



TORREYANA

Published for members of the Torrey Pines Docent Society, #104, Feb., 1984

NEXT DOCENT MEETING: Saturday morning, Feb. 17, 9:00 A.M., Lodge

At the Annual Meeting the general election of officers for the Torrey Pines Docent Society for 1984 will occur. Annual reports will be presented. Following the business meeting, Bill Brothers will lead a nature walk.

The nominating committee is asking for recommendations for docents to serve on the Executive Board. Phone Bill Brothers, Chairman, at 286-7085. Offices to be filled are: President, Vice President, Secretary and Treasurer. Nominees must provide their consent either by writing or by being present to accept verbally a nomination at the annual election meeting. Only full voting members are qualified to hold office. This means members who have paid their dues for 1984 and completed all prescribed training requirements for full membership, according to the by-laws of T.P.D.S.

Duties of the Executive Board: President- Presides over monthly meetings and special Board meetings. Vice President- Conducts meetings in absence of President, assists President by coordinating monthly meetings and training program for new members. Secretary- Records minutes of meetings and keeps a record on file. Keeps a record of applications for membership and a current membership list. Treasurer- Keeps a current record of the organization's finances, (dues, donations, expenditures, monthly bank statement) and upon authorization of Exec. Board may sign checks to meet expenses of the Society. Gives monthly report.

Also serving on the board, by appointment, are: Torreyana Editor, Sales Coordinator, Duty Coordinator and Librarian.

Newly elected Board members will be trained by the '83 Board.

Please help us keep the Docent Society alive and interesting. Won't you share in the work? That means giving your full support- doing monthly duty, serving on the board, or assisting in other capacities.

We hope to see a large turn-out of docents at the February meeting.

VOTE VOTE VOTE VOTE VOTE



VOTE VOTE VOTE VOTE VOTE

Report from the Ranger by Bob Wohl

I've been deficient (as usual) in writing for the Torreyana, but I decided that, with the new year, I might write about the new staff that has "evolved" here at Torrey Pines.

Randy Hawley has been commuting from his home in Imperial Beach for over 3 years. It was beginning to wear on him, so he applied for a ranger position at Silverstrand State Beach. Since Sept., 1983, he has been working there and at Border Field State Beach. Though his state beaches have been adversely in the news (the Tijuana sewage problem has kept them in quarantine), he is loving it and his spirits haven't dimmed since leaving Torrey. He also is still intimately involved with the "restaurant corner" at the Lodge and with the San Dieguito Natural History Association that he, Yvette DeView, and other San Elijo State Beach Rangers created at the Cardiff-based campground.

Greg Hackett, of course, was given a one month's extension to Dec. 1, 1983 at Torrey Pines, but eventually the "powers that be" chose to rotate two new Rangers in and Greg was moved to South Carlsbad State Beach campground. He misses all of us "terribly", but he's still performing his duties with the same level of enthusiasm and consideration for the public. We will miss his smiling, jogging countenance around the trails.

The two new Rangers also began as Ranger Trainees 3 years ago, and were classmates of Randy and Greg. Yvette DeView is an avid cross-country skier and hiker and, a year ago, married another Ranger, Mike Stavros of Pendleton Coast, right here at Torrey Pines Lodge. Yvette helped spearhead the creation of the San Elijo State Beach visitor center with its popular "hands-on" tide pool, and is one of the founders and officers of the San Dieguito Natural History Association. Her previous park experience was at Cabrillo National Monument as a volunteer.

Steve Woods has worked at South Carlsbad State Beach and Cuyamaca Rancho State Park. He has been in the U.S. Coast Guard and State Forestry, bringing with him two-fold expertise on land and sea. Steve is married and has two children, one a baby arriving last fall.

Both Steve and Yvette are San Diego natives, bringing with them knowledge of the area, skills in interpretation, exhibit work, forest management, safety and rescue, ocean and seashore, ecology, and excellent public relations abilities.

And a Happy New Year in 1984!

Bob

In Memoriam

PATRICIA COATES
daughter of
Margaret Fleming Allen



by Judy Schulman

In the December 1983 issue of the Torreyana, I talked about the formation of a statewide docent league. The league is seen as a loose coalition or federation of non-profit organizations working in California State Parks. I am currently serving as secretary of the steering committee involved in the groundwork of the group's formation. What this means is that you have a direct line for giving your opinions on what you would like to see the group do for you. If you have any ideas, please call me at 452-7683 (evenings).

