



FIRST CLASS MAIL

## CONTRA COSTA HILLS CLUB

### CCHC NEWSLETTER – APRIL 2025 ISSUE

Dear Members

Greetings! For our members who have requested mail communication, here is the hike schedule for April-June updated through March 26, a save the date flyer for an overnight outing in September, and a short newsletter.

We recommend you consult the club website at <https://contracostahills.org/index.html> for updates and additional information. Also visit our safe section in [groups.io](https://groups.io) for announcements, late updates, as well as pictures and write-ups from past hikes.

Thank you for your support of the club, and see you on the trail.

# Mendocino & Fort Bragg

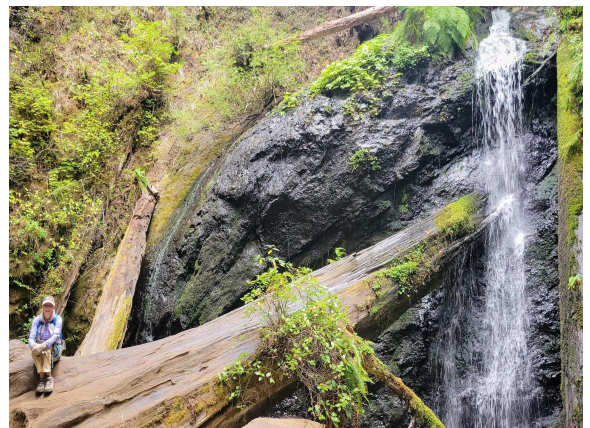
**September 14-18 2025**



Join fellow CCHC members to explore the towns of Fort Bragg and Mendocino with some of the most unique Northern California Coastal Ecology with sweeping views, beaches, verdant forest of pines, firs and redwoods next to pygmy forests. And all can be experienced within the same day!!

**Sunday 9/14/25** – drive to Fort Bragg. Lunch stop at Boonville (hwy 128). Walk Noyo Harbor and breakwater with working boats, restaurants and fresh seafood markets. Visit Noyo Center for Marine Science. ~Emerald Dolphin Motel

**Monday 9/15/25** – @ Fort Bragg. Start the day with an easy short loop along Glass Beach and bluffs to Pudding Creek Trestle. Lunch @ MacKerricher SP Laguna Point Tidepools, then easy strolling in Mendocino Coast Botanical Gardens <fee> -or- a moderate hike @ Jug Handle SP Ecological Staircase Trail.



**Tuesday 9/16/25** – @ Van Damme SP Moderate-plus Fern Canyon Trail to Pygmy Forest Loop -or- just the easy Canyon out & back and drive to the upper loop trailhead for flat 2mi of Pygmy Forest trails. Group Dinner Night.

**Wednesday 9/17/25** – @Russian Gulch SP. Easy-moderate Russian Gulch Waterfall Loop, then Pt. Cabrillo Lighthouse - short walk to lunch spot. *afternoon options:* @Mendocino Town hike the flat, up to 6mi Mendocino Headlands -and/or- explore Mendocino Town -or- Fort Bragg Farmers Market / Murals / Cowlick's Ice Cream / Union Lumber Co Store.

**Thursday 9/18/25** - Drive home. Suggest hwy 20 via Willits



# CCHC NEWS – APRIL 2025



March 23 – Sunol Regional Wilderness – Angus and Mark at one of the stream crossings

## President's Message:

I hope that everyone is doing well and enjoying the longer days of daylight and sunshine. April 2 is the most important day this month for the Club as we gather at Boudin's in San Francisco for our Annual Spring Luncheon. I believe that there will be some fifty members in attendance to enjoy each other's company, the food, and the spectacular view. Although some of you may think that the cost is more than you may want to pay for the luncheon, keep in mind that since the pandemic prices have indeed risen. However, thanks to many of you who have made generous contributions to the Social Committee, the cost has been reduced most favorably. Again, I cannot thank Lucy enough for the great job she does coordinating these events. I also want to extend my thanks to Fran Ternus, who recently resigned from the Board. She was a valuable Board Director with insightful comments and a positive attitude. Of course, that means that we need to fill the position. Please let me know if you would be interested in joining the Board. The Club, as I have emphasized before, only exists as long as there are members who volunteer to sustain the organization. There are many excellent hikes scheduled for the 2nd quarter, so take a look to see when you will want to join your fellow hikers for an enjoyable Thursday or Sunday hike. I look forward to seeing you on a hike or perhaps at the luncheon. Take care and stay well, Stew.

## NEWS AND EVENTS

### Dear Members

A huge thank you to all the wonderful CCHC members who gave a donation to conservation with their membership. We couldn't do as much as we do without you. Also, remember you can give to conservation anytime during the year. The more we have, the more we can give away.

- Beryl Vonderheid for the Conservation Committee

## Spring Luncheon, April 2

11:30 at Bistro Boudin at Fisherman's Wharf, the birthplace of world-famous San Francisco sourdough bread. We will be in a room on the second floor, with a beautiful view. There may be a spot or two left. Contact Lucy Perdichizzi at [lucyperd@sbcglobal.net](mailto:lucyperd@sbcglobal.net)

**CCHC Overnight Outings: PINECREST LAKE** and the area around Hwy 108 – June 1–5, 2025

**SAVE THE DATE Mendocino & Fort Bragg** September 14-18 2025. See the attached flyer.

**OPEN HIKE DATES:** Sunday, April 20, May 25, plus all Sundays in June are open. Contact Marilyn Vihman or Jim Baranowski if you would like to lead a hike, or if you would like some ideas for hikes.

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**IN THEIR FOOTSTEPS:** A full set of write-ups and pictures can be found under CCHChikers on groups.io. Contact Rosemary Johnson with questions.

**CHINA WALL, MACEDO RANCH, ALAMO,** March 2. Leaders: Diane Cannon and Colette Cussary. Precipitation, cold wind, muddy trails, and stream crossings. Considered all possible miseries and we still showed up at the trailhead. Luckily no rainfall, with patches of blue sky high up from the beginning. Late morning sunshine dappled on the vivid wasabi-green hill with bare trees. Sprouting valley oak begin to add gentle hue gradations. On the Briones to Mount Diablo Trail, China Wall forces you to stop with admiration even from a distance. Years of erosion have created these thrust-faulting rock formations into fine sculptures. A small detour to visit the picnic table dedicated to past CCHC member Betty Goldstein. Lunch at Borges Ranch. Then the real challenge came on Buckeye Ravine, muddy skidding steep downhill. At the bottom of the trail we were rewarded, facing soaring Castle Rock. Nature is ever fascinating; there are some identifiable faces on the rock. Golden eagles and red-tailed hawks gliding high above with sparrows cutting the air at sharp angles. On the way back we chatted about how lucky to hike on a perfect day in this season, the transition into real Spring. Thank you, Diane and Colette, for leading another memorable hike and for the treat, and 11 hikers for your love of nature.

– Sophia Garcia



March 2 – Marilyn, Diane, Angus on China Wall

# CCHC NEWS – APRIL 2025



March 9 – Lake Merritt walk before Annual Meeting

**ANNUAL MEETING**, March 9. March 9, 2025 was not an ordinary Sunday. Not only was it the beginning of daylight savings time, but it was the day that the Contra Costa Hills Club held its annual meeting. Club members who were enthusiastic about coming early to walk around Lake Merritt gathered at Oakland's Lakeside Park Garden Center to begin the three-mile trek around the lake. We informally gathered at around 10:00 a.m. and soon began our walk in small groups or as individuals. The sun was shining with a light breeze while temperatures hovered in the fifties. A variety of birds were on the placid lake including egrets, mallards, coots, Canadian geese, and a lone white pelican. Once the hikers returned to the Garden Center, they joined with the members who had arrived in the meantime. There was an expansive display of goodies to enjoy while we all engaged in friendly conversation and caught up with those we had not seen for a while. Our guest speaker, Susan Ramos, a naturalist with the East Bay Regional Park District at Crab Cove Visitor Center, Alameda, was about to begin her presentation when we ran into a technical glitch. So, Stew pivoted a bit and began the business meeting while Susan and Jim headed to Alameda to get an electric cord that we thought would correct the problem. Well, that wasn't the solution. The projector was not working with Susan's computer to present the PowerPoint presentation. Nonetheless, after a fifteen-minute break once the business meeting was concluded, Susan began a most wonderful and informative talk about monarch butterflies. Her props worked well as did her knowledge and dedication to these beautiful winged gifts that enhance our planet. Once her presentation ended, Stew had some closing remarks and then we most efficiently cleared the room of tables, chairs, leftover refreshments, CCHC memorabilia (kindly brought by Yvonne, our historian), and we vacated the premises. By the way, the slate of officers was elected to serve another year. Thank you to those of you who attended this year's annual meeting. I hope that those of you who did not make it will consider coming in 2026. – Stew Perlman



March 13 – Carquinez Scenic Drive

**CARQUINEZ SCENIC DRIVE**, March 13. Leader: Rosemary Johnson. Why did the newt cross the road? To get to the other side? Or, was it for romance? Known as California newts or orange-bellied newts, native to Northern California coastal counties, these creatures were crossing the road in large numbers. A brave group of hikers had shown up to contemplate these questions, as well as the key question of whether or not it would rain. Rosemary led the group from the Port Costa Staging Area near Carquinez Scenic Drive. This paved road is also called George Miller Regional Trail, and is known by locals as "Snake Road." From its winding perch along the hills between Martinez and Crockett, long freight trains could be seen far below. Large ships passed by on the straight. Big clouds did have gray in them, but the sun was shining through. The current road had originally been built for vehicle traffic, but became difficult to maintain due to the steep terrain. Today it is still nicely paved, but is closed to cars. Hikers, cyclists, strollers and wheelchairs, all share the same winding road. There are small cement platforms off to the sides for people with wheelchairs to use for rest stops. The group stopped at a picnic area for lunch and watched the beautiful scenery below. The clouds above were dramatically changing. Coincidentally, another CCHC member coming from the opposite direction met up with the group. A man passed by and offered to take a photo of the hikers. The hills were so green it seemed like St. Patrick's Day had arrived early. The hikers were almost euphoric. Blue lupines and poppies were blooming. But, as they headed back to the trailhead, raindrops started falling. Umbrellas and ponchos came out. It was a gentle rain -- almost enjoyable. Then suddenly, the rain stopped. The group arrived back at their cars, grateful for having taken a chance on a day that had turned out so well. – Linda Malm



March 16 – Remembering Pat McDonald Hike

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Please contact James Baranowski at [brnw\\_th@yahoo.com](mailto:brnw_th@yahoo.com) if you have a comment or contribution. Thank you.