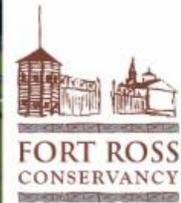


November 2018

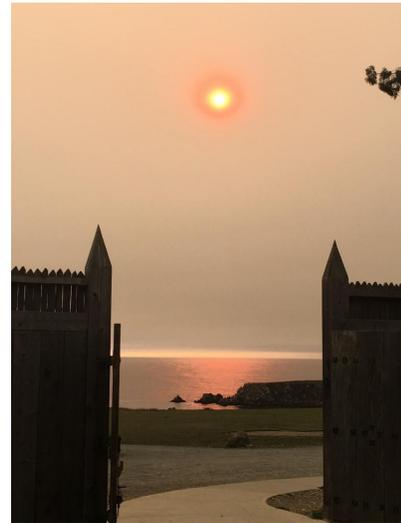


Fort Ross & Salt Point News

Dear friends of Fort Ross and Salt Point,

Haze from the California wildfires is having an impact even here along the coast. Our hearts go out to all the families affected, and we are grateful to the firefighters working incredibly long hours in such hazardous conditions to battle these blazes. A fire broke out not far from Fort Ross this last week, but our dedicated local volunteer firefighters were able to quickly contain it. May the rains come soon!

As 2018 draws to a close we are making plans for the year ahead. We'll continue to strengthen our school programs that serve over 3600 kids a year and grow our [FRC Education Fund](#) to make sure more kids have access to these great outdoor opportunities. We are already brainstorming for our Fort Ross Festival summer bash. And we've got lots of stewardship projects going, from coastal prairie restoration projects we are working on with State Parks to our Bioblitz project we do in partnership with California Academy of Sciences.



As you plan for your year-end giving, we ask that you support Fort Ross Conservancy to ensure that we can provide another wonderful year of [educational and interpretive opportunities](#) at Fort Ross and Salt Point Parks. We are a small grass roots operation and your donation sincerely makes a difference to all of us on the ground and ensures these meaningful programs continue to thrive.

Hope to welcome you to Fort Ross and Salt Point soon!

Sarah Sweedler
Fort Ross Conservancy CEO
sarahs@fortross.org

GIVING TUESDAY at Fort Ross - November 22-29



Join the **#GivingTuesday** movement and [donate today](#) to [Fort Ross Conservancy's Education Fund](#) which makes it possible for hundreds of kids to visit Fort Ross and participate in both our [Marine Ecology Program](#) and [Environmental Living Program](#). All donations made for the entire week of November 22-29 go to our FRC Education Fund. Let's work together to make sure all kids have access to excellent outdoor education!

#GivingTuesday is a global giving movement that has been built by individuals, families, organizations, businesses and communities in all 50 states and in countries around the world. Millions of people have come together to support and champion the causes they believe in and the communities in which they live.

There are two business days set up to encourage shopping – Black Friday and Cyber Monday. **#GivingTuesday provides an opportunity to give back. Together, we are creating a new ritual**

for our annual calendar. #GivingTuesday is the opening day of the giving season -- a reminder of the "reason for the season." Every act of generosity counts, and each donation means even more when we give together.

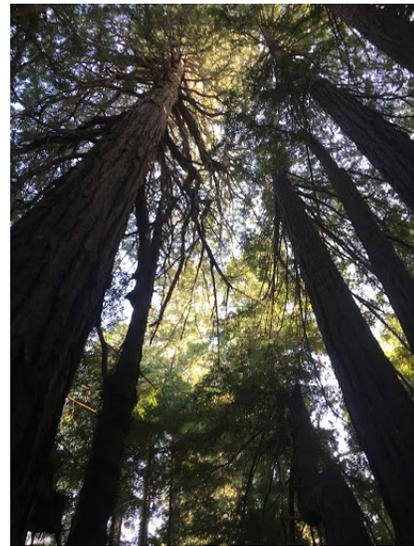
REDWOODS WALK & TALK - December 8th, at 3 PM

Spyra Grove, Fort Ross State Historic Park (Meet at Fort Ross Visitor Center)

Join us for a thirty minute interpretive redwood stroll in our beautiful Stanley Spyra Memorial Grove. Meet at Fort Ross State Historic Park Visitor Center and carpool to trailhead at Stanley Spyra Memorial Grove, three minutes uphill from Visitor Center.

In celebration of their 100th anniversary, [Save the Redwoods League](#) has been offering free passes to all redwood state parks throughout the year, ending with December 8th. You can download your free pass starting at 8am on Saturday November 24th at [Free Second Saturdays at Redwood State Parks](#). Free park entry requires the printed pass.

For more info: <http://www.fortross.org/events.htm> or contact Hank Birnbaum, hankb@fortross.org, or (707) 847-3437 or (707) 847-3440.



SHOP LOCALLY FOR YOUR HOLIDAY GIFTS



The holiday season is upon us yet again, and it's time to find something special for your friends and loved ones. Come visit the Fort Ross Bookshop any Friday, Saturday, Sunday or Monday from 10 am to 4:30 pm throughout November and December to find that perfect gift.

Make a day of it! Pack a picnic, bundle up, tour the Fort, and on your way out swing through our wonderful shop to see our fantastic book titles, gifts, local jewelry, and much much more!

