



TORREYANA

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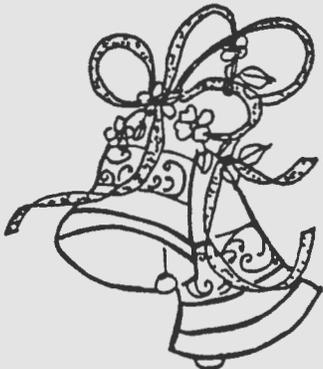
Next Docent Society Meeting

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 19, 9:00 A.M. AT THE VISITOR CENTER

Is there something you need to know in order to be more effective when you give your walks to the public? All of us need a little rereading from time to time. It's important, too, that we all give essentially the same information to the visitors to the Reserve. So, plan to attend the September meeting when our topic will be "Torrey Pines, Fact and Fiction." Submit your questions, about the Torrey pine tree in particular, or about any of the plants, animals, geology, etc. in our domain, to the Rangers as soon as possible. If you can't provide questions in advance, bring them with you on September 19. The staff will provide us with a panel discussion so as to get us all off on the right track.

Our refreshment period will be devoted to a special farewell to Sarge, who will be retiring in October.

ROMANCE BLOSSOMS AT TORREY PINES



The docent training class of 1986 was one of the most successful in recent years--depending, of course, on how one measures success. For one thing, ten or so of these people completed their final requirements and have been doing their bit in regular stints in the Lodge and on the trail. One other measure of success, not usually associated with the training, is the boy-meets-girl syndrome (or, in this case, amazingly, grandfather meets grandmother). It all happened under a Torrey pine tree. Parker Foster and Patricia Buckley were married in a private ceremony in St. George, Utah, on August 20! We wish them both well and many years ahead of "Happy Docenting."



After two or three cloudy, chilly days, the morning of August 15 started out as a rerun of the same old series. But much to the delight of the Torrey Pines Docents, the sun came out in all its glory, just in time to welcome them to the annual docent picnic at Torrey Pines State Beach. Thanks to Parker Foster, who came early to reserve a special "place in the sun," about 25 docents and families enjoyed a delightful seaside picnic with some special treats as well as an opportunity to walk on the beach, swim in the surf, or just lie back and relax and swap stories. We even saw a few marbled godwits who were having their own "potluck" on the sandy shore. In all, it was a beautiful day and we're hoping that next year's will be even bigger and better.



Book Report by Ida Marra

My Family and Other Animals by Gerald Durrell. The Viking Press, N.Y., 1956 (574.9 D).

This book was written from a field journal kept by an avid young naturalist-zoologist during a five-year sojourn on the Greek island of Corfu. It is light reading at its best, beautifully descriptive of the flora and fauna of the changing seasons, interspersed with hilarious accounts of happenings in the lives of this English family of amiable young adults and widowed mother, who changed villas on whim to accommodate (and disaccommodate) visitors.

The author is an acutely sensitive observer who knew exactly what any animal, human or otherwise, was thinking or feeling and recorded it faithfully, from his loyal canine to his pet gull and mischievous magpies. If you need sidesplitting laughs, this is a book the whole family, especially armchair travelers, will enjoy. It's a busman's holiday for naturalists. (Available in large-print edition.)



That Quail, Robert by Margaret Stanger. Fawcett Crest, N. Y., 1966. Paperback, \$2.50).

If, for some inexplicable reason, this little true story has evaded you so far (as it had us until recently), don't let another day go by. Be on your way to Warwick's or any other discerning bookstore for a copy and spend an enchanted hour getting to know a representative of one of the most beautiful birds in our Reserve. You will end up hoping, somehow, that you, too, can have a quail for a housepet--one who has morning juice and toast, evening V-8 juice, keeps you company while you read and do the dishes, and chooses a red velvet hat for its sleeping quarters.

Notes from the Naturalist

by **Hank Nicol**

Lately some people have taken up the mistaken notion that I know something special. I've been appointed to the advisory committee for the Penasquitos Canyon preserve. That's a city-county park. I've been railroaded onto the board of directors for the Science Conservancy Foundation. Don't ask me to explain that. This last July I was asked to be a featured speaker at the San Diego County Park's Wilderness Weekend. The fact that I work free might have had something to do with it. The affair was to be held at William Heise County Park. That's up near Julian, and it's one of my favorite places. It didn't take me that long to accept the invitation.

