



# TORREYANA

THE DOCENT NEWSLETTER FOR  
TORREY PINES  
STATE NATURAL RESERVE

Issue 423

October 2020

## Storytelling at Torrey Pines

by Kristine Schindler & Joan R. Simon

On September 12 we had our first ever “Tales of Torrey Pines” storytelling event in lieu of our general meeting. We met up virtually via Zoom, the way we docents gather these days during the pandemic. No face masks needed ☺. It was a varied group of stories told by seven docents, with the inestimable **Joe Meyer** as our MC. There were visuals, a few tall tales, and even a hand dance to help demonstrate the stories.

Leading off was **Debi Buffington**, “the rock lady,” who summed up millions of years of tectonic plate movement at the Reserve with a memorable triplet (accompanied by an appropriate hand “dance”):

- Up and Out Divide
- In and Down Collide
- Side to Side, Slip and Slide

**Kathy Dickey** followed with an animated retelling of “The Coyote Meets the Stinkbug”, a traditional Kumeyaay story where the stinkbug outwits the coyote.

**Bruce Montgomery** gave us a hilarious whopper, a la Mark Twain, about his “pet rattlesnake.” We were hooked, right up to the final twist.

**Mark Lippard** led us through the story of the Bird Song, the source of how the Kumeyaay learned to respect each other and nature.

**Garnet Roehm** regaled us with an adventure he titled, “Would anyone in their right mind chase a skunk at close range?” Garnet was a park ranger at a mountain campgrounds east of San Diego when, entreated by two children, he valiantly set out to capture an ailing skunk, outfitted with rubber boots, maintenance overalls, a painter’s balaclava and dust mask, eye goggles and gloves -- trying to look as if he “did this sort of thing all the time.”

## Docent General Meeting

**Saturday**, October 10, 9 am

**Location:** Online via Zoom (link to the meeting will be emailed to all docents)

**Speaker:** Dr. Adam Young

**Topic:** Scripps Coastal Mapping and Erosion Research

Dr. Adam Young is an associate project scientist in the Coastal Processes Group of Oceanography and research affiliate of the Scripps Center for Climate Change Impacts and Adaptation. Young leads the coastal mapping program; his research focuses on coastal physical processes and quantitative coastal evolution on time scales important to modern society. He is specifically interested in coastal erosion, hazards, geomorphology, sea level rise, sediment budgets, and anthropogenic influences on the coastal system.

**Annette Ring** demonstrated the magic of photos, showing pictures that glow, foam, fall down, wash up, and are part of nature at Torrey Pines. (See some of Annette’s photos on page 2.)

**Joe Meyer** recounted the fascinating tale of the eccentric [Hermit of Torrey Pines](#), who dug a cave in a Torrey Pines bluff and lived there from 1971 until 1991, when, after several earlier attempts, he was finally (and permanently) removed by state park rangers.

(Cont. on pg. 2)

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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

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**TPDS Executive Board Members:**

President: Janet Ugalde

Vice-president: Roger Isaacson

Treasurer: Gerry Lawrence

Secretary: Gabriele Wienhausen

Directors-at-large:

Mark Embree

Annette Ring

Stu Rosenwasser

Lynne Truong

**TPSNR Staff:**

**Supervising Ranger:** Dylan Hardenbrook

**Rangers:** Stephanie Adams, Kyle Knox,  
Dave Richards, Jesus "Chuy" Salinas  
Rodriguez

**Sr. Park Aides:** Louis Sands, Jake Mumma

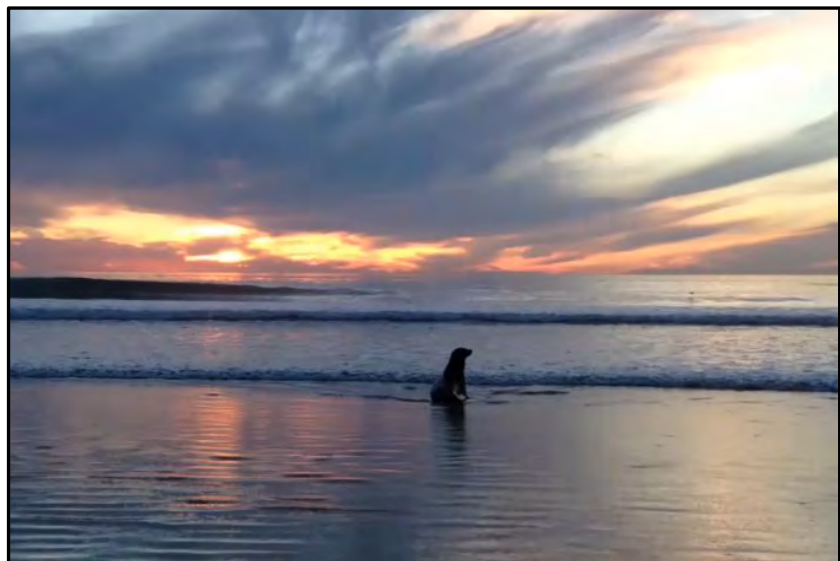
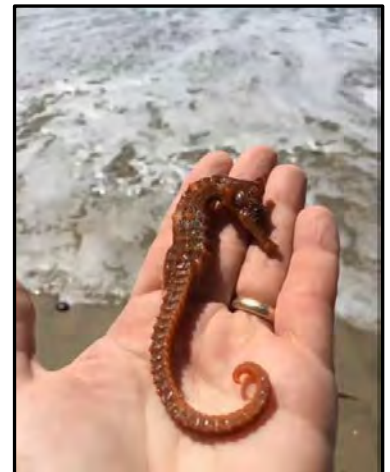
**Park Aides:** Cheryl Biernacki, Krista  
DeBusschere, Joy Inton, Shawn Jacobs,  
Johnson Jou (Interpreter), Jake Mumma,  
Ingo Renner

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

The evening was well attended, with over 70 people joining in. We all look forward to creating more stories and memories in the Reserve once we have returned. Thank you to everyone involved.

If you missed the event, you can watch these presentations in full at:  
<https://vimeo.com/457374752/674a1e75a0> You won't regret it.



## Docent of the Month: Gabriele Wienhausen

*Photo by Herb Knüfken*

I arrived in San Diego almost 40 years ago to spend twelve months as a research fellow at what was then the brand-new UC San Diego campus. For this stay, my faculty host helped find a small cottage to rent in Olde Del Mar. It was truly a treat to commute to work every morning along the Pacific Ocean and up Torrey Pines hill, flanked by a gorgeous sandstone formation and with a view of the most peculiar-looking trees. In my free time, exploring the park's trails was a mesmerizing experience, which I described through letters and photos to family and friends back in Germany in great detail. Little did I know then that the "twelve-month" stay would be never ending.



My love for the Reserve has also never ended. I first learned about the docent program when my sons were still small and I promised myself that I would look into becoming a docent as an empty nester. But work always seemed to be overwhelming, leaving no time for other things. Fortunately, the late **Jeff Elman** pointed at his Torrey Pines baseball cap with a grin on his face every time we met and called me a fool for not applying to the docent program.

Indeed, joining the Torrey Pines Docent Society was one of the best decisions I ever made. Becoming more closely acquainted with our Reserve has brought profound personal fulfillment.

I have been greatly inspired by my fellow docents, who share love and enthusiasm for our Reserve and for all things living or not, who cultivate curiosity, who ask "why" and "how," and who taught me to experience nature with more intention and focus and with all my senses. I have learned from every docent with whom I have interacted; it's impossible

to name all of them. My mentor, **Peter Domaille**, however, deserves a special shout-out.

Being a docent has helped me to slow down. I have learned to pause to notice nature as a way to connect ourselves and our communities to one another and to develop a more meaningful sense of place and purpose.

I feel very fortunate to be part of the Torrey Pines Docent Society and honored to be recognized as Docent of the Month.

## Graffiti Removal Trio

*by Annette Ring*

**Guy Lawrie, Don McGuire, and Thomas Stehlik** meet weekly to remove graffiti from the beach cliffs. They also pick up trash on the beach and along the lagoon near the road. They social distance and wear masks around visitors. If you're at the beach during low tide, you might see these three with their tools headed down the beach to remove graffiti. Our thanks to this trio for keeping TPSNR looking its best.



