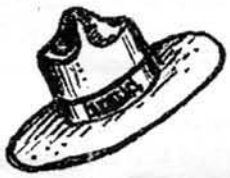
The **Ponderosa**

The Pine Ridge Association Newsletter
Henry W. Coe State Park

Autumn 2001

From under My Brim

by Barry Breckling



Black Oak

I am the rock on the hill, and when people say that I am older than dirt, they are correct—I am as old as the earth, and I have seen much. Someday I will be dirt and help nourish the trees on the slope below me, but for now, I sit quietly, motionless, and observe. I love to watch the red-tailed hawks and the black-tailed deer, and the wind and the clouds, but most of all I like to watch the trees because they are almost as patient as I am. My favorite trees are the oaks, and of them I like the immense valley oaks and especially the black oaks with their deeply lobed and pointy, shiny green leaves. Below me on the northeast facing slope is a forest of black oaks. It is not a pure stand but is mixed with other trees, as they most commonly are found to be. Here the black oaks' neighbors are ponderosa pines, madrones, and bays. I have taken a special interest in one fine, tall, relatively old black oak—I consider her my friend. I call the tree "her," but she is actually both he and she, having male and female flowers. In her graceful beauty though, I see a very feminine nature.

It was a sunny week in early March when I saw my favorite tree once again feel the joy of spring and begin to bloom. Some years snow or freezing weather would cause her buds to freeze and die as they started to bloom, and the following year she would bear no acorns. In most years though, early March in the coastal mountains brought the warm weather that was perfect for her budding female flowers and hanging male catkins, and her buds would sprout free of fear.

As March progressed, more and more of her little female flowers, which were stuck tightly to the twigs or on short stocks off the twigs, started to bloom. At the same time, the larger buds at the ends of the branches pushed forth jagged pompoms of tiny deep red leaves and dangling male flowers, the catkins. The red in the leaves is a toxin that keeps most insects from eating the tender young leaves.

The late winter winds blew briskly for a week, carrying through her limbs the pollen from the male flowers of other trees. Almost all of her opened female flowers caught some of the pollen and were fertilized. If the weather didn't get any colder, those female buds would eventually turn into acorns, but it would take more than a year and a half for the acorns to become mature, and I knew well, from experience, that other perils lay ahead.

In 1857, when she was 106 years old, a man by the name of John Newberry, who was only 35 years old, gave her species the common name "California black oak" and the scientific name of *Quercus kelloggii* in honor of pioneer botanist

Inside this issue . . .

The Snodgrass family on Rancho Orestimba

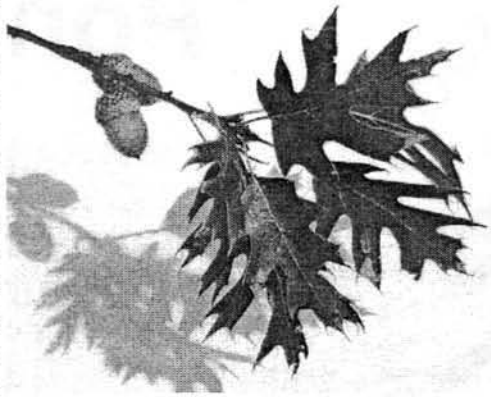
Efforts to eradicate yellow star thistle

Two poems written by Sada Coe

Painting of the Coe brothers given to the park

. . . and more!

Dr. Albert Kellogg, who would later be the founder of the California Academy of Sciences. All oaks flower in early spring, but some oaks, like the valley and blue oaks, have acorns that develop in the fall of the same year. My friend, however, was in the black oak group, and it took her acorns about a year and a half to develop. If you were to look at the ends of her branches in the fall, you would see mature acorns that had been fertilized not in this year's spring but in the spring of the previous year. And, if you looked very carefully, you could see small buds that were tiny developing acorns from this year's spring. Inside an acorn cup you would find a fuzzy lining that insulates the seed from the cold of the upcoming winter. Acorns that take only one season to mature have no fuzzy lining because they won't have to survive harsh winter weather.



Two hundred and fifty-one years earlier, on a warm fall day, as just an embryo—an acorn—she had fallen from her mother's upper limbs. Up in that tree were over 1,000 other acorns. She bounced and rolled 75 feet down the hillside and ended up under a couple inches of leaves and forest duff. There she rested safely insulated from the fall heat that killed the acorns in more exposed locations. It only took a couple weeks of exposure to kill them. Other acorns that had marginal protection survived the heat but froze to death within a week of below-freezing nights followed by days that barely got above freezing. Other acorns that landed in areas with poor drainage got fungus or blue-gray mold and did not survive.

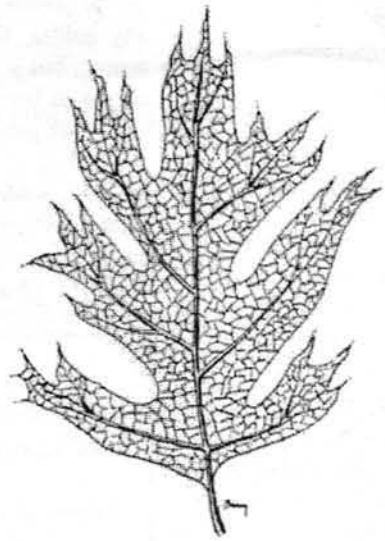
There under the leaves and forest duff she lay asleep through the winter, but with the warming days of spring, she awoke and split open. Out of her side came a root, and it headed straight into the earth. For the next two weeks, only her root grew. Then she sent up a trunk, a small trunk, but before long that trunk would have leaves, and by the end of the summer her roots were two and a half feet deep and she stood six inches tall.

