



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

FIRST CLASS MAIL

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



MARCH 2021



KNAPSACK

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

It's been nearly a year since we were supposed to meet for the Club's Annual Meeting; however, the Board decided to cancel it as we became increasingly aware that meeting indoors with 60 or more people could be risky to our health. This past year has familiarized us with a new four letter word: Zoom. And so we will have a virtual Annual Meeting using the Zoom platform. You may attend in your bathrobe and pajamas if you are so inclined. The Board and I look forward to seeing you. There will be a guest speaker, Kevin Dixon, the Acting Supervising Naturalist from Crab Cove, Alameda, EBRPD. Please respond to Lois Switzer's request for your thoughts and questions related to the presentation: Oaks of the East Bay. As for our future hikes, it is looking good for Thursday hikes beginning in April. However, Sunday hikes present a problem with the large number of people who may be on the trails. So, at this time we are considering Sunday hikes only in those places that do not attract a large number of hikers. At our next Board meeting in March we will have a more definitive decision; it's all very fluid as the pandemic continues albeit looking better. Lastly, I hope that everyone is doing well and that you are able to have either gotten your vaccination(s) or will be able to arrange for them soon. See you at the CCHC Annual Meeting.

Stew Perlman

101st VIRTUAL ANNUAL MEETING **Sunday, March 21, 2021** **Via ZOOM**

Members planning to attend the meeting should register with Cameron Mitchell
CMitch9778@aol.com You will be given the Zoom link and/or meeting ID and passcode before the meeting date.

If you are new to Zoom and need a practice session on a date prior to the meeting, let Cameron know.

- 10:45—11:00 AM: Join the meeting
- 11:00 AM: Speaker: **Kevin Dixon**, Acting Supervising Naturalist at Crab Cove. Topic: **Oaks of the East Bay**. (see page 2 for additional information)
- 11:45 AM Business Meeting:
 - Introduction of Officers
 - Reports
 - Election of Officers (see February Knapsack)
- Adjournment

SAVE THESE DATES

- Sunday, March 21, 2021 virtual Annual Meeting
- October 10-14, 2021 – Prairie Creek Redwoods State Park. If all goes well, sign ups may start not later than April, 2021. Vaccination and/or testing may be required.
- March 2022 – Anza Borrego

Information on the above Overnight Outings will appear in future *Knapsacks*.



Unfortunately, due to pandemic restrictions, we will not be able to hold our annual spring luncheon this year... but hopes are high that things will loosen up enough that we can safely gather in July for a Summer Luncheon. Keep your fingers crossed!

WHAT'S GOING ON WITH THE HIKES?

We hope to resume hiking in April, following social distancing guidelines, with a maximum of 10 people on a hike – with the possibility of splitting into two groups if more than 10 wish to participate in the hike. Crowded spaces should be avoided and, for that reason, lunch needs to be eliminated, well spaced out, or on the trail.

Sunday hikes are to be in areas that will be less crowded. Of course, a 'Sunday' hike could be scheduled during the week to avoid crowds.

Our Hike Schedulers are doing their best to provide safe and enjoyable hiking opportunities during the ongoing pandemic.

OPEN HIKE DATES

There are many dates to choose from. *Please submit your hike as soon as possible*—detailed descriptions are optional as the times are so unsettled.

Open Thursday Hikes: April 1, and 8; May 13, and 20; June 3, 10, and 24; July 1, 8, 15, 22, and 29; August 5, 12, 19, and 26; September 2, 9, 16, 23, and 30.

Open Sunday Hikes: April 4, 11, 18, and 25; May 2, 9, 16, 23, and 30; June 6, 13, 20, and 27; July 4, 11, 18, and 25; August 1, 8, 15, 22, and 29; September 5, 12, 19, and 26.

For Thursday hikes contact: Jim Baranowski, 925-577-1022, Brnw_th@yahoo.com

For Sunday hikes contact: Mary Ulrich, 925-937-2932, cchcsundays@gmail.com

ANNUAL MEETING GUEST SPEAKER

Kevin Dixon, Acting Supervising Naturalist at Crab Cove (EBRPD) in Alameda, will be the guest speaker at our Annual Meeting on March 21st. His subject will be **Oaks of the East Bay**. He's worked for EBRPD since 2007. He's roamed the hills of the East Bay since he could run. He has a master's degree in SE Asian Studies from UC Berkeley and has lectured on SE Asian culture and Indonesian language in British Columbia. Kevin is fascinated by geology, plants, and animals equally, and loves sharing this excitement. He recently transferred from Black Diamond Mines to Crab Cove.

He would love it if we could send him our thoughts and/or questions about **oaks/trees/woodlands/forests** so that he can home in on what would be most interesting for us. Please send your thoughts and/or questions to Lois Switzer at L_A_Switzer@hotmail.com by March 14, 2021.