At the January board meeting, the board of directors decided to try to take a new direction in membership categories. Currently we have full members, associate members, and supporting members. Full members have completed training and are asked to serve 6 hours a month. They are qualified to lead nature walks and staff the visitor center. Their dues are \$3. Associate members are those individuals who are actively pursuing a prescribed course of docent training. They are encouraged to staff the visitor center as soon as possible. Their dues are also \$3. Supporting members are those members who have contributed at least \$10 to the organization or have been given the membership for outstanding service on behalf of the society. Although the primary need for volunteers at Torrey Pines is to work in the visitor center and give nature walks, we are going to add a new non-public related category. This category, to be formally named at a later date, will be for those individuals who wish only to involve themselves with activities like gardening, trail maintenance, or picking up litter. They will be asked to go through training, but their check-off list will have some variance from the current one. As such projects can be assigned only by the park staff, a new system of keeping track of hours worked will have to be designed.

Attention all associates who have not yet finished the check-off list requirement of writing an article for the Torreyana or giving an oral presentation. Fate has smiled down on you! We are eliminating it from the list. If that was the only requirement you had left, please let me know and I will change your status from associate to full member.

"New Frontiers" will be the theme of an Interpretive Conference jointly sponsored by the Western Interpreters' Association, the Calif. State Park Rangers Association, and the Park Rangers Association of Calif. to be held March 11-15 in Santa Cruz. Interpretation--the art and profession of sharing the cultural and natural world with others--will be examined through four separate program tracks. Future park management, resources, technologies, and techniques will be explored. The Holiday Inn in Santa Cruz will host the conference. The conference is open to all interested people. Fees are \$35/member, \$45/non-member, \$25/student. Registration materials are available by writing to JOINT CONFERENCE, P.O. BOX 28366, Sacramento, CA 95828-0366, or telephone (916)383-2530.

Judy

Bill Brothers ordered up a perfect day, a calm ocean and a sturdy ship to carry 43 Torrey Pines State Reserve Docents and Friends to the Coronados Islands.

The plan was to accompany California gray whales on that segment of their southern migration which takes them past the Coronados Islands. We boarded the Bold Content on a bright, sunny day and lined up at the rails to watch California sea lions basking in the sunshine as they rested on harbor buoys; Heerman's, Ring-billed, Western, California and other gulls; Black-legged kittiwakes, Brown pelicans, cormorants and other harbor birds. We were scanning the ocean from every part of the boat - and very soon someone shouted, "There's a blow! About 1 o'clock." Everybody rushed to that side of the boat - cameras and binoculars at the ready. More shouts. "There's whale just off the bow - two whales!" "Three whales at 11 o'clock!" We were surrounded by grays nearby and spouts in the distance.

Our skipper slowed the boat many times to let us watch a single whale, a pair or a cow and calf. We followed and observed many different whales and noted they make several blows before turning downward for a deeper dive, and then we were able to see their flukes rising above the surface of the water. (And all cameras were in action to catch a shot of that fluke before it disappeared.)

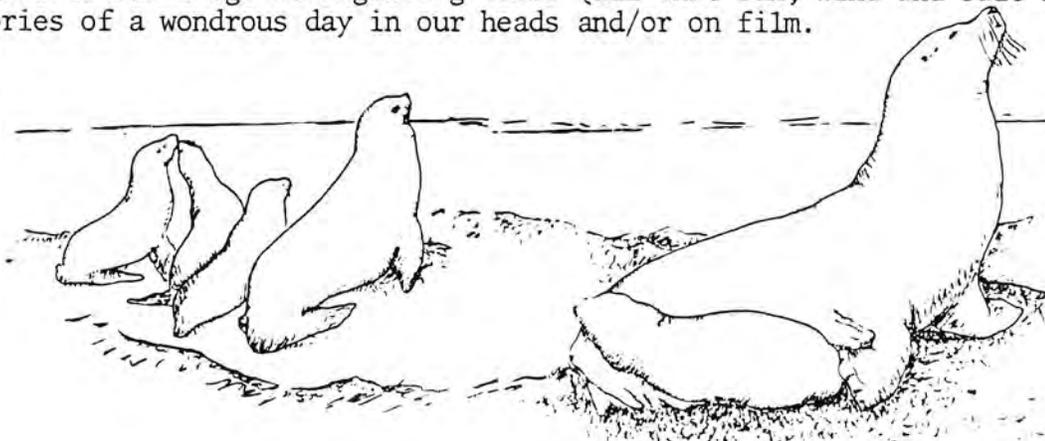
Several people who happened to be looking in the right place at the right time watched a spectacular acrobatic display as one whale rose up almost completely out of the water and then fell backward with a huge splash. We were fortunate to see the whale breach twice, although 10 or more breaches in succession have been recorded. Breaching is a fairly common occurrence in the lagoons where grays go to calve and mate. It is less frequently seen by whale-watchers on the open ocean.