Around her were many other seedlings, but as the spring progressed and summer wore on, most of them disappeared. Their tender roots were eaten by gophers, insects ate their leaves, and deer munched off leaves, twigs, and all. In late fall, just before she was ready to drop her few leaves, a deer found her and chomped her down to ground level. The next spring she sent up another trunk, and again that fall, she was chomped down. But the third year, with strongly developed roots, she grew a little taller and stronger, and by luck the deer missed her. After 12 years, she was tall enough that her upper branches were higher than the deer could reach, though they still chewed on her lower leaves. At 12, she was also the only surviving tree from her mother's acorn crop of the year 1750.

She was surrounded by the canopies of other trees as she grew up, but there was a clear spot, an opening in the canopy where an oak had fallen 20 years earlier. The opening was not directly above her but just downhill a little distance, so as she grew, she stretched and leaned out towards the opening. Even though she arched at an angle down the slope, she was strong and supple enough to survive the blustery winter winds.

It wasn't until she was 32 years old and 20 feet tall that she produced her first acorns, and she wasn't in her prime until she was over 100 years old and 60 feet tall.

There were years when many of the acorns that dropped from her limbs had hitchhikers in them. These were the larva of the oak weevil, a hungry white caterpillar that ate the embryo. When the acorns were developing, adult weevils used their long snouts to chew their way into the acorns. They ate some of the meat of the acorns, but the real damage came when the weevils laid eggs in the acorns, eggs that hatched into ravenous larva.



Many years, fall fires burned slowly through the forest. They burned up all the leaf litter, including the acorns that she had dropped. In some of those years, over 90 percent of the acorns would not have sprouted anyway, because they had weevil larva in them. Hot fires that burned up into the crowns of the trees were the most devastating enemy of the oaks, but when there were slow burning fires every few years, there was little underbrush and few low oak limbs available to carry the fire up into the crowns of the trees. During the years following a fire, she often had large crops of acorns, and they were almost all weevil free because the fire burned the weevil larva, along with the acorns, and

also burned the immature adults living in the leaf litter.

Everyone loves to feast on her acorns. I don't know of any more popular food in the wilds. The Indians who lived in a village in the valley below would come up in the fall and gather the acorns. They loved the black oak acorns and considered them the tastiest of all the acorns. They also valued black oak acorns for their high level of tannins, which kept most bugs and diseases away so that the acorns stored well and lasted easily through the winter and far into the next year. The Indians also boiled the bark of black oak trees and used the cooled liquid, high in tannins, as an antiseptic and pain relief for burns. Many summers they lit fires to burn away the underbrush and duff and make it easier to find the acorns in the fall. They knew that their fires would kill the weevils, too.

Young deer would fatten up for the winter on her acorns. In good acorn years, most of the fawns got fat on the oil-rich nuts and easily survived the scarce months of winter. In sparse acorn years, many fawns did not make it through the winter. In the spring following a good acorn year, the does often had twins, but after a bad acorn year, they usually had only one fawn.

Acorn woodpeckers gathered the acorns and stuck them in holes they drilled in trees, storing them for later use. Scrub jays and gray squirrels carried acorns off and buried them in hiding places. Jays and squirrels have good memories, and they spent the winter retrieving and eating their stashed acorns. Some years, they buried more acorns than they could eat, or they buried so many that they forgot where some of them were, and some of those lucky, forgotten acorns grew up to become trees. Her mother had started that way. I remember clearly, a scrub jay had stuck hers 100 yards up the hill under a tuft of grass and had forgotten he had put her there.

Well, let's get back to the present, the fall of 2001.

My favorite oak is loaded with acorns this year, at least 2,000, I'd say (though I get tired trying to count). She is getting old though. She has a fire scar at her base from a very hot fire that burned through the area 50 years ago. Other trees with similar scars have had a fungus get in through the scar and kill them. Last year people lit fires on our hillside on purpose. They were like the fires of the old times; they burned slowly, clearing the duff and underbrush.

I recently noticed that she has a large crack in one of her limbs, and soon I'm sure she'll loose that limb. She'll probably still survive another 50 to 100 years. I've heard people say that oaks live for a hundred years and die for a hundred years, but it seems to me that the black oaks live for 200 years and die for a hundred years, and even after they fall over and seem dead, they often sprout new growth from their bases.

I have watched carefully today and noticed that her acorns have been falling in large numbers. An eastern fox squirrel has picked up a nice plump acorn from the ground (though this squirrel often takes the acorns from the trees before they drop). She took that plump acorn and buried it in deep duff only 15 feet below me and quickly ran off to bury more. I think she buried this one plump acorn so quickly and is burying so many more acorns this week, that she might not recall this specific one. I just have a feeling.

Years ago I didn't see these squirrels; I saw the native western gray squirrels. Someone brought these fox squirrels from the East Coast, and now the big, beautiful gray squirrels with their wonderfully expressive tails are not to be found. That must have happened about 30 years ago, and it was about that same time that another introduced animal, the European pig, started eating almost all the acorns that fell to the ground. These animals are disturbing to me. About 60 years ago, I started seeing a yellowish haze, especially in the summer and fall, and I have heard loud sawing and hammering and roaring noises in the valleys below. These things are disturbing to me. Sometime in the next hundred years, my special oak will die. She has left her seeds, so I will not be disturbed by her passing, but I am concerned about the oaks, especially the black oaks. There are rumors of a disease heading our way that will kill even the large healthy black oaks suddenly and quickly. What will be their fate in years to come?

I am the rock on the hill. I am as old as the earth and have seen much, and I am disturbed by what the future may hold for my friends the oaks.

