

# TORREYANA

THE DOCENT NEWSLETTER FOR  
TORREY PINES  
STATE NATURAL RESERVE

Issue 387

August 2017

## London to San Diego via Iceland and Greenland in a Small Helicopter

by Joan R. Simon

**E**ddie Kisfaludy is an adventurous guy, so when he says his helicopter trip from London to San Diego in August 2016 was “the best thing I’ve ever done in my life,” that’s really saying something. Judging from the video he brought to the July 8 docent meeting, we could see why.

Purchasing a small helicopter for his aerial data-collecting company, SciFly, Kisfaludy found himself with a dilemma: how to get the helicopter from London back to his base in San Diego. “There are two ways to get it home,” he said. “You can put it in a shipping container and send it – or you can fly it across the North Atlantic.” It’s not hard to see why Kisfaludy chose the latter.

Starting in London, Kisfaludy and his wife, Amanda, set out on their 8,000-mile trek. Before flying over open ocean, they donned survival suits and packed rafts, along with the usual camping gear: a tent, sleeping bags, and enough freeze-dried food to get them to the next inhabited spot.



Their first landing, 250 miles over the North Atlantic, was the Faroe Islands, where they encountered friendly puffins, unafraid because there were no local land animals to pose a threat. The next stop, 300 miles over open waters, was the “fire and ice” land of Iceland, where amidst the ice caps,

### Docent General Meeting

**Saturday, August 12, 9 am**

**Location:** St. Peter's Episcopal Rec Hall, Del Mar

**Speaker:** John Clark, Ph.D.

**Topic:** Plant Conservation

Dr. John Clark is San Diego Zoo Global's Director of Plant Collections and Strategy. In this role, he provides strategic direction for the plant collections at the San Diego Zoo and Safari Park while overseeing the Native Plant Seed Bank and field projects focused on Tecate cypress, Micronesian cycads, and aguaje palms. His team is part of a longstanding effort to restore coastal sage scrub habitat for the coastal cactus wren. Dr. Clark also serves as President and Chief Executive Officer of the [Center for Plant Conservation](#), an independent nonprofit association of 40 botanical gardens, arboreta, and other organizations working to conserve imperiled native plants.

**Refreshments:** Docents with last names beginning with **A, B, C** will be responsible for providing snacks for this meeting.

glaciers, crevasses and icebergs dotting the coast, they also encountered bubbling hot springs (a la Yellowstone) and a group of native goats basking in the steam of their own “Icelandic spa.” They were “as lethargic as you would be if you were taking a steam bath,” Kisfaludy said.

The last stop before reaching the Western Hemisphere was Greenland. (cont. on pg.2)

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FLASH From Joy Inton: Don't forget to donate your ZooNooz magazines to the Museum Shop.



The Kisfaludys landed at the Arctic Circle and flew down the never-before-seen eastern shoreline, where there was “nobody – no natives, fisherman, animals, no algae or invertebrates...but there were plenty of mosquitos!” They saw myriad long fjords with icebergs floating in turquoise-blue water as beautiful as anything in the Caribbean. It was “deafeningly quiet, until you’d hear off in the distance ice melting, icebergs falling apart,” Kisfaludy reported. It was “eerie to hear ice crashing and thundering, a deep bass crumbling sound.”

Where did the Kisfaludys stay in this remote winter wonderland?

“We’d pick a camping spot from the sky and if it looked good, we’d put it down there.” They even alighted on an iceberg (despite Amanda’s protestations) and it was dangerous enough for the *National Geographic* to edit out that part of their video before offering it to the public.



The biggest challenge was bad weather (and San Francisco-style fog), and there was plenty of it in the North Atlantic, with long waits at every stop for the skies to clear. Fortunately for them (but less so for a climate-challenged planet), the summer of 2016 was the warmest on record, and the weather was unusually good. They even did a little nude sunbathing in 70°-degree weather on the southern tip of Greenland (those shots were probably banned as well). There was evidence of ice caps and glaciers melting everywhere, with massive waterfalls pouring water right off the glaciers into the open ocean.

