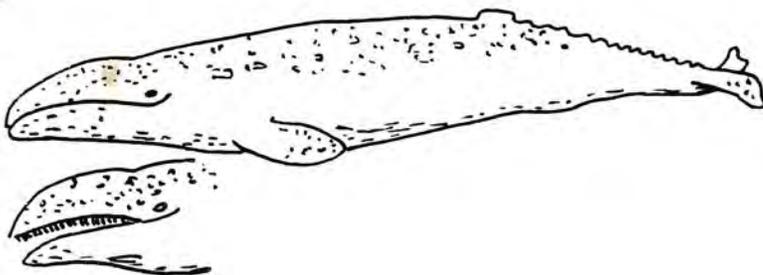




TORREYANA

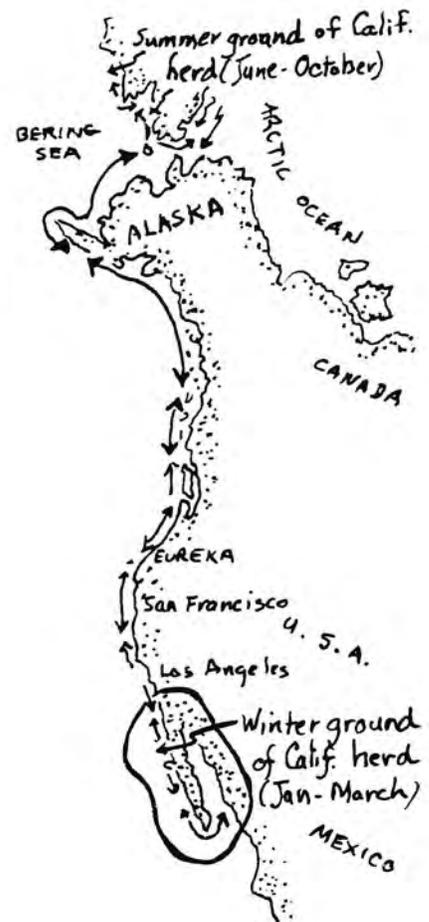
Published for Members of the Torrey Pines Docent Society, #101, Nov., 1983

NEXT DOCENT MEETING: Saturday, November 19, 9:00 A.M., Lodge
Hurry to our November meeting to hear Jim Sumich give a talk and slide presentation on Marine Mammals and the California Grey Whale. Jim is an instructor of biology at Grossmont Community College. He is currently doing research on the California grey whale.
Remember, November is the start of the grey whale migration off the California coast.



JANUARY WHALE WATCHING TRIP PLANNED

Those people tentatively interested in going on a January whale watching trip to the Coronado Islands, call Bill Brothers at 286-7085.



News & Notes



Docents are proud of Ranger Bob Wohl for his TV starring role in the 12-week series of programs entitled "Your California State Parks." The series began October 4 and can be seen every Tuesday at 7 P.M. on Southwestern Cable TV and Channel 15C. In each program, Bob serves as host and interviews personnel from parks throughout California while views of these parks are shown. Nearly 20 park staff and docents are involved in the productions.



COFFEE FUND EMACIATED

The poor delapidated Coffee Fund needs your help in supplementing its diet. It eats that green paper stuff and coins of the realm. Supplemental feedings are not necessary if you remember, at each refreshment break, that it's also very hungry!

Anyone having articles, photos or clippings that may be of interest to other docents, please put them in the box by the bulletin board. Thanks to Ruth Cheney for keeping our board updated and interesting.

It is time to update our "emergency duty" list. This is a list of docents whom the rangers can call in the event (hopefully rare) that a scheduled docent fails to show up. Please call Judy Schulman (452-7683) to reinstate your status on the list or to add your name to it.

Anyone wishing to buy Torrey Pines Christmas cards by MAT, call Rowdy James or Judy Schulman. The cards will be brought to the November meeting.

Quiz

1. Who is "Monsieur the Fish"?
2. Do you believe in mermaids and mermen?
(See page 7.)

Secretary's Notes by Julie Marine

The regular monthly meeting of the Torrey Pines Docent Society was held on October 15, 1983, at 9:00 A.M. in the Lodge. There were 26 members, park staff, and guests in attendance.

President Judy Schulman opened the meeting with several special announcements. Following talks by the guest speakers, docents will be given the opportunity to see the new slide show that is now being shown to visitors to the Lodge. Also, segments of Ranger Bob Wohl's television series about California State Parks will be presented.

