

TORREYANA

THE DOCENT NEWSLETTER FOR
TORREY PINES
STATE NATURAL RESERVE

Issue 464

March 2024

New Discoveries in the Flora of TPSNR

by Joan R. Simon

At the February 10 general meeting, Dr. Jon Rebman, Curator of Botany at the San Diego Natural History Museum (SDNHM), spoke to the Docent Society about new discoveries of flora at Torrey Pines and throughout San Diego County.

First, Dr. Rebman took us on a quick tour of the flora in San Diego County, one of the most diverse counties in the country. We have 2,672 documented plant taxa, with 2,446 plant species that are native and 772 (almost 30%) that are non-native, many of which have become naturalized. Altogether, they comprise 163 families and 879 genera. There are 36 endemic plants (i.e., unique to the county), plus 28 near-endemic, which means the majority are within the county lines, with maybe one or two populations outside. (Dr. Rebman pointed out that county boundaries are political and show no respect for biology.) There are over 266 “sensitive” plant taxa, some state and federally listed. “We are finding new things all the time,” Dr. Rebman said; there have been 40-50 in the past couple of years (including non-natives). Some are even new to science, e.g. *Cuscuta psorothamnensis* in the Morning Glory (*Convolvulaceae*) family in 2018; *Malacothamnus enigmaticus* in the Mallow (*Malvaceae*) family in 2019 (see below); and



Docent General Meeting

Date: Saturday, March 9, 9:00 am

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

Speaker: Dr. Reinhard (Ron) Flick, Research Associate at Scripps Institution of Oceanography (SIO) and a consulting coastal oceanographer

Topic: Not Your Grandma's Sea Level! King Tides and Sea Level Rise in Southern California

Peak high tides and sea level provide the background conditions for wave storms to cause coastal flooding, damage, and erosion. Mean sea level rise acceleration over the coming decades and centuries adds a new element to coastal hazards not experienced by humans since large-scale “permanent” shoreline development began, perhaps 5,000 years ago. Dr. Flick will clarify southern California peak high tide patterns and some of their consequences and discuss observations of mean sea level and sea level fluctuations, and what the future may bring on our coast.

Dr. Flick retired as Staff Oceanographer and Oceanography Program Manager from California State Parks, Divisions of Boating and Waterways and Natural Resources in 2020. He is one of the founders of the SIO Center for Coastal Studies.

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

Nemacladus twisselmannii var. *botanywomanae* in the Bellflower (*Campanulaceae*) family in 2020.

One way they are being found is through iNaturalist. To say Dr. Rebman is a fan of iNaturalist would be an extreme understatement. In fact, the identification platform is a lifeline for him and other scientists and lets them keep tabs on what is going on in the field. It is the main way citizen-scientists (such as docents) can share their finds, whether these are plants they've seen many times over or ones that are unique to them – and maybe even to scientists. Dr.

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Rebman said he spends many hours on iNaturalist every week. "I am using every single one of you that is out there doing shots of plants, because once I verify whatever observations you made, we download them into our databases. It has really increased our knowledge of the distribution of plants and plant diversity."

iNaturalist is a free app easily downloaded to a mobile phone. Photos can then be uploaded to iNaturalist. It is also a two-way street: "We can contact observers and, if it's a new plant, we can ask the observer to go back and get a specimen of the plant," Dr. Rebman explained. Observers are even being included as authors of scientific papers because of their findings.

SDNHM was contracted to conduct six field visits to TPSNR in 2023 to update documentation of the plant biodiversity at the Reserve. Financial support came from California State Parks and the Torrey Pines Conservancy. The survey yielded significant results, with 85 new plant records added to the flora, including 22 added as verified iNaturalist observations. This was nearly 14% of the known flora. In all, 239 new plant specimens were collected and added to the collection at the SDNHM, which was first started in the 1870s. Dr. Rebman thanked **Margaret Fillius** and Anna Arft, a science volunteer at SDNHM, for helping to collect the plant specimens.

Here are some basic facts about the flora of TPSNR. We have 710 different plants on the checklist. As in the county overall, 67% of the flora is native and 33% is non-native; 52 are "sensitive" plants ("not just the Torrey pine is rare"), including the San Diego sea dahlia and coast barrel cactus. Two are on the California endangered species (including *Dudleya brevifolia*), and two are federally endangered species. Only 62% of the flora has been documented with specimens and only 63% has iNat photo observations.

