



THE CONTRA COSTA HILLS CLUB
PO Box 2056, El Cerrito, CA 94530
Website: www.contracostahills.org

FIRST CLASS MAIL

Founded February 22nd, 1920
103 YEARS OF
CONSERVATION—COMPANIONSHIP—HIKING



JUNE 2023



KNAPSACK

Co-Editors: Silvia Akinaga, Rosemary Johnson
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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

By now most of you who have a vegetable garden have been busy purchasing your tomatoes, squash, peppers, eggplants, etc. while also getting your soil amendments, maybe new gloves and other related garden tools. I hope you have a plentiful yield.

As we move into June, remember that the Fremont Annual Picnic occurs on the 15th. Frank, Jerry, and I along with Sylvia Kwan and Frank's son-in-law Steve all hope to see you there. (Don't forget to RSVP with your choice of entrée.)

I am certain that you noticed that there are many hike dates to be filled this quarter. Please strongly consider leading/co-leading a hike through the summer months. For those of you who will be traveling this summer, I want to wish you a safe and joyous voyage.

Stay well and hope to see you on the trails...

Stew Perlman



A HEARTY WELCOME TO OUR NEWEST MEMBER



Terra Muzick of Oakland

SAVE THIS DATE

September 18-22, 2023: CCHC Outing to Columbia River Gorge & Silver Falls State Park
 Sign-ups May 26-June 9, 2023, see flyer in May Knapsack or on the CCHC website www.contracostahills.org under Hike Schedules, Outings

Celebrate Summer Solstice June 21 – the longest day of the year

"...This is the solstice, the still point of the sun, its cusp and midnight, the year's threshold and un-locking, where the past lets go of and becomes the future; the place of caught breath, the door of a vanished house left ajar..." — Margaret Atwood

IT'S ALL ABOUT THE HIKES!!!



THANK YOU MEMBERS! (but we still need Sunday Leaders)

About a week ago we made a plea for hikes over the summer season. And you have answered! Thursday hike dates for July, August, and September are full! Thank you so much for your overwhelming support!

Sundays are filling up, but there are still a lot of Sundays left. As of May 27, these Sundays are open: August 20 and 27, and September 3.

Hikes are the lifeblood of the club. If you like to hike, please volunteer to lead a hike to your favorite spot. If you don't like our hikes, sign up to lead the kind of hike you would like! I know that it can get kind of toasty in Brentwood in August, but there are lots of great places to go closer to the coast or around the bay. (Or plan a tour of Brentwood ice cream shops!) Short or long, easy or hard, city or wild, you are welcome to submit a hike. So send Jim Baranowski (brnw_th@yahoo.com) or Marilyn Vihmann (marilyn.vihman@york.ac.uk) your hike. If you have questions, we are here to help. Your hike will be a gift to all of us in the club!

Thank you
Jim and Marilyn, Hike Coordinators

"Summer is the annual permission slip to be lazy. To do nothing and have it count for something. To lie in the grass and count the stars. To sit on a branch and study the clouds." — Regina Brett



WHAT'S UP WITH JESSIE SANTOS....

Every long-term hiker will remember Jessie Santos who celebrated her 100th birthday on April 20th. I visited her the week before and found her planning the big event. Alert as ever, she discussed among other things, the S.F.



Giants, her recently deceased desert turtle that left behind an egg, the rentals she oversees across street, and her love of junk food. As I left, her friend Ernestine arrived with a shopping bag of suspicious food for lunch. Jessie was a CCHC member from 1981 through 2019.

Jo Anne Schultz

HAPPY BELATED BIRTHDAY JESSIE!!! from CCHC

"A perfect summer day is when the sun is shining, the breeze is blowing, the birds are singing, and the lawn mower is broken." — James Dent

FROM THE CONSERVATION COMMITTEE:

A big **THANK YOU** to all the wonderful members who gave a donation for conservation with their membership. It is special to give to conservation through our hiking club as it allows the Conservation Committee to give to organizations who are saving land and building trails for us to walk on. We give to large organizations like East Bay Parks, Save the Redwoods, etc., but we also give to smaller organizations like Sausal Creek, Citizens for East Shore Parks, etc.

You can give an additional donation to conservation any time during the year. More donations are always welcome – small or large. Several small donations add up to a large donation. The more we have, the more we can give away!

