

Wandering & Wondering

John Maybury

LIFE ON THE EDGE

I feel for the tenants of the Esplanade Apartments (see 10/9/09 photo by Adelman & Adelman), who have been evacuated and rendered essentially homeless for up to a year by the creeping erosion of the bluff below their buildings. They may bravely tell reporters about the million-dollar views of the Pacific Ocean, but the sad reality is that the steadily crumbling cliff has gone down faster than anyone predicted. The local average rate of loss may be two inches a year, but some parts of Esplanade have lost much more, especially in large chunks. People who enjoyed 40 and 50 feet of backyard when they first moved to the neighborhood have seen their property disappear onto the beach, where it is swept away by the tide. As various commenters have noted on my blog PacificaRiptide.com, the blame game has now begun for this unfolding disaster: the owner/landlords, the City of Pacifica, the Coastal Commission, the original builder. Meanwhile, those tenants are out in the cold.

BEACH WATCH

Sixteen years of biological data from 41 beaches in North-Central California are now available in the new Beach Watch online



query system (farallones.org). The Beach Watch shoreline-monitoring program is a public-private partnership of the Gulf of the Farallones National Marine Sanctuary and the Farallones Marine Sanctuary Association. Beach Watch was founded in 1993 and covers the outer coast of central California between Bodega Head in Sonoma County through Año Nuevo State Reserve in San Mateo County, as well as beaches inside Tomales Bay and Bolinas Lagoon. Along each beach segment, live bird and marine mammals are counted, dead vertebrates are

documented, human and dog activities are recorded, and data are collected on oil and tarball abundance and distribution, vegetation/algae wrack, invertebrates, and stream and lagoon status (opened or closed to the ocean). The online query system allows public access to data on live birds and marine mammals and dead vertebrates. Users can choose different filters and groupings to view the

data; for example, the data can be queried for specific species, by individual beaches, or for a particular date range. The data are summarized and can also be displayed in graph form. Info: Shannon Lyday, Ecosystem Monitoring Manager, Farallones Marine Sanctuary Association, P.O. Box 29386, San Francisco, CA 94129, 415-561-6625 x302, email slyday@farallones.org.

SCAT, CAT!

According to outdoorsman Tom Stienstra (San Francisco Chronicle, January 3), you can tell if a mountain lion (see photo) has

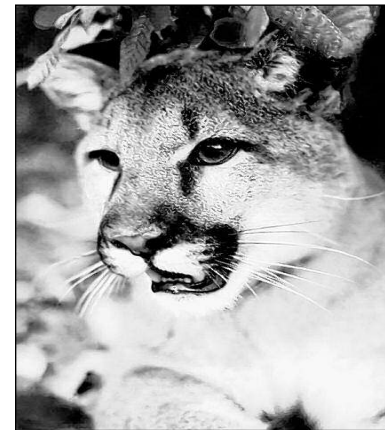
been lurking near your favorite hiking spot if you see scat in the middle of the trail. It's the big cat's way of marking territory, and the deposit most likely will have hair in it from the prey animal that the feline predator recently ingested. Okay, enough information on that subject. Hikers, beware!

MEGAN'S LAW

Dick Hurley sent me a printout from meganslaw.ca.gov that shows names and pictures (and in some cases the addresses) of state-registered sex offenders living here in Pacifica. At last count, California's attorney general listed 22 sex offenders in this town of 40,000.

HYBRID BEARS

Scientists speculate that ice melt caused by global warming has forced polar bears to move farther south in search of food, bringing them into contact with grizzly bears and possibly interbreeding with them. The zoo in Osnabruck, Germany says it has such a hybrid bear on display. Another adaptation by polar bears that may allow them to survive the shrinking food supply in Arctic regions has been



observed around Hudson Bay, where normally seal-eating polar bears have turned to raiding birds' nests and eating the eggs. (Earthweek.com)

VITALITY PROJECT

The whole town of Albert Lea, Minnesota has gone crazy. They all have joined the pursuit of healthy, happy lifestyles in something called the Vitality Project: diet, exercise, stress management, and cultivating spiritual and family values. Read Dan Buettner's article "The Minnesota Miracle" in AARP Magazine, January-February 2010 (aarpmagazine.org).

GOOD DEEDS

Help clean up Sharp Park Beach on Saturday, January 9, and Linda Mar Beach on Saturday, January 16, both from 9 to 11 a.m. See details elsewhere in this newspaper. This is an ongoing project of the Pacifica Beach Coalition and its president Lynn Adams. For more information on their work to save our local environment, see the Pacifica Beach Coalition category/archives on PacificaRiptide.com.

SITSEER

Kudos to Thomas Rivette et al. for saving old steam engines: ctrc.org

SWAMI SEZ

"A pirate does not mow the lawn. Lawns are for landlubbers." (Pirate Law #37)

MAYBURRITOVILLE

- Web Sites: Pacifica Tribune, Wandering & Wondering, Goofbuster
- Blogs: Pacifica Riptide, Peninsula Coastside (SF Gate)
- Email: mayburrito@goofbuster.com