The Sunflower Family (*Asteraceae*), as expected, was the most prevalent with 115 taxa; grasses (*Poaceae*) came second; atypically, the third largest was the Mustard family (*Brassicaceae*) – "yes, there are native mustards;" fourth are the legumes (*Fabaceae*).

Five of the six visits to Torrey Pines were east of North Torrey Pines Road, along the Peñasquitos Lagoon and Flintkote Trail, as well as in the Extension. The researchers found new bulrushes and sedges, dodder, a hairy coffee fern, and a couple of new willows that hadn't been documented. In their one visit to the main Reserve, they encountered depressions that were like vernal pools and provided a lot of new records, and even a new plant family for Torrey Pines, *Elatinaceae*. [See slides 14 – 28 in the PowerPoint presentation for photos of the newly found native flora; see link at the end of the article.] (Continued on pg. 7.)

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General Meeting Minutes: February 10, 2024

Speaker: Dr. Jon Rebman, Curator of Botany and Interim VP of Science and Conservation, San Diego Natural History Museum (SDNHM), speaking on new discoveries of plants at TPSNR (see article on pg. 1). Approximately 80 docents attended the meeting.

Business meeting: Vice President **Harry Proctor** called the meeting to order.

Parking passes: Louis Sands passed out annual park parking passes. Anyone who did not get their pass at the meeting can pick one up from Louis at the Reserve or contact **Lynne Truong** to arrange a pickup. Parking passes for the church will be available at the next general meeting.

Any docent who received a parking ticket from this meeting should contact **Harry Proctor** to get it dismissed.

Docent of the Month: Laura Jefferson is the docent of the month. Laura is an active Whacky Weeder and puts in a lot of hours at the TIK. (See pg. 4.)

Superior Achievement Award from CA State Parks: Ranger Stephanie Adams presented **Barbara Wallach** with this award for her significant contribution to interpretation and education at TPSNR. This long-overdue award recognized Barbara's tireless work in many areas since she first became a docent in 1993. She was instrumental in starting the Children's Program with Joan Nimick in 1993 and organized the Whacky Weeders some years later. She has led countless docent and public educational walks and presentations and is frequently the go-to person for all sorts of TPSNR questions and issues. And she is well loved for just being her inimitable feisty self.



Photo by Herb Knufken

Roving Interpreter: Harry Proctor and Gabriele Wienhausen are leading an ad hoc committee to review and evaluate this group. They are looking for a couple of docents to join them. Contact them to submit an application or suggest a docent for the committee.

Standing Rule Change: The vote for the change was about 60% in favor, 40% against. Going forward, 20 hours of the required 84 hours must be with Lodge hosting or the Children's Program in order to count towards application for Lifetime Membership.

Earth Day: TPSNR will celebrate Earth Day on Sunday, April 21. Contact **Lynne Truong** to help with this event.

Children's Program: On Feb. 14, **Barbara Wallach** will lead an orientation for any docent interested in learning the Children's Program's "tricks of the trade."

Lodge Hosting Training: To learn Lodge hosting duties, shadow a skilled host. There is also a training tape made by **Steve Neal** to view for help. Remember to log your time for this into Better Impact.

New Coffee Urn: **Marian Edelbrock** instructed us to "push not pull" on the lever of the new coffee urn in order to dispense coffee.

Lodge Centennial Mugs: Extra mugs that were made for the Lodge Centennial celebration were available for docents to take. They were all gone by the end of the meeting.



Next Monthly Board Meeting

Date: Wednesday, March 6

Time: 1 – 3 pm

Place: Children's Pavilion (or docent library, depending on weather or number attending)

Everyone is welcome, but please let a board member know if you're coming.

See pg. 2 for list of board members.

Docent of the Month:

Laura Jefferson

Photo by Herb Knufken

I was very surprised, and also very honored, to be named Docent of the Month.

In 1980, I moved from Ohio to San Diego. I discovered Torrey Pines soon after starting to work in the pharmacy at Scripps Memorial Hospital. I began by hiking down the Broken Hill Trail to the beach and back up. I eventually started hiking more of the trails, and started thinking, "I'm not in Ohio anymore."



I joined the Whacky Weeders when I first retired in 2019. Since graduating with the amazing docent class of 2023, I've been volunteering at the TIK with an awesome mentor, **Coach Vance**.

