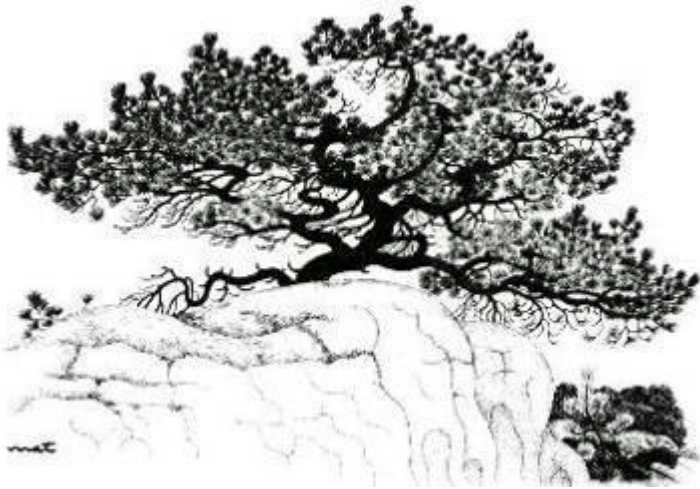




TORREYANA

THE DOCENT NEWSLETTER FOR
TORREY PINES
STATE NATURAL RESERVE

Issue 452

March 2023

Why Do Great Whales Sing?

by Joan R. Simon

Why indeed? While there are no clear-cut answers to that question, Professor John Hildebrand of the Scripps Institution of Oceanography shared many fascinating clues with us at our February 11 general meeting.

All of the whales that make songs are part of the Mysticeti suborder of “mustached” or baleen whales. These are the large whales that all have baleen, keratin bristles that hang from the roof of their mouths and filter their food. They feed by engulfing water that includes their prey and then squeezing the water out through their baleen, keeping the food inside their mouth. Mysticeti include the blue whale, gray whale, humpback, right whales, rorquals, minke, fin and bowheads.

What makes a whale sound qualify as a song? First, it must have a pattern that is repeated. The singers are thought to be exclusively male, and their songs appear to have something (but not everything) to do with breeding. Both males and females make sounds without the patterned quality; these sounds are often produced as call/countercalls between multiple individual animals and are not true songs.

William Watkins, an early pioneer in the field of marine mammal bioacoustics, had a more stringent definition, requiring five attributes in order to designate a whale’s sound a song: (1) produced by males; (2) territorial (related to defense/ownership of an area); (3) stereotyped, i.e., patterned and repetitive; (4) seasonally produced; and (5) involved in reproductive activity.

Dr. Hildebrand set out to determine whether all of these criteria are necessary to define the sounds of particular whales as songs.

He played many examples of whale sounds. There were call/countercalls by the right whales, used to keep track of

March General Meeting

Date: Saturday, March 11, 9 am

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

Speaker: Dr. Julia Fiedler, Scripps Institution of Oceanography

Topic: CoastSnap and Beach Monitoring at Torrey Pines

Dr. Fiedler’s presentation will focus on the CoastSnap program, which puts beach monitoring into the hands of citizen scientists through the use of smartphone photography. The CoastSnap smartphone cradle, located at the Guy Fleming Trail’s North Overlook, has been the location of over 1300 user-submitted photos since its installation in August 2022. It has provided valuable data for monitoring shoreline and beach change, tracking sand and cobble cusps; more recently, has given insight into freshwater output from Los Peñasquitos Lagoon.

Dr. Julia Fiedler is an assistant project scientist with the Coastal Processes Group at Scripps Institution of Oceanography. She received a PhD in physical oceanography from Scripps in 2018.

Refreshments: Docents with last names beginning with **P, R, S** will be responsible for providing snacks for this meeting.

each other, but not singing. There were songs by bowheads with an identifiable repeated pattern clustered in phrases. They occur during the spring, which is assumed to be their breeding season. (See photo top of pg. 3.)

The **gray whale** was recorded in the San Ignacio Lagoon in Baja California, where in winter they give birth after a long migration from Alaska. Their sounds, while songlike, are not patterned or repeated,

(Cont. on pg. 3.)

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Park Aide: Zuzana Volny

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FLASH - Don't forget to donate
your ZooNooz magazines to the
Museum Shop.

President's Message: Oh Deer!

While driving along Carmel Valley Road at 10 in the morning on the way to the Reserve, I spotted something moving in the estuary marsh out of the corner of my eye. "That's no bird," I thought to myself, "that's deer." In my excitement, I pulled over to the curb, whacking a trash bin in the process. After picking up the bin, I grabbed my binoculars and crossed the street to get a better look.