Orestimba Ranch: The Snodgrass Family

by Teddy Goodrich

"Live the life you have imagined." Henry David Thoreau

South of Robinson Creek, two neighboring peaks identified as "Snod" and "Grass" commemorate John and Robert Snodgrass, owners of the Orestimba Ranch for almost three decades. John's granddaughter, Terry Anne, shared the story of her grandparents with me, so my story focuses on John, his wife, Fay, and their daughter, Marigene, and their life in the Orestimba.

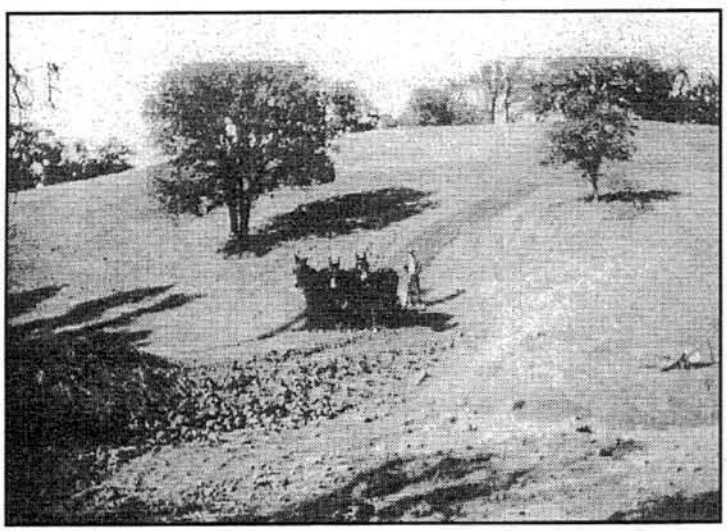
In 1921, John and Robert Snodgrass purchased 40,000 acres of the 100,000-acre Rancho Orestimba. They brought years of ranching experience with them to their new property. Their father, Larkin Snodgrass, came to California from Kentucky in the 1840s. Unlike other immigrants of that era, he was not interested in mining but rather was always involved with raising livestock, sheep and cattle. By 1868 he had purchased part of the San Buenaventura mission land near present-day

Ventura. John was born here in 1869, Robert in 1871. In 1884 the family moved to a large ranch southeast of Los Angeles near present-day Watts. Larkin sold that ranch in 1890 and bought a stock farm northeast of Compton, where he raised thoroughbred trotting horses. Larkin died in 1911.

Prior to purchasing Orestimba Ranch, John and Robert had leased large cattle ranches in Piru and in the Owens Valley. They were also involved in farming operations where Robert's interest in machinery was born.

John was in his element on the ranch. He was a tall, thin man whose skin was wrinkled and brown from all the years he had spent out of doors. He had inherited his father's love of horses, and his life revolved around his horses and the cattle that were the source of his family's livelihood, buying and selling, monitoring feed and water, gathering and branding, and building and maintaining corrals and fences.

One of the first things he did after his family moved onto the ranch was to replace the trail that led up the Garzas drainage from Gustine with a road that he built using a mule team and a Fresno scraper. The new road was essential for transporting cattle and obtaining supplies. To provide an adequate water supply for his stock during the hot, Orestimba summers, he built a number of stock ponds, again using only his mule team and the Fresno scraper. Among the ponds he built are Hartman,[1] Red Creek,[2] and the ponds in the Robinson drainage. He also built the Orestimba Corral at the southernmost point of his land holdings.



The first reservoir in 1923

According to his granddaughter, he never carried water when he was out on his range, but he always carried a lemon to quench his thirst. When neighbors' cattle strayed onto his ranch, he corralled them and informed the neighbors that their cattle were being held for them, but he also told them their cattle were being held without water. Upon hearing this news, there was usually little delay before the cattle were returned to their home range.

John and Fay Snodgrass in 1938

Life in the Orestimba must have been particularly hard for Fay Snodgrass. When the family first moved there, the only accommodations were two small adobe homes that may have dated back to the area's first homesteader, Eli Robison. Within a few years, the new, two story ranch house[3] was built, providing more space and some degree of comfort for this dedicated ranch wife.

Fay's life revolved around supporting John and his work: She cooked and cleaned, but she also rode with him when an extra hand was needed. Except for infrequent visits to town for food and supplies and occasional visits from friends, her life was one of isolation.

Summers were often unbearably hot. Guests frequently brought large boxes of fresh fruit as gifts to the isolated family, thinking they were providing them with a rare treat. For Fay, most often this meant firing up the wood stove and spending many hot hours canning the fruit for winter use. There was always concern about an adequate water supply for the family's use as well as for the needs of the livestock. There was also constant worry about wildfire and especially

about rattlesnakes. When Marigene was young, Fay kept a 410 shotgun nearby.

Perhaps the person whose life was most affected by the isolation of Orestimba Ranch was Marigene. She was so deprived of the company of other children that when she attended first grade at Occidental School in Gustine, she could not take her eyes off the other students in her class. The following year, her parents sent her to a boarding school in Sacramento. All her remaining years of elementary school were spent in boarding school, and she was very unhappy with the separation from her family. Summers, though, were spent at home on the ranch where she was joyfully reunited with her mother and father. She swam in the stock ponds, played with her dog and cat, and enjoyed visits from her friend, Jean. Her daughter, Terry Anne, felt her mother loved the ranch all the more because she was away at school for so many of her growing-up years.

After her elementary school years were finished, she attended Orestimba High School in Newman for three years, boarding in town with a friend of the family. Weekends she went home to the ranch. On Friday afternoons in the winter, she was driven by automobile as far as the first deep stream crossing. Someone would be waiting for her there with a horse, and she would ride on horseback the rest of the way home. She completed her last year of high school in Los Angeles.

