



The Pinnacles Partnership Voice

Pinnacles Partnership, P.O. Box 2080, Hollister, CA 95024 • (831) 634-1210 ext 12

3 April 2009
Vol. 3.2

Photographing Pinnacles in Spring

By Gavin Emmons, PNM Wildlife Biologist.

(Editor's Note: The following is an excerpt from an article Gavin published in 2008 for Nature Photographer)

There is a wild magic here at Pinnacles National Monument in the spring, with life unfolding in a riot of color throughout the park. The air is alive with the smell of wildflowers, the sound of downward spiraling calls of canyon wrens, the breath of wind threading past rocks spires and dancing with swaying branches of gray pines. The rains of winter have given way to gurgling creeks and the hills are bright with green grass and oaks. Across the canyons, hills, and peaks the wildflowers paint the land red, purple, orange, and yellow. Spring is the most popular season at Pinnacles for visitors, and for good reason: wildflowers are abundant, oak woodlands are blooming and electric green with new leaves, and the creeks flow with water. With



Variable checkerspot feeding on black sage flowers, Pinnacles National Monument. Taken with Pentax 645N camera, 120mm AF macro lens, Velbon Carmagne 530 tripod, Arca-Swiss B1 ballhead.

life and color at the park so rich during the spring, it can be difficult to know where to begin as a photographer. However, two park features are consistently reliable and accessible as photographic subjects in the spring – wildflowers and blue oak woodlands. Pinnacles National Monument supports a diverse species assemblage of wildflowers, reflected in part by the 68 species of butterflies and over 400 species of bees that have been documented in the park. The peak blooming season for wildflowers at Pinnacles is March to May, but the season can extend from January into June in wet years.

All photos by Gavin Emmons

Indian warriors and goldfields are two of the early bloomers. Indian warriors are brilliant reddish flowers that grow in disturbed soil near the base of chamise bushes, the roots of which they parasitize for sustenance. Goldfields are tiny yellow flowers that carpet poor soil, often near trails in the High Peaks at the park. By March to April the variety of wildflowers at the park can be incredible. The scarlet wash of wooly Indian paintbrush and venus thistles decorate higher elevations while species of clarkia, blue fiesta flowers, owl's clover, and bush lupine decorate canyons and riparian corridors with pink to purple highlights. The intense orange of California poppies shines from lowland creek beds while hardy bitterroot and wild onion flowers cling to thin soil in the High Peaks. Fremont's checker lilies and mariposa lilies are two particularly beautiful species. The checker lilies have a very short blooming season and can be found sporadically along riparian corridors, with a population along Old Pinnacles Trail the most reliable for photography. Mariposa lilies bloom late in the wildflower season, preferring the hot weather of late spring and early summer and exposed slopes near black and California white sage. Oak woodlands can also be spectacular during the spring. Hillsides above creek canyons are covered with chaparral and blue oak woodlands depending on soil type and sun exposure. While the chamise and ceanothus of the chaparral flower with their fragrant blooms, the blue oaks and grassy slopes of the woodlands push forth new leaves, creating a dazzling effect of electric green. The magenta flowers of shooting stars can often be found below blue oaks in these woodlands along with blue dicks, clarkia species, and baby blue eyes. The most accessible blue oak woodlands are just behind the Bear Gulch Nature Center and on the hills of the High Peaks Trail down from the Condor Gulch Trail junction. The bright green color of the blue oak leaves can be captured in midday, but use of backlighting during the early and late hours of the day can yield particularly wonderful results. Patience and good technique are important for successful wildflower photography. Sunlight at Pinnacles can create beautiful opportunities but can also easily blow out highlights and color. In general, try to photograph flowers during overcast days or near dawn and dusk when shadows create more even lighting. The early and late hours of the day tend to be more still, an essential factor with many of the delicate and thin-stemmed flower species in the park. To make use of midday hours, bring a small umbrella that can act as a shade to block out sunlight... and any rain that is threatening! For most of the photographic possibilities listed above, a good macro lens is essential. A wide-angle zoom lens can also be valuable in capturing images of landscapes. The most important thing during the spring is to simply enjoy the wild and yet accessible beauty of the park. Breathe in the smell of ceanothus and manzanita blooms, walk slowly, pay attention to the details, and you will surely discover the magic of spring at Pinnacles. I hope to see you on the trails!



