

AUDUBON CANYON RANCH



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Renew, Refresh & Recommit to the Earth

The Strengths and Legacy of Audubon Canyon Ranch

RENEWING AND REJOICING

by Scott Feierabend

Audubon Canyon Ranch's credibility and stature have earned it a lasting place in the hearts and souls of our volunteers and supporters, and in the local communities we serve. From steadfastness of purpose and a clear sense of direction, ACR has slowly expanded in size and program since its founding in 1961. Today, ACR has a staff of 27 employees—representing almost 200 years of service—who provide the professional skills and expertise critical to sustaining a vibrant nonprofit organization.

Our long-term plan

After taking a deliberate and thoughtful “30,000-foot” view of our staffing structure, I created a “One ACR Plan” that plays to our strengths and builds a leadership team that inspires excellence and fosters success. The Plan sets a new stage to address key priorities for long-term organizational expansion.

For example, the new Plan invests more deeply than ever in ACR's environmental education programs by establishing an Education Department and increasing staff capacity to meet the needs of our docents and volunteers, who are so critical to delivering our programs. The new

positions of Director of Education and Community Outreach Coordinator will, among other things, help to recruit and retain volunteers, identify new opportunities for our volunteers, and work within the community to broaden ACR's environmental education outreach.

Building on history

ACR's new organizational Plan also establishes a Regional Conservation Fellow to develop a new conservation project that will link ACR to habitat protection and restoration concerns across the San Francisco Bay Area. Establishing this position will strengthen ACR's scientific capacity and pave the way for future post-doctoral fellows to further promote and strengthen ACR's program growth in conservation science.

An important feature of the new Plan is a framework for greater collaboration and cooperation across ACR's preserve staff. In addition, the Plan builds on the strengths and expertise of ACR's employees, and provides greater program focus for “doing fewer things better.”

The future of ACR is bright and promising. Building on the rich history, enduring legacy and deep



foundation with which ACR's volunteers, Board, staff and others endowed the organization, this Plan provides the means and the resources for moving “One ACR” into the future. I look forward to your support as we begin a new and exciting era for Audubon Canyon Ranch.

Scott Feierabend is the ACR Executive Director.



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The Overnight Program at the Martin Griffin Preserve **TEACHING EARTH STEWARDSHIP**

by Diane Lafrenz

In his book *Last Child in the Woods: Saving Our Children from Nature-Deficit Disorder*, Richard Louv writes “Nature gives itself to children—for its own sake, not as a reflection of a culture. At this level, inexplicable nature provokes humility.” This aptly describes the nature experience Audubon Canyon Ranch docents provide to visiting students. At the heart of ACR’s Martin Griffin Preserve environmental education program lies the docents’ mission—to communicate a knowledge and appreciation of nature to schoolchildren.

Blossoming into stewardship

Imagine a small group of students outdoors with a docent, who is instilling lessons and nature appreciation. From this experience comes a bud of humility that transforms a deficit of nature awareness into a hint of curiosity... blossoming into a fondness for and stewardship of our earth. The Overnight Program, an extension of the ACR environmental education programs, provides a solid nature experience for schoolchildren.

The program offers urban students an opportunity for a more extensive experience in nature and to learn in more depth about our natural environment through a wide range

“Since many students were leaving their families for the first time, it helped them to meet the docents before they arrived at Volunteer Canyon.”
- Bryan Brandow*

of nature activities and experiences. Thereby we foster a lifetime of learning about the natural world and kindle a sense of the importance of being good stewards of the earth.

Free overnight program

The Overnight School Program of ACR’s Martin Griffin Preserve is one of the best kept secrets in education in the Bay Area. This free program is designed specifically for schools whose students—fourth and fifth graders—would not otherwise have access to an extended outdoor education program. They get

an experience that only a few children have these days: to spend enough time outdoors to start getting comfortable there. By seeing the fun and value of being in nature, they develop the desire to learn about the earth and protect it.

Prior to the overnight stay on the preserve and similar to preparations for a one-day field trip, docents visit the students in their classroom. For the overnight stay, we have a little more material to cover and more questions to answer. It is critical that we answer all questions so we gain the trust of wary children and nervous parents.

On the morning of their overnight stay on the preserve, students arrive at the preserve’s Volunteer Canyon and unload their gear for the long walk down the driveway to the bunkhouse.

