



TORREYANA

*A monthly newsletter for
Torrey Pines State Reserve*

No. 227

February 1995

NEXT DOCENT SOCIETY MEETING Saturday, February 18, 1995, AT 9:00 A.M.

Amateur photographers who have been frustrated in capturing that perfect sunset viewed through a Torrey pine will learn how it's done from our guest speaker, Bill Evarts, author-photographer of *TORREY PINES Landscape and Legacy*. He will share with us his experiences in photographing the Reserve through many seasons and will have some large poster samples of his photographs. As is evident from reading his book, Bill has a strong personal interest in the Reserve, starting with his walk here as a child with Guy Fleming, so members can look forward to a talk filled with special insights.

ANNUAL MEETING OF TORREY PINES ASSOCIATION



The 45th annual meeting of the TPA will be held in the Lodge on Thursday, February 9, at 3:00 P.M. A light refreshment will precede the meeting. Besides the regular business of the meeting, representatives of the National Park Service will talk about Cabrillo and Channel Islands National Monuments. Cabrillo Monument is centered around the lighthouse on Point Loma. Santa Rosa Island, which holds the other stand of Torrey pines besides our own, is one of the Channel Islands. The talks are sure to be of interest to Association members and docents alike, and all are cordially invited to attend and bring friends.

Trail Closure Imminent

The recent rains caused serious erosion and damage to the lower part of the Beach Trail, so the Reserve staff requested approval to close the trail between the beach and the junction with the Broken Hill Trail. Approval is expected by early February, at which time signs will be posted. Until then, docents on Lodge duty should advise visitors not to use that section of the Beach Trail.

In view of the recent landslide and tragic loss of two lives, docents should also tell visitors to use extreme caution if they walk along the beach and to stay away from the cliff walls.

D o c e n t D o i n g s

Docent of the Month - Pres. Diana Snodgrass presented the January award to Grace Martin in recognition of her numerous contributions during her many years of membership; especially notable was her work as chairperson of the group that prepared the current training manual.

Lodge Committee - At the suggestion of several docents, a committee is being formed to monitor and maintain the visitor area in the Lodge. This includes the displays, docent desk supplies, and general appearance of the area. With sufficient volunteers, the time required per individual would be no more than an hour or so per month, and the Lodge main room would remain in much better condition. Docents interested in further information should call Diana Snodgrass.

Extension Walks - While docents have had occasional public walks in the Extension area, there has not been a regular program for this. So during the next several months, the Society will have a few Extension walks each month to determine if there is sufficient public interest to make this a continuing program. Docent Jan Taylor is coordinating this program and is arranging for publicity for it. The first two walks are scheduled for Saturday, February 11, at 9:00 A.M., and Saturday, February 18, at 1:00 P.M.; the walks start at the Extension entrance at the north end of Del Mar Scenic Parkway (near the tennis courts). Several docents will be needed to help with the walks, and those interested should call Jan.

Indian Learning Tales - At the January meeting, docent Theo Tanalski described his ideas on a project to incorporate material from the book *Who Speaks for the Wolf* into the children's programs. This would use indigenous Native American materials to further cross-cultural understanding and appreciation of the local environment. Theo and interested docents will have a short meeting after the February TPDS meeting. For further information, call Theo at 481-8628 (new number).

Lodge Books - *Wildflowers of the Santa Monica Mountains* by M. McAuley is out of print. It appears that it is being replaced by a new set of books by the same author in which the plants are correlated to trails. The first volume, now in the display case, is *Wildflower Walks of the Santa Monica Mountains, Vol. 1, Central Section*. Another new book is *A Taste of Nature, Edible Plants of the Southwest and How to Prepare Them*, by Kahanah Farnsworth.

NOTE: Karen Griebe requests that docents on Lodge duty keep all but the display copies of *TORREY PINES Landscape and Legacy* in the locked cabinet.

Brownie, Girl Scout Program - As part of their community service projects, these groups have been coming to the Reserve to remove Hottentot fig under the supervision of docent Dave Economou, who suggested and started this program. To show the Society's appreciation, Joan Nimick has then taken the groups on Reserve nature walks.

Tide-Pool Walks - Docent Wes Farmer has scheduled beach walks at low tide for Sunday, February 12, and Sunday, February 26; walks start at 1:00 P.M. at the kiosk.

Docent Doings (continued from p. 2)

Children's Walks - Barbara Wallach thanks the following docents for their participation in the January walks with six school groups: Jim Cassell, Vida Fruebis, Karen Griebe, Don Grine, Ann Henrichs, Melanie Martinod, Diane Sachs, Theo Tanalski, Mary Weir, and Diana Wenman (Editor's note: thanks also to Barbara for her continuing efforts for this program).

