



Celebrating Over 45 Years of Open Space Preservation
And Five Years of Measure AA Accomplishments

VIEWS

QUARTERLY NEWS ON OPEN SPACE PRESERVATION AND PROGRAMS • SPRING 2020

A Treasure Hunt for Wildflowers

Hundreds of wildflower species grow in Midpen preserves. From brilliant stands of California poppies to small clusters of blue-eyed grass, you can see blooms from early spring through late winter. Midpen’s preservation and care of open space land is improving native wildflower habitat in many of our preserves.

The spring wildflower season changes each year depending on many factors such as the timing and amount of winter rains and warm weather. We can’t predict exactly where and when you can see flowers, but we can tell you what you might see. Follow us on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram for the latest news.

Also, for the past 12 years, staff and volunteers have been conducting surveys to document and study the wildflower population in Sierra Azul Preserve. Last year’s count identified more than 130 flowering species, including seven species of rare or endangered plants such as Santa Clara red ribbons clarkia and woodland woollythreads.

Leave no Trace

Wildflowers can be fragile. Please follow these guidelines so everyone can enjoy their beauty.

Take photos not flowers. Wildflowers wilt quickly after picking and can’t be transplanted. Picking wildflowers also prevents them from going to seed, limiting future wildflowers.

Stay on established trails and take photos OF flowers not IN flowers. Venturing off trail damages existing blooms and prevents the next generation from growing.

Visit openspace.org/wildflowers for information on how to identify wildflowers and where to see them. 🌿



Karl Gohl

Golden yarrow
Rancho San Antonio Preserve



Kate Pittman

Lupine
Purissima Creek Redwoods Preserve



Spotlight: Picchetti Ranch Preserve’s Zinfandel Trail

If you love Rancho San Antonio, you’ll love Picchetti Ranch Preserve. Like Rancho, there is plenty to look at and the trails are mostly level. Several loop trails gain a mere 350 feet in elevation to a knoll providing excellent views of the Santa Cruz Mountains, Santa Clara Valley and San Francisco Bay.

Picchetti Ranch, located in the foothills of Cupertino, is situated on the grounds of an old winery and farm. The historic winery, located next to the parking lot, features a house and ranch buildings, picnic tables, a bubbling seasonal creek and a collection of peacocks and chickens.

Beyond the winery, a small network of trails wander through native oak woodlands, chaparral, remnant orchards and forested canyons to a hilltop with views of Stevens Creek Reservoir.

What to Expect

Picchetti Ranch’s forested canyons of madrone, coast live oak and California bay provide shade on a warm day. On a clear day, the Sierra Azul range, crowned by Mount Umunhum, is visible to the south through a break in the trees. The Zinfandel Trail ducks into the forest, crossing seasonal creeks eventually connecting Picchetti Ranch Preserve with nearby Stevens Creek County Park, managed by Santa Clara County. 🦋

Distance: 4 miles round-trip | Elevation Gain: 514 feet

A Message from the General Manager

Preserving and Caring for 100 Square Miles of Natural and Working Lands

In its infancy, Midpen focused primarily on the foundation of our mission: preserving a regional greenbelt forever. Nearly half a century later, with a crown of public open space ringing the Bay Area, we have successfully matured into a more balanced delivery of our full mission that also includes restoring protected lands, providing opportunities for public enjoyment and preserving rural character and agricultural lands along the San Mateo County Coast.

Midpen now manages 100 square miles of diverse and dynamic natural and working lands encompassing bay wetlands, redwood forests, serpentine grasslands, oak woodlands and more. Thousands of native plants and animals, many found nowhere else on earth, make their home here—an incredible abundance that makes California one of the top biodiversity hotspots in the world. Caring for these lands is a responsibility Midpen staff are passionate about and a value we are grateful to uphold.

Today, our challenge is to care for the ecological health and function of these landscapes that have been shaped by a long history of natural processes and human influences. At Midpen, we do this using a range of passive and active land management approaches.

For example, one way we actively protect 8,000 acres of coastal grasslands—one of the most biodiverse ecosystems in North America—is by partnering with a handful of small-scale, local ranchers using conservation grazing. California native grasslands evolved with periodic fire and herds of native grazing animals no longer present on the landscape. The biodiversity of

these grasslands benefits from periodic disturbances to prevent encroachment by introduced species, shrubs and forest.

To achieve our conservation goal of protecting coastal grassland for native plants and animals, we require ranchers to follow site-specific prescriptions that limit the number, duration and location of cows and are adjusted based on changing environmental conditions like drought. This type of carefully managed conservation grazing has been shown to benefit many of our native grasses and wildflowers, and in turn the wildlife, birds and threatened or endangered species like San Francisco garter snakes that depend on grassland habitat.

Another example of how we work with community organizations and volunteers to actively care for the land is our partnership with Golden Hour Restoration Institute. Together, we have reintroduced more than 1,000 native plant seedlings to Mount Umunhum's restored summit, formerly the site of an Air Force station.



Mount Umunhum, Sierra Azul Open Space Preserve

With your support, Midpen, together with our partners and the larger community, can continue fulfilling our balanced mission. By doing so, we help sustain the vibrancy, beauty and health of our region for plants, animals and people.

Ana M. Ruiz
Ana María Ruiz,
General Manager

Photo above Rancho San Antonio Preserve by Karl Gohl



Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District Board of Directors

The board holds regular meetings on the second and fourth Wednesdays of each month at 7 p.m., at the Midpen administrative office: 330 Distel Circle, Los Altos, CA.

Pete Siemens — Ward 1 (Cupertino, Los Gatos, Monte Sereno, Saratoga)

Yoriko Kishimoto — Ward 2 (Cupertino, Los Altos, Los Altos Hills, Palo Alto, Stanford, Sunnyvale)

Jed Cyr — Ward 3 (Sunnyvale)

Curt Riffle — Ward 4 (Los Altos, Mountain View)

Karen Holman — Ward 5 (East Palo Alto, Menlo Park, Palo Alto, Stanford)

Larry Hassett — Ward 6 (Atherton, La Honda, Menlo Park, Pescadero, Portola Valley, Redwood City, San Gregorio, Woodside)

Zoe Kersteen-Tucker — Ward 7 (El Granada, Half Moon Bay, Montara, Moss Beach, Redwood City, San Carlos, Woodside)

Ana María Ruiz — General Manager

Peggy Gibbons — Open Space Views Editor | Renée Fitzsimons — Outdoor Activities Editor

Outdoor Activities

SPRING 2020 | March – April – May

MIDPENINSULA REGIONAL OPEN SPACE DISTRICT

GENERAL INFORMATION

With this newsletter in hand and a sense of exploration in mind, we invite you to enjoy the Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District preserves. These 26 extraordinary preserves include nearly 65,000 acres of permanently protected open space, from redwood forests to bay shoreline. We encourage you to participate in the wide variety of adventures offered inside *Outdoor Activities*. The activity durations listed are averages based on our experience – always allow extra time in your schedule for unusual circumstances, or the slower pace of some

groups. Please arrive a little early to ensure a prompt start for each activity. The activities are FREE; some require reservations.