It was a female mule deer with two yearlings trailing behind her. I have seen hundreds of deer in my lifetime. Yet this felt special as it was the first time I had seen these creatures in the Reserve. I stood on the side of the road peeking through the binoculars, lost in the moment, tracking the trio as they pranced over the pickleweed. Entirely focused on my subjects, I heard no sounds of passing cars. Nor did any thoughts enter my head (I must admit this is not a rare occurrence for me). Time seemed to have stopped. I had entered an immersive state.

Twenty minutes later, I was back in my car reflecting on a special memory. In 2005, while camping in Humboldt County, my then ten-year-old daughter and I decided to investigate some abandoned orchards adjacent to the campsite. We came upon a grove of apple trees and spotted a lone deer munching on the fruit that lay on the ground. We decided to move slowly and sit down about ten feet from the doe, which was not in the least bit afraid of us. Staying still, we watched her closely devour apple after apple. We were silent and still. After 15 minutes, more deer entered the orchard for their apple meal. Eventually we were completely surrounded by a herd (we lost count) with no escape route. The brave deer were perhaps too hungry to worry about our presence. Both present in moment, my daughter and I experienced an authentic immersion in nature.

We are fortunate enough to have a program at the Reserve called Mindful Walks, which encourages immersion in nature on a weekly basis. It was started by **Gabriele Wienhausen, Lynne Truong, Cres Torres, and Sandy Levin;** and **Loraine Trust, Dinah Carl, Beverly Toth, and Nancy Novak** have also been trained as guides. If you are interested, I strongly encourage you to join this welcoming group, which meets every Sunday at 8 am at the Lodge (see pg. 7).

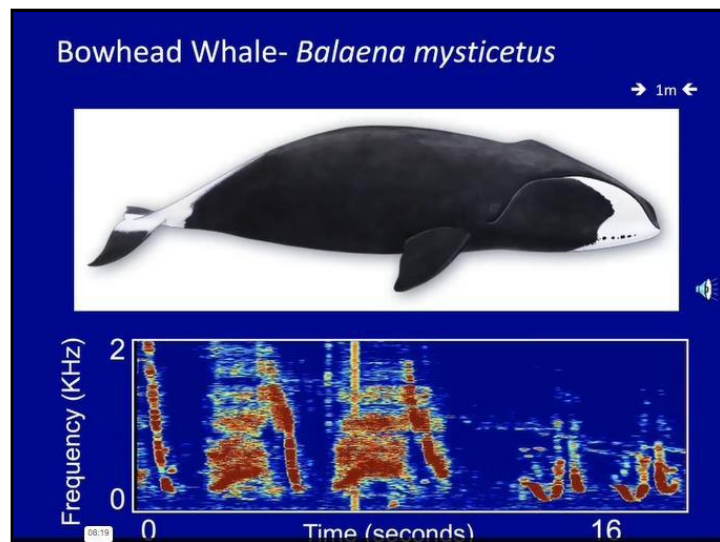
Often, we move to find our birds, flowers, or insects by slowly seeking them out. Yet how often, when we stay in one place, unmoved and quiet, does nature reveal itself, on its own, to us?

Cheers.

Matt Xavier,

TPDS President

(Cont. from pg. 1.)



Bowhead whale song

so are not recognized as songs. They are, however, optimized for communication in the shallow lagoon waters.

The minke whales, the smallest of the Mysticeti, were recorded by the US Navy for 50 years before the sounds were identified as coming from this species. The songs of the Atlantic and Pacific populations, both seasonal (spring) and repetitive, are totally different from each other, reflecting the geographic separation of the two groups.

Blue whales, the largest of the baleen group, have two-part songs that alternate between pulsed and tonal sounds and that can go on for hours at a time. The songs vary according to the location of a particular group. There is one song in the eastern Pacific along the North American coast, another simpler one in the deep waters of the mid-Pacific, another along coastal South America, a different one around Antarctica, and yet another in the north Atlantic – worldwide there are ten different varieties of blue whale songs.



Through his research, Dr. Hildebrand discovered that the pitch of the blue whale songs has been getting lower every

year. While it is the same basic song, going back to the 1960s, it started out at a much higher frequency. One theory about why their pitch has been steadily dropping is that when these songs were first recorded in the '60s, there were many fewer blue whales – commercial whaling was still permitted at that time. The whales needed a higher pitch to project their song over a longer distance – presumably to reach the females they were looking to breed with. By the 21st century, the blue whale population had increased enough that the whales didn't need their song to reach as far.

Recording devices were put on the backs of blue whales, and it was discovered that no calls were made while whales were engaged in deep foraging dives. That was probably because of too much pressure, reducing the air available for the whale to be able to vocalize. Most calls occur at 25 to 30 meters, and often with quick, shallow breaths at the surface to avoid any gaps in the song. Is the whale saying: "I'm better because I can make more continuous calls than the other guy"? And why are they calling at that particular depth? Dr. Hildebrand hypothesized that it might be the same reason we like to sing in the shower, where the walls of the shower stall magnify the sound. When a whale is closer to the surface, the sound is similarly optimized and seems more powerful. It's a way for the whale to appear more impressive based on a more powerful sound.