For every purchase you will receive one free Fort Ross poster - just mention this ad.

GATHERERS - A New Role Group for ELP Students

The Environmental Living Program is a wonderful hands-on outdoor experience which allows children to experience the joys of history as active participants, exploring the interaction between people and their environment. This program has been running at Fort Ross for close to three decades and serves well over 3000 kids each year. We love hearing the stories from adults who came to ELP decades ago -- and they are now chaperoning the field trip with their own school kids! On October 2016, Fort Ross Conservancy began managing and running the ELP. It was a steep learning curve, but now in our third season all of the ELP Instructors -- Hank Birnbaum, Charon Vilnai and Tricia Ialeggio -- and I not only have our feet under ourselves (in fact we have our sea legs), but we are thoroughly enjoying our involvement in this incredible program.



We've completely updated the manual making it into an easily navigable website, cleaned up the curriculum, and we are especially proud to announce that the FRC ELP team has created a entirely new ELP Role Group called the **Gatherers!** This new role group honors the long time California Natives of this and surrounding areas, and pays respect to their incredible connection to the lands and the bounty of each season.

This role group asks ELP students to put on their naturalist hats, to practice their observation skills, and to watch and document their surroundings as the seasons change. Gatherers will need to plan for and carry out seasonal foraging to gather and prepare materials needed for their seven years of service at Settlement Ross. Classroom preparation projects include physically constructing a field journal from scratch which they will use to document their findings and to note where, when, and how something was observed or gathered. Onsite projects for the Gatherers are: [Making Cordage](#) out of dried Dogbane or freshly foraged flax, or [Gathering Acorns](#) ahead of time to make delicious pancakes from hand-ground acorn meal while on site at Fort Ross.

This was a very exciting step for our team and I'm proud that they followed their own passion and curiosity to create a new and better way to tell the story of our California Native cultures and traditions. We hope to continue to grow and enliven this wonderful program that has so positively influenced children for decades!

To learn about this fabulous new role group, check out the [Gatherers Role Group](#) page.

--[Song K Hunter](#), Director of Programs, Fort Ross Conservancy

SEA LIONS and COOKIECUTTERS: The Not-So-Sweet Tale



During our monthly sea lion surveys at Fort Ross, we frequently spot animals with precise, circular scars on their bodies. These marks are the resulting scars from cookiecutter shark bites. Cookiecutter sharks (*Isistius brasiliensis*) are a curious species of dogfish shark, in the family [Dalatiidae](#). Don't be fooled by their sweet sounding common name; cookiecutters are the only known parasitic species of shark throughout the world, and they are named for their rather distasteful method of feeding.

Like some other species in the family Dalatiidae, Cookiecutter sharks use bioluminescent [photophores](#) to attract various types of prey, such as whales, dolphins, tuna -- and of course our poor, unsuspecting sea lions. When a sea lion sees the cookiecutter's glowing photophores, it takes the bait, mistaking the shark for bright, edible fish. The sea lion chases after the shark in pursuit of a nice meal, unaware that the tables are about to be turned! When the sea lion is in reach, the cookiecutter shark quickly turns around, and with its suctional lips, latches onto the sea lion's flesh. Once latched on, the cookiecutter shark neatly spins itself around, using its teeth, to cut out a cookie-shaped round of flesh from its prey. Fortunately, the cookiecutter shark's bite isn't deadly, but still rather unpleasant. Everytime we see a sea lion with the characteristic cookiecutter shark bite, we can say, "there's one more sea lion who has lived to tell the tale."

Cookiecutter sharks live in both the Pacific and Atlantic oceans. Their bites have been found on many marine mammals, fishes and even submarines! If you're concerned about happening upon a cookiecutter shark during one of your visits to Fort Ross and Salt Point State Parks, not to worry: during the day these spooky creatures stay in very deep waters and only swim up to shallower waters at night to feed, so humans tend to have very little interaction with them -- if only our sea lions were so lucky.

We conduct monthly sea lion surveys at Fort Ross all year round. If you'd like to come along one month -- or perhaps join our dedicated crew of volunteer marine mammal monitors -- send me an email and let the adventures begin!

[A National Geographic video about cookiecutter sharks -- with the help of cookies](#)
[See here for more about cookiecutter sharks](#)

--[Charon Vilnai](#), Programs Instructor and Sea Lion Survey Project Lead

200 YEARS AGO...

Alexander Andreyevich Baranov left Russian America in November of 1818 after serving 28 years (1790-1818) as the Chief Manager and Governor of Russian America. During his stay in Alaska, Baranov established the Russian outposts on Kodiak Island, then New Archangel/Sitka; his assistant, Ivan A. Kuskov, established Fort Ross. After the departure of Baranov, who was from the merchant class, Russian America was turned over to Russian Naval oversight. On the journey home, Baranov died aboard ship, near Java, never returning to his native Russia.



Alexander Andreyevich Baranov, painting by Mikhail T. Tikhanov, 1818. After completing this portrait, 200 years ago this October Tikhanov sailed to Alta California, making several paintings of our Coast Miwok and Kashaya Pomo inhabitants during his visit.

--[Hank Birnbaum](#), Bilingual Guide, Historical Specialist & ELP Instructor



Visit our website at WWW.FORTROSS.ORG for details

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