



TORREYANA

Published for Members of the
Torrey Pines Docent Society
and the Torrey Pines Association

No. 123

September 1985

Next Docent Society Meeting

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 21 -- MEET AT ENTRANCE TO MUSEUM OF MAN AT 9:45

For our September meeting we will depart from the usual by offering a docent-guided tour of the Museum of Man in Balboa Park, featuring some hands-on exhibits and demonstrations. At 9:45 we will convene at the entrance and our group will be divided in half. One group will depart to study the Indians of Southern California and the others will study the Mayan Indian culture. At 11 o'clock the groups will switch. At 12 noon we will retreat to the cool of a shady tree, enjoy our brown-bag lunches, and conduct a brief meeting.

Bring a lunch and be at the Museum entrance promptly at 9:45. See you there.



Digueno village

News and Notes

HAPPY NEWS

The news we've been waiting for! Ranger Bob Wohl and his wife Robin are proud parents of a baby girl, Shana Alexandra, born Friday, August 23, at Scripps Memorial Hospital. Baby Shana weighed in at 7 pounds 14 ounces and measured 20 inches in length. At last report baby, mother, and Bob are all doing nicely. Congratulations, Bob and Robin!

(Continued)



News and Notes (continued)

A THANK YOU MESSAGE

Margaret Allen, recuperating from open-heart surgery, sent the following note to the Docent Society (via Judy Schulman, who arranged for delivery of a gift from the docents):

Dear Friends:

Thank you so much for the beautiful flower planter. Your thoughtfulness, notes, cards and concern have meant so much to me. I am anxious to get back to Torrey Pines and be with such wonderful friends--the Torrey Pines Docents. Until I see you in person, please accept my appreciation and love to all of you.

Sincerely,
(signed) Margaret Fleming Allen

Please note that the correct address for Margaret is 354 E. Millan, Chula Vista, CA 92010 (not 324 as given in the August Torreyana).

AN INVITATION

You are invited to become a member of the Torrey Pines Association. This organization has as its primary purpose bringing together persons "interested in the protection and preservation of the rare Torrey pines and their associated fauna and flora, within the unique geological area officially...called 'The Torrey Pines State Reserve.'"

Among the achievements of the Torrey Pines Association are:

1. Purchase of the land north of Carmel Valley Road, to preserve its wild habitats; this area is known as the Extension.
2. Restoration of the Guy Fleming house to a livable condition to make possible 24-hour surveillance in the Reserve by a Park Ranger.
3. Supplying display cases for the Museum; providing taxidermy for specimens to be displayed.

As a volunteer in the California State Park system, you have already demonstrated your concern by applying for membership in the Docent Society, which entitles you to receive this newsletter.

Annual membership in the Torrey Pines Association is set at \$5.00 per year; to become a contributing member costs \$10.00 per year; a life membership is provided by payment of \$100.00; and a patron contributes \$1000.00 or more.

Since overlapping membership reinforces your circles of influence, we would like to urge docents to join the Torrey Pines Association.

For further information, please call: Dr. Thomas Whitaker (past president) at 453-2659; Dr. John S. Bradshaw (vice president) at 744-2347; Mr. Stanley St. John (president elect) at 274-2487; or Dr. John Shelton (treasurer) at 459-5442.

The elected officers and Counselors
of the Torrey Pines Association

Notes from the Naturalist by Hank Nicol



BIG EARS

I thought I was a month ahead. Unfortunately, the editor was hard pressed and used up two months' supply in August. Now I'm hard pressed, so what you are about to read has little or nothing to do with Torrey Pines. You know what to do about that. YOU write something.