Mariposa lilies, furled near dusk, Pinnacles National Monument. Taken with Pentax 645N camera, 120mm AF macro lens, Velbon Carmagne 530 tripod, Arca-Swiss B1 ballhead.



Indian warrior flowers, Pinnacles National Monument. Taken with Nikon F3HP camera, 24-120mm Nikon lens, Velbon Carmagne 530 tripod, Arca-Swiss B1 ballhead.

oak woodlands are just behind the Bear Gulch Nature Center and on the hills of the High Peaks Trail down from the Condor Gulch Trail junction. The bright green color of the blue oak leaves can be captured in midday, but use of backlighting during the early and late hours of the day can yield particularly wonderful results. Patience and good technique are important for successful wildflower photography. Sunlight at Pinnacles can create beautiful opportunities but can also easily blow out highlights and color. In general, try to photograph flowers during overcast days or near dawn and dusk when shadows create more even lighting. The early and late hours of the day tend to be more still, an essential factor with many of the delicate and thin-stemmed flower species in the park. To make use of midday hours, bring a small umbrella that can act as a shade to block out sunlight... and any rain that is threatening! For most of the photographic possibilities listed above, a good macro lens is essential. A wide-angle zoom lens can also be valuable in capturing images of landscapes. The most important thing during the spring is to simply enjoy the wild and yet accessible beauty of the park. Breathe in the smell of ceanothus and manzanita blooms, walk slowly, pay attention to the details, and you will surely discover the magic of spring at Pinnacles. I hope to see you on the trails!

Condor recovery efforts continue to soar

By Alacia Welch, Condor Recovery Project



Courtesy Pinnacles National Monument

Time for another update from the California condor recovery crew! In the last couple of months, we released the final condors of the 2008 cohort, continued our intensive daily tracking efforts of the new juveniles, and started documenting breeding behavior in the oldest birds of the Pinnacles flock.

On January 13, Condor No. 421, the last juvenile of the 2008 cohort, found himself outside of the flight pen. He started with a couple of shaky flights followed by crash-landings, but he did discover the rest of the flock on his first day.

Unfortunately, since then he's proven to be a slow learner. It took over two weeks before he landed at the feeding site. We try to make sure newly released condors feed within five days of being released, so his extended time not feeding caused us to be very concerned. So concerned, in fact, we tried to catch him using both a hand net and net gun. We were unsuccessful, but on the third day of trying to catch him, he finally made it to the feeding site and fed! The other peculiar behavior with this particular condor is he refuses to roost off the ground. All of the other condors roost on branches in trees, but for some reason 421 chooses not to follow suit. Unfortunately, that puts him in significantly more danger. Roosting on the ground through the night means he's much more easily approached by predators. At this point, we continue to keep an especially keen eye on Condor 421 and we hope that he starts roosting off the ground soon. If not we may bring him back into captivity for a few months and try to re-release him.

The same day Condor 421 was released, we also let go an adult female condor #112 who was transferred to Pinnacles from the US Fish and Wildlife Service release site in southern California. She had been interfering with breeding pairs in her home region, so she was transported to Pinnacles to see if she might breed with an adult male in this area or if she might change her ways. So far, she has stuck pretty close to Pinnacles with only a couple of flights outside of the park. She also tends to be by herself and occasionally is chased by some of the older females. It seems that she has not tried to establish herself in the flock yet. It should be interesting to see how her relationship with the other condors evolves and whether she ends up staying in central California.

Right now we are in the midst of condor breeding season. This is the first year that any of the Pinnacles condors have been old enough to breed and it looks like at least two of them are thinking about it. Interestingly, both have paired up with condors released by Ventana Wildlife Society in Big Sur. The first pair we noticed was Condor 313 (Pinnacles-released male) with Condor 303 (Big Sur-released female). They have been seen perching together on many occasions and are often seen at the feeding site together. They are also the only pair we have seen copulate successfully. The other potential pair we have seen is Condor 310 (Pinnacles-released female) and Condor 219 (Big Sur-released male). This pair we aren't as certain about and only time will prove if they end up nesting. Fortunately, both 313 and 310 have GPS transceivers, so we can monitor where they go every hour of each day and hopefully get a good sense of what nest cliffs they choose.

