



FORT ROSS - SALT POINT NEWSLETTER

PUBLISHED BY THE FORT ROSS INTERPRETIVE ASSOCIATION

A CALIFORNIA STATE PARK COOPERATING ASSOCIATION

SPRING 2008

WWW.FORTROSSINTERPRETIVE.ORG

SEARCH FOR THE RUSSIAN WINDMILL

Soon after establishing the Ross colony, the Russians erected two of the earliest windmills in California. Archival evidence suggests that the first of these was located north-northwest of the northern blockhouse, just south of modern-day Highway 1. The exact location has never been determined.

In anticipation of the 200th anniversary of the founding of the Ross colony, FRIA has embarked on a research project focused on identifying the location of the first windmill. Dr. James Allan, FRIA Board member and adjunct professor at Saint Mary's College of California, is teaching a class of Saint Mary's students in the methodology of archaeological survey and remote sensing. Using the results of archival research conducted by the Department of Parks and Recreation (Farris 2000), the general area of the first windmill's location has been identified. Students will conduct pedestrian surveys, magnetometer and conductivity surveys in this area and will analyze and interpret the data to see if any evidence of disturbances possibly associated with the windmill can be identified. In the summer of 2008, Dr. Allan will continue this research by conducting an archaeological field school during which the information gathered through the pedestrian and remote sensing surveys will be evaluated through test excavations. The excavations will be conducted to determine if there is any evidence remaining of the windmill that will confirm its exact location.

SALT POINT SHORELINE WALKS

Join Keith Nelson for enjoyable and educational shoreline walks to explore tidepools, discover wildflowers and learn about the local geology. Meet at Salt Point Visitor Center (at Gerstle Cove). The walk is about 1.5 miles round trip, which takes about 2 hours.

Sun. April 27 10:00-12:00

Sun. May 11 10:00-12:00

Sun. May 25 9:00-11:00 Memorial Day Weekend

Sun. June 8 9:00-11:00

Sun. June 22 8:00-10:00

Sun. July 6 8:00-10:00 July Fourth Weekend

A PHOTOGRAPHER'S WORKSHOP

On Saturday, May 17, 9:00 AM to 4:30 PM at the Fort Ross Visitor Center, Reny Parker will present "Capture the Magic of Wildflowers: A Photographer's Workshop" including field time for taking photographs. Ms. Parker is the author of *Wildflowers of Northern California's Wine Country & North Coast Ranges*.

"Do your portraits of wildflowers emote the beauty and feeling you experienced when you clicked the shutter? Would you like to have your images "speak" to people?

... You will be introduced to easy methods that help you capture the results you desire. This workshop includes visual presentations, demonstrations, and two hours in the field that will enhance your shooting skills. A review and short critique will follow the field work.

Participants should bring a digital or film slr camera, macro lens if available, tripod, no more than 2 prints to share with the group, bottled water/beverage, and a bag lunch. For field work a hat, sturdy shoes, and pants you don't mind getting dirty. A laptop computer would be helpful to share photos taken during our field work. . ." Reny Parker

For more information: renyswildflowers.com/workshop.html or call 707.894.9100. Fee is \$59.





SOUNDS OF NATURE PACIFIC TREE FROGS

BY SUSAN RUDY

When the rainy season comes to Western Sonoma County, November-April, amphibians come out of hiding and begin moving to their breeding grounds. Salamanders and newts are the quiet types and move silently through the landscape to their ponds and water sources – but frogs gather and sing out their willingness to breed. Singing is a male trait, and this song known as an “advertisement” call is a loud joyful harbinger of spring.

Like birds, each frog species has a distinctive call – and it’s easy to learn to identify them by their songs. Audio guides are readily available to practice frog calls, and a number of good free websites have sound clips of frog calls and habitat information. It’s a great way for children to practice hearing nature, and you can quickly learn a few frog songs by listening to recordings while traveling in the car.

The most common frog heard calling in our area is the Pacific Chorus Frog *Pseudacris regilla* (alternately called *Hyla regilla* - Pacific Tree Frog.) This frog is generally still called the Pacific Tree Frog. Though it can be found in trees, this frog is chiefly a ground-dweller, living among shrubs and grass near water. Large toe pads allow it to climb easily and cling to branches, twigs, and grass. These frogs eat a wide variety of invertebrates; they locate prey by sight and use a large sticky tongue to pull them into their mouth.

