



TORREYANA

THE DOCENT NEWSLETTER FOR
TORREY PINES
STATE NATURAL RESERVE

Issue 391

December 2017

Holiday Party!



TP Visitor Center (Lodge)

Saturday, December 9 @ 11:30 am

Potluck Coordinator - Joe Raffaele: It will be potluck, so bring a dish to share. Water, cider, coffee, and hot mulled wine will be provided. To keep waste down, please bring your own plates and utensils.

Decorations Coordinator - Khai Truong: We'll be decorating the Lodge on Saturday, December 2, at 3 pm (after the Art & Nature Festival); if necessary, we'll finish up on December 3 at 10 am. We are not using pine cuttings this year. All are welcome to participate.



Ethnobotany Team Showcases Cactus-Based Foods

by Jane Barger

The Budding Botanist Ethnobotany team demonstrated uses of cactus-based foods at the November docent meeting. The team provided the docents in attendance with colorful and tasty samples of Creamy Nopales Dip and Salsa de Nopales with chips, Prickly Pear Jelly on bread,

and cups of Prickly Pear Lemonade. The demonstration served to highlight the parts of plants of various species in the cactus family (Cactaceae) that multiple cultures use for food.



Ethnobotany team (L to R): Jane Barger, Sue Lange, Debi Buffington & Karen Fraser

The Budding Botanists are a group of approximately thirty docents dedicated to furthering our collective knowledge of plants at TPSNR. We aim to systematically examine different plant families for their naming, ethnobotany, propagation/pollination and stories, which we will share with the docents at large.

(See photo on pg. 3)

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The Torrey Pines Docent Society publishes the *Torreyana* monthly, edited by Joan Simon and Dan Hammer on alternate months, and is formatted and produced by Roger Isaacson. Submissions are due on or about the 20th day of the preceding month and may be emailed to

Editors@torreypine.org.

Please send postal/
email address changes to:

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Membership@torreypine.org

Web sites:

TP Docent Society: torreypine.org

TP Association: torreypines.org

Visitor Center phone: 858.755.2063

TPDS Executive Board Members:

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Treasurer: Gerry Lawrence

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Directors-at-large:

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Roger Isaacson

Steve Neal

Lynne Small

Janet Ugalde

TPSNR Staff:

Supervising Ranger: Dylan Hardenbrook

Rangers: Kyle Knox, Jesus "Chuy" Salinas Rodriguez

Sr. Park Aides: Louis Sands, Jake Mumma

Park Aides: Cheryl Biernacki, Krista DeBusschere, Joy Inton, Johnson Jou (Interpreter)

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

President's Letter

November is a time of transition in the Reserve, when the days get shorter and the temperatures begin to cool. The clamor of children fills the air again, so you know our Children's Program is in full swing after the summer hiatus. The toyon berries are bright red and ripe for the pickin' by hungry ravens and scrub jays. Weary coastal sage scrub is in its drought deciduous mode, barely hanging in there, in want of rain.



Our Docent Society holds its elections this time of year, perfectly in rhythm with this season of change. A new board has been approved. For the past several years, I have had the honor of working with talented members who must now move on. Our dedicated Secretary **Annette Ring**, Treasurer **Gerry Lawrence** and Director-at-Large **Lynne Small** have done a terrific job in rounding out our cabinet. They will be replaced in the new year by **Mark Embree**, **Bobbi Krueger**, and **Stu Rosenwasser**.

The Docent Society's bylaws have been amended per vote, clarifying Nominating Committee protocol and modifying membership categories to better serve the society into the future. Annual active hours will be raised in 2019, from 72 to 84, to reflect State Park requirements and to help us accommodate the large influx of visitors we now have in the Reserve. Training has been moved to fall and will emphasize interpretation as well as fundamental knowledge of the natural history of the Reserve.

Another project the board has decided to wholeheartedly support is the printing of **Margaret Fillius's** 4th edition of her very popular book, *Native Plants of Torrey Pines and Nearby San Diego County Locations*. This exceptional field guide has updated taxonomy and photos, 40 new plants, and a larger binding.

I look forward to our yearly Holiday Party. Hope to see you all there!

