



TORREYANA

THE DOCENT NEWSLETTER FOR
TORREY PINES
STATE NATURAL RESERVE

Issue 417

April 2020

Coronavirus and the Reserve

by Dan Hammer

With its natural wonders and scenic trails, TPSNR offers San Diego County's residents and visitors a respite from urban life. But with more than 3 million visitors a year, it also offers the coronavirus as many chances to spread as any city street.

That is why the California Department of Parks and Recreation has closed many of its sites and cancelled activities at all of them until at least April 30. As we have seen, this includes all organized docent activities at Torrey Pines, from Lodge hosting and guided walks to weeding and roving interpretation, regardless of whether they involve close contact with the public or fellow docents.

Moreover, all parking lots and vehicle gates are closed, including the North and South Beach Lots as, well as the lot at National University. Even the free parking on N. Torrey Pines Rd. along the beach has posted signs saying "No Parking Anytime." Visitors and docents coming to TPSNR by car will have to park along Carmel Valley Road.

State Parks District Superintendent Gina Moran sent this message to parks volunteers: "We understand that these decisions may change plans for State Parks, you, and our visitors. All decisions are based on direction from the Governor and current knowledge from the Centers for Disease Control, California Department of Public Health (CDPH) and San Diego County Public Health."

As of March 27, TPSNR remained open to foot traffic. Outdoor areas, including trails and beaches, remained open. Day-use restrooms also remained open; visitors are advised to bring soap for handwashing and to use alcohol-based hand sanitizers when water is not available. According to Supervising Ranger **Dylan Hardenbrook**, docents willing and able to walk into the Reserve are welcome to engage in weeding or other solo projects but should feel under no obligation to do so.

District Superintendent Moran expressed her "personal thanks to each one of you for your understanding and patience during this challenging time. We may be experiencing an

The docent General Meeting will be held **online** at 9 am, **Saturday, April 11**. We plan to hold several practice sessions before the meeting. Details will be available in emails from Better Impact and TPDS Google Groups and will include ZOOM invites. There will also be a business meeting after the program.

The *online* program will be

Darren Smith, TPSNR Ecologist

Topic: Rare and Endangered Plants at Torrey Pines

Darren Smith is the Natural Resources Program Manager for the San Diego Coast District, California State Parks. Darren graduated from Humboldt State University in Physical Geography and completed a Master's Degree in Plant Geography from SDSU. His research included investigating plant species diversity patterns following disturbances and island biogeography. Darren has worked mainly in Southern California Mediterranean-type ecosystems but with additional work in western Polynesia. He has been working at the San Diego Coast District and TPSNR for the last 19 years.

extraordinary situation, but together we are an extraordinary community of volunteers and professionals who not only care for the parks, but care for each other. Together, we will come out of this stronger."

Or as TPDS president **Janet Ugalde** said, "This is temporary. We will be back!"

In the meantime, docents and the public can enjoy the peace and beauty of the Reserve after a long walk from Carmel Valley Rd. or being dropped off at the South Lot entrance. Enjoy the peace and beauty as you walk the trails – just be sure to stay six feet away from your fellow hikers!

Note: The information in this article is current as of noon on March 27, 2020. However, the situation is fluid. For further updates, follow [TPDS Google Groups](#). You can also consult the State Parks COVID-19 Closures page at parks.ca.gov/?page_id=30355, \ the Torrey Pines State Beach Page at parks.ca.gov/?page_id=658 and the COVID-19 Resource Center at parks.ca.gov/?page_id=30350

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Editors@torreypine.org.

Please send postal/
email address changes to:

Torrey Pines Docent Society
P.O. Box 2414, Del Mar, CA 92014

Attn: Membership or email to

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

President's Message

How quickly our lives can change! Just a few weeks ago, we were happily anticipating spring in our cherished Reserve. Now a virus has filled us with uncertainty and fear. How can we remain sane while enduring isolation and boredom?

Take care of your body. Exercise, practice yoga, get ample sleep and proper nutrition.

Take care of your soul. Resilience is the process of adapting well in the face of adversity, trauma, or stress. Resilience involves thoughts, behaviors, and actions that anyone can learn and develop. Learn more about resilience at apa.org/topics/resilience.

Remind yourself of past successes in overcoming adversity.

Embrace optimism. Your glass is half full, not half empty.

Cultivate gratitude. Make a list of the things you are grateful for.

Find ways to laugh.

Keep things in perspective. Don't dwell on virus news.

Nurture flexibility. Accept that change is a part of life.

Help others. Contact isolated seniors. Donate the money you won't be spending on vacation or in restaurants.

Connect with loved ones. Schedule an online chat or meal with friends and family. Your grandchildren have more time available now that schools are closed.