Member Absences - Members occasionally have to be absent from docent activities for several weeks or longer because of business travel and work schedules, illness, and other reasons. Since there is usually no way for the Society to learn about these absences, members who will have to be absent for extended times are requested to notify any Board member.

Parking Passes - Members who didn't pick up their parking passes at the January meeting may obtain them at the Lodge. The passes and membership cards will be in a business envelope box by the docent mail boxes in the docent room.

Delinquent Dues - Members who haven't renewed their TPDS membership for 1995 are requested to do so promptly. Dues are \$10 for full members and \$25 for supporting members. Please mail checks to June Brickelmaier (address in membership list).

Next Training Class - The 1995 training program will start on Saturday, March 25. According to Jim Cassell, about 25 people have already indicated interest in attending. The March *Torreyana* will carry the complete training class schedule.

Meeting Refreshments - Jane and Bob Talbert, who arrange for the meeting refreshments, thank all the members who brought food to the meetings during the past year; they encourage the new members to help this year.

Proposed Change, TPDS Bylaws - At the January Board meeting, a change in the bylaw concerning the supporting member category was discussed, and a change was recommended for vote by the members at the February meeting. The present wording is: Article II, Section 2, Part C, Supporting Membership: Supporting Membership is offered to docents who are no longer able to participate actively yet wish to support the activities of the Docent Society

The proposed change is the insertion of the underlined phrase at the beginning:
After two years or more of duty, Supporting Membership is offered ...

Nominating Committee Report

The Docent Society Nominating Committee of Joan Nimick (chair), Del Roberts, and Vida Fruebis presents the following slate for officers of the Society for the 1995-96 term. In addition to the names listed, all positions are open to nominations from the floor at the February meeting and election. You may also call any member of the committee before the meeting if you wish to be considered for an office or know someone who does.

President _____	Secretary - Kathy Watson
Vice Pres. Programs - Walt Desmond	Treasurer - June Brickelmaier
Vice Pres. Training - Jim Cassell	Duty Coord.- Ruth Ganeless & Elaine Sacks
<i>Torreyana</i> Editor - John Carson (Note: Any member interested in assisting on the newsletter and becoming editor later this year, please call John Carson.)	

TPA Counselors Visit TPDS Meeting

TPA Vice Pres. Sally Spiess and Treasurer John Shelton attended the January meeting at the invitation of Pres. Diana Snodgrass. This is part of a new dialogue between the two groups to increase member understanding of each group's objectives and activities. John Shelton prefaced his comments to the docents by saying how impressed he was with all the work they do and their enthusiasm in taking on new projects. He then reviewed the origins of the TPA, its mission, and its main accomplishments, which are summarized here.

During her life, Ellen Scripps was a strong advocate for the preservation of the Torrey Park area and backed her commitment to the Park with generous contributions of her own funds. She bequeathed her land in the Park to the City with the request that the City protect and preserve the Park. By the 1940s, area citizens became concerned by the City's neglect of the Park, so they organized the TPA to ensure that Scripps's requests were carried out. Among the purposes listed in the articles of incorporation are the following: protecting, preserving, and beautifying the area; raising funds for these objectives; and cooperating with the relevant governmental agencies to further these goals. The group's early accomplishments included working for the transfer of the Park to the State and acquisition of the Extension. During recent years some of the TPA projects were renovating the Fleming house, providing the early display cases for the Lodge, supplying binoculars to TPDS for the education program, and publishing Bill Evarts's book.

TPA's main mission is preservation of the Reserve, with political advocacy being an important aspect. TPDS's mission is mainly interpretation and education. Both groups have common interests in informing the public about the area, its place in the local environment, and in maintaining the Reserve for the future.

Dahl on Mammals

Members entering the Lodge for the January meeting encountered two bears guarding the entrance. Fortunately they were stuffed specimens (black and blond color phases of the American black bear) that were part of Pat Dahl's display for her talk. Docents who heard her program two years ago and thought reptiles were her main interest quickly learned that Pat has a total commitment to all animal life. For her visit this time she shared her knowledge and experiences with all kinds of mammals, most of which occur in our state. A sampling of her comments and animal lore is given below.

Coyote - Although it occasionally kills animal pets, its main food is small rodents, which it helps keep under control. Dens are normally located away from human areas.

