



TORREYANA

THE DOCENT NEWSLETTER FOR
TORREY PINES
STATE NATURAL RESERVE

Issue 410

August 2019

San Diego's "Best-Kept Secret"

by Dan Hammer

If you've followed the local news over the past few decades, you've probably heard of Campland and De Anza Cove, two controversial developments on city-owned land at the northeast corner of Mission Bay. But you might not have heard of Kendall-Frost Marsh, a little gem of wetlands just west of these parcels.

Dr. Heather Henter, executive director of the UC San Diego Natural Reserve System, calls Kendall-Frost Marsh "the best-kept secret in town." At July's TPDS meeting, she let us in on the secret. Her informative presentation covered the history of Mission Bay and the Kendall-Frost Marsh Reserve, the battles over Campland and De Anza Cove, and the future prospects for the sensitive and important natural resources in northeast Mission Bay.

Mission Bay was originally called *Bahia Falsa* ("false bay") for two reasons: It was very shallow, and early explorers sometimes entered its waters in the mistaken belief they were coming in to San Diego Bay. In the early 20th century,

Docent General Meeting

Date: Saturday, August 10, 9:00 am

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

Speaker: David Walker, Torrey Pines Docent and marshland restoration specialist

Topic: Marshland restoration at Florida's Lake Apopka and the return of birds & wildlife to these marshes

After completing an M.S. in Environmental Science at Indiana University, David worked at Everglades National Park studying nutrient dynamics in freshwater marshes and micro-invertebrates as part of the food web. He spent most of his career at the St. Johns River Water Management District as Basin Program Manager for the Upper Ocklawaha River and Lake Apopka Restoration Programs, which included the restoration of more than 45,000 acres of wetland habitat and 60,000 acres of lakes that form the headwaters of the Ocklawaha River.

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



the City of San Diego changed its name to Mission Bay and began planning to create an aquatic park. In 1946, dredging began, and dredged material was used to create many landforms we know today, including De Anza Point, Fiesta Island, Vacation Island, and Bahia Point.

In 1952, as Mission Bay Park developed, Lena Kendall and Albert Frost donated acreage for a wildlife refuge. The Kendall-Frost Mission Bay Marsh Reserve was one of the founding parcels in the University of California Natural Reserve System, which today comprises 39 sites around the state including four associated with UCSD. See map of Kendall-Frost Reserve to the left (dark brown).

At just 40 acres, Kendall-Frost is small but vital. These last remaining acres of wetlands in Mission Bay provide crucial ecosystem services: acting as a buffer to stabilize shorelines, filtering and cleaning the water, storing carbon to mitigate climate change, serving as nurseries for fish

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

and other marine animals, and providing habitat for many species including the endangered Ridgway's Rail.



In addition, the Kendall-Frost Reserve supports important biological research, both out in the wetlands and at the Reserve's headquarters trailer, on topics ranging from parasites to climate change to urbanization and habitat alteration.

In 1994, the City of San Diego approved a Mission Bay Park Master Plan Update emphasizing the "parks within a park" concept, aggregating recreational, commercial, and environmental uses in different areas of Mission Bay. The update called for northeast Mission Bay to focus on natural habitat, with 80 acres of wetlands to be created or restored in addition to the current 40 acres.

Thus far, this vision has not become a reality. On the contrary, the City recently approved a five- to eight-year lease extension for nearby Campland that allows the RV park to expand east of Rose Creek into the former De Anza Point mobile home park. San Diego Audubon has formed a coalition with other local environmental and planning groups to challenge this plan. (To learn about Audubon's alternative visions for Mission Bay, see rewildmissionbay.org)

To thrive in the future, the Kendall-Frost wetlands need fresh water and sediments, which could be provided if Rose Creek were dechannelized. The Reserve also needs to acquire some upper wetlands in order to survive when sea level rises. And for this to happen, the Reserve needs community involvement and engagement, both in the planning process and in the maintenance of the wetlands and improvement of the research facilities.

If you want to volunteer, there are work parties at Kendall-Frost the first Saturday of every month from 9 to 11:30 a.m. If you want to donate to the new Kendall-Frost Field Station, visit the website (nrs.ucsd.edu) and click on the "Donate" tab. (In the notes, specify that your donation should be used as matching for California Prop 68 funds. Your donation will be doubled!) For the latest news about the planning process in NE Mission Bay, visit the ReWild website (rewildmissionbay.org). Finally, if you live in San Diego, you can let your city councilmember know that you support wetlands restoration in northeast Mission Bay (sandiego.gov/citycouncil).

