



TORREYANA

Published for Members of the
Torrey Pines Docent Society

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NEXT MEETING: Saturday, August 18, 9 a.m., in the Lodge

The chance to explore the wonders of TPSR with our knowledgeable naturalist has been renewed. Following a brief meeting in the Lodge, Hank Nicol will lead us on a hike in the little-known east grove. Wear your hiking shoes. This will be a new walk for most of us. Afterwards, there will be refreshments back at the Lodge. A Board meeting will follow.

News and Notes



PRESIDENT GLENN DUNHAM REPORTS

Just back from vacation and planning the next one and not much news otherwise. We had a very enjoyable and relaxing beach party in July and I want to thank everyone for the delicious food.

Vacation time means changes in our routine, so make sure you check the lodge calendar or with Ruth Hand to make sure there isn't any conflict. Don't forget us at vacation time. New members please get your lodge duty items signed off and start helping out; we could use it.

One item in the mail was from the San Diego Docent Council, which is encouraging member institutions to allow San Diego docents free admission. So far the Aerospace Museum and the Photographic Arts Museum, with some limitations, have agreed. Call me if you want the details.

GOOD SUGGESTION

Jeanne Vanderhoof submitted the following:

"I would like to suggest that we keep a supply of grocery bags (plastic ones with handles) available in the lodge to take on walks.

Even though there isn't a lot of trash on the trails (the Rangers and Park Aides do a good job keeping it clean), the practice would encourage our guests to be more concerned about the environment and maybe they will initiate the practice other places."

(Continued)

CONGRATULATIONS TO JUDY SCHULMAN

Formerly Research Assistant for the Corporate Marketing Department of Copley Newspapers, Judy was promoted on July 1 to Survey Research Analyst. She is in charge of day-to-day operations of the Marketing Department, which include coordinating field work, coding, data entry, computer programming, and data analysis. We wish her success in her new position.

PICTURES AVAILABLE

Jeanne Vanderhoof reports that she took pictures at the beach party and also at the Olympic Torch Relay at Torrey Pines. She will bring these to the August meeting and anyone who desires prints can order them from her.

Secretary's Notes by Betty Andrews

The annual beach picnic of the Torrey Pines Docent Society was held on Saturday, July 21, 1984, at North Beach, with good attendance. A group of members went on a bird and flower walk in the lagoon area, after which everyone enjoyed a superb pot-luck meal.

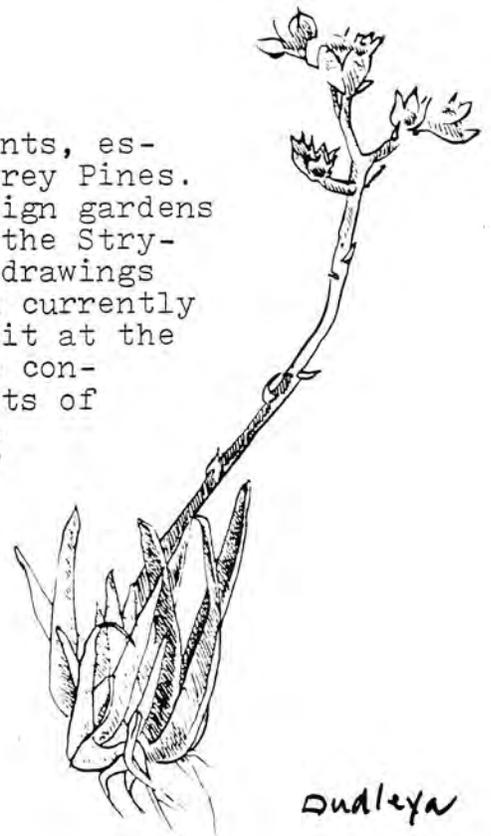
After lunch, Glenn Dunham conducted a quiz, prepared by Judy Carlstrom (who was unable to attend), on seaweeds. The quiz was won by new docent Wolfgang Koessler, and his prize was a copy of "Seashore Life of Southern California" by Sam Hinton.

Ruth Hand reminded everyone that docents are still needed to man the lodge, both weekdays and weekends.

Getting to Know You by Irina Gronborg

My love and appreciation of the beauty of plants, especially native plants, has brought me to Torrey Pines. I'm an artist and teacher, and I live and design gardens in Solana Beach. A recent one-woman show at the Strybing Arboretum in San Francisco exhibited my drawings and tapestries of subtropical plants, and I'm currently represented in the "California Species" exhibit at the Oakland Museum. In recent artwork, I've been concentrating on creating very realistic portraits of plants. I'd like to use art to help make the public aware of the beauty of our heritage of native plants.

ED. NOTE: The accompanying drawing was submitted by Irina. We hope to put her talents to frequent use. Thank you, Irina.



THE LONGEST KILOMETER by Hank Nicol

The most photographed event in the history of the planet Earth reached Torrey Pines just before 8:00 a.m. on Wednesday, the 25th of July, 1984. The Olympic flame was passed on the beach between lifeguard towers number one and number two.



Days before the event I was filled with irreverent thoughts. Was the Sony Walkman the official belt stereo of the Torch Relay? Remembering the hot air balloon crash, would the Boss Ranger flip out when he saw fire entering a state reserve? This was the only place that the relay reached the Pacific. Would the runner make a grand gesture? Would he wade into the surf up to his knees. You know, "One small step . . . , one giant leap"

It was a beautiful morning. The sun was out for the first time in several days. Like the old grammar school joke, it was a great day for the race . . . , the human race.

I saw a mass of flashing red and yellow lights. There were joggers, bikers, telephone company trucks, and TV station cars. These were fronted by a skirmish line of cops on motorcycles. They were led by a lone runner with a torch. Halfway down the hill the procession halted while the flame was passed from one runner's torch to that of the next. The mass came on again.

Jeff Pierson of Irvine was wearing the official Torch Relay skivvy shirt. He was carrying an unlit official propane torch. He clambered down the rip-rap to the beach. He was the target of many cameras: his family's cameras, newsmen's cameras, gawkers' cameras, my camera, Channel 8's camera. We all took aim. We were ready.

Hank Wesseln of Anaheim made the turn into the reserve entrance. His torch was burning brightly, but he wasn't making very good time. How could he with that mob to wade through? Besides having to change torches, the relay had to change escorts. Lifeguards Scott Lieziert, Brian Hickey, and Miles Lundquist would follow the runners on the beach portion of the run in two jeeps. Because of the detour to get onto the beach without twisting an ankle, Hank ran somewhat farther than the standard kilometer.

I thought there would be a mob scene on the beach, but everyone stood back a respectful distance. Hank, Jeff, and the sponsor's representative made a beautiful composition as they passed the flame from one torch to the other. Neither runner made the grand gesture. They both have better taste than I do. Jeff was most photogenic as he waved the torch to the crowd and headed up the strand toward North Beach.

The aftermath was Hank's posing for pictures with his torch, with his family, with his friends. He was congratulated by many. He had been cheered by all. Yes, he got to keep the torch. After all. . . three thousand bucks.

The show moved on toward Los Angeles. It was over for Torrey Pines. It was over for San Diego. I'm supposed to be a tough guy, but I'll admit to a large lump and a small tear.

Hank

About ten years ago, my daughter Linda and I were up in Los Angeles "playing tourist" on a swelteringly hot, smoggy day. We stopped at a refreshment stand to get a tall icy drink, and then sat in a shady spot to try to cool off. After a short while, we became aware of a "fast brown thing" that was dashing about under the bushes next to where we were sitting. Because of the proximity to the food stand, we assumed that it was a large, well fed mouse. Our curiosity finally got the best of us and we ended up on all fours, hoping to get a better look at it. The "thing" turned out to be what I thought was a large brown mockingbird with an excessively long, "deformed" beak. "It's probably a birth defect," I said, and went into a tirade about the evils of pollution.

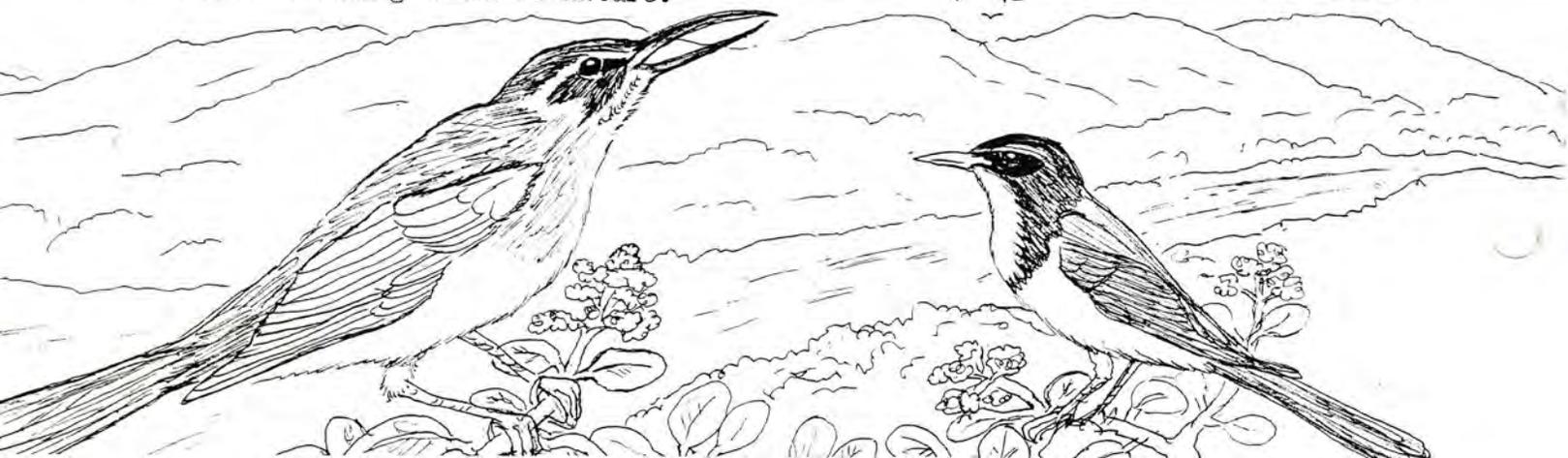
Years later, I found out that the bird was perfectly normal. He was supposed to look like that. He was a California Thrasher. It was no coincidence that the bird slightly resembled a mockingbird, for he is in the same family as the mockingbird and also the catbird. The long curved beak that I thought was a deformity is actually a very useful and efficient tool that is used to uncover insects, which are the birds' main food source. The search is accomplished by a thrashing motion which exposes insects which are just under the surface of the ground. It is from this habit that the thrasher got his name.

Unlike the mockingbird, who seems to enjoy city life, where tall trees and T.V. antennas offer a better stage for his concerts, the thrasher prefers the dense chaparral which provides protective cover while he searches the ground for insects. The thrasher is a good sized bird, about the same size as a scrub jay. Their bodies are dark brown, with a pale rusty underside. The California Thrasher has a distinctive light colored eyestripe which distinguishes him from other thrashers.

What the thrasher lacks in beauty, he more than makes up for in his songs. Loud, clear, and never monotonous, his music is a medley of the songs of the best singers in the chaparral, the warblers, finches, song sparrows and many others, for like the mockingbird, the thrasher is a gifted mimic.

The chaparral, dwarfed from the lack of rainfall, rarely grows very tall, but when the thrasher decides to sing, you will always find him perched on the very top of the tallest vegetation available. I have grown to love the thrasher's songs and one day while hiking, I stopped to listen to a particularly good singer. After a short while, I noticed that I was not the only one who was enjoying the music. Sitting on a branch no more than two feet away from the thrasher was a scrub jay who appeared to be totally mesmerized by his neighbor's singing. The "concert" lasted for almost 15 minutes, and the whole time, the jay remained attentive and motionless. I thought that this was just a unique and isolated incident that would never happen again, but many times since, I have seen a jay perched close by while a thrasher serenaded his world. Whether this is a common practice with jays, or there is simply one jay in our canyon who is a music lover, I don't know.

To me, it is only one more facet of the mysteries, the beauty and the wonders of the fascinating world of nature.



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"Wouldst thou" — so the helmsman
 answered,
 "Learn the secret of the sea?
 Only those who brave its dangers
 Comprehend its mystery!"
H. W. Longfellow



Torrey Titters

WARRINGTON

I had to read it in all the newspapers,..
 that my own son got caught "lurking"...
 in the Ladies restroom!!!!

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