



TORREYANA

THE DOCENT NEWSLETTER FOR
TORREY PINES
STATE NATURAL RESERVE

Issue 406

March 2019

HELP!

by Dan Hammer

Docents who braved the winter weather to attend February's TPDS meeting were rewarded with Michael Martino's entertaining presentation on beach and ocean safety. Martino, a former chief lifeguard for California State Parks, is the author of *HELP! San Diego Lifeguards to the Rescue: A History of Their Service*. After dispelling the myth that lifeguards are sculpted gods and goddesses from *Bay Watch* ("It's not sexy – it's hard work!"), Michael shared his safety tips and his research on the origins of San Diego's lifeguard services.

His first and most important safety tip: swimmers can best protect themselves by understanding *rip currents* and *set waves*. **Rip currents** are responsible for most ocean drownings and rescues. They form when a longshore current flows into an underwater channel or hole and then accelerates out to sea. Though sometimes called *riptides* or *undertows*, rip currents are not caused by the tides, and they drag you out, not under.



Docent General Meeting

Date: Saturday, March 9, 9:00 am

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

Speaker: Kesler Randall, Fossil Vertebrates Collections Manager, San Diego Natural History Museum Paleo Services

Topic: Fossil evidence found throughout San Diego County

Refreshments: Docents with last names beginning with **G-H-I** will be responsible for providing snacks for this meeting.

If you are caught in a rip current, you should lie on your back and allow the rip current to carry you until it weakens enough for you to swim to the side and out of the current. Do not waste your energy by trying to swim directly in, or even immediately to the side. A related tip: A gap in a line of waves often indicates a rip current, which is flowing out to sea with more force than the incoming wave; this is *not* a good place to enter the ocean.

Set waves are groups of waves of similar size and intervals. A set of larger waves usually alternates with a "lull" of smaller waves. Ocean swimmers can get into trouble when they swim out at the end of a lull, only to be caught by the first wave in a large set.

After teaching us how to stay safer, Michael told us about the origins of San Diego's lifeguard service. In 1868, when his history begins,

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

there were no lifeguards in San Diego – and indeed very few swimmers. The ocean was a place to make a living from fishing or trade, not tourism. Any boater or ocean swimmer who got in trouble had to rely on “citizen rescuers” who were often poor swimmers and fully dressed.

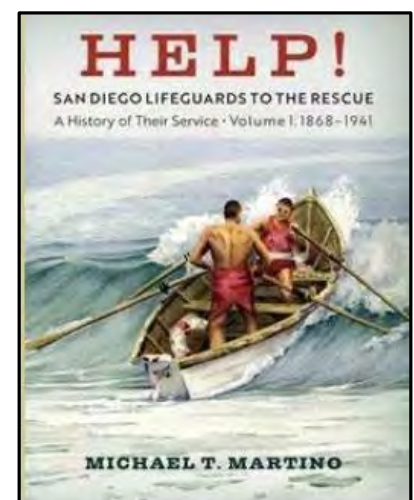
This changed around 1900, when beachgoers began to swim in saltwater bathhouse tanks or enjoy “booty dunking” – holding onto ropes tethered in the ocean in order to cool off in their wool “swimming costumes.” (See photo.)

By 1913, bathhouses hired lifeguards to protect patrons who swam in their tanks or jumped off their docks. That June, bathhouse lifeguard John Brown died trying to rescue two swimmers who also drowned. Brown's replacement, Walter Field, greatly improved lifeguard services in Ocean Beach. He and his two assistants rescued 21 people, and no ocean swimmers drowned that summer.

Five years later, a mass drowning led to the formation of San Diego's first professional lifeguard service. Walter Field and his crew were off to fight in World War I, but thousands of other service members based in San Diego flocked to local beaches in their free time. One warm day in May, 20 soldiers ignored a lifeguard's warning and tried to swim across the mouth of Mission Bay through high surf and strong currents. Eleven of them drowned, along with two civilians. Sixty other swimmers were rescued that terrible day.

Following this tragedy, San Diego's beaches were closed and tourists shied away. To help turn the tide, famed waterman George Freeth convinced the city council to purchase new, improved ocean rescue equipment and cordon off dangerous areas at the beach. The council also began to consider hiring city lifeguards, though it would be two more years before they did so.

