Presenting A Succulent Paradise at Our November Meeting!

by Vernie McGowan

Debra Lee Baldwin presented an excellent slide show with many photos from her new book "Designing with Succulents". She encouraged the planting of succulents instead of lawns, pointing out that they are low maintenance, drought tolerant and interesting to look at. Also shown were before and after photographs of a lovely succulent garden around a home belonging to Rob and Suzy Schaefer in Rancho Santa Fe. The "after" photos were taken following the Witch Creek Fire and graphically showed that the fire had burned right up to the succulents, melted a few aloe's, and stopped. Debra presented photos illustrating both landscape design and container gardening, pointing out important principles such as the sculptural shapes of the plants, contrasts in texture and repetitions in form and color. Differences in elevation also create interest.

Aeonium 'sunburst' is one of the beautiful examples of succulents on Debra's Web site: http://www.debralee baldwin.com/

Following her talk, copies of her book and a CD containing 230 succulent portraits were available for sale. Debra generously donated a copy of her book for the docent library. [See review on page 4]

COME TO THE GALA TORREY PINES DOCENTS' HOLIDAY PARTY!

by Jeff Spivak

Our Annual Holiday Party will be held Saturday December 15th at 11 a.m. at the Lodge. This is a wonderful chance to have fun and share good holiday cheer with fellow docents and staff! As per tradition, the previous year's class, in this case the Class of 2007, will host this event. The entire society is asked to bring something to this fabulous pot luck extravaganza. Choices include hors d'oeuvres, salads, main dishes, side dishes, desserts, drinks. Plan on bringing your most popular dish to share with...
your friends and colleagues at the reserve and come enjoy a good time!

November Docent Meeting Notes
Excerpted from notes from the TPDS General Meeting, November 17, 2007 by Secretary, Judy Schulman. Complete minutes in Library.

Docent of the Month: Michael Yang (2007) was the November Docent of the Month. He is being acknowledged for his work with the Trail Patrol, the Library, and the mapping project.

Photo by Herb Knufken

Ranger Report: Ranger Jody Kummer reported that two different evacuation plans are needed for the park in case of fire. One plan would be needed if a fire were already in the park. The other plan would be when there is advance notice of imminent fire damage. She would like to create a priority list of what should be taken. When Firestorm 2007 threatened and DPR told her to get ready to evacuate, she took the mountain lion, the Mat print, the Mitchell print, other paintings, and the butterfly collection. DPR will put double panes in the windows, trim the trees near the lodge, move displays away from the windows, and paint the outside beams (this slows them down from catching on fire). The North Beach parking lot is scheduled for repair. It will take two months since they will also be redoing the sewer lines. The new phones will arrive on Monday. The new phone system should be done in three weeks. It will have different lines for directions, TPA, new volunteer information, and the rangers. She will be talking to Brian Gaudet about the upper, western lot restroom problem. They will probably put in two chemical toilets and a washing station.

Lodge Duty: (Irene Larrimore) The 2008 calendar is available. A docent to lead a walk is needed for 2 p.m. on Thanksgiving. She thanked everyone for doing a good job.

Children’s Program: (Cecily Goode) Thanks were given to all who helped in her absence. This included the walk leaders and those who helped paint the benches. Four schools had to be rescheduled because of the fire. Don Grine has already given one of these programs. On January 3rd, there will be a training program on whales.

Library: (Bonnie Hornbeck and Michael Yang) There are two new books: Care and Maintenance of Southern California Plant Gardens and Fossil Treasures of the Anza Borrego Desert. Given the voluminous number of document pages in our archives, Mike Yang asked for help in determining what items were actually important enough to be archived. Historian Judy Schulman offered to help.

Gourd Workshop/Carpobrotus Surveying: Barbara Wallach thanked the docents who helped make gourd ornaments during the last two sessions. Docents are asked to bring pinecones for future projects. Darren Smith is asking for docent help on mapping the Carpobrotus. Interested docents should meet Monday at 8:30 a.m. in the lodge. Carol Martin will organize docents into groups for mapping in the Extension and the Reserve.

Docent Question of the Month – December 2007
Courtesy of Jim Larrimore

Q: A California Ground Squirrel faces off a rattlesnake, waving its raised tail back and forth. What is going on? (New research results will make you shake your head!)