Thanks again! See you on one of those trails,
Beryl Vonderheid
for the Conservation Committee



Bon Tempe Lake—Laurie Lau

Thursday, April 20, 2023

**Mt. Tam: Bon Tempe and Lagunitas Lakes
Leaders: Carol Savio & Sets Amann**

Fourteen nature lovers gathered at Lakes Lagunitas and Bon Tempe to go on a scenic hike around them. Because of the heavy rainfall this year there were a couple of little water falls to see. There were plenty of wildflowers to get excited about as Laurie's many photos show us. Among the wildflowers that we saw were Irises, Hounds Tongue, Lupines, Sun Cups and many more. Unfortunately, we didn't see much wildlife since I believe that large groups frighten them away. There were a few ducks that made appearances at the lakes. Also, after lunch, at Lake Bon Tempe some turtles were spotted sunbathing on a rock.



Irises and other wildflowers, overflow from Lagunitas Lk into Bon Tempe Lk, Dwelling model built by Vilda - Laurie Lau

It was right after sighting the turtles we came across a small group of adults and children. They told us that they were part of an organization called Vilda. An organization that originated from Finland and started in Fairfax, CA in 2006. Their purpose is teaching children and adults about uniting with nature and to connect with other families. The project that they were working on that afternoon was making waterproof model huts so they could be replicated into livable shelters. Thank you, Carol and Sets, for another wonderful hike with the group.

Julia Cordell



Sunday, April 23, 2023

**San Bruno Mountain
Leaders: Jo Anne Schultz, Jan Proudfoot & Dorothy Bratt**

We met at Balboa Park BART (where it was cold, windy and bathrooms were closed) but had our meet and greet at San Bruno Mountain Crocker Gate Trailhead. After a brief history of this area by Jo Anne (and Dorothy discovering she had left her cookies at BART), 14 of us began the hike and enjoyed the various wildflowers along the way. Jo Anne led the way along single path trails (Eucalyptus, Ridge & Summit Loop) up to the ridge top as there were many options to get lost! San Bruno Mountain is located in the area formerly occupied by the Costanoan Indians. They practiced a hunting, fishing and gathering economy. John Crocker acquired the property in the 1870's. It passed to Crocker Land Company upon his death. In recent times the surrounding area has been developed for light industry and mineral resources recovery. A quarry, on the north base of the main ridge, was used for gravel extraction. We climbed towards the radio towers along the many switchback trails. Sadly, the views were obstructed by the fog but there was a beauty to the surroundings shrouded by fog. We had lunch at the top of the ridge and then began our descent. Many trails



had walls of Hogweed plants on both sides. After returning to the trailhead, we made our way to Daly City BART and thanked JoAnne, Jan and Dorothy for a wonderful hike (just over 9.6 miles and 1300 ft elevation gain).



Flowers, weeds, hikers - Teresa Schwanauer

Terese Schwanauer

Thursday, April 27, 2023
Dry Creek Pioneer/Garin Regional Parks
Leaders: Laurie Lau & Cary Kong

Garin and Dry Creek Pioneer Regional Parks are adjoining parks, located in the hills east of Union City and Hayward, which were gifts from descendants of pioneer ranching families. The Meyers family donated Dry Creek Pioneer Park in 1978. Twelve members joined our leaders at Dry Creek to begin a challenging, beautiful hike. The leaders began an hour early, as a very warm day was coming. We started towards High Ridge Loop Trail,



climbing through a cool groove of trees along a creek which was definitely not dry. We

came out amidst green hills, hiking a fire road to avoid the muddy beginning of High Ridge Loop Trail. For about two miles, climbing slowly, we enjoyed the green hills, the wildflowers and a spectacular view of the East Bay cities below and the southern San Francisco Bay. The day became warmer as expected. It had been a long time since hiking without layers

was possible. High Ridge Loop took us to Garin Regional Park where we had lunch near the Red Barn Visitors Center. After lunch, we intended to loop around Jordan Pond. As we crossed the south end of the pond, we found a heavy outflow of water. We crossed with great care, and then picked up Ridge View Trail, rather than continue



Green hills, Visitor center & wisteria arbor, Jordan Pond—Sylvia Kwan; Hikers with city view - Laurie Lau



around the pond. On this trail after climbing to more lovely views, we returned to Dry Creek Trailhead. The total climb for the day was ~1000 ft. in 6 mi. We thank our leaders for being aware of the heat in time to change the start time. We also thank them for the delicious cookies. We all so enjoyed the chance to hike to these beautiful green hills, covered in wildflowers.