All activities are developed and led by Docent Naturalists who have completed an extensive training program. These docents volunteer their time to share their knowledge of natural and cultural history with you. For more information about the volunteer docent program, visit the District's website at openspace.org, or phone the District at 650-691-1200 weekdays, 8:30am to 5:00pm. 🦋

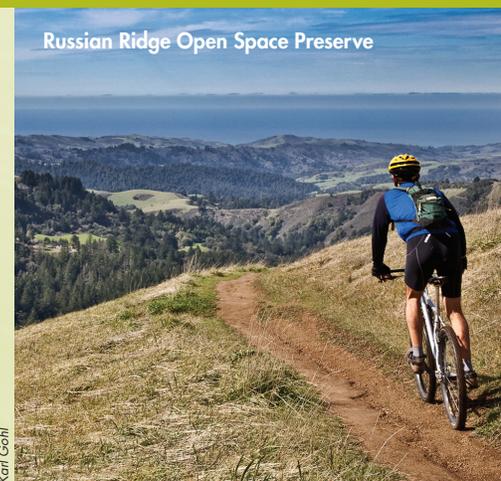
ACTIVITY GUIDELINES

To Ensure Your Experience is Enjoyable, Please Review this Information

- For all hikes, wear boots or sturdy walking shoes appropriate for rugged trails. Dress in or bring layers (T-shirt, long-sleeved shirt, sweater, and/or jacket). The weather can be unpredictable. No matter what season it is, be prepared for rain, wind, fog, or sun!
- Carry ample drinking water with you – water is not available on preserves. Bring sun protection (hat, sunscreen) and consider insect repellent.
- If you have internet access, you are advised to check the District website – Outdoor Activities and Trail Conditions – for possible notifications before heading out to a docent-led activity. Occasionally activities must be cancelled or trails closed with little notice.
- Heavy rain cancels hike activities unless otherwise noted in the description. If there is light rain or the threat of rain, go to the meeting place. Docents will plan to meet participants and discuss hike options – route or duration may be altered due to weather and trail conditions.
- Participants are encouraged to make personal decisions on comfort, safety, and willingness to drive or hike in stormy or threatening weather conditions.
- For a mountain bike or horseback ride, heavy rain within two days prior to the activity will cancel it.
- Equestrians must provide their own horses (no stallions). Lead lines are required and breast collars are recommended for all horses, and helmets must be worn by all riders under age 18.
- Hikers yield to horses; bicyclists yield to hikers and horses. Observe trail speed limits (15 mph max; 5 mph when passing).
- Please be courteous, stay alert, and make your presence known to other trail users well in advance, particularly when approaching from behind.
- Restrooms are not available at all preserves; please plan accordingly.
- Please carpool if possible. Parking is limited in many locations.



Karil Gohli



Karil Gohli

Special Note

If you have a group of 8 or more people who would like to attend a docent-led activity listed here, please contact the Interpretation and Education Program Manager to discuss in advance at 650-625-6536 or docent@openspace.org. Other arrangements may need to be considered for your group. 🦋

Header photo: Picchetti Ranch Open Space Preserve by Jack Gescheidt

WHERE TO MEET

Directions to preserves featured in this season's schedule of *Outdoor Activities* are listed below. Some preserves have more than one access point. Some activities meet at different locations than where the activity will actually occur. If an activity does not meet at the preserve listed, or if there is more than one preserve access point, the alternate meeting location will be indicated in italics on a separate line following the preserve name as part of the activity header. (For example: **Skyline Ridge Meet: *Russian Ridge*** or **Russian Ridge Meet: *Caltrans vista point***). If no information follows the preserve name, then refer to the detailed directions for the preserve or alternate meeting location listed below.

Note: Restrooms are not always available; please plan accordingly.

PLEASE CHECK THE LISTED DESCRIPTION TO MAKE SURE YOU MEET YOUR ACTIVITY LEADER AT THE CORRECT LOCATION.

DANIELS NATURE CENTER

Park at the Russian Ridge Preserve parking lot on the northwest corner of the Skyline Boulevard (Highway 35) and Page Mill/Alpine Road intersection (across Skyline Blvd. on the right). Walk to Alpine Pond at Skyline Ridge Preserve by going through the tunnel under Alpine Rd. The Nature Center is a small gray building on the east shore of Alpine Pond.

EDGEWOOD COUNTY PARK

Meet at the parking lot for Edgewood County Park on Old Stage Coach Road. Exit I-280 at Edgewood Road. Head east on Edgewood Rd. for about 1.0 mile to the park entrance on the right.

LONG RIDGE

Peters Creek Trailhead: Meet at the roadside pullout area on the west side of Skyline Boulevard, 3.6 miles north of Highway 9 or 3.3 miles south of Page Mill Road. If you are coming from the north on Skyline Blvd., the pullout is just past Portola Heights Road on the right. From the south, the pullout is near the Palo Alto city limits sign on the right. There is additional parking across Skyline Blvd. at the Grizzly Flat trailhead (Santa Clara County Park).

LOS TRANCOS

Meet at the Preserve parking lot on Page Mill Road (across from Monte Bello Preserve), 7 miles west of I-280 or 1.5 miles east of Skyline Boulevard. Those traveling from I-280 on Page Mill Rd. should allow approximately 35 minutes travel time.

MONTE BELLO

Meet at the Preserve parking lot on Page Mill Road (across from Los Trancos Preserve), 7 miles west of I-280 or 1.5 miles east of Skyline Boulevard. Those traveling from I-280 on Page Mill Rd. should allow approximately 35 minutes travel time.

PICCHETTI RANCH

From the intersection of I-280 and Foothill Expressway, go 3.5 miles southwest (toward the mountains) on Foothill Boulevard/Stevens Canyon Road. Turn right on Montebello Road. The Preserve is 0.5 miles up Montebello Rd. on the left.

PULGAS RIDGE

From I-280, exit Edgewood Road. Drive 0.75 miles on Edgewood Rd. toward San Carlos/Redwood City. Turn left (north) on Crestview Drive, then immediately turn left on Edmonds Road. Follow Edmonds Rd. to the Preserve parking lot entrance on the right.

PURISIMA CREEK REDWOODS

Purisima Creek Road entrance: From the Highway 92 and Highway 1 intersection in Half Moon Bay, travel south on Hwy. 1 approximately 4.3 miles. Turn left on Verde Road. After turning on Verde Rd. and traveling 0.25 miles, continue straight to remain on what becomes Purisima Creek Road. (Verde Rd. splits off to the right.) Travel approximately 3.7 miles on Purisima Creek Rd. to reach the Preserve.



Picchetti Ranch Open Space Preserve

RUSSIAN RIDGE

Meet at the main Preserve parking lot on the northwest corner of the Skyline Boulevard (Highway 35) and Page Mill/Alpine Road intersection (across Skyline Blvd. on the right). Those traveling from I-280 on Page Mill Rd. should allow approximately 40 minutes travel time.