Learn about mindfulness and meditation at mindful.org.

Enhance your spirituality. Study a familiar (or unfamiliar) religion.

Become a more knowledgeable docent. Spend time with our excellent TPDS website. Our many videos will fascinate you: [click here](#). Lose yourself in Herb's magnificent photographs: [click here](#). Explore All About Birds and iNaturalist.

Keep a schedule. Set achievable goals. Clean out that closet you've been avoiding.

Take up a new hobby or revive a forgotten one.

Make photo albums. Create gifts/works of art online, from old pictures: mixbook.com; shutterfly.com.

Read or listen to audiobooks. Use your library card online to borrow e-books/audiobooks—free.

Paint, garden, listen to music, craft pinterest.com, do jigsaw puzzles or...
Type any interest into your browser (Google, Yahoo).

You are not alone. We are all in this together.

This is temporary. We'll be back.

See you on the trail—soon I hope!

Janet Ugalde, TPDS President

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Docent of the Month:

Mitch Marzec

First of all, Thank You for the honor. With so many of my fellow dedicated docents active on so many fronts, I am truly humbled.

I've been an avid outdoor person all my life. Growing up back east, I spent a lot of time in the deep woods, on lakes and the ocean. Hiking, skiing, camping, fishing always brought me unparalleled feelings of freedom and wonder. Later in life, scuba diving, running, cycling, sailing were added to the list. Now, in my senior years, it's primarily hiking and golf.

I've lived in California for the past 30 years. I cycled past Torrey Pines countless times and dove and sailed off the coast for years but never once visited Torrey Pines. A few years back my youngest daughter invited me to hike Torrey Pines. My eyes were opened to the beauty of the Reserve. While returning to Lodge, we met a docent, started chatting and ended up on a spontaneous guided tour. By the end of the day, the docent and my daughter convinced me to "sign up." So began my docent adventure.

It's been a wonderful experience. I was impressed from the start with the dedication and friendliness of the TPDS staff, the Aides and Rangers. While everyone has always been there for me when needed, I would like to thank **Louis Sands, Ingo Renner, Don McGuire, Joe Meyer, and Jake Mumma** for their support, advice and guidance in the early days of my adventure. Being a docent is one continuing learning experience! Very satisfying and rewarding. Looking forward to continuing the adventure and education.



Children's Program

by Louis Sands, Children's Program Coordinator

All Children's Program field trips have been **Cancelled** through April and beyond. If you have signed up to participate, and your date of service is cancelled, then you should receive an auto-generated cancellation notice. If you have any questions about the program, please contact me at childrensprogram@torreypine.org. Thanks to all, and please stay safe!

Gonzales Canyon CEED Walk

by Ingo Renner, walk leader

Our February 28 CEED walk offered 20 docents (photo below) the chance to explore nearby Gonzales Canyon and learn about the riparian plant habitat found along its seasonal creek. We discovered native willows, sycamores, artemisias, and the rare Marsh-Elder (*Iva hayesiana*). We saw lush chaparral growing on north-facing slopes, sheltered from the bright rays of the sun at our latitude; among the highlights were Mountain Mahogany, Scrub Oak, Coast Live Oak, California Rose, and Fuschia Flowering Gooseberry. On the hotter south-facing slopes, we saw a more arid habitat: sages, cholla cactus, and *Dudleya* varieties. Our two-hour walk was the perfect chance to become familiar with an abundant variety of native plant species only a few miles away from Torrey Pines State Natural Reserve.



TPSNR Plant Quiz

by Barbara Wallach

While you're sheltering in place, test your plant ID skills by identifying these. All are found growing at TPSNR. (Answers on pg. 6)



1



2



3



4



5



6

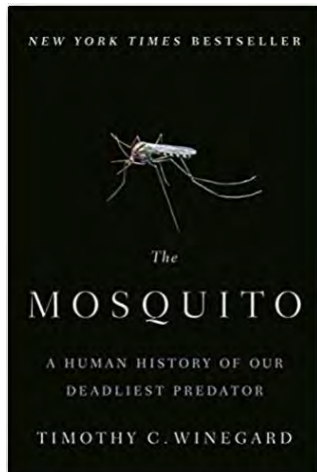
Torrey Pines Book Club

Because of the COVID-19 pandemic, our next meeting has been cancelled. Even though we don't know what the status of the disease will be by April 14, it's highly likely that we will still be avoiding crowds. We will reschedule this meeting, though, so let's use this time to read *The Mosquito: A Human History of Our Deadliest Predator* by Timothy C. Winegard.