A: (See p. 5)
TPA: (Pat Masters) On December 1st the TPA will host a free symposium entitled “10,000 Years at Torrey Pines State Reserve: The Land, the Sea, and the People.” It will be held from 8:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. at the Sumner Auditorium at SIO.

Speakers will include ecologists and archeologists. Since parking is limited, please contact Pat at tpapresident@torreypines.org to RSVP. The program will be videotaped for future docent training. She was also able to get a tule boat for us to display that was commissioned by the Barona Cultural Center. It had been previously displayed at the Coronado Historical Association's Museum of History and Art.

State Park Advocacy Briefing:
President Steve Usher announced that another session will be held the first week in February. It is designed to help volunteers meet with legislators during State Parks Advocacy Day.

Parking Passes: Docents will continue to have ID cards with photos. The backside will have a sticker that is updated annually. This will serve as your parking pass. Display this on your dashboard with the sticker side up. Please contact Ranger Jody Kummer if you don’t have a card.

Annual Election: Nominating committee chair, Steve Rose, announced the slate for 2008:

- President: Steve Usher
- Vice-President: Tom Polakiewicz
- Treasurer: Priscilla Lewis
- Duty Directors: Lillian Lachicotte and Irene Larrimore
- Director of Communications: Roger Isaacson
- Director of Training: Jeff Spivak
- Director of Children’s Program: Cecily Goode
- Director of Programs: Ken Baer

Other than the addition of Ann Williamson for secretary, the slate was the same as last year. There were no nominations from the floor. Mayo Stiegler moved to accept the slate. This was seconded and the slate was elected unanimously by voice vote.

CHILDREN’S PROGRAM
The winter holiday in December will provide a relaxing time for all docents who participated in the Children’s Program hikes. Thanks to all who have sanded, stained and painted the benches in the amphitheatre area.

We are looking at January 3rd or 4th for a training session on whales. Margaret Fillius and Barbara Wallach have agreed to do the presentation and then lead a hike to incorporate the ideas we have learned. Several schools have signed up in January and early February for this topic. Look for an email in December announcing this session.

Cecily Goode
Children’s Program Director

Thank you for being our docent. My favorite thing in the Reserve was getting iron from the sand. I liked the sand walls because it was really pretty. It was so cool when you gave the harvesting ants the oatmeal and then one of the harvesting ants took it to their house. I had a great time at the Reserve.

Here are some letters received from children attending the TPSR Children’s Program

Thank you for being our guide. I learned so much about the Kumeyaay Indians. I had a lot of fun wearing the willow bark skirt. How did they make it?

Thank you for being such a great guide. I thought that the prickly pear was very interesting and fun to learn about. Thank you so much for being such a great guide!

Thank you so much for helping us to learn about the Ipai Indians and plants and animals in the area. I really enjoy how the Indians used the berry to make lemonade. I remember that the Indians used a furry leaf that they used for bandages. I appreciate you teaching us that there was Iron sand on Red Butte. Thanks again for helping me learn so many things.

Thank you for being our docent.
LIBRARY NEWS: These items may be found on the “New Books” shelf!

Care and Maintenance of Southern California Native Plant Gardens, by Bart O’Brien, Betsey Landis, and Ellen Mackey. Metropolitan Water District of Southern California, Los Angeles, CA, Publisher, (2006)

This is a primer that provides tools, references and resources that guide the reader along the path to creating and maintaining a garden of California native plants. Chapters include climate influences on native plants, various soil conditions, watering needs, pruning, weeding and identifying and controlling a wide range of pests, both beneficial and harmful. There are many color photos, good illustrations and charts. The book closes with a selection of resources and a glossary of terms used in the book. Anyone interested in learning more about kaleidoscopic, captivating, drought tolerant gardens will want to check this one out! Reviewed by Mike Yang

Designing with Succulents by Debra Lee Baldwin, published by Timber Press Inc. 2007

Viola

DVD copies of “Viola”, which had its west coast beach premiere at the wonderful docent appreciation event organized by Supervising Ranger Jody Kummer are now available in the library. This remarkable 80 minute film, made by high school students, describes the difficulties encountered by a Chinese boy who has recently moved to this country. He finds comfort in playing his viola and in his visits to Torrey Pines State Reserve where many beautiful scenes were filmed. Reviewed by Steve Rose

A New Look at the Lodge Entrance

By Diane Greening

Thanks to Frank Burham for building a beautiful new display case for the front of the Lodge. Frank’s case (Photo here by R. Isaacson) was built to match the existing wood display cases to the left of the door, and replaces the decrepit aluminum one with the missing letters! It will contain the notices for the Lodge hours and tour times, as well as any other public events for the Reserve. I’d also like to post a photograph of the Reserve, to be changed monthly. Let me know if you have a seasonally appropriate photo you’d like to post. This is not a contest, and I will try to rotate posted photos among the interested photographers.