I'm amazed by how knowledgeable the docents are, and I learn something new from them and from visitors every day.

What's On the Beach? Jingle Shells

Article and photo by Kathy Dickey

On a sunny day in early February, I took a walk on South Cardiff State Beach to look for jingle shells. The west side of the parking lot and most of the sand were covered with cobblestones. It was right after a stormy king tide day, and I did not expect to find many shells because jingle shells are very thin and fragile, but in less than 20 minutes, I found three shiny intact ones and some pieces of others.

Jingle shells (*Anomia peruviana*) are common on all our San Diego County beaches. Often confused with the similar Atlantic coast jingle shell (*Anomia simplex*), they have various nicknames: false jingle shell, pearly jingle shell, mermaid's toes, saddle oyster, potato chip shell, or gold shell. Found from coastal central California to Peru, these

thin bivalves are irregularly circular or oval-shaped and up to two inches in diameter. They are called jingle shells because they jingle when many are collected from the beach, and they are often used for jewelry or wind chimes.



The photo does not do justice to how beautifully iridescent and shiny they look, as if they had just gotten a manicure. The lower shell or "valve" of the jingle shell is white, while the color of the upper valve can be shiny lemon-yellow, golden, brownish, silvery black, or pale buff. The upper valve is the shell most often seen on the beach.

These bivalve mollusks live in subtidal areas to about 50 feet deep. The lower valve is flat and has a hole in it where tufts of filament, called byssal threads or byssus, grow out to attach it to rocks, dead shells, or waterlogged wood. The byssus becomes calcified and permanently fixed. The upper valve is rounded and movable. Jingle shells are filter feeders. They create a current of water that flows through their gills, where microscopic food particles like plankton and organic matter are trapped and consumed.

Jingle shells reproduce sexually through spawning. There are usually male and female jingle shells, but a few individuals are hermaphroditic. They release gametes into the water column, usually in the summertime. The young hatch as planktonic larvae that drift in the water, eating organic matter for several weeks before settling to the ocean bottom and metamorphosing into their adult form.

References:

Beyond the Beach Blanke: A Field Guide to Southern California Coastal Wildlife by Marina Curtis Tidwell, 2005, Mountain Press.

The Beachcomber's Guide to Seashore Life of California by J. Duane Sept, 2009, Harbour Publishing Co.

beachchairscientist.wordpress.com/2012/12/05/jingle-shells-jingle-shells-jingle-all-the-way/

What's New in the Reserve

by Louis Sands, State Park Interpreter I

We survived the atmospheric rivers, and now it's time to prep for the amazing flower display that should follow! Docents, if you love flowers but need a knowledge refresh, head to our website: torreypine.org. Click on "Volunteering." Select "Docent Login" from the drop-down menu. Enter your username/password, and remember they are case sensitive with no spaces. On the "Protected: Docent Links" webpage, click on the first blue box, "Docent Document Repository." Scroll down to "Docent Refresh Resources" and click on "Docent Refresh Training." You will find a video presentation on plants delivered by our beloved docent botanist, **Margaret Fillius**.

Our website also contains helpful information on the Reserve's plant communities. Simply click on the "Nature Center" tab found on the opening webpage and scroll down to "Plants." If you want a reference that you can take to the trails, visit the gift shop in the Lodge for a field guide, check out material from our library, and/or download the iNaturalist app for plant identification. Enjoy the exploration and discovery!

If you love flowers AND working with kids, then consider assisting with the Junior Rangers program this month. The March program will focus on flowers, their anatomical features and functions. The program will take place on March 9 and 10, and March 16 and 17. Send an email to Senior Interpretive Park Aide Zuzana Volny at zuzana.volny@parks.ca.gov.

Thanks, and we'll see you 'round the Reserve!

BLIK – Learn at Lunch

Date/Time: Thursday, March 7, 12 noon

Location: BLIK (North Parking Lot)

Speaker: Mukesh Mehta* (class of 2023), California Licensed Professional (PG) and Certified Engineering Geologist (CEG)

Topic: The Geology of Los Peñasquitos Lagoon

Bring your lunch, a chair, your curiosity, and any questions about our lagoon. No need to register. You may claim one hour on Better Impact under Training, Continuing Education (up to 12 hours per year). BLIK Learn at Lunch is the first Thursday of every month at noon at the BLIK. All docents, park employees, and visitors are welcome.

*You can read Mukesh's DOM in the November 2023 *Torreyana* [here](#).