➤ Please turn to **Stewardship**, page 4



Photo by Patti Blumin

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Land Steward, BP
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Land Steward, MGP



STEWARDSHIP from page 3

Docents, children, chaperones and teachers then form a circle to talk about the nature awareness skills that we will use in all our activities. We ride over to the preserve's Picher Canyon, where they are immersed in nature-based activities that are the cornerstone of the ACR curriculum.

Around the campfire

After dinner, we have a campfire lighting ceremony with flint, as well as stories and songs. The students learn about the important role bats play in our ecosystem with a live bat presentation by expert Maggie Hooper. As our eyes adjust to the night sky, we tell stories by campfire, and then go onto the trails for a night hike... with no flashlights. We study the stars and talk about how our senses contribute to greater nature awareness in the darkness.



The next morning, a grand breakfast is peppered with stories of nighttime sounds not heard at home: coyote howls, owl hoots, bats fluttering.

"The blindfold string walk is a favorite! It is so valuable for the kids to receive instruction in small groups led by such competent and caring docents. Every child feels well nurtured and fully involved. Your Overnight Program is fabulous!"

*- Mary Blume**

Navigating blindfolded

A favorite activity follows—the blindfold string walk. Keeping one hand on a strategically placed string,



Photo by Patti Blumin

blindfolded students navigate under and over trees, branches and other natural obstacles using their nature awareness and problem solving skills. Should obstacles prove too difficult, a docent or chaperone assists. Students often finish the challenge with an extreme sense of accomplishment.

We also engage the students in a watershed hike, rounding out concepts introduced with the watershed model the day before.

"I liked when we sat at the fire and told stories at night before the night hike. I wish I could go to Audubon Canyon Ranch again."

"I had fun hiding in a bush and jumping out when the other group came, to scare them during the night hike. I also loved the six-hour hike."

"I feel so special that we got the opportunity to go on the camping trip."

*- Students***

In his book, Richard Louv writes, "Nature inspires creativity in a child by demanding visualization and the full use of the senses." This concept drives us as students participate in nature journaling

with writing, drawing and painting. We hope to develop the students' observation and awareness skills, as well as give them a concrete memory aid to remember their experience.

Growing and changing together

"As they experience activities in this theme, children will discover that nature is growing and changing right along with them," write authors Linda Garrett, Hannah Thomas and Hilary Elmer in their book *Small Wonders: Nature Education for Young Children*. This is what docents of the Martin Griffin Preserve are striving to convey and long to hear in the closing circle of the Overnight Program. The closing circle is filled with moments of gratitude, pledging allegiance to the earth, skits and fond farewells.

Author David Sobel writes in *Childhood and Nature*, "What's the relationship between school and Mother Nature? Are they getting divorced or are they committed to working on a long-term relationship?" A focus on nature awareness and earth stewardship in most California school districts is thin, at best. ACR docents are working hard to foster a lifetime of learning about the natural world and the importance of being good stewards of the earth.

Diane Lafrenz is a Martin Griffin Preserve Docent.

* Quotes from Bryan Brandow, teacher at Richmond's Washington Elementary School, and Mary Blume, teacher at Alameda's Otis Elementary School, were gathered from their program evaluations. We appreciate their dedication to teaching and service over and above their duties. It is an honor to work with them.

** Quotes from students who participated in an Overnight Program were gathered from docents' "fan mail" and thank you letters.

A Conversation with the Modinis

THE HISTORY OF THE MODINI INGALLS ECOLOGICAL PRESERVE

As told to Sherry Adams

The rugged spine of mountains running north of Mount St. Helena is the split between Lake County to the east and Sonoma County to the west. It is home to black bears and mountain lions, rare plants that grow in the harshest conditions, natural springs and dramatic waterfalls. This is the central Mayacamas, home to the Modini Ingalls Ecological Preserve, a property slated to become ACR's fourth large nature preserve, thanks to a planned giving arrangement with the Modinis.

For 65 years, Jim and Shirley Modini have lived here and given their all to ensure the protection of this land.

Stories from the Modinis

Jim remembers coming to the ranch as a boy and seeing the remains of a "bear pen" along McDonnell Creek. Just a few timbers remained of what was once a grizzly bear trap. It is with horror at the "cruelty of man" that the Modinis tell about this trap and the desire of the early European settlers to kill off the carnivores on the land.