I borrowed some forestry type training aids and Ranger Bob's collection of pine cones. I had collected most of them anyway. My camping gear is minimal, so, in a wild moment, I loaded everything onto the motor bike instead of into the car. A nice, sunny day. . . . The open road. . . . I buzzed through Poway. I roared through Ramona. I braked for Santa Ysabel. Who can pass up Dudley's Bakery? The girl talked me into a small loaf of seven grain honeywheat-buttermilk. Sounded good. If I couldn't squeeze it in, I'd stuff it under my shirt.

A naturalist 50 miles from home isn't worth much. The bike's trip meter rolled over on 50 just as I rode through the gate. I arrived about 5:00, P.M., that is. County Park Rangers Randy Ford and Doug Ruth were at the gate. Randy gave me a campsite next to a meadow under a huge live oak. I set up my little tent and picked up the air mattress. "What's this goop stuck to it? Where's the valve to blow it up?" The mattress had been in a bag hanging over the side of the motorcycle. The valve had been right in the path of the exhaust. It had melted. Things were going to be a little rougher than I'd bargained for. Randy came along in his pickup. I told him of my problem. He said he thought he could round up an extra camp pad.

I thought I should learn something about the Cedar trail. I would have to lead people around it, and I had never seen it myself. The sign said it was a one mile loop. I saw black oaks, live oaks, and a few dead oaks. I saw incense cedars and Coulter pines. There were wild rose, wild strawberry, and wild blackberry. The understory was thick with snowberry and, of course, poison oak. I recognized many plants. Some I could figure out. On others, I didn't have a clue. The walk turned out to be an easy 20 minute stroll. I thought I would have time for another hike. Several more trails take off from the tent campground. I rode the bike up there. The Desert View trail looked interesting, but the map said it was three steep miles, and the sun was getting low. I took the one mile nature trail instead. I was glad I did. Even though many of the placques had been vandalized I was able to reduce my ignorance a bit. When I got back Randy and another County type, Ralph Strahan, helped me out with more local knowledge. They showed me the coffeeberry. It is very closely related to our redberry but looks totally different. The plant that really had me beat was green as lettuce. It had thin, soft leaves. It had odd shaped, triple headed berries. It turned out to be a ceanothus. It was unlike any other ceanothus I knew. I stared every time I passed one. I couldn't get it into my head that this was deer brush/buckbrush/California lilac.

I went back to my campsite to pig out on Dudley's bread and gorp. Anyone who says gorp is "trail mix" is an eccrinistic, glycogenic lepton. In my absence some one had left a foam sleeping pad on the camp table. I unrolled it, put my sleeping bag on it. I strolled around the campground a bit and met John Peterson. He is a groundwater geologist for the county. He would lead a walk to the Desert View the next day. We talked awhile as I toasted myself at his fire. It was getting late. I went back to my tent and crawled in. It was not the most uncomfortable night of my life. . . . Close! I slept very little. When I couldn't stand it any longer, I got up and walked around the meadow. The moon was full and lit the landscape in spite of some clouds. The people in the next camp site had a light on all night. Their tent looked like a giant jack-o-lantern. I probably got three and a half hours sleep altogether. I staggered over to the restroom and had the first ice-water shave I can remember since Korea. That woke me up!

PRESIDENT'S NOTES

Because we did not have a regular general meeting in August during which the calendar would have been passed, I joined Maurie Brown, Duty Coordinator, in telephoning and asking for commitments for the coming month. I want to thank those of you who so willingly agreed to serve, even though you may just have completed walks or Lodge duty. It is very rewarding to receive this kind of cooperation, and I extend my appreciation.

Unfortunately, there are a number of our members who are frequently serving only one 3-hour session per month, which makes it very difficult to fulfill our commitments for weekend walks, weekend Lodge duty, and weekday duty. If you have not signed up for the requisite number of hours before the next general meeting on September 19, will you please stop at the Lodge and sign up or call Maurie at 755-8084, and she will be able to tell you what the openings are. And please keep in mind that any time you are unable to attend the meeting when the calendar is passed, you can stop by the Lodge or call Maurie to work out suitable duty hours.

Thanks so much for your help. We hope our problems are just summer headaches brought on by vacations, visitors, etc., but we do need your help on a regular basis.