Mindego Gateway parking lot: Continue on Alpine Road past the main Preserve parking lot for another 1.5 miles. The Mindego Gateway parking lot is on the right. Allow 45 minutes travel time from I-280.

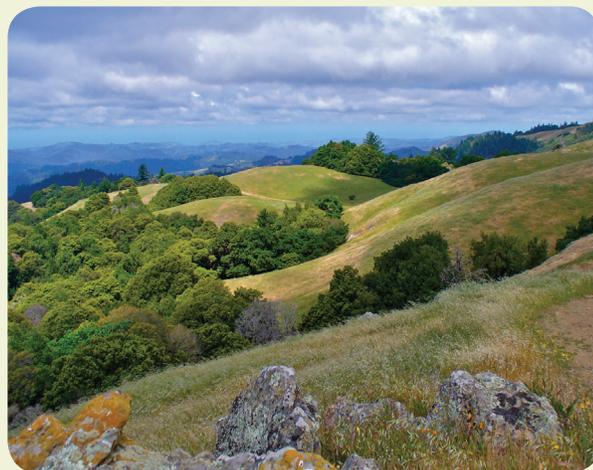
SIERRA AZUL

Jacques Ridge parking lot: Meet at the parking lot located near the intersection of Hicks Road and Mt. Umunhum Road in San Jose. Exit Highway 85 at Camden Avenue. (From northbound Hwy. 85 turn left on Branham Avenue and then turn left on Camden Ave. and from southbound Hwy. 85 turn left on Camden Ave.) Travel on Camden Ave. about 1.6 miles. Turn right on Hicks Rd. and travel for about 6.3 miles. Turn right on Mt. Umunhum Rd. The Preserve parking lot will be on the right.

SKYLINE RIDGE

Meet at the Preserve parking lot on Skyline Boulevard located one mile south of the Skyline Blvd. (Highway 35) and Page Mill/Alpine Road intersection. After entering the Preserve, turn right and go to the farthest parking lot. Those traveling from I-280 on Page Mill Rd. should allow approximately 45 minutes travel time.

Equestrian parking lot: After entering the Preserve, proceed to the farthest parking lot on the left. Those traveling from I-280 on Page Mill Rd. should allow approximately 45 minutes travel time.



Long Ridge Open Space Preserve

Matthew Findling

ST. JOSEPH'S HILL

Lexington Reservoir Dam: Meet at the County boat launch parking lot next to the Lexington Reservoir Dam. From southbound Highway 17, take the Bear Creek Road exit, cross over the highway, and go 0.4 miles north on Hwy. 17 to Alma Bridge Road. Follow Alma Bridge Rd. over the top of the dam. Continue beyond the dam as the road jogs to the right. Turn right into the parking lot just before the road veers to the left. A Santa Clara County Park parking fee is in effect.

Northside lot – Free Limited Parking:

Meet at the parking lot located at the northeast corner of Highway 9 and Santa Cruz Avenue in Los Gatos. The sign at the lot says: "Northside lot – Free Limited Parking." Take Highway 17 south toward Los Gatos. Exit at Hwy. 9-Los Gatos/Saratoga and continue west on Hwy. 9 (approximately 0.33 miles) to the parking lot, located on your right just before Santa Cruz Ave. Carpool to the activity location.



Purisima Creek Redwoods Open Space Preserve

THORNEWOOD

From I-280, take the Highway 84/Woodside Road exit. Follow Hwy. 84/Woodside Rd. through Woodside and then to a junction with Portola Road at 3.3 miles. Bear right to stay on Hwy. 84, now La Honda Road. At 4.9 miles from I-280, turn left at a brick wall marked 895-897; look for the District sign just inside this gate. The small parking area is on the right about 500 feet from the entrance gate. Please do not drive beyond this lot to the private residences.

THORNEWOOD (continued)

Alternatively, from the junction of Highway 35 (Skyline Boulevard) and Hwy. 84 in Sky Londa, take Hwy. 84/La Honda Road north 1.9 miles and turn right at the brick wall marked 895-897. 🦋



Russian Ridge Open Space Preserve

KEY TO SYMBOLS

-  **Easy Hike/Walk:** Flat to gently rolling hills. Total elevation gain less than 200 feet. Leisurely pace. Frequent stops.
 -  **Moderate Hike:** Steeper or more frequent uphill grades. Total elevation gain 200 to 600 feet. Leisurely to moderate pace.
 -  **Strenuous Hike:** Steep hills and/or long distances. Total elevation gain greater than 600 feet. Moderate to vigorous pace.
 -  **Suitable for children:** must be accompanied and supervised by an adult. See the activity description for any additional information.
 -  **Wheelchair accessible.**
 -  **Stroller accessible:** Jogger-type suggested.
 -  **Meal/Snack break:** Bring a lunch, dinner, or snack as appropriate.
 -  **Dogs on leash:** Well-behaved and socialized dogs are allowed, and must be controlled on a maximum six-foot leash.
 -  **Equestrian Ride:** Riders under age 18 must wear a helmet. Lead lines are required and breast collars are recommended for horses. Equestrians must provide their own horses (no stallions).
 -  **Reservations required:** Reservations for activities requiring them will only be accepted within the two (2)-week period just before the activity date. To make a reservation or a cancellation, visit the District's Web site www.openspace.org/reservations or call 650-691-2150 (enter 2). If you provide information prior to the reservation acceptance period, it will not be processed. Please limit your reservation to a maximum of four (4) people.
 -  **Easy Nature Ride:** Slow, leisurely pace, minimal climbing, and multiple stops to observe nature.
 -  **Introductory Mountain Bike Ride:** Outings include demonstration and practice emphasizing trail etiquette and techniques required for dirt riding followed by a 5- to 7-mile ride on fire roads and single-track trails, with occasional natural history stops. Riders should be in good physical condition to perform climbs and descents.
 -  **Intermediate Mountain Bike Ride:** Intended for participants with dirt single-track riding experience; able to climb and descend steep and moderately-rough trails. Recreational ride at a moderate/brisk pace; 8+ miles on a wide range of fire roads and single-track trails. For experienced riders in very good physical condition with good endurance.
 -  **Advanced Mountain Bike Ride:** Intended for participants with dirt single-track riding experience; competent at climbing and descending steep and rough trails. Moderate to fast pace, 10+ mile ride on a wide variety of trail conditions. For experienced riders with a high level of physical fitness and excellent endurance.
- Note:** For all rides, bicyclists must wear helmets and bikes must be in good condition, and the participants must be very familiar with the operation of gears and brakes. Mountain bikes are strongly recommended for all except the Easy Nature Rides. Easy Nature, Introductory, and Intermediate Rides include a natural history component that is provided by the docents during the rest stops. Advanced rides develop and improve mountain bike skills – any natural history discussion stops are secondary to the overall riding experience.