To the rescue, April 1940

Robert's death in 1946 and John's declining health brought an end to their ranching operation. The ranch was sold to Ernest and Mabel Gill of Madera who continued the traditional type of ranching operation practiced by the Snodgrass family.

[1] The Hartman dam was removed in the 1980s.

[2] Now known as Paradise Lake.

[3] Ranch headquarters are on private property. Please respect the "no trespassing" signs.

Park News

by Kay Robinson
Park Superintendent

California State Parks (CSP) exist for a variety of reasons, but their two primary missions are preservation of areas with extraordinary natural or cultural values and provision of high-quality recreation. These often are competing objectives, sometimes mutually exclusive. The task before us is to provide opportunities for recreation while protecting those very values for which people visit State Parks.

In the last three years, funds have become available for repair and maintenance of failing state park infrastructure: buildings, roads, and water and septic systems. The projects that were selected for completion were derived from the Park Infrastructure Database (PID)—a statewide master list of unfunded, overdue (deferred) repair and maintenance projects that now number in the hundreds of millions of dollars in value. Of the $137 million available to all state parks, Henry Coe SP received its fair share. Such repairs as new signage and fencing at Hunting Hollow, replacement and additional backcountry restrooms, new campground furniture, preparation for the visitor center expansion, and replacement of the Ranch House roof are examples of how we have applied these funds.

Additionally, CSP received $20 million in funding for management of natural and cultural resources. On a statewide basis, this resulted in such efforts as Native American rock art preservation, development of GIS systems, purchase of software for inventorying and mapping of resources, continuation of prescribed burn programs, and elimination of invasive exotic species. Some projects require long-term planning and implementation; hence, it was helpful that this funding was on a three-year basis rather than the traditional annual basis.

Two natural resource projects for Coe are just now being contracted out. One is for the continuation of the Reservoir Management Plan. The scope of the project will require review of all of the ponds in the newer park additions (Redfern, Silacci, Lakeview Meadows, and Stevenson) with an evaluation of their structural integrity, biological and recreational values, and maintenance needs. The result will be a recommendation for their maintenance, repair, or removal. The second project is a review of the roads and trails for their stability, erosion potential, and placement, with recommendations for repair or removal as well as ongoing annual maintenance. Repairs to the foundation, electrical system, and walls and windows of the Ranch House will also be funded in FY 2001–02 as a cultural resource maintenance project.

A fourth exciting project is the reduction of yellow star thistle (*Centaurea solstitialis*) in the valley of Hunting Hollow. The Hollow is a "natural" for this kind of project. It is composed of smaller and larger meadows broken by natural barriers of creek crossings, tributaries, or vegetation. The issue of non-native plant species invading and taking over the native plant areas of the state has become well known and a source of great concern. If you travel the highways of this state or have rural property, I'm sure you've seen how yellow star thistle (YST) has become more prevalent and threatens our native grasslands.

There has been much research on this issue, and several methods have been developed to combat this "invasion." At the Hollow we have selected four methods to apply: mechanical, biological, cultural, and chemical. The most minimally invasive, so to speak, but the most labor intensive is the **mechanical** method: manual pulling of the weeds after they have "starred out" but before they have gone to seed. That means someone out there in the heat of July and early August pulling the weeds out one by one by hand and putting the weeds into a sturdy bag for removal to a refuse disposal site. The dispersal of the seeds to other areas is something we want to minimize, so the bags are sealed before they leave the site.

The second method, **biological,** is the release of hairy weevils (*Eustanopus villosus*). Both YST and hairy weevils are native to Greece; the star thistle is thought to have become entrenched here because of historic grazing practices and the introduction of YST seed through imported hay. The best news about this method is that the hairy weevil is specific to the yellow star thistle. According to local Department of Agriculture staff, this weevil won't even feed on red star thistle, which makes it an ideal combatant and will likely not create another problem when it is done feeding on the YST. We first introduced the hairy weevil in June 1998 and, just by observation, the location of release appears to have less of an infestation and the plants are shorter than before its release.

Cultural control is otherwise known as prescribed burning. In mid-July we conducted a prescription burn on three acres near the windmill in Hunting Hollow. This meadow was selected because of its fairly dense stand of YST as well as its fairly easily defended borders. This method, like the mechanical, must take place after the plant has "starred out" but before it goes to seed—a very narrow window. Preparation of the burn plan was done by Chris Weske, who also dealt with all of the logistics to get the Bay Area Air Quality Management District and CDF permits, directed the park staff in preparing the perimeter, and arranged for a crew of 23 from seven different county and state agencies on short notice. Park staff spent two days mowing the perimeter and clearing a secondary fire line (to the intense discomfort of poison oak endured by two staff members!). The fire carried fairly well, and we have plans to repeat this burn for two more years to kill any viable seeds and plants that may still persist.

The **chemical** control portion of the experiment was conducted at the north end of the largest meadow. The methodology is to mow the area in early spring so that the Transline application falls directly on the rosettes of sprouting star thistle plants. The interval between mowing and application turned out to be longer than we had wanted, and we feared that the Transline would not be as effective because of higher plant growth. However, an observation of the treated area shows no star thistle and yet a full and similar complement of grasses and forbs as found in neighboring untreated plots. This method appeared to have the highest level of success with the lowest labor intensity. The investment of a half-day of mowing and a half-day of Transline application resulted in few or no yellow star thistle plants observed in this four-acre meadow.

