



TORREYANA

THE DOCENT NEWSLETTER FOR
TORREY PINES
STATE NATURAL RESERVE

Issue 413

November 2019

Fun with Fungi

by Dan Hammer

We tend to associate mushrooms with cool, dark forests, but they're actually everywhere – even here in our desert country near the sea. Our local mycologists have to look harder to find fungi, but they do. Members of the San Diego Mycological Society (SDMYCO) have found and identified hundreds of species of mushrooms right here in San Diego County.

Two SDMYCO members, Michelle Innis and Matthew Meyer, shared their knowledge and enthusiasm about mushrooms at the October TPDS meeting. Michelle outlined the Society's activities, and Matthew told us about a number of mushroom species and the people who love them.

Fungi are neither fauna nor flora. In fact, on the tree of life, they are actually closer to animals than to plants. When cooked and eaten (carefully!), they are an excellent source of protein. Fungi have been around for a very long time, and are credited with making life on land possible by breaking down rocks and sand to create soil. (Because of these digestive powers, some fungi are being explored for bioremediation – e.g., digesting oil spills, converting the oil into a safer substance.)

According to Matthew, mycology is an understudied field. For example, relatively little is known about many species' range, rates of extinction, or reaction to climate change.

In recent years, however, volunteer mycologists all over the world have identified thousands of species and greatly expanded our knowledge about these fascinating organisms. Many of these citizen scientists, including SDMYCO members, are participating in the Mycoflora Project. Using the iNaturalist app, weekend mushroom hunters can photograph any mushroom they find, identify it, and enter it

Docent General Meeting

Date: Saturday, November 9, 9:00 am

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

Speaker: Kristie Orosco, San Pasqual Indian Reservation

Topic: Kumeyaay Ethnobotany and Resource Conservation

Kristie Orosco works to advocate for indigenous resource preservation. Her conservation objectives include habitat preservation, coastal species, and cultural resource conservation. She will be touching on these topics as well as Kumeyaay ethnobotany.

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

into a global database.

If you do go mushroom hunting, you may find species you have never seen. Many of them are beautiful to look at, and some of them are delicious to eat when cooked. But as Matthew warned, "Don't eat anything unless you know exactly what it is." When in doubt you can take a sample to experts at SDMYCO for help in identification.

Among the local species Matthew discussed are

Chlorophyllum molybdites, commonly known the Vomiter mushroom (photo at right). As the name indicates, these won't kill you, but they'll make for a very unpleasant dining experience.



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Park Aides: Cheryl Biernacki, Krista DeBusschere, Joy Inton, Shawn Jacobs, Johnson Jou (Interpreter), Ingo Renner

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

The most shocking revelation in Matthew's talk was that the three most common and popular types of mushrooms found in supermarkets – button mushrooms, crimini, and portabella – are all the same species, *Agaricus bisporus*, merely harvested at different stages of their life cycle.

Agaricus spp.

- Common Names
 - Button Mushrooms
 - Field Mushrooms
- Phylogeny
 - Kingdom: Fungi
 - Phylum: Basidiomycota
 - Class: Agaricomycetes
 - Order: Agaricales
 - Family: Agaricaceae
 - Genus: *Agaricus*
- Edibility: Varied
- Habitat: Grass, Dirt, Sand, Leaves
- Range: Global



A. xanthodermus



A. bitorquis



A. californicus

Oyster mushrooms tend to be tastier than *A. bisporus* because the latter has been cultivated so long and widely that it evolved to produce fewer nutrients. All mushrooms are more nutritious when cooked because the heat breaks down indigestible chitin contained in fungi.

Michelle told us about SDMYCO's activities, including monthly meetings with scientific speakers, forays, dinners, and classes in everything from cultivation and identification to cooking and painting. The Society meets at 6:30 pm. on the first Monday of every month from October through May in Room 101 of the Casa del Prado in Balboa Park. For more information, visit sdmyco.org. You can also learn more about mushrooms by seeing the feature film *Fantastic Fungi: the Magic Beneath Us*, screening at La Paloma Theater in Encinitas on November 3 at 4 pm. and at the Hotel Del Coronado on November 5 at 8 pm.

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General Meeting Minutes – October 12, 2019

Meeting called to order at 9:00 am by President **Janet Ugalde**.

Speakers: Michelle Innis and Matthew Meyer, of the San Diego Mycological Society, presented a very interesting lecture titled *Fun Mushrooms of Southern California*. (See the article on front page.)