They also talk about the Obsidian Trail, a native trade route from Napa Valley that passed through the northeast corner of their ranch, where obsidian flakes remain as evidence. This coincides with anthropologists' description of one of the major trails



Photo by Phyllis Schmitt

Jim and Shirley Modini reviewing a photo album from the 1930s

that passed through Western Wappo territory.

Timothy and Teresa Ingalls came to California in the mid-1800s and homesteaded along Ingalls Creek. Some artifacts of this homesite remain, including chimney brick and a prickly pear cactus planted near the house. Timothy and Teresa's son Jack inherited the ranch and married Mame Livernash, Jim's maternal aunt.

Learning respect for the land

As a boy Jim visited neighbors, learning from local ranchers such as Henry McDonnell and the Briggs brothers. Jim speaks with reverence of these men and their respect for the land's wild things. He recalls they were saddened by the prospect of increasing

"man signs." When Jim was a boy, his Uncle Jack died, leaving a childless Mame. As a young teenager, Jim began to manage the ranch and its livestock for his Aunt Mame. When Mame died, she left the ranch to Jim and Shirley Modini.

This past January, while sitting on the couch and recounting some of the challenging years, Jim looked over at Shirley in a quiet moment. "If you had to do it all over again, would you?" Shirley, in her signature plainspoken style replied, "Are you kidding? Think what I would have missed otherwise..."

Sherry Adams is the Modini Ranch Biologist.

IN MEMORY

The ACR community fondly remembers and mourns the loss of Phyllis Schmitt, dedicated volunteer, talented naturalist, inspired educator and a good friend to the natural world.

Phyllis helped to record the Modini's stories. As with all who knew Phyllis, the Modinis are saddened by her passing and join ACR in offering heartfelt condolences to her family and friends.



Phyllis Mary Schmitt
Teacher and Naturalist
1940-2010

A good match

The Modinis were aware of Audubon Canyon Ranch and had long respected its work and the spirit of ACR founder Marty Griffin. As the Modini team did their due diligence in 2008, it became clear that ACR was a good match. ACR had proven that they approach preservation in the way the Modinis do—with the absolute minimum human touch.

The trustees were impressed with ACR's careful financial management and the extremely low turnover of their excellent science staff and land stewards.

Jim and Shirley bonded naturally with Skip Schwartz, ACR Senior Advisor and Executive Director Emeritus, and they could see that staff leadership like John Petersen and John Kelly were “the real thing.”

All about the ranch and animals

Key to the Modinis' decision making was Julie Turrini, a partner at Resources Law Group, California's preeminent law firm for conservation transactions. “Conservation agreements are all we do. For Jim and Shirley, it was not about money, not about legacy, not about control. It was all about the ranch and

the animals,” says Julie. “We have never seen anything like it.”

Jim and Shirley don't think they are extraordinary, but they do hope that their life's work is noticed. “Maybe if younger people hear about what we have tried to do here, they will be inspired to help us save a place for the animals, too. There is so much development, and you can't put that back. But up here, with our ranch surrounded by other protected lands, the wildlife has a chance.”

Judy Johnston is a dear friend, neighbor and trustee of the Modinis.

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Training New Volunteer Educators at the Martin Griffin Preserve

VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT

by Gayle Cahill and Chris Kasman

At this writing, the Docent Training Committee of ACR's Martin Griffin Preserve education program is approaching the end of its 2010-2011 program. Nearly 30 talented, experienced and generous docents have staged a 23-week training course replete with the joy of discovery and the warmth of the docent community. Here are some of the myriad ways this committee presented a seamless program in natural history to our docent trainees.

Since the summer of 2009, the committee has brought fresh eyes and enthusiasm to every aspect of the program's planning and execution. Training materials were revisited, retooled and updated. Committee members worked swiftly to recruit and schedule well-loved instructors, and stayed "on the job" to ensure that class days ran smoothly. Members also organized entirely new classes for this year's program.

Making the training a pleasure

Every committee member contributed to maintaining the group's

legendary reputation for welcoming trainees with hospitality, generosity, snacks, decor and fun prizes. Members devised innovations or revived lapsed traditions, including scavenger hunts, a project tree, a weekly kit display and the occasional puzzle. Others volunteered to serve as trainee mentors, striving to make the training a positive experience for every participant. These docents also attended several short workshops to support their work as mentors.