Michael Martino's presentation ended here, but his book continues through 1941, and he is working on a second volume of this fascinating local history. Volume 1 of *HELP! San Diego Lifeguards to the Rescue* is now available for purchase in the Torrey Pines museum shop.



Torrey Pines Docent Society

General Meeting Minutes

February 9, 2019

Meeting called to order at 9:05 am by President **Janet Ugalde**.

Speaker: Michael T. Martino, former Chief Lifeguard for California State Parks, presented an excellent lecture on the history of San Diego lifeguards from 1868 to 1918. His book, *Help! San Diego Lifeguards to the Rescue*, was for sale and will be available for purchase in the Museum Shop (see the article on the front page).

President's Report: **Janet Ugalde** announced that the board voted to cease sales of reusable water bottles and the plant brochure at the TIK; however, donations at the TIK will still be accepted. She reminded the docents that there is an *All Docent* mailbox (right side, lower right) in the library, and docents should periodically check it to see if they have any correspondence.

Vice President's Report: **Ingo Renner** reported that Earth Day for TPSNR will be celebrated on Saturday, April 20 from 9 am until 1 pm. Signup sheets were available for planners, setup and cleanup docents, and docents to staff the various booths. Contact Ingo if you were not at the meeting, but would like to volunteer. Next Ingo announced he has Torrey Circle *Nature Discovery* presenters for the next six months: the first four are *Grey Whales* by **Jane Barger** on Mar 16th, *Native Wildflowers* by **Margaret Fillius** on Mar 10, *Kumeyaay* by **Kathy Dickey** on April 6, and *Local Birds* by **Marty Hales** on May 18. Kathy Dickey has volunteered to advertise these events. **Wes Farmer** and **Ingo** will lead a low tide beach walk on February 18.

Lake Hodges Walk: **Barbara Wallach** reported that the Lake Hodges walk organized by **Karen Fraser** on February 8th was well attended, with sightings of White Pelicans and the dance of the Western Grebe being the highlights.

Better Impact: Better Impact (BI) is the State chosen program to replace Volgistics. The planned turnover date is still March 1. **Roger Isaacson** announced that 155 docents have signed up for BI to date. Roger gave a brief presentation on BI, emphasizing that under My Profile, Contact Information, Privacy Settings, all three boxes should be checked. Just below that box, if you want to receive email reminders of your scheduled assignments, the box should actually state "X Unsubscribe from Weekly Schedule Reminders." Roger and his BI team stayed after the meeting to help more docents sign up for BI. He also had a signup sheet for a computer oriented workshop he will conduct at the Lodge on Feb 12 at 4 pm.

General: Senior Park Aide **Louis Sands** was on hand to pass out the 100- and 200-hour *Volunteer Pass* (VIP Pass) to docents that met those volunteer hour thresholds. See Louis for your pass if you were not present at the meeting.

George Beardsley: **Judith Zyskind** announced that Lifetime member George passed away February 4th. He was in charge of our monthly meeting speaker selection for several years, was a strong environmentalist, physicist, and can best be described as a *Gentle Giant*. George is survived by his wife and fellow docent **Connie Beardsley** as well as their three daughters. There will be a *Celebration of George's Life* on March 31 at the La Jolla Community Center. (See pg. 5.)

Joan Nimick: **Barbara Wallach** informed us that Lifetime member Joan passed away in December at the age of 97. She was in the class of 1989, and she was the Training Officer for Barbara's 1993 class, as well as founder of the Children's Program. (See pg. 5.)

Docent of the Month: **Sara Mussen** for all of her Lodge hosting (especially filling in with short notice), as well as her informative postings on Google Groups.

Refreshments: At March's General Meeting, docents with last names starting with letters **G-H-I** are responsible for snacks.

Meeting ended at 11:10 am.

Children's Program

by *Louis Sands, Children's Program Coordinator*

Heads up, Children's Program docents! Quite a few school field trips have been rescheduled to unorthodox days thanks to the recent rainy weather and trail closures. For example, in the month of March, we have school groups confirmed for Monday the 4th and Friday the 15th! Please take a moment to review the remaining schedule carefully, and sign up if your schedule permits: torreypine.org/volunteering/

The *good* news is that these rainy days will bear the most awesome display of flowers for our students! The *better* news is that, of the eleven field trips scheduled during March, seven will have either a Plants and Habitats or Ecosystems and Food Chains theme. Those field trips could not be timed more perfectly, right?! And the *BEST* news is that we have all of the resources you need to prepare an interactive and educational walk. Check out the training resources available on the docent website: torreypine.org/volunteering/training-resources/

Now, put on your creativity hats, and let's get at it!

