



TORREYANA

Published for members of the Torrey Pines Docent Society, #69, Dec., 1981

DOCENTS PLAN CHRISTMAS PARTY

Join the fun! Come to our annual pot-luck party on Saturday, Dec. 19, at 9:00 A.M. Bring your favorite Brunch casserole, salad, fruit, fancy bread or cookies.

There will be no formal program, but "Docent of the Year" will be awarded, and there may be some other surprises! Don't miss the festivities!

"Happiness is a long, winding trail through an oak-floored valley alive with wind, bird and animal music- shared with a friend. Happiness is a hike up a steep rock ledge to drink peace from the bowl of the chapparal-clad valley below- shared with a friend.

Happiness is knowing you've helped to create a wildlife oasis that you can share, not only with your human friends, but also with the other denizens of our natural world."



TORREY PINES DOCENTREE



If you DON'T SEE YOUR NAME, WE HAVEN'T SEEN YOU FOR A LONG TIME. COME BACK AND HELP LIGHT UP OUR TORREY PINES "DOCENTREE" !



MARY MILLER REFLECTS ON DOCENT SOCIETY BEGINNINGS AND DREAMS FOR THE FUTURE

It will soon be seven years since a small group of people answered an appeal in the local papers for volunteers to help at Torrey Pines State Reserve. What a diverse group we were; housewives, waitresses, computer scientists, salesmen and flower children all drawn together by affection for a windswept piece of real estate. I don't think many of us were prepared to initiate a formal organization. I thought we would be assigned tasks by the rangers and then go on our way until the next assigned duty. It was not to be so. Interpretive Ranger Linda Engel had a difficult time molding us into a viable group, but by prodding and pushing she succeeded.

If my memory is correct, the first executive board was composed of Loo Ann Barrett, Mary Miller, Sue Lipsy, Jane Falvey (Vogel), Steve Calder and Tina Murray. We wrestled during the summer of 1975 with the many problems any new organization faces, including the tedious job of writing by-laws.

I had volunteered to be vice-president as I thought it would require the least amount of work. Wrong again! Before the year was up, the president resigned, the treasurer and duty coordinator moved to other states and Ranger Engel was transferred. At one point, when I was feeling especially frustrated, someone called asking how to get in touch with the executive board. I tersely replied that I was it. What a relief when Gene Barber was willing to assume the presidency in the spring of 1976 and I could simply hold one office.

It has not been an easy seven years for the Docent Society. We have struggled with growing pains and at times some of us wondered if we would grow at all. There have been opposing philosophies between members and sometimes between members and the ranger staff which have caused stagnation. Occasionally we have wondered if such a place as "Sacramento" exists, at other times we have been all too aware that it does.

During the past year I have observed something special taking place. There has been a resurgence of enthusiasm in the Society. This is the result of many factors, the chief one being the cooperation that has developed between volunteers, the Reserve staff and the Department of Parks and Recreation. For the first time it seems as if we are all pulling in the same direction and can see some tangible results for our efforts. The dreams that some of us had in 1975 are beginning to come true.

There are many of you receiving the Torreyana who are no longer active. I invite you to come back for a visit. I think you'll like what you see. The baby is growing up and becoming a rather beautiful child.



Mary Miller

I don't know how far the primeval Torrey pine forest extended. Somebody dug up the remains of a five needled bundle of pine needles in northern Oregon. He claimed it was from a Torrey Pine. Maybe. Some people like to think that there was a forest of Torrey pines from San Diego to Santa Barbara. Again, maybe. We have a chunk of petrified "pine" from La Jolla which is supposed to be forty million years old. Was it a Torrey pine? Well..... In historical times the trees seem to have extended only from La Jolla to Del Mar. Even that has been reduced to the small, scattered woodland we know today. This is a small sample of a common fate for wooded areas around the world. The forests of England were cut down to build the British fleet that ruled the seas. Before Europeans came to settle, a squirrel could have gone from one end of Pennsylvania to the other without touching the ground. The farmlands of Ohio and Kentucky, England and Germany were once forests. The disappearance of these forests may have been of benefit to Man, but, in many cases, the old "Sahara Forest" joke ain't funny.