Our task now is to monitor the results throughout this winter and plan for a renewal of all four methods next year. Experiments elsewhere have shown that just one year of burning or chemical application is rarely enough to eliminate this pest. Two to three years of repeated applications of the selected method are required to successfully curb this problem.

This project is designed as an integrated management plan using four different methods. With this plan we hope to build in long-term sustainable management practices to eliminate yellow star thistle. Each method has different criteria for success, and some methods will not be able to be used at all in some infested areas of the park just due to the nature of the infestation, such as roadside edges or thin patches that would not be amenable to burns, for instance.

My thanks to Chris Weske, Joanne Karlton (Resource Ecologist of the Four Rivers District), George Gray (Resource Ecologist of the Santa Cruz District), Ric Carpenter, Rick Perez, Dave Teves, Phil Collett, Barry Breckling, Patrick Goodrich, Nedra Martinez, Jim Mason, Ken Parrish, Cameron Bowers, Elaine Hartman, and Joe Huff who helped achieve the success we now see.

If you have a chance to hike down Hunting Hollow valley, take a look at the burn area, closely observe where there is and is not yellow star thistle, and even look for those tiny winged creatures, the hairy weevil. Over the years I hope you'll notice an improvement in the environment and a lessening of this threat. If you'd like to become involved with any of these methods, please give me a call.

Yellow Star Thistle
by Chris Weske

Yellow star thistle (*Centaurea solstitialis*) is a winter annual that was introduced into California around 1850. This Eurasian weed now infests 22 million acres in 56 of the 58 counties in California. Yellow star thistle (YST) can develop into dense stands over hundreds of acres, crowding out desirable species of grasses and forbs. The spines on the flower heads make walking through YST a less-than-desirable experience.

Yellow star thistle is encroaching into Henry W. Coe State Park. This species is working its way up the road from the Coyote Creek Entrance and has a good foothold throughout Hunting Hollow. In an attempt to begin dealing with this species in the park, a series of trials have been set up in the meadows of Hunting Hollow. Current control techniques include chemical, biological, fire, and manual efforts, which are all established methods used by other land managers.

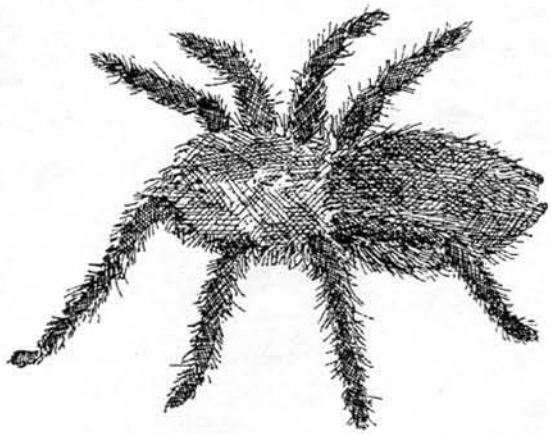
On April 24, 2001, two meadows were sprayed with Transline herbicide (clopyralid). Transline is a pre- and post-emergence herbicide that was registered for use in California in 1997. While very effective on the thistle species, Transline suppresses clovers. Timing of application may be used to minimize detrimental effects on non-target species.

On June 8, the Santa Clara County Department of Agriculture released hairy weevils (*Eustenopus villosus*) in Hunting Hollow. The hairy weevil, one of six insect species being used to manage YST, was first introduced into California in 1990. It feeds only on YST, ignoring other closely related thistles. The weevil has only one generation per year, but both the adults and larvae feed on the seed heads.

On July 20, the three-acre windmill meadow in Hunting Hollow was burned. Two to three consecutive years of burning has been shown to reduce YST populations significantly. Burning after flower development but before seed maturation eliminates the current year's crop. The burn also removes the ground litter that encourages germination of the YST seed bank. The next crop of thistle is burned the following year, thus depleting the seed bank. Timing is critical. If an area is burned too late, seeds will have developed. It is also important to examine what species are on site to fill the void left after removal of the YST, since summer burning can open the door to other undesirable species.

The staff of Henry W. Coe State Park have not entered into the YST battle alone. Park staff are members of the Santa Clara County Weed Management Area (WMA), a cooperative organization of public and private land managers who deal with exotic weed control. The WMA allows for the sharing of information and resources and for coordination of local control efforts.

Other techniques used by land managers include carefully timed mowing and grazing, and researchers are looking into other biological control agents, both insect and fungi. At this time, it appears that the most successful management programs will employ a combination of techniques. Although yellow star thistle is definitely here to stay, with diligent effort we may be able to manage it in some locations.



Coe ♬
by Barbara Bessey, President, PRA

The world gasped with disbelief on September 11, 2001, as we watched a terror unfolding that was unlike anything that most of us have ever lived through. Although my mother told me what her life was like growing up in during the Great Depression, the attack on Pearl Harbor, and the ensuing World War II, many of us baby boomers have been untouched by war for most of our lives. And, as I write this, I am listening to the news correspondents in Afghanistan describe what the beginning of The War in 2001 is like for those living in it. Our hearts go out to the friends and families and colleagues who lost loved ones during The Attack or who will lose loved ones during the events that are unfolding now.

I would like to share with you two poems[4] that Sada Sudcliffe Coe Robinson wrote that I feel speak to our current moments. It was Sada who donated her beloved Pine Ridge Ranch to become a public park in honor of her father in 1953; in 1971, she saw her vision of a Visitor Center become a reality when the existing building was built. I think that I would have liked Sada; from her writings, it seems that she had a lot of spunk and she loved what we now call Coe Park. Her poetry suggests to me, at least, that she also believed that individuals can make a difference.