Docent of the Month:

Sara Mussen

Photo by Herb Knüfken

Growing up in the open spaces of Ramona, my love for nature began before I can remember. I was a free-range child in a world of granite and chaparral. One of my favorite places to be as a kid was in the dappled light sitting in a cleft between two boulders completely covered by a sumac canopy. With parents who loved nature and grandparents who lived in Missouri, our summers always included a road trip threaded between state and national parks, camping and exploring along the way. Our most-visited park was Yosemite, where I was introduced to the life and writings of John Muir. His activism and advocacy inspired an early desire to do my part to help preserve and protect what was left of our wildlands. I majored in Biology, with an emphasis in Ecology, with the hopes to make that my life's work. Life had other plans. I ended up using my degree to make a living in biotech, and it was on the way to one of those jobs in 2012 that I saw a banner posted in front of the Reserve about



volunteering, so I called the number and joined the next docent class. I am so grateful that I did.

After graduation, it seemed that Lodge hosting fit the best with my retail experience, my full-time work schedule, and my personality – so that is what I do, now pretty much exclusively. While I have been between jobs recently, it has been really wonderful to get to spend so much extra time at the Reserve, filling in when needed, doing the kind of work I always wanted to do. One of my favorite things about Lodge hosting is the opportunity to educate and advocate for not just our park but all wild places. I also love watching the faces of our smallest visitors as they discover different things around the Lodge. The desk is especially well placed to watch them discover the little windows placed just at their eye level and experience their wonder at discovering things hidden from the taller people around them.

I was touched and honored to find out that I was named Docent of the Month. It was completely unexpected because, while I am proud of the work I do at the Reserve, so many others do so much more. Some might remember that in my presentation at the end of docent training, I said that one of the most important natural wonders at Torrey Pines was the docents themselves. After years now, and many hours volunteering with you all, I still feel that is true. I am honored to be part of such a creative, inspiring, dedicated, and interesting group of people, and I look forward to many more years of hosting in the Lodge.



First Public Nature Program a Success

by Ray Barger

The first Public Nature Program presentation, entitled “The Incredible Journey of the Gray Whale,” was held in the new Torrey Pines Pavilion on Saturday, February 16. Docent **Jane Barger** gave a half-hour presentation on the Gray Whale population, migration, calving and feeding, physical characteristics, and whaling history along with other interesting facts about the Gray Whales. She used multiple props including Gray Whale baleen, bones, models, and illustrations to engage the more than 60 people in attendance. Jane thanked **Debi Buffington** for assisting in the Q&A at the end of the talk, and **Frank Burham**, **Roger Isaacson** and **Stu Rosenwasser** for their help setting up the display, using our new large ultrabright-screen TV. Next Public Nature Program: **Margaret Fillius** on Native Flowering Plants, Sunday, March 10, 9 am in the Pavilion.

In Memoriam

George Marston Beardsley

George loved the outdoors, and Torrey Pines Reserve in particular. The youngest grandson of one of the Torrey Pines founders, George White Marston, George Beardsley continued the family's legacy in his quiet way by serving as board member (1988-1996) and president of the Torrey Pines Association. He was active in working to control

encroachment on the boundaries of the Reserve and in addressing inadequately controlled erosion on the flanks of the mesa, as well as water quality issues in the lagoon.

George later joined the TP Docent Society and served on that board as well. His favorite activity was leading hikes and educating the public on the treasure we have at the Reserve.



George was a physicist who began his career in academia as a professor of physics. After moving to San Diego in 1985, he worked in the private sector. He often said he was very fortunate to have found a vocation that he loved and that allowed him to continue to learn and enjoy for his entire life. He also enjoyed reading, travel, and cheering Stanford sports.

George was devoted to his family and shared his love of Torrey Pines with his wife Connie (also a Torrey Pines docent), daughters Megan, Sarah and Emily (a park aide in 1992), three sons-in-law, and six grandchildren.