The longest leg of the flight was the 500 miles between Greenland and Eastern Canada, and it raised the question of how the Kisfaludys were able to take a small helicopter across such large expanses of water. Kisfaludy described how he devised a fuel bladder that could store 66 gallons of fuel and pumped it up to the gas tank. This gave him eight hours of flying time, more than twice the normal three-hour capacity of his small helicopter.

The rest of the trip was a cakewalk – across Quebec, the Great Lakes, Wyoming, and down to San Diego. To see a video of the Kisfaludys in Greenland, go to: [tinyurl.com/helicopter-atlantic-Eddie](http://tinyurl.com/helicopter-atlantic-Eddie)

If you want to read about some of Eddie Kisfaludy’s ocean adventures, go the *Torreyana* issues of May 2012 ([torreypine.org/wp-content/uploads/nl/2012/1205.pdf](http://torreypine.org/wp-content/uploads/nl/2012/1205.pdf)) and May 2013 ([torreypine.org/wp-content/uploads/nl/2013/1305.pdf](http://torreypine.org/wp-content/uploads/nl/2013/1305.pdf)).

## Meeting Minutes – July 8, 2017

Meeting called to order at 9:05 am by President **Ingo Renner**.

**TIK Enhancement:** Ingo presented new resin animal paw prints and skulls that were made by Nature Watch and paid for by the Docent Society. These are labeled and will be at the TIK for interpretive purposes.

**Speaker:** Eddie Kisfaludy (helicopter pilot & CEO of SciFly in Kearny Mesa) gave a fascinating video presentation of his flight from London, up through Scotland, over to the Faroe Islands, across Iceland, around southern Greenland, over to Canada, and on to San Diego (see front page).

**TPA Update:** TPA President Peter Jensen thanked the Class of 2017 for its donation to TPA. He stated that TPA had received a \$12,000 grant for Interpretive Signage in the Reserve. He requested ideas from docents for additional signage at their favorite spots in the Reserve, as there are some funds remaining after what is already planned.

**Budding Botanists:** Ingo announced a new group and sign-up sheet for docents interested in more advanced native plant study. The first meeting will be July 14.

**Potluck Dinner & Night Hike:** Ingo announced that there will be a potluck dinner Aug 5 at 7 pm at the Lodge, where the winners of the Photo Contest will be announced. (He thanked all the docents who entered pictures for the contest.) This will be followed by an interpretive night hike. Please sign up to bring an appetizer, main course, or dessert.

**CareTeam meeting:** The CareTeam's mission is to "Contact & Retain," and there is a meeting after the general meeting.

**Torrey Pines Road Cleanup:** **Kristine Schindler** reminded the docents that there is a scheduled TP road cleanup tomorrow morning, July 9, and it will start at 8 am because of the heat. We try to do a road cleanup quarterly, and the last was on Earth Day.

**Mindfulness in Nature:** **Gloria Garrett** announced that the "Mindfulness in Nature" program has been very well received, and she invited docents to give it a try. The normal schedule is Sunday mornings, 8:00 to 9:45 am, and the next walk will be July 30. Gloria also leads special groups and could use some help leading walks. She would like to train anyone interested and asked for volunteers.

**Docent of the Month:** **Gloria Garrett** for her outstanding "Mindfulness in Nature" program.

**July CEED Event:** **Joe Meyer** announced we are visiting Lyons & O'Haver - Master Taxidermists in La Mesa, on Thursday, July 13.

**Grunion:** Park Aide **Johnson Jou** gave a presentation on how to observe and catch California grunion. He talked about the equipment that was needed, the best dates and

times for July & Aug, and the best way to clean & cook them. (see pg. 5)

**Treasury Report:** Treasurer **Gerry Lawrence** presented the half year Treasury Report. This report is posted on the bulletin board in the docent library as well as on line: go to the Torrey Pines website, under Volunteering, Society Docs.

**Refreshments:** At the August General Meeting docents with last names starting with letters **A, B, C** are responsible for snacks.

Meeting ended at 11:10 am.