The Limit by Sada Sudcliffe Coe

How dark are the shadows of evening,
When twilight knocks at the door!
The setting rays of sunlight,
Shadow the land of "Never-More."

It is then one feels the aloneness,
And the vastness of the night.
When all have gone before you
In the day's last parting light.

There seems to be no morrow,
And Dawn is an empty space,
The work that is done within the day
Seems nothing at all but waste.

Perhaps one has reached the limit,
Of what one was meant to be,
And the roots of one's active living
Are cut like a stunted tree.

Man's Light by Sada Sudcliffe Coe

Life is such a little while!
One day a tear! The next a smile!
A candle reaching into space!
Searching! Searching for its fate!

Life is such a little while!
One day a tear! The next a smile!
While the candle's tiny flame
Keeps burning on through wind or rain!

Through the darkness of the night
The candle burns! It is man's light!
Far within the vast beyond
Is the echo of man's song!

The candle flickers now and then,
As it helps to guide a friend,
Who reaches blindly into space,
Searching! Searching for his fate!

I hope that you will join us for our annual celebration of Thanksgiving at Coe on the Saturday after Thanksgiving. Last year, more than 50 of us enjoyed a magnificent sunset as we ate our dinner in the White Barn. The barn was dressed up with candles and other seasonal decorations, and we enjoyed tasting all of the various kinds of dishes that everyone brought.

This is your organization. Get involved in something that interests you. Let me know if there is something you would like to participate in but you haven't yet seen an opportunity to do so. You can e-mail me any comments or suggestions (BBessey@AIR.org).

I hope you remain safe in these difficult times; see you at the park!

[4] These poems were published as part of her book called *The Lost Trails of Santa Clara.*

A Very Special "Hill" for the Park

by Nedra Martinez

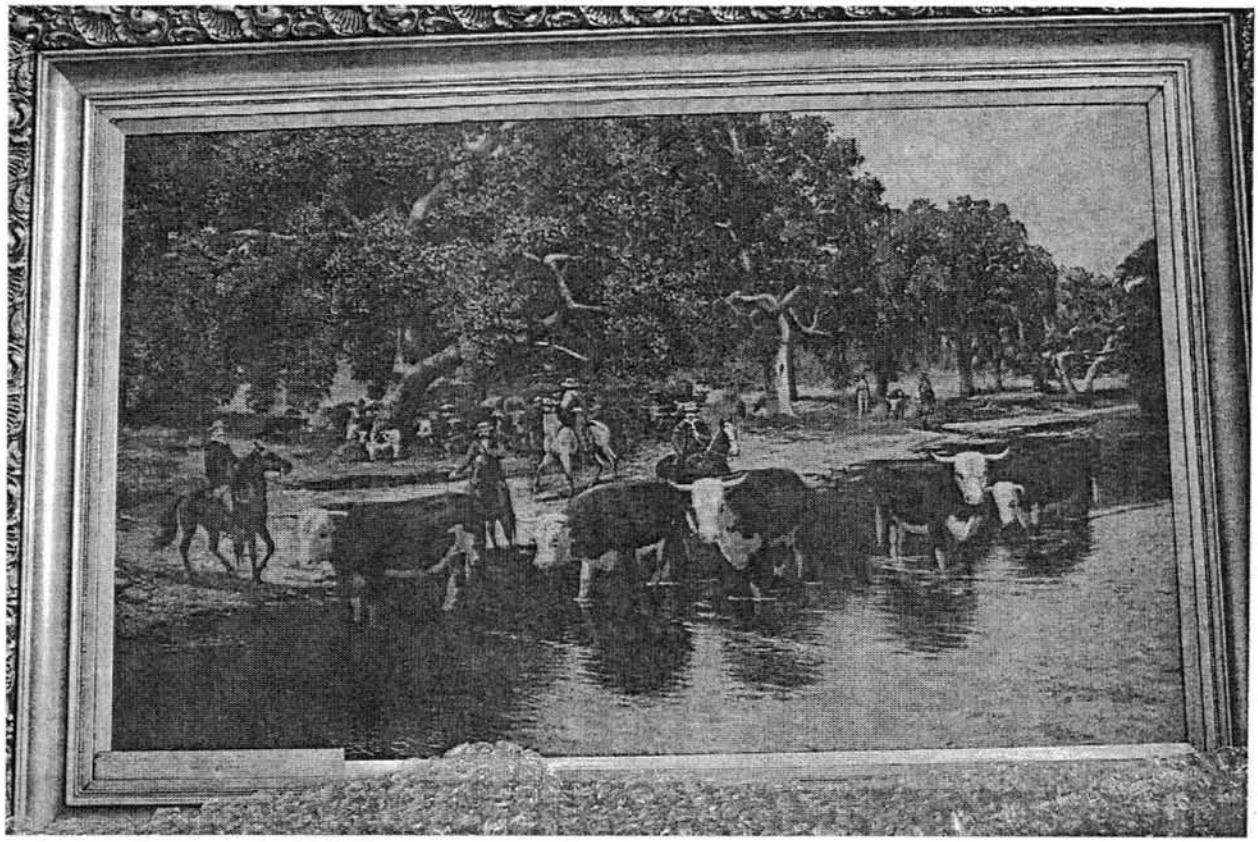
February 7th might have seemed like an ordinary day to you, but here at the park office it was a pretty exciting day. But to really get a feel for how exciting it was, you have to start on a cold winter day in December.

Barry Breckling had stopped by the office and mentioned offhandedly that George Thomas, one of the park's ranching neighbors, had stopped him and asked if Barry would be interested in looking at a painting his family was trying to find a home for. Barry knew that I had worked with gifts at my previous park and asked if I would be interested in going with him to look at it. It was cold, I couldn't get into the park, I was new, so what the heck. Little did I know what awaited.