Fox - The black legs of the red fox (found in the Sierra and northern Calif.) distinguish it from the gray fox, which occurs throughout most of the State. The gray fox is the only fox that can climb trees, which it does for food and protection.

(continued on next page)

Dahl (continued from p.4)

Bear - A bear's warning signs are turning its body sideways, twisting its head to look at the intruder, and making loud "huffing" sounds. Pat compared a bear's movement to a freight train: slow to start, but once moving it picks up speed and goes on and on. Climbing a tree to escape a bear isn't helpful, because black bears climb trees easily and spend lots of time in them. Among Pat's jobs as a field biologist is climbing into bear caves in winter to obtain bear blood samples.

Raccoon - This masked bandit has a fondness for bird eggs, so it can be a problem in local bird nesting areas, such as Lake Hodges.

Ringtail - This looks like a smaller version of the raccoon without the mask. The miners in Julian were reported to keep them in the mines to provide early warning of earthquakes.**

Opossum - This is the only marsupial in the U.S. It has 50 teeth, more than any other mammal in the country.

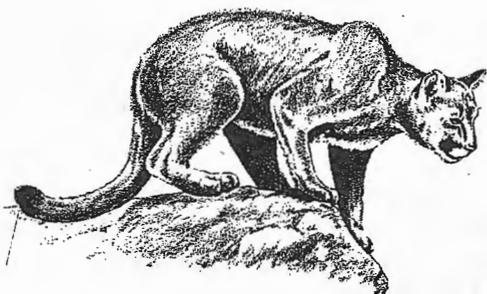
Skunks - Both striped and spotted species occur here. The spotted skunk (the smaller of the two) stands on its front feet, back and tail bent up over its head, just prior to spraying. Skunks eat lichens to neutralize toxins from beetles they eat.

Bats - These are the only mammals with flight ability. Those in our area do not migrate.

Elephant Seal - Pat showed the skulls of several mammals, with the one for this mammal being by far the largest.

Pat's recounting of her experiences kept an overflow audience engrossed, with many members staying afterwards for further discussion. Given her incredible commitment to animals, it is easy to imagine her paraphrasing Will Rogers: "I never met an animal I didn't like!"

**Editor's note: Unusual animal activity is sometimes reported just prior to earthquakes, and one proposed explanation involves the presence of minerals underground, such as quartz, that display the piezoelectric effect, in which a force applied to the crystal produces an electric field. Many ground animals appear to be sensitive to electric fields. As forces build up underground prior to an earthquake, the electric fields from any present piezoelectric rocks will increase, and the animals may sense this. Since gold is commonly found in quartz-bearing rocks, it is possible that the Julian miners may have actually had an early warning indicator in the ringtail, although animals that live in the ground, such as snakes and rodents, might have been better choices.



Tea and Talk Meeting

Over 20 members attended this informal session held at Joan Nimick's house on January 15. The purpose was to provide docents with the opportunity to discuss the Society's projects, problems, and outlook without the time constraints of the regular meetings. Ranger Greg Hackett also attended to provide information and represent the Reserve's staff. Thanks to Joan Nimick for making her home available and to several members and Joan for furnishing refreshments. The main items discussed are summarized here.

1) Lodge Visitor Area

a) **Main Room** This room needs regular cleanup. Several docents could take responsibility for periodic (perhaps weekly) light cleaning, check docent desk for supplies, and keep area organized.

b) **Displays** The Indian display needs repair. Additional displays were suggested, but lack of space is a problem. One solution is rotation of displays, with ones on view related to seasonal or other themes. This would require storage space. Some of the current displays require better labeling.

c) **Video** A slide show or video directed at children was suggested.

d) **Outside** An outdoor display was suggested for the area on the north side of the Lodge. This could provide information for visible points of interest.

2) **Seniors** Provide easy tours for people from senior centers.

3) Trail Conditions

There was consensus that the trails need considerable repair. Several ideas:

a) Form a volunteer group for trail work.

b) Assign several members to each trail with the responsibility to do light maintenance and trimming.

c) Have trail work as part of the required six hours per month. At present, the Lodge and walks have priority; counting trail work as suggested might cause scheduling problems for them.

d) Include trail work as part of the training. This would have the added advantage of familiarizing the new members with the trails.

e) Use outside groups looking for community service.

f) Repair or replace signs as needed on the trails and around Lodge.

g) **Observation** Docents have always done some trail work. A large increase would change the scope of the Society's activities and might require changing the bylaws and getting State approval (if a group does a lot of maintenance, it is considered a volunteer organization rather than a docent group).

