



## A Personal View: San Gregorio's George Cattermole, Coastside habitat activist and local personality

by Leah Lubin



It was getting close to the time for the San Gregorio Music Festival. The second weekend in August is a time I especially look forward to, a chance to support the Coastside Habitat Coalition and enjoy great music at the same time.

To receive more information about the musical lineup, I called George Cattermole. After a short amount of time I realized that George himself was a great resource of local news, had strong opinions and is involved personally with the struggle to save the environment. So, one week later, on a bright Monday morning, I drove down to the San Gregorio Store to meet George and ask him these questions:

Leah Lubin: What is your history and involvement with the San Gregorio Music Festival?

George Cattermole: We started seventeen years ago with the intent of raising money and awareness to protect the coast with our primary focus on the incredible cluster of endangered species that live here. Over the years, I found that musicians and artists care about the environment and are willing to give their time and artistry to such a cause.



LL: How do you see your future involvement in the San Gregorio Music Festival?

GC: We are going to keep doing this because the species and their status has not really improved at all. It has deteriorated.

LL: How do you feel about our local community and where do you feel the growth and change should come from?

GC: It's a wonderful place to live because of the diversity. But what's worrisome to me is that yachts are replacing fishing boats, and golf courses and walking trails are replacing family farms. Agriculture is in great danger. They are trying to turn this area into a playground for tourists.

LL: What did this festival and the San Gregorio Store do for you personally?

GC: My wife and I have owned the store and the festival for 20 years. To me, they are an instrument to do what I think is the most important thing I can do, which is to help preserve biodiversity. This is one of the most threatened areas in the world with a large number of species under attack.

LL: What do you feel is your greatest life achievement, so far?

GC: Two wonderful children.

LL: What is your favorite way to spend leisure time?

GC: I listen to music and hang out with artists and musicians. Also, I relax by working in my garden.

LL: What quality do you most admire in mankind?

GC: I most admire the farmers around here, the way they get nature to yield without destroying it.

LL: What talent would you most like to develop?

GC: Be more effective in getting people to protect endangered species.

LL: The most recent issue of the Coastside Habitat contained your article "In The Trenches." You wrote about the welfare of two endangered species: the San Francisco garter snake and the California red-legged frog. How did your interest in their future develop?

GC: I studied and taught philosophy for thirty years. So what attracted me is the idea that nature is the most important thing and that everything is connected. The beauty of nature is what it's all about.

LL: What realistic way do you feel the community can all get involved?

GC: By trying as hard as we can to leave this place better than we found it. I would love to see San Gregorio stay the way it is.

Thank you George.

**The 17th Annual San Gregorio Coastal Protection Music Festival will take place on Saturday and Sunday, August 11 and 12 in the cow pasture behind the San Gregorio General Store, Highway 84, San Gregorio. Music, crafts, food and drink, activities for kids. All proceeds to benefit endangered species in the area.**

### **Music on Saturday:**

Bug's Electric, Allette Brooks, Jay Howlet, Austin Willacy, David Elias and the Great Unknown, J.C. Flyer, Box Set Duo, John Trudell and Bad Dog, Claddagh Band

### **Music on Sunday:**

Max Lax, The Rusticators, The Curios, Mary Pitchford, Gary Gates Band, Flying Other Brothers, Gregg's Eggs, Lane and the Bad Ass Chicken Bones

For more information, call 650-726-2499 or visit their website at <http://www.sangregoriostore.com>.