Phoenicia grew rich on its cedar forests which furnished the wood to build its own ships and also those of Egypt and Greece. Islam swept through the area centuries later. No Moslem would cut down an olive or a palm, but religion didn't protect the cedars. Between the heavy cutting and the goats, the cedars of Lebanon don't amount to much anymore.

I've seen the modified slash and burn agriculture of Southeast Asia for myself. The forest isn't burned down directly. Some of the timber is sawn into boards for houses and boats. The rest is turned into charcoal. The farmer plants cassava. That's the stuff your tapioca pudding is made from. He gets good crops for the first couple of years. Then the yield goes downhill for about ten years. The farm eventually ends when the lateritic soil gives out altogether. Remember that Ankor Wat was built of laterite. The so called "opening up" of the Amazon basin may turn out to be the same thing on a larger scale, miles and miles of brick and no trees at all.

Germany's Black Forest is a popular setting for stories of elves and witches. The name probably helps. It isn't too generally known that the Black Forest has been completely cut over more than a dozen times. It has never been clear cut, though. Individual mature and over mature trees have been continuously removed, but there has been no obvious change since the time the locals were keeping the Roman Legions out. Here in America clear cutting has been fashionable for some time. The people who cut down every Douglas fir for miles replant Douglas fir seedlings. They'll tell you that this is the ecologically sound way to do things. If the same area had been hit by fire, the first things popping up would be annuals and short lived perennials. The forest would come back as alder for twenty or thirty years before the Doug fir took hold again. By replanting fir all the intermediate, soil building, natural phases are skipped. If we keep this up we have a long term version of what happens to the cassava farm. One of the more annoying things is that alder is a valuable hardwood which can be used in the same ways as maple and birch.

Alder brings a higher price than fir by the board foot, but it doesn't bring in as much per acre. The whole clear cut system is not based on ecology. It isn't even based on economics. It's strictly greed.

We've managed to save the Torrey pines, at least over the short haul. The job is a little easier because they aren't much good for timber, pulp, fence posts, or Christmas trees. But there isn't much chance that the trees will ever extend out over the area they once covered no matter how small or large it may have been. We are struggling to preserve the Torrey pines and all the plants and animals that go with them. This is only a small skirmish in a large war.

Hank



Judy's Gentle Conglomerations of Thought

EXTRA! EXTRA! READ ALL ABOUT IT! Hank Nicol's Notes from the Naturalist has finally gone to the printer. I would like to thank the following people for their help: Ruth Hand, Julie Marine, Rowdy James, Frances Parks, Bill Brothers and Millicent Horger for proof reading and editorial comment; Elsa Evans for word processing; Karen Schlom, Rick Marx, John Thunen and Martha Black for art work; and especially Hank Nicol for writing such a humorous but informative book!

It has come to my attention that someone has been using the docent mailing list for political campaigning. The reason we know this is that some of us use slightly different names at Torrey Pines than we do in our professional or personal lives. The mail that we have been receiving has been using the name that we use at Torrey Pines. The list is only for use among docents.

The history committee for the museum renovation is in need of additional help. If you would like to join it, please call me in the evenings before 10 P.M. at 452-7683.

Hope you had a HAPPY THANKSGIVING! Make our duty coordinator happy by thanking her for her hard work by giving her a call.



Judy

Along Our Bloomin' Trails

by Helen Chamlee

Ah, the rose family, a fine old family from the people point of view. For thousands of years this large and widespread family has supplied mankind with delicious fruits, sweetly fragrant flowers, noteworthy ornamental shrubs, perfumes, vitamin C, medicines, brandies and liquers and inspiration for all forms of art.

Popular and widely cultivated fruits, all of them kissing cousins of queen rose herself, include the cherry, apple, plum, pear, quince, loquat, peach, almond, apricot and nearly all the juicy fruits we call berries-- blackberry, raspberry, boysenberry, salmonberry, thimbleberry and that universal favorite, the strawberry.

Ornamental shrubs bearing fruits that we as humans don't ordinarily consume but which are greatly relished by many kinds of birds are, toyon, pyracantha, raphiolepis and cotoneaster.

