



Week of July 12-18



Ground Cones along the Old Growth Trail

Derek Neis

Special Events This Week

Ranger Programs

Free Ranger programs will be offered each day. Check the blackboard in the Visitor Center for fascinating topics and times. Candlelight tours that present a unique perspective of the caves will take place on Friday and Saturday evenings. Reservations for the adventurous off-trail tours are now being accepted.

Join Ranger Suzan O' Larick Thursday night for a free evening Ranger program.

Chateau Programs

Entertainment at the Chateau is in full swing this week. Monday is "Artist's Adventure," featuring local artist Nancy Hall. Tuesday features classical pianist Lindsey Brown, while David Hodges brings poetry to life on Wednesday. Chateau Artist-in-Residence, Jennie May Donnell reads intriguing stories in the Lobby on Friday, Saturday, and Sunday. Visitors on Sunday afternoon can enjoy the Celtic harpist, Bob Clark. Inquire at the Chateau's front desk for the finer details of these hotel events.

Black Bear (*Ursus Americanus*)

With the arrival of summer, some lucky visitors are catching glimpses of Black Bears on the Monument. But don't expect their coats to be black – bears range in color from blond to dark brown, and several bears spotted at the Monument were cinnamon. Mother bears typically give birth in late January or early February, so you might spot some bear cubs, too!



Black Bear and cubs

USDA Forest Service

Despite their reputation as carnivores, bears are actually omnivores. They eat primarily berries, fruit, nuts, and roots, but will also eat grass, fish, insects and insect larvae. But bears are opportunists, so they will also eat campsite food and forage in garbage dumps. Check with Rangers if you are unsure how to safely store any food you bring.

As you hike the Monument's trails, keep an eye out for scat or tracks, or fur caught on tree bark where bears have rubbed. For safety, hike in a group and make noise as you walk. If you see a bear, remain calm and avoid sudden movements. Give the bear plenty of space, and it will most likely dodge you.

Bears are protected in our National Parks, and the possible expansion of this Monument will allow them a larger safe habitat. If you spot bear, please stop at the Visitor Center and fill out a Wildlife Observation form so that we can increase our knowledge about these captivating residents.

California Ground Cone (*Boschniakia strobilacea*)

If you're walking along the Old Growth Trail and see what looks like big pine cones stuck into the ground, take another look. What you're seeing is actually a wildflower, the California Ground Cone. The "cones" are 3"-7" in height, and reddish-brown to dark purple. Because it lacks chlorophyll and cannot produce its own food, as most plants do, this plant is parasitic on the roots of madrones

and manzanitas, causing large knots to form on their roots. This plant is a perennial, flowering for many seasons.

The California Ground Cone is just one of many unusual plants waiting to greet you as you explore the trails of Oregon Caves National Monument.