

AUGUST 2018



Fort Ross & Salt Point News

Dear friends of Fort Ross and Salt Point,

We had a fabulous time at [Fort Ross Festival](#) and I hope you were able to join us this year as well. This is our biggest event of the year and it's truly a community effort -- so many volunteers and vendors, craftspeople and performers coming together, with Volunteer Coordinator Melissa Bushner orchestrating all that magic. The weather was sublime and several thousand people sure looked like they were having a great time. Thanks go to everyone who participated! We are especially grateful to California State Parks for their support in pulling this complicated event together, for Sacramento leadership for their unveiling of the [long-lost Pomona sign](#) board, and to Ranger Gorman for traveling from Southern California to assist with the militia and cannon firing. Yes, cannon firing returned to Fort Ross!



We asked photographer [Paul C Miller](#) to create this [3-minute festival video](#) for the city of Vologda and Tot'ma, Russia, with whom we have an informal sister city relationship. FRC coordinates a "bell bridge" during Vologda's city holiday in August, which usually means that FRC staff send our greetings and ring the chapel bell on a live and generally amateur feed at a time convenient to the event in Russia. This year we thought we'd take advantage of our star-studded *zvonnitsa* performance by Victor Avdienko, bell ringer from the San Francisco Symphony, and put together a more formal greeting for everyone to enjoy. Thank you Paul!

If you like what you read in our newsletter and on [our website](#), consider [becoming a member of Fort Ross Conservancy](#). We are a nonprofit dedicated to connecting people to the history and beauty of Fort Ross and Salt Point State Parks, and we rely on our community to keep our organization and our parks thriving.

Hope you to see you at Fort Ross and Salt Point before the summer season ends. Please stop by and say hello.

Safe travels,
-Sarah

Sarah Sweedler
Fort Ross Conservancy CEO
sarahs@fortross.org

1939 SEBASTOPOL GRAVENSTEIN APPLE SHOW



Look what our friend Serge Litvinenko found-- an apple chapel! [Read more](#) about "The Apple That Travels" in this article in Western Sonoma County Historical Society.

SALT POINT PARK ACTIVITIES

On the weekends there are **Junior Ranger** programs and **Family Hikes** at Salt Point State Park. Check for flyer announcements on the kiosks upon arrival.

Saturday, Aug. 18, noon - Family Hike - Meet at Stump Beach day use parking lot.

Saturday Aug. 18 & 25, Sept. 1 & 2, 7:30-8:30 pm. - Campfire Program - Meet at Woodside ranger station area. "Animals in the Park" is the theme with puppets, songs and more. Informative fun for the whole family. Bring chairs.

JUNIOR RANGER PROGRAMS (for 5-12 year olds):

Saturday - Aug. 18, 10am - "Butterflies, caterpillars & bugs!" - Meet at the Salt Point Visitor Center at Gerstle Cove.

Sundays - Aug. 19 & 26, 10am - "Into The Forest" Meet at Woodside day use parking lot for a one hour hike. Let's find a Fairy Ring and adopt a tree!

Sunday - Sept. 2, 10 am - Scavenger Hunt at Stump Beach



SEA LION ENTANGLEMENT



Since the early '90s, the Sea Lion Rocks of Fort Ross State Historic Park have been monitored by volunteer citizens and scientists. Monitoring is done for a number of reasons, including noting any changes we see in the sea lions or their habitat. During our last monthly sea lion survey in July 2018, we observed something we've never seen during all our years of monitoring: sea lion entanglement.

At the start of each survey, we never know what we're going to see. Sometimes there isn't that much activity to observe while other times we get to watch the sea lions play, dive, and haul-out. Seeing a 2,000 lb Steller sea lion bull climbing up a steep rock with nothing but his flippers to propel him upward is truly amazing, and it's a scene we never tire of watching! But seeing the sea lion entanglement on our latest survey was quite another story. Thanks to the sharp eye of Jane Straight, long-term volunteer sea lion surveyor at the Park, we spotted two animals with neck entanglements. I was able to capture them in this photo.

Circled on the left: a Steller sea lion with something wrapped tightly around its neck, and it appears to be digging in to the skin. We saw this animal trying to scratch at the affected area repeatedly. Circled on the right: a California sea lion also with something around his neck -- it looks like a piece of rope with something else attached. If anyone can tell what this piece of marine debris is, please send me an email!

Entanglement happens when man-made marine debris, such as commercial fishing gear, gets caught on an animal, often around the neck, and often leading to serious injury or death. We sure hope these two incidents of entanglement at Fort Ross remain an anomaly and do not mark the beginning of a sad trend for our local sea lions. Coming up on September 15th, is the 34th [Annual Coastal Cleanup Day](#), coordinated by Coastwalk California. If you are inspired to help keep our ocean clean and safe for all marine wildlife, consider taking a little time to help clean up the beach. Or, visit the Coastwalk California website to find a nearby coastal cleanup event to join others in their work to clear our coasts from hazardous debris.