We had been so preoccupied watching whales that we were surprised to see North Island dead ahead, and caught our first glimpse of pinnipeds - harbor seals (the rather small, roundish and spotted ones) on the rocks. More were observed on Middle Island where many California sea lions were spotted on rocks quite high up above the water. There are a few colonies of sea lions in the Coronados where they "haul out" to give birth to their pups. We spent some time near a small cove where elephant seal cows were lying in a sandy cove, together with young pups. Sea lions were also there on the sand and up on ledges.

We observed Black petrels in addition to the same kinds of birds we saw in the harbor and on the way to the islands. They were feeding on the abundant supply of fish, resting in large numbers all over the islands and flying about.

We also saw two burros at Puerto Cuevo. They are not indigenous to the Coronados and were brought there to be used by the lighthouse keepers and other island residents. A Mexican marine unit is posted at Puerto Cuevo to maintain Mexico's claim to her northernmost ocean possession and to enforce sanctuary and fishing laws.

We returned to San Diego with glowing faces (all that sun, wind and salt spray) and memories of a wondrous day in our heads and/or on film.



Secretary's Notes by Julie Marine

Nineteen docents gathered at Torrey Pines North Beach area for a walk in the Peñasquitos lagoon to view and identify birds. The morning sun was so beautiful and we were grateful for that, as the morning air was crispy and cool. With binoculars and all manner of bird manuals, we began by watching the gulls and godwits along the sandy beach that borders the channel where the ocean tide was flowing into the lagoon. I must say that I have had a lot of difficulties in distinguishing one type of gull from another.

One of our more knowledgeable docents, Mary Miller, commented that she remembered one bird, the godwit, because the bill turns just slightly upward, and that when Mary was leading a Girl Scout bird tour the quote was, "Remember the godwits, for their bills are turned to God." You know, that's a great way to remember those godwits.

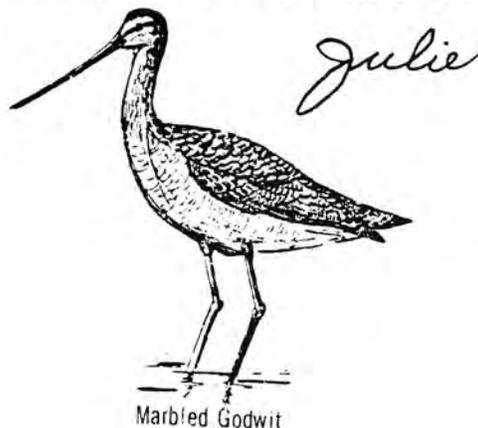
We walked along the edge of the channel to the railroad tracks and trestle crossing. There we watched western grebes, surf scoters and even some terns, egrets and a great blue heron. An old dead bush in the salt marsh had a small flock of rosie house finches perched and preening their feathers. This made me wonder if they were just passing through the lagoon or permanent residents there. "Oh, see those cormorants drying their wings," commented one of the group.

As I walked back to my car I felt there is hope that this beautiful lagoon and all the wildlife within it is due to efforts of so many people working together in various ways- planning groups and environmental groups, to name but a few, campaigning and urging the leaders of our fine city, county and state to preserve these valuable wetlands.

We, too, can be defenders of the environment. How will this lagoon be 30 to 50 years from now? Hopefully, the city and county will have a plan to keep out pollution by a means of monitoring waste and run-off from nearby developments. The importance of preserving the lagoons is now being realized by many other states, as refuges for wildlife and a place for people to enjoy. To sum this all up, I may not be able to name every bird and plant and flower here, but I can, at least, share my deep concern with visitors at the park. They, too, may enjoy and appreciate what nature gives to us all.