Lodge Duty Request for Month of December: In addition to weekends there are uncovered holiday double shifts Dec 26-Jan 1. Please take a look at the calendar and if you are able to help out, especially as a 2nd person, call the desk and sign up for one of the empty extra spots. Thanks! Irene Larrimore and Lillian Lachicotte

Interpretive Trail Patrol Training Session at the Lodge Saturday, January 26, 2008

The session will start at 9 a.m. and take about three hours. Docents interested in becoming a Trail Patrol member should do the following. Before attending the meeting, read the on-line Interpretive Trail Patrol Handbook (located on the Web site at http://www.torreypine.org) Complete the 20-question quiz. Ask Sherry Doolittle or Alan Bennett to email it to you, then complete on-line and email to either Sherry or Alan OR print it, answer the questions, and give to either Sherry or Alan. Study the maps of Torrey Pines and the Extension. You will be asked to fill out the names of the trails on a blank map at the training session. Finally, you will take a qualifying patrol with...
one of the above or with a ranger. It will take about an hour and help you to see what a real Trail Patrol looks like. Once you've completed the requirements, you will become a member of the Interpretive Trail Patrol. If you have any questions, please contact either Sherry Doolittle or Alan Bennett.

**Docent Question of the Month: October 2007**

*by Jim Larrimore*

*Photos from Web as indicated*

**Q.** A California ground squirrel faces off a rattlesnake, waving its raised tail back and forth. What is going on? (New research results will make you shake your head!)

**A.** It’s the Californian ground squirrel versus rattlesnake in a potentially lethal showdown. But the squirrel has a secret weapon that until now has remained invisible to the human eye. Remarkably, the California ground squirrel (*Spermophilus beecheyi*) is using infrared radiation as a defensive tactic to confuse the rattler.

> A ground squirrel in Torrey Pines State Reserve
> Nanocr.eu website (Jon Lech Johansen’s blog), Dec 20, 2005
> [Licensed under Creative Commons License (CC). Free to Share: - to copy, to distribute and transmit. Attribution – as specified by author.]

When a rattlesnake stalks a young squirrel, a protective adult will face off the predator by heating up its tail and waving it in the snake's face.

**Small photo of California ground squirrel with tail raised:**

George McCarthy/Nature Picture Library (squirrel); Illustration by Matt Collins.

*Mammals of Yosemite National Park* (1952) by Harry C. Parker

Rattlesnakes detect small mammals via so-called pit organs in their noses, which detect infrared. The heated tail makes the squirrel appear larger to the snake’s infrared organ — a form of harassment that confuses the rattler.

This defensive tactic remained invisible to biologists until they looked at the animals through an infrared video camera. Graduate student Aaron Rundus and his supervisor Donald Owings of the University of California, Davis spied on squirrel-snake stand-offs. Infrared video showed that when the adult California ground squirrels were threatened by rattlesnakes, their tails warmed by several degrees, presumably due to increased blood flow. A stuffed squirrel also elicited defensive reactions from rattlesnakes if the mock critter’s tail was artificially heated and wagged. This is the first discovery of one animal communicating with another by infrared.

The squirrels themselves do not see in infrared, so they cannot see another squirrel's tail heating up. But the snakes can, proving that the squirrels have evolved a specific way to deter rattlesnakes. The defense is not totally effective: earlier studies have found that a rattlesnake’s diet includes a lot of squirrel pup. Amazingly, the researchers also found that ground squirrels confronted with a gopher snake, which has no infrared sensory organ, wagged their tails but didn’t bother to warm them up first! [Reported by NewScientist.com, Aug 13, 2007, and Scientific American, Oct 2007, page 36. Reference: Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences (DOI: 10.1073/pnas.0702599104), published online August 17, 2007.]

**FLASH:** Blue whales, first reported in the August Pinecone, have been seen again off Torrey Pines by docent Roger Isaacson and his wife. In mid-October a Blue Whale spouted right in front of the setting sun and then at least six more were seen nearby, and the same scene was seen the next evening.