Roberta O'Grady

Roberta O'Grady



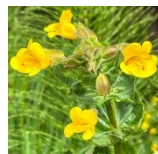
Sunday, April 30, 2023
Alamere Falls, Pt. Reyes National Park
Leaders: Jan Lecklikner & Diane Cannon

Seventeen brave hikers started early for a 14+ mile (over 1800 ft elevation gain) hike to Alamere Falls. The trail started in a Eucalyptus Grove. When we emerged from the grove, we were on a rolling exposed dirt path along the shoreline with gorgeous coastal views. The morning fog was disappearing as the sun began to filter its way onto the trails. After a climb on a dirt path, we reached a cool shaded forest where the trail narrows. This area is home to many swampy ponds and lakes. The most popular lake is Bass Lake, which in the summer is a popular swimming hole destination. A quick lunch at Wildcat Camp, then a lovely walk along the beach to the falls. Alamere Falls, at 40 feet, are the largest of the Bay Area falls. Water from Alamere Creek drops directly onto Wildcat



Beach and then into the Pacific. It is one of only two known tide falls in California. The other is McWay Falls in Big Sur. Alamere Falls is one of 34 waterfalls in the world that flows into the ocean, and only 4 of those are in the US. At high tide, the waterfall flows directly into the ocean. At low tide, a small stream feeds into the waves. Thanks, Jan and Diane, for leading this beautiful (but challenging hike).

Patti Bacon



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Coastal view, Bass Lake - Sylvia Kwan; Seep-spring Monkeyflower, Harlequin Flower, Group at falls - Teresa Schwanauer; Marilyn admiring enormous tree, Woolly Sunflower, Sea-side Daisy - Laurie Lau

Thursday May 4th, 2023
Ferry Building to Heron's Head Park, SF
Leaders: Fran Leighty & David Jadeson

Skies gray all day, but not a drop of rain. Great day for a hike along the bay. Fran led the group onto the N Trolley.



At Oracle Ballpark a statue of Willie Mays. Sailboats gently rocked in the marinas. Mission Rock Resort (restaurant), was paneled outside with numbered wooden

bench slats from the old Cal stadium. The SOMA/Mission Bay districts continue developing -- businesses, warehouses, large new apartment complexes, healthcare, grocery stores, and coffee shops. Kathleen Clarkson, an SF native, pointed out the flag-ship store of Restoration Hardware, and the historic Dog Patch neighborhood.



Heron's Head Park was named for its appearance on a

map. Lunch included Fran's fabulous Fig Newtons. The park's Eco-center has a "living roof" and tanks to catch rainwater. A docent came out to give a talk about the Eco-center. Inside the building were more tanks that filter used water from the building into reusable "recreational



water" which is reused by the center, but is not potable. Some hikers

known as the "Fremont Three" were on the hike and were in high comedic form. Jokes flowed throughout the day. Later, everyone headed downtown on the newly completed MUNI T-line. Some got off to catch BART. Others continued to the final stop in Chinatown for an early dinner and stroll through Stockton and Grant Streets to see the area restaurants and businesses coming alive.

Linda Malm

Oracle Park, Home of SF Giants, Small yachts & big cargo ships share the Bay, Docent Miguel holds map of Heron's Head Park, CCHC Hikers - Sylvia Kwan



Sunday, May 7, 2023
Pleasanton Ridge Regional Park, Sunol
Leaders: Diane Cannon & Laurie Lau

If it's a hot day it would be unbearable, and if it's cold a frozen wind will knock you down, on this the Sunol Ridge Trail. But another lucky day for us, perfect hike

weather. We hiked the area that had belonged to Tyler Ranch property, bought by the park district in 2009. We were offered a maiden voyage to hike on newly developed Sunol Ridge Trail. Our hike leader pre-warned us at our departure how difficult & knee-killing this hike could be. All the way uphill, 2191' gain, to the lunch spot, Sunol Peak, completely open to a big sky. Laurie took a woodland detour with some hikers, a more challenging sharp uphill to the peak. A pleasant breeze became a cold blow at ~2000' up. Lunch



on the leeward, open view one side and fairy-land with wildflowers on the other. California poppy, red maids, blue eye grass, bellardia

and Johnny jump-up are more or less neck-less, pretending to be low profile close to the ground, doing hide and seek among the waiving silver grasses. Surrounded by Mission Peak, Ohlone Wilderness, Del Valle, Brushy



Peak, Morgan Territory and the long Pleasanton Ridge Trail stretched out below, we were mere specks in the vast park-land. Clouds were swept along, reflecting traces of



their shadows on the far away hills with many shades of green soon to become many shades of brown. Moment of bliss. The trail was well groomed, in and out ~ 8 miles with 2191' elevation gains. We all enjoyed this hike!!