The first thing you notice about this painting is that it is big, really big—43" tall by 63" wide. The next thing you notice is the subject matter, men on horseback rounding up and separating the bulls in a creek bed with beautiful sycamore trees over them. Then we started to narrow things down. Doesn't that look like Charles Coe and his brother Henry? Could the other be Tim Kirby and Adriano Gonzalez? And what about the artist, looks like Andrew P. Hill and the date is 1909, doesn't that name ring a bell? We left promising Mr. Thomas that we would get back to him about accepting the painting.

Ah, the wonders of the internet. No sooner had Barry dropped me off then I was on the net looking up the artist. Well, no wonder his name sounded familiar! He was a renowned California landscape artist and photographer, was a founder of the Sempervirens Fund, and has a monument dedicated to him at Big Basin State Park! Based on that alone, we decided to accept the painting as a gift.

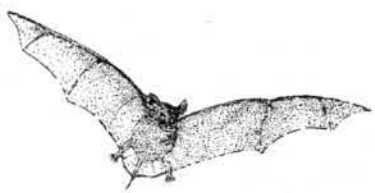
A call to Teddy Goodrich helped fill in the cast of characters in the painting and its history. The painting hung above the bar in Pat Kirby's establishment in the town of Madrone, now part of Morgan Hill. Andrew Hill and the Coes were friends,



and he took many photographs of the ranch. The painting was painted for Pat Kirby, an employee and friend of the Coes. Sometime between 1925 and 1930 the bar was sold, and the painting went to Pat's home and then on to his daughter and then his great-granddaughter, Gayle Wagner. Gayle is the person who has graciously given us ownership of the painting.

After more research we have decided that it is indeed the Coe brothers in the painting, and the creek and sycamores are located under the original bridge that went over Coyote Creek (part of Cochrane Road) where the Anderson Dam is now. Thanks to Teddy we even have a photograph of the bar, after it was sold, that shows where the painting hung.

The Hill painting now resides in the Sector Office and is awaiting a cleaning. The plans are for it to hang in a proud location in the Coe Park Visitor Center. Let's hear it for cold December days and a chance encounter with a neighbor!



Nominations Sought for the Annual PRA Award

Each year at the PRA annual meeting held in February, an award is presented to someone whose volunteer efforts have preserved and enriched Henry W. Coe State Park. It is not necessary that the recipient be a member of the Pine Ridge Association or be a uniformed volunteer in the park. Occasionally the award has been given to two people who had worked closely together to benefit the park. The recipient receives an engraved plaque, and the person's name is added to the large plaque that is displayed at the visitor center.

Two unofficial sets of criteria for selecting the recipient from among the nominees have been proposed:

- Leadership: scope, motivation, and initiative
- Involvement: scope, altruism, and time contribution
- Asset growth: recruiting, fund-raising, personal contribution
- Ideas/Projects: creative, innovative, follow-through with personal implementation
- Performance: past, sustained, future expectations
- Measurable accomplishments: visible results

- Has had a beneficial effect on the park's resources and activities
- Has sought out responsibility and has acted as a leader
- Has leveraged efforts into multiplicative effects by organizing the activities of others

We are asking PRA members to make nominations for this award by the middle of November. If there is someone you would like to nominate, please write a short paragraph of reasons why that person should be considered and send it to the PRA Secretary, Winslow Briggs, 480 Hale St., Palo Alto 94301 or Briggs@Andrew2.Stanford.edu. A committee of the PRA board of directors will collect additional information about the activities of your nominee and will make a selection this fall.

Time to Run for the PRA Board

The Pine Ridge Association will hold its annual election for the Board of Directors in December. The terms of three directors expire at the end of this year. Now is the time to prepare your candidacy statement and send it to the Board's Secretary, Winslow Briggs, 480 Hale St., Palo Alto 94301 or e-mail it to Briggs@Andrew2.Stanford.edu.

Any association member may run for the Board. A member may also nominate another PRA member. To do this, send Winslow a short statement explaining why you believe the person would be a good Board member, and he will contact your nominee to ask the person to consider running.

The most important qualification for a Board member is a willingness to attend Board meetings and to participate in carrying out tasks for the association. Meetings typically take place every other month on week nights. The term of office is three years. If a Board member is also a Coe Park volunteer, meetings and board-related activities count toward volunteer hours.

We use the special nonprofit bulk-rate mailing permit for sending out association-related materials. However, this means that some members may not receive their newsletters or other materials for several weeks after they are mailed. So that the ballots can be distributed (and received by all members) in a timely fashion, it is important that all candidacy statements be postmarked on or before **Friday, November 16.** Please send your statements to Winslow at one of the addresses above. (If you plan to nominate someone else, please do so at least two weeks earlier.) Your statement might be a few paragraphs long and might contain information like how long you have been a PRA member, why you became interested in Coe Park, ways that you have served the park or other volunteer activities in which you have benefited the public, any special qualifications or experience that you have, and specific plans that you have for improving the park as a Board member.

If you have any questions about what it would be like to be a Board member or if you would like additional guidance on putting together a candidacy statement, please call Board Chair Barbara Bessey at 650/851-7813.

PRA Annual Meeting Moved to Feb. 9

Due to scheduling problems, the PRA Annual Meeting this winter has been moved to the following Saturday, February 9. Information about the meeting will be mailed to all members at the end of December or beginning of January.