President's Report: **Janet Ugalde** explained that the "maintenance plagued" docent truck has been donated to KPBS. Janet asked for volunteers to help plan the holiday party on December 14, at 11am. This year the party will be held in the north part of the North Parking Lot or the beach there, depending on the weather. Docents should contact **Lynne Truong** if they can help plan the event.

Treasurer's Report: **Gerry Lawrence** discussed the *Profit & Loss Budget vs Actual 2019* report through the third quarter. The highlight was Museum Shop sales were up 16% over last year. He also stated that the school bus reimbursement expense for the Children's Program has increased as we are bringing in more classes of children to experience our Reserve.

Nominating Committee: **Ken King** explained that the committee of five members (himself, **Janice Barnard**, **Peter Domaille**, **Don McGuire**, and **Joe Meyer**) has selected a slate of prospective 2020 board members for the docent society. He thanked the seven board members that have volunteered to continue to serve on the board for next year. They propose replacing outgoing secretary **Steve Neal** with **Gabriele Wienhausen** and outgoing director-at-large **Pao Chau** with **David Walker**. This slate of officers will be voted on by the membership at the November general meeting.

Susan G. Komen Walk: **Joe Meyer** announced that volunteers are needed for the Komen walk on Friday morning, November 15; he provided a signup sheet. If you are able to volunteer, contact **Ann Smith Mercandetti** for this worthy cause.

Docent Hours: **Annette Ring** made a reminder announcement about docents logging their hours; the minimum requirement is now 84 hours. If you need help logging your hours, contact her or **Sally Whitlock**. If you know you are not going to be able to obtain the 84 hour requirement and would like assistance applying for Associate Membership for 2020, contact **Lynne Truong**.

General: **Joe Meyer** is compiling interesting stories about long time docent **Wes Farmer**, so contact Joe if you have a contribution. **Jim Bedinger** has published a book about his three and a half years as a POW during the Vietnam War titled *Patriot, Prisoner, Survivor*. **Lynne Truong** announced that a docent is needed to tackle the cleanup of the whalebone display area behind the Lodge. **Nancy Walters** announced there are several new items for sale in the Museum Shop, and to keep the Museum Shop in mind when doing your holiday shopping.

Docent of the Month: **Serena Grädel** for frequently hosting the Lodge, leading Children's Program walks, and staffing the TIK. Serena is also an avid Whacky Weeder.

Refreshments: At November's general meeting, docents with last names starting with letters **G-H-I** are responsible for snacks.

Meeting ended at 11:00 am.

Docent of the Month: Serena Grädel

Photo by Herb Knüfken

If I had to pick a favorite spot in San Diego, I wouldn't hesitate a second to say Torrey Pines State Natural Reserve. I love the Reserve for its unique natural beauty and, more importantly, for the people who dedicate so much of their enthusiasm and knowledge to this place.

The Docent Society has been one of the most important communities to me since I moved here from Switzerland a bit more than a year ago. From the beginning, I felt welcome as well as challenged and inspired. I first started off as a tourist and a volunteer Whacky Weeder, where I learned about the docent training. I'm so glad **Lynne Small** encouraged me to sign up! Since then I have tried and enjoyed almost every activity in the Reserve, thanks to the support and great leadership of other docents. It's a pleasure to learn from you all. I look forward to spending many more hours in the Reserve with fellow docents until I have to say goodbye next summer: laughing together about a fun incident from the Children's Program, hauling bag after bag full of *Carpobrotus*, and sharing with each other a childlike joy when finding a perfect example of fresh coyote scat. Still I discover and learn new things during every visit to feed my persistent curiosity about this place.



“Wine in the Pines” Supports Historic Lodge Restoration

by Diane Ailor, Torrey Pines Association; photos by Ken King, Lillian Lachicotte, and Annette Ring

In collaboration with the Torrey Pines Docent Society and California State Parks, the Torrey Pines Association hosted a “Wine in the Pines” fundraiser on Saturday, October 19 on the grounds of the Historic Lodge in Torrey Pines State Natural Reserve.

Over 200 guests enjoyed fine wines and local craft beer, wood-fired artisan pizza and farm-to-table salads while listening to popular jazz guitarist Peter Sprague. The event featured a silent auction with an extensive array of items including excursions, dinners at local restaurants, spa services, lodging, sporting goods, theatre tickets, paintings and more. Three local *plein air* artists painted live at the event, exhibiting their works and donating 50% of each sale to TPA.

