



TORREYANA

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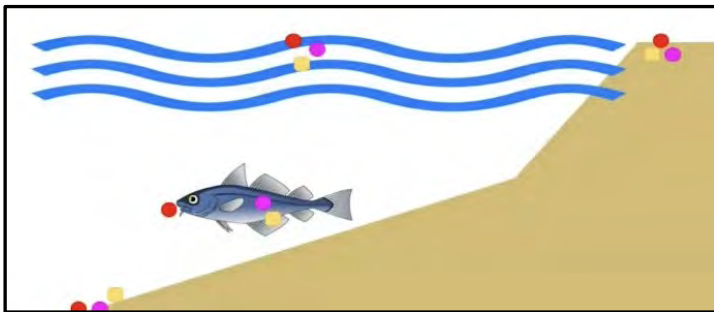
Plastics, Pollution, and Penguins

by Dan Hammer

For the second time in six months, Dr. Tammy Russell, a marine ornithologist and postdoctoral researcher at Scripps Institution of Oceanography, gave docents a lucid and engaging look at her work. At the November 2024 TPDS meeting, she summarized her groundbreaking research on tracking the elusive Brown Pelican. At the May meeting, she outlined her “scientific hobby,” studying plastic pollution and its effects on the seabirds of western North America and Antarctica.

Though she grew up on a farm in central California, Tammy has been fascinated with seabirds since childhood, when her family vacationed at the coast and her mother showed her a documentary on the albatross. As an undergraduate at UC Santa Cruz, she performed necropsies on seabirds and got “pissed off about plastics” that she found in the birds’ bellies.

Tammy’s plastics research focuses on microplastics, plastics under 5mm that come from two sources: *primary* plastics (such as microbeads and nurdles) that were created small and *secondary* plastics that are shed as microfibers from synthetic fabrics and as particles from larger plastics. Some primary plastics, the microbeads, have been banned but are still found in the oceans and on beaches around the world.



Microplastics are everywhere in the marine environment. Because they are mostly buoyant, many float on the surface, where they do the most damage to birds. But once they become covered with algae or bacteria, microplastics can sink through

Docent General Meeting

Date: Saturday, June 14, 9:00 am

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

Speaker: Dr. Katie Heineman, San Diego Zoo Wildlife Alliance

Topic: The Past, Present, and Future of Torrey Pine Trees

The Torrey pine has a complex relationship with traditional ideas of rarity and conservation status. To determine a forestry prescription for the management of these rare trees, the Zoo Wildlife Alliance has been conducting experimental outplantings, habitat modeling, and monitoring of Torrey pine stands within and outside its native range. Dr. Heineman will discuss early insights from these conservation activities, including how they affect our predictions of Torrey pines’ reactions to climate change.

Dr. Heineman is the Program Officer for Biodiversity Banking at the San Diego Zoo Wildlife Alliance. Her work focuses on ensuring that the genetic diversity of threatened species such as the Torrey pine is conserved in biological collections for future conservation action and research.

Refreshments: Docents with last names beginning with **D, E, F, G** will be responsible for providing snacks for this meeting.

the water column and be eaten by fish, and many are washed back ashore to be eaten by a variety of animals.

Although not all microplastics are innately harmful, they are produced using chemicals that are extremely toxic; they are also *hydrophobic* (repelling water) and attract and accumulate molecules with the same properties, such as pesticides, BPA, PCBs, and flame retardants.

(Cont. on pg. 3.)

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President's Message

Adaptation Manifests Continuation

During Dr. Tammy Russell's lecture at the May General Meeting, her discussion of three penguin species particularly resonated (see photo near the bottom of pg. 3). She highlighted how the Gentoo penguins, as opportunistic feeders, have shown remarkable adaptability in their diet, shifting to available food sources beyond just krill. This flexibility has allowed their population to grow, in stark contrast to the other two species, which rely heavily on krill and are now facing population declines. In nature, adaptation is the key to survival and success. Whether it's the Arctic fox changing its coat with the seasons or birds altering their migration routes in response to climate shifts, animals teach us that flexibility, awareness, and responsiveness are essential.

As docents, we are interpreters, educators, and ambassadors – and like the animals we represent, we thrive when we adapt. Just as animals evolve to meet the demands of their environment, we too must grow and adjust. Each group of visitors is different. Some come with curious minds and detailed questions, while others seek wonder and inspiration. Adapting your tone, language, and approach ensures that every visitor walks away with a memorable and meaningful experience. Like the octopus that changes color to blend in or stand out, a docent must know when to shift focus – whether to calm a restless school group or engage a particularly inquisitive guest.

Moreover, many animals develop tools or techniques to enhance their success. Crows use sticks to extract insects, and dolphins use sponges to protect their snouts. Similarly, docents benefit from using interpretive tools: props, analogies, storytelling, and humor can all enhance learning and connection. Don't be afraid to develop your toolkit.

Even more inspiring is the collaborative adaptation seen in animal communities. Bees, meerkats, and elephants all show us the power of working together to support a common goal. As docents, we are part of a larger team. Supporting one another, sharing insights, and learning from each other strengthens not only our individual work but also our entire docent community.

Nature reminds us: to thrive is to adapt. When we stay curious, flexible, and engaged, we mirror the resilience and ingenuity of the natural world – and become better docents because of it.

Matt Xavier

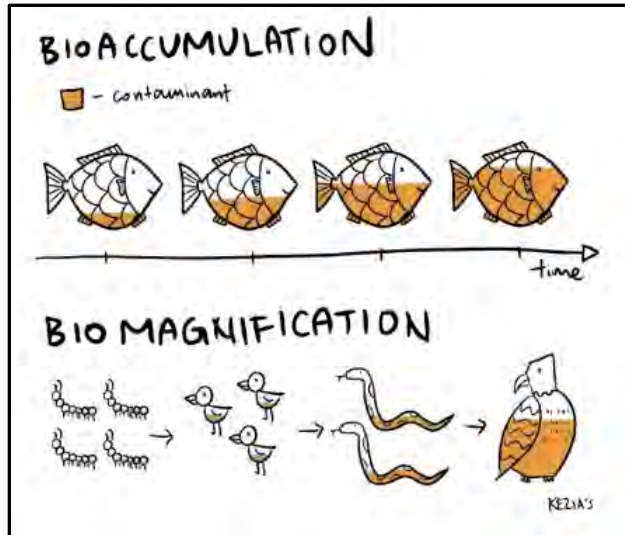
TPDS President



Contents

Plastics, Pollution, Penguins	1
President's Message	2
CEED Gonzales Canyon	4
Meeting Minutes	5
Docent of the Month	5
June CEED	5
Wine in the Pines	6
Youth Program	6
What's on the Beach	7
Blue-Eyed Grass	7
Bird of the Month	8
Bee of the Month	8
La Jolla Half Marathon	9
TP Book Club	10
Bird Survey	10

(Cont. from pg. 1.) These chemicals have an array of negative impacts on marine life – on their immune system, reproduction, nervous system, growth rates, and mortality. They build up in the marine food web through *bioaccumulation*, the increase of contaminants within one organism; and *bio magnification*, the increase and concentration of contaminants as they are passed up the food chain, as when a seabird eats a fish that has eaten krill.



As the production of plastics continues to increase, plastic pollution is a growing threat to marine animals and humans.

Tammy’s plastics-related research has three foci: local seabirds, balloon pollution at sea (“my nemesis”), and the Penguano Project (“my favorite”).

When she started at Scripps in 2018, Tammy found that there were beach survey programs all along the U.S. west coast (including Alaska) but none in San Diego County. She started a San Diego beach survey the following year and joined the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service’s BeachCOMBERS program, which coordinates beach studies from the Mexican border to Santa Cruz. Her San Diego project covers eight San Diego beaches with more than a dozen volunteer researchers; under permits from NOAA, they collected dead birds until avian flu hit and continue to perform necropsies to analyze their stomach contents. All seabirds that forage on the ocean surface had plastics in their stomachs; one Northern Fulmar had 661 pieces of microplastic and one entire balloon. The goal of this program is to create a long-term timeline of the effects of plastics on local seabirds.

Light-air-filled balloons can travel far when they are released, and they persist long after they are enjoyed by people. Tammy documents all large marine debris, particularly balloons. She spends a lot of time out at sea, where she always sees balloons, especially after Mother’s Day and Valentine’s Day. She provides documentation to the Surfrider Foundation to support its local initiatives to ban light-air-filled balloons, such as the ban recently enacted in Del Mar.

Shifting gears, Tammy described her work in “my favorite place in the whole world – Antarctica.” She said, “When I was little, I wanted either to be the first person on Mars or to work in Antarctica – and Antarctica was much more attainable.” During her first year at Scripps, several new studies documented the presence of marine microplastics on the Antarctic Peninsula but left open the question of how they arrived there. “It wasn’t the pristine experience that I had dreamed of,” she said, “but it got me there.”

In 2019, she started the Penguano Project to understand how plastics work their way through the food web of Antarctic penguins. Working in collaboration with NOAA, two labs at Scripps, and Birch Aquarium, Tammy sought to carry out research, reach out to the public about the impacts of plastic pollution, and mentor students through lab work.

Her research goal was to determine (a) how much and what types of plastic Antarctic penguins are eating and (b) whether there are differences among penguin colonies, species, or their diet. She hoped that the answers to these questions could help determine how to mitigate the pollution. (The ecosystem monitoring at NOAA’s two Antarctic research stations supports decision-making by the international Commission for the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources, which establishes conservation measures that determine the use of these resources.)

Tammy studied three species of brush-tailed penguins: the Adélie, the Gentoo, and the Chinstrap. They are all medium-sized (just over two feet tall), build their nests out of rocks and then “poop all over them” to bind them, and usually lay two eggs, which both male and female incubate.



The Adélie Penguin breeds all around the South Pole, eats almost exclusively krill, and is strongly dependent on sea ice. The Chinstrap is found further off on offshore islands and on the tip of the Antarctic Peninsula; it feeds in open water and depends on krill. Gentoo Penguins establish far-flung colonies and don’t associate with sea ice; they have a huge foraging range and a highly flexible diet that includes fish, squid, and a lot of krill.

In Tammy’s study area, populations of Adélie and Chinstrap Penguins are declining precipitously while the Gentoo population is increasing. With warming oceans and loss of sea ice, krill in this area cannot make it through the

winter, and the two species that rely on krill face massive challenges.

Now plastic pollution presents additional stressors to these species. Tammy and her collaborators are studying how much microplastic and what types each species ingests. They do this by collecting and analyzing these penguins' distinctive pink guano. (Before starting work on their limited Antarctic samples, they used massive amounts of guano from Birch Aquarium's Little Blue Penguin enclosure to train student volunteers and to test methods of sample processing and analysis.)

After drying the guano samples, the researchers analyze them, looking for microplastics and nanoplastics. Using a spectrometer, they can analyze these "suspicious particles" and determine whether they are plastics and, if so, what types of polymer they are.

The next step is to see whether species with different diets carry different types and amounts of plastics. Tammy's hypothesis is that penguins that eat fish have a greater concentration of plastics because of biomagnification. Key data just arrived in early May, and analysis is ongoing.

So far, researchers have found relatively few microplastic particles in Antarctic penguins, but they have found the smaller nanoparticles in virtually all the penguins studied.

Tammy noted that this project has provided an opportunity for students to gain valuable lab experience and for scientists and students to engage in outreach on climate change and plastics as part of the Little Blue Penguins exhibit.

Along with her plastics research and her primary work on Brown Pelicans, Tammy embarked on a study of krill samples at the Smithsonian Institution. With their highly efficient filtering system, krill accumulate plastics as they digest phytoplankton; these plastics are then passed up the food chain. During dissection of 554 krill stomachs collected between 1993 and 2016, Tammy already started to see plastics in their stomachs.

Tammy's penguin analysis will wrap up in June, and the results will be submitted for publication this summer. She will continue to work on establishing the Penguano Project as a long-term monitoring program for microplastics in Antarctica. Krill analysis is to be determined, depending on future funding.

As Tammy noted, "Plastics are superdepressing to talk about, which is why they're only a side project for me."

Equally depressing, in my opinion, is the recent evisceration of federal funding for scientific research. *The New York Times* reports that the United States spent nearly \$1 trillion on research and development in 2024, and the federal government provided about 40 percent of the total funding for basic research. Such investments are now being cut

sharply; even funds to reimburse researchers for contracted expenditures are being withheld.

During the Q&A, when Tammy was asked about funding cuts, she replied, "Yes, our funding has been cut. My position is now going to end in June. We have had funding from the National Science Foundation and NASA, and that funding is no longer there. All of the proposals we have written over the past year – the grants for those programs no longer exist... I have all these programs set up for long-term monitoring, but now that's all going to end in June."

We are blessed to have brilliant, dedicated scientists like Dr. Tammy Russell in our midst and fortunate that many of them have shared their research and insights with us. May she and her colleagues find the support they need to carry on their work – be it from the private sector, from the next federal administration, or in whatever foreign countries are wise enough to attract our finest minds.

If you missed Tammy's presentation or want to see it again, click [here](#). For coverage of her November talk on Brown Pelicans, see *Torreyana* December 2024 [here](#).

Note: The opinions expressed here are those of the writer and should not be attributed to the speaker or the TPDS.

May CEED: Gonzales Canyon

by Ingo Renner

The first CEED program of the year found 22 docents exploring the nearby Gonzales Canyon Open Space Park. On a two-hour loop-trail walk, I introduced the group to a variety of native plant species growing in the canyon's chaparral, coastal sage scrub, and riparian habitats.

Seasonal streams, combined with urban runoff, flow through the canyon and into the San Dieguito watershed. This water source provides nourishment to native willows (arroyo and narrow-leaf), mule fat, three artemisias (wild tarragon, Douglas's mugwort, Palmer's sagewort) and much more. Docents also got to see a rare coast live oak. Not many are left in the area due to habitat loss.

Gonzales Canyon was slated for development in the late 1970s but was preserved in the 80s as part of the City of San Diego's Multiple Species Conservation Program.



General Meeting Minutes: May 10, 2025

Speaker: Tammy Russell, a marine ornithologist and postdoctoral researcher at Scripps Institution of Oceanography on plastic pollution in seabirds (see pg. 1). Approximately 60 docents attended.

President **Matt Xavier** led the business meeting.

Docent of the Month: Pam Burdt, class of 2025, a Lodge and TIK host, who recently helped with Wine in the Pines and the Lodge cleaning day.

Lynne Truong encouraged docents to sign up to monitor the La Jolla Half Marathon on May 17 (see pg. 9).

Ranger Stephanie Adams presented the State Parks Golden Poppy Award to **Ann Smith Mercandetti** for her initiative in creating teams to monitor the annual Komen Walk and La Jolla Half Marathon. Ann made these interpretive as well as monitoring events, with eye-catching posters for docents to hold up as they cheered on the participants. A docent since 2005, she has worked with the Youth Program and is a longtime, dedicated Whacky Weeder.



Volunteer Opportunities:

- Nomination Committee
- Docent Training team, starting in September; **Janet Ugalde** is stepping aside as training leader.

Contact **Matt Xavier** if you are interested in either opportunity.

Bird Count: **David Walker** mentioned this is the peak of the migration season; 96 species were counted in May.

Ombudsperson: **Lisa Kakone** has been named to this position.

Ambassador Stations: The easel at the site above the kiosk is now locked to the bench. Docents need only to pick up the canvas bag in the South Parking lot shed.

Thanks were given to:

- Volunteers for the Lodge and taxidermy cleaning.
- Wine in the Pines volunteers; it was a successful event with approximately 200 tickets sold.
- **Lynne Truong** for organizing Earth Day.
- **Ingo Renner** for leading the CEED walk at Gonzales Canyon (see pg. 4).

Lodge Tip: If house finches are in the Lodge, turn off the lights and they are likely to fly out.

Refreshments: Docents with last names beginning **D, E, F, G** are scheduled to bring snacks to the June meeting, along with anyone else who would like to contribute.

Docent of the Month: Pam Burdt

Photo by Herb Knufken

Thank you, everyone! As a new grad with the class of 2025, I am truly grateful to be a part of the TPDS. You can imagine how surprised I was to be named Docent of the Month.

A couple of years ago, I started checking out the Docent Society at the Reserve and North Beach, talking with docents to determine whether I would be a good candidate for the role. Well, I can say I made the right decision! Lynne Truong was my mentor initially, and then all docents became my mentors for those activities that I have been involved in - almost all of them except for the Youth Program.



I have lived and worked in San Diego for more than 35 years; now retired and loving every day of it! Growing up in Southern California, I came to appreciate coastal nature, desert landscapes, and mountain ranges, all within close proximity. I was married at TPSNR in 2002, and I live in Carmel Valley. It is amazing how life can keep you near what you love.

I have been so impressed with all the speakers, activities, and opportunities for participation and am looking forward to continuing this adventure with all of you. Thanks again and see you out there!

June CEED: Leo Carrillo Ranch

Date: Friday, June 6

Time: 10.00 am

Place: Leo Carrillo Ranch Historic Park
6200 Flying Leo Carrillo Lane, Carlsbad, CA 92009

Meet at: Parking lot near the white kiosk that says "Bienvenidos/Welcome"

Duration: Approximately 1.5 hours or less

Difficulty Level: Relatively easy – easier than even Guy Fleming Trail, but there are hills, uneven ground, and stairs. We will be walking about a half mile total.

RSVP: Mukesh Mehta

Limited to: first 30 docents to respond

This is a reciprocal visit. Docents from the Leo Carrillo Ranch will be coming to Torrey Pines in June or early July.

More Information: carlsbadca.gov/

Wine in the Pines: A Triumphant Return to the Reserve

by Solange Jacobs, TPC Executive Director

After a three-year pause, *Wine in the Pines* returned on April 26 for an unforgettable evening celebrating the 75th anniversary of the Torrey Pines Conservancy. The weather teased us with forecasts of rain and arrived with dramatic gusts of wind just before the skies cleared – sunshine emerging just in time to welcome guests to our beloved Reserve.



Delicious cake from VG Donut & Bakery

Hosting an event in the Reserve is always a special occasion – not only for the wine, bites, and music but for the chance to get together with the rare beauty of Torrey Pines as our backdrop. This year's celebration reminded us how meaningful it is to come together in support of this cherished landscape.



As part of *Wine in the Pines*, artist Patricia McGeeney captures the view from the Lodge in real time

We are especially grateful to the 30+ docents who made this event possible. From the crew that arrived the day before to haul tables out of storage to the large group that arrived at noon to begin set-up to the dedicated volunteers who handled parking, check-in, the auction, and shuttle service throughout the evening – this event simply could not have happened without you. Even our tear-down team amazed us by wrapping up an hour ahead of schedule! A special thank you to Docent President Matt Xavier, who skillfully coordinated this volunteer army; and to his wife, Irene, who

stepped in to help keep everything running smoothly on the day of the event.

Your support, stamina, and grace made it all happen, and I am deeply thankful to each of you not only for your hands-on help but for your valuable feedback after the event. As this was my first time organizing *Wine in the Pines*, your insights will help us make each future gathering even better.

While the economy in April presented challenges, with some impact on ticket sales and auction participation, the event still delivered a net positive return, a meaningful accomplishment made possible by our community's generosity and spirit. Feedback from guests was glowing—especially in praise of the food, wine, cake, and entertainment.

Here's to 75 years of protecting and celebrating Torrey Pines – and to many more moments of joy in the Reserve.

Youth Program

by Janet Ugalde, Program Director

In May, our Youth Program team completed its 2024-25 educational offerings. We served more than 2,800 students, grades 2-5, from San Diego County schools.

Thirty-four awesome docents donated 850+ hours of their time as walk leaders, presenters and shift leaders. The following superheroes each donated 10 or more mornings: **Debi Buffington, Pao Chau, Kathy Dickey, Mary Friestedt, Paul Howard, Wayne Kornreich, Bruce Montgomery, Patty Montgomery, Steve Neal, Rachel Scherba, and Janet Ugalde.**

Thanks to our faithful team members. Kudos to our new members. And thanks to all who contributed to our success, including Lodge hosts and TIK talkers. See you in September!



On May 13, the Youth Program team enjoyed lunch at North Beach

What's on the Beach? Sand Dollars

by Kathy Dickey

I'm always surprised to find a complete sand dollar when I'm walking along the beach. There are not many of the white round skeletons (called "tests") available, especially because they are so thin and fragile. The test has a five-petalled design on both sides that looks like leaves or a flower.



Top surface, one with barnacle attached

Sand dollars (also called Pacific sand dollars, sea biscuits, or sand cakes) are members of the class Echinoidea, which includes over 800 species of sea urchins and sand dollars worldwide. The common local species, *Dendraster excentricus*, is three to four inches in diameter when an adult. It ranges from Alaska to Baja California and is found both in shallow intertidal areas as well as in water 20 to 50 feet deep.

Here are some interesting facts about these creatures:

- In live specimens, the test is densely covered with tiny spines, giving it the texture of a coarse, dark-purple velvet. The spines serve as gills, allowing the animal to breathe.
- In shallow water, the purple sand dollars can use their spines to move and to cover themselves with sand. In deeper water, they stand on an edge with a third to half of their body anchored in the sand.
- Sand dollars in deeper water can form a density of more than 523 per square yard. It is thought that this crowding helps with protection and reproduction.
- Food particles (diatoms, larvae, and detritus) are trapped in sticky mucus among the spines and transported to the mouth hole on the lower surface of the animal using hair-like cilia. Within the animal, a complex set of five jaws (known as Aristotle's lantern) come together to grind up the food. Waste is expelled out a tiny hole on the bottom edge of the sand dollar.



- Sand dollars can live up to 13 years. Predators include sea stars, crabs, some fish, and gulls. They are also susceptible to storms, extreme heat, dehydration, or changes in salinity. Some young sand dollars can make themselves heavier by eating sand for protection. If a sand dollar overturns, it is unable to right itself and will die.
- Many sand dollars will support a single pink barnacle, *Balanus tintinnabulum*.
- There are male and female sand dollars. They reproduce by releasing their eggs or sperm into the water. The larvae that form drift as plankton, but if a predator comes after them, they can clone themselves by splitting into two smaller larvae.

References available upon request.

Blue-Eyed Grass, San Diego's New Official Flower

by Margaret Fillius

In April, blue-eyed grass (*Sisyrinchium bellum*) was selected as the City of San Diego's new official flower, after a month-long public voting process. It replaces the carnation, a non-native plant that had been adopted in 1964.

Blue-eyed grass is in the iris family and grows 8 to 20 inches high. It is native to much of California, although not around or east of the Salton Sea. It is a perennial that looks a bit like a bunch grass and has small, attractive purple-blue flowers. The stems usually have leaf-bearing nodes. The flower has three sepals and three petals that are similarly oval with a pointed tip and dark veins and with a yellow blotch at the base. It spreads by rhizome and by seed, and it prefers seasonally wet clay soil.



Blue-eyed grass is scattered throughout the Reserve; it is often easily seen opposite the parking area for the Guy Fleming Trail and up the hill from there on the left side of the road. The blooming season is usually from February to May, but you may still see it this year near the lion's paw on the Guy Fleming Trail. After flowering, it dies back to the ground and is dormant over the summer.

You can find blue-eyed grass in local nurseries as it does well in cultivation in the San Diego area. It is on several fire-resistant plant lists, including that of the County of San Diego.

Bird of the Month: House Finch (aka “Hollywood Finch”)

by Robert James; photo by Avidhiker on iNaturalist.org

This month we shift to a familiar species. The House Finch (*Haemorhous mexicanus*) is a frequent visitor to our backyard feeders and is commonly associated with the Southwest. It is also abundant in the Reserve: our monthly bird surveys over the past two years have averaged around 100 individuals. One key ecological role they have is dispersing seeds they do not digest.



The House Finch may have even been one of the first birds that you learned about. A wonderful benefit is that it is easily seen by our visitors. In the spring, these birds can often be seen carrying grass and other vegetation to build their cup-like nests. One frequent location is right outside the Lodge above a high-use area (see whether you can find it). They are also commonly seen foraging with our ubiquitous California Towhee (*Melospiza crissalis*).

The House Finch is an excellent example of sexual dichromatism, following a common pattern in the bird world with males being the colorful ones. Their typical red plumage is a striking contrast to females' overall light-brown and streaked breast feathers. Bright plumage is thought to be an indicator of fitness used by females to select mates. You may have noticed a few males with yellow plumage, which are also the same species. This variation is due to dietary and other health differences in those individuals. Colored carotenoid pigments are produced from the foods these birds have consumed, though sometimes not completely.

Most range expansions of organisms can be attributed to either natural or human-caused changes; the House Finch is an example of both. This species has been naturally spreading into the Midwest and eastward for many years. But here is where it gets interesting: In about 1940, some pet shop owners on Long Island, looking to boost sales, had thousands (mostly males) illegally captured. These scofflaws intended to market them as “Hollywood Finches.” However, thanks to efforts by the Audubon Society, pet shop owners came to fear the impending legal consequences. Unfortunately, many birds were let go on the East Coast, and some of their descendants persist there.

House Finches can often be seen flying low in small flocks, and their flute-like songs can be heard as they sing perched in vegetation along the Reserve trails. So stop, look, and

listen. The free Merlin phone app can also help us identify them, especially for visitors, and affirm how frequently a little bit of Hollywood is among us.

Bee of the Month: Sonoran Bumble Bee

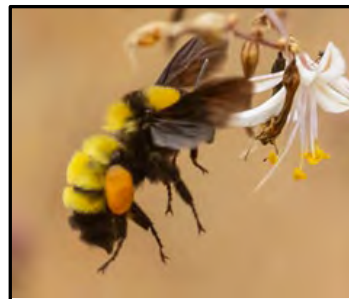
by Jess Mullins; photo by Phil Roullard

Bumble bees are some of the most recognizable and beloved insects, known for their large size and fuzzy, colorful coats. As spring flowers first begin to bloom, you might notice that some bumble bees seem much bigger than you remember from last summer. That's not your imagination! Unlike most of the solitary native bees at the Reserve, bumble bees are social creatures that live in colonies made up of three castes that vary in size: queens, workers, and males.

At the start of the season, the queen is in flight! She's the largest in the colony and easy to recognize as she bumbles from flower to flower, gathering pollen and nectar. She uses these resources to start a nest, which is tucked away in an old pocket gopher burrow. Once she has enough food stored, she begins laying eggs on top of the pollen and nectar provision. From that point on, the queen stays in the nest, incubating her eggs and letting her newly emerged daughters (called workers) take over the job of foraging. The workers look like a mini version of the queen.

Later in the season, the queen begins laying eggs that will develop into males and future queens. The future queens are fed more food and higher-quality resources, which allows them to grow larger. Once mature, the new queens and males leave the nest to mate. After mating, the queens find a sheltered underground spot to hibernate through the winter, ready to start the cycle again the following year. While the timing of this cycle varies slightly by species, the general pattern is the same for all bumble bees.

At the Reserve, the Sonoran bumble bee (*Bombus sonorus*)



stands out as one of the largest bumble bees. This species peaks in abundance in July and August, later than most others. These bees are recognizable by their golden-yellow fur covering most of their abdomen, whereas other bumble bees have smaller

yellow bands that are more lemony rather than golden. The Sonoran bumble bee is one of just five bumble bee species found in San Diego County. Unfortunately, its numbers are declining. It is currently listed as “Vulnerable” by the International Union for Conservation of Nature, and in 2021, it was petitioned for protection under the Endangered Species Act (ESA). It is a great sign that we see this species at the Reserve.

The La Jolla Half Marathon Comes Through the Reserve Again

On Saturday, May 17, twelve docents greeted the La Jolla Half Marathoners as they came through Torrey Pines on their way out to the finish line at La Jolla Cove.

In addition to leaders **Lynne Truong** and **Rosemary Wareham**, the docents who cheered on the runners were: **German Cervantes**, **Pao Chau**, **Marian Edelbrock**, **Darlene Farnes**, **Julia Halter**, **Mukesh Mehta**, **Betsy Seible**, **Joan Simon**, **Valerie Thomas**, and **Christie Zilberman**.

Approximately six thousand runners took part in the race. The first runners entered the Reserve at the South Parking lot kiosk at 7 am, with the last ones exiting at the golf course about two hours later.



Docents with signs preparing for half-marathoners to arrive.
Photo by Coach Vance



Christie Zilberman greeting runners ascending the road near the Guy Fleming trailhead
Photo by Julia Halter



Starting up the hill.
Photo by Lynne Truong



Runners heading south towards Torrey Pines Golf Course.
Photo by Mukesh Mehta

Torrey Pines Book Club

We will have a hybrid meeting this month: you can attend either via Zoom or in person. Please notify **Annette Ring** if you plan to participate or if you need any extra help getting connected.

When: Tuesday, June 10, 1:00 pm

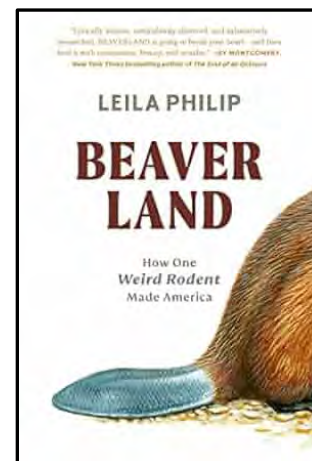
Where: Meeting room at White Sands La Jolla, 7450 Olivetas Ave, La Jolla

What: *Beaverland: How One Weird Rodent Made America* by Leila Philip

Amazon says:

Beaverland is a masterful work of narrative science writing, a book that highlights, through history and contemporary storytelling, how this weird rodent plays an oversized role in American history and its future. She follows fur trappers who lead her through waist-high water, fur traders and fur auctioneers, as well as wildlife managers, PETA activists, Native American environmental vigilantes, scientists, engineers, and the colorful group of activists known as beaver believers.

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



July 8: *The Wide Wide Sea: Imperial Ambition, First Contact and the Fateful Final Voyage of Captain James Cook* by Hampton Sides

Torrey Pines Docent Society Bird Survey: May 2025

Number of species: 90
(+5 other taxa)

Cinnamon Teal 3	Eared Grebe 1	Purple Martin 2	Bullock's Oriole 2
Gadwall 14	Western Grebe 20	Northern Rough-winged Swallow 33	Red-winged Blackbird 9
Mallard 19	Brandt's Cormorant 7	Barn Swallow 11	Orange-crowned Warbler 16
Ruddy Duck 4	Double-crested Cormorant 5	Cliff Swallow 15	Nashville Warbler 1
California Quail 4	Snowy Egret 2	Bushtit 57	Common Yellowthroat 36
Eurasian Collared-Dove 5	Great Egret 4	Wrentit 132	Yellow Warbler 7
Mourning Dove 93	Great Blue Heron 4	Blue-gray Gnatcatcher 4	Black-throated Gray Warbler 3
Vaux's Swift 22	Brown Pelican 105	California Gnatcatcher 4	Townsend's Warbler 6
White-throated Swift 28	Osprey 1	Northern House Wren 16	Hermit Warbler 2
swift sp. 4	White-tailed Kite 2	Bewick's Wren 32	Wilson's Warbler 22
Anna's Hummingbird 53	Red-shouldered Hawk 2	California Thrasher 23	new world warbler sp. 2
Allen's Hummingbird 10	Red-tailed Hawk 13	Northern Mockingbird 11	Western Tanager 4
Rufous/Allen's Hummingbird 2	Great Horned Owl 1	Western Bluebird 2	Black-headed Grosbeak 8
hummingbird sp. 6	Nuttall's Woodpecker 13	Swainson's Thrush 1	Lazuli Bunting 21
Ridgway's Rail 1	American Kestrel 2	Scaly-breasted Munia 4	
Killdeer 2	Peregrine Falcon 5	House Finch 145	
Semipalmated Plover 3	Western Wood-Pewee 3	Lesser Goldfinch 63	
Whimbrel 4	Western Flycatcher 9	Dark-eyed Junco 9	
Long-billed Curlew 2	Black Phoebe 13	White-crowned Sparrow 2	
Willet 6	Say's Phoebe 1	Savannah Sparrow 1	
Western Gull 93	Ash-throated Flycatcher 15	Belding's Song Sparrow 57	
California Gull 12	Cassin's Kingbird 3	California Towhee 94	
Caspian Tern 5	Western Kingbird 5	Rufous-crowned Sparrow 4	
Elegant Tern 60	Hutton's Vireo 5	Spotted Towhee 39	
Royal Tern 16	Warbling Vireo 8	new world sparrow sp. 4	
	California Scrub-Jay 14	Yellow-breasted Chat 19	
	American Crow 15	Hooded Oriole 10	
	Common Raven 77		
	Tree Swallow 2		

Observers: Donna Mancuso, Dinah Carl, Luz Chung, Dave Rimlinger, Gale Darling, Andy Rathbone, Pam Burdt, Kathy Estey, Robert Turner, Manolo Turner, Robert James, Karen Turner, Paul Mulholland, Nancy Richardson, Lilly Tang, Steve Neal, Roslan Balagansky, Debbie Regottaz, Tsaiwei Olee, David Walker

Herb Knufken's photo gallery includes many birds: pbase.com/herb1rm



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