MARCH

WWW – Wildflowers, Wandering and Wine

Sunday • March 1
Picchetti Ranch • 4.5mi
10:00am to 1:30pm



It's spring-time! Join docents Martin Manley, Linda Smith, and Lindsay Joye for a hike to discover wildflowers that were ushered in by winter rains. En route you'll see the varieties of plant communities found in this relatively small preserve and search for creatures inhabiting the seasonal pond. Bring a lunch to enjoy at the picnic tables down by Stevens Creek. At the end of the hike you will have the option for a little wine tasting on your own at the Picchetti Winery. **(Note: a shortened version of this hike will go ahead in light or moderate rain—it can be a wonderful time to see this Preserve if you have good raingear.)**

Earthquake Walk

Sunday • March 1
Los Trancos • 2-3mi
2:00pm to 4:30pm



Join docents Lyle Rice and Sabra Abraham for a fun and educational hike along the San Andreas Fault. You'll stop to discuss the wonder of plate tectonics, examine remnants left by thousands of major earthquakes, and learn how to prepare for future earthquakes. **(Note: Families with engaged children who are attentive listeners and capable of hiking several miles are welcome on this leisurely-paced outing with minimal elevation change. This popular hike is not suitable for large groups, thank you.)**

Explorer Hike: The Hill in Spring

Wednesday • March 4
St. Joseph's Hill • 4mi
Northside lot – Free Limited Parking
10:30am to 2:30pm



Ascend the Novitiate Trail at a leisurely pace to your hilltop lunch place guided by docents Laura Levin, Mary Brunkhorst, and Dennis Smith. Along the way, you'll search for spring wildflowers in a variety of plant communities while gaining 600 feet in elevation. Rewards include expansive views of the Santa Clara Valley and Lexington Reservoir.



Long Ridge Open Space Preserve

Nora Sullivan

Hiking and Mindfulness

Saturday • March 7
Long Ridge • 2.5mi
10:00am to 1:00pm



Take a moment, or a few, for mindfulness on this leisurely hike along the Peters Creek and Long Ridge Trails where you'll stop to share and practice mindfulness strategies among the trees with docents Anna Lee and Marie Faust Evitt. Please bring your lunch and something to sit on.

Astride the Sleeping Giant

Sunday • March 8
Los Trancos • 2mi
2:00pm to 5:00pm



Docents Dave and Judy Boore and the San Andreas Fault will be your guides for an afternoon exploring the causes and consequences of earthquakes occurring "in your backyard". Dave is an emeritus seismologist at the U.S. Geological Survey. You'll visit two Preserves, stop for engaging discussion (sometimes extended—depending on weather and interest), and hike at a moderate pace between stops. This minimal elevation change outing is well suited for those needing a less physically challenging hike, and is intended for interested teenagers as well as adults. **Reservations are required and will be accepted on or after February 23.**

History and Nature

Tuesday • March 10
Picchetti Ranch • 4.5mi
10:00am to 1:30pm



Join docents Gerri Tiernan and Lyle Rice to learn a little history, explore a seasonal pond, and witness the changes in nature as winter turns into spring on this moderately-paced hike along the Zinfandel, Orchard Loop, and Vista Trails. You'll hike into adjoining Stevens Creek County Park for a brief rest stop at picnic tables. A visit to historic Picchetti Winery (on your own) is an option at the end of the hike.

Scenic Aerobic Hike: Edgewood Park

Wednesday • March 11
Edgewood County Park • 6mi
10:00am to 1:00pm



Join docents Fran Keeler, Huey-Shin Yuan, and Mary Brunkhorst for a moderately-paced, exercise focused hike on trails with beautiful scenery. Scenic Aerobic hikes are offered at different preserves every second Wednesday. The route of each hike will be determined by the docents based on current trail and weather conditions.

Signs of Spring

Friday • March 13
Pulgas Ridge • 4.25mi
9:00am to 12:00pm



Join docents Liz Foreman and Lindsay Joye to explore for signs that spring has arrived, including viewing of an array of wildflowers. You'll travel the Blue Oak and Dick Bishop Trails and also climb to the top of a ridge on the Dusky-footed Woodrat Trail to take in views of the Bay and surrounding hills. There will be an elevation gain of about 600 feet, on this moderately-paced outing with some uneven terrain.

Getting to Know Lichen

Friday • March 13
Long Ridge • 3.2mi
10:00am to 2:00pm



On this moderately-paced hike you'll make close observations of lichens and gain an appreciation of their fascinating architecture and the complex division of labor that occurs in the organism. Your docents Marilyn and Bill Bauriedel will help you find and identify a few of the common lichens growing on trees, fence posts, shrubs, and rocks along the Peters Creek Trail. You'll also enjoy the beauty and variety of this spectacular preserve.



Ken Lunders

Pulgas Ridge Open Space Preserve

Hidden Life of the Forest

Sunday • March 15

Los Trancos • 2mi

1:00pm to 4:00pm



As spring arrives, trees awaken from their winter sleep. Join docents Marie Faust Evitt, Ann McCarty, and Catherine Crawford-Swent to explore how trees know it's spring and other facts such as how trees talk to each other and whether trees sleep at night. You'll hike at a leisurely pace as you discover the amazing life of trees. Capable, attentive children who can hike 2 miles are welcome.



Ken Hickman

Sierra Azul Open Space Preserve

Explorer Hike: Into the Woods

Wednesday • March 18

Sierra Azul • 5-6mi

10:30am to 2:30pm



Enjoy a hike over the headwaters of Guadalupe Creek and along the Woods Trail to find and identify spring wildflowers with docents Laura Levin, Dennis Smith, Kate Gudmundson, and Mary Brunkhorst. You'll gradually climb about 200 feet, and enjoy stunning views on this leisurely-paced, out and back hike.

Pond to Pond Hike

Thursday • March 19

Skyline Ridge • 5mi

Meet: Equestrian parking lot

10:00am to 1:30pm



Join a group of enthusiastic hikers and docents Ann Reisenauer, Noa Doitel, and Susan Bernhard on loop a hike through two preserves. You'll start your outing by circling Horseshoe Lake, climbing Sunny Jim Trail and end up at Alpine Pond and the Daniels Nature Center. There should be fabulous fungi viewing and newts in the creek, and you'll learn some land use history and see wildflowers if the winter rains are generous. Suitable for children 8 years or older who are willing to hike hills and are curious about nature.

Geocaching for Families

Saturday • March 21

Skyline Ridge • 2mi

Meet: Russian Ridge

1:00pm to 3:00pm



Join docents Kim Borick and Alisa Stutzbach, and an REI Outdoor School Instructor to search for geocaches using GPS units supplied by REI. This interactive afternoon outing is great fun for children and adults. You are encouraged to bring small trade items (inexpensive children trinkets, less than 2" in size to exchange with treasures found in cache containers). This activity is geared towards the first-time geocacher and families but all are welcome. **(Note: This activity includes some off-trail hiking; long pants and closed-toes shoes are required.)** Reservations are required and will be accepted on or after March 7.