Thank you, Laurie & Diane, for this special experience, and thank you, Laurie, for treats.

Sophia Garcia

Niles Canyon view—Harry Fong; Up the trail, Chinese Houses, Red Maids, Golden Violet or Johnny jump-up - Sophia G.

Thursday, May 11, 2023
Mount Diablo, Mitchell Canyon, Globe Lily
Leaders: Mary Ulrich & Dorothy Bradt

What a wonderful day for this lovely 4 mile, 500' elevation gain/loss hike! The description said, "Globe Lily," and they were delivered in abundance, along with a multitude of other wildflowers. The super bloom this year is the best ever! As we walked up the mostly shady canyon, with the creek and birds sending musical notes our way, we were treated to hillsides of many varieties. Here is a sampling: Globe Lily, Mariposa Lily, Clarkia, Ithuriel's Spear, Red and Blue Larkspur, Paintbrush, Broomrape, Yerba Santa, Monkeyflower, Chinese Houses, Morning Glory, Black Sage, Blow-Wives, Ornamental Onion, California Poppy.



The colors mixed together provided us with quite a beautiful palate. Even the poison oak looked lovely! (Did I really say that?) And then there were the many butterflies flitting here and there searching for nectar, or just cavorting with one another, almost running into our group of 23 passing by. We saw Checkerspots, Pale Swallow-tails, California Sisters, West Coast Ladies and more. As we were returning to the Visitor's Center, a tiny snake slithered across our path. Yikes! Just as our tummies were starting to grumble, we arrived back at the trailhead about noon. Lunch was enjoyed under a canopy of spreading oaks. Ah, sigh! Thanks, Mary and Dorothy, for a morning of splendor.



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Diane Cannon

Mt. Diablo Globe Lily, Mariposa Lily, Indian Paintbrush, Chinese Houses, Golden Poppies, Blue-eyed Grass, Narrow-leaf Mule's Ears - Mary Ulrich



Sunday, May 14, 2023
Mother's Day Hike, Through 3 Regional Parks
Leaders: Sophia Garcia & Amy Tiekou

Hi! My name is Kora. I'm 7 1/2 and I'm happy to do this write-up. There were 17 people on this hike and they all welcomed me so much, even though I'm just a kid and they're much older. We walked 7 miles up and down the trails and did 1,000 feet elevation gain. I've never done that before! I loved the views and all the flowers. My favorite flower was the forget-me-nots. My favorite view was of Mt. Diablo. The plant I didn't like was poison oak. It can give you itches, so I used Tecnu when I got home. So far, no itches! We walked through three parks: Sibley, Huckleberry, and Redwood. I saw a curly banana slug right in the path, but I didn't step on it. I also saw two lizards and 3 butterflies. At lunchtime, we stopped at a place called Girls Camp. It was funny that we had men there, because I thought it was only for girls. I collected a pinecone and a turkey-tail fungus. At the end of the hike, I was a little tired, but I made it! Thank you, Sophia, Amy, and CCHC, for this hike. I had a lot of fun! Maybe I'll come again!



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Kora Cannon

Diane, Ben & Kora Cannon, Oakland Star Tulip—Laurie Lau Sophia G. & Amy T.—Patti Bacon; Huckleberry in bloom—Sylvia Kwan Banana Slug, Douglas Iris, Western Red Columbine, hikers—Teresa S.



**Pinnacles National Park
Overnight Outing April 2-5, 2023
Leaders: Dorothy Bradt, Lynne Vogensen, Diane Cannon & Rosemary Johnson**

This was a short trip to a close by location. Just two hours away, Pinnacles seems further due to the extreme difference in the geology of the area. Twenty hikers joined the four leaders on this outing. All but one hiked together on Sunday, but the group divided into A Team, 14 vigorous hikers, and B Team, 10 relaxed hikers, at Pinnacles. Both groups needed to make changes to the Pinnacles itineraries due to the high water in creeks and caves. Scouting out the window, just do what we can, and all agreed it turned out fine.