Museum Shop Spotlight

by Nancy Walters

We are so fortunate to work with a wonderful group of retired military woodturners who take our dead Torrey pine trees and turn them into beautiful objects! Our Visitor Center shop has just received 75 creatively shaped wood items from the organization Turn Around Vets. Hopefully there will still be some of these items available by the time this goes to print, so stop in to the shop soon for the best selection!



BLIK: Temporary Location

by Rosemary Wareham

The BLIK will reopen every Friday through Sunday in March, but the location will change. There is going to be construction in the North Beach parking lot near the bathrooms and the usual BLIK site, lasting until summer. Among other things, the ramps under the bridge are being fixed. While this work is going on, the BLIK will be setting up near the lifeguard trailers. All of our equipment has been moved to the shed in the northeast corner of the parking lot (where the holiday party was held). The Learn at Lunch series will also be held at this location during the construction.

March 14 CEED Event San Dieguito River Valley Conservancy Monthly Walk n Talk

Date: Thursday, March 14

Time: 9:00 – 11am

Location: Pamo Valley, Cleveland National Forest (north of Ramona)

Directions: to be sent to participants

Leader: Juan A. Reynoso, Kumeyaay Storyteller and Educator

RSVP: Lisa Kakone

Limited to 20 docents on a first come, first served basis. Carpooling is encouraged.

Creature Feature: Peregrine Falcon *(Falco peregrinus)*

by Laura Chaing, Senior Interpretive Park Aide

The fastest animal in the world nests in our cliffs, primarily hunts birds, and so on and so on.... Many of us have collected countless fun facts about our charismatic friend, the Peregrine Falcon. What a treat to have several resident adults living at Torrey Pines year-round! Keep an eye in the sky, because we'll be seeing more activity from these birds in the coming months.

In the first week of February, I observed the male mounting the female peregrine falcon for a moment, both later flying off and executing a midair food transfer. An hour later, I heard the female Peregrine Falcon screeching and diving at a Red-tailed Hawk to chase it away from the Guy Fleming Trail. Courtship season is here, and a combination of territorial behavior and mating displays around the cliffs of the Reserve will likely become increasingly common as we approach spring.

If you aren't sure where to find our Peregrine Falcons, here are a few location tips:

South Beach: Near the cliffs that start by Lifeguard Tower 1, bring some binoculars and you may get a good view of Peregrine Falcons in the air or on the cliffs. If the tide is low enough to safely walk on the beach, about 100 yards south of the first lifeguard tower, you may notice the peregrines will regularly fly and perch in the various caves along the cliff face. Because our main pair of Peregrine Falcons nest in the same area in our cliffs every year, they are also commonly observed along this stretch of beach and cliff. Sometimes you can even hear their screeching and calls over the waves.

Guy Fleming, South Overlook: At the overlook, look to the cliffs towards the south. Sometimes one or both of our main Peregrine Falcon pair will be perched on the sandstone cliffs. This is a good location for spotting the falcons and a great place to interpret and engage with them. If you have binoculars, you may even see the falcons' droppings on their respective sandstone perches, demonstrating how these are regular locations the birds will likely return to in the future. If they are not perched, sometimes you may also see the Peregrine Falcons fly by (while you also keep an eye out for whales, dolphins, sharks, sea lions, and other marine life!).

Guy Fleming, parallel to the ocean: As you walk between the South and North Overlooks, sometimes a Peregrine Falcon may fly by, along the cliff edge. Come spring, when their chicks have hatched, the young falcons are sometimes so hungry you can hear their begging calls over the sounds of the waves!

Guy Fleming, North Overlook: At this overlook, you may see Peregrine Falcons flying by along the cliff or perched on various Torrey pines (both fallen dead trees and living ones). If not, Ravens, Red-tailed Hawks, and American Kestrels are also common visitors to this location, and the territorial female Peregrine Falcon may dive at some of these birds and chase them away. It is a great birdwatching location for a variety of birds.

Lodge/Visitor Center: An uncommon location to see Peregrine Falcons is at the Lodge. On occasion, I have noticed the female Peregrine Falcon in pursuit of a Red-tailed Hawk. When she is feeling particularly territorial, it seems she makes sure any hawks are far away from the Guy Fleming Trail before backing off.