Learn more about sea lion entanglement from [NOAA Fisheries](#)
Read about some of The Marine Mammal Center's [Entangled Patients](#)
Learn more about [FRC's Marine Mammal Monitoring Projects](#)

SNAPSHOT CAL COAST



This June, Fort Ross Conservancy participated in Cal Academy's annual Snapshot Cal Coast bioblitz. This was our third year hosting a mini bioblitz as part of the statewide event, and this year in the interest of capturing data on a whole new stretch of our coastline we moved our bioblitz to an entirely new location: Windermere Point, the northernmost area of Fort Ross State Historic Park lands, just at the tip of land, south of Fort Ross Store. Within 2 hours, we had captured 376 observations, 94 different species -- and this was with only five of us in the field!

To look at the specifics of our bioblitz, you can check out the [iNaturalist project page](#).

In 2017 we held a two day event at Salt Point capturing 477 observations and 111 different species, and in 2016 we surveyed Fort Ross Cove for a total of 223 observations and 104 different species.

Statewide, this year's event was our most successful event, with a whopping 14,477 observations and 1,586 species! For a detailed list of all the species seen throughout California [check out the project page](#).

Snapshot Cal Coast is an annual California statewide effort to document our coastal biodiversity by holding a series of bioblitzes up and down the coast, focusing on intertidal zones in marine protected areas (MPAs). Led by the California Academy of Sciences and with support from the MPA Collaborative Network and other partners, we'll be creating a snapshot in time of where species are located along our coast.

-- [Song Hunter](#), Director of Programs

S.S. POMONA 1888-1908

During Fort Ross Festival the Pomona sign was unveiled by two young brothers whose sixth great grandparents were George W and Mercedes Call.

John Foster (retired Senior Archaeologist) and Dr. Charles Beeker (Director Underwater Science at Indiana University) did the honors for the Pomona's restored steam whistle, salvaged from the shipwreck and gifted to state parks in 2008 on the centennial of her sinking.



Steam Ship Pomona, known as "Pride of the Coaster Fleet", was built in 1888 by the Union Iron Works of San Francisco. She boasted a triple expansion steam engine and a single brass propeller. As a passenger and freight vessel she traveled regularly between San Francisco and Vancouver making stops at ports along the way.

On St. Patrick's Day, March 17, 1908, the Pomona was steaming northward from San Francisco when she first struck Monterey Rock. In an attempt to save the vessel, Captain Charles Swanson navigated her into Fort Ross Cove where she ran aground on a wash rock. The ship pivoted on the rock and the bow pointed out to sea as Captain Swanson ordered passengers and the crew to evacuate. With the captain leaving the boat last, all the participants of Pomona's final voyage arrived safely onto the Fort Ross shore.

Much speculation took place on why the schooner was traveling so close to shore. " 'We stood in because so many of the women were seasick' the captain is quoted as saying, but some of his passengers asserted yesterday that the real reason was not seasick women, but orders from the

company to save coal and ease up on defective boilers.”
[From the *Call Bulletin*, a San Francisco daily newspaper,
1936.]

(Viewing the *Pomona*, Courtesy of the Stafford Collection.)



During subsequent salvage efforts, the following story about a legendary devilfish appeared in the San Francisco Chronicle:

"Diver Fights with Octopus: Martin Lund Has Terrific Combat in Hold of Wrecked Ship (United Press Leased Wire)"

San Rafael, Cal. September 28, 1908 --- Martin Lund, a diver for the Pacific Coast Wrecking company, had a terrible experience with a monster devilfish while he was in seven fathoms of water Saturday afternoon at Fort Ross cove, working on the Pomona, which was wrecked some months ago. Lund was in the hold of the wrecked vessel when he was seized about the leg by the tentacle of a devilfish. He slashed at the fish with his knife and gave the signal to be hoisted. The devilfish had too strong a hold of him and he had to signal the helpers to cease their efforts to haul him to the surface, because his helmet was giving way. Another tentacle grasped him about the waist, and still another about the neck. Then another grasped him about the legs and he had to fight hard for life. After cutting two of the tough tentacles that grasped him in a death-like embrace, Lund saw the creature preparing to strike with its beak,

and he made a lunge for the head just in time to deal a death blow .

Hardhat diver salvaging the *Pomona* in 1908.

(Photo: National Maritime Museum, San Francisco)

Today, the S.S. *Pomona* is a unique example of California's diverse 19th century maritime history and is among the best remaining examples of steam driven propeller shipwrecks in the United States. Significant remaining archaeological features include the ship's lower hull, drive shaft, boilers, and engine connecting rods, which provide a habitat for a variety of marine life representative of Northern California.



Visit our website at WWW.FORTROSS.ORG for details

Fort Ross Conservancy | 19005 Highway 1 | Jenner, CA 95450 | info@fortross.org | 707/847-3437