Ingo Renner
President, TPDS



(Cont. from pg. 1)



Ethnobotany team discusses food uses of cactus with Ingo Renner & Walt Desmond

Meeting Minutes – November 11, 2017

Meeting called to order at 9:15 am by Ingo Renner.

Speaker: Did not show up.

Ranger's Report: Assemblymember Todd Gloria visited TPSNR earlier in the week and indicated he supports parks. For more see his website at: a78.asmdc.org/

Art and Nature Festival: Ingo mentioned that **Johnson Joo** is heading up the Art and Nature fest again this year on December 2 from 9 am – 1 pm. Please contact him if you can help. Johnson had sign-up sheets for booths, the set-up and take down. Docents and other artists are welcome to sell their art at this event but are asked to donate at least 10% to the TPDS. **Dan Hammer** is handling the PR for this event. Johnson asked for help designing a banner to hang by the main road. (See pg. 8 for more details.)

Margaret Fillius's book: The board passed a motion that the Docent Society publish the 4th edition of Margaret's beautiful field guide *Natives Plants of TPSR and Nearby San Diego County Locations*. She has updated her new book with additional plants, photos, and the latest taxonomy. The books are expected in the Museum Shop before the holidays. She wants all the monetary proceeds to go to the TPDS.

Nominating Committee, aka NomCom: **Walt Desmond** announced the nominations for the Board of Directors for 2018: President: **Ingo Renner**, Vice President: **Ray Barger**, Treasurer: **Bobbi Krueger**, Secretary: **Steve Neal**, At Large: **Pao Chau, Roger Isaacson, Janet Ugalde, Stu Rosenwasser, Mark Embree**. This slate was passed unanimously.

Membership Bylaw Changes:

All of the following changes to the bylaws were passed unanimously.

Nominating Committee, aka NomCom

- The NomCom shall have 5 members.
- NomCom members will have a 5-consecutive-year term limit.
- The NomCom will be appointed by the board at the July board meeting.
- The NomCom will present the slate of four officers and five At-Large board members for the November Annual meeting.

See November [2017 Torreyana](#) for other approved bylaw changes

Susan G. Komen 3 Day walk: **Ann Smith Mercandetti** asked for docents to sign up to be at TPSNR during the Susan G. Komen walk on Friday November 17 by 7:45 am. More than 2,000 people are expected to walk through TPSNR that morning. In years past, having docents with signs cheering the walkers on and reminding them not to litter or eat in the Reserve has helped greatly. (See article on pg. 9.)

Museum Committee: **Lillian Lachicotte** gave an update on what they are doing:

- Setting up a sound system in the Museum to provide recordings of bird songs, animal sounds and Native American music in 15-minute loops to be controlled by the Lodge host.
- Relocating the butterfly and moth display to the east island and adding information about butterfly and moth chrysalises.
- Sprucing up the west island displays and adding an enlarged photo as a background.
- Adding to and improving the collections in the drawers.
- Installing historically-correct lanterns outside the Lodge.

TPA: **Ken King** mentioned that the TPA was founded in 1950 by Guy Fleming to help support TPSNR. Ken gave an update about what the TPA is currently working on:

- The Children's Program interpretive structure is proceeding. It will likely be a hard structure that will also accommodate both new and ongoing docent training classes. The goal is to complete this structure around May.
- TPA has recently funded the eye-rod and cable fencing throughout the Reserve.
- The Lodge will be 100 years old in 2023. Celebratory festivities will be planned.

Membership dues and hours: Please pay before the holiday party so Louis can order the parking passes. Also, remember to log your hours into Volgistics.

Lynne Truong is handling membership now. **Carol Smith** is stepping down. Many thanks to Carol for her many years of service with this task.

Road Cleanup: **Kristine Schindler** announced that there will be a road cleanup of the outside road, (N. Torrey Pines Rd.) on Sunday Nov. 12 at 9 am. Meet in the South Beach parking lot.

Speakers: **George Beardsley** would like a couple docents to help him find the speakers for the general meetings.

Budding Botanists: **Jane Barger** from the Budding Botanists, aka BB, along with other Budding Botanists had prepared food such as nopales and prickly pear jam made from cactus. She urged us to try them during the break.