That about sums up the recent activities of the Pinnacles condors and the tracking crew for the last couple of months. Hope you enjoyed hearing about our adventures and please contact us if you have any sightings of condors! Alacia Welch 831-389-4486 ext. 276 or alacia_welch@nps.gov

African-Americans left behind a legacy

By Timothy Babalis National Park Service Historian

February was Black History Month. (I know that was awhile ago, but when I conceived this article, it *was* still February). Consequently, I'd like to say something about the role of African-Americans in the National Park Service, and specifically at Pinnacles National Monument. This takes me back to a little-known episode in the history of the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC), President Franklin Delano Roosevelt's popular program for under-employed youth during the Great Depression. When the CCC was established at the beginning of 1933, selection agents were explicitly instructed to show no discrimination on the basis of race, color or creed. This news was received with especial relief among the black community, because blacks had already suffered disproportionately as a result of the economic crisis. Unemployment was higher among black youth than among any other national cadre, as under-employed whites replaced blacks in jobs which whites would never have considered prior to the Depression. Nonetheless, Robert Fechner, the director of the CCC, resolved that the CCC would comprise no more than ten percent black enrollment (based upon the percentage of the U.S. population comprised by African-Americans at that time).

From the very beginning, blacks were among the most ardent supporters of the CCC program and comprised its most enthusiastic pool of applicants. But black enrollment in such a highly-visible public service role posed a serious problem for a nation where racial discrimination was deeply embedded. With very few exceptions, most CCC crews were segregated, meaning that black enrollees were never allowed to integrate with white enrollees, and blacks were almost never allowed to serve in supervisory positions. This meant that even all-black crews were managed by white supervisors (the only exception was Gettysburg National Military Park, where the all-black enrollment—which included supervisors, technical specialists, and ordinary enrollees—distinguished itself by exemplary

service). Local fears and resentment against blacks receiving any advantage through this national program made it difficult to locate black CCC crews in local communities in many parts of the nation. An unexpected result of this discrimination was the appointment of the majority of black units to the National Park Service and the U.S. Forest Service, because these federal agencies managed lands in the most remote parts of the nation, often far from population centers where racial prejudices might result in an inflammatory situation. Problems still emerged.

For example, in 1939 race riots broke out at Sequoia National Park as segregated black and white CCC camps fought one another. But rather than abandoning its experiment in lining out work crews regardless of color, the Park Service (and CCC Director Robert Fechner) retained the black CCC camp at Sequoia in defiance of popular criticism. By the end of the following year (1940), 300,000 black youths and 30,000 black veterans had served in the CCC in 43 states. But the war in Europe, and the anticipated entry of the United States, had created a strong impetus for the retirement of the program. White enrollees were already leaving the CCC in large numbers to enlist in the armed services in preparation of the imminent conflict. But blacks remained deeply committed to the CCC, because they were not yet allowed into the military and still faced discrimination by industries even as they were beginning to recover as a result of the incipient war effort. The CCC still remained one of the best employment and educational opportunities for black youth during this tumultuous period.

It was during this difficult time that Pinnacles received its first black company of CCC enrollees. In the winter of 1941, Custodian W.I. Hawkins accepted the first cohort of these young men, fearing the worst. He was pleasantly surprised when they proved to be hard-working and responsible. At the end of the season, in the spring of 1942, Hawkins wrote enthusiastically of

recruiting in Oakland, CA (where a large population of African-Americans already existed) in order to replace the black crew he had recently lost through natural attrition. Unfortunately, Hawkins' efforts would come to nothing as the CCC program was formally dissolved later that year in response to the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor.

Despite the nation's great need, and the willingness of the African-American community to serve, most blacks were prohibited from combat duty and allowed to serve only in ancillary roles like

purser or cook. (Nonetheless, it was a black cook named Dorie Miller who was the first African-American to earn the distinguished Navy Cross after bravely manning an anti-aircraft battery while his battleship, the U.S.S. West Virginia, was under fire during the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941).