Pacific Tree Frog range is large, from southern British Columbia to Baja California and east to Idaho, Montana and Nevada, between sea level and 10,000 feet. The frogs advertisement call is high-pitched, loud and two-parted, and truly frog-like -- typically described as “rib-it.” Most people will recognize it’s call as a widely used nighttime background soundtrack for Hollywood movies, even those set in areas where this frog does not live! Advertisement calls are heard during the evening and at night, and even during the daytime at the peak of the breeding season if the conditions are right – warmer temperatures and moist air are favored. Large groups can be heard calling together in wetlands and pools. When close to other males of the same species, males may also make a slow trilling encounter call. The males can also produce a land call, a prolonged one-note kr-r-r-ek sound much of the year, especially during rains. This call can be heard in unlikely and unexpected places, such as under bushes and in the garden.

Though their voices are very large, Pacific Tree Frogs are small. Adults vary from 3/4 - 2 inches long from nose to tail, with a large head and eyes, a slim waist, and a dark stripe extending from the nostrils to the shoulders through the middle of the eye,. Though most often green or brown, coloring is variable: green, tan, brown, gray, reddish and cream. These frogs can change color quickly from dark to light, probably in response to changes in temperature and humidity. Their underside is creamy with yellow underneath the back legs.

Fort Ross and Salt Point State Parks have wonderful places to listen to the singing of Pacific Tree Frogs. With over 9000 acres of protected natural lands, frog-friendly wet areas and breeding pools are often found. Particularly easy spots to access are the sag ponds that sit along the San Andreas Fault at Fort Ross. These wetlands hold water year-round. They have an abundance of protective water plants that the frogs use for hiding, attaching their egg masses, and provide a safe place for the young frogs to pass through their aquatic stage as tadpoles. To find these ponds, go to the historic Fort Ross apple orchard, and head north on foot along the old roadbed that begins across from the orchard gate at Fort Ross Road. There you may still hear frogs calling this late in the year, and if you look in the water you may see tadpoles developing.

Frogs are natural wonders, but since their life cycle requires both aquatic and terrestrial habitats, they are very susceptible to environmental changes. Frogs are disappearing world-wide due to threats such as pollution, the destruction of habitat, non-native species introduction, and increased ultraviolet radiation. These sensitive creatures act as an indicator of our ecosystem’s health, and the loss of frogs raises many concerns about the health of our own environment.

If you are interested in learning more about frogs or taking part in a nation-wide frog monitoring project, the National Wildlife Federation has a program called FrogwatchUSA for people who can track frog populations near their homes and communities, and share the information on-line. The site provides instructions how to identify and monitor your local frogs and is located at www.nwf.org/frogwatchusa/. The website www.californiaherps.com also has a lot of information to get you started on learning to identify frog and frog calls and includes photos and calls that can be downloaded for herptiles (amphibians and reptiles) found throughout California. Excellent reference books and field guides are also available at the public library and bookstores.

For the best reference of all, lace on your boots and take a walk through Fort Ross and Salt Point, and listen to the frog calls of spring.

EXCERPT FROM A JOURNAL OF A VISIT TO ALTA CALIFORNIA CONTINUED FROM THE WINTER ISSUE OF THIS NEWSLETTER



Dmitry Zavalishin.^a Excerpt from a Journal of a Visit to Alta California during the Round-the World Voyage of the Frigate *Kreiser*.^b 1 December 1823-12 January 1824. Translation by James R. Gibson.

. . . The sloops *Apollon* and *Ladoga*, whose sole purpose in stopping at San Francisco was the necessity of letting their commands rest and recover, were soon, of course, ready to leave, and on 12 January 1824 they set out on their return voyage to Russia. I cannot help recalling the honourable and sensitive behaviour of our frigate's officers on that occasion. Knowing that our former senior lieutenant, K-----,¹ who had been transferred from the frigate, would be coming to delicately bid the frigate's officers farewell, all of them — in sight of the command that had demanded his removal — approached him to say goodbye, although few of them had not been seriously mistreated by him. None was himself personally and directly to blame for the clashes with him, having generally avoided dealings with him, but he had found the means of provoking conflict with us in various devious ways. It is true that he never dared to address me rudely or to interfere directly with my orders, knowing that I reported every day to Lazarev and would not fail to openly recount his disagreeableness; but I often had to take the part of the young officers and his subordinates and therefore not infrequently had also confronted him.