Flat Rock: In 2023, for the first time, we noticed a second Peregrine Falcon nest established in the cliffs of Torrey Pines near Flat Rock. It was about 50 yards north of the Beach Trail steps. It remains to be seen whether this second pair of adult Peregrine Falcons will nest there again in 2024, but that is an exciting possibility. I've noticed the second pair of Peregrine Falcons fly along the cliffs on either side of Flat Rock throughout fall and winter, so they are quite active in our area.

Sightings are never guaranteed, but we have the special opportunity to observe multiple resident birds and learn their favorite spots and behavior quirks. Good luck watching for our Peregrine Falcons – and if you see them, don't be shy about sharing your experience with visitors, fellow docents, and staff!



Photo by Herb Knufken; Guy Fleming Trail, Feb. 11, 2024

(Flora, continued from page 2.)

The survey's biggest discovery was *Sphenopholis interrupta* ssp. *californica*, an annual wedge grass. It was found along the North Fork of the Broken Hill Trail, "just walking where everyone walks."

Originally, it had been known in only one place, in northwestern Baja California and that one specimen (the type specimen used to describe the grass for science) had been collected in the 1800s, so this grass had been lost to science for over 100 years. Today that area has been given over to agriculture and "completely blitzed as far as natural habitats are concerned." Botanist Margie Mulligan, a SDNHM Botany Department Associate and her colleague, Jesse Vinje, found it in 2020 in Carlsbad and a few nearby spots. The surprise was also seeing it growing at Torrey Pines. "It is probably the rarest plant we have in San Diego County," Dr. Rebman explained.



Among the non-natives found were weeping bottle brush, pokeweed, thistles, maiten tree, mallows, and grasses. A big surprise was encountering **blackberries** growing in large patches in the wetland area where the fresh water stream enters Peñasquitos Lagoon. [See slides 29 – 33 for photos of newly found non-natives.]



Whacky Weeder Alert: The survey group found one area that had a lot of wattle, *Acacia cyclops*, in the eastern part of the Extension, with all the worst features of a non-native: It produces copious amounts of seed, reproduces quickly and pushes out the native plants.

This year the SDNHM will be celebrating its 150th anniversary. A birthday gift to the community will be a native plant garden around the museum, which should be



open by this summer. The other project is an Urban Canyon Initiative over the next three years. San Diego urban canyons have been known for harboring and protecting multiple species of flora and fauna, despite the heavy urbanization of the county. The project seeks to find out what is left in the canyons of San Diego today and will endeavor to protect that local biodiversity.

We hope Dr. Rebman will be able to do further surveys at Torrey Pines and will come back to update us on his findings.

Dr. Rebman's talk can be accessed here:

Audio only: vimeo.com/911913166?share=copy

PowerPoint presentation: tinyurl.com/Plant-PDF-Feb10-2024

The WannaBees Project

by Robert James

Even in the winter at the Reserve, one can often hear a fleeting buzz and spot a black and yellow bumble bee flying about or spy a shiny metallic sweat bee in the early-blooming flowers. This reminds us that some native bee species are always active. But how many of San Diego County's over 700 native bees are here in the Reserve?

This exciting community science project is a collaborative effort that includes UC San Diego and the Pollinator Lab at the University of Oklahoma. The goal of the project is to use photography to document and monitor the native bee species and their associated plant species. A similar project is ongoing at nearby Cabrillo National Monument.

Our intrepid (and growing) WannaBees group of docents and volunteers surveys nine routes throughout the Reserve at least once a month. Now beginning our third year, we have made more than 1,400 observations of native bees representing all six families in North America. Collaborating entomologists kindly provide the identifications and have educated us about this underappreciated biodiversity. In addition, through our surveys, we have better documented the status and distribution of other wildlife species.

This month, we are starting a "Bee of the Month" column in the *Torreyana* to educate our fellow docents and other stakeholders about these fascinating native pollinators that are so important to the survival of native plants at Torrey Pines. The featured bee will be one that is active and frequently occurring during that month. There could be an opportunity for you to share it with visitors, including school groups.

In addition, we will host a workshop this spring to describe the project and show how to use the iNaturalist.org online data platform. There will be guided practice on taking

suitable photographs (by either camera or iPhone). Some of us started without any fieldwork experience and were not good at taking photos with a phone. But we all learned and got better. Participating in the WannaBees is very doable for anyone. We hope you attend the workshop and try it out.

For more information, please contact **Gabriele Wienhausen** or go to torreypine.org/volunteering/bee-monitoring-project/ For an earlier article on this project, see the December 2022 *Torreyana* [here](#).

Bee of the Month: Red-tailed Micro-shortface Bee

by Jess Mullins; photo by Tina Tong on iNaturalist

This is the first in a series of monthly articles on the bees of Torrey Pines.

The inaugural Bee of the Month is the red-tailed micro-shortface bee (*Micralictoides ruficaudus*). This species in the sweat bee family Halictidae is about the size of a grain of rice (4.5 mm, 1/10 inch) and is named for its red-brown abdomen and very short face. Its range runs in coastal areas from northern Baja California to Marin County. This is just one of the 700+ bee species found in San Diego County. Like most bees, this bee is solitary, meaning it does not have a queen or a hive, and solitary mothers build single nest cells.

This bee can be found across its range in the early spring months and is commonly found at TPSNR in March and April. Its flight season is in sync with its floral host, the California poppy (*Eschscholzia californica*). Nearly all bees collect pollen as a protein source and nectar for carbohydrates. Some species, like the red-tailed micro-shortface bee, specialize on pollen resources from a single species, but they will drink nectar from other flowering plants. This specialist bee collects pollen exclusively from the California poppy.

Source: Bohart, George E., and Terry L. Griswold. "A revision of the Dufourea genus *Micralictoides* Timberlake (Hymenoptera: Halictidae)." *The Pan-Pacific Entomologist* 63.2 (1987): 178.

Check out more of the wild bees that The WannaBees have found at the park this year here: inaturalist.org/observations?place_id=any&q=TPSNRBeeMonitoring2024&search_on=tags&taxon_id=630955&view=species

[Jess Mullins is a PhD student at UCSD and a WannaBee volunteer.]



Children's Program

by Janet Ugalde, Program Director

THANK YOU, Children's Program docents, for adapting to numerous cancellations and reschedules this winter!! Our awesome Louis Sands (Interpreter 1) is working hard to accommodate students whose visits are rained out. Please check our sign-up site frequently and consider joining us for one of our make-up visits, which will be held on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays.

Welcome to our newest team members: **Mary Makowski** (2024) and **Wayne Kornreich** (2009). I know your participation will bring you pride & joy!

New Woodrat Taxidermy in Museum

by Zuzana Volny, Senior Park Aide; photo by Roger Isaacson

In February, we received a new taxidermy of a woodrat. Through the process, we learned that taxidermizing a woodrat is quite difficult. Their fur is subject to "slipping," which means it easily falls out. The woodrat is staged in the same location as the last one, in the west museum display.

We understand that touch is an important part of learning, but please do not allow anyone to touch this new woodrat taxidermy. Although this woodrat is off limits to protect our investment, we will be also receiving a small woodrat pelt that the public will be allowed to touch.



From the January [1980 Torreyana](#)

Check out the woodrat article and see what the *Torreyana* looked like 44 years ago.

CEED: San Diego Botanic Gardens

by Mukesh Mehta

“We are going to see the world today,” said the group leader as we started our tour at the San Diego Botanic Gardens, located in Encinitas. A total of 18 Torrey Pines docents participated in the February 22 CEED event (see photo below). We were split into two groups of nine, one of which was led by **Mary Friestedt**, a Torrey Pines docent with our Children’s Program.

We learned that this 37-acre urban oasis has 29 unique gardens, plus a conservatory for tropical plants. The walking tour took us through gardens with plants and trees from around the world, including Africa, Australia/New Zealand, and North and South America. There are four miles of trails, some leading up to ocean views and through celebrated gardens, including the Hamilton Children’s Garden, the largest children’s garden on the West Coast.

Who would imagine a rainforest in San Diego? Yes, a rainforest is thriving within the confines of SDBG, which also has North America’s largest public collection of bamboo with over 100 varieties. The San Diego Zoo used bamboo from the Botanic Garden to feed the panda bears when they were living at the zoo. Our tour took us to the bodhi or peepul tree (*Ficus religiosa*), a fig tree sacred to Hindus and Buddhists: this species is the oldest living planted tree in the world. We also saw many plants familiar to us at Torrey Pines, including lemonade berry, yerba santa, toyon, deerweed, agave, and wart-stemmed ceanothus, in addition to several Torrey pines. Of course, all the plants and trees are sufficiently watered (with recycled water) and grown with fertilizers.

It was a gorgeous day, and everyone thoroughly enjoyed the beautiful gardens.



Torrey Pine Pollen Makers

by Rhea Bridy

Soon, green to golden brown,
burgeoning in sun-rain-sun-gusty-upswept
breeze,
wafting upwards toward little ancient
candlesticks, rosette receivers ready,
silently, poetically, the pollen makers renew an
ancient task.

Soon, February-March, Winter-Spring, the
pine cone coming to life.



Torrey Pines Book Club

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

When: Tuesday, March 12, 1:00 pm

What: *Being a Beast: Adventures Across the Species Divide* by Charles Foster

Amazon says:

How can we ever be sure that we really know the other? To test the limits of our ability to inhabit lives that are not our own, Charles Foster set out to know the ultimate other: the non-humans, the beasts. And to do that, he tried to be like them, choosing a badger, an otter, a fox, a deer, and a swift. He lived alongside badgers for weeks, sleeping in a sett in a Welsh hillside and eating earthworms, learning to sense the landscape through his nose rather than his eyes. He caught fish in his teeth while swimming like an otter; rooted through London garbage cans as an urban fox; was hunted by bloodhounds as a red deer, nearly dying in the snow. And he followed the swifts on their migration route over the Strait of Gibraltar, discovering himself to be strangely connected to the birds.

A lyrical, intimate, and completely radical look at the life of animals—human and other—*Being a Beast* mingles neuroscience and psychology, nature writing and memoir to cross the boundaries separating the species. It is an extraordinary journey full of thrills and surprises, humor and joy.

All TPDS docents are welcome. Meetings usually last an hour and a half.

April 9th: *I Contain Multitudes: The Microbes Within Us and a Grand View of Life* by Ed Yong



Torrey Pines Docent Society Bird Survey: February 2024

Number of species: 81
(+1 other taxa)

Blue-winged Teal 5
Cinnamon Teal 3
Northern Shoveler 6
Gadwall 3
American Wigeon 31
Mallard 11
Green-winged Teal 5
Canvasback 3
Redhead 5
Lesser Scaup 27
Bufflehead 2
Red-breasted Merganser 9
Ruddy Duck 1
California Quail 2
Pied-billed Grebe 1
Western Grebe 76
Mourning Dove 51
White-throated Swift 13
Anna's Hummingbird 60
Allen's Hummingbird 23

Virginia Rail 1
American Coot 76
Whimbrel 15
Long-billed Curlew 1
Marbled Godwit 3
Willet 4
Greater Yellowlegs 1
Western Gull 19
California Gull 1
gull sp. 1
Double-crested Cormorant 15
Brown Pelican 76
Snowy Egret 7
Great Egret 7
Great Blue Heron 3
White-faced Ibis 30
Turkey Vulture 1
Osprey 1
Cooper's Hawk 4
Red-shouldered Hawk 3
Red-tailed Hawk 9
Belted Kingfisher 1
Downy Woodpecker 2
Nuttall's Woodpecker 18

Northern Flicker 5
American Kestrel 8
Merlin 1
Peregrine Falcon 1
Black Phoebe 12
Say's Phoebe 7
Cassin's Kingbird 10
Hutton's Vireo 6
California Scrub-Jay 31
American Crow 24
Common Raven 44
Bushtit 95
Wrentit 110
Ruby-crowned Kinglet 3
Golden-crowned Kinglet 1
Blue-gray Gnatcatcher 2
California Gnatcatcher 12
House Wren 10
Bewick's Wren 38
California Thrasher 34
Northern Mockingbird 6
Hermit Thrush 2
House Finch 118
Lesser Goldfinch 26

Dark-eyed Junco 12
White-crowned Sparrow 20
Golden-crowned Sparrow 4
Savannah Sparrow 6
Song Sparrow 60
Lincoln's Sparrow 2
California Towhee 89
Rufous-crowned Sparrow 1
Spotted Towhee 31
Western Meadowlark 6
Red-winged Blackbird 5
Orange-crowned Warbler 17
Common Yellowthroat 7
Yellow-rumped Warbler 29

Participants: 10

Nancy Richardson,
Donna Mancuso, Kathy Estey
Robert Turner, Manolo Turner,
Lilly Tang, Debbie Regottaz,
Marty Hales, Tsaiwei Olee,
Robert James

View this checklist online at ebird.org/checklist/S161574819

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



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