

Del Monte Forest Property Owners

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FORESTNEWS

April - June 2014



Del Monte Hotel 1909

Of Plants and Men - by Neal Hotelling

The Monterey Peninsula is blessed with a nearly ideal climate – for people and plants. While we are aware of how historic cultural change affects the human community, we frequently ignore how history impacts plant communities. The Peninsula's population was native just 250 years ago, and adopted a diet largely based on the native flora and fauna. Although there is some evidence that they may have planted maize, hunting and gathering was the core of their culture.

Over the next century, beginning in 1770, the population became heavily Hispanic. Serra, de Anza, and other Spanish immigrants introduced new plants, primarily for fruit and agriculture to accommodate their tastes. A French scientific expedition came to the young Spanish colony in 1786, and its leader La Pérouse, reported: "The soil...is inexpressibly fertile. Every kind of garden plant thrives astonishingly. We enriched the garden of the governor and the missions with different grains that we had brought from Paris."¹ At some time in this era, flowers such as the Castilian Rose were also introduced to the gardens.

Even though the United States captured Monterey in 1846, the culture of the former capital of Alta California remained largely Hispanic for another three decades. William Brewer recorded from his 1861 visit: "Monterey has about 1,600 inhabitants and is more Mexican than I expected...and Spanish is still the prevailing language."² As late as 1879, when Robert Louis Stevenson visited the area, the Scottish writer recalled, "The town, then, was essentially and wholly Mexican; and yet almost all the land in the neighborhood was held by Americans...[a] class numerically so small [in comparison]."³

The coming of the Southern Pacific Railroad (1874) was followed by the opening of Hotel Del Monte (1880) – the precursor of Pebble Beach Resorts. That same year, the railroad barons also bought the Peninsula acreage that became known as Del Monte Forest and began construction of 17-Mile Drive. The cultural shift was enormous. American and European immigrants came in greater numbers many to visit, and several others who bought and built homes on the peninsula.

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Nature Notes from the P.G. Museum of Natural History

Peer through your binoculars at Bird Rock, and you're sure to see some remarkable activity this season. The stars of the show are Brandt's Cormorants. Usually rather plain in appearance, through the month of April they display their courting finery: white plumes on their heads and bright blue pouches of bare skin at their throats.

In April and May, the female Brandt's Cormorants lay their eggs on the relatively flat islet of Bird Rock. This breeding colony is one of the most significant along the Central Coast. The eggs begin hatching in June, after which the young take about six weeks to grow in their feathers and reach full size. Until they're fully fledged, the youngsters look like the dinosaur descendants they are.

The size of the Brandt's Cormorant colony at Bird Rock varies. It depends in large part on the availability of the fish they prey on. (In El



Brandt's Cormorants in breeding plumage
- Photo ©by Don Roberson, used with permission

Niño years, warm ocean waters reduce their numbers.) The birds will also abandon their nesting sites if disturbed. So just use your binoculars, and enjoy the show. (If you want to see Brandt's Cormorants up close, visit the PG Museum of Natural History—where the birds don't fly away!) - Annie Holdren

FOREST CONSERVANCY BOARD 2014 OFFICERS



Previous DMFC Board President Rick Verbanec (left) and Incoming President Rick Srigley
- Photo by Lynn Carmichael

The Del Monte Forest Conservancy board of directors elected long time board member William "Rick" Srigley as president for 2014, replacing Rick Verbanec who has served the past two years. Robert Hutchison will serve as vice president, Lynn Carmichael as secretary, and Ned Van Roekel as treasurer. Mr. Verbanec will continue with the Conservancy as a board member.

Mr. Srigley has led major biotechnology firms 30+ years. He will guide the board through 2014 to fulfill the Conservancy's mission of maintenance, open space acquisition, and conservancy of more than 1,300 acres of Pebble Beach forest lands.

Visit <http://www.delmonteforestconservancy.org>



Horses have been a part of the history of this area since the earliest days of the Spanish (1770-1822) and Mexican (1822-1850) periods. The exhibitions of these devout horsemen became known as rodeos.

In 1880-81, when Pacific Improvement Company opened Hotel Del Monte and 17-Mile Drive, horses were the chief form of transportation; ridden or more often pulling wagons. Along with the stable for the horses used for transportation, the company established a one-mile oval race track with polo fields on the infield and a permanent stable that could house up to 300 horses for competitions. The Del Monte stables, located in the area of today's Monterey Fairgrounds, were known and acclaimed throughout the west. Early residents in Del Monte Forest (the Hills, the Hathaways, and the Flints, for example) maintained private stables.