Bathrooms: When will they be done? In about a year, so next fall.

Broken Hill Trail: When will the Broken Hill trail open? In about half a year, so next spring.

Science Fair: TPDS science fair winner from 2017 Emily Shi went on to win a Broadcom Masters® award. She received \$20,000 and another \$1,000 for her school's STEM program. (See pg. 8 for details.)

Badges: **Greg Howard** will be ordering docent badges soon; let him know if you need a new one. With a magnet they are \$10.26 each. With a pin they are \$9 each.

Docent of the Month: "**Garnet**" aka **William Roehm** for all his work with the TIK, Public Walks, and Seabees.

Holiday Party: Will be at the TPDS Lodge on Saturday, December 9. Please sign up for the potluck. Pick from appetizer, salad, main dish and dessert. Please bring your own plates, cups and flatware to the party to help us be more green.

Refreshments: December's general meeting will be the Holiday Party potluck at the Lodge.

Meeting ended at 10:10 am.

Children's Program

by *Louis Sands, Children's Program Coordinator*

It is always rewarding to expand the reach of our program. During this 2017-18 school year alone, we will welcome seven new schools – one from as far away as southern Orange County.

It is also a pleasure to welcome perennial favorites! This November, the teachers from Dailard, Empresa, and Foussat elementary schools continued to impress us with their organization, student preparedness levels, and, of course, leadership. Ask any Children's Program docent, and s/he'll

tell you the positive impact these teachers have on the student experience. Thank you, teachers!

During the upcoming holiday season, seize the opportunities to enjoy your families, eat lots of great food, drink decadent libations, and reboot! The winter/spring season of the Children's Program begins on January 9, when we welcome the namesake of our favorite visionary/philanthropist, Ellen Browning Scripps Elementary School. Please join us then! If you have any questions, contact me:

tpsnr.childrensprogram@yahoo.com

From **Janet Ugalde** and me:
Merry Christmahanakwanzika!!

Dues Are Due!

by *Lynne Truong, Membership Chair*

The TPDS Board requests that service hours for 2017 be recorded by December 31, 2017 and membership dues for 2018 be paid by January 1, 2018.

Service hours and dues are state requirements for parking passes, which are issued by our rangers. Please note that if membership dues are not received by January 1, you will not get your parking pass at the January meeting. Any dues paid after January 1 will require two weeks before you can receive your parking pass from a park aide.

Docent Requirements:

- **Active Members:** \$25 dues and minimum of 72 service hours [This will increase to 84 hours in 2019.]
- **Associate Members (previously Supporting):** \$25 dues. Service hours are not required for Associate Members but are much appreciated.
- **Lifetime Members:** No requirements, but service hours and donations are welcome.

For more information on the Associate Member class, see the [October Torreyana, pg. 6](#).

If you have questions about recording your service hours on Volgistics, contact **Roger Isaacson** (portal@torrypine.org).

If you have questions about your required service hours or dues, contact **Lynne Truong** (membership@torreypine.org).

You may place your check payable to TPDS (marked dues) in the Treasurer's box in the docent library. Or mail to:

Torrey Pines Docent Society
Attn: Treasurer (Dues)
P.O. Box 2414
Del Mar, CA 92014



First Day Hikes

America's State Parks First Day Hikes 2018 is a national initiative supported by State Parks in all 50 states. Last year California set an all-time record of 53 State Parks participating with 85 hikes available.

Join a hike at TPSNR on January 1, 2018 at 10:00 am and 2:00 pm.

Note: There will be no CEED event in December.



Docent of the Month: William "Garnet" Roehm

Photo by Herb Knüfken

I was born in central Massachusetts and got my outdoor adventure spirit from my dad, who was your classic outdoorsman. Throughout my whole childhood and teen years, my general routine on the weekend was to get up at 4 am. If it was fishing or hunting



season, that is what dictated what we were up to. When fishing we would mainly work the streams and rivers and when hunting we walked parallel through the fields and woods. A couple of times we got separated and I got lost. I would just walk and walk until I hit a dirt road, and then I'd flag down a vehicle driven by other hunters. When the fishing and hunting seasons were over, the whole family (I had three older sisters) got into the action. The weekends were filled with camping, downhill skiing, or going to the ocean to bodysurf. If we ever had a "free" weekend, it really wasn't free as I would go with my dad out in the woods to cut firewood and haul it home.