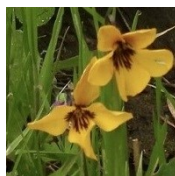


Sunday, April 2nd

The 3.3-mile warm up hike was just east of Gilroy at Coyote Lake-Harvey Bear Ranch Santa Clara County Park. A climb of ~300 feet on the Coyote Ridge Trail brought us to where we had views to the west of the sprawling town of Gilroy and to the east of the lake and the green hills beyond. Quite a contrast! We returned on single-track Valley Oak Trail named for the shady trees alongside. Rosemary Johnson



Padre's shooting stars, Padre's shooting stars, Yellow violets, Checkerbloom - Noël Siver; View of Gilroy, View of Coyote Lake, only pic of entire group - Sylvia Kwan



Monday, April 3rd

Ten members of Monday's B (bridge trolls?) Team started at the Pinnacle's Visitor Center and took the Bench Trail and the Sycamore Trail to Bear Gulch - crossing seven bridges along the rushing stream. Wildflowers were just starting to pop: Larkspur, Bush poppy, Elegant Clarkia, California Buckwheat, and more. The trail was a bit soggy in places, but the weather was perfect. Karen Arntzen

Bridge over Chalone Creek to Sycamore Trail, Mule deer, Acom Woodpecker on stump with numerous holes at Bear Gulch - Noël Siver



Monday-Tuesday, April 3-4, 2023

These are memories of the Peaks Group.

Day 1: We took Blue Oak Trail up 1,353' to its junction with Condor Gulch Trail. Wildflowers were everywhere covering the hillsides: shooting stars, baby blue eyes, Indian warriors, fiddlenecks, Death camas, poppies, saxifrages, popcorn flowers, blow witches, goldfields, blue dicks, ceanothus. Wow! We stopped for lunch under blue skies sporting fluffy white clouds and enjoyed views of large rock formations close-by and mountain range after mountain range going off into the distance. Cold gusts of wind soon drove us down Condor Gulch Trail, where Lynne and Robin spotted a condor. Yay! Arriving at Bear Gulch parking lot after 5.1 miles, we relaxed in the shuttle that took us back to our cars.



Baby Blue-eyes, California poppies and High Peaks, Golden Chia, Star Lily - Robin Dean; Lynne in lead - Sylvia Kwan





Group at tunnel, View into the distance, Hiker about to enter the tunnel - Patti Bacon

Day 2: The route today was High Peaks Trail, a bit more strenuous at 6.2 miles and 1,698' gain/loss. We began at yesterday's end, at the trees with, at least, 1,000 woodpecker holes each, and went up Condor Trail under slightly warmer conditions and minimal wind. The view was right at the highest pinnacle peaks almost constantly. At the top, we threaded our way through beautiful rock formations, catching views far below of countless other rock formations. Then it was switch-backs down the mountain to a lovely tunnel carved right through the rocks. We joined Juniper Trail that zig-zagged back up the mountain to our lunch spot. Here we basked in the sun near a strategically located bench and bathroom. Finally, completing the High Peaks Trail Loop, we wended our way down the mountainside, past the coolness of Bear Gulch Cave Trail to our cars. Diane Cannon

Tuesday, April 4, B Team

The morning started where we ended the day before, as well. We followed Bear Gulch Trail to Moses Spring Trail. We started through the cave but decided there was a little too much water so we went the alternate route. It turned out to be quite a challenge over large boulders! We did go through part of a cave walking slowly with hikers helping other hikers to discern the trail in dim conditions. Then we climbed a staircase carved out of rock to the reservoir at the top where we had a nice break before going up the Rim Trail to view wildflowers and down the High Peaks Trail back to Bear Gulch where we had our lunch. It was only ~2 mi., 400' elev., but seemed much more due to the conditions.

After lunch, we drove to High Peaks parking lot to start a level hike just to get a little more mileage in. We just followed the Bench Trail along the stream and back again for about an hour. Another couple miles that were much easier than the first two.

Rosemary Johnson



Backed out of this cave, Tough alternate route, Karen taking pix of hikers on staircase & waterfall, B Team had a well-earned rest at reservoir, Henderson's Shooting Stars, Goldfields, Bear Gulch Reservoir, Under an overhang - Noël Siver



NOTE: The Board and Conservation Committee are currently not physically meeting due to COVID-19 shelter in place orders. CCHC members should contact Stew Perlman with any concerns so they can be discussed at the meetings. Conservation issues should be addressed to Beryl Vonderheid.

Please submit your hike write-ups of up to 300 words as soon as possible after each hike to Rosemary Johnson at compasros@comcast.net. All other submissions should reach Silvia Akinaga at sakinec@aol.com by the middle of the month to appear in the following month's issue.

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