It would be superfluous, of course, to go into a detailed description of California after what has occurred and been discovered there recently, but it should be said that the chief value and importance of California was even then already fully known and frequently proclaimed officially. The working of mineral wealth has its limits, and we see that not even thirty years have passed since the discovery of gold (whose existence, however, had long been known there), and its extraction has decreased substantially, and other countries have already surpassed California in the amount and value of extracted minerals. But the superior climate, rich soil, and capital location on the Great Ocean, with one of the best ports in the world, constitute the unalterable and inalienable advantage of California, and from this naturally sprang the desire to expand our colony

¹ Presumably Ivan A. Kupreyanov, then a lieutenant (since early 1820) on the *Kreiser* and later (1835-40) a governor of Russian America.

of Ross at least as far as the northern shore of San Francisco Bay and the Sacramento River, and to that extent it was then still possible. That is why — keeping in mind such an expansion of our colony — I took advantage of my official travels throughout California in order to make every possible inquiry and to collect the necessary information for reaching the said goal. It is well known that as a result of the legend preserved at the settlement of Ross about the places that I examined on the Sacramento River, the manager of the colony of Ross, Mr. Rotchev, who knew this legend, had been prompted to show the Swiss Sutter places on the Sacramento River that were suitable for the establishment of an agricultural colony [New Helvetia], and that it was precisely there that during the construction of a water mill traces of gold were found. But its presence was known earlier and it had even been secretly worked in California, as I have shown in the article comprising my reminiscences of California (see 'California in 1824' in the *Russian Messenger*, November 1865). Only security and labourers were not forthcoming, and the Franciscan friars, who held sway in California, did not tolerate foreigners, fearing an excessive influx of them and thus the loss of their power.

This fear was also the main reason why they stopped working the silver mines, which had been started under the Spanish government and stopped with the defection of Mexico from Spain, when California became completely defenceless, as was demonstrated by the attack of a free-booter [the insurgent Hippolyte], who pillaged Monterey [in 1818]. There also existed the opinion that the Jesuits, who had owned the missions before the Franciscan friars, mined gold surreptitiously and that this explained the richness of their churches, which was inexplicable in view of the lack of trade and of the possibility of making money from the province's other products.

It is known that at present the value of California's agricultural output has for a long time exceeded the value of its gold output, and it was always possible to foresee this turnabout because the rich productivity of California's soil was even in our day already an indisputable fact that is now more glaringly evident than it was when the friars worked the land less perfectly. I myself saw at San Francisco Solano Mission that in place of a harrow they dragged a felled laurel tree over the fields. And what of it? Wheat yielded tenfold, barley twentyfold, and corn one hundred and twentyfold. That is why when our government declined to make an effort to expand the colony of Ross, and the Russian-American Company wanted to assume the responsibility for doing so and proposed my assistance in the matter, in a note that I submitted at that time I advised the Board of Directors to exert every effort in grain growing and at the same time to caution some directors

against rushing to search for valuable minerals (to which they were attracted by knowledge of the former mining of silver there), since this would readily draw a throng of adventurers who were already rushing there and whom we would be powerless to restrain. Grain was already at that time in demand everywhere, but its production was insufficient even in California itself, which did not have its own trading vessels for hauling it. Needless to say, there was stock rearing at that time in California; the herds were so large that the owners did not keep count, and they determined the ownership of this or that herd according to the place where they grazed; dairying was quite unknown, and they kept only as many cows as were needed to give milk for domestic use.