The year I graduated high school I got my draft number: it was 12 (out of 365). A low number meant that, if I messed up my college deferment, I was going to be drafted, but before I had to report to

the draft board I enlisted in the Air Force. From basic and advanced training, I was spit out as a cookie-cutter medic. After working in various ER and intensive care jobs, I was shipped out to remote sites in Alaska where I was the only medical person for between 100 and 150 men at each site.

I stayed in Alaska for 13 years total as it was my dream place to live. (Frostbite ultimately pushed me down to Southern California.) Hiking, backpacking, mountaineering, and rock climbing were my favorite pursuits. Becky, my wife of 40 years, was born there, and we had our first of two sons up there. I dabbled in outdoor education, being an assistant instructor for a mountaineering class and teaching basic rock climbing on my own. That kind of work was leading me straight to the poor farm, so I had to get me a real job. From then on until I retired, I worked as either a park ranger or in some capacity in construction. I was a park ranger for a total of 11 years and enjoyed the interpretive end of it as well as the search-and-rescue part. It was the law enforcement component, especially testifying in court, that I didn't like. Ranger positions may look like a dream job to most people, but believe me they are not easy.

One notable expedition I was on was a 1977 climb of Denali. On this climb, we set a modern-day speed record. Yup, nobody has taken longer to climb it than we did: ten weeks. We retraced the pioneer climbs of the early 1900's, we traversed the mountain (up one side down the other), and we dealt with some hellacious storms. We summited on May 17. It was a sunny day. The ambient air temp at the summit at noon was minus 35 F.

At Torrey Pines, my favorite duty is working with the Seabees because of the cooperative spirit displayed. Between all of us we paste together the skills and knowledge to typically get every job done well. The other duty I enjoy is leading Public Nature Walks. Although I try to inject bits of humor, I really take them seriously, because for that hour or two, for those people on the walk, I am the face of TPSNR.

Anacardiaceae (Cashew or Sumac)

Family

by the Budding Botanists

Some people are allergic to the bark of the laurel sumac, while others are allergic to eating cashew or even mango. Almost all of us will get a bad skin rash from poison oak. These plants all belong to the cashew or sumac family, Anacardiaceae. This family comprises shrubs and small trees, and many of these plants make a drupe – a stone fruit that is indehiscent (does not split open). The most notable examples are cashew (*Anacardium occidentale*), the namesake of the family; pistachio (*Pistacia vera*); and mango (*Mangifera indica*). The cashew nut that we eat is a seed, the pistachio is a thin-shelled drupe, and the mango is a juicy drupe.

The family name Anacardiaceae comes from the Greek *ana* (without) and *cardium* (heart). The family is named after the cashew genus *Anacardium*, in which the seed is located outside the core of the fruit, and thus without a heart. Plants present in the Reserve are the following:

Malosma laurina (laurel sumac, California sumac): *Mal-*, from the Latin *malus* (apple tree) and *osma* (odor); *laurina* from the Latin *laurus* (bay tree – *laurina* means like the laurel). The unfolded leaves resemble the bay laurel tree and smell like apple. Years ago, locating this shrub was important for farmers searching for appropriate sites to plant citrus. Since laurel sumac does not survive freezing temperatures, it is a surrogate for citrus. Orange County was originally farmed in this way. One characteristic of Anacardiaceae shrubs is that they have resin channels underneath the bark, and the secreted sap can cause irritation and allergic reactions. Some people are sensitive to laurel sumac because of this.