Dr. Hildebrand turned next to the **humpback whale**, the iconic whale singer, whose song cycle takes about 11 minutes. Biologist Roger Payne brought these songs to everyone's attention through his 1970 album, *Songs of the Humpback Whale*. His work played an important role in making the public aware of the plight of whales, helping to achieve a moratorium on commercial whaling in 1986.

Payne's wife Katie took the analysis of humpback whale songs one step further by developing a way to categorize the songs, showing how they evolved over time. She discovered that within the song there are themes, within the themes there are phrases, and within the phrases there are units. Using this system, scientists have been able to demonstrate how the humpback's song is not static, but instead evolves over time, changing from one singing cycle to the next. Over a 10-year period, the song will evolve to be totally different. Sometimes rather than a gradual evolution, there is a fast change within a year, and "it's more of a revolution than an evolution," Dr. Hildebrand said and added, "This emphasis on change is an aspect we don't fully understand."

Humpback whales breed in low latitudes, where the water is warmer. But high latitudes (with colder waters) are more productive, hence better for feeding. They have been tracked between their breeding and feeding areas, and while they segregate into separate breeding zones, they mix in the higher latitude feeding areas where there is still some singing and where they are exposed to each other's songs.

Whale biologist Jim Darling, who has spent his career studying humpback whale songs, has observed that humpback singers, all males, appear to communicate only with other males. “We never see a singing whale approach (or be approached by) a female,” Dr. Hildebrand commented, adding that “this is a complicated story,” and it is not completely understood by the whale research community.

Whale singing is concentrated in one or two seasons, presumably the breeding ones. For example, blue whales sing in summer and fall, humpbacks sing primarily in the winter and spring, again when they are probably breeding. For fin whales, it’s fall and winter, their presumed breeding season. Their songs speed up as the season goes along. But they come back to the same song the next season, although around 2005 there was a radical shift in their song off the coast of California.

In summary, these are the behavioral aspects of baleen whale songs that have been determined so far:

- *Mostly produced by males
- *Focused on male-to-male interaction
- *Seasonal, and usually associated with the mating season of each species
- *Patterned and repeated, but with much variation and many changes over time
- *Optimized for detection over long distances

Dr. Hildebrand shared a few additional items of interest. He explained that the name *right whale* was chosen in the “bad old days” of commercial whaling, when the “right” (best) whale to hunt was a species which had so much blubber that the whales floated on the water surface even after being killed, making it easier to retrieve the oil that was so valuable at the time. They were hunted almost to extinction and are still an endangered species.

Female whales make sounds, but rarely songs. Their sounds are primarily of a call/countercall nature. Females are more social than males, and their calls are focused on keeping track of each other: “Here I am. There you are.”



Yes, humpbacks actually do sing in the water in a vertical position. They are stationary when singing, as they hang vertically with their heads looking down. Groups of whales can often be seen singing together.

To hear humpback and other whale songs [click here](#).

To watch this and past TPDS meeting videos [click here](#).

General Meeting Minutes:

February 11, 2023

The meeting, led by President **Matt Xavier**, was in person, with 75 docents attending. The speaker presented via Zoom.

Speaker

Professor John Hildebrand, from Scripps Institution of Oceanography, spoke on “Why Do Great Whales Sing?” (See article on pg. 1.)

California State Award

Ranger Stephanie Adams and Interpreter 1 Louis Sands presented **Roger Isaacson** with the California State Parks Superior Achievement Award for his more than 10,000 hours of volunteer service, which has included single-handedly managing the IT systems and website for TPSNR and the Docent Society, as well as volunteering as a Whacky Weeder, formatter/editor of the *Torreyana*, Lodge host and a board member since 2015, to name a few (see pg. 6). Stephanie thanked **Ken King, Jeannie Smith, Lynne Truong** and Senior Park Aide Ingo Renner for helping her learn about all of Roger’s accomplishments.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Dinah Carl was named Docent of the Month for being co-leader of the Mindful Walks team and Lodge and TIK hosting among other activities (see pg. 6).

Mindful Walks are every Sunday morning from 8 - 10 am starting in March. Contact **Cres Torres** or **Dinah Carl** for more information (see pg. 7).

Donna Close was given special thanks for all her flower walks and posts (see pg. 8 for her column on “What’s Blooming”).

Coffee at 8: Matt Xavier reminded docents that on the first Tuesday of every month at 8 am docents can talk with him at the Bird Rock Coffee Roasters on Carmel Valley Road.

Bird Count is the first Tuesday of every month (pg. 11). All are welcome, no experience necessary; contact **David Walker**.

Lodge 100th Anniversary will be on April 8, starting at 10 am. The celebration will replace the April docent meeting so everyone should plan to attend. The planning committee has been working on this for over a year. Docent volunteers are needed and will be briefed. Contact **Matt Xavier** to volunteer.

BLIK (Beach and Lagoon Interpretation Kiosk) is ready to proceed. Funding is in place, a kit for the structure has been purchased, the Seabees will erect it, and Senior Park Aide Ingo Renner is building the cabinets. A soft opening is planned for mid to late March, and a grand opening to include TPC and donors is planned for April 15.

The BLIK will be staffed by docents from 9 am to 1 pm on weekends. Those new to the BLIK should plan to shadow a veteran for two days. Go to Better Impact to sign up once the kiosk is in place. Contact **Rosemary Wareham** or **Gabriele Wienhausen** for more information.

Women's Club of San Marcos would like a Torrey Pines docent to give a short presentation. If you are interested, contact **Selma Torres**.

Flower Photography Walks with Senior Park Aide Zuzana Volny will start on Feb. 19. These are for the public, but Zuzana is willing to schedule and lead walks for docents (see pg. 9).

CEED has a new leadership team: **Lila Beth Scott**, **Santosh Nichani**, and **Mukesh Mehta** (see pg. 5).

Museum of Us (formerly Museum of Man) is offering a special tour of its Kumeyaay exhibits to Docent Society members. There was a lot of interest in participating, and Matt will follow up.

Committee Needs: The following committees need more docents or a docent/leader/s: Nominating, Care Team, Meeting Refreshments, and December Holiday Potluck. Contact **Matt Xavier** or any board member for more information.

Lynne Truong asked docents to make sure any change in their contact information has been submitted to membership@torreypine.org. The 2023 Member List is available in the docent library in the lower right side of the mailbox cabinet.

Meeting Snacks: **Marian Edelbrock** and **Michele Kurtis Cole** are organizing the refreshments for the monthly meetings. Marian announced next month's meeting snacks will be provided by those whose last name starts with P, R, and S, but anyone is welcome to contribute something. Coffee and hot water for tea will be available before the start of the meeting beginning next month – a change approved by popular vote.

Louis Sands, TPSNR Interpreter 1, announced that four new part-time senior interpretive park aide positions are open. Louis encouraged docents to apply. Contact him for details: louis.sands@parks.ca.gov. His office is in the service lot trailer in the maintenance yard. **Please record your hours**, especially lifetime members. The State needs to know, as it reflects how many volunteer hours TPDS is providing.

Children's Program

by Janet Ugalde, Children's Program Coordinator

What an incredible joy it is to share our Reserve with visitors now. So much life abounds, and so many gorgeous flowers. Children's Program docents are hike leaders in paradise. Grateful students, teachers and chaperones are loving their visits.

THANK YOU, faithful, returning, and new team members, for making our program a huge success. We need more docent participation this spring. What better use of your time and efforts? Join us for a huge emotional boost.

What's New in the Reserve

by Louis Sands, Interpreter 1

I am excited about the opportunity to serve as Torrey Pines State Natural Reserve Interpreter 1. Even though I have worked at our beloved Reserve for 17 years, there's still much to learn about the State Parks and its many resources. Of course, my primary interest is determining which of these resources can assist our interpretive team, docents and staff alike, with the delivery of San Diego's best natural and cultural interpretive programming: guided trail hikes, mindful walks, school field trips, Visitor Center and TIK hosting, and Roving Interpretation.

We all love engaging our visitors with the Reserve's remarkable wonders! Our contributions come easy and often, because we reap so many benefits. Rest assured, your efforts are impactful and appreciated by many.

One of my preliminary goals is to recruit a team of interpretive park aides to serve as liaisons for our docent program leads. We will task these park aides with providing support to all existing interpretive programs as well as participating in the development of new programs and/or expanding current offerings. Support will take many forms: recruitment and training, service data management, supplies procurement, advertising and promotion, departmental policy adherence, participant recognition, and the implementation of best practices. I am looking forward to collaboration and creative new ideas!

Look for timely updates of this process on our Google Groups message board. I'll see you 'round the Reserve!

MARCH CEED EVENT

Date: Wednesday, March 15

Time: 9 – 11 am

Place: Carmel Mountain Preserve Loop

Length: 1.7 miles; easy to moderate

Leader: Ingo Renner

RSVP: Lila Beth Scott

Park at Ocean Air Recreation Center, 4541 Fairport Way, SD (Neighborhood street parking)

Docent of the Month: Dinah Carl

Photo by Herb Knufken

I've always been happiest when I am exploring nature or learning something new about the natural world. It started with spending most afternoons roaming the hills near Malibu Canyon on horseback when I was growing up. It continued with my explorations of the back country by horse, and later on foot, when I moved to North County San Diego in the 1970s. Sadly, most of the areas I roamed in those days have now been transformed into housing and shopping centers.



As a Southern California native, I have seen so many beautiful landscapes disappear in my lifetime. We all owe a large debt of gratitude to Ellen Browning Scripps for having the foresight and generosity to put her money and her efforts towards preserving the amazing natural landscape of the Torrey Pines Reserve for our enjoyment and that of generations to come. It offers us an oasis in the midst of the busy hum of suburban life.

Becoming a docent at the Reserve has been a wonderful experience. The knowledge I've gained and the new friends I've made who share my interest in the natural world has been incredibly rewarding. Every day I spend in the Reserve brings some new gift. Often a visitor will ask me a question I never thought about before or another docent may share some new observation with me. In either case it will send me off down a rabbit hole of research to expand my knowledge. With everything I learn it deepens my awareness and appreciation of not just the Reserve but of the greater world around me.

When I am working in the Reserve, I enjoy helping to enrich the experience of visitors to the Reserve by introducing them to something new: the smell of a particular plant, the sound of a local bird, or the sight of dolphins swimming in the waves. Just getting people to slow down for a moment to appreciate this amazing life around us is enough to make me feel like I am contributing something worthwhile.

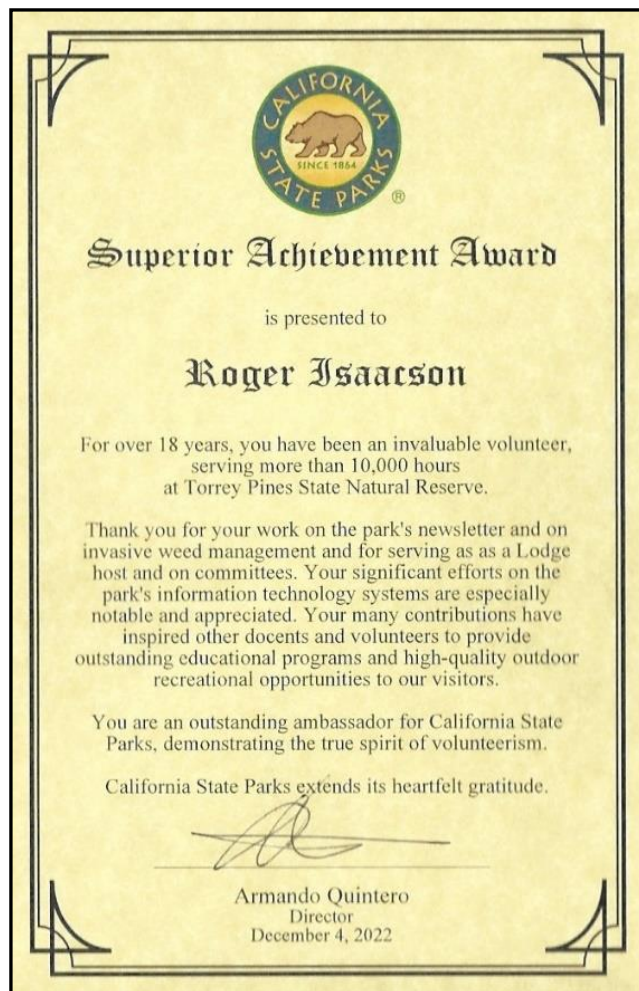
State Medallion Award Given to Roger Isaacson

by Ranger Stephanie Adams

On February 11, 2023, California State Parks presented Roger Isaacson with the Medallion Award for Superior Achievement. This is the highest honor given to exemplary volunteers who make a significant contribution towards the mission and goals of the Department and are worthy of recognition by the California State Parks Director. The award consists of a personalized certificate signed by the Director and two brass medallions encased in a matted frame. Over the past 18 years, Roger has provided over 10,000 hours of invaluable service. He is a demonstration of the true spirit of volunteerism, and we are grateful for his dedication and commitment to all of us at Torrey Pines State Natural Reserve.



Photo by Barbara Wallach



Lodge History 3: Ground Breaking News!

by Judy Schulman, TPDS Historian

This is the third in a series of articles by Judy Schulman about Torrey Pines Lodge. We will be celebrating its 100th anniversary on April 8, 2023.

The news about the ground breaking for the Torrey Pines Lodge was so ground breaking that the headline “Ground Broken for Torrey Pines Lodge: To Be Resting Place for Auto Tourists” appeared on five different dates!

In four of the appearances, the article stated that “today” was the date for the event. The article first appeared in the *San Diego Sun* on August 23, 1922. The *Escondido Times Advocate* ran the same article on three separate dates with the exact same wording: August 31, 1922, September 8, 1922, and September 9, 1922.

In the September 16, 1922 issue of the *Oceanside Blade Tribune*, the ground breaking was mentioned as occurring a few days earlier and was briefer than the earlier versions.

In fact, we do not have the exact date of the ground breaking, but I believe it was done by local building contractor J.H. Nicholson. I have found a few mentions of his company doing the initial excavating. I also have found some invoices from him dated about that time. I was not able to find if any dignitaries attending the ground breaking.

MORE MINDFUL WALKS

by Sandy Levin

Due to popular demand, Mindful Walks in Torrey Pines will be offered to the public every Sunday from 8 am to 10 am beginning in March.

These walks have become a popular addition to the interpretive guided walks. Previously, these walks were offered on the first and third Sundays of the month by docents **Gabriele Wienhausen**, **Lynne Truong**, **Cres Torres**, and **Sandy Levin**. Over the past several months, docents **Loraine Trust**, **Dinah Carl**, **Beverly Toth**, and **Nancy Novak** have been trained as Mindful Walk guides, with Cres and Dinah as current co-leaders of the team.

Mindful Walks in Torrey Pines are an invitation to slow down and appreciate the beauty of nature. The walks blend nature interpretation, history, and science with sensory experience, guiding visitors to form a deep personal connection to the land. Participants are guided to be curious, to be present in the moment, and to take in the environment not just through their physical senses but also through emotional, mental, and spiritual sensory perceptions.

If you are interested in learning more about Mindful Walks, come join us. Mindful Walks begin at 8 am at the Lodge.

La Jolla Historical Society Exhibition:

“Rare Trees Sacred Canyons: Torrey Pines – San Diego’s Symbol of Preservation”

From spectacular artworks by A. R. Valentien, showing Torrey pines' heavy cones and unique sheath-bound needles, to the many human efforts to save its tenuous home on the San Diego coast, this exhibition honors the Torrey pine tree as well as the local efforts to create a treasured Reserve.

The exhibition will run from February 11 to May 28, and is open (free) from noon to 4 pm, Wednesday through Sunday.

The La Jolla Historical Society's gallery is next to the Contemporary Art Museum in Wisteria Cottage, one of Ellen Browning Scripps's houses, which was donated to the Historical Society by her niece Ellen Revelle. The exhibit is co-curated by Peter Jensen and John Durant, both former longtime board members of the Torrey Pines Conservancy.

For more information: lajollahistory.org/exhibitions/current-exhibitions/



Photo by John Durant

Museum Shop Spotlight

by Nancy Walters

The Museum Shop would like to highlight the beautiful items provided to us by basket artist Marianne Furtado. Although she is not a docent, Marianne collects Torrey needles (not from the Reserve!) and uses them to weave some lovely baskets and decorated gourds that she generously donates to the shop. Thank you, Marianne!



What's Blooming: Uncommon Plants along the Trails

Article and photos by Donna Close

As we transition into spring, the plants and wildflowers are responding quickly. What a difference a week can make. Common wildflowers just starting to bloom include the common phacelia (purple), popcorn flower (white), California poppy (yellow), and groundsel (yellow). While Guy Fleming gets the most variety, there is always something unique to find on other trails.



Wild Onion, Red-Skin Onion (*Allium haematochiton*)

The wild onion grows in the most unlikely spot. It pops out through the hard surface of the Linda Vista formation. Its one-inch oblong bulbs are reddish in color. The plant is edible, and this California native makes an appearance from March to May. It is most visible from the trail below Red Butte.



Stinging Lupine (*Lupinus hirsutissimus*)

The stinging lupine grows in coastal sage scrub and chaparral communities. Unlike other lupines, this one has prickly hairs all over its stems and leaves. This showy pink annual has made its home on the south-facing slopes of the Parry Grove Trail. It is popular with pollinators and supports birds and caterpillars. With a good rainy season, it blooms from March to May.



Ground Pink, Fringed Lianthus (*Lianthus dianthiflorus*)

A member of the phlox family, these annual wildflowers are endemic to Southern California. They prefer growing in open sandy places. They grow low to the ground, and you



will often find them in mass on the west hillside and across the trail as you approach the South Overlook of Guy Fleming. These are some of the earliest spring flowers and typically bloom from February to April.

Biscuit Root, Shiny Lomatium (*Lomatium lucidum*)

Biscuit root has been emerging over the last month or so. It can grow up to 1½ feet and is found in chaparral and coastal sage scrub communities. As with other members of the carrot family, the short flower stalks branch out of a single stalk. It is often found in partly shaded areas and has dark toothy green leaves and small yellow flowers that turn into purplish seed pods. This is a host plant for the anise swallowtail butterfly. You can find it growing among the polypod ferns on Guy Fleming, along the middle section of the park road, and at the top part of most trails. This plant can be found from January to April.



Pigmy Weed, Pigmy Stonecrop (*Crassula connata*)

This very small, often overlooked annual succulent (to 2") can be seen growing throughout the Reserve. It prefers open sandy areas, but can be found in slightly moist spots. It tends to be green when in shaded areas (look for an example on North Broken Hill Trail), but is most visible when it is a patch of red along the road and trails.



Granny's Hairnet, Woodland Threadstem, Fairymist (*Pterostegia drymarioides*)

How can you not love a plant called granny's hairnet? This small member of the buckwheat family can be easily overlooked.

A low-growing, spreading annual with tiny flowers and reddish stems and leaves, it makes an appearance from March to July and can be found in coastal

sage scrub. Look for it on the Guy Fleming Trail, where patches are popping up on the west slope near the South Overlook.



Flower Photography Walk

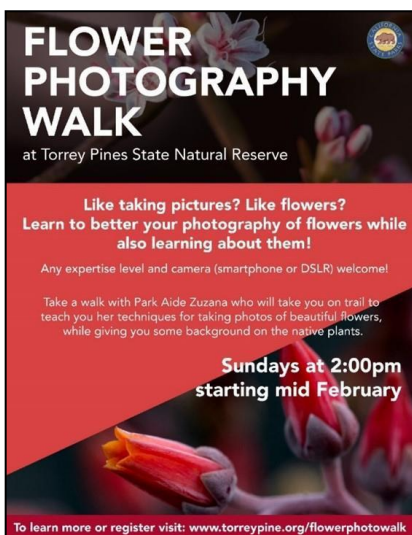
by Zuzana Volny, Park Aide

I will be doing a Flower Photography Walk on Sundays starting in mid-February for Torrey Pines visitors. I have posted a few flyers at the TIK and inside and outside the Lodge. Feel free to tell visitors about it!

Visitors can learn more and sign up by going to the website on the flyer: torreypine.org/flowerphotowalk

Any level of photography experience is welcome (smartphones too!). I'll be covering the basics of photography and macrophotography, and then we will go on trail to take photos of flowers and learn about native plants.

Each walk will be limited to 10 participants. If enough docents express interest in learning about flower photography, I will create a separate walk just for you.



In Memoriam: Marc Gittelsohn

Docent Marc Gittelsohn passed away on February 3, 2023. He became a docent in 1985 and was instrumental in setting up the library for the Docent Society, having been head of the Undergraduate Libraries at both UC Berkeley and UCSD. He was named Docent of the Month in 1994 for his work supporting the docent library. Barbara Wallach commented, "He always had a book in his hand and increased our docent library collection three-fold." [Click here](#) for *Union Tribune*-Obituary

Rejoice!

by Rhea Bridy

Rain promised

Sea Dahlia delivered

Birds, Ground Squirrels

Bees, Earth, Sun, Ourselves

A star is born

Rejoice!



EXTREME LOW TIDES

Article and photos by Ingo Renner, Senior Park Aide

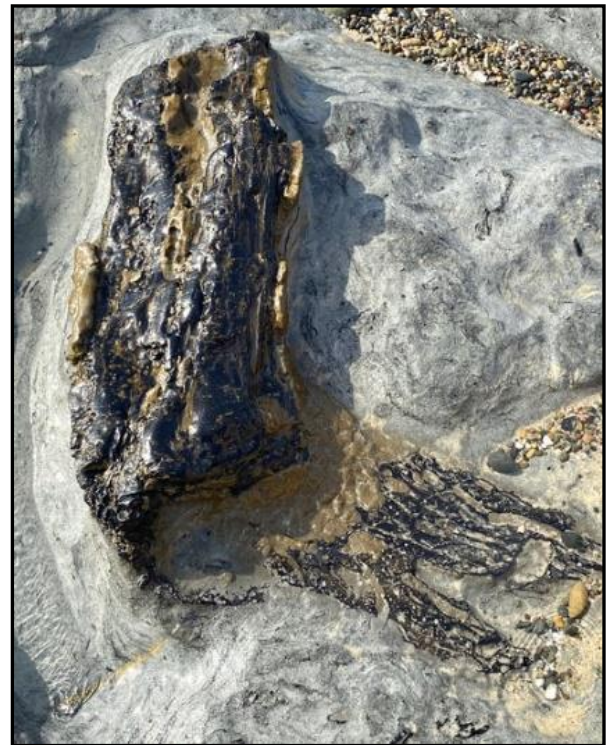
On January 23, a unique set of circumstances led to a rare chance to explore the usually hidden tide pools of Torrey Pines State Beach. The combination of king tides and loss of sand from winter storms enabled beachcombers to find uniquely eroded rock formations, fossilized logs, and marine life.

King tides happen when the moon and sun are both at their nearest to Earth, exerting maximum gravitational fields and causing extreme high and low tides on the same day. This was the case on January 23, with a seven-foot high tide and a minus-two-foot low tide.

The most common question from beach visitors this time of year? “How did you bring all those pebbles onto the beach?” You can confidently tell them that our maintenance crew did not bring them in with a bulldozer; rather, it is part of an annual cycle, with spring tides bringing the sand back onshore, covering up most of the rocks again.



Rock formation exposed by -2 ft. tide



Fossilized log



Nudibranch

Torrey Pines Book Club

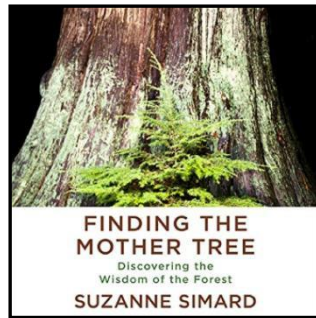
We will continue to meet via Zoom on the second Tuesday of each month at 1:00 pm. Please notify **Annette Ring** if you plan to participate or if you need any extra help getting connected.

When: Tuesday, March 14, 1:00 pm.

What: *Finding the Mother Tree: Discovering the Wisdom of the Forest* by Suzanne Simard

Amazon says:

Suzanne Simard brings us into her world, the intimate world of trees, in which she brilliantly illuminates the fascinating and vital truths – that trees are not simply the source of timber or pulp, but are a complicated, interdependent circle of life; that forests are social, cooperative creatures connected through underground networks by which trees communicate their vitality and vulnerabilities with communal lives not that different from our own.



Simard writes –in inspiring, illuminating, and accessible ways – how trees, living side by side for hundreds of years, have evolved, how they learn and adapt their behaviors, recognize neighbors, compete and cooperate with one another with sophistication, characteristics ascribed to human intelligence, traits that are the essence of civil societies. At the center of it all, are the Mother Trees: the mysterious, powerful forces that connect and sustain the others that surround them.

Simard writes of her own life, born and raised into a logging world in the rainforests of British Columbia, of her days as a child spent cataloging the trees from the forest and how she came to love and respect them. She is a pioneer on the frontier of plant communication and intelligence; her TED talks have been viewed by more than 10 million people worldwide.

All TPDS docents are welcome. Meetings usually last a couple of hours.

April 11: *Entangled Life: How Fungi Make Our Worlds, Change Our Minds & Shape Our Futures* by Merlin Sheldrake.

Torrey Pines Docent Society Bird Survey: February 2023

*Number of species: 80
(+1 other taxa)*

Blue-winged Teal 1
Northern Shoveler 11
Gadwall 42
American Wigeon 48
Mallard 41
Northern Pintail 63
Green-winged Teal 67
Canvasback 4
Lesser Scaup 31
Bufflehead 24
Red-breasted Merganser 6
Ruddy Duck 4
California Quail 4
Pied-billed Grebe 1
Western Grebe 7
Mourning Dove 62
White-throated Swift 14
Anna's Hummingbird 75
Allen's Hummingbird 30
hummingbird sp. 5
Virginia Rail 1
American Coot 30

Long-billed Curlew 1
Willet 4
Heermann's Gull 8
Western Gull 105
California Gull 127
Black-vented Shearwater 300
Brandt's Cormorant 725
Double-crested Cormorant 6
Brown Pelican 245
Great Blue Heron 2
Great Egret 6
Snowy Egret 2
Osprey 2
Northern Harrier 1
Sharp-shinned Hawk 1
Cooper's Hawk 1
Red-shouldered Hawk 1
Red-tailed Hawk 10
Belted Kingfisher 2
Nuttall's Woodpecker 17
Northern Flicker 5
American Kestrel 8
Peregrine Falcon 1
Black Phoebe 10
Say's Phoebe 8
Cassin's Kingbird 11

Hutton's Vireo 4
California Scrub-Jay 17
American Crow 85
Common Raven 22
Northern Rough-winged Swallow 1
Barn Swallow 1
Bushtit 60
Wrentit 75
Ruby-crowned Kinglet 3
Blue-gray Gnatcatcher 3
House Wren 3
Bewick's Wren 34
California Thrasher 17
Northern Mockingbird 8
Western Bluebird 5
Hermit Thrush 9
American Robin 86
House Sparrow 8
House Finch 146
Lesser Goldfinch 22
Dark-eyed Junco 6
White-crowned Sparrow 52
Golden-crowned Sparrow 7
Savannah Sparrow 2
Song Sparrow 30

California Towhee 78
Spotted Towhee 24
Western Meadowlark 24
Red-winged Blackbird 25
Orange-crowned Warbler 25
Common Yellowthroat 7
Yellow-rumped Warbler 115
Townsend's Warbler 1

Observers: Andy Rathbone, Donna Mancusco, Marty Hale, Tsaiwei Olee, Kathy Dickey, Kathy Estey, Debbie Regottaz, Steve Neal, Eva Armi, Lisa Kakone, Janice Barnard, Nancy Richardson, David Walker, Medi Denker, Jean Kelleher, Gary Grantham, Gabriele Wienhausen

View this checklist online at ebird.org/checklist/S127974960

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



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