All proceeds from the event will help support the restoration of the Historic Lodge.

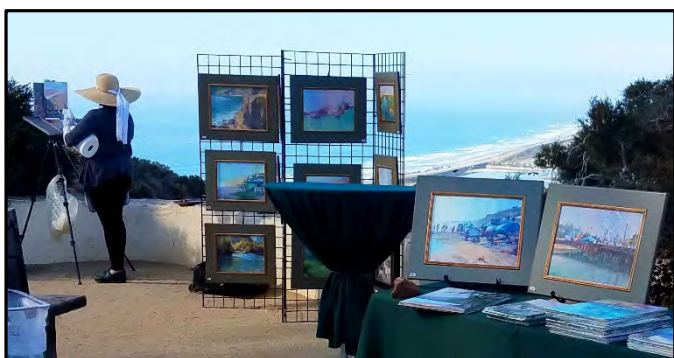
Many thanks to all of the docents who participated and contributed to the success of event.



There were 45 items for the silent auction



Musician Peter Sprague



Art and Artists by the Sea



Docent Joanne Miale, hosting the appetizer table. She has crafted sterling silver jewelry for many years for the Museum Shop,



Delicious and attractive appetizers from Bristol Farms



LJ Crafted Wines ready to serve!

Nature Discovery Series: Land, Water & People in the Peñasquitos Lagoon

by Lynne Truong

On October 19, Dr. Norrie Robbins gave a lecture about the land and the water in the Peñasquitos Lagoon and the people who lived around it. She presented the geology of watersheds and landforms in and around Torrey Pines State Natural Reserve. She also spent time educating us about the past and present tectonic plates and how their movement affected the geology and land forms of Southern California and the western United States. The talk ended with information on the minimal effects on the land from native people and the disappearing watershed from modern day development.

Sat. Nov. 16, 10:30 at the Pavilion

“Torrey Pines During WWI & WWII” by **Judy Schulman**, possibly followed by a walk.

Dr. Robbins (in photo below) will be the speaker at a general meeting in 2020.



Torrey Pines Book Club

When: Tuesday, November 12, 1:00 pm

Where: Alison and Greg Howard's home in Encinitas

What: *The Last Season* by Eric Blehm

Amazon says:

Destined to become a classic of adventure literature, *The Last Season* examines the extraordinary life of legendary backcountry ranger Randy Morgenson and his mysterious disappearance in California's unforgiving Sierra Nevada, mountains as perilous as they are beautiful. Eric Blehm's masterful work is a gripping detective story interwoven with the riveting biography of a complicated, original, and wholly fascinating man.

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

December 10: *The Girl Who Drew Butterflies: How Maria Merian's Art Changed Science* by Joyce Sidman

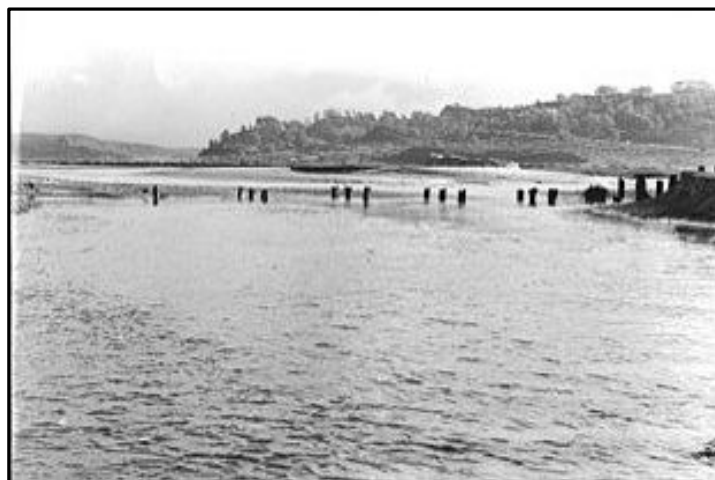
Early Days of the Peñasquitos Lagoon

by Maryruth Cox

In March and April of 1974, Jessie LaGrange took pictures of the slough entrance at flood tide. The pictures below show the wooden pilings left from the original wooden bridge which connected the coastal road to McGonigle Rd. Her husband, Lee LaGrange, felt that these pilings obstructed the free flow of water out of the slough. He saw that the pilings trapped seaweed and sand and effectively blocked the water. He began removing the pilings, one by one, with ax and muscle power. Neighbors helped.