To learn more about Kendall-Frost Reserve, visit nrs.ucsd.edu/reserves/kendall.html If you have specific questions for Dr. Heather Henter, you can email her at hhenter@ucsd.edu

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General Meeting Minutes – July 13, 2019

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

Speaker: Dr. Heather Henter, Executive Director of the UCSD Natural Reserve System presented her extremely interesting lecture titled *Mission Bay Kendall-Frost Marsh Reserve: Challenges and Opportunity in a Changing Climate*. (See the article on the front page.)

Science Fair Winner Presentation: Eric Yang presented his and Jack Chine's study titled *Surveying Slope Survivors: Native Plants Prevalent to Beach Bluffs*. (See the June 2019 *Torreyana*, pg. 7.)

Living in Torrey Pines State Natural Reserve: Chief Lifeguard **Ed Vodrazka** stated he and his wife were given the incredible honor of living in the Guy Fleming house in 2003. Their two children, Charlie and Jade, have really enjoyed growing up in the Reserve. Ed then introduced his 13-year-old daughter, Jade, who read her very clever prose poem titled *The Toyon*. (See pg. 5.)

President's Report: **Janet Ugalde** announced that TPA will donate \$8000 for a replacement storage unit in the North Lot. Combined with the 2019 \$3000 TPDS budget to repair/replace our rusty container, we will be able to acquire a new storage building similar to the one used by the lifeguards next door. The old rusty unit will be recycled. Next Janet explained that our docent truck has had an inoperative air bag, and there would be a significant expense to repair it. Janet solicited a docent with automotive knowledge (or friend of a docent) to assess the current condition and expected longevity of the truck. This will help the Board decide whether to repair the airbag or not. Lastly, Janet reminded Lodge hosts we have a summer Friday 10 am Public Walk through August, and therefore the Public Walk announcement sign should be displayed on Friday mornings.

Vice President's Report: **Roger Isaacson** stated that the submission deadline for the photo contest for our 2020 TPDS Tide Calendar has been extended one day through July 14. Roger next explained that on August 1, we will be switching to our own private *Better Impact* account. No usernames or passwords will change.

Treasurer's Report: **Gerry Lawrence** presented the first half of 2019 finances. He had the report he manually generates on the big screen, and this report is available on our website under *Society Docs*. Gerry stated that TPDS is very financially sound with more than adequate assets. Museum Shop sales were up, and the biggest increase in expenses was for more buses to bring an increase in Title I school children to the TPDS Children's Program.

General: **Nancy Walters** and **Selma Torres** thanked the docents for being patient as they take over Museum Shop

management. They asked Lodge hosts for suggestions on additional items to be stocked, and one of the first additions will be a selection of small postcards. **Wayne Kornreich** announced he could use more docents to judge next year's Science Fair, and to contact him if you are interested. **Greg Howard** had a signup sheet for docents needing new or additional name badges. Contact Greg asap if you need a badge, letting him know if you prefer a pin or magnetic back, and whether green or Lifetime gold.

Docent of the Month: **Rosemary Wareham** (Class of 2018) for leading 14 Children's Program walks already this year! Rosemary also hosts at the Lodge, staffs the TIK and has led a Public Walk.

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

Meeting ended at 11:20 am.

Children's Program

by Louis Sands, Children's Program Coordinator

It feels like only yesterday that I was brainstorming with former program directors **Marie Johnson** and **Barbara Justice** about designs for a commemorative pin to celebrate the 25th anniversary of the Children's Program. And now here we are, about to usher in Year 30! What an awesome milestone: We actually have current Children's Program docents who weren't even born when our beloved program began.

The success of this program has always started and ended with you, the capable and committed docents of Torrey Pines State Natural Reserve. While we have enjoyed a loyal core of docent support over the years, we know that new energy and ideas are essential for keeping this program afloat and fresh!

If you haven't joined us before, let this coming school year be your first. C'mon, what are you waiting for... Year 35?! Join this journey of fun, education, and purpose. You will be richly compensated with heartwarming thank you letters, occasional hugs, and the affirmation that your interpretive contributions matter!