Judy reported that an article in Westways, a magazine published by the Automobile Club of Southern California, encouraged the use of Torrey pine needles for basketry, but the article neglected to state that the Torrey pine is a protected tree found primarily at Torrey Pines State Reserve. Judy wrote a letter to the editor to emphasize this point and to state that the picking or gathering of cones, needles, or flowers in the Reserve is expressly prohibited by law. Her letter was published in the following issue of the magazine.

Four iron-on patches of the Torrey Pines Docent Society logo were given to the lucky persons who found Halloween stickers pasted under their chairs.

New metal docent badges provided by the State Parks Department were distributed.

Judy reported that the letter to the State Parks Department in Sacramento written by concerned docents in regard to the general plans for the future of Torrey Pines State Reserve was received and appreciated, and a copy of the final report will be mailed to the Docent Society. There will be a public hearing on the matter in San Diego. Docents are welcome to attend, and information on the exact time and place can be obtained from the rangers' office.

Vice President Bill Brothers asked docents who would like to go on a whale-watching excursion in January 1984 to sign up now or to get in touch with him as soon as possible so that he will know how many (including family members and guests) wish to go. Early reservations are required by the boat company.

Bill Brothers introduced our special guest speakers, Dr. Zac Hanscom and Dr. Boyd Collier from the San Diego State University Biology Department. A slide and talk presentation on the ecology and interactions between the harlequin bug and the bladder pod bush was interesting and educational. The research program will provide knowledge that may aid in growing our nation's crops, where insects take a heavy toll. For example, an understanding of how the bladder pod can live in this relationship with the harlequin bug and still survive could possibly have applications in agriculture. Torrey Pines State Reserve has been one of the areas for this research project.

The meeting ended with refreshments, after which docents were privileged to watch taped segments of Ranger Bob Wohl's television shows, in which he interviewed rangers from Redwood and Old Town State Parks. Also, Ranger Greg Hackett's new slide show was presented for docents who had not yet seen it.

Julie

ANIMAL TALK

Striped Skunk

(Mephitis mephitis)



I think it would be safe to assume that most people have a pretty good idea of what a skunk is, and what it looks like. Their glossy black fur with its snowy white stripe, and the ability to spray their enemies with a powerful sulfur compound, earns this small animal instant respect from country and city folk alike.

For three years now, these animals have been nocturnal visitors to our patio, along with our many raccoon friends. I have learned many interesting facts about skunks that I have never read about in the typical nature encyclopedias. Some of these, I would like to share with you.

The books usually describe the skunks' vocalization as simply, "a growl". This is true, they do growl. However, they also hiss like an angry cat, chirp exactly like a sparrow, and tiny baby skunks, when chasing each other, make the same comical sound that the Snoopy character makes in the Snoopy cartoon.

Baby skunks, like most youngsters, are very playful. They wrestle and pounce on each other similar to the way kittens and puppies do. This always happens when their little tummies are full to the bursting point, (which is when all skunks are the happiest).

Another thing that I have never read about, but I am certain of, is that all skunks must be as myopic as the original Mr. Magoo! Their characteristic threat posture of highly plumed tail, and stamping front feet is not reserved for their enemies alone. Skunks threaten everyone.....and everything..all the time. Enemies...brothers...sisters,..cousins,..Mama,..Papa,.. chairs, tables, flowerpots, trees, walls,..you name it. They don't even recognize their own Mother until they literally bump into her. (This is not an exaggeration, I'm serious). I see it every night.

Unless a skunk is startled, or his life is put on the line, he does not "spray" as often as you might think. As a case in point:

My husband Don goes to play golf in the wee small hours before dawn, and there is usually a skunk or two on the patio when he leaves. As he opens the sliding glass door, he talks to them, telling them that he is just passing through and means them no harm. They hide under a table until he's gone and then come back to resume eating. A few times, a skunk was crunching on dog kibbles right where the door opens. My husband opened the door slowly, and VERY GENTLY nudged the skunk aside with his foot, and all the while talking to him in a soft, friendly tone. The skunk allowed himself to be moved just enough so that Don could get through the door, and he never stopped chewing his kibbles. As long as no fast movements are made, skunk and husband go on with their business with no traumatic experiences had by either one.

But of course there is a limit to a skunk's patience. I remember one such occasion when I looked out on the patio and there was my favorite raccoon "Tuffy", following a skunk all over the patio. For some unexplainable reason, the raccoon was trying to sniff of the skunks...uh...."business end". The skunk was almost running, trying to get away from the young raccoons. cold, wet, nosy....nose. This went on for an eternal 5 minutes.

I said, "Tuffy, you silly thing, you are really asking for it, ...and you're gonna' get it!!!"

And he was.....and he did!