[Ed: for more information on how the lagoon closing was handled by residents in the early days, see the article in [Torreyana Nov. 2004, p. 7](#) by Peter Jensen.

Also, [see Jan-Feb 1987 p. 7](#)]



Bird of the Month: Orange-crowned Warbler

by Jack Friery; photo by Andy Rathbone

Our featured bird this month is the **Orange-crowned Warbler**, *Leiothlypis celata*. This busy little bird is only about five inches long, from tip to tail, and weighs a mere .3 to .4 ounces. (That's roughly the weight of two quarters.) The most obvious field mark for this bird is that it has few field marks. In our region, it's a dull olive-green color. Its "orange crown" (which can be seen faintly in our photograph) is not usually seen – except when the bird is excited, has just taken a bath, or is singing to attract mates in its nesting territory. Look for the bird flitting endlessly in shrubs and low-growing vegetation in riparian settings, patches of forest, and chaparral. Although their primary food is ants, spiders, and flies, they'll eat fruit, seeds, and berries, and even nectar from flowers.

Although the Orange-crowned Warbler is a species of least concern, studies have shown that the United States population of the bird declined by about 34% between 1966 and 2014.

Sources: [allaboutbirds.org/guide/Orange-crowned Warbler/overview](http://allaboutbirds.org/guide/Orange-crowned_Warbler/overview)

bluebulbprojects.com/MeasureOfThings/results.php?comp=weight&unit=oz&amt=.3&sort=pr&p=1

iucnredlist.org/species/22721624/94718199.



Torrey Pines Docent Society Bird Survey: October 2019

Number of species: 73
(+6 other taxa)

American Wigeon 3
California Quail 1
Pied-billed Grebe 1
Western Grebe 2
Clark's Grebe 1
Eurasian Collared-Dove 2
Mourning Dove 48
Vaux's Swift 3
swift sp. 2
Black-chinned Hummingbird 1
Anna's Hummingbird 64
Rufous/Allen's Hummingbird 10
hummingbird sp. 15
Semipalmated Plover 1
Killdeer 7
Whimbrel 9
Long-billed Curlew 2
Western Sandpiper 5
peep sp. 1

Willet 11
Heermann's Gull 26
Western Gull 30
California Gull 12
Caspian Tern 2
Royal Tern 7
Pacific Loon 1
Brandt's Cormorant 2
Double-crested Cormorant 24
Brown Pelican 93
Great Blue Heron 2
Great Egret 1
Snowy Egret 5
Black-crowned Night-Heron 1
Osprey 2
White-tailed Kite 1
Northern Harrier 1
Cooper's Hawk 5
Red-shouldered Hawk 2
Red-tailed Hawk 8
Belted Kingfisher 1
Downy Woodpecker 2
Nuttall's Woodpecker 8
Northern Flicker 2

American Kestrel 6
Peregrine Falcon 5
Pacific-slope Flycatcher 2
Black Phoebe 24
Say's Phoebe 19
Cassin's Kingbird 15
Hutton's Vireo 6
California Scrub-Jay 10
American Crow 100
Common Raven 38
Barn Swallow 1
swallow sp. 1
Bushtit 112
Wrentit 101
Ruby-crowned Kinglet 2
Red-breasted Nuthatch 2
Blue-gray Gnatcatcher 2
California Gnatcatcher 19
House Wren 17
Bewick's Wren 13
wren sp. 12
European Starling 2
California Thrasher 17
Northern Mockingbird 4

House Finch 141
Lesser Goldfinch 65
Dark-eyed Junco 13
White-crowned Sparrow 9
Savannah Sparrow 4
Song Sparrow 25
California Towhee 61
Spotted Towhee 21
Red-winged Blackbird 10
Orange-crowned Warbler 7
Common Yellowthroat 19
Yellow-rumped Warbler 10

Observers: Frank Wong, Andy Rathbone, Marty Hales, Steve Neal, Herb Knüfken, Jack Friery, Kathy Dickey, Gary Grantham, Karen Turner, Manolo Turner, David Walker, Tsaiwei Olee, Sunil Bhavsar, Bob Glaser, Nancy Richardson, and Anonymous

View this checklist online at ebird.org/view/checklist/S60526756

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



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