Most of the work done at Pinnacles by this now-forgotten black CCC crew was limited to the improvement or completion of jobs already started by previous enrollments. This was an inevitable consequence of the declining CCC budget, as the majority of federal funds were being diverted toward the escalating war effort. Very few new jobs were initiated within the national parks during this period. Pinnacles' final CCC enrollees worked on improving the Bear Gulch Dam by installing rustic stone facing or constructing culvert improvements on the Bear Gulch Road. However, they did contribute one noticeable feature which can still be seen—the

tunnel on the lower High Peaks Trail within Bear Gulch. This was made in order to accommodate a realignment of the trail to the east side of the canyon.

Prior to the construction of this tunnel, which cut through a pilaster of solid rock blocking passage along the east side of Bear Gulch, the

trail crossed Bear Creek over a small bridge and climbed a little ways up the west side of the canyon to the first junction of the Cave Loop Trail. The new tunnel made it possible for the trail to

continue along the east side of the canyon and reach the Cave Loop junction in a more direct fashion. This is now one of the most commonly-used trails in the monument; so many readers of this column are probably familiar with it. The next time you hike through this tunnel on your way to the Bear Gulch Caves or the High Peaks, think of the young black enrollees who constructed it. Their contribution to Pinnacles National Monument was significant, even if they have not received the same attention as other builders of the monument. I also invite any reader who has more information—especially photographs—concerning this all-but-forgotten episode of Pinnacles' history to contact me so that I can add this information to the general history of the park.

Timothy Babalis can be reached at timothy_babalis@nps.gov.

The next time you hike through this tunnel on your way to the Bear Gulch Caves or the High Peaks, think of the young black enrollees who constructed it.

May 30, 2009 from 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

The 3rd Annual Pinnacles Partnership "Picnic in the Park" will be held on May 30, 2009 from 9:00 a.m. to noon in the Monument's Visitor Center (campground).

Ranger led hikes will begin at 9:00 a.m. and a delicious BBQ lunch will be served at noon. Free to members; \$15 charge for guests. Please call Edie Nelson at (831) 423-5576 for more information.

Partnership profile: Eric Brunnemann

Eric Brunnemann was “born in Abilene, Texas, about the time the wheels of the jet hit the tarmac.” The son of a lieutenant colonel stationed in Tripoli, Libya, Brunnemann’s parents came home long enough to ensure he was born on Texas’ sacred soil, where his family operated a ranch in the rural hamlet of Sabinal.

How a military brat came to assume the role of superintendent of the Pinnacles National Monument in 2005 is a story that spans oceans and probability. Today, Brunnemann, his wife, Wendy and their two children are deeply rooted in the community of San Benito, living in a ranch house a few minutes from the Monument’s east entrance and close to Jefferson School, a one-room kindergarten-eighth grade public school, where Wendy works teaching in lower grades.

Brunnemann was a 16-year veteran of the National Parks Service when he arrived in San Benito County from “war” in the Pacific National Historical Park on Guam. The move from the central Pacific to the crags of Pinnacles came when Brunnemann saw a posting for the job he now holds. Not long after, the family was packed, ready to trade palm trees for gray pines and beaches for deep canyons. The posting would be, as Brunnemann describes it, his first to a park that had an array of natural resources. “It’s been first rate,” he recently said of his experience at Pinnacles, and his efforts to reconnect the park to its surrounding community, in part through the Pinnacles Partnership. “I’ve gotten to take everything I’ve put together in my understanding from all the parks I’ve been at and apply it here. It’s like the park was waiting for that day – partnerships, rangers. Getting the park to come out of its shell has been great.” Brunnemann has been an active member and promoter of the Pinnacles Partnership since its inception. He sees public-private partnerships as essential to the national parks mission. Eric and Wendy Brunnemann are active in their rural community, and he’s worked to re-establish the historic ties with local families that led to the establishment and early stewardship of the park. As the son of a ranching family, Brunnemann said, he already “speaks the language.”



Eric Brunnemann, as photographed by his daughter, Catriona.