Has anybody noticed that I now have TWO bionic ears? A couple of years ago I got one for my left ear. I started hearing people. I still couldn't understand them. I heard birds for the first time in years. Of course, I'd heard scrub jays squawk and ravens croak all along. But when someone had told me that the California thrasher had a beautiful song, I just nodded and smiled. I took his word for it. When somebody asked about the rattling sound along the trail, I told him it was a cicada, not a rattlesnake. I hoped I was right. With one hearing aid I could hear cicadas, and thrashers, and wrens, and all sorts. I could even hear rattlesnakes. But when I tried to locate the source of a sound, it was always to the left. I could chase it around in circles and never find it. Except sometimes. I would get my left ear/hearing aid lined up on something and really get a blast. Since my eyes were designed for binocular vision forward, I still couldn't see what was making the racket.

I've been reading a bit about this left brain/right brain stuff. All of us have our wiring crossed. The left half of the brain works the right side of the body, vice versa and etcetera. The word-understanding part of the brain is on the left side, which gets its information through the right ear. My right ear was only a little deaf from age and infirmity. It hadn't gotten the full benefit of that mortar shell way back in.... Still, I thought I'd try a second hearing aid.

I only thought I'd been hearing the sounds of Torrey Pines, and other places, with one hearing aid. Now, with two, I hear even more birds. I hear small frogs I hadn't known existed. My new refrigerator is not as silent as I had thought. Sometimes I can even hear the stuck left turn signal of the park pickup, "Click, click, click, click...." The new hearing aid even has a little switch, so I can hear a telephone conversation without the one-note piccolo accompaniment. The only trouble is that the switch must have been made in Australia. It's backwards like everything else Down Under. Up is off, not on as it is in the ol' U.S. of A.... but did I achieve my goal? Can I understand human speech better? Well, a little, but I've discovered one more handicap. My brain is in backwards. Suddenly I realize why I felt so at home in Australia.

Hank

THE JACKPOT by Ellen Nickel*

Admittedly, I wasn't looking forward to our trip to Las Vegas this spring--except to visit a couple of old friends. But I was surprised by an enjoyable time. Vegas is smack dab in the middle of a great desert wilderness, and one needn't wander far from the flash and tinsel of the city to reach a more "civilized" kind of wildlife. There are sundry retreats for the naturalist. We were most impressed with Red Rock Canyon, only a half hour drive from the city.

Owned by the Bureau of Land Management, Red Rock Canyon is actually composed of several canyons, gouged into bright red, iron-oxide hills. It has an excellent visitor center, a 13-mile scenic-loop drive, and numerous hiking trails.

As my husband, baby, and I drove along the straight stretch of flat, grey-green and Navajo white desert toward the canyon, its red sandstone loomed before us in brilliant contrast. As we drew closer, many wonderful shapes and colors became apparent. Bleached patches of yellow and cream in the red give these the name "Calico Hills," through which Red Rock Canyon is carved. The hills are ancient, petrified sand dunes. The once soft ripples and delicate striations have hardened into rigid testimonials of their history.

A portion of the canyons has been given protective status as Research Natural Area, because ponderosa pines grow there at remarkably low elevations--4000 feet. These pines, covering the nearby La Madre Mountains, follow the canyons downward in green cascades, taking advantage of water that trickles from the mountains much of the year.

We hiked into Icebox Canyon. As the temperature was well into the 90s, the name enticed us. Indeed, it proved to be refreshing and relatively cool.



We started along a sandy wash, lined with desert willow in full bloom. Its pink and yellow, orchid-like flowers perfumed the air like violets. Cholla cactus sported orange blossoms. The buckwheat had just begun to bloom and was all lacy with pink and white buds. Bees, wasps, and flies bumbled about the flowers, feasting. The sun glinted off their iridescent greens, blues, and purples--like little jewels nestled among the petals.

Higher in the canyon, amongst stone outcroppings, were twisty junipers adorned with frosty blue berries. The manzanita, with its shining, slippery red bark, was also in berry.

White-throated swifts and violet-green swallows carved elegant lines across the cloudless sky. The swifts chased each other, meeting in mid air to tumble together down and down until you'd think they might crash, then breaking apart with utmost grace and precision,

*The following note accompanied Ellen's article: "Hank wrote in the last Torreyana, 'I've never even wanted to go to Las Vegas.' I'm sure many naturalists feel the same way. I thought your readers might like to know about the side of Vegas you never see on the billboards."

to climb again into heaven.