Hotel Del Monte was the core of the resort operation until World War II. Similarly, the Del Monte Equestrian Center was the center of equestrian activity. In the 1920s and 1930s international polo teams competed at Del Monte and the track was used for both traditional horse racing and an annual steeplechase.

Samuel F.B. Morse hired Fred Ruhl in 1924 to construct a board-and-batten quadrangle of stables with an open rectangular interior courtyard. Its primary purpose was a boarding stable for the horses of residents. It connected to nearly 100 miles of forest bridal trails.

Grace Douglas started a summer riding and etiquette camp in 1925 for girls in the forest. In 1928 The Douglas School opened (at the site of Stevenson School) and Grace hired young Richard Donnell "Dick" Collins (1908-1984) as the business manager and athletic director. After serving in the war, Collins returned to the peninsula to take over management of the Pebble Beach Equestrian Center. He held the first "Pebble Beach Summer Horse Show" on



Longtime head of the Equestrian Center, Dick Collins, holds court from the operations kiosk during the 1960 Pebble Beach Horse Show. The kiosk is still the center of courtyard activity.



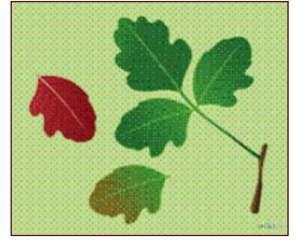
August 4, 1946, with 87 entrants in 15 different classes. Initially a one-day event, it gradually expanded, continuing annually beyond Collins' retirement in 1979.

In 1954, Collins established the Pony Club, based on the English model for training young riders; it was the first such club in America. Collins was named manager of the U.S. Equestrian Team for the 1955 Pan-American Games, and later the U.S. Team at the 1960 Olympics held in Rome. The 1960 Olympic Team Trials were held at the Pebble Beach Equestrian Center.

After Collins retired, the facility was expanded under the direction of Abby and Jay Foss from 1980-84; from 1984-1992, Derek & Bea diGrazia operated the facility; and Tim Postel, who in his youth had been a student of Dick Collins, ran the facility under a lease until 2013. Throughout the years of major events, the core daily activities allowed locals and visitors to enjoy the beauty of the Del Monte Forest in a truly unique way.

On July 1, 2013, Pebble Beach Company resumed direct management of the Center and today focuses on core activities of boarding, lessons, training and trail rides. The quadrangle built by Ruhl is still the center hub of today's stables. Celebrating 90 years of equestrian excellence, we invite you to spend time on the back of a horse, one of the oldest forms of transportation, to explore the beauty of Del Monte Forest as others have for nearly a century.

Summer approaches and, ah, the dreaded “leaves of three...” A fairly attractive native plant, sometimes viney, sometimes woody, yet always is brimming with urushiol, a milky venomous oil that ties our Western Poison Oak to its Midwestern and eastern kin, the Toxicodendrons! (Remember your Latin).



For some, poison oak might cause a mild to severe skin rash, although “rash” might seem too mild a term for those who really are sensitive. Generically: allergic contact dermatitis. For those, like me, who have gone merrily through life and careers verily rolling in the stuff without a blister, oozing or otherwise — don’t be too cocky: a scratch on the arm from cutting brush, gently basted with a broken stem of poison oak, could land one in the ER, eager for steroids in any form. And, like so many allergies, heightened sensitivity can start afresh at that point in time. Humility and long-sleeves (and pants, and no flip-flops) are the order of the day when working around the stuff.



Western Poison Oak
[*toxicodendron diversilobum*]

Perhaps the most dangerous and potentially lethal form of Poison Oak ingestion is when smoked and inhaled (try never to inhale), as proved by too many brave, unfortunate California wildland firefighters.



Mugwort, a.k.a.
Douglas's Sagewort
[*artemisia douglasiana*]

Everyone should know, and as many do ask, all parts of the plant — from seed through leafless broken-off branches bear urushiol. (Remember your Cambodian: “urus” means “to take care of,” and “sh-oil” means it already is affecting your speech). That said, rushing to wash off the oil may not be critical, but I suggest doing so (with soap and water) within an hour.