Each and every act of kindness and competence has been essential to the program's success. The committee looks forward to docent graduation in March 2011, where 27 well-educated trainees will ceremoniously replace their trainee nametag with their Martin Griffin Preserve Docent nametag. Shortly thereafter, schoolchildren will return to the preserve for the spring season.

Gayle Cahill and Chris Kasman are Martin Griffin Preserve Docents and Docent Training Committee Co-chairs, 2010-2011.

Congratulations Graduates!

Robin Bradford	Susan Pridmore
Susan Durham	Heather Pugh
Scott Feierabend	Lindsey Shanks
Pamela Gach	Mary Lynn Shimek
Joyce Griffin	Judd Simmons
Britt Henke	Meg Simonds
Joy Jamgochian	Farahad Taleghani
Chip Kaplove	Nahal Taleghani
Judy Kaplove	Eric Watterud
Julie Keating	Cathy Willis
Paul Koski	Barbara Winter
Anne Montgomery	Raquel Ximenes
Susan Nelsen	Karen Young
Erica Posner	

Immerse yourself in natural history learning and inspire a conservation ethic in the children you teach:

Become a Docent of ACR's Bouverie Preserve

Orientations

May 25 and June 15
10 a.m. – noon

Training

Begins September 7, 2011

Classes

Meet at the Bouverie Preserve once a week on Wednesdays through February 22, 2012.

Training topics include birds, insects, pond life and teaching techniques. Three units of college credit are available. Upon graduation, docents have the knowledge and confidence to lead field trips for schoolchildren. Exciting supplemental enrichment classes are offered throughout the year.

Sign up

Call **707.938.4554** for more information or to sign up for an orientation

Fee

\$135—covers the cost of training



Photo by Chris Kasman

Make a Lasting Environmental Impact THE CLERIN ZUMWALT LEGACY CIRCLE

by Skip Schwartz

Folks from all walks of life tell us stories about how planned giving allowed them to help provide for the future of Audubon Canyon Ranch. We have published many articles in the ACR Bulletin over the years. When I reviewed these stories, I found that ACR's friends have used a healthy diversity of methods to create a legacy and ensure the organization's success.

"Grace would be so happy that her gift has come at such an important time in the history of ACR, when the substantial new funds allow the Ranch to continue and expand its important programs. She liked the idea of supporting a small operation where her money can make a critical difference."

~ George Peyton on Grace Dafoe

Each of the members quoted on this page organized his or her estate differently—from wills and trusts to charitable annuities, from real estate bequests to a charitable trust funded through the sale of appreciated real estate, from a lead trust bequest to an art auction to benefit ACR.

"I saw a connection between my years of volunteer work and the distribution of my estate."

~ Sue Stoddard

"I want my gifts to have impact. I selected local organizations with a strong current mission and a strong balance sheet. They know in a real tangible way that they have my support and future resources."

~ Julie Allecta

"I cannot imagine another nonprofit that could manage the Bouverie Preserve like ACR has."

~ Sam Dakin

Many ways to give

Audubon Canyon Ranch relies on many forms of financial support. And when you remember us with a legacy gift in your will, trust, retirement plan/IRA or insurance policy, you are validating our vision and mission. Believe me...we hear you, and we appreciate you!

We invite you to join the Clerin Zumwalt Legacy Circle. Didi Wilson,

ACR Director of Development and Communications, will be delighted to talk with you at 415.868.9244. I look forward to seeing all Zumwalt Legacy Circle members at the appreciation luncheon in June.

"Talk about full disclosure, ACR bent over backwards to explain how charitable trusts work and then told us to get independent counsel—there were no surprises. It's done well for us. We feel more people should at least know about the benefits of charitable trusts."

~ Phyllis and George Ellman

As guardian of the sanctuaries and as a public benefit organization, Audubon Canyon Ranch has an ongoing responsibility to care for these lands and the plants and animals that call them home. Will you please join in the Legacy Circle to help pass the torch to the next generation?

Skip Schwartz is ACR's Senior Advisor & Executive Director Emeritus and a Clerin Zumwalt Legacy Circle member.