WELCOME SPRING!
March 20, 2021

DUES ARE DUE - APRIL 1, 2021

CCHC's Annual Dues:

\$25 per person (email version of *Knapsack* and quarterly hike schedule), or \$20 per person for two or more people at the same address. The cost for two members at the same address would be \$40.

\$33 per person (mailed print version of *Knapsack* and quarterly hike schedule), or \$20 per person for two or more people receiving one *Knapsack* and one hike schedule at the same address, plus \$8 to cover mailing expenses. For example, the cost of membership for two people at the same address would be \$48.

Make your check payable to CCHC. and mail it to the Membership Secretary:

Connie Gee
1121 Brighton Avenue
Albany, CA 94706

If you wish to contribute to the Conservation Committee, you can add any additional amount to your annual dues and mark your check "Dues plus Conservation."

IN THE HIKERS' FOOTSTEPS

Downtown Oakland across Lake Merritt—RJohnson



Thursday, January 7, 2021 Black Diamond Mines Regional Park

It's Dorothy Bradt, Linda Malm, Karen Arntzen and Fran



Leighly on the trail to Black Diamond. We went two miles out and two miles back, and then stopped at Cuppa Joe's in Clayton for coffee which we took over to The Grove

Park in Clayton and discussed how to solve the problems of the world!

Hugs 🤗 Patricia Derickson

Wednesday, January 20, 2021 Lime Ridge Open Space, Walnut Creek

As Diane Cannon and Rose Susoeff share the same January 20 birthday, we decided to celebrate by hiking the hills of Lime Ridge. Counting our blessings that it wasn't as windy and blustery as the day before, we hiked up Ohlone Trail to Paraiso Trail to Lime Ridge Trail and treated ourselves to gorgeous views of downtown Walnut Creek and Concord on one side and Crystal Ranch on the other. Grateful to be heading down Manzanita Trail to the trailhead near Boundary Oak's Golf Club, we decided to drive to Arbolado Park to eat lunch and partake



Rose Susoeff, Fran Leighly, Diane Cannon and Dorothy Bradt - taken by Patricia Derickson

of Dorothy Bradt's delicious muffins with birthday candles! A wonderful way to celebrate another year with our friends!

Patricia Derickson

San Pablo Reservoir – Two Perspectives Thursday, January 21, 2021 Thursday, February 4, 2021

A smallish group generally organized by Patricia Derickson and led by Karen Arntzen hiked along San Pablo Reservoir from two different directions. We met at Kennedy Grove Regional Recreation Area on January 21 and hiked a mostly paved trail to a picnic area with a small marina. On February 4, we hiked the more familiar path from the junction of Camino Pablo Road with Bear Creek Road on the edge of Orinda to the boat launch parking area.

The starting point at the northeast end of the Kennedy Grove parking lot is not readily apparent. Fortunately, Karen knew where to go. Right away we had a tricky crossing over the creek made from the dam overflow. We crossed the entrance road and continued straight up to the dam. Unfortunately, we found that wasn't the actual trail. We had missed the post which had the trail sign on it. So, we had to skirt a fence and climb over a guard rail to get back to the trail.



Keiko Noriye, Dorothy Bradt, Linda Malm, Rosemary Johnson, Patricia Derickson, selfie of Karen Arntzen

We had another adventure off-trail when the leaders tried to recall how to find the path that skirted the actual reservoir. The path we followed was rough so we climbed up an incline to again return to the paved path. We then had an uneventful walk to the large picnic area with covered picnic tables. We had a great view of the water and opposite hillside there. I guesstimated that we were at least a half mile from the other parking area. Was I wrong! When I measured it out on gmap-pedometer, it was a full 2.25 miles apart.

The walk back was much quicker since we just followed the trail and the road, avoiding the creek crossing. The only eventful occurrence was a sighting of a river otter on the rocks above the overflow culvert to the creek. However, I was the only one who saw it because my surprised



First sight of Reservoir from trail, Lone Pelican on the water - Rosemary Johnson

gasp startled the animal into diving into the water. The roundtrip was approx. 3.6 miles.

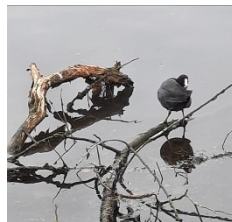
Although the other end of the trail was the path more traveled, it was the more charming. It is mostly a trail not a road and winds through a forested area. It was greener and more pleasant to my eyes. I saw more birds although we did not see nesting herons as we had hoped. Guess it is a little early for that activity. We did see some Canada geese and coots near the East end of the reservoir. Then a lone White Pelican was swimming near the picnic area. His comrades were resting on a

raft further out in the water. Nothing else of note, just a restful forest bathing experience. The roundtrip is 4.3 miles.

Rosemary Johnson



Birds on Lake Merritt February 16, 2021 Rosemary Johnson



Coot stands on branch to preen



Snowy egret's "golden slippers" visible—they shake these to lure prey



Pelican in back is swallowing his recent catch



Great Blue Heron

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.

OFFICERS & COMMITTEES 2020—2021

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