I've enjoyed being the recording secretary for the past few years. My sincere thanks go to Millicent and to Isabel for typing my lengthy notes and for filling in for me when I've been away.

Happy New Year to all!



A CONVERSATION WITH FRIENDS

I
WHO'S METHUSELAH?

by Hank Nicol

I was talking with some friends. One of them had the mistaken and common idea that Torrey pines can grow to a great age. The twisted shapes might give that impression, but everybody should know by now that a bristlecone pine is considered to be the oldest living thing. The bristlecones grow, very slowly, in eastern California, Nevada and Utah. One tree on Wheeler Peak in eastern Nevada was already 350 years old when the Great Pyramid of Cheops was built around 2580 B.C. That makes it about 4,900 years old.

One of the men in the group was a scientist, a learned and respected plant geneticist. He's a man who can be described as "taciturn". Compared to him, Jimmy Stewart is a chatterbox. He surprised me with the observation that nothing is close to 5,000 years old. The oldest living part of that bristlecone couldn't be over 30 years old. Only a few needles, twigs, and a narrow strip on the outside of the trunk are alive. Most of the 4,900 year old wood is dead.

I hadn't thought of that, but of course he was right. The oldest living thing on earth must be animal and not vegetable. The cells of living things are constantly being replaced. Most of them last only a few years at best. Your body, and mine, is totally renewed every seven years... with some exceptions. Brains don't have any replacements or reinforcements marching to the front. Brain cells and nerve cells have to last as long as you do. (I'm not sure mine are making it.) So it seems to me that the oldest living things would be the brain and nervous system of that legendary 190 year old tortoise in Tonga. Methuselah lived longer than a sequoia, the Torrey pine is as old as the bristlecone and you and I (sob!) are even older.

Hank





ANIMAL TALK



Common Raven (Corvus Corax)

Few people who visit Torrey Pines can help but notice the huge glossy black birds perched up in the trees, especially around the lodge and on the Guy Flemming trail. They make sure their presence is known by their loud and interesting repertoire of vocalizations.

Because they are a large black bird, the Raven is often confused with the Crow, but there are four or five easy ways to distinguish the two birds:

- (1) The Raven's most common vocalization is a loud "Croak"; the Crow's is a "Caw".
- (2) The Raven flaps his wings less and often interrupts his flight to soar, but the Crow has a faster, steady flapping style of flight.
- (3) Ravens travel in small groups of 2-7, but Crows prefer to fly in large groups.
- (4) Ravens have a "bearded" feather structure on their throat, but the Crows' throat is smooth. This is very noticeable, especially in profile.
- (5) The Raven is about 4" longer than the Crow, and in general is a larger, heavier bodied bird than the Crow.

Ravens are good parents, and cooperate in the care and feeding of their young. The Father spends much time acting as a sentinal, and few enemies get past his watchfull eye.

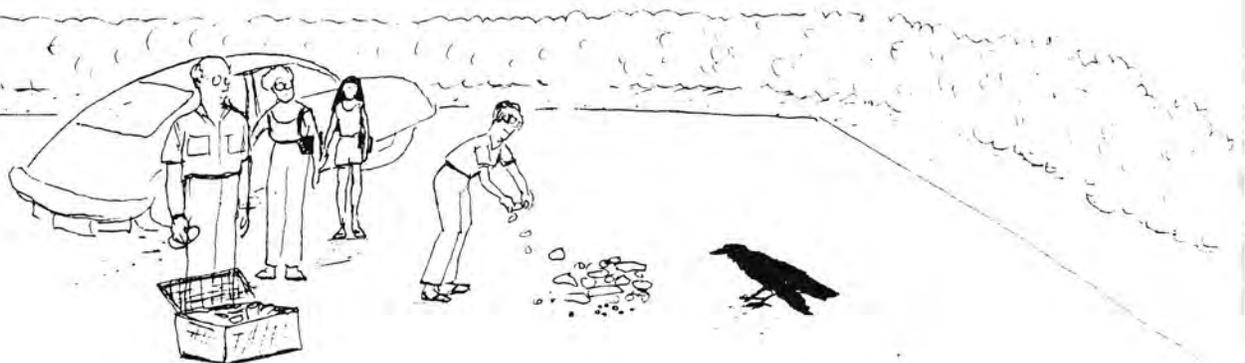
Ravens, like Crows, are scavengers and do the earth an important service by cleaning up carrion.