California's native rose, Rosa californica, grows wild along some of our streams and in most places in mountain forests. These shrubby plants are notoriously prickly, prickly, prickly. The prickles on roses are outgrowths of the bark, as you no doubt have noticed as you stripped prickles from the stems of your garden roses, but they are quite firmly attached and those hooks on the wild rose stems and leaves clearly indicate a hands off policy.

Our wild rose has flowers of a clear, pure pink, centered with a yellow mass of stamens. Its fruits, the hips, are glossy red when ripe, and they furnish winter food for wildlife. Both flowers and foliage are fragrant. Wild relatives of the rose to be found in southern California include toyon, wild strawberry, blackberry, Catalina ironwood, several kinds of plum, and redshanks and chamise.

Let's go "rose" hunting in our backcountry. Chamise, you ask? A chamise plant doesn't look much like a rose bush, or bear bright and tasty fruit, but the family resemblance is there, in its minute flowers. Chamise has short, needlelike leaves, borne in clusters on stiff angular branches. When in flower the bushes appear to have been dusted with snow. When out of flower they are those grayish or brownish shrubs that cover most of our dry slopes and ridges below 5000 feet. They are found mixed with other chaparral plants, or scattered in the coastal sage scrub, or in almost pure stands. Numerically speaking, chamise is the most common plant of southern California's brushlands.

Closely related to chamise is redshanks. It is a more appealing shrub, with bright green delicate foliage and red, picturesquely shredding bark, whence "redshanks". Its flower clusters, borne in summer, are large and showy. Jacumba and Laguna Junction are likely places to see redshanks. It is restricted to higher elevations.

Toyon is another rose relative. It is widely distributed from coastal canyons and foothills up to 4000 feet. It is our outstanding red-fruited wild shrub, bearing great clusters of bright red berries from November through January, or until migrating cedar waxwings gobble them down. It has been called California holly because of its red winter fruits, and long ago a new town just west of Los Angeles was named Hollywood because so many fine toyons grew in the vicinity.



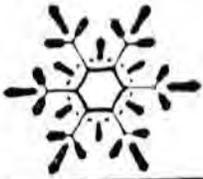
Docent Doings



What a stimulating day at the Natural History Museum on November 21st! Not only did we have a chance to study their displays, with an eye to our own Visitor Center improvements, we also learned some interesting facts about sea mammals. For example, did you know that the polar bear, with his streamlined head, is in the process of evolving from a land mammal into a sea mammal?

Our thanks to Bill Brothers for arranging the meeting, and to Tom Demeré, assistant curator of paleontology and geology at the museum, for the tour, slide show, and for sharing with us his knowledge, in explaining the significance of a collection of whale baleen, sea mammal skulls, krill (food for baleen feeding grey whales), and even barnacles and lice that live on the gentle giants.

M. H.



Quiz



Did you know?

...that by moving its tail in certain ways a fox can send messages to other foxes?

...that within the past hundred years the number of North American bison has increased from fewer than 600 to more than 40,000?

Ed. note: The "Happiness" thought on page 1 was contributed by Julie Marine. Something nice to think about this holiday season!

TORREY PINES DOCENT SOCIETY
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the 25th of each month.
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Poetry Corner

"Once in a lifetime, if one
is lucky, one so merges
with sunshine and air and
running water that whole
eons might pass in a
single afternoon without
notice."

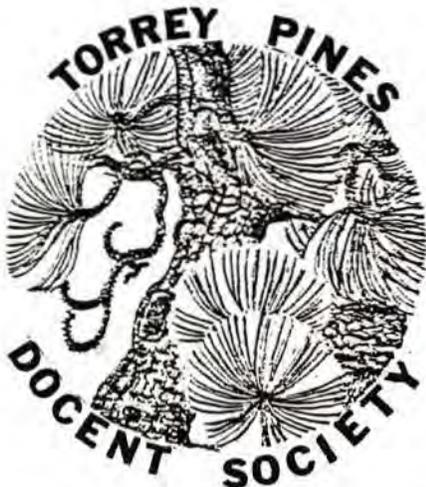
-Loren Eisley,
The Immense Journey

ON A WINDY DAY

White gulls
climbing steep stairs
of the wind, turn and slide
noisily down its banisters
again.

-E. W. Hackett

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Scrub Jay