Amazon says:

Why was gin and tonic the cocktail of choice for British colonists in India and Africa? What does Starbucks have to thank for its global domination? What has protected the lives of popes for millennia? Why did Scotland surrender its sovereignty to England? What was George Washington's secret weapon during the American Revolution? The answer to all these questions, and many more, is the mosquito.

Across our planet since the dawn of humankind, this nefarious pest, roughly the size and weight of a grape seed, has been at the frontlines of history as the grim reaper, the harvester of human populations, and the ultimate agent of historical change. As the mosquito transformed the landscapes of civilization, humans were unwittingly required to respond to its piercing impact and universal projection of power... Driven by surprising insights and fast-paced storytelling, *The Mosquito* is the extraordinary untold story of the mosquito's reign through human history and her indelible impact on our modern world order.



La Jolla Half Marathon Postponed

Supervising Ranger **Dylan Hardenbrook** has received confirmation that the La Jolla Half Marathon, which had been scheduled for Sunday, April 26, will be postponed this year in accordance with the current CDC recommendation. No future date has been selected at this time.

Whacky Weeder Helpers

This is the 12th year that volunteers from Solana Beach Presbyterian Church have come to work at Torrey Pines on their annual Community Serve Day.



Weather data from the TPSNR weather station (on the roof of the Visitor Center/Lodge). In most storms, TP has somewhat lower rainfall than coastal Del Mar.

2018-19	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	TOTAL
inches	0.03	0.63	1.02	1.12	1.72	3.07	1.15	0.22	0.06	0	0	0.01	0.08	0.04	2.94	3.69	15.78
					7 mo. total		8.74										
2019-20	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	
inches	0.08	0.04	2.94	3.69	0.25	0.4	3.00										
					7 mo. total		10.4										

Three Baby Torreys

by Ann Smith Mercandetti

When doing my docent training in 2005, I became interested in weeding, and that has definitely stuck! When I found my first Baby Torrey on the Guy Fleming Trail, with its needles still gathered into its “cradle cap,” I did not even realize that what I was looking at was a Baby Torrey! Thankfully, I decided not to pull it since I didn't know what it was, and I realized that evening that those bent, green “boughs” captured at the top into the brown “cap” were actually pine needles! The Baby Torrey was not there the next year, and I started keeping a record of where I found Baby Torreys (and rattlesnakes) when weeding.

Several years later, a Baby Torrey was growing along the west side of the road, a bit north of the stop sign at the top of the hill. Although that one was “caged,” it was trying to grow in hard soil in the hot sun all day, and it did not survive very long. That same year I found a Baby Torrey growing near the divide into the circle of the Guy Fleming Trail. **Lynne Small** photographed it, but again, the Baby Torrey was not there the next year.

Another few years passed. While weeding, I found two Baby Torreys growing on the east side of the Guy Fleming Trail near the North Grove. There was another one that sprouted near Dylan's office door behind the Lodge that year. No fencing, and none survived their first year.

Then last year, after wonderful rains, I found a Baby Torrey when weeding near the upper west parking lot, along the road side. Dylan let me know where there was some wire fencing, which Ingo shaped into a circle; and this Baby Torrey #1 (photo right) has now grown a couple more inches. S/He is looking very healthy!!



After the winds blew the big tree down on a Saturday morning near Dylan's office, more than a half dozen Baby Torreys sprouted from pine cones that had, apparently, slammed against the ground from the fall. The second tree that blew over in the opposite direction a few nights later left two more Baby Torreys sprouting and coming up. Baby Torrey #3 is probably from that second tree that fell, and, like Baby Torrey #1, is fenced and growing where s/he first sprouted. Baby Torrey #3 is doing better following

the rains we have had recently. It gets more direct sunlight during the day than Baby Torrey #1 (photo right).

Baby Torrey #2 is one of the babies that was transplanted, as a number of babies came up too close to the wall behind Dylan's office to be able to grow into mature trees there. S/He was transplanted just to the right of the entrance to Whitaker Garden in a tall wire cage, and this baby also appears to be doing well (photo below, right).

For the first time that I know of in the 15 years that I have been a docent, three Baby Torreys at TPSNR have survived their first year. **Eva Armi**, who first helped docents understand the importance of weeding, let me know recently that in the years she weeded on the Guy Fleming Trail, she too found Baby Torreys that had sprouted; none were caged, and none were found the second year.

We had planned to have a Birthday Party for the three Baby Torreys at our March meeting, which had to be cancelled. Dylan has already suggested “Next Year”!! So please plan on birthday cake for our Torrey Babies when they arrive at their “Terrible Twos” in 2021!!