4) Children's Education Program

a) Offer a story hour, once a month, and advertise it (e.g., *Reader*).

b) Use a book (*Who Speaks for the Wolf* was suggested) as a background source for the children's programs.

c) Consider period costumes, such as for portraying Ellen Scripps.

d) Organize a program covering the Reserve's natural history, one topic a week, for youth groups.

5) Road up to the Lodge

The increasing bicycle and pedestrian traffic up the hill is causing serious hazards. A path alongside the road is one solution being considered (G. Hackett).

6) Whitaker Garden Status

The members helping on this gradually dropped out, leaving too much for the remaining person to complete.

7) **Interpretation** A suggestion was made to obtain the highly recommended video by John Mott on interpretation for docent use.

Throughout the discussions it was clear to all that docent commitment to project completion is essential. This has been lacking at times in the past.

In conclusion, as Greg Hackett pointed out, whatever the docents choose to do, they should make sure the activities are both fun and rewarding.

Torrey Fossil Finds Wes Farmer

The "Torrey Turtle"

On a recent beach walk, I found an unusual bone fossil near, appropriately, the entrance to Animal Canyon. The fossil, on the side of a 12-pound rock, consists of dorsal bones that resemble wide ribs embedded in a layer approximately 5.5" long, 4" wide, and 0.2" thick. The rock itself, which contains spired gastropod fossils, came from the Del Mar Formation, placing the fossil age at about 45 million years.

Mark Roever of the Paleontology Dept., San Diego Natural History Museum, identified the fossil as a freshwater, softshell turtle, family Trionchidae. Present day members are found on several continents and occur nearby in the Colorado River (the spiny softshell, *Trionyx spiniferus*). Softshell turtles differ from the familiar pond turtles in having a leathery skin covering the top shell. The sketch in figure 1 shows the bone structure of the carapace (top shell) of a softshell turtle.

Figure 2 is a photograph of the exposed bones, showing the underside of the carapace. The bones were originally attached together along their edges but split apart after ending up in the Del Mar Formation. Part of a bone broke off, exposing the imprint in the rock of the skin covering (just below the left end of the bottom bone in figure 2). The top side of this bone is in figure 3 and shows the skin covering. Most of the bones were covered with a thin layer of rock, which had to be removed; figure 4 on the next page shows the fossil as found.

How did a freshwater turtle get in the Del Mar Formation, which contains so many fossils of sea life? Since this formation is thought to include areas that were lagoons and estuaries, perhaps it was washed into a lagoon from a nearby river. The fossil is presently located in the north end of the display case along the west wall in the Lodge. Members are invited to view this early visitor of the Reserve area.

Reference: Carroll, R.L., *Vertebrate Paleontology and Evolution*, Freeman and Co. 1988

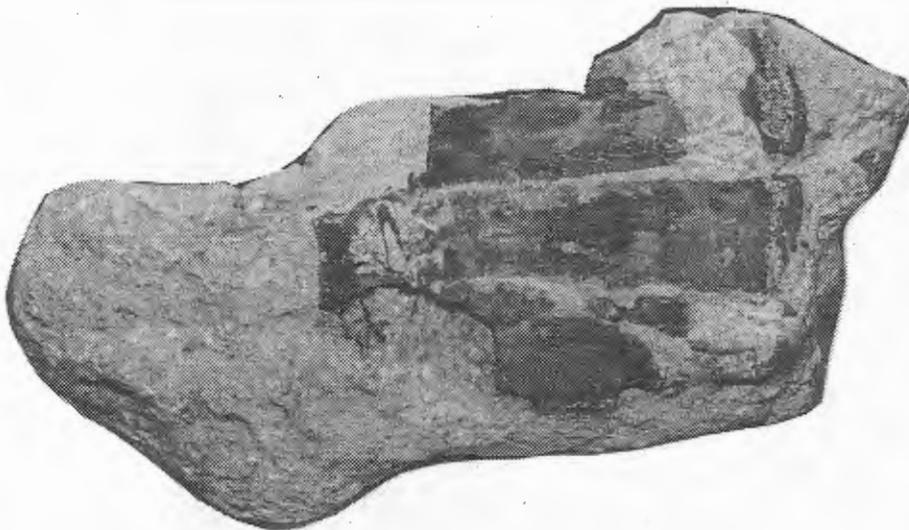


Figure 2. Underneath side of carapace, softshell turtle fossil.