## Bushmallow

*by Rhea Bridy*

Lone, pretty pink flower, native chaparral mallow, strives to make it in early fall transitions.

Despite all, despite polluted opaque air, hot bone-dry conditions, she hopes for a better day.

She advertises sweetly for bees to come round, prepares to set seeds for the future.



## Docent Day II

by Dan Hammer

Home, Sweet Home! On Monday, September 21, scores of docents flocked to Torrey Pines for the second (and most likely final) Docent Day – a chance for TPSNR to thank us for our volunteer work and for us to enjoy the peace, quiet, and beauty of a nearly empty Reserve. It was such a treat to see old haunts, old friends, and trails crowded with little more than coyote scat. Thanks to Supervising Ranger Dylan Hardenbrook for making this possible. And thanks to everyone who shared their photos and memories of this memorable day.



Credit: Dan Hammer, Elfin Forest Trail



Credit: David & Debi Buffington



Credit: Pao Chau, Life is good, says little squirrel



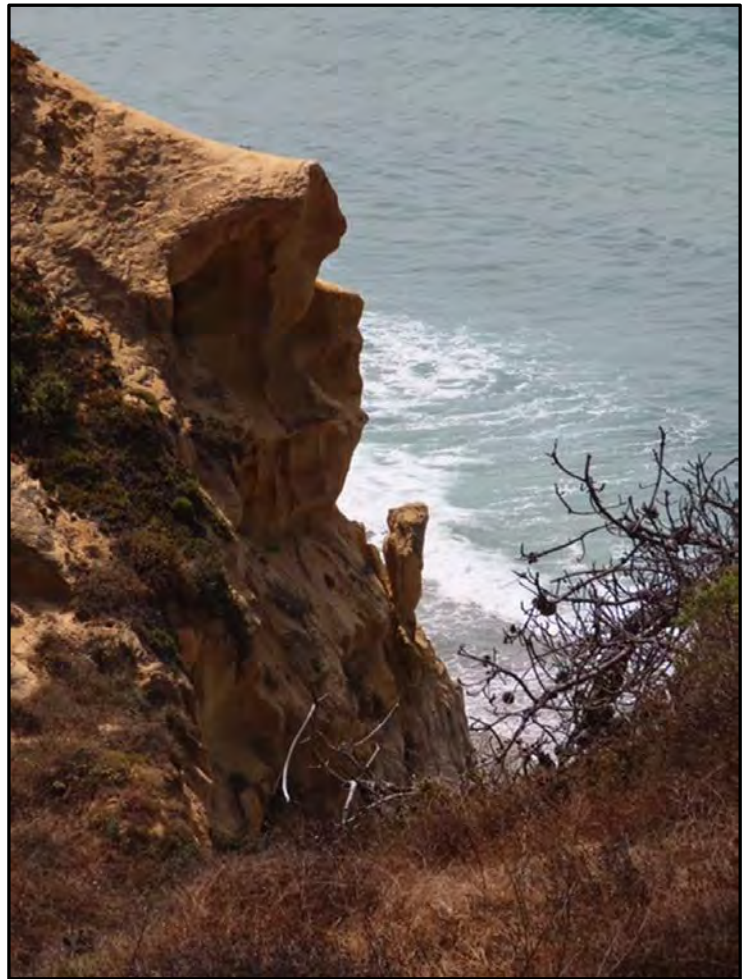
Credit: Dan Hammer



Credit: Kathy Dickey, prickly pear



Credit: Kathy Dickey, Lion's Paw



Credit: Kathy Dickey, cliff column



Credit: Herb Knüfken



Credit: Karen Frazer, lizard doing push-ups



Credit: Dan Hammer



Credit: Karen Frazer, raven pair



Credit: Mike Pisor, Parry Grove Trail entrance



Credit: Sara Mussen, Razor Point



Credit: Herb Knüfken



Credit: Karen Frazer, dolphins below the Parry Grove Trail



Credit: Kathy Dickey



Credit: Ann Gaarder, enjoying the newly remodeled Guy Fleming Trail North Overlook



Credit: David & Debi Buffington

ED: Thank you to the 16 docents who submitted 130 photos for this memorable day (three months after Docent Day I, which was June 23, 2020).