Mark your calendars for the 2019-20
Children's Program kickoff meeting, please:
Wednesday, September 11 at 10:30 am at
the Torrey Circle Pavilion. Thank you in
advance for your continued support of this
important program.

Docent of the Month:

Rosemary Wareham

Photo by Herb Knüfken

I always wanted to be a docent and never had time until I recently retired. Louis Sands encouraged me to try out the Children's Program. I was a bit hesitant as I had no experience with this sort of thing, but everyone involved gave me lots of support and eased me into the role. One day we were short walk leaders and I ended up on the trail with a group of fourth graders. As we rounded the bend on the Guy Fleming Trail, the spring flowers were blooming and the sea was a brilliant blue. The little girl next to me took a deep breath and said, "That is the most beautiful thing I have ever seen." Though she lived in Oceanside, she had never been hiking and she had never seen the ocean up close. She was chattering the rest of the hike about how she was going to find a way to come back to Torrey Pines Reserve. She was hooked, and so was I.



Nature Discovery Series: Signs Along the Trails, July 20

by Kathy Dickey

Barbara Wallach gave 37 Torrey Pines Pavilion attendees a master class in how to engage children and adults with the signs of nature. Stop look and listen. Use all your senses. Walk slowly.

"What signs can you think of?" she asked the audience. "Poop!" yelled a young boy. She said we all need to be scientists and call that "scat." Others yelled out "old skin, fur, feathers, tracks..." She pulled out little finger puppets

from her vest – a bee, a spider, a raccoon, a mouse...the kids were loving it!

She began a picture show of the signs that animals leave behind. She showed us tracks of insects, snakes, and lizards. We looked at the prints of raccoons and coyotes, and discussed who

makes all those holes in the ground along the trails (not snakes). The ant lion discussion included a funny photo of an ant with a lion's head. White and black lizard scat, and bees with a big "backpack" of pollen on their legs were favorites, along with that big black bug who sticks his bottom up in the air. Other often-overlooked items included sap, galls, chewed leaves, flower "girl and boy" parts, webs, egg cases, spiders, tree rings, and lichen.

Afterwards, there were tables laden with things to look at and feel, and little books for the kids to do some nature journaling. Three groups went out on the trails to look for more, led by **Pao Chau**, **Margaret Fillius**, and **Paul Dunphy**.



Our next program in the Nature Discovery Series will be "Geology in the Reserve," by Ray Barger, August 17 at 10:30 am.

*** If anyone would like to lead one of these monthly programs in the future, please let **Ingo Renner** or **Kathy Dickey** know. We would prefer it be on a 3rd Saturday of the month, at 10:30 am. Just plan on a short (30-45 min) introductory talk or a display on any nature-related topic, followed by a short, easy walk led by a few docents. Expect attendance of 30-50 people, including children. We envision topics like mammals, reptiles, spiders, insects, wildflowers, snakes, water-conserving plants, geology, beach creatures, shells, kelp varieties, rocks, pollination, raptors, fish, dolphins, whales, nocturnal birds, native people, nature photography tips, and the like.

The Toyon

A prose poem by Jade Vodrazka (daughter of Torrey Pines Chief Lifeguard Ed Vodrazka)

Author's note: I was 11 (I think) when I wrote this, and I'm 13 now. It was inspired by the novel *Wishtree* by Katherine Applegate. It's from the point of view of a toyon tree right above my yard that I really love.

"It is the province of knowledge to speak, and it is the privilege of wisdom to listen."

— Oliver Wendell Holmes, Sr.

I sit on a ledge. I always have. I always will. I will never move. You will never hear me speak. But I will listen.

I have done almost everything that you think is impossible. I have cradled owlets. I have housed jays. I have had raccoons bury their fingers in my notches. I have had woodpeckers pick at my skin. I have held a wish on the tips of my fingers, keeping it safe, grasping its flowing, fiery tail, making sure it never, ever flies away.

I have heard so many things. I have heard ravens screeching with laughter and jays cawing in annoyance. They think they rule the world, those jays. I have heard small birds fighting over big seeds. I have heard yells and shouts of joy from below me. I have watched a little girl grow up.

I sit on my ledge all day and all night. I have seen the most beautiful sunsets and the most subtle sunrises. I have sat in the rain and I have sat in the wind. I have had a girl climb on me, her muddy shoes scraping against my skin, reaching higher all the time. It tickles a bit, but the look on her face as she climbs higher, higher, higher is priceless.