Noting that “there are no degree plans to go into the Park Service, per se,” Brunnemann described his own journey. After traveling with his family from North Africa to several locations in the United States, the family settled again in Texas, where Brunnemann ultimately went to the University of Texas for a degree in archaeology and a master’s degree in anthropology. Summers were spent in archaeological work in Greece and Portugal. A museum assignment in San Antonio led to a curator’s job at Fort Davis, an Indian Wars period outpost. “They actually interviewed me to see if I could play baseball,” Brunnemann said. “They had a re-enactment team. They quickly realized I really didn’t play baseball that well.”

After learning of an opening at a new national monument in Albuquerque, N.M., called Petroglyph, Brunnemann secured the archaeologist’s job, earning another master’s degree in American Studies at the University of New Mexico at the same time. Petroglyph National Monument is an interesting experiment in collaboration, one jointly managed by the state of New Mexico, the city of Albuquerque and the National Parks Service. Initially, it wasn’t an easy marriage. “Nobody was talking to each other,” he recalled. That is, except for Brunnemann, the federal archaeologist, and the Albuquerque city archaeologist. The two communicated well enough that ultimately, they were married.

The next stop was a four park complex in the Canyonlands, where Brunnemann was cultural resources manager, a posting he still describes as a great job. The next jump—to Guam—might seem improbable, but “it was a perfect fit, because of the Spanish colonial influence,” Brunnemann said. While there, the island park was slammed by two typhoons, and “what wasn’t wiped out before got wiped out in the second storm.” It was left to Brunnemann to close the visitors’ center and begin rebuilding. “Now, it’s one of the most beautiful national parks,” he said.

Today, the Brunnemanns and their children, Catriona, 10, and Aidan, 6, are not thinking about their next move in the National Parks Service. “I’m having a good time,” Brunnemann said. “It took about a year-and-a-half, almost two, to see the subtleties of how Pinnacles operates. Now we’ve launched all these projects and I don’t want to let them go.” *(Editor’s Note: If Eric and his wonderful family even think about leaving, the Acting Executor Director of PIPA will nag Eric for the remainder of his natural life!)*



Native tribes remember links to monument

By Val Lopez

The current Amah Mutsun Tribal Band is comprised of the descendents of Mutsun speakers and the descendants of the aboriginal tribal groups whose villages and territories fell under the sphere of influence of Missions San Juan Bautista and Santa Cruz during the 18th, 19th and 20th centuries. The Chalon Costanoan’s territory included Pinnacles and went as far south as present day King City. The western boundary was approximately highway 101 and the eastern boundary extends beyond Hernandez Reservoir. The Chalon language was a branch of the Mutsun language. In 1846 Horatio Hale published a short Chalon language vocabulary taken at Mission Soledad in 1842.

Between 1798 and 1806 most Indians taken to Mission Soledad were from Chalon. At the close of 1806, 775 Chalon Costanoan speakers had been baptized at Mission Soledad. In 1815 the last Chalon was baptized at Mission Soledad. Of all Indians taken to Mission Soledad, 37% were Chalon, 13% were Esselen and 50% were Yokuts from the San Joaquin Valley.

Mutsun was the name of the Village site near Mission San Juan Bautista. The surrounding villages spoke Mutsun as well including Unijaima (Gilroy to Hwy 129), Ausaima (Casa de Fruita), Mutsun (San Juan Bautista and Hollister) and Pagsin (Paicines). Think of these village sites as encompassing a 20-25 mile or more circle. Many other villages spoke Mutsun as well.

Because the Chalon and Mutsun languages were so similar these Tribes participated in ceremonies, gatherings and intermarried. Today’s descendent have oral histories of relationships with Chalon prior to, during and after the mission period.

Last year the Amah Mutsun held our Fall Dance at Pinnacles and members of the Toulumne and Miwuk Tribes joined us as we sang our traditional songs. We are now planning our Spring Dance and hope to hold it at Pinnacles. Our desire to return to Pinnacle is due to the strong spirit and sacredness of Chalon. Because our dances are ceremonial we do not extend invitations to the public. To do so would be like someone extending an invitation to have others watch them go to church service. However, should someone be at Pinnacles when we are dancing, they will be welcomed to observe, we only ask that no pictures be taken and please do not eat during the dance.