Greening ACR

Audubon Canyon Ranch is shifting to electronic communications wherever possible. If you are a volunteer and do not receive email from ACR, contact us at 415.868.9244 to ensure we have your email address.



The ACR Board STEWARDING YOUR DONATIONS

by Andy Lafrenz

Spring approaches, and we're seeing an explosion of wildflowers and new growth on Audubon Canyon Ranch preserves. While herons and egrets turn to breeding, the ACR Board turns to the fiscal year 2012 budget.

ACR's mission is to protect nature through environmental education, conservation science and ecosystem restoration on its multiple preserves, in perpetuity. The ACR Board of Directors has an equally important charge—stewardship of the organization's long-term financial health.

Our revenue and expense decisions are based on a detailed annual budget. It's a carefully crafted plan, reviewed and approved by the Board each June, so we can start our July 1 year with a solid, updated fiscal strategy.

Collaborative budgeting

Creating a coordinated financial plan is a collaborative process. First, every January the Board's Finance Committee works with staff to put



together a long-term fiscal planning tool. It identifies upcoming impacts on revenue and expenses—such as land parcels ACR is considering acquiring and key fundraising initiatives that will likely affect revenues.

Once the Board approves the fiscal planning tool, then staff and the Finance Committee begin developing a preliminary budget. To make sure it's as accurate and relevant as possible, we gather input from across the ACR community. Docent and Ranch Guide representatives recommend allocations for improvements in their areas. And since many Board members are also passionate program volunteers, they

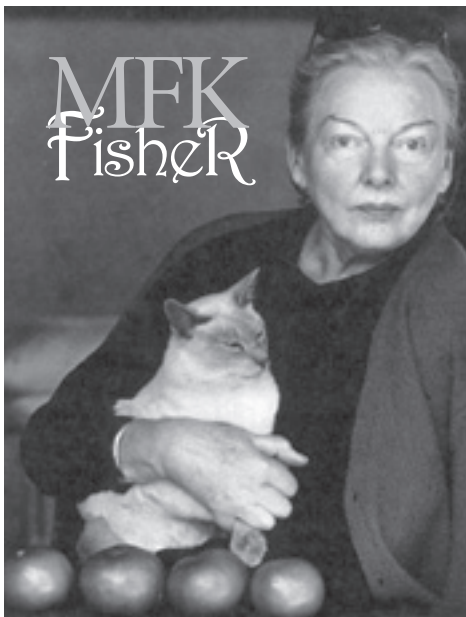
can share first-hand knowledge of the top spending priorities.

Long-term fiscal health

Finally, the Finance Committee presents a refined budget draft to the Board for discussion and approval. Because of our bottom-up planning process, it's quite reasonable to expect members to reach a consensus, or in many cases, unanimity. In spite of these turbulent financial times, splendid good-faith cooperation within the ACR community results in the betterment of our programs.

The ACR Board of Directors takes seriously its obligation to ensure your donations are responsibly managed, for today and for the long-term fiscal health of the organization. On behalf of the ACR Board of Directors, thank you for the honor of your support. We hope you will continue to entrust your gifts of financial resources and time to us.

Andy Lafrenz is a Ranch Guide and President of the ACR Board of Directors.



the Art of Eating:

A TRIBUTE TO MFK FISHER

Saturday, May 14, 2011 2 p.m. – 5:30 p.m.
Bouverie Preserve of Audubon Canyon Ranch

Mary Frances was a close friend of David Bouverie and spent the last two decades of her life at the Bouverie Preserve.

Individual Ticket: \$125 – \$500 Early Bird Special: \$100 (by Friday, April 1st)
Tables of 10 starting at \$2,500

RSVP by Friday, April 29th to 415.868.9244 or rsvp@egret.org

Proceeds benefit the education programs of ACR. This includes ACR's school program, which annually provides over 6,000 3rd, 4th and 5th graders the opportunity to experience nature first-hand at no cost to schools.

Sustainable food
and wine tastings
inspired by the writings
of MFK Fisher, coupled
with a lively auction.

Open to the Public

Martin Griffin Preserve
(formerly Bolinas Lagoon Preserve)

Saturdays, Sundays and Holidays from March 19 - July 10, 2011
Weekends ~ open 10 a.m. – 4 p.m.
Weekdays (except Monday) ~ open by reservation – call 415.868.9244

Come hike the more than eight miles of trails at ACR's Martin Griffin Preserve. Visit the new ponds, view the nesting Great Blue Herons and Great Egrets, and enjoy the wildflowers. Knowledgeable Ranch Guides will answer your questions.