## Children's Program

by *Louis Sands*, Children's Program Coordinator

**Janet Ugalde**, Children's Program Director, and I would like to congratulate the docent Class of 2017. You will have many opportunities to contribute to our beloved Reserve, and we sincerely hope that you prioritize the children's program on your docent bucket list! Each program day brings a new adventure and a chance to expose deserving students to the natural world around them.

The children's program reservation system opens for teachers on August 15, so we're close to starting the 2017-18 school year! New and returning docents, please take note of the following:

1. Children's program days remain the same for the 2017-18 school year: Tuesdays, Thursdays, and first Fridays of the month. **This year's program begins on Tuesday, September 26.**
2. Stay tuned! In August, Barbara Wallach will lead a hike that focuses on trail activities for kids. We strongly encourage our recent graduates to join us, and seasoned docents in need of a refresher are welcome, too.
3. In September, we will have our annual kick-off event/meeting for all children's program docents. This is a fun opportunity to catch up with friends, old and new, and prepare for the coming year.
4. We will announce a date for the August and September events at the **August 12** docent general meeting.

If you have ANY questions about the children's program, do not hesitate to contact me: [tpsnr.childrensprogram@yahoo.com](mailto:tpsnr.childrensprogram@yahoo.com). Thank you, and I'll see you around the Reserve!

## Docent of the Month: Gloria Garrett

Photo by Herb Knüfken

I believe that we protect that which we love, and I love nature. When I moved to La Jolla in 2000, I discovered Torrey Pines and was saddened to see a lot of visitors passing through such a special place with what seemed like a deep disconnect with the land. So, when I moved to Del Mar in 2014, I knew I wanted to become a docent. I completed the training in 2015 and dove into leading nature walks and going on Trail Patrol as soon as I could, hoping my love of the pines and the web of life here would be infectious and help to create allies among the visitors.



My time on the trail sparked an idea for a program that would blend the valuable interpretation, history, and science of the traditional nature walks with a sensory experience that would allow visitors to have a deeper, personal connection to Torrey Pines. I had studied Shinrin Yoku, a Japanese term that means "taking in the forest atmosphere" or "forest bathing." Shinrin Yoku was developed in Japan during the 1980s. The idea is simple: if a person visits a natural area, the wilder the better, and walks slowly, opening the senses along the way, there are calming, rejuvenating and restorative benefits to be achieved. And I believed that visitors who experienced this would naturally want to be good stewards of the land.

In September of 2016, I led the first official Mindfulness In Nature (MIN) walk, and visitors responded. A few regulars have been coming for months. On occasion, I lead special MIN walks. The most recent was a walk through the Extension with Hidden Treasures, a nonprofit that provides support for women who are survivors of the sex trafficking trade. The MIN program is held every Sunday, rain or shine, from 8-9:45 am (unless I'm off visiting my beloved national parks or Lake Michigan). A brief description of the program and a link to a video produced by the recently departed, deeply gifted, visionary videographer Jim Karnik is listed under Program Updates on the [torreypine.org](http://torreypine.org) web site

home page. "The Mindfulness In Nature experience is an invitation to clear your mind, refresh your body and sink into the heart of Nature as Torrey Pines Reserve begins a new day." The program begins at the Visitor Center /Lodge, includes a guided nature walk to one of the Reserve's awe-inspiring lookout points, and concludes with a few minutes of quiet to allow visitors time to let their senses expand and bathe in the beauty of the morning.

I'm excited to see the program thriving and invite any docents who are interested in being trained to lead the MIN program to contact me! It would be wonderful if we could offer the program both Saturdays and Sundays. To reach me, please see the Member List for my email or phone.

## New in the Museum

by Lillian Lachicotte

Photos by Roger Isaacson

We have yet another wonderful addition to our museum, thanks to **Ingo Renner**, who has built and installed well-crafted drawers under the display case on the west wall. These drawers are to contain displays of objects found in the Reserve. Already on display are a shell collection donated by **Jane** and **Ray Barger**, owl burps and bones given to us by **Nancy Woodworth**, and many objects of interest contributed by **Barbara Wallach**. A working group, including the above mentioned docents plus **Jeannie Smith** and, of course, **Ingo Renner**, organized and set up the display.