Coe Website Has Moved!

by Barbara Bessey

Please update your internet bookmarks so that you can find our Coe Park website in its new location. It is now located at: **www.coepark.org.** The former URL will remain on the internet for about six months to facilitate the transfer to the new location. If you have any trouble getting on to the new site, please let webmaster Judy Breckling know (e-mail her at *webmastr@coepark.org*). We want to make sure that the new site is fully functioning before we remove the old one. For those of you who may not be familiar with the website, you will learn how to reach the park, what the various fees are, as well as learn about upcoming park events and information about its flora and fauna. The PRA is proud of the great job that Judy has done in putting the website together, so please check it out!

New Members through August

by Margaret Mary McBride

We are pleased to welcome the **new members** listed below. Thank you for your support, and welcome to the Pine Ridge Association!

Lori Aldrighette, Morgan Hill
Richard Allsop, South San Francisco
John Amouroux, Newark
Al & Suzanne Banuelos, San Jose
Don Barbe M.D., Modesto
David Bourassa, San Jose
Jim Clayton, San Jose
Ann Marie Cottle, Gilroy
James M. Crowley, Monte Sereno
Michael Crowley, San Jose
Marta Dinsmore, Gilroy
Kent R. Evans, Hollister
Ashley Ferry, San Francisco
Gorden Foster, Morgan Hill, CA
Angela & Michael Garrett, San Francisco, CA
Stefanie & Donald Glockner, San Jose

John Grindeland, San Jose
Malcolm Harper, Oakdale
Fred Hines, Los Altos
Dan Hobbs, San Jose
Tiffany Holcomb, Saratoga
Richard Holtermann, San Jose
Robert B. Hopkins, Concord
Steve Hummel, Los Altos
Ingrid Y. Hung, Sunnyvale
Dennis Jacobs, Santa Clara
Michael Judas, San Jose
Liz King, Los Altos
Ken Kiser, Gilroy
Bernard Knechtli, Mill Valley
Elizabeth Lamson, Berkeley
Sally Large, Morgan Hill
Edward J. Long, San Francisco
Carmen Maddock, San Jose
Judy Malone, Hollister
Pat McEvoy, San Francisco
Georgann Meadows, Santa Clara
John & Valerie Metcalfe, Los Altos Hills, CA
Peter Miller, Berkeley
Vance E. Miller, Jr., Portola Valley
John Nerness, Los Gatos
Penny Noble, Palo Alto
John O'Neill, Santa Clara
Bob Petersen, Hollister
Mark S. Pharis, Aptos
Tod Pohlmann, Milpitas
Mike Randal, Woodside
John L. Richards, Palo Alto
John Rohlf, Campbell
John W. Ryan, Santa Clara
Wayne Saylor, Sunnyvale
Greg Schmidt, San Jose
Janet Schwind, San Jose
Murle Scrutchin, San Jose
Paul Sidenblad, Cupertino
Tony Silva, Redwood City
John Spaur, San Jose
Bob Thompson, Morgan Hill
Sarah Tigerman, Redwood City
Sinchi Tonooka, San Jose
Ray Triplett, Monte Sereno
Bill & Virginia Ungs, Gilroy
Sam Valenti, Sunnyvale
William Weinheimer, Hollister
Joe Whitecavage, San Francisco
Reuben Zarate, San Jose

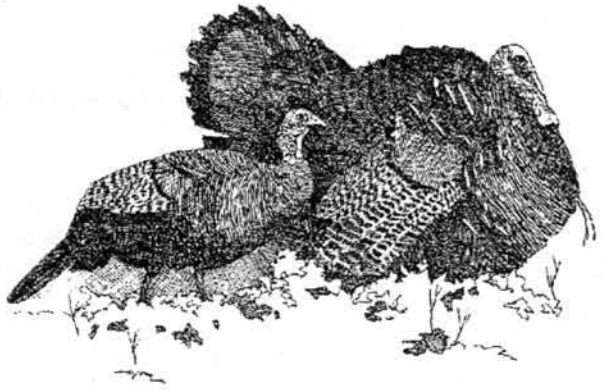
We would like to remind you to let us know of any change of address so your issue of *The Ponderosa* will follow you.

PRA Calendar

Saturday, November 3: **Trail Day at Coe Park.** Join other interested volunteers and help work on trails in the park. If you would like to see what a typical work day might look like, check out our website at *www.coepark.org/trailwork.html.* If you are interested and would like more information or to sign up, please call the Trail Day Coordinator at the Coe Sector Office (408/848-4006).

Saturday, November 24: **Coe Thanksgiving Saturday.** All PRA members are invited to attend a potluck at Coe headquarters on the Saturday after Thanksgiving Day. Bring a favorite dish to share, and enjoy the camaraderie of other individuals who also enjoy the park. Appetizers will start at 3 p.m. Sunset that evening will be at 4:51 p.m. Please call the park headquarters to sign up or to obtain more information (408/779-2728). We always need some individuals who are willing to cook turkeys for this event

Saturday, February 9, 2002: **The Annual Meeting of the PRA and the Uniformed Volunteers.** Invitations will be sent to all PRA members in late December or early January.



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Winslow Briggs, Secretary
Dennis Pinion, Treasurer
Derek Smith, Volunteer Committee Chair
Ann Briggs
Kevin Gilmartin
Dave Perrin

Kay Robinson, Park Superintendent

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	Cindie Brunner	Nedra Martinez

The Ponderosa is a publication of the Pine Ridge Association with approximately five issues per year. The PRA's mission is to enhance and enrich the public's experience at Henry W. Coe State Park through education and interpretation. Articles and artwork relating to the history, natural history, and management of the park are welcome. Please send submissions to the editors at 127 Glenwood Avenue, Woodside, CA 94062-3512; or call 650/851-7813.

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