**Welcome to New TPDS Board Member!**

Secretary: Ann Williamson

Many thanks to retiring member Judy Schulman

**Got Your 88 Hours In?**

*By Walt Desmond, TPDS Membership*

That’s right, our 96 hour service requirement to maintain membership averages out to 8 hours per month. So in 2007’s first eleven months we should have recorded 88 hours on our oh-so-easy-to-use Docent Hour Tracking system. Everybody should know that 36 of those hours can come just from attending our monthly meetings. Miss a meeting and you have an extra lodge duty or trail walk to do.

But while those two duties are the highest priority—we can never leave the Lodge untended or the walks unguided—there are MANY other ways to fulfill service requirements, while at the same time enjoying the beauty of this unique place on earth. With trail patrol, Whacky Weeder, recycling, children’s program, bookstore, special walks, trail and other maintenance, and Darren Smith

TPDS Online Bulletin Board
All Docents are encouraged to join the TPDS Google Group to post your own messages of interest to the TPDS or take part in ongoing discussions. Just ask Walt Desmond or Roger Isaacson to send you an “invitation.” Anyone can view the content by going here: http://groups.google.com/group/tpds
Members who have joined the group may receive an email with a link when a new item of interest is posted. You can easily opt out or change your email preferences after you join. Here is what you see when you join or change your preferences:

How do you want to read this group?
☐ No Email
I will read this group on the web

☐ Abridged Email (No more than 1 email per day)
Get a summary of new activity each day

☐ Digest Email (Approximately 1 email per day)
Get up to 25 full new messages bundled into a single email

☐ Email (Approximately 1 email per day)
Send each message to me as it arrives

Trail Patrol Bride
By Bill Eckles
Flo and I were finishing up a trail patrol with a lap around the Guy Fleming trail. “Wow, fancy duds for a hike”, I called out as a vision in white appeared before us, flowing down the steps and ducking below the felled tree-arch. She was quite a vision in her flip flops and bridal train and explained that she had a group waiting for her at the south overlook on the trail and some “special” doings to participate in. We offered to help, but she assured us her maid-in-waiting who was
accompanying her could handle the chore. Yet, she appreciated the accompaniment we provided as we collectively progressed along the canyon and around the bend.

We were soon met by the eager groom, resplendent in his wedding garb and ready to begin the ceremony. Not so much adventure, but it surely is interesting what surprises Trail Patrol can provide on a Saturday’s afternoon. Guy Fleming would be proud to know that his majestic beauty inspires new beginnings as well.

Red-Breasted Merganser in Peñasquitos Lagoon

Snowy Plover North Torrey Pines Beach

Photo images are copyrighted. Please contact the photographer before using an image for any reason: herb1rm@hotmail.com

[Ed.: See more amazing TPSR photos on Herb's site: www.pbase.com/herb1rm]

Total of 86 species (unusual sightings shown with an asterisk and in italics)

Ducks & Geese
- Gadwall 2
- American Wigeon 95
- Mallard 7
- Blue-winged Teal 2
- Cinnamon Teal 3
- Northern Pintail 4
- Lesser Scaup 11
- Surf Scoter 14
- Bufflehead 9
- Ruddy Duck 4
- Red-breasted Merganser

Quail
- California Quail 7

Loons
- Common Loon 1

Grebes
- Pied-billed Grebe 9
- Eared Grebe 1
- Western Grebe 37

Pelicans
- Brown Pelican 5

Cormorants
- Brandt's Cormorant 2
- Double-crested Cormorant 5

Herons & Egrets
- Great Blue Heron 3
- Great Egret 2
- Snowy Egret 3
- Osprey 1
- Red-tailed Hawk 2
- American Kestrel 8
- Peregrine Falcon 2

Rails & Coots
- American Coot 104

Plovers
- Black-bellied Plover 2
- Snowy Plover 21
- Semipalmated Plover 19
- Killdeer 1

Sandpipers & Phalaropes
- Willet 18
- Long-billed Curlew 1
- Marbled Godwit 4
- Sanderling 6

Western Sandpiper 48
- Dowitcher sp. 14

Gulls & Terns
- Heermann's Gull 10
- Ring-billed Gull 2
- California Gull 3
- Western Gull 17