With the declaration of Mexican independence, California became independent of Spain, but its personnel in government remained the same. After the ephemeral emperor Agustín (Iturbide) was deposed, Mexico became a federal republic; in California the only change consisted of the fact that the former governor, Don Luis Argüello, was transformed into the president of the province of Upper, or New, California (Alta, or Nuevo, California). Only the friars, the leaders of the missions, felt the change in that with the cessation of dependence upon Spain aid from there also ceased; now they had to maintain the guardian soldiers, who likewise stopped receiving salaries from Spain. This, however, induced the friars to engage even more in grain growing as their chief source of income and to slacken the overly frequent religious exercises of the Indians. The arrival of our frigate and two ships of the Russian-American Company to buy wheat afforded the missionaries unexpected revenue because while meat was very cheap, wheat, in view of our great need of it for the colonies, was sold to us very dearly by the missionaries — about four paper rubles per pud. Apart from the generally small output, the shortage of wheat at that time stemmed partly from its export to Peru, for which a small American cutter was hired. It was more to our disadvantage than anyone else's to buy wheat at this price because the supply of a large amount required hard cash, whereas part of the cargoes of the Russian-American Company's ships was bought for goods, and what the company did pay in money it soon recouped with interest because — given the gaining of money by everybody, the issuing of salaries to everybody, and the generosity of our officers — it sold all of the goods that it had brought.

Two places were allotted for the work of the frigate: one opposite the frigate's anchorage, where workshops were established and the chronometers were checked, and the other on the northern side of San Francisco Bay, where firewood was cut, charcoal was made, seamarks were taken, and linen was washed.

Upon the completion of all of the work the sailors had to be given a rest in order to prepare for a monotonous

anchorage of a whole year, and perhaps longer, at Sitka if they were not relieved or for some reason mail did not arrive from Okhotsk and orders to return were not received. The enormous number of horses and the cheapness of hiring them gave the sailors the opportunity of trying an unknown or long forgotten pleasure — riding on horseback. The Spaniard here does not take a step on foot; having taken his seat on a horse, he reluctantly dismounts, so that not infrequently he even rides into a room (through a high — by custom — doorway) in order to ask something.² Therefore, every Spaniard in the presidio has at home a great many horses that he exchanges in his herd. At the landing all of the officers had saddled horses always at the ready day and night, besides some for special dispatches. For the sailors, however, the chief pleasure consisted of the ride itself, although various adventures that befell them served as a source of merriment and endless stories.

Before our departure we were visited by the governor of the province and the head of the missionaries, the Father President (Padre Presidente), as he is called. The latter's visit caused me a lot of trouble. Our hiermonk ought to have conversed with him, but he was an uneducated man from the family of a Cossack captain in the Don Army who retained an old liking of horses but was not at all versed in theology, and against my will I acted as an intermediary between them in conversations. Imagine my difficulty when the Father President began to ask our hiermonk questions about the Graeco-Russian [Russian Orthodox] Church, about dogma, rites, and the position of the clergy, and about the morals of the people and our hiermonk asked him only about horses and everything concerning them. To satisfy both I had to write both the questions and the answers. The sailors, too, almost put us in difficulty. They organized a theatrical performance for the governor and began to act some sort of ___³ play in which the protagonists were a pope and a deacon uttering a very indecent ektenia⁴. It is well that our doctor sensed it and told the Father President that it was a medieval mystery play, but the play ended, of course, in the first act.

Understandably, the enlivenment that the presence of our ships — especially our frigate with its large number of

2 In a similar vein two decades later newcomer John Bidwell wrote that "It is a proverb here (and I find a pretty true one) that a Spaniard will not do anything which he cannot do on horseback . . . for they did almost everything on horseback"; he added that "in fact, I doubt if their horsemanship is surpassed by the Cossacks of Tartary" (Gillis and Magliari, 2003, p. 92).

3 The original has the apparently concocted adjective *pregadky*, which may mean "disgusting" (from *pre* ["very"] and *gadky* ["vile"]).

4 A part of the Orthodox liturgy comprising versicles and responses.

officers and its music - brought to the little society of San Francisco's residents caused it to part from us with difficulty. The constant pleasure and benefits that we afforded them and the generosity of the officers, who rewarded every paltry service, made us the most desirable guests of the Spaniards continually and everywhere, and that is why they saw us off with genuine tears and reminded us afterwards with letters. The Indians liked us no less — for our gentle treatment of them, for our presents (which we gave to their children), and for our intercession to deliver them from punishment, and for a long, long time we dreamt that we would come to free them from the power of the Spaniards. The leader of one independent tribe, who gave me a 'chief's belt' as a symbol of his rank, said that if only we were to expand our colony to the north, he with his whole tribe would relocate on our territory; and the outlaw Pomponio⁵ did not trouble me, although I was accompanied by an important Spaniard (who was hated by him) while we were twice found in the most dangerous place in sight of the hidden band of this brave Indian.