## Music Soothes ... and Inspires TPA's Fall Fundraisers

by Peter Jensen, President, Torrey Pines Association

Headliners Peter Sprague and Rebecca Jade invite you to a live-stream concert Saturday, October 24, 5 to 6 pm.

"Jazz for the Pines" replaces "Wine in the Pines" this year during these difficult times, but the celebration is no less important as Torrey Pines Association gears up its fall fundraising efforts.

New this year is the inclusion of a fine-art poster by illustrator Scott Ramsey. Major donors at the top ticket tier receive a signed copy, suitable for framing. A great keepsake in TPA's 70th year.

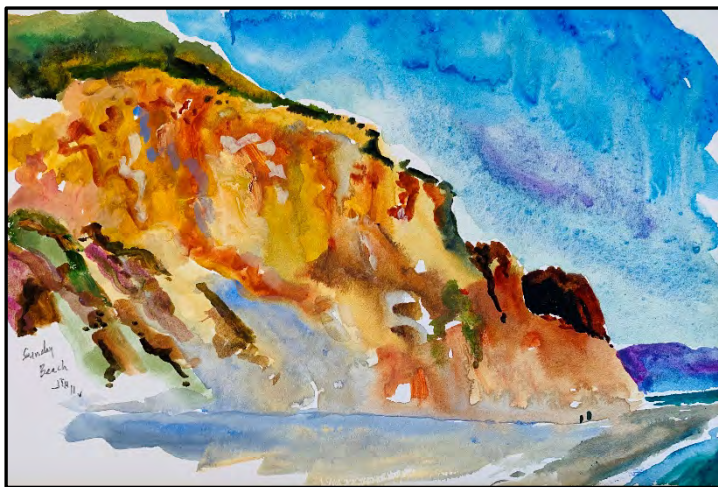
A major announcement about TPA's future will take place during the concert.

In addition, an online auction launches October 1 and continues throughout the month. Local artists have donated several premier works, including James Hubbell's donation of a colorful watercolor (see below) that depicts TPSNR's iconic bluff and beach.

Please help TPA make this a success! Attend the concert, bid on artworks, receive a poster... we at TPA thank you, as will Guy Fleming, founder of TPA 70 years ago, from the great beyond!

Click [here](#) for more information on how to buy tickets.

Click [here](#) for flyer.



**Torrey Pines State Natural Reserve reopened to the public on September 24. It had been closed since March 13 because of the COVID-19 pandemic.**

## Torrey Pines Book Club

We will continue to meet via Zoom at our regularly scheduled time. Please notify Ken King if you plan to participate and if you need any extra help getting connected.

**When:** Tuesday, October 13, 1:00 pm

**What:** *Walking the Amazon: 860 Days. One Step at a Time* by Ed Stafford



Amazon says:

In April 2008, Ed Stafford set off to become the first man ever to walk the entire length of the Amazon. He started on the Pacific coast of Peru, crossed the Andes Mountain range to find the official source of the river. His journey led on through parts of Colombia and right across Brazil; all while outwitting dangerous animals, machete-wielding indigenous people as well as negotiating injuries, weather and his own fears and doubts. Yet, Stafford was undeterred. On his grueling 860-day, 4,000-plus mile journey, Stafford witnessed the devastation of deforestation firsthand, the pressure on tribes due to loss of habitats as well as nature in its true-raw form. Jaw-dropping from start to finish, *Walking the Amazon* is the unforgettable and gripping story of an unprecedented adventure.

**November 10:** *This Tender Land* by William Kent Krueger

## Autumn Buckwheat

by Rhea Bridy

Between summer and autumn  
White flowers surrender their seed.  
Rich, coffee-colored and crispy,  
Watch the ants harvest, take heed.



# Bird of the Month: American Wigeon

by Jack Friery; photo by Herb Knüfken

Our featured bird this month is the **American Wigeon**, *Mareca Americana*, a duck that is a wintertime visitor to Torrey Pines Reserve. (Wigeon is pronounced “WIJ-uhn”—see [youtu.be/0KIFytTt1ZU](https://youtu.be/0KIFytTt1ZU).) Breeding males have a green eye patch and a conspicuous white crown. Females are warm brown with a gray-brown head and a smudge around the eye. In the male, there is a bright white wing patch, called a speculum, on the top wing. (*Speculum* means “mirror” in Latin.) The bird is about 20 inches long and weighs about a pound and a half.

The male’s call is a soft “rubber ducky” sound.

The wigeon is a “puddle duck.” A “puddle duck,” or “dabbling duck,” is a duck that frequents shallow water and feeds by tipping up rather than diving.

American Wigeons are common, but their populations declined by 2% per year between 1966 and 2015, according to the North American Breeding Bird Survey, resulting in a cumulative decline of 65% over the 49-year period. The global breeding population is estimated at 1.4 million.

Sources: [allaboutbirds.org/guide/American\\_Wigeon/overview](https://allaboutbirds.org/guide/American_Wigeon/overview)  
[ducks.org/hunting/waterfowl-id/Dabbling](https://ducks.org/hunting/waterfowl-id/Dabbling)  
[en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wigeon](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wigeon)  
[audubon.org/field-guide/bird/american-wigeon](https://audubon.org/field-guide/bird/american-wigeon)



## Torrey Pines Docent Society Bird Survey: September 2020

Number of species: 69  
(+3 other taxa)

|                              |                              |                           |                              |
|------------------------------|------------------------------|---------------------------|------------------------------|
| California Quail 14          | Caspian Tern 18              | Western Wood-Pewee 1      | Northern Mockingbird 9       |
| Western Grebe 12             | Royal Tern 10                | Black Phoebe 16           | Western Bluebird 2           |
| Eurasian Collared-Dove 3     | Red-throated Loon 6          | Say's Phoebe 3            | Scaly-breasted Munia 10      |
| Mourning Dove 34             | Brandt's Cormorant 52        | Cassin's Kingbird 11      | House Finch 163              |
| White-throated Swift 5       | Double-crested Cormorant 7   | Hutton's Vireo 2          | Lesser Goldfinch 66          |
| Anna's Hummingbird 33        | Brown Pelican 15             | California Scrub-Jay 13   | Savannah Sparrow 2           |
| Costa's Hummingbird 1        | Great Blue Heron 6           | American Crow 52          | Song Sparrow 37              |
| Rufous/Allen's Hummingbird 5 | Great Egret 2                | Common Raven 32           | California Towhee 63         |
| Black-necked Stilt 6         | Snowy Egret 6                | Northern Rough-winged     | Spotted Towhee 25            |
| Killdeer 2                   | Yellow-crowned Night-Heron 1 | Swallow 3                 | Yellow-breasted Chat 1       |
| Long-billed Curlew 2         | Osprey 2                     | Barn Swallow 10           | Red-winged Blackbird 7       |
| Marbled Godwit 7             | White-tailed Kite 1          | Cliff Swallow 2           | Orange-crowned Warbler 8     |
| Sanderling 3                 | Cooper's Hawk 2              | swallow sp. 6             | Common Yellowthroat 9        |
| Least Sandpiper 19           | Red-shouldered Hawk 3        | Bushtit 90                | Black-headed Grosbeak 3      |
| Willet 10                    | Red-tailed Hawk 3            | Wrentit 39                |                              |
| Heermann's Gull 82           | Great Horned Owl 1           | Blue-gray Gnatcatcher 8   | Observers: not specified     |
| Western Gull 61              | Belted Kingfisher 2          | California Gnatcatcher 23 | (Count limited by closure of |
|                              | Downy Woodpecker 4           | House Wren 21             | the Reserve)                 |
|                              | Nuttall's Woodpecker 12      | Bewick's Wren 17          |                              |
|                              | American Kestrel 6           | wren sp. 4                |                              |
|                              | Peregrine Falcon 3           | California Thrasher 19    |                              |

View this checklist online [ebird.org/checklist/S73708555](https://ebird.org/checklist/S73708555)

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



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