, 2007
Birding Ramble: Middle Harbor	Dianne Fristrom	September 19, 2007
Djerassi Gardens	Ellen Paisal/Nancy Stryble	October 4, 2007
Kayaking Drake's Estero	Greg Meyer/Nancy Stryble	October 20, 2007
Cranes and Cosumnes	Gay Auerbach	November 8-9, 2007
Chabot Observatory	Dianne Fristrom	November 30, 2007
Yellowstone National Park	Ellen Paisal	May 6-10, 2008
Glacier National Park	Marilyn Rhodes	July 12-18, 2008

THIRD THURSDAY LECTURES

Climate Change and Biodiversity in Northern California	Dr. Mark Schwartz	October 18, 2007
Modern Discovery of Cordell Bank	Dr. Lisa Etherington	November 15, 2007

MUSEUM HAPPENINGS

The Edge: where it all comes together (Art Gallery)	Through October 7, 2007
Art and History Galleries close for remodeling	January 1, 2008

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