It was not without regret that we left California, where we had found a hearty welcome, rest, an abundance of everything that we needed, and pleasure. After celebrating Christmas and the New Year twice (according to the Russian and the Catholic reckonings) and bidding a sincere farewell to the residents for wishing us a safe voyage and a return to them, we sailed from San Francisco Bay; for a long time we were able with the telescope to see all of our acquaintances among the populace, which had assembled on the southern point of the entrance to the bay in order to see us off as long as possible. Our return passage to Sitka was quite safe and presented nothing remarkable.

⁵ Pomponio was a runaway neophyte from San Rafael Mission who after four years of marauding was captured and executed in early 1824 (see Alan K. Brown, "Pomponio's World," in Edward D. Castillo, ed., *Native American Perspectives on the Hispanic Colonization of Alta California*, "Spanish Borderlands Sourcebooks," Vol. XXVI [New York, 1991], pp. 217-34).

The Fort Ross Interpretive Association is working with Russian archives to research documents and graphics produced on early 19th century voyages to California. Russian American scholars are working closely with FRIA to research and translate these important records which will enhance the study of early California. *Excerpt from a Journal of a Visit to Alta California* is among the documents that will be included in the project publication. The anticipated goal of this project is to produce a book which will feature translations of journals, as well as the beautiful maps and graphics produced on these Russian voyages. Several of the maps are illustrated here. [Ed.]



A Map of San Francisco Bay, According to a Corrected Compass, Compiled with a Description During the Stay There of the Sloops OTKRYTIE and BLAGONAMERENNY in 1820 and 1821 in the Months of December and January. Depths are Shown in Sazhens



Map of Rummyantsov [Rumyantsev] Bay on the Northwest Coast of America, 1820...

A BRIEF HISTORY OF PACIFIC COAST WHALING

BY NICHOLAS J. LEE

The pursuit of whales is as old as civilization itself. In the Northern Pacific, whales were caught as long ago as 230 BC by the ancient Japanese. Whales were caught by the Indians of the Pacific North West, utilizing special 35-foot canoes, harpoons, lines and floats, even by poison. Peoples of the Arctic—the Eskimo, Chuckchi, and Koryak— also hunted the whale which was much prized for its meat, oil and bone. Recent discoveries of old Eskimo whaling camps have been dated back 1000 years. These people followed much the same trends as the Indians; the boats they used were made of skin and called umiaks. In winter time they harpooned the whales from the ice when they came up to breathe. They then pulled the whale up on the ice and sledged it back to land. A successful catch was celebrated by a ceremony called Nolakatuk. The Japanese had developed a highly organized coastal industry in the 1600s, but this had declined by the nineteenth century, possibly due to over fishing.

Whales were first mentioned on the Pacific Coast by Sebastian Viscaino in 1602 when he referred to Bahia de Belenas or Whale Bay in Baja California and to the Bay of Monte-rey (Monterey) as being plentiful in huge sea wolves (sea lions) and whales.

The first shore whaling on the Pacific by non-native peoples took place out of Monterey, California, in 1851; however whaling ships from Britain and the New England ports had been active since they first rounded the Horn in the 1790s. They at first concentrated on the waters off Chile and Peru but activities soon spread throughout the Pacific. Often they caught seals and sea otters for their valuable skins as supplemental income. These early whalers were largely responsible for the discovery of many of the Pacific Islands . . . The Sandwich Islands (Hawaii), because of their proximity to the famous off-Japan whale fishing grounds, and San Francisco, were the whalers' main operating bases in the Pacific where they refitted and took on fresh supplies.

Most of the whales caught at this time were Spermaceti or Sperm Whales. In 1835 the first Black-Right or North Pacific Right Whales were taken on the Kodiak grounds and new impetus was given to whaling. In 1843 the Bowhead Whale was discovered along the Siberian Coast, off Kamchatka, just as this species was dying out in the Northeast Atlantic and the Arctic Ocean, where it had been pursued for over 100 years as the Greenland Right Whale.

Five years later, the Bowhead was discovered above the Bering Straits and after this, whaling tended to concentrate on the Arctic, Bering, and Kodiak grounds in the summer and along the coast of Lower California in the winter.