NOTES FROM THE NATURALIST (continued)

I got over to the campfire center in plenty of time. Someone had set up a gallon size pot of coffee. I took advantage. The Wilderness Weekenders gathered for introductions and to sign up for three programs. Randy was to take a group to the site of a former Indian Village. John Peterson was there to lead the geology section. The San Diego Lace Guild had a program for those who couldn't, or didn't want to, walk. Then there was me. I found I only had six customers. Two of these had intended to go to Desert View but had lost their way. That was a bit hard on the old ego, but, with any choice, that's where I would have gone. We made the 20 minute hike in an even two hours. In the afternoon things were reversed. I had the big crowd. Most of the campers had gone on the longer hikes in the heat of the morning. They were ready for a shorter, shadier walk in the afternoon. By then I had made most of my mistakes, and I was able to lead a fairly credible nature walk in the unfamiliar territory.

Back at the beginning I had told all assembled that I expected to learn a lot more than any of them would. I certainly did. I finally got the identification of the canyon and coast live oaks straight. I found a very different mountain mahogany. I learned that a penstemon is a flower with five stamens. Of course! But I never did get over that lettuce-green ceanothus. I also rediscovered something I already knew. Heise County Park is an absolutely beautiful place in which to camp and to hike.

*Canyon
Live Oak.*



*California
or Coast
Live Oak*



Next to gold, the most coveted import in Europe from New Spain in the sixteenth century was cochineal.

Cochineal (*Dactylopius coccus*) is the name of the tiny scale insect that grows under white, woolly puffs on some prickly pear pads in the Torrey Pines State Reserve. It's a close cousin of the insect that the Zapotec Indians were growing commercially when the Spanish arrived in Mexico in 1518.

The Spanish at first thought the quarter-inch bugs, whose dried bodies were the source of a vibrant, unparalleled red dye, were grain. No matter. They bought them up by the thousands and shipped them to Europe--apparently along with the recipe for the dye. The new scarlet hue, which was untinged with the purple of former reds, quickly became the rage. Red, after all, has long been a favorite color for royalty, religious vestments, tapestries and carpets.

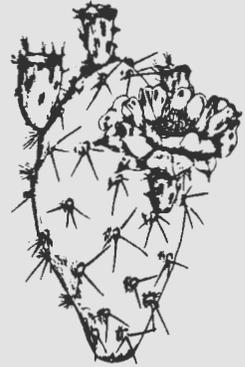
In the seventeenth century, the introduction of tin as a mordant, or fixative, made the dye virtually permanent. It also produced the brilliant color which the British army chose for its famous redcoats. Indeed, until the late nineteenth century when synthetic dyes took over most of the market, the fluid from cochineal insects, known in the pharmaceutical trade as carminic acid, was the source of color for a wide range of products, from stains used in the laboratory to maraschino cherries, pork sausage, lipstick and rouge, and candy. It may soon return as a food dye, since some coal-tar dyes being used have been linked to cancer.

At present, however, cochineal dye is used mainly by weavers who prefer natural materials. In our local area, one of these is Gloria Bissmayer of Alpine, California, who has displayed some of her work at a "Wildwood in the Park" day. Gloria talks about starting a cochineal "garden" to avoid the bother and expense of sending off to some distant place for a supply of cochineal. Currently, an ounce costs \$4. It takes two ounces to dye one pound of average wool yarn the preferred deep shade, so that the cost of the dye is a significant factor.

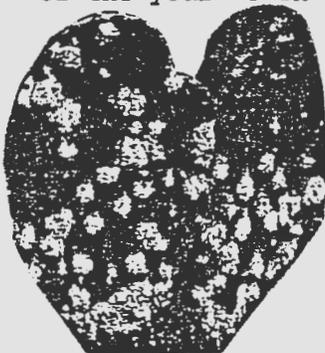
Gloria estimates that a good growth of cochineal on just one big prickly pear might produce two ounces of dried bugs. Commercial yield is 200 pounds per acre, with approximately 70,000 insects per pound. Under the right climatic conditions, cochineal can be harvested three times a year, so it shouldn't take more than a few sunny square feet to raise an adequate crop for an individual weaver. Brushing the bugs off the pads, which is how they are harvested, may be another problem. No doubt a little experimentation leads to the right instrument and a minimum of thorn pricks.

Since the woolly patches are evident on the Reserve's prickly pears for much of the year--even at the end of summer, some are still in evidence in shady spots or on the under sides of pads--they often provide a good topic for trail groups. You can be sure if you don't draw attention to the growths, an observant and curious visitor will, so it's best to be forearmed with answers to possible questions.

(To be continued in October *Torreyana*)



Opuntia littoralis.



Poetry Corner

VOLUNTEERS*

by Del Solomon

A wise old owl and a little grey squirrel
Were sitting in a tree.
They had not else but to sit and talk,
And to see what they could see.