Rhus integrifolia (lemonadeberry). *Rhus* is the Greek name for sumac while *integrifolia* comes from the Latin *integritas* (complete). Taken together *integrifolia* means “with complete

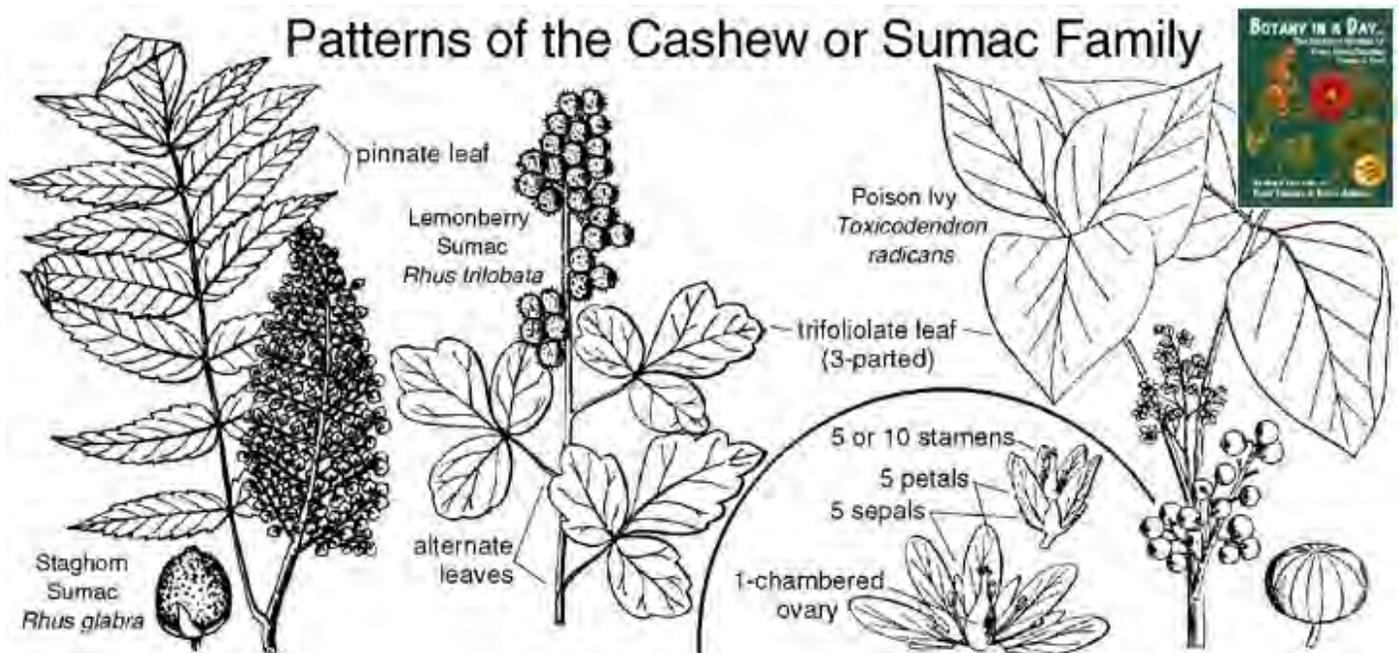
leaves.” Like leaves of many evergreen, drought-tolerant shrubs (which are thick and leathery), the leaves of lemonadeberry do not wilt. The short, stiff branches create support for funnel-web-weaving spiders, whose flattened webs are often found on these shrubs.

Toxicodendron diversilobum (Western poison oak, Pacific poison oak). *Toxicodendron* means “poison tree,” from the Greek *toxikos* (“belonging to the bow,” referring to a poison in which arrows are dipped) and *dendron* (tree, from ancient Greek *dendrites*). *Diversilobum* (diverse lobe) refers to the varied-shape leaves. Western poison oak can cause rashes from phenolic compounds. Many people are sensitive to this plant and can get dermatitis from other members of this family. Poison oak makes urushiol, an organic oily compound that is also in the genus *Toxicodendron*. This is why the condition caused by these plants is also called urushiol-induced contact dermatitis.

A consistent feature of plants in the Anacardiaceae family is their inflorescence. The flowers typically (though not always) form a dense cluster (panicles) and provide a characteristic shape that is apparent even when they are only flower buds. When in bloom, the flowers are very small, with five whitish cream to pinkish petals. As with the inflorescence, the resulting fruits are in a dense cluster, sometimes called sumac bobs, and they turn reddish when ripe.