Amid a treacherous jumble of barbed cholla spines, a cactus wren had made a cozy nest, carefully lined with soft down.

Deeper into the canyon, we came upon ponderosa pines. There were many signs of nearby water--lush plant life, big green dragonflies darting about, and a huge robber fly carrying between its legs a predaceous diving beetle. Sure enough, we came upon a series of tiny pools in granite, where hundreds of tiny blue lycaenid butterflies congregated to drink the stagnant water.

Beyond the pools, the canyon ascended steeply to sheer rock, dry now, but darkly streaked from the falling torrents of past storms. The cliffs were sheer on either side of us, gleaming with patches of black desert varnish. It was cool and shady, and the trees seemed to breathe as the wind rushed through them. We rested, and were revitalized for the hike back.

This is only an example of the beautiful places we found around Las Vegas. So, when people ask me how I made out in Vegas, I tell them, "I hit the jackpot!"

Secretary's Notes by Betty Andrews

A regular meeting of the Torrey Pines Docent Society was held in the Lodge at 9 a.m. on August 17 with 38 people present.

President Glenn Dunham passed around the duty calendar, the sign-up sheet, and name and address list, which must be updated.

Jeanne Vanderhoof informed the group of the library list she has completed. These materials are available to members and must be signed out properly. She also found a plant list, made up by Hank Nicol, and has made copies for interested members.

Bob Amann showed a patch he had made up for Torrey Pines volunteers and suggested that the docents might be interested in having this patch, or one similar, made up for members.

Bob Wohl informed us that some prices have gone up in the bookstore, including the price of Mat's cards.

Bib told us that Dr. Whitaker has stepped down as president of the Torrey Pines Association and that Stan St. John has taken over temporarily.

He also told us that Sacramento has approved a grant of \$75,000 to refurbish the museum and the work is to be completed by July 1, 1986.

Judy Carlstrom introduced the speaker, Sam Hinton, author of Seashore Life of Southern California, who is presently working on a second edition of his book. His topic was "Deep Sea Life." He showed slides and talked about creatures living in the dark, atrophic area of the ocean where the temperature is just above freezing.

Following his presentation, refreshments were served. These were provided by Bill Anderson, Margaret Bardwick, Betty Andrews, Irene Stiller, and Julie Marine. Our thanks to all.



TORREY PINES ASSOCIATION

Torrey Pines Reserve
P.O. Box 150
LA JOLLA, CA 92038

August 8, 1985

New Officers - Torrey Pines Association

At a meeting held on July 25, 1985, the Counselors of the Torrey Pines Association selected a new slate of Officers to direct the affairs of the Association.

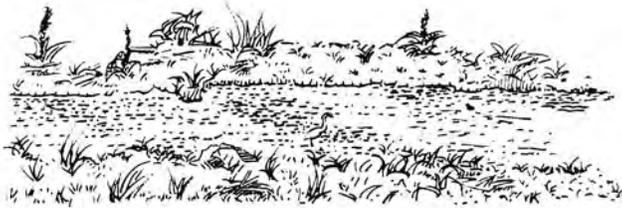
Commencing with the Annual Meeting, February 13, 1986, Stanley St. John was chosen to be the new President. Stan is a native Californian, presently employed as an Engineer at Solar, a division of the Caterpillar Corporation. Stan has a lifelong interest in the Torrey Pines. He is well equipped by training and interest to guide the affairs of the TPA. A graduate of UCSD, he has spent most of his adult life in the San Diego area. As an added bonus, Stan has strong ties with the Fleming and Shelton families; in fact, he is related to them. He will provide the TPA with much needed dedicated and innovative leadership.

After much arm twisting, Mrs. Nobie Hopper was persuaded to be our new Secretary. Nobie is a member of the TPA and the Docents; as such, she is the perfect bridge between the two groups. She follows in the footsteps of her late husband, Bob, a leader in the activities of both the Docents and the TPA.