Please stop by to see the drawers and offer suggestions, help to identify objects, or donate items you think would be of interest.

## The Grunion Are Running: Q and A with Johnson Jou

**P**ark Aide **Johnson Jou** gave us a fascinating look at “grunion running” in his Spotlight On presentation at the July 8 docent meeting. Grunion (*Leuresthes tenuis*) are a sleek, silvery 5-6” fish related to topsmelt and jacksmelt. They are found only from Point Conception (above Santa Barbara) to Baja California. They are famous for their unusual mating ritual during the spring and summer. At the highest tides of the month, female grunion come up on the sandy beaches at night, where they dig their tails into the sand and lay their eggs. The male then wraps himself around the female to deposit his sperm. For the next 10 days, the grunion eggs remain hidden in the sand. At the next set of high tides, the eggs hatch and the young grunion are washed out to sea. Female grunion can lay anywhere from 2,000 to 4,000 eggs.

Though watching grunion can be exciting, Johnson encouraged us to consider the delights of catching and cooking them, as the Kumeyaay Indians did in an earlier age. Here are his tips for finding grunion.

### When is the best time to see a grunion run?

The grunion may run from March through August on nights following a full or new moon, but the months of April, May and June are your best bet. Typically the third and fourth nights tend to be a bit better. The grunion may run anytime within a two-hour window after high tide, so be prepared and be patient.

### Where is the best spot to see a grunion run?

Grunion prefer flat, sandy beaches and areas without a lot of flashing lights, noise, or activity.

### What should I bring?

Sandals, headlamp, shorts, and a fishing license! The months of April and May are closed season when no take or contact of any kind is allowed. Before and after those months, fishing is permitted but with restrictions. Anyone over 16 must have a valid Department of Fish and Wildlife license.

### How do I catch a grunion?

Only by hand. No gear of any kind can be used including nets, hooks, traps, buckets for scooping -- only your bare hands. The law also stipulates that you may take only what you plan to use.

### How do I cook grunion? What do they taste like?

Grunion are one of my favorite fish to cook. They have a soft texture and are easy to eat. The humble grunion is buttery and rich in flavor because they digest their food a lot faster than most fish and therefore have less chance of picking up any off-putting odors or tastes. Simplicity and

perfection is found in a bowl of rice with fresh grunion, sautéed with garlic, salt and a squeeze of lemon.

Here are the recommended times this month for finding grunion:

### August

- 7 Mo 9:40 pm – 11:40 pm
- 8 Tu 10:15 pm – 12:15 am
- 9 We 10:50 pm – 12:50 am
- 10 Th 11:30 pm – 1:30 am
- 21 Mo 9:40 pm – 11:40 pm
- 22 Tu 10:25 pm – 12:25 am
- 23 We 11:05 pm – 1:05 am

## Torrey Pines Book Club

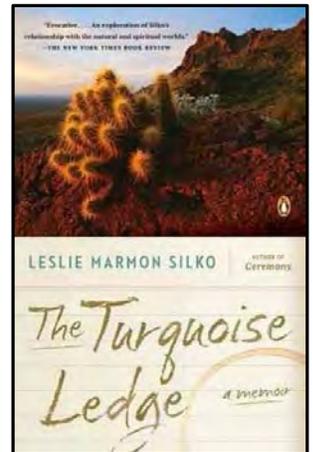
**When:** Tuesday, August 8, 2:00 pm

**Where:** Kathy Glasebrook’s home in University City

**What:** *The Turquoise Ledge* by Leslie Marmon Silko

From Amazon:

*Leslie Marmon Silko's new book, her first in ten years, combines memoir with family history and reflections on the creatures and beings that command her attention and inform her vision of the world, taking readers along on her daily walks through the arroyos and ledges of the Sonoran desert in Arizona. Silko weaves tales from her family's past into her observations, using the turquoise stones she finds on the walks to unite the strands of her stories, while the beauty and symbolism of the landscape around her, and of the snakes, birds, dogs, and other animals that share her life and form part of her family, figure prominently in her memories. Strongly influenced by Native American storytelling traditions, The Turquoise Ledge becomes a moving and deeply personal contemplation of the enormous spiritual power of the natural world--of what these creatures and landscapes can communicate to us, and how they are all linked.*



All TPDS docents are welcome. Meetings usually last a couple of hours. RSVP to **Kathy Glasebrook** if you plan to attend. (Check Member List for email or phone number.)