A Celebration of Life will be held at the La Jolla Community Center, 6811 La Jolla Boulevard, at noon on Sunday, March 31. Please let the Beardsleys know if you are coming so they have an indication of how much food to provide. RSVP to Sarah Merrifield:

merrifieldsarah1@gmail.com

Joan Nimick: “the pinch and sniff docent”

by Barbara Wallach, photo by Herb Knüfken

Joan Nimick was truly a docent's docent. She was a role model, tireless trainer, and mentor to many members of the Docent Society. Her enthusiasm, love of nature, and encouraging words are the reason many of us are docents today. Joan was a

botanist and naturalist, and her willingness to share her knowledge was limitless. She led many training hikes, always encouraging us to “pinch and sniff” leaves as she explained their uses and unique features.

Joan was born in Australia (where she had been an airline flight attendant) and was familiar with Mediterranean climate plants and their unique

adaptations. Those same plant adaptations existed at Torrey Pines, so Joan was off and running.

Joan became a docent at Torrey Pines in 1989 after first training as a docent at Eaton Canyon Natural Area in Los Angeles and serving as a hike leader there. At Torrey Pines, she soon became involved with the school education program and helped develop and expand the topics offered to area schools. She was also instrumental in the planning of our first flower brochure and wrote many interesting articles for the *Torreyana*.

In 1993, Joan recorded 433 volunteer hours, and most of those hours were leading children and adults on hikes along the Reserve trails. Because of her efforts and love for the Reserve, Joan was recognized as Docent of the Year in 1995. Joan passed away in December 2018, leaving many of us with wonderful memories of times spent together on the trail.





On February 2, a large Torrey pine fell next to the Lodge. Park Aide Tyler Best had to run to avoid being hit. new Docent Medi Denker: "I was leaving Lodge duty when the first tree fell and saw the whole thing in slow motion."



Above: the first tree, next to SR Dylan Hardenbrook's office. A second, adjacent tree fell toward the south on February 8. [Click here for Google Group link.](#)



Lake Hodges Birding Outing, February 8, 2019 Thanks to Karen Fraser for arranging this walk. [Click here for Google Group.](#)



Beach Walk February 18, 2019 [Click here for beach walk photos.](#) Thanks to Barbara Wallach and Wes Farmer.

Torrey Pines Book Club

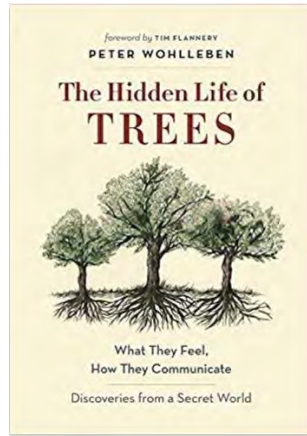
When: Tuesday, March 12, 1:00 pm

Where: Jan Lombardi's home in Loma Portal

What: *The Hidden Life of Trees: What They Feel, How They Communicate—Discoveries from A Secret World* by Peter Wohlleben

From Amazon:

In his international bestseller *The Hidden Life of Trees*, Peter Wohlleben opened readers' eyes to the amazing processes at work in forests every day. Now this new, breathtakingly illustrated edition brings those wonders to life like never before. With compelling selections from the original book and stunning, large-format



photographs of trees from around the world, this gorgeous volume distills the essence of Wohlleben's message to show trees in all their glory and diversity. Through rich language highlighting the interconnectedness of forest ecosystems, the book offers fascinating insights about the fungal communication highway known as the "wood wide web," the difficult life lessons learned in tree school, the hard-working natural cleanup crews that recycle dying trees, and much more. Beautiful images provide the perfect complement to Wohlleben's words, with striking close-ups of bark and seeds, panoramas of vast expanses of green, and a unique look at what is believed to be the oldest tree on the planet.

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

April 9: *The Soul of an Octopus: A Surprising Exploration into the Wonder of Consciousness* by Sy Montgomery.