Dr. John Shelton will continue as our Treasurer. We are fortunate indeed to have John as Treasurer. He is a talented money manager. His shrewd investments have permitted us to carry out several projects without reducing our original capital.

These officers work under the guidance and supervision of 21 Counselors elected by the Membership.

Thomas W. Whitaker
Thomas W. Whitaker, President



Los Penasquitos Lagoon Foundation
P.O. Box 866 Cardiff, CA 92007

LOS PENASQUITOS LAGOON FOUNDATION REPORT

This foundation is a non-profit corporation that has been functioning for two years under the guidance of the California Coastal Conservancy and the Conservancy Project Manager Don Coppock.

Joan Jackson has served as chairman of the Foundation Board, which consists of nine members and a staff secretary, Ann Omstead.

At the meeting of August 21, 1985, the board members voted unanimously to accept the Penasquitos Lagoon Enhancement Plan. The draft of this work is the result of nine alternative plans originally considered. The plan has been circulated since December 1984, available for comment from the public as well as from appropriate state agencies.

The eight elements of the plan are 1) Monitoring, 2) Open lagoon mouth, 3) Expanding park and open space areas, 4) Improving water circulation, 5) Restoring habitat, 6) Providing public access, 7) Controlling sedimentation, and 8) Mitigating wetland development. Of these elements, the Lagoon Foundation shall be responsible for monitoring, opening the lagoon mouth, some habitat restoration, and improving circulation.

State and City agencies are responsible for the other elements, the sedimentation control being of major importance.

Revisions to the enhancement plan have included a suggestion by the State Department of Fish and Game to add policies which would lead to purchase and maintenance of sedimentation basins in Carroll and Penasquitos Canyons, as well as in the Carmel Valley watershed.

Another revision came from written comments by Wendell Gayman which were distributed at the public hearing April 24, 1985. This followed an earlier public workshop, at which time the low cost technique was submitted, with historical documentation by Lee La Grange, and later accepted as the preferred initial implementation for opening the lagoon mouth.

Initially this method would clear channels while the lagoon is closed and in a dry condition. At this time the low water level has exposed channels, thereby identifying areas to be deepened and improved.

Then, after impoundment of winter rains, when a sufficient volume of water becomes available to create erosive flow, a careful coordination of surf and tide conditions will determine the time for lagoon opening. This method utilizes an advantage of volume and power of outgoing stream flow to carry sand and cobble to the surf.

Wendell Gayman has added a comparative study with other low cost methods to be implemented when necessary which includes the removal of gravel from the upstream end of the entrance channel, fluidization, and other less costly techniques.

This accepted alternative plan for implementing low cost techniques to keep the lagoon mouth open before attempting large scale costly

measures has been commended by the Department of Fish and Game.

Don Coppock has introduced us to the new Coastal Conservancy Project Manager, Terri Nevins, who has prepared the Environmental Impact Statement for the plan.

Members of the Torrey Pines Association serving as Penasquitos Foundation Board members are Sally Speiss, Bob Conway (who is treasurer for the board), and Jessie La Grange.

Bill Fait represents the State Park and Recreation Department on the Board. Regular attendees and active participants from the Torrey Pines Association are Margaret Knight and Frances Armstrong. Jack Bradshaw is on the Technical Advisory Committee. Jim and Peggy Whitehead have also attended and keep posted.

Meetings are held the 3rd Wednesday of the month, usually at the Via de la Valle McDonald's community room at 7 P.M.

For information on September and October meetings, call Ann Omstead at 753-6970.