I live in Torrey Pines State Park. The wind is the salty sweet of the ocean, and the other trees, mostly Torrey pines, are old and wise. I am young and foolish and have already made more than my share of mistakes. The animals here are nice, for the most part. Jays are annoying, and ants are so focused on work you can't talk to them at all.

I don't have to worry about being cut down, because everything here is protected. People who come in must come out with nothing from the park. Here is one of the few places nature can work alone, without help or interference by humans. Every day, I watch people come and people go. Sometimes I wonder what it would be like if I hadn't put down roots. If I had been able to roam free. But I think that



if I was able to move, I would always come back to my ledge.

I guard a house. It is old and special. Some of the old Torreys know and remember what it was like when it was first built, by a man named "Guy Fleming." He planted most of the trees here. They say that they can still remember his gentle touch.

Even though I am not much more than a young sapling, I have seen and heard and felt much. I have stories to tell. I see the world from a unique point of view.

I think what I'm trying to say is that I am a tree. Not an old, wise, rare Torrey pine, but a common toyon. But I am unique. As my idol, Red the red oak, once said, "Trees can't tell jokes, but they can certainly tell stories." And I do have a story, hidden in my leaves, stored in my roots, and tangled in my branches.

Nature's Propagation

by Pete di Girolamo, Garden Committee

Sharp observation by Docent Ann Smith Mercandetti discovered new Torrey pine seedlings where the pine fell next to Supervising Ranger Dylan's Lodge office patio wall. At Dylan's request, the Lodge Garden Committee has rescued these half-dozen baby pines into pots, which they "planted" in shady soil near the Pavilion for moisture retention until future final relocation.



Watering of these tiny rescued pines is part of a weekly ongoing effort by Park Aide **Tyler Best** to keep the new plants around the Pavilion hydrated until they can properly root and be on their own next year.

The Garden Committee is also caring for four new, larger pines in Whitaker Garden that were planted at the same time as the new Pavilion-area pines, all originally sourced from the Reserve.

Following her initial discovery, Ann has spotted a couple of new seedlings in other locations, which may be added to the first group or perhaps left to see if they might survive as examples of nature's recovery after our rainy year.

The Torrey Pines – Mission Bay Connection

by Judy Schulman, TPDS Historian

How many of you knew that Mission Bay used to be a state park? How many of you caught the 1929 date for Mission Bay being a state park on our July speaker's history outline? How many of you know that there is a connection between Mission Bay and Torrey Pines? How many of you wish I would stop asking so many questions and get on with answering them?

In 1928, voters approved a \$6 million California Park Bonds Act. At that time, there were no state parks in Southern California.

Mission Bay was one of three sites selected by the newly formed State Park Board Commission. The other two were Silver Strand and Borrego Desert. (I am surprised Torrey Pines was not on the list.) Mission Bay officially became a state park on August 14, 1929.

It would be given back to the City of San Diego in 1945.

In 1937, there was talk about trading Mission Bay for Torrey Pines. The proposal was for Mission Bay to return to local control. Surprisingly, there were many civic and commercial groups against the trade. Proposition 5 appeared on the March 1937 ballot. The results were Yes (in favor of the trade) 6,980 and No (against the trade) 15,260. It wouldn't be until 1956 that another vote would transfer Torrey Pines from the city to the state.



Photo News Brief:



On the evening of July 15, over 30 members of the InterTribal Youth Organization came to TPSNR for an ethnobotany tour led by Norrie Robbins, Richard Bugbee, and Kathy Dickey.

Torrey Pines Book Club

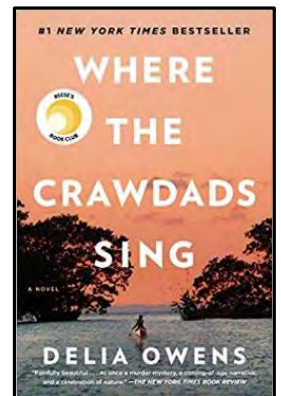
When: Tuesday, August 13, 1:00 pm

Where: Cindy Tozer's home in Rancho Peñasquitos

What: *Where the Crawdads Sing* by Delia Owens

Amazon says:

For years, rumors of the "Marsh Girl" have haunted Barkley Cove, a quiet town on the North Carolina coast. So in late 1969, when handsome Chase Andrews is found dead, the locals immediately suspect Kya Clark, the so-called Marsh Girl. But Kya is not what they say. Sensitive and intelligent, she has survived for years alone in the marsh that she calls home, finding friends in the gulls and lessons in the sand. Then the time comes when she yearns to be touched and loved. When two young men from town become intrigued by her wild beauty, Kya opens herself to a new life--until the unthinkable happens. Perfect for fans of Barbara Kingsolver and Karen Russell, *Where the Crawdads Sing* is at once an exquisite ode to the natural world, a heartbreaking coming-of-age story, and a surprising tale of possible murder. Owens reminds us that we are forever shaped by the children we once were, and that we are all subject to the beautiful and violent secrets that nature keeps.



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

September 10: *The Monk of Mokha* by Dave Eggers

Bird of the Month: White-throated Swift

by Jack Friery; photo by Andy Rathbone

Our featured bird this month is the **White-throated Swift**, *Aeronautes saxatalis*. This common bird of the American west has much to commend it. It's one of the fastest birds in our skies. It spends nearly its entire life in the air, feeding and drinking water on the wing. It preens, and even sleeps, in the air, taking micro-naps. And, it's such a specialized flier, snatching insects on the wing, that it cannot walk on land—its legs are so far back in the body that it must to cling to cliffs and chimney faces when it's not in flight.

The White-throated Swift is about six or seven inches long, and weighs a little more than an ounce. Its wings are long, pointed, and swept back—and its flight pattern is a bit of an optical illusion. It seems that one wing is going up, while the other is simultaneously going down.

The bird's scientific name is a mix of Greek and Latin. *Aeronautes* translates to “air sailor,” and *saxatalis* means “rock-dweller,” a reference to its roosting sites.

Sources: allaboutbirds.org/guide/White-throated_Swift/overview;
audubon.org/field-guide/bird/white-throated-swift;
[Choate, The Dictionary of American Bird Names.](#)



Torrey Pines Docent Society Bird Survey: July 2019

Number of species:65
(+5 other taxa)

Gadwall 3
Mallard 21
Surf Scoter 2
California Quail 1
Pied-billed Grebe 1
Eurasian Collared-Dove 2
Mourning Dove 47
White-throated Swift 6
Anna's Hummingbird 9
Allen's Hummingbird 8
hummingbird sp. 4
Ridgway's Rail 1
Heermann's Gull 4
Ring-billed Gull 1
Western Gull 28
California Gull 7
gull sp. 17
Caspian Tern 5

loon sp. 3
Double-crested Cormorant 10
Brown Pelican 21
Great Blue Heron 6
Great Egret 6
Snowy Egret 15
Black-crowned Night-Heron 1
Osprey 3
White-tailed Kite 2
Cooper's Hawk 4
Red-shouldered Hawk 1
Red-tailed Hawk 4
Downy Woodpecker 2
Nuttall's Woodpecker 15
American Kestrel 3
Peregrine Falcon 3
Pacific-slope Flycatcher 3
Black Phoebe 13
Say's Phoebe 2
Ash-throated Flycatcher 10
Cassin's Kingbird 19
Hutton's Vireo 3

California Scrub-Jay 3
American Crow 36
Common Raven 56
crow/raven sp. 4
Northern Rough-winged Swallow 1
Cliff Swallow 17
swallow sp. 2
Bushtit 10
House Wren 4
Bewick's Wren 17
California Gnatcatcher 21
Wrentit 70
Western Bluebird 5
California Thrasher 4
Northern Mockingbird 13
European Starling 2
House Finch 108
Lesser Goldfinch 51
Dark-eyed Junco 1
Song Sparrow 14
California Towhee 66

Spotted Towhee 37
Yellow-breasted Chat 11
Hooded Oriole 4
Red-winged Blackbird 50
Orange-crowned Warbler 3
Common Yellowthroat 13
Wilson's Warbler 1
Black-headed Grosbeak 2
House Sparrow 7

Observers: Frank Wong,
Andy Rathbone, Tina
Rathbone, Marty Hales,
Steve Neal, Bob Glaser,
Herb Knüfken, Kathy Dickey,
Karen Messer, Nancy
Richardson, Robert Turner,
Manolo Turner, Gary
Grantham, and Anonymous

View this checklist online at ebird.org/view/checklist/S58315266

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



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