Better Impact

- In case you have been "out of the loop," we will shut down Volgistics on March 1
- We now have 175 docents (out of 230 actives) who have created their accounts
- About 127 are now logging all their hours on the new system
- Some of the pluses are:
 - 1- Auto-logging of their hours after signing up on the calendars, which are the Children's Program, Lodge Hosting, Public Walks, TIK-talkers, General Meeting, Weeding, and Seabees
 - 2- Home page reminders of the next three upcoming shifts (see image)
 - 3- Weekly reminders on Friday night of your upcoming shifts in the next two weeks

The image is a screenshot of the 'Volunteer Portal' website. At the top, there's a navigation bar with tabs: HOME, OPPORTUNITIES, SCHEDULE, HOURS, REPORTS, CONTACT, and MY PROFILE. Below the navigation bar, the main content area has a 'Welcome' section for 'Rogya Isaacs' with an 'Edit' link. To the right, there's a section titled 'Upcoming Shifts' listing three events: 'Torrey Pines SNR - Weeding' on Monday, April 01, 2019; 'Torrey Pines SNR - Lodge Hosting' on Saturday, April 13, 2019; and 'Torrey Pines SNR Administration - General Meeting' on Saturday, May 11, 2019. Below this, there's a 'VOLUNTEER HOURS' section showing 'This Week' (2), 'This Year' (6), and 'Lifetime' (6). At the bottom, there are links for 'California State Parks' and 'California State Parks - San Diego Coast District'.

Here are a few pointers:

- Use the Opportunities tab to sign up for an Activity.
- Use the Schedule tab to list your full schedule or Remove yourself.
- Use the My Profile tab to edit your Contact Info or change your password and to receive email reminders of your scheduled assignments.
- Questions? Email portal@torreypine.org

Cam'ing for Critters

by Peter Jensen, Torrey Pines Association

Six years ago, several “critter cams” started their silent sentry duty along game trails in the Torrey Pines/Peñasquitos Lagoon area. The photo results have ranged from downright cute to out-and-out gory. A nighttime parade of coyotes, bobcats, deer, raccoons, and other lagoon denizens have unwittingly passed in front of the post-mounted cameras, and some of our top predators have been recorded carrying their victims (or body parts thereof!).

Alas, no mountain lions yet (if they are ever to return).

Pat Masters, Ph.D., a past-president of the Torrey Pines Association, installed the cameras herself in May 2013. The project was funded by the Ellen Browning Scripps Foundation, and Pat has monitored them on a regular basis ever since. (Only two of the four are now in operation; Pat has removed the other two for possible repositioning in more productive locations.)

Wildlife cameras have lightning-fast, motion- and infrared-activated trigger sensors. Images are stored digitally until Pat hikes into hidden lagoon locations for regular downloads.



Mother bobcat with kitten

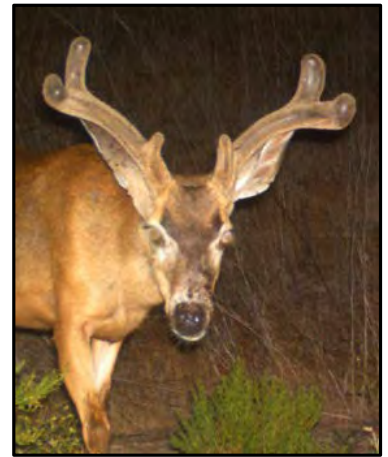
“We chose camera locations beside established game trails,” Pat said in an interview on February 18. Her curiosity has been richly rewarded with thousands of photographs. The record shows predictable species, but there have been photos (or the lack thereof) that have intrigued Dr. Masters, a retired scientist who worked at Scripps Institution of Oceanography.

“One thing is tremendously puzzling,” Pat said, “but I think I have a hypothesis. After big rains in 2017, I wasn’t picking up anything. It was as if all the animals we were used to seeing moved out. Bobcats totally disappeared at first, and up until two months ago I was still rarely picking

up a bobcat, whereas before 2017 I would have photos of at least one, two, or even up to five every time I went out to monitor the cameras.

“What was going on?” she continued. “Finally, while trudging through heavy brush to get to the most remote camera, I decided that overgrowth may have blocked the game trails and animals had found other routes.”

Animals are tripping the cameras again, and Pat is now interested to see what will happen after this year’s big rains.



Deer with velvet



Coyote with prey

Can she recognize individuals?

“Other than unusual animals like a male mule deer missing one side of his antlers, and one old male with a club foot I saw for a couple months, all the deer look alike, so it’s hard to tell how many individuals we may have in a herd.