The most complicated feature of the Anacardiaceae family is its pollination characteristics, particularly of lemonadeberry, its closely related sugar bush, and laurel sumac. Leaf structures are shown in the diagram below:

Docents **Pao Chau, Jeff Elman, Peter Domaille**, and Park Aide **Johnson Jou** contributed to this article. The Budding Botanists will continue their discussion of the Anacardiaceae family in the January 2018 *Torreyana*.





CEED trip to Barona Cultural Center on October 25

Photo by Mike Yang

Roadside Cleanups: More Than Meets the Eye

by Kristine Schindler

At least quarterly, docents come together to lend their hands, backs, and hearts to our roadside cleanup efforts. Thank you to all past, present, and future docents who help with this activity. It is a chance to show passers-by (on 4 wheels or 2) on N. Torrey Pines Rd. our caring and stewardship. It goes well beyond beautification and has to do with road safety too. It quickly becomes apparent when you do a roadside cleanup that many collisions happen on this stretch of roadway, and removing debris is important. Also, our hope is that less litter encourages less litter. Plus it gives each docent a chance to see other areas of the Reserve and lagoon at a walking pace, instead of zipping up or down the road quickly in the bubble of a car. A gift indeed.

road), and much more. Please consider joining in sometime. Contact **Kristine Schindler** (See Member List) if you have any questions and/or ideas of how to make this activity even better.



You get good exercise, immediate gratification with a clean roadway at the end of the activity, many thank yous from cyclists as they go by (especially on the uphill side of the

Do your own “pop up” road cleanup. When you have a few minutes as you drive (or ride!) up or down the outside road, choose a safe place to pull off the road and give 10-15 minutes to walk a short section of road in need. **Betsy Seible** has had this thought and likely others as well. All you need is a pair of gloves and a small plastic bag (or better yet a bucket). Just be sure to be safe.

And thank you to our most recent cleanup team:

Steve Neal, Dan Hammer, Betsy Seible, Gabriele Wienhausen, Darlene Martineau, Brian Fujita, Mona Kuczenski, Jean Glover, Donna Close, Pao Chau, Joan Simon, Don McGuire, Wendy Brody, Lorraine Stein, Ray Eller, and Nancy Richardson

Art and Nature Festival December 2

The TPDS will present its 2nd annual Art and Nature Festival on Saturday, December 2 from 9 am to 1 pm in front of the Visitor Center. (To read about last year's great inaugural festival, click [here; Torreyana Dec 2016](#) pg. 5.)

The Art and Nature Festival brings together local artists, nature-related organizations, and other nature lovers to share their work and passions with the public. The Festival will feature artwork, a flintknapper demonstration, woodworking from the Turn Around Vets, and live owls, reptiles and insects. The Children's Program and a variety of local nature organizations will have outreach booths highlighting their work. Artists offering their works for sale include local potters, plein air painters, and basket weavers. A portion of all sale proceeds will go to benefit the TPDS.

As of press time, volunteers were still needed to help with set-up around 7:30 am or take-down around 1 pm. If you'd like to help, please contact Johnson (see Member List)

Photos below are from the very successful November 13, 2016 event. *Photos by Mike Yang*



Gloria Garrett doing Kumeyaay interpretation



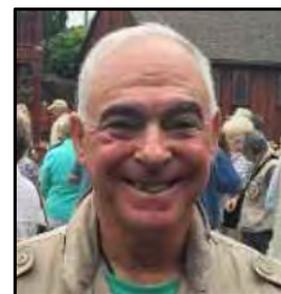
Jeannie Smith giving art instruction

Special Walks Team

The Docent Special Walk Team is completing a very busy, interesting and successful 2017. As of the end of November, 41 Special Walks were conducted either during the week or on weekends. Over 1,600 guest walkers participated this year. Fees paid to the Docent Society for these walks exceeded \$7,800.

Groups participating in 2017 Special Walks included visiting corporate and professional society conference attendees, multiple Road Scholar tours, a Norwegian tour group, several local senior organizations, local and visiting environmental groups and a large contingent of elementary school-age day campers from San Ysidro.