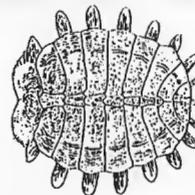


Figure 1. Bone structure of carapace, softshell turtle (reference, p. 214)

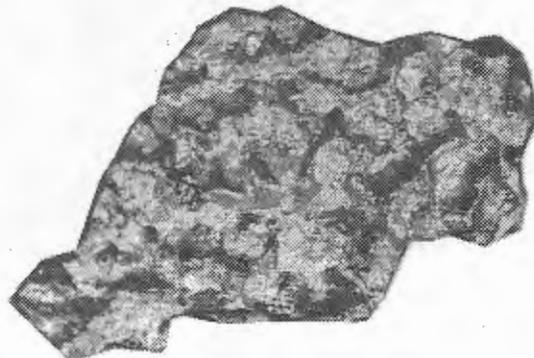


Figure 3. Skin covering on carapace.



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Fossils (continued from p. 7)

Reflections on the Reserve's Past and Present

In walking about in the Reserve and along the beach, I've noticed the similarities between life in the past, as revealed by fossils, and life in the present. Along the Fleming and Parry Grove trails, the flattened grooves in the exposed cambium layers of dead Torrey pines are a constant reminder of the effects of the bark beetle. In the Del Mar Formation, one can find fossil remains of the bark and outer layer of (unidentified) tree trunks, with the cambium layer showing the characteristic trails of beetles, their castings turned to stone. So the battle between trees and beetles is truly an ancient one.

Also in the Del Mar there are fossil remains of what were the hard outer parts of tree trunks; these contain holes (some filled with deposits) about the size of a pencil, caused by some marine animal. Wood exposed in the ocean today frequently shows similar hole structures, caused by shipworms. One can imagine a section of a dead Torrey pine, with its hard outer part intact and most of the core rotting and disintegrating, being washed down into the ocean by rainstorms, attacked by shipworms and then buried in the sand, perhaps to be a fossil "find" in the far distant future.

Similar examples can be found in the sea life. Many oyster shell fossils in the Del Mar have surfaces riddled with holes. Today, rock scallop and Pismo clam shells along the Reserve beach have similar appearance, these holes caused by burrowing sponges.

This is just a sampling of the similarities between past and present. So the next time you walk along the beach, let your imagination show you possible connections between then and now.



Figure 4. The softshell turtle fossil as found, showing the rock layer that covered most of the carapace bones.



FEBRUARY DUTY CALENDAR

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
			1 L MARGULIES L BRICKELMAIER	2 L ARMI L CLARK	3 L SCHROEDER L HELLER	4 L BRICKELMAIER W MARLEY L D. SACHS W STEIGLER
5 L HELLER W FERGUSON L McCONNELL W FRANCIS	6 L D. SACHS L COOPER	7 L McDONALD L HUBER	8 L D. MILLER L SHAW	9 L RENNER L P. BARDWICK	10 L GRAIN L GANELESS	11 L ROBERTSON W D. MILLER L D. SACHS W D. ROBERTS
12 L SCHULMAN W CASSELL L SCHULMAN W P. ROBERTS	13 L MARINE L LIGHTHALL	14 L TALBERT L GITTELSONH	15 L MARGULIES L AMANNS	16 L JACOBSON L DIXON	17 L SCHROEDER L HELLER	18 MEETING L PARNELL W BRAV L PARNELL W STEIN
19 L WATSON W D. MILLER L MARLEY W FERGUSON	20 L GRINE L COOPER W MYERS	21 L McDONALD L SCHROEDER	22 L P. BARDWICK L BAELE	23 L RENNER L SHAW	24 L MARINE L HENRICHS	25 L WATSON W BRAV L FRANCIS W STEIGLER
26 L BAELE W CASSELL L DIXON W P. ROBERTS	27 L COOPER L LIGHTHALL	28 L TALBERTS L GITTELSONH				

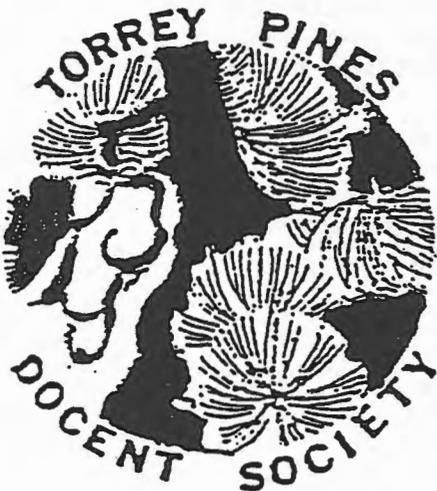
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