Kansireesum (With our hearts)

Calendar

April 11, 2009 @ 8:30 p.m. to 10:30 p.m.

Pinnacles National Monument (West Side) Night Hike: The Dark Side of the Pinnacles

Join naturalist Peter Szydlowski on the west side of Pinnacles for a chance to experience the natural darkness and nocturnal quiet under starlit skies. We will hike out for about a half mile along one of Pinnacles' easier trails, stopping along the way to become aware of the importance of bringing the Night back into our lives. At the turnaround point, we will silently sit under the magnificent Milky Way before returning on the same trail. Reservations are required. Please call Michael Rupp at (831) 389 4486 ext 243 for more information or to make reservation.

April 18, 2009 @ 9:00 a.m. to Noon

Weed Pull Party on the EAST SIDE (Campground)

Join us on Saturday, April 18, 2009 and we will prove to you that pulling weeds can be great fun! Pinnacles Resource Management Team and Pinnacles Partnership are co-hosting this free, muscle toning event. Instructions for novice weed pullers, cheerful companionship, thick gloves and refreshments will be provided. For more information, call Brent Johnson at (831) 389-4486 ext. 259.

April 25, 2009 @ 11:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

6th Annual Chalone Appellation Pinnacles Wine Festival Hosted by Inn at the Pinnacles

On Saturday, April 25 from 11:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., food and wine lovers are invited to enjoy a very special event. Hosted by the Inn at the Pinnacles, in the heart of the Chalone Appellation, the Pinnacles Wine Festival showcases the finest in wine and culinary experiences. This is the only festival which comprises of every wine producer from a wine appellation, paired with an abundance of five-star restaurants, Hog Island Oysters, and much more. It is a rare opportunity to speak with winemakers, chefs and proprietors. In its sixth year, the Pinnacles Wine Festival looks to be more sensory-provoking and breath-taking than ever. Pinnacles Partnership and Pinnacles National Monument will be in attendance at the event to showcase the many programs the Monument and the Partnership provide for our neighboring counties. Tickets are \$50/person if purchased by April 10, 2009 or \$60/person thereafter. To purchase tickets, please call Inn at the Pinnacles at (831) 678-2400. View a slide show of last year's event at <http://www.pinnacleswinefestival.com>.

May 1, 2009 @ 5:30 p.m. to 10:00 p.m.

Star Party & Nature Walk on the WEST SIDE

On Friday, May 1, 2009, Hartnell College, Pinnacles National Monument and Pinnacles Partnership are co-hosting a Star Party. From 5:30 - 7:00pm, join Hartnell Geology instructor Bob Barminski and Ranger Carl Brenner for a guided nature hike on the Balconies Trail. You'll see and learn about the earthly wonders around you on this 1.6 mile round trip trek over moderate terrain. Bring along food for a picnic or barbeque dinner to enjoy at dusk as the magnificent landscape frames the darkening sky. Then gather back in the parking lot from 8:00 - 10:00pm for a sky talk and telescopic views of the heavens courtesy of the Hartnell Planetarium and Astronomy Department, Hartnell's Fremont Peak Observatory student interns, and the Salinas High Astronomy Club. In recognition of 2009 as the International Year of Astronomy, we'll share the universe with you. Thrill to the sight of the heavens through a telescope, as Galileo first did some 400 years ago. Enjoy views of the beautiful ringed planet Saturn, along with distant nebulae, star clusters and galaxies. Appreciate the stars and constellations as never before as you view the night sky away from city lights under truly dark skies. A \$5 vehicle entrance fee to West Pinnacles is required, but there is no charge for the hike or star viewing. Come out to experience the natural world under a wide-open sky! Meet in the parking lot at 5:00pm to participate in the guided hike. For star gazing, be sure to arrive at the Park entrance gate before it closes at 8pm.

***DON'T FORGET TO MARK YOUR CALENDAR FOR THE
ANNUAL PICNIC IN THE PARK ON MAY 30, 2009!!!***