Many thanks to the members of our Docent Special Walk Team for their enthusiastic support of our busy 2017 activities. If other docents would like to be included on our 2018 Special Walks Team, please email **Stu Rosenwasser** (see Member List) and you will be included on all of our Request for Docent Guides emails going forward.



Science Fair Winner Receives \$20,000 Award as Broadcom Masters Finalist

Emily Shi, a TPDS 2017 Science Fair winner ([Torreyana June 2017](#)) for her project on "Microscopic Study of Torrey Pine Needles for Moisture Condensation," was chosen a Broadcom MASTERS® 2017 Finalist. Emily won the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation Award for Health Advancement, which recognizes the student whose work and performance shows the most promise in health-related fields. She was awarded \$20,000, and her school, The Cambridge School in San Diego, received \$1,000 for its STEM program.

The Broadcom MASTERS® finalists include 15 girls and 15 boys selected from 2,499 applicants representing 49 states, 4 US territories and 1 military base abroad. It is the nation's most prestigious Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) competition for middle school students. MASTERS stands for: Math, Applied Science, Technology and Engineering Rising Stars.

See: student.societyforscience.org/broadcom-masters



Torrey Pines Book Club

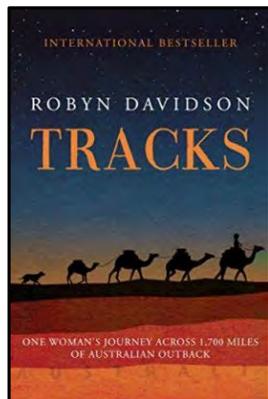
When: Tuesday, December 12, 2:00 pm

Where: Alison & Greg Howard's home in Encinitas

What: *Tracks: A Woman's Solo Trek Across 1700 miles of Australian Outback* by Robyn Davidson

Summary:

Robyn Davidson opens the memoir of her perilous journey across 1,700 miles of hostile Australian desert to the sea with only four camels and a dog for company with the following words: "I experienced that sinking feeling you get when you know you have conned yourself into doing something difficult and there's no going back." Enduring sweltering heat, fending off poisonous snakes and lecherous men, chasing her camels when they get skittish and nursing them when they are injured, Davidson emerges as an extraordinarily courageous heroine driven by a love of Australia's landscape, an empathy for its indigenous people, and a willingness to cast away the trappings of her former identity. Tracks is the compelling, candid story of her odyssey of discovery and transformation.



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

January 9, 2018: *The Long Walk: The True Story of a Trek to Freedom* by Slavomir Rawicz.

Docents Guide Komen Walkers through TPSNR

by Ann Smith Mercandetti

Despite the falling of soft raindrops, TP Docents **Joan Simon, Steve Neal, Marty Jacobson, Walt Desmond, Debby Sherman, Linda Zolotnik, BJ Withall, Paul Dunphy, Annette Ring, Karen Lay, Ken King, Coleen Huang, Dan Hammer, Gloria Phillips, Helen Grundler, Kim Weber, Gabrielle Ivany, Pao Chau, Darlene Martineau, Lynne Truong, and Sherri Doolittle** picked up their posters and spread out along the 1.5-mile road through Torrey Pines State Natural Reserve to welcome more than 2,000 Three Day Komen Walkers for Breast Cancer from all over the United States on the morning of Friday, November 17. While Komen Walks take place in seven locations across the country each year, the walk here in San Diego is the largest, and it raises the

most money for breast cancer research and medical needs for cancer patients.



The raindrops disappeared, and it became a pleasant day for walkers to enjoy the Reserve. **Debby Sherman**, stationed at the curve of the Reserve entrance, received a lot of "I didn't know that!" comments from walkers about her poster as they started up the hill: "Torrey - Rarest tree in the U.S." This is what Torrey Pines' docents do: help care for TPSNR and educate people who come into the Reserve. **Ken King** and his two-lady crew were busy at the "Photo-Op" stop, taking photos of walkers with their own cameras along the road, just west of the lodge. Walkers could stop and have themselves "framed" (thanks to TP docent **Kristine Schindler**) with a beautiful view of Red Butte and Torreys in the background.