Figure Eight: Pond to Lake

Thursday • March 26

Skyline Ridge • 4.5mi

10:00am to 2:00pm



Join docents Marie-Anne Neimat and Judy Sencenbaugh to explore the beauty of this preserve. You'll hike the Ipiwa and Sunny Jim Trails, loop around Alpine Pond and return via the same trails and conclude your hike by Horseshoe Lake. You'll be treated to sweeping views of the hills and ocean, and early signs of spring in a variety of habitats.

Umunhum Barlow Explorer

Sunday • March 29

Sierra Azul • 6mi

10:00am to 3:30pm



Join docents Greg Azevedo, Gordon Ferguson, and Emma Finter for an uncommon outing around the lower area of Mount Umunhum via Barlow Road and the Woods Trail. This moderately-paced, mostly downhill hike will have many short breaks, wildflowers, and wonderful views. You'll begin your hike at a trailhead along Mt. Umunhum Road near the Bald Mountain parking lot. Several trail sections are steep with varied surfaces. Bring ample drinking water. **(Note: Participants will carpool/shuttle from meeting location to the trailhead.)** Reservations are required and will be accepted on or after March 15.

APRIL

Explorer Hike:

Welcome to Spring

Wednesday • April 1

Pulgas Ridge • 5mi

10:30am to 2:30pm



Welcome spring with a special hike! Join docents Mary Brunkhorst, Dennis Smith, and Laura Levin to explore for early blooming flowers and the signs of spring in a preserve noted for a beautiful display of wildflowers throughout varied habitats. You'll travel along the Blue Oak, Dick Bishop, and Polly Geraci Trails on a round trip outing.

Among the Trees, Shrubs, and Flowers

Friday • April 3

Thornewood • 4mi

9:00am to 11:30am



Enjoy a morning hike with docents Liz Foreman and Nina Bell as you explore a variety of trees, shrubs, and wildflowers. You'll descend through chaparral into a redwood forest, then travel along the Schilling Lake and Bridle Trails on this moderately-paced out and back hike. **(Note: There is one steep hill and some uneven terrain. No restrooms are available at this Preserve and parking is very limited. Please carpool.)**

Daniels Nature Center Season Begins!!

The **David C. Daniels Nature Center**, located on the edge of Alpine Pond at **Skyline Ridge Open Space Preserve**, will open for the season on Saturday, April 4, 2020. Come by to take part in our opening weekend welcome. The Nature Center will be open Saturdays and Sundays from 12:00pm until 5:00pm during spring and summer, and 11:00am to 4:00pm in the fall.





Picchetti Ranch Open Space Preserve

Shirley Smith

WWW – Wildflowers, Wandering and Wine

Saturday • April 4
Picchetti Ranch • 4.5mi
10:00am to 1:30pm



Join docents Martin Manley, Linda Smith, and Naureen Moon for a hike through Picchetti Ranch, and please see the description for March 1.

Ohlone Footsteps

Saturday • April 4
Skyline Ridge • 2mi
Meet: Russian Ridge
10:00am to 12:30pm



Prior to European settlement, the Bay Area was home to a mosaic of Native American tribal communities, and many have frequented the Santa Cruz Mountains. Join docents Kim Borick and Sarah Schoen for a leisurely-paced hike with frequent stops along the Ipiwa and Sunny Jim Trails. Historical and cultural background will be provided along with examples of indigenous material that have been used by tribal groups and their practices in managing the landscape's natural resources for years. You'll discover what draws Ohlone people time and again to these mountains. Appropriate for children aged 10 and older. Bring lunch to enjoy at Alpine Pond following the hike!

Stop In and Explore

Saturday and Sunday
April 4 and 5
Daniels Nature Center
12:00noon to 5:00pm



Spring weekends are here and so should you be...as the living is easy, especially on the edge of Alpine Pond. Bring family and friends to visit any Saturday or Sunday this spring between 12:00 noon and 5:00 pm. You can enjoy displays about natural communities, view larger-than-life pond strata mobiles, take a pond prow, and perhaps have an opportunity to study live aquatic organisms "borrowed" from Alpine Pond with guidance from a docent. These adventures and more await you!

Earthquake Hike

Sunday • April 5
Los Trancos • 2mi
2:00pm to 4:30pm



Join docents Paul Billig and Sarah Schoen, and please see the activity description for March 1. **(Note: Families with engaged children who are attentive listeners and capable of hiking several miles are welcome on this leisurely-paced outing with minimal elevation change. This popular hike is not suitable for large groups, thank you.)**

Stevens Creek Serendipity

Tuesday • April 7
Monte Bello • 3.5mi
9:30am to 12:30pm



Join docents John Seyfarth and Gerri Tiernan for a leisurely-paced morning hike high above the valley. You'll explore the many delights that nature has to offer along the Canyon and Stevens Creek Nature Trails below the slopes of Black Mountain. You'll learn a little bit about local history and earthquake geology, discover wildflowers, and look for animals (or their signs) like birds, mammals, salamanders, and slugs. Capable, attentive children 10 years and older are welcome.



Amanda Mills

Purisima Creek Redwoods Open Space Preserve

Scenic Aerobic Hike

Wednesday • April 8
Picchetti Ranch • 6mi
10:00am to 1:00pm



Please see the activity description for March 11.



Judy Kramer

Windy Hill Open Space Preserve

Exploring and Birding

Saturday • April 11
Skyline Ridge • 2mi
9:30am to 12:00pm



Join docents Sabra Abraham, Lindsay Joye, and Lyle Rice to explore several different habitats at this Preserve and see what birds you can discover. You'll be walking around Horseshoe Lake and observing chaparral, grassland, forest, and riparian habitats for avian inhabitants or visitors. This outing is open to anybody with an interest in birds! For beginners, you'll learn the basics of using your binoculars (bring your own if you have a pair), observe bird behaviors, and identify common species. Advanced birders are also very welcome to join the group to share your enthusiasm and enrich others!

Stop In and Explore

Saturday and Sunday
April 11 and 12
Daniels Nature Center
12:00noon to 5:00pm



Please see the description for April 4.

San Francisquito Creek Watershed Discovery

Sunday • April 12
Windy Hill • 7mi
9:00am to 2:00pm



Join docents Veronica Chouinard and Chris MacIntosh for a day of discovery to learn about and explore the San Francisquito Creek watershed through its hydrology, environment, economics, and scenery. This hike meanders along a wooded brook briefly before climbing up through the watershed, and offers sweeping views on its return descent. The ascent is strenuous. The hike will use Hams Gulch, Lost, Anniversary, Spring Ridge, and Meadow Trails; its pace will be moderate. **(Special Meeting Location/Directions: This hike will meet at a roadside parking location on**

Alpine Road adjacent to the trailhead and gate WH06. Travel 0.9 miles southwest on Alpine Road from his intersection with Portola Road. The pullout-parking area will be near the intersection with Willowbrook Drive. Parking is limited. Please carpool.)