The squirrel looked down and what did he
see
But people out for a hike.
He looked to the owl and said with a
smile,
"It's strange what people like."

The squirrel then said, "The one in
front
Sure has a lot to say.
He talks about plants, and he talks
about rocks,
And things along the way.

"He answers all the questions people
Ask about the trees.
I think I'll ask a question that
Concerns the birds and bees."

The owl then said, "You're new here, son,
Or you would surely know,
The one in front is 'Mr. Big,'
And he makes things go.

"He calls himself a 'docent,' but
I think that sounds profane.
To call him aught but 'volunteer'
Is perfectly inane.

"He leads the walks, he cleans the trails,
He heads the fireside chat.
When one comes to Torrey Pines,
He's where the action's 'at.'

He still says he's a 'docent,' yet
I say a 'volunteer';
But I don't care what name he has,
I'm glad that he is here.

"Are you aware of all the hours
He spends up in that house?
They have displays of squirrels and birds.
They even have a mouse.

"The Rangers say he's their right arm,
And I say that is true.
He tells the folks about the park,
He's mentioned me and you."

The little grey squirrel was much
impressed
With what the owl did say.
He said, "You mean he does all that,
And does it without pay?"

The wise old owl just blinked his eyes
And said, "There still much more.
There's others 'round here just like
him,
I think about three score."

The little grey squirrel said to the owl,
"What keeps them on the go?"
The owl said as he cocked his head,
"It's love, son. This I know."



*This poem originally appeared in Calaveras Big Trees Newsletter. Ranger Greg Hackett made one obvious modification and submitted it to the Torreyana editor with the following note: "Hope you can fit this into the Torreyana some time. It really expresses how I feel about our Torrey Pines Docents. (Wish I had written it.) Thanks." (signed) Greg Hackett.





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

LOS PEÑASQUITOS LAGOON FOUNDATION REPORT by Jessie LaGrange

At the meeting August 12, 1987, the Treasurer's Report showed a balance of \$12,024.26 in the operating account. Expenses for the month were \$127.20 for stationery printing. The civil liability account (fine monies from the City of San Diego) has a balance of \$98,304.61. A withdrawal of \$2,413.96 was made on July 13 for payment to Ecological Research Associates for monitoring services. Joan Jackson reported that an additional \$50,000 had been received on the day of the Foundation meeting, following the most recent State Regional Water Quality Control Board meeting.

Steve Zimmer recommended that the Foundation send a response to the Sunset Del Mar Restaurant-Office Development Plan, City of Del Mar. A request should also be made to be included in the mailing list for the Environmental Impact Report said to be in preparation at this time.

A response to the Baldwin-Carmel Del Mar Neighborhood #6 request for "Variance" to the accepted plan was composed. A request was sent for a more detailed map of drainage and detention basins, as the material received was deemed to be inadequate for proper evaluation.

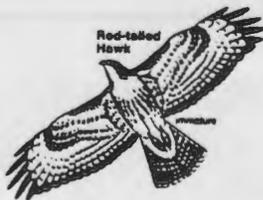
A request was made to the By-Laws Committee to have a complete report for the next meeting.

The next meeting will be Wednesday, September 9, 1987, at 7:00 p.m. at the Great American Savings meeting room in the Big Bear Shopping Center, Via de la Valle, Solana Beach.

News and Notes

DAY OF THE BIRD

A fund-raising event called "Day of the Bird" is scheduled for Saturday, October 17, from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. at the Whittier Narrows Nature Center and Wildlife Sanctuary in Los Angeles County. Proceeds will provide an intensive avian care center, a bird food fund, a fund for emergency operations, and support for professional services of veterinarians and raptor rehabilitators. The day-long program begins with a bird walk and includes a barbecue luncheon. Tickets cost \$7.00 and must be reserved in advance. Telephone the Center at 818-444-1872 or 818-448-8378.



Torrey Pines Docent Society

President: Grace Martin

Deadline for Torreyana copy is the 25th of each month. Send contributions to the editor:

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3702 Oleander Drive
San Diego, CA 92106
Phone: 222-7016

Asst. Editor: Marion Dixon

TRANSFERS FOR SHIRTS

Attractive transfers showing "Torrey Pines Docent Society" printed in a circle around Torrey pine trees will be available at the September meeting. The transfers, which come in two sizes, can be ironed on front, back, or sleeve of a T-shirt, preferably green, for identification while on duty. Price will be minimal.



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FOR

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