Ann inspecting protected Baby Torrey Pine in cage



Answers to quiz on pg. 4

- 1 - Bee plant
- 2 - Biscuitroot
- 3 - Virgin's Bower
- 4 - Warty Stem Ceanothus
- 5 - Wreath plant
- 6 - Vining Milkweed

Bird of the Month: Semipalmated Plover

by Jack Friery; photo by Herb Knüfken

Our featured bird this month is the Semipalmated Plover, *Charadrius semipalmatus*. This dainty little shorebird can be seen on Torrey Pines beach and in the lagoon, once in fall and winter as it migrates to its breeding grounds in northern Canada and Alaska, and again in late June or early July on its return after breeding. (Juveniles return in September and October.) Interestingly, some late-migrating Semipalmated Plovers are still moving north in June as the earliest migrants are returning south. The bird is about 7 inches long and weighs just over an ounce and a half. It is distinguished by its short, stubby beak and by a single black band around its neck. (The bird pictured is a juvenile, which has duller markings and pale scaling on its back.) The Semipalmated Plover is a cousin to the Killdeer, a bird many of us may be more familiar with. The Killdeer is larger and has a double black necklace. The North American breeding population of Semipalmated Plovers is estimated to be about 200,000 birds. What does *semipalmated* mean? It's a Latinism that describes the bird's feet as "partially webbed." And *plover*? That word is a mystery – it apparently relates to the Latin word for rain, *pluvia*. But no one really knows what the plover has to do with rain. A group of plovers may be referred to as a stand, wing, or congregation.



Sources: allaboutbirds.org/guide/Semipalmated_Plover/overview; Unitt, *San Diego Bird Atlas*; Choate, *The Dictionary of American Bird Names*; en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Plover.

Torrey Pines Docent Society Bird Survey: March 2020

Number of species: 85
(+3 other taxa)

Blue-winged Teal 1	Whimbrel 4	Peregrine Falcon 2	Lesser Goldfinch 39
Cinnamon Teal 8	Long-billed Curlew 2	Black Phoebe 7	Dark-eyed Junco 3
Gadwall 27	Least Sandpiper 20	Say's Phoebe 3	White-crowned Sparrow 31
American Wigeon 12	Western Sandpiper 6	Cassin's Kingbird 10	Golden-crowned Sparrow 6
Mallard 10	Willet 9	California Scrub-Jay 1	Song Sparrow 44
Northern Pintail 8	Ring-billed Gull 3	American Crow 17	Lincoln's Sparrow 2
Green-winged Teal 1	Western Gull 16	Common Raven 10	California Towhee 32
Lesser Scaup 28	Royal Tern 4	Northern Rough-winged Swallow 21	Spotted Towhee 18
Surf Scoter 5	Red-throated Loon 12	Swallow sp. 2	Western Meadowlark 7
Bufflehead 10	Double-crested Cormorant 13	Bushtit 68	Red-winged Blackbird 13
Red-breasted Merganser 10	Brown Pelican 34	Wrentit 31	Orange-crowned Warbler 21
California Quail 1	Great Blue Heron 1	Ruby-crowned Kinglet 7	Common Yellowthroat 38
Pied-billed Grebe 1	Great Egret 2	Red-breasted Nuthatch 1	Yellow-rumped Warbler 40
Western Grebe 118	Snowy Egret 5	Blue-gray Gnatcatcher 1	
Mourning Dove 8	Black-crowned Night-Heron 2	California Gnatcatcher 1	
White-throated Swift 21	White-faced Ibis 5	House Wren 12	
Anna's Hummingbird 32	Turkey Vulture 1	Marsh Wren 3	
Rufous/Allen's Hummingbird 22	Osprey 1	Bewick's Wren 22	
Virginia Rail 1	Northern Harrier 2	wren sp. 2	
American Coot 29	Cooper's Hawk 2	European Starling 2	
Black-bellied Plover 1	Red-shouldered Hawk 1	California Thrasher 5	
Killdeer 5	Red-tailed Hawk 4	Northern Mockingbird 2	
	Belted Kingfisher 2	Western Bluebird 2	
	Downy Woodpecker 1	Hermit Thrush 1	
	Nuttall's Woodpecker 4	House Sparrow 3	
	Northern Flicker 1	House Finch 46	
	American Kestrel 2		

Observers: Andy Rathbone, David Walker, Marty Hales, Robert Turner, Kathy Dickey, Steve Neal, Deborah Walker, Gary Grantham, Phyllis Kuszner, Nancy Richardson, Manolo Turner, Mark Embree, Tsaiwei Olee, Bob Glaser, Jeannie White, Gretchen Embree, and Anonymous

View this checklist online at ebird.org/checklist/S65877333

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



Torrey Pines Docent Society
PO Box 2414
Del Mar, CA 92014
(858) 755-2063
torreypine.org