Carol Daniels

Russian Ridge Open Space Preserve

Explorer Hike: Let 1,000 Flowers Bloom

Wednesday • April 15
Russian Ridge • 6mi
10:30am to 2:30pm



You'll explore the wonders of spring flowers at one of the best wildflower viewing areas in the Bay Area, with docents Dennis Smith, Mary Brunkhorst, and Laura Levin. Although what you see will as always depend on the spring weather, you are bound to see some delights. You'll follow the Ridge Trail to a lunch spot, then return via the Hawk Ridge, Charquin, and Ancient Oaks Trails on a leisurely-paced hike with about a 600 foot elevation gain. Bring your cameras, field guides, and/or binoculars, or just sharp eyes and plan for an enjoyable outing.

A Not So "Taxing" Jaunt

Thursday • April 16
Long Ridge • 6mi
10:30am to 2:30pm



After filing your tax return, join docents Mark Prusinowski, Denise Lawrence, and Marie-Anne Neimat for a rejuvenating hike through the cool forests and scenic vistas of this Preserve. Your personal gains and losses will be from the 800-foot elevation gained while enjoying the hills and valleys along Peters Creek and Long Ridge Trails. This loop will be extended with an out-and-back segment on the Hickory Oaks Trail to Turtle Rock for a break to admire the views of Big Basin State Park, Butano Ridge, and the Pacific Ocean. This moderately-paced hike has several short climbs, and includes frequent stops to investigate interesting plants and animals.

Survival Strategies of the Chaparral

Friday • April 17
St. Joseph's Hill • 4mi
9:00am to 12:00pm



Have you ever wondered how plants in the chaparral community survive the hot dry conditions on rocky south facing slopes? Learn the adaptation strategies these plants have developed to thrive here. Join docents Jumana Latif and Marie-Anne Neimat on a moderately-paced hike where you'll discover some of the most common chaparral plants along the Jones, Manzanita, and Novitiate Trails. Additionally, you'll be rewarded with sweeping views of Lexington Reservoir and beyond.



Literature, Lore, and Life Sciences

Saturday • April 18
Skyline Ridge • 6mi
8:30am to 12:30pm



Would a rose by any other name smell as sweet? Unpack the diverse symbolic and scientific meanings behind this and other familiar quotes from literature across the centuries and continents on a moderately-paced hike along many of this Preserve's popular trails. Docents Anna Lee, Nina Bell, and Catherine Crawford-Swent will guide you on an exploration of the ways nature has inspired literature and lore throughout history, and the various paths through which humans have made sense and meaning of the incredible nature in people's lives.

Wandering and Writing in Nature

Saturday • April 18
Long Ridge • 4.6mi
1:30pm to 5:00pm



Writers and philosophers across the ages have found inspiration, wisdom, and peace through time spent in nature. Join their ranks on this moderate hike along Peters Creek and Long Ridge Trails, accompanied by the words and spirits of John Muir, Alice Walker, Aristotle, and other friends and mentors, old and new. Discuss their meanings and philosophies with fellow hikers and docents Anna Lee and Ping Li, then discover your own insights through journaling or quiet contemplation during an extended break at the Wallace Stegner bench. You are invited to bring a journal, a writing implement, and/or your favorite nature quotes to kindle reflection and discussion.

Stop In and Explore

Saturday and Sunday
April 18 and 19
Daniels Nature Center
12:00noon to 5:00pm



Please see the description for April 4.

The Music, Poetry, and Art of Nature

Saturday • April 25
Picchetti Ranch • 2mi
9:30am to 12:30pm



Composers, poets, and artists draw inspiration from the natural world—birdsong, forests, wind, and the sea. When asked how he came up with a beautiful theme, Brahms said it came from a lot of walking in the woods. To Beethoven, the trees felt holy. Many poems of Keats, Frost, and Mary Oliver come from attention to the natural world. In the paintings of Klee, Miro, and Matisse natural images abound. Look through the eyes and ears of these artists with docents Maureen Draper and Chris Christensen on a leisurely walk to celebrate spring on the Bear Meadow and Zinfandel Trails.



Stop In and Explore

Saturday and Sunday
 April 25 and 26
 Daniels Nature Center
 12:00noon to 5:00pm



Please see the description for April 4.



Haley Edmonson

Purisima Creek Redwoods Open Space Preserve

Redwood Oxygen

Sunday • April 26
 Purisima Creek Redwoods • 5.3mi
 10:30am to 3:00pm



Find out why you'll be breathing some of the cleanest air in the world with docents Bob Segalla and Sam Berry on the Purisima Creek and Craig Britton Trails. You'll also learn about the redwood logging history of the area. This leisurely-paced hike through a cool mystical forest is suitable for capable children. **Reservations are required and will be accepted on or after April 12.**

Spring Splendor

Sunday • April 26
 Russian Ridge • 3.4mi
 11:00am to 2:00pm



This Preserve is a world class location for viewing spring splendor with an unusually high number of wildflower species blooming profusely and concurrently, plus spectacular vistas over bay, mountains, and ocean. You'll walk at a leisurely pace led by your docents Marilyn and Bill Bauriedel, and June Cancell on the Ridge, Charquin and Ancient Oaks Trails to discover wildflowers in detail. The route will traverse grassland, mixed evergreen forest, and chaparral plant communities. A mid-morning start for this hike should allow time for wildflowers to wake up and show you their beauty. Attentive children over 8 years old are welcome. **(Note: Parking is limited on spring weekends. Arrive early.)**

MAY

Ferns and Other Ancient Plants

Saturday • May 2
 Monte Bello • 3.2mi
 10:00am to 1:30pm



Walking down into Stevens Creek Canyon, docents Debbie Mytels and Ping Li will help you identify various ferns and other plants that evolved before flowers graced the Earth. You'll hear a few stories about how ferns were a part of other cultures for many generations and you'll stop to look for newts along the creek. On the return via the Canyon Trail, you'll stop for a snack at a sag pond and find yet another type of ancient plant before concluding the hike.

Stop In and Explore

Saturday and Sunday
 May 2 and 3
 Daniels Nature Center
 12:00noon to 5:00pm



Please see the description for April 4.

Wonders of Cherry Springs

Sunday • May 3
 Sierra Azul • 3mi
 Meet: See text below
 10:00am to 2:30pm



Join docents Greg Azevedo, Emma Finter, and Gordon Ferguson at a special access area of this Preserve that will traverse mixed evergreen forest and grassland. You'll discuss local history and learn about the pond environment and flora of the area while enjoying views of Santa Clara Valley and the surrounding Preserve. This moderately-paced hike includes a 500-foot elevation gain uphill segment. **(Note: Directions will be sent to participants.) Reservations are required and accepted on or after April 19.**

Earthquake Hike

Sunday • May 3
 Los Trancos • 2mi
 2:00pm to 4:30pm



Join docents John Seyfarth and Collin Lim and please see the activity description for March 1. **(Note: Families with engaged children who are attentive listeners and capable of hiking several miles are welcome on this leisurely-paced outing with minimal elevation change. This popular hike is not suitable for large groups, thank you.)**

Explorer Hike: Stephens Creek?