Backyard Naturalist Series

Bouverie Preserve

Saturday ~ 9:30 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.
April 2, 2011 Wildflowers with Jeanne Wirka

Geared toward the adult amateur naturalist, these Saturday seminars include time in the classroom and on the trail. One to three-mile hike on mildly to moderately strenuous terrain. Bring a bagged lunch and water for the trail. Class size is limited. \$25 per seminar
Registration required: rsvp@egret.org or 415.868.9244

Guided Nature Walk

Bouverie Preserve

Saturdays ~ 9:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.
April 9, April 30, May 7, 2011

Experience the beauty and rich natural history of this 500-acre preserve. Reservations required. bouverie@egret.org or 707.938.4554
Donations appreciated. \$ Docent Council of Bouverie Preserve

Spring Science Salon
Bouverie Preserve

Saturday, April 16, 2011
Save the date and watch egret.org for details on the next event in ACR's Science Salon series.

Mother's Day BBQ
Volunteer Canyon, Martin Griffin Preserve

Sunday, May 8, 2011
For about 50 years, the Marin Audubon Society has hosted this delightful fundraiser on Mother's Day in Volunteer Canyon. Proceeds benefit the education and conservation programs of ACR and Marin Audubon Society. Call Mary Anne Cowperthwaite at 415.453.2216 for info. To help plan, call Jude Stalker at 415.668.1242. Space is limited. RSVP by May 2nd. Carpooling strongly encouraged!
\$20 per adult; \$10 children under 10. Mail your check payable to Marin Audubon Society to: 141 Oak Avenue, San Anselmo, CA 94960 Your check guarantees your reservation.

Work Day



Bouverie Preserve: Saturday, May 21, 2011, 9:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.
Martin Griffin Preserve: Saturday, September 17, 2011 – Picher Canyon
9:15 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. lunch

Help us with habitat protection and restoration projects (Bouverie Preserve) or trail and library work, pulling weeds, planting native flowers, and cooking lunch (Martin Griffin Preserve). Bring your favorite tool and gloves for outdoor projects! Registration required.
Bouverie Preserve: RSVP to 707.938.4554 or bouverie@egret.org
Martin Griffin Preserve: RSVP to 415.868.9244 or rsvp@egret.org



Habitat Protection & Restoration Stewards

Bouverie Preserve: Mondays ~ 8:30 a.m. – noon
Martin Griffin Preserve: Thursdays ~ 9 a.m. – noon

Assist with habitat protection and restoration work, while learning about the ecology behind the project (Bouverie Preserve). Help with ecological restoration: collect seeds, propagate native plants, prepare project sites, out-plant and ensure survival of plants and renovate facilities (Martin Griffin Preserve).

Bouverie Preserve: Call 707.935.8417 or e-mail Jen Potts at jpotts@egret.org
Martin Griffin Preserve: Call 415.868.9244 or e-mail Doug Serrill at doug@egret.org

More information on all these nature exploration opportunities is available at www.egret.org/volunteer.

To keep up to date on the latest ACR happenings, **sign up for our e-newsletter**. Published once every two months, this free email newsletter highlights updates from the Preserves, including school group visits, latest findings from science staff, volunteer opportunities and ways to come explore ACR's nature sanctuaries. To sign up or to view past issues, visit www.egret.org/newsletter.



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WHEN TO VISIT

Cypress Grove Research Center
 By appointment only 415.663.8203

Bouverie Preserve
 See calendar of events inside.

Martin Griffin Preserve
 Mid-March to mid-July
 Saturday, Sunday and holidays
 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Weekdays by appointment only
 415.868.9244 Closed Mondays
 Martin Griffin Preserve is adjacent
 to Bolinas Lagoon on Shoreline
 Highway One, three miles north of
 Stinson Beach.

Our Mission

Audubon Canyon Ranch
 protects nature through
 environmental education,
 conservation science and
 ecosystem restoration.

The Audubon Canyon Ranch
 Bulletin is published twice yearly
 as a benefit to our members.

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 consumer) using soy-based inks.

Renew, Refresh & Recommit to the Earth