**September 12:** *Ellen Browning Scripps: New Money and American Philanthropy* by Molly McClain

**October 10:** *Wind, Sand, and Stars* by Antoine de Saint-Exupéry



Above: Field trip to Lyons & O'Haver - Master Taxidermists on July 13. About 50 docents attended the tour. See the TPDS Google group for details and more photos:

[groups.google.com/forum/#!topic/tpds/vJvCyL-ZLYQ](https://groups.google.com/forum/#!topic/tpds/vJvCyL-ZLYQ)

Photo by Wes Farmer

## Genetic Conservation of the Torrey Pine

by Margaret Fillius

On the evening of July 2, a group of docents met to hear a wonderful presentation on Genetic Conservation and Management of the Californian Endemic Torrey Pine (*Pinus torreyana* ssp. *torreyana* and ssp. *insularis*) by Dr. Jill Hamilton and her graduate student, Lionel de Santo, both of North Dakota State University.

Jill talked about the genetic consequences of rarity, focusing on long-lived species that may be subject to dramatic shifts in environment, including fluctuations in both abiotic and biotic stresses impacting long-term species' evolutionary potential. The Torrey pine's extremely restricted distribution makes it subject to the genetic consequences of rarity. Multiple factors, such as the distribution of genetic variation, go into setting up conservation management programs for such species.

Previous genetic analyses of *Pinus torreyana* (Whittall et al. 2010 and Ledig and Conkle 1983) showed no within-population variation at 59 allozyme gene loci – the Santa Rosa and the Torrey Pines State Reserve populations were each homozygous, but the two populations did differ from each other at two of the 59 gene loci. The genetic uniformity may leave trees more vulnerable to pests, pathogens, and environmental change. This could lead to reduced plant fitness under climate change scenarios.

Is the Torrey pine a candidate for “genetic rescue”? And what *is* genetic rescue? Jill and Lionel explained that it takes a multi-pronged approach. Conservation goals for the Torrey pine are *in situ* (i.e., protection that already exists) and *ex situ*. The latter includes storing seeds in the Colorado

Seed Bank and growing trees in botanical gardens. *Ex situ* conservation allows for methods that may have the potential to increase genetic diversity and to protect against extinction.

For the past decade, Santa Barbara Botanic Garden has been growing trees from both populations as well as offspring from the fertilization of Island cones with mainland pollen. The offspring (F1) have been growing faster and producing cones earlier than the parent populations. Does this correlate with fitness? There are plans to look at F2 variations and see whether fitness will be maintained. Will deleterious traits be retained?

Future studies call for the collection of seeds. Lionel described Clustering and Principal Component Analysis (PCA) using physical characteristics of trees in both populations to determine the best means of sampling. He found that there are three distinct clusters of trees at the Reserve and four on Santa Rosa Island. The final conclusion was that random sampling of trees within each cluster should give the best selection of seeds.

The group has been gathering seeds using strict criteria for how many trees per cluster, cones per population, and seeds per population. After gathering cones, they harvested the seeds, then returned the remainder of the cone to the site.

To study the effect of climate change, the intention is to grow individuals from both Torrey pine populations under two distinct treatments (control – drought) in a common environment to evaluate differential gene expression among Torrey pine populations and treatments that may reflect adaptive differences.

### AUGUST CEED Event

Date: **Thursday, August 24**

What: **Whale watching trip**

Where: **SD Whale Watch – 1717 Quivira Rd**

Time: **9 am**

Duration: **3.5 hrs.**

Leader: **Naturalist on board the Privateer**

# Bird of the Month: Nuttall's Woodpecker

by Jack Friery; photo by Herb Knüfken

Our featured bird this month is the **Nuttall's Woodpecker**, *Picoides nuttallii*. This bird, the most common woodpecker in the Reserve, is six to seven inches long and is usually found by following its metallic-sounding rattle call.