Wednesday • May 6
 Monte Bello • 5mi
 10:30am to 2:30pm



Join docents Mary Brunkhorst and Laura Levin for a leisurely hike along the Canyon, Stevens Creek Nature, and White Oak Trails. While discovering the flora and fauna of this mixed evergreen woodland, you'll learn about the early settler Elisha Stephens and his link to the incorrectly spelled Stevens Creek.

Signs of Spring

Friday • May 8
 Pulgas Ridge • 4.25mi
 9:00am to 12:00pm



Join docents Liz Foreman and Nina Bell, and please see the activity description for March 13.



Jack Geschmidt

Skyline Ridge Open Space Preserve

Ohlone Wilderness Wisdom

Saturday • May 9
 Skyline Ridge • 1.5mi
 1:00pm to 4:00pm



Explore how native people who have lived in this area for thousands of years took care of the land before the arrival of Europeans. Join docents Marie Faust Eviitt, Ann McCarty, and Catherine Crawford-Swent for a leisurely-paced hike and fun activities along the beautiful Horseshoe Lake Trail filled with wildflowers. Discover how the Ohlone people have used strategies like controlled burns to nurture plants and ensure abundant food and materials for homes, baskets and medicine. Engaged children who can comfortably hike 1.5 miles are welcome.

Stop In and Explore

Saturday and Sunday
May 9 and 10
Daniels Nature Center
12:00noon to 5:00pm



Please see the description for April 4.

Let's Go Mindego!

Sunday • May 10
Russian Ridge • 4.5mi
Meet: Mindego Gateway parking lot
11:00am to 3:00pm



Explore the natural beauty and rich cultural history of this iconic landmark. Join docents Chris Christensen, Helena Cohen, and Collin Lim for a hike along the Mindego Hill Trail to the summit of Mindego Hill. The route offers exceptional opportunities for raptor sightings, spring wildflowers and spectacular views of the surrounding hills.



Scenic Aerobic Hike

Wednesday • May 13
Russian Ridge • 6mi
10:00am to 1:00pm



Please see the activity description for March 11.

Listening to Nature

Friday • May 15
Skyline Ridge • 3.5mi
10:00am to 2:00pm



Open your ears and embark on an auditory journey through this beautiful Preserve. From birdsong to windsong, biophony to geophony the hills are alive with the sound of nature. Join docents Chris Christensen and Jumana Latif for a leisurely soundwalk around Horseshoe Lake then climb the Sunny Jim and Ipiwa Trails to bask in the rich ambience of the distant hills. Along the way you'll learn how species compete for their niche in the sonic landscape and how they are constantly challenged to adapt to the modern, ever-changing world of sound.



Hiking and Mindfulness

Saturday • May 16
Long Ridge • 2.5mi
10:00am to 1:00pm



Join docents Anna Lee and Naureen Moon, and please see the activity description for March 7.

Trail Run: Mindego Views

Saturday • May 16
Russian Ridge • 4.6mi
Meet: Mindego Gateway parking lot
2:30pm to 4:30pm



Take in majestic views of the Bay Area from the Mindego Hill summit on this out-and-back, up and down strenuous trail run with docents Anna Lee and Raymond Curiel. Multiple paces accommodated, beginning trail runners and veterans welcome!

Stop In and Explore

Saturday and Sunday
May 16 and 17
Daniels Nature Center
12:00noon to 5:00pm



Please see the description for April 4.

Butterflies of Picchetti Ranch

Sunday • May 17
Picchetti Ranch • 2.5mi
10:00am to 1:00pm



Join docents Jan Hintermeister, Karen DeMello, and Cathy Brown to explore the wonderful and strange world of insects that taste with their feet and smell with their antennae. Learn to identify common butterfly species in their natural environment and understand why humans from the Stone Age to the Space Age have been fascinated with these delicate winged creatures. Many facts and flutters await you on this leisurely walk along the Zinfandel and Orchard Loop Trails. Bring binoculars if you have them. Attentive children with an interest in nature are welcome. **Reservations are required and will be accepted on or after May 3.**



Clockwise from upper left: Stevens Creek Shoreline Nature Study Area by Liv Ames, Skyline Ridge OSP by Susan Osofsky, La Honda Creek OSP by Frances Freyberg, Bear Creek Redwoods OSP by Frances Freyberg, Skyline Ridge OSP by Liv Ames, and Monte Bello, OSP by Anda Corlan



Clockwise starting above: Rancho San Antonio OSP by Douglas Wirnowski; Rancho San Antonio OSP by Yamil Saenz, Windy Hill OSP by Carol Daniels and Long Ridge OSP by Niki Muller



Astride the Sleeping Giant

Sunday • May 17
Los Trancos • 2mi
2:00pm to 5:00pm



Please see the activity description for March 8. **Reservations are required and will be accepted on or after May 3.**

Spring Sunset and Mindego Hill

Sunday • May 17
Russian Ridge • 4mi
Meet: Mindego Gateway parking lot
5:00pm to 7:30pm



Enjoy a relaxed-paced hilly loop hike before sunset with docents Ann Reisenauer, Noa Doitel, and Susan Bernhard as you travel down the Mindego Hill Trail, up the Charquin Trail and along the Ancient Oaks Trail with about a 600-foot elevation gain. You'll learn about and admire some fine, venerable old oaks plus enjoy sweeping ocean and forest views and many signs of spring along the way. Your evening hike will finish as the sun sets behind Mindego Hill.

Explorer Hike: Watershed Wonders

Wednesday • May 20
Picchetti Ranch • 4.5mi
10:30am to 2:30pm



Take a moderately-paced hike through the Stevens Creek watershed along the lovely Zinfandel Trail with docents Kate Gudmundson, Mary Brunkhorst, Dennis Smith, and Laura Levin. You'll see firsthand some of the intriguing ways nature moves, stores, and conserves water to make the most of this life giving resource. Learn some of the ways a healthy watershed depends on the complex interactions between water, geology, soil, plants, and wildlife and in turn supports a rich diversity of species including humans. You'll break for lunch at picnic tables under towering sycamores before returning along the same route.

Introduction to Geocaching

Saturday • May 23
Los Trancos • 2.5mi
10:30am to 12:30pm



Join docents Debbie Mytels and Dave Kocsis, and an REI Outdoor School Instructor, and please see the activity description for March 21. **(Note: This activity includes some off-trail hiking; long pants are recommended and closed-toe shoes are required.) Reservations are required and will be accepted on or after April 25.**

Stop In and Explore

Saturday and Sunday
May 23 and 24
Daniels Nature Center
12:00on to 5:00pm



Please see the description for April 4.

Dinner on the Deck

Sunday • May 24
Russian Ridge • 5mi
6:00pm to 10:30pm



Enjoy a moderately-paced evening hike with docents Paul Billig and Huey-Shin Yuan. Enjoy views along the Ridge Trail and at Borel Hill, and dine on a redwood deck. After the sun sets, you'll do a return hike through ancient oak trees. Be prepared for fog with layered clothing for warmth. Bring water, dinner and a flashlight with a red filter or cellophane covering, if possible. **Reservations are required and will be accepted on or after May 10.**

34th Annual – Hike the Open Spaces

Monday • May 25
Monte Bello • 3mi
Meet: Picchetti Ranch
8:30am to 12:45pm



Join docents Greg Azevedo and Bob Segalla for a leisurely-paced walk through a less traveled section of this Preserve on the Waterwheel Creek Trail. If the weather is clear, expect to see some spectacular views of the Santa Clara Valley and portions of the Santa Cruz Mountains. This walk with occasional stops will include the history of the Preserve and the District, and you'll learn about the plants, animals, and geology of the area. This minimal elevation gain hike is well suited for children and those needing a less physically challenging outing. **(Note: Participants will carpool/shuttle to the trailhead.) Reservations are required and will be accepted on or after May 11.**



Fremont Older House Tours are not being offered for Spring 2020. Please make a note to check next year for availability of tours.





CALL FOR ENTRIES!

11TH ANNUAL PHOTO CONTEST



Entries Due:
May 31, 2020

Photo submissions must be taken in areas of District preserves that are open to the public.

Full contest details at openspace.org/contest



Prize: One winner in each category will receive a \$100 REI gift card and a Midpen swag bag.



Vote: Fans can vote for their favorite image on Facebook!



Enter photos in any of the five categories:

- Landscapes
- Wildlife
- People in Nature
- Plant Life
- Aspiring Photographers (Students in 6 -12 grade)



Coastal Corner

Caring for Coastside Watersheds

Local creeks were once plentiful with silvery runs of trout and salmon migrating upstream from the ocean. Today, local steelhead trout are threatened and coho salmon are endangered. When Midpen recently acquired a new area of La Honda Creek Preserve with frontage along San Gregorio Creek, we saw an opportunity to care for its remaining habitat and help these fish survive and thrive.

Inspired by successful projects in the Pacific Northwest, Midpen anchored strategically placed logs into a half-mile stretch of San Gregorio Creek. This project was supported by voters who passed Midpen's Measure AA, our friends at the San Mateo Resource Conservation District (RCD) and grants from California's Coastal Conservancy and Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW).

For these fish, reintroducing logs to the creek is a matter of survival. Logs create protective eddies where fish can retreat from fast-moving water. They alter the flow of water so that it flushes sediment from gravel streambeds where steelhead and salmon lay their eggs. Logs also create deep, cool pools fish need to survive during the dry season and they provide cover from predators.

With the project complete, the RCD continues monitoring creek conditions while CDFW is tracking fish populations in the watershed.

"Before, we rarely saw fish here," Midpen Senior Resource Management Specialist Aaron Hébert said. "Now we're regularly seeing fish in the newly created pools." 🐟



Midpen Staff

La Honda Creek Preserve

Meet Rolo, Midpen's Gopher Snake

Rolo is a 2-year-old gopher snake that came into Midpen's care in July 2019.

He was rescued from the Vallejo area and now serves as an animal education ambassador for children and adults alike. Rolo is fed and cared for by Midpen staff and docents at the Daniels Nature Center, located at Skyline Ridge Preserve.

Gopher snakes are nonvenomous and are commonly found on the West Coast. They feed on small mammals such as mice, ground squirrels and gophers. Gopher snakes play an important role in the ecosystem by helping to keep rodent populations under control. To see Rolo, visit the Daniels Nature Center on the weekends after it reopens April 4. For more information, visit openspace.org/naturecenter.



Photo above by Renée Fitzsimons



Jack Geseherdt

2019 Donation Acknowledgments

Thanks to our generous 2019 donors! To view a full list of donors visit openspace.org/donations.



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preserve maps, volunteer opportunities and more.



Mount Umunhum's Restoration Continues

Mount Umunhum's Summit opened to the public in 2017, and while thousands of people have visited and taken in the majestic views, staff are still hard at work behind the scenes restoring its native vegetation. For the past three years, staff and hundreds of volunteers have installed thousands of native plants as part of a multi-year vegetation restoration plan. Native plants are better adapted to the challenging conditions and support a wide variety of wildlife including birds, lizards, bees, dragonflies and butterflies. Some of the native plants that have been installed include rock buckwheat, California fuchsia, golden yarrow and several tree species including canyon live oak and grey pine.

"Plants are much slower to get established up here due to extreme weather conditions, elevation and rocky soils. I call this extreme rock gardening," says Midpen Resource Management Specialist Amanda Mills.

"One of my favorite things about the summit restoration is bringing people up to share the history and uniqueness of the site as well as the biodiversity of flora and fauna."

Mount Umunhum is home to 362 plant species, many of which are considered special status or locally rare. Mount Umunhum's summers are very hot and dry, and its winters often bring heavy rains, gale force winds, frost and sometimes snow. The influences from geology,

elevation, exposure to extreme elements, fire history and water availability have resulted in five unique plant communities and habitats. The summit includes serpentine and sandstone outcrops and soils which are extremely rocky calling for a different restoration approach. Extra effort is being made to rebuild soil by incorporating pathogen-free and weed-free compost and undisturbed native soil from nearby that have beneficial nutrients and mycorrhizae (fungi) to give the installed seedlings the best chance for survival.



Midpen Staff

Mount Umunhum, Sierra Azul Open Space Preserve

"There are not a lot of opportunities to restore mountain summits, especially in the Bay Area, so it's been an extremely valuable and rewarding experience for staff, volunteers and our partners to see the transformation of this mountaintop over the past few years," says Mills. Midpen, in partnership with Golden Hour Restoration, will complete a fourth phase of native plant installations this fall, and will continue to collect native seeds for direct sowing over the next few years

while maintaining and monitoring the site to ensure the vegetation restoration is successful.

Please respect restoration fencing—even if you can't see them, it doesn't mean they're not there—walking in restoration areas compacts the soil and makes it harder for seedlings to germinate. 🐛



Women in Conservation: Hallie M. Daggett, First Woman in the Forest Service

In honor of Women's History Month, Midpen celebrates the first woman hired as a fire lookout by the U.S. Forest Service, Hallie M. Daggett. Daggett grew up hunting, riding and fishing, and was an expert shot with a rifle. Daggett was hired in 1913 and served in solitude for 15 summers at a remote lookout station on Klamath Peak in California's Klamath National Forest. In her first season she reported roughly 40 fires and was praised by Assistant Fire Ranger M.H. McCarthy, who declared, "The first woman guardian of the national forests is one, big, glorious success." Follow us on Facebook and Twitter during Women's History Month in March for more stories about women in conservation. 🌿

US Forest Service, Forest History Society