“Like deer, coyotes are always [there]. I’ve seen one guy with one ear missing, but it’s even difficult telling males from females, and we almost never see juveniles. One has to be with a full-grown adult to tell the difference.

“I have seen bobcat kittens with mom. Never dad. And kittens are half-size, never tiny. Mom does the deciding as to when it’s time for [hunting] school.”

For more photographs, view the TPA website’s ["Window on Wildlife."](#)

Bird of the Month: Green-winged Teal

by Jack Friery; photo by Herb Knüfken

Our featured bird this month is a dainty and striking little duck, the **Green-winged Teal**, *Anas crecca*. It is the smallest dabbling duck in North America, measuring about 14 inches long and weighing only 12 ounces. (A dabbling duck feeds in shallow water by upending itself – rear end in the air – to reach underwater plants and crustaceans. A personal observation: although dabbling ducks normally do not dive, I have seen a flock of Green-winged Teals flying south over the ocean dive to avoid predation by one of our Peregrine Falcons.) The male has a lovely cinnamon-colored head, with a green swoosh from the eye to the neck. The female is much more subdued, but both sexes have a green patch on their wings that is evident when they are flying.



Green-winged Teals have closely spaced, comblike projections called *lamellae* around the inner edge of the bill. They use them to filter tiny invertebrates from the water, allowing the birds to capture smaller food items than other dabbling ducks.

At Torrey Pines Reserve, the Green-winged Teal is commonly seen only in winter. The bird migrates to the northern continental U.S., Canada, and Alaska in the summer.

Sources: [https://www.allaboutbirds.org/guide/Green-winged Teal/overview](https://www.allaboutbirds.org/guide/Green-winged_Teal/overview); Unitt, [San Diego County Bird Atlas](#).

Torrey Pines Docent Society Bird Survey: February 1-10, 2019

Number of species: Feb 1-5: 58

Cinnamon Teal 2
Northern Shoveler 10
Gadwall 8
American Wigeon 25
Mallard 17
Northern Pintail 41
Green-winged Teal 4
Canvasback 6
Lesser Scaup 25
Bufflehead 8
Red-breasted Merganser 1
Ruddy Duck 5
Pied-billed Grebe 1
Western Grebe 2
Eurasian Collared-Dove 2
Mourning Dove 26
Anna's Hummingbird 17
Allen's Hummingbird 4
Rufous/Allen's Hummingbird 5

hummingbird sp. 8
Ridgway's Rail 1
American Coot 53
Long-billed Curlew 1
Ring-billed Gull 50
Western Gull 3
Caspian Tern 1
Double-crested Cormorant 3
Great Blue Heron 1
Great Egret 9
Snowy Egret 6
White-tailed Kite 2
Cooper's Hawk 1
Red-shouldered Hawk 2
Red-tailed Hawk 5
Belted Kingfisher 1
Nuttall's Woodpecker 4
Northern Flicker 3
American Kestrel 4
Peregrine Falcon 1
Black Phoebe 5
Say's Phoebe 9
Cassin's Kingbird 7

California Scrub-Jay 2
American Crow 7
Common Raven 32
Bushtit 18
White-breasted Nuthatch 2
Rock Wren 1
House Wren 2
Marsh Wren 1
Bewick's Wren 10
wren sp. 1
Blue-gray Gnatcatcher 1
California Gnatcatcher 5
Ruby-crowned Kinglet 4
Wrentit 29
Western Bluebird 2
Hermit Thrush 6
California Thrasher 5
Northern Mockingbird 3
Cedar Waxwing 12
House Finch 18
Lesser Goldfinch 6
White-crowned Sparrow 18
Song Sparrow 16

California Towhee 24
Spotted Towhee 13
Red-winged Blackbird 51
Orange-crowned Warbler 3
Common Yellowthroat 4
Yellow-rumped Warbler 37
House Sparrow 1

Observers:

Jack Friery, Herb Knüfken,
Bob Glaser, David Walker,
Marty Hales, Tsaiwei Olee,
Michelle Haglund, Serena
Grädel, Steve Neal, Mark
Embree, Andy Rathbone,
Kathy Dickey, Donna
Mancuso, Gary Grantham,
and Anonymous

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



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