Docent monitoring of "events" coming through the Reserve has drastically cut the previous problem of trash and food litter left within the Reserve by event participants. This was the fifth year of TP Docents monitoring the Komen Walk. It is definitely a successful project, thanks to those great docents who sign up for monitoring!! Thank you! Thank you! Thank you!!

Bird of the Month: Rock Wren

by Jack Friery; photo courtesy of Herb Knüfken

Our featured bird this month is the Rock Wren, *Salpinctes obsoletus*. The bird has a speckled brown back, a long, thin, down-curved bill, and a prominent white eyebrow. Curiously, the Rock Wren apparently never drinks water, a convenient adaptation in its customary arid environment. It apparently fulfills all its moisture requirements from the insects and spiders it devours.

This lovely little bird is an uncommon visitor to Torrey Pines. True to its name, we've spotted the Rock Wren hopping along the beach rip-rap along the south entryway to the Reserve. Watch for the bird doing "push-ups" on a convenient boulder.

The wren family, by the way, is called Troglodytidae, which is derived from *troglydte*, meaning "cave-dweller." If you've ever called anyone a troglodyte and haven't been punched in the nose, our congratulations.



Sources: allaboutbirds.org/guide/Rock_Wren/id
en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rock_wren
en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wren
audubon.org/field-guide/bird/rock-wren

Torrey Pines Docent Society Bird Survey: November 4, 2017

Number of species: 83
(+1 other taxon)

Blue-winged Teal 2	Osprey 1	Nuttall's Woodpecker 7	Orange-crowned Warbler 3
Gadwall 2	White-tailed Kite 2	Downy Woodpecker 1	Common Yellowthroat 12
American Wigeon 2	Northern Harrier 2	American Kestrel 5	Yellow-rumped Warbler 121
Mallard 15	Cooper's Hawk 1	Merlin 1	White-crowned Sparrow 47
Northern Pintail 10	Red-tailed Hawk 5	Peregrine Falcon 2	Golden-crowned Sparrow 1
Green-winged Teal 13	American Coot 30	Black Phoebe 19	Song Sparrow 9
Lesser Scaup 2	Black-bellied Plover 2	Say's Phoebe 8	California Towhee 34
Surf Scoter 2	Killdeer 7	Cassin's Kingbird 12	Spotted Towhee 12
Bufflehead 5	Whimbrel 2	Hutton's Vireo 5	Western Meadowlark 2
California Quail 4	Long-billed Curlew 1	California Scrub-Jay 10	Red-winged Blackbird 1
Common Loon 3	Least Sandpiper 2	American Crow 56	House Finch 74
loon sp. 8	Spotted Sandpiper 1	Common Raven 15	Lesser Goldfinch 40
Pied-billed Grebe 1	Willet 8	Bushtit 49	House Sparrow 2
Eared Grebe 1	Heermann's Gull 10	Rock Wren 1	
Western Grebe 14	Ring-billed Gull 3	House Wren 3	Observers: Frank Wong,
Double-crested Cormorant 3	Western Gull 9	Marsh Wren 1	Kathy Dickey, Jack Friery,
Brown Pelican 30	California Gull 2	Bewick's Wren 9	Marty Hales, Steve Neal, Bob
Great Blue Heron 3	Royal Tern 1	Blue-gray Gnatcatcher 1	Glaser, Andy Rathbone, Eva
Great Egret 4	Eurasian Collared-Dove 1	California Gnatcatcher 19	Armi, Max Edwards, Gary
Little Blue Heron 1	Mourning Dove 33	Ruby-crowned Kinglet 3	Grantham, Tsaiwei Lee,
Black-crowned Night-Heron 1	Great Horned Owl 1	Wrentit 45	David Walker, Molly
	White-throated Swift 60	Hermit Thrush 4	McConnell, Valerie Thomas,
	Anna's Hummingbird 30	California Thrasher 1	Herb Knüfken, and
	Allen's Hummingbird 9	Northern Mockingbird 2	Anonymous
	Belted Kingfisher 1	European Starling 4	

View this checklist online at ebird.org/ebird/view/checklist/S40557455

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