If impatient to clean off the poison oil, it may help to identify and acquire a handful of Mugwort (*artemisia douglasiana*). Fortunately, Mugwort is a locally native plant, one that I believe works — by rubbing it all over the “affected area,” within an hour if not ASAP. Or, rubbing alcohol, or lots cold water if that’s all you have handy. Above all — be careful, help others in need, and know where your dog has been rolling around — this stuff is not going away!

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REMINDER!

The 11th Annual “A Table Affair” will be held Thursday, April 24, 2 - 6 p.m., The Lodge at Pebble Beach Conference Center. No charge, no reservations needed. Donations will be gratefully accepted for the National Disaster Search Dog Foundation. Thirty-six imaginatively designed tables will be on display.

Of Plants and Men *(Continued from page 1)*

The hotel prided itself on its beautiful grounds with flowers in bloom all year – “the finest, most gorgeous, the richest, the most varied in all the world, the famous gardens of Kew and Kensington not excepted.”⁴ To accomplish this they brought in dozens of non-native plant species from around the world. “In January and February, the first grand burst of spring color comes in the form of great beds of narcissus, tulips, crocuses, crown imperials, and the whole long list of Holland gems, arranged in beds of conventional design...all the rare and beautiful flowering plants of countries south of the equator—of South America and the Cape of Good Hope, of Australia, of all the strange countries and islands over which hangs the Southern Cross—have found a congenial home in the grounds of Hotel Del Monte...Not only have the floral resources of all countries been drawn upon, but scientific hybridization...has produced new varieties of great beauty and value.”⁵

Other non-endemic plant species introduced to the Peninsula, with lesser clarity as to when (but likely in the 19th century), include Eucalyptus trees from Australia, ice plant from Africa, French Broom and Pampas Grass. The non-endemic plant Kikuyu Grass was introduced in the 20th century, traced locally to Joe Mayo, the agronomist that oversaw the golf courses at Pebble Beach in the 1920s and 1930s.

He also helped maintain the football field for Monterey High, for which he first brought in the hardy, drought tolerant grass. In Del Monte Forest he introduced it for coastal stabilization because of its spreading mat of rhizomatous roots. During the drought of the late 1970s and 1980s, this invasive weed took over the turf of Pebble Beach Golf Links, leading to extensive eradication in the early 1990s.

The cultural change of the 1980s and 1990s was in environmental philosophy. While a century earlier, Pebble Beach Company boasted of having plants from six of the seven continents, part of the plan for developing The Inn and Links at Spanish Bay was to eradicate non-endemic species, like ice plant, from the dunes and coastline, and re-introduce native plants to the terrain. For a few years in the early 1990s PBC staff gathered seeds and propagated and hand planted hundreds of thousands of native plants, creating large plant communities of native coastal scrub and dunes plants mimicking areas of the coast that had not been as impacted by man. Propagation of native plants in the company’s greenhouse continues to allow staff to supplement the natural regeneration of these plant communities.

Future generations may define a further evolution of desirable plants, but it is nice to know our climate encourages vibrant living for us to share with nature.🌿

¹ “Monterey in 1786: The Journals of Jean-François de La Pérouse,” introduction and commentary by Malcolm Margolin, Heyday Books, 1989, p.67

² “Up and Down California: The Journal of William H. Brewer,” edited by Francis P. Farquhar, Yale University Press, 1930, p.104

³ “The Old Pacific Capitol,” by Robert Louis Stevenson

^{4, 5} “Hotel Del Monte,” 1892 souvenir booklet, page 9-11





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Dr. Ochoa

DMFPO Semiannual Meeting Sunday May 18th

All 2014 DMFPO members are invited to hear

California State University, Monterey Bay: Advancing the Central Coast

Sunday, May 18, 2014

The Inn at Spanish Bay

2:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.



Dr. Eduardo M. Ochoa grew up in Buenos Aires, Argentina. He earned degrees in physics, nuclear science and economics from Reed College, Columbia University and the New School for Social Research. In mid-career, his plans to return to work in his Argentinian homeland were sidetracked by a military coup. He has worked as an engineer, academic faculty member and administrator, and most recently as Assistant Secretary for Postsecondary Education in the

Obama Administration. He had previously been the acting Dean of the School of Business Administration at California State University (CSU)-Los Angeles, Dean of the Cal Poly Pomona College of Business and Vice President of Academic Affairs at Sonoma State University. President Ochoa's wife Holly is a historian, writer and editor. The title of his presentation is: Strategic Planning of CSU Monterey Bay and the University's role in advancing the Central Coast.