By Jessie La Grange

Jessie La Grange
August 24, 1985

LAGOON NOTES by Jack Bradshaw

The plants and animals of the lagoon and salt marsh environments are influenced greatly by the salt content of the waters bathing them. Plants and animals normally found in freshwater cannot tolerate the high salt content of ocean water, and marine organisms typically have difficulty adjusting to the lack of salt in fresh river water. Estuarine and lagoonal species on the other hand have become adapted to both extreme and fluctuating amounts of salt and with the exclusion of competing marine and freshwater forms they have become highly successful. Ecologists denote the salt content of water in terms of "salinity," which may be defined as the number of grams of total salts in 1 kilogram (approximately 1 liter) of water. This is usually expressed as parts per thousand or o/oo as we do with parts per hundred (per cent) o o/o. Seawater off San Diego has a salinity of approximately 34 o/oo whereas fresh river water contains very little salt with salinities of 0 to approximately 0.7 o/oo (Colorado River).

If the lagoon has been open to the sea the normal tidal ebb and flow will maintain salinities close to that of the nearby ocean. However, with the closing of the entrance channel due to drifting sand and a combination of high tides and storm waves, extreme fluctuations in the salt content may occur. During one recorded episode beginning in January 1959, the salinity of Los Penasquitos Lagoon steadily increased due to evaporation over an eight month relatively dry winter and spring from a normal 34 o/oo to 63 o/oo. At the end of this period the salt content was so high that only a few hardy animal species survived. These were the California Killifish, the Bay Topsmelt, and the California Mudsucker. Most of the abundant fish and shellfish fauna that had flourished when the lagoon was open to the sea disappeared.

On the other hand, during exceptionally wet winters the amount of fresh water added to the closed lagoon may greatly exceed that lost by evaporation, and the truly marine forms suffer from the other extreme. The author vividly recalls during floods seeing Striped

Shore Crabs climbing telephone poles attempting to avoid the salt-deficient water. The fresh water typically forms merely a surface layer so that the deeper waters may retain salinities approximating that of seawater and thus furnish a restricted but tolerable habitat for a few truly marine forms. Although not optimal for strictly freshwater or marine organisms, brackish surface water may be ideal for the growth of such brackish-water species as Widgeon Grass, a preferred duck food. In 1966, sewage effluent inflow had lowered the surface salinity to 13 o/oo and the entire lagoon surface had been covered with long matted grass stems. The high rainfall in early 1967 resulted in the breaching of the sandbar at the entrance and the inflow of tidal seawater quickly restored salinities to near ocean values. Although the Widgeon Grass gradually disappeared, its niche was temporarily filled, this time by Sea Felt, a marine green algae.



Not only does salt content fluctuate wildly but oxygen levels tend to vary to greater extremes than in most other environments. The high photosynthetic activity of the dense plant growth (both vascular and algal) stimulated by abundant plant nutrients such as nitrate and phosphate produce large amounts of oxygen during the daylight hours, thus supersaturating the surface waters to over two times their saturation level. During the night, however, no oxygen is produced and the excessive respiration of the high populations of both animals and plants, together with the bacterial respiration involved with the decomposition of the copious organic matter, may drop oxygen levels to zero by daybreak. Fish kills, particularly of such large forms as Mullet that occasionally may be seen littering the lagoon margins, occur in this manner.

We have seen that the lagoon environment is highly variable as compared with the open ocean or freshwater regimes. It is not surprising that to survive in such an unstable environment, plants and animals must have considerably more tolerance than their marine or freshwater relatives. In addition, many species have evolved specialized structures and behavior patterns to survive these extreme conditions.

(Next time: Characteristic plant species and their adaptations)

TORREY PINES DOCENT SOCIETY

President: Glenn Dunham

Deadline for Torreyana copy is the 25th of each month.

Send contributions to:

Isabel Buechler, Editor

3702 Oleander Drive

San Diego, CA 92106

Phone: 222-7016

Poetry Corner

I will be the gladdest thing under
the sun!

I will touch a hundred flowers and
not pick one.

Edna St. Vincent Millay
from "Afternoon on a
Hill"

Torrey TITTERS



AND OUR GUEST SPEAKER WILL BE TALKING
TO US ABOUT FIRE PREVENTION!

WAB/Br/1/8

Torrey Pines Docent Society
c/o Torrey Pines State Reserve
2680 Carlsbad Boulevard
Carlsbad, CA 92008

FOR