Stories of the intelligence of Ravens, Crows and their smaller cousins the Jays and Magpies are legion. I had the opportunity to observe an example of this intelligence about ten years ago, while visiting relatives in Florida.

As my family and I got out of our car in Everglades National Park, a Raven emerged from under a shady bush, and walked right over to us. One of his wings was obviously broken, and dragged on the ground as he approached us. Within about two minutes we had emptied almost half of the contents of our picnic basket in front of the "Poor Thing", and then walked away to let him eat in peace. As we reached the other side of the parking lot, we turned to watch him enjoy his meal. We were startled to see 15 more Ravens come walking out from under the same bush and join the injured bird in his repast. We didn't really think too much about it until we returned from our hike and saw another car of tourists drive up. The Ravens were nowhere in sight until the tourists had gotten out of their car. At this point, our friend with the broken wing again appeared from his hiding place and, like he had done with us . . . stood piteously right in front of them. Their reaction was exactly the same as ours, and in no time, the Raven was standing before a mountainous heap of picnic type goodies. When the people left to go hiking, we sat in our car and watched as the rest of the Raven's "gang" rejoined their leader at their second breakfast of the morning.

We laughed all the way home at how easily we had been "Had", by such a clever and resourceful CON ARTIST !!

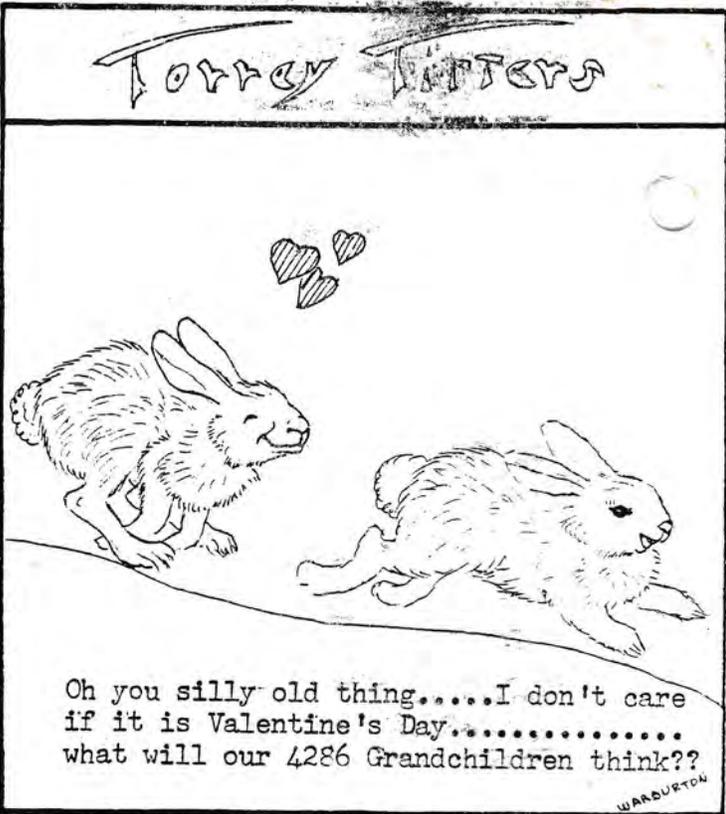
Jane



TORREY PINES DOCENT SOCIETY
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ASSOC. ED.- Isabel Buechler

EDITOR'S FAREWELL

"Farewell, my own, light of my life, farewell," so sang the sailor in Gilbert & Sullivan's H.M.S. Pinafore. And now I say, "Farewell," (at last) to the "light of my life" (well, sort of)....my 4 year job as Torreyana Editor. Oh, I did love it, but it's time for a change and fresh ideas. Isabel Buechler has agreed to be the new Editor. You're lucky. She has a background as technical editor at G.A., and was always tops in language all through school. (Also, she is a much better typist than I!) Many thanks to my regular contributors - Hank, June, the presidents and secretaries, and the rest of you who sent in articles from time to time. Keep the contributions coming! Good copy makes the job so much more fun and the publication worthwhile. Send your articles, bits and pieces to Isabel from now on at 3702 Oleander, San Diego, CA. 92106. (Phone: 222-7016)



Love, Millicent

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FOR

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Scrub Jay