The genus name *Picoides* combines the Latin *Picus* for a woodpecker and the Greek *-oidēs* meaning resembling. The species name is a dedication to Thomas Nuttall (1786-1859), an English botanist and ornithologist. (Even at this early date, Nuttall's travels took him across the American continent and even to Hawaii. At one point in his travels, Nuttall "was found walking the beach in San Diego Bay, collecting shells" by noted author Richard Henry Dana. [lewis-clark.org/article/500](http://lewis-clark.org/article/500))

And, just to prove there're not in it just for the insects, here's an observation about the usefulness of woodpeckers: "The spongy bones of the woodpecker's skull and the flexibility of its beak, both of which provide protection for the brain when drumming, have provided inspiration to engineers; a black box needs to survive intact when a plane falls from the sky, and modelling the black box with regard to a woodpecker's anatomy has increased the resistance of this device to damage sixty-fold. The design of protective helmets is another field being influenced by the study of woodpeckers." [en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Woodpecker](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Woodpecker).

Sources: [allaboutbirds.org/guide/Nuttalls\\_Woodpecker/id](http://allaboutbirds.org/guide/Nuttalls_Woodpecker/id), [en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Picoides](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Picoides), [lewis-clark.org/article/497](http://lewis-clark.org/article/497).

Video: [youtu.be/SAMmFQI85qo](http://youtu.be/SAMmFQI85qo).



## Torrey Pines Docent Society Bird Survey: July 1, 2017

Number of species: 60  
(+3 other taxa)

Gadwall 4  
Mallard 4  
California Quail 14  
loon sp. 2  
Western Grebe 4  
Brandt's Cormorant 2  
Brown Pelican 2  
Great Blue Heron 2  
Great Egret 3  
Snowy Egret 10  
Osprey 2  
Cooper's Hawk 6  
Red-tailed Hawk 3  
Bonaparte's Gull 6  
Heermann's Gull 2  
Ring-billed Gull 1

Western Gull 18  
California Gull 1  
Caspian Tern 1  
Black Skimmer 2  
Eurasian Collared-Dove 8  
Mourning Dove 31  
White-throated Swift 10  
Anna's Hummingbird 33  
Rufous/Allen's Hummingbird 15  
Nuttall's Woodpecker 10  
Downy Woodpecker 1  
American Kestrel 2  
Peregrine Falcon 1  
Pacific-slope Flycatcher 1  
Black Phoebe 10  
Ash-throated Flycatcher 3  
Cassin's Kingbird 12  
Hutton's Vireo 2  
California Scrub-Jay 6

American Crow 4  
Common Raven 20  
Northern Rough-winged Swallow 10  
Cliff Swallow 7  
swallow sp. 2  
Bushtit 26  
House Wren 4  
Marsh Wren 1  
Bewick's Wren 17  
California Gnatcatcher 17  
Wrentit 40  
Western Bluebird 2  
California Thrasher 3  
Northern Mockingbird 7  
European Starling 2  
Orange-crowned Warbler 2  
Common Yellowthroat 2  
Yellow-breasted Chat 5  
Savannah Sparrow 2

Song Sparrow 14  
California Towhee 59  
Spotted Towhee 19  
Black-headed Grosbeak 5  
Red-winged Blackbird 5  
Brown-headed Cowbird 4  
House Finch 73  
Lesser Goldfinch 57  
House Sparrow 2

**Observers:** Frank Wong, Jack Friery, Kathy Dickey, Marty Hales, Gary Grantham, Bob Glaser, Andy Rathbone, Tina Rathbone, Janet Ugalde, Herb Knüfken, Sherry Doolittle, Jim Wilson, Tsaiwei Olee, Pete di Girolamo, and Anonymous

View this checklist online at [ebird.org/ebird/view/checklist/S38113236](http://ebird.org/ebird/view/checklist/S38113236)

Herb Knüfken's amazing photo gallery, including many birds, may be found here: [pbase.com/herb1rm](http://pbase.com/herb1rm)



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