Arctic whaling was a tough and dangerous business, and in the 1870s most of the Arctic Whaling Fleet was lost in two separate disasters when they were caught by pack ice in the Bering Straits. In 1871, 33 ships and their crews, with oil and bone worth \$1,600,000 were lost.

At its peak, in 1846, there were about 900 vessels in the whaling industry, 735 of which were American. About 500 of these operated in the Pacific. Soon after this, a decline in prices occurred, caused by the opening of new petroleum oil fields. (Standard Oil, which was a principal buyer, cut its price from 50 cents to 30 cents a gallon.) This, plus the Arctic disasters, together with the fact that many of the crews deserted to try their luck in the California gold fields, was responsible for a decrease in whaling. Operations were never again to be so widespread or so numerous, although fewer ships and stations, using modern and more efficient methods were soon to catch more and more whales.

As to the whales themselves, perhaps a brief description of some of the different kinds to be found in the Pacific might be helpful. Whales are an old group of animals. Fossil records indicate they were already well developed in the Eocene epoch, over 60 million years ago. They are descended from terrestrial animals and exhibit the highest degree of adaptation of life in water. Maximum metabolic efficiency is such that young whales can gain 30 tons a year. They are usually weaned in five or six months and mature in two years. Whales have no hair or fur, but have a 12 inch or so coat of blubber for protection and insulation. Whales are of two kinds: baleen and toothed. Baleen whales, Fin Whales and Right Whales (because they were the "right" ones to catch) are whalebone bearing. They have innumerable frayed sheets of baleen suspended from both sides of the upper jaw. With this apparatus they are able to strain or sieve large quantities of small marine creatures including heteropods, pteropids, copepods and shrimp like crustacea called euphausiids (commonly known as krill). Collectively known as whale feed, these were a valuable indication to whalers of the probable presence of whales. This whale feed enables sufficient nourishment to build a huge body with exceptional rapidity, and to support high expenditures of energy and storage beneath the skin of voluminous masses of insulating oily blubber. Some whalebone whales make seasonal migrations from tropical calving grounds to feeding grounds in the colder waters of the Arctic and Antarctic. . .

The toothed whales include those with teeth on both jaws or those with teeth on the lower jaw only. These latter usually have only rudimentary or partially formed teeth on the upper jaw. Porpoise and dolphin have teeth on

both jaws and feed on fish. The Spermaceti, or cachalot, as it is also known, and bottle-nosed whales have teeth on the lower jaw and feed mainly on squid. These squid, which can reach extremely large size, live at depths of approximately half a mile under the surface. Pressure at this depth is equal to 80 atmospheres.

Whales do not have sharp vision. Their eyes are protected . . . by a gland that sheds grease tears. They do, however, have accurate hearing. A sophisticated system similar to sonar is used for locating objects around them and is also used in their navigation, as is a sense of smell or taste utilized to recognize nutrient or sediment laden waters emptying into the sea. This is of vital importance to the migratory whales as landmarks in their journeys between feeding grounds and breeding grounds. Whales, dolphins, and porpoises may be called whales, but generally only the larger cetaceans are referred to as whales, although this is not always the case. Many whales are not confined to one ocean but range all the seas. . . . [The following description Pacific Coast whales is omitted here.]

The most interesting and well known Pacific whale is the California Gray Whale (*Eschrichtius gibbosus*). Gray Whales feed in summer in the Bering Sea and adjacent Arctic Ocean. There are actually two groups of Grays, which do not intermingle. One group, which is not now too large, spends the summer in the Sea of Okhotsk and the winter in Korean waters. The main group of California Grays leaves the north in September or October and travels south down the west coast to Mexico, usually arriving December through February. In the lagoons of Baja California (Mexico), and on the east coast of the Gulf of California, the females have their calves and breed.

In the spring, March through April, they start north again, reaching the feeding grounds in June. The journey is 5000 to 7000 miles each way and takes two to three months. They can swim at 10 knots, but usually swim at a steady 3-4 knots, making 60-80 nautical miles a day. Gray Whales are between 35-50 feet long, the females being the longest. This is reverse sexual dimorphism.