- June -



ZERO POPULATION by Hank Nicol

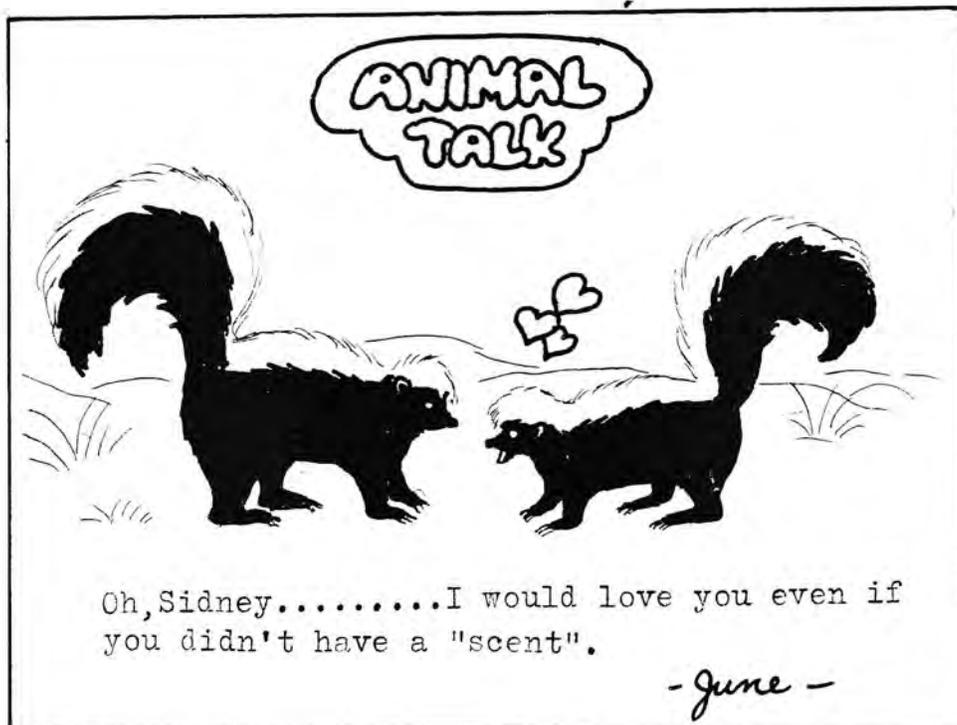
By now, anyone with any interest at all in the subject knows that the genetic variation among Torrey pines is close to zero. This is probably because the population was once close to zero.

It seems that cats can have the same problems as trees. The October issue of Science 83 has a story on the genetics of cheetahs. One group lived in Namibia while the other was over 200 miles away in Transvaal. Forty-seven enzymes were tested; all were identical. In another test, 97 percent of the proteins were the same. For comparison, only 78 percent of housecat and 68 percent of human proteins were identical.

No one has been able to make tests like this on elephant seals, which at one time were reduced to the dozens, or the blue whales, which are now down to the hundreds. Even though a population builds back up, it will have a limited number of genes. It can take hundreds of thousands of years to increase the variability and adaptability. In the meantime, one catastrophe, or one epidemic, or one dam across a river can wipe out a whole species.

At least one species has been extirpated right here at Torrey Pines....., and in the last five years. When I first came here yucca whipplei, the beautiful Our Lord's Candle, grew in the East Grove. You can still see some dead flower stalks. These last plants were too few and too spread out for the yucca moths to find them. No yucca moths, no seeds. No seeds, no yucca. This yucca still grows up and down and inland. But if we can't prevent the disappearance of a species in a state reserve.... We get excited about saving a species when it becomes endangered. We need to get in there a little earlier.

Hank





This month I would like to share with you this letter that was sent to us by Sam Farr Member, California State Assembly, 28th District. More information on the Assembly Bill that he discusses will be presented at the next meeting....

September 30, 1983

Torrey Pines Docent Society
San Diego Coast Area
2680 Carlsbad Boulevard
Carlsbad, California 92008

Dear Docent Society Members:

Recently, I was joined by everyone of my colleagues in the Assembly in voting to place the Parklands Bond Act of 1984 before the voters in June of next year. The bill is in the Senate and if successfully passed, to the Governor for final approval.

I am extremely pleased by the broad based and bi-partisan support that the bill (AB 2099) has attracted. This \$370 million bond issue will be shared equally between the state and local government. By restoring and expanding our present state holdings, it can play a major role in maintaining the nation's number one park system. The 65 million visitors attracted to the State Parks every year are helpful to our state's economy. Likewise, by providing discretionary funds for every local agency to use on its priorities, as well as by earmarking special amounts for state-wide priority concerns, the issue can assist our local park systems to remain healthy and provide for the needs of our community.

I want to call to your attention the \$3 million allocation for planning, development, rehabilitation, restoration and interpretive facilities in support of volunteer community action projects for the state park system.

This provision of AB 2099 is of utmost importance to your organization and I sincerely need your help. Your organization's endorsement is urgently needed as well as the support of each one of your members. Please send letters of support to your Senator and to Governor Deukmejian. Also, I respectfully request you publicize the California Parklands Bond Act of 1984 in all your organization's newsletters and mailings.

In addition, if you could send our office a copy of your letters, I would appreciate it. We are keeping a file on all agency, organization and individual support for us during the legislative process as well as during the campaign next spring.

I have enclosed copies of AB 2099, and an analysis of the bill for your information and use. Please join with me by supporting the California Parklands Bond Act of 1984. If you desire additional information concerning AB 2099, please contact my office.

Thank you for your support and assistance.

Sincerely,

SAM FARR
Member of the Assembly

An Indian visiting the Reserve was heard to say, "Consider that cigarette like a peace pipe. Say a prayer every time you light it as the Indians did, and pretty soon people will do either a whole lot more praying or a whole lot less smoking!"

ANSWERS TO QUIZ:

1. Monsieur the Fish

In the coastal villages of Southeast Asia, Monsieur the Fish (cá ong, in Vietnamese) is a much loved denizen of the deep, a cheery and cooperative creature that is said to bring good luck to all and, occasionally, to carry shipwrecked sailors home on its back. It has all the characteristics of your typical Good Fairy, the "good guy" in myths all over the world.

As it turns out, though, Monsieur the Fish is actually the dolphin, folklorists say, and most of the magical-sounding attributes described by its admirers are probably not beyond its real abilities.



2. Merpersons

Improbable as they seem, half-human/half-fish mermaids and mermen are among the most persistent of all mythological creatures. Even the generally levelheaded Christopher Columbus reported that on one of his voyages three of them "rose out of the sea, but were not so beautiful as they are represented." And early Norse sailors told and wrote about a ten-foot-tall creature with the head, shoulders and slender body of a man; it would rise up out of the sea before storms, they said, a warning of bad weather ahead.

Now along comes a study by scientists at the University of Manitoba which suggests that Columbus and those early Norsemen were onto something. When an atmospheric temperature inversion approaches the sea, says the study, the result can be an optical illusion- an illusion that could make a dumpy walrus a mile or two away look like a skinny, towering, humanoid "merman". Further, the conditions that produce the illusion would happen only in the last stages of a warm front, in the calm before a storm, just as the Norsemen claimed.

Or maybe there's another, more exotic reason for the universality of the half-human/half-fish story, another twist on the "racial memory" theme. According to Sir Alister Hardy, now professor emeritus of zoology at Oxford, it's possible that our apelike human ancestors actually spent some of their evolutionary history in the sea. Perhaps our myths reflect this dim ancestral past.

TORREY PINES DOCENT SOCIETY

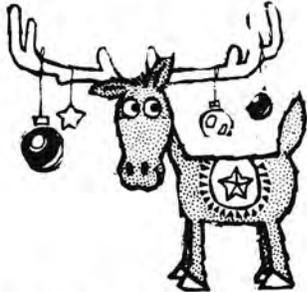
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Poetry Corner

Watching for Wild Geese

Since I faintly heard,
Far away, the first wild goose
Give forth his cry,
My thoughts have been fixed only
On the middle of the sky.

-By Fujiwarano Okikage
(900 A.D.)



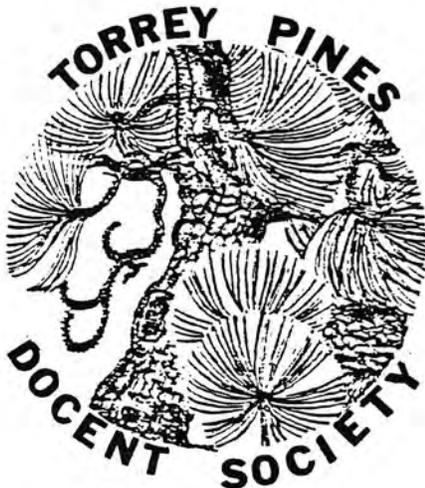
COMING EVENTS

The smashing, annual, Docent Christmas party is scheduled for Saturday morning, Lodge, on December 17.

Mark your calendars!



Torrey Pines Docent Society
C/o Torrey Pines State Reserve
2680 Carlsbad Blvd.
Carlsbad, Ca. 92008



FOR

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Scrub Jay