Formerly, many of the Grays stopped in San Diego Bay and were so numerous that it was dangerous to row across the bay because of the risk of overturning. In the 1870s it was not uncommon to see fifteen at a time. Nowadays the Gray Whales congregate off the west coast of Baja California. A few circle Cape San Lucas and cross the Gulf of California to lagoons on the eastern side but most go to Scammon's Lagoon, Black Warrior Lagoon, San Ignacio Lagoon, and to the Magdalena Bay area, especially Soledad to the north.

. . . Gray Whales were not hunted extensively until the larger whales had become scarce. Then in 1946 lagoon whaling started. The ships anchored in or offshore of the bays of California and Lower California and let the whales come to them. The toll was formidable. In 1851 the Gray Whale population was estimated at 50,000. By 1874 only 10,000 were left and they were scarce in the lagoons, but the exploitation still continued. By 1900 there were nearly none left.

The few surviving Grays eventually multiplied enough to justify a Norwegian factory ship with steam powered catchers. Several hundred were caught in the winters between 1924 and 1928 at Magdalena Bay. An American factory ship, the *California*, also operated from 1932 - 36, taking its share. Shore stations at Trinidad and Moss Landing, together with others in California, added to the toll.

In 1937 the International Whaling Commission declared the Gray Whale a totally protected species, forbidding its capture by a member nation. Only native peoples of the Arctic could kill Grays and only for their own use. The number of California Grays is now estimated in excess of 5,000 but they are still in jeopardy. . . commercial exploitation of the few remaining lagoons may soon imperil the Gray Whale. . .

There are three methods of catching whales. The traditional picture of whaling is, of course, of the ships which left their home ports and stayed away several years at the whaling grounds until a full cargo of oil and whalebone was obtained. The whales were caught by small double-ended "whale boats," and then towed to the ship to be stripped of their blubber alongside. The carcass was then set adrift. The oil was "tried" out and put into tanks or barrels on board ship. This method is still the most common, but a specialized fleet has now taken over from the old sailing ship and her whaleboats. The modern whaling fleet usually consists of a "factory" ship, a fleet of catcher vessels, with often a tanker and several whale "tugs". [The history of whaling will be continued in a future issue.]



Membership Application

NAME _____ PHONE _____

ADDRESS _____ CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____

_____ \$10.00 Senior/Student _____ \$15.00 Regular _____ \$20.00 Family _____ \$25.00 Organization \$_____ Donation

Fria board meetings are scheduled for the second Saturday of every other month.

The next regularly scheduled meeting is Saturday June 14 at 10:30 AM

FRIA website: www.fortrossinterpretive.org

Fort Ross State Park web site: www.fortrossstatepark.org



Mission Statement

The mission of the Fort Ross Interpretive Association, Incorporated, is to promote for the benefit of the public the interpretive and educational activities of the Russian River Sector of California State Parks at Fort Ross State Historic Park and Salt Point State Park.

To enhance and conserve the cultural and natural historic, interpretive and educational resources of Fort Ross and Salt Point State Parks.

To sponsor, publish, distribute, and sell appropriate items which increase visitor understanding and appreciation of this area.

To acquire materials and equipment to assist in the educational and interpretive programs at Fort Ross and Salt Point State Parks.

To develop and maintain a library.

To preserve and archive historical material associated with Fort Ross and Salt Point State Parks, and to provide and maintain adequate and secure storage facilities.

To sponsor, support, and assist scientific research and investigations relating to Fort Ross and Salt Point State Parks, and presentation of these studies to the public.

To promote interpretation that reflects current research.

To plan, organize, and implement fund raising programs to support interpretive and educational activities at Fort Ross and Salt Point.

Board of Directors: President & Corresponding Secretary, Sarah Sweedler; Recording Secretary, Thomas Fujiyoshi; Treasurer, Jim Allan; Directors, Carolyn Coryelle; Ludmila Ershow; Konstantin Kudryavtsev; Kent Lightfoot; Marion MacDonald; Susan Rudy
Staff: Lyn Kalani—Executive Director; Lake Perry & Sarjan Holt—Administrative Assistants; Susanna Barlow—membership secretary.

Fort Ross Interpretive Association
19005 Coast Highway One
Jenner, CA 95450
Phone: (707) 847-3437
Fax: (707) 847-3601
E-mail: fria@mcn.org

Non-Profit Org.
U.S. Postage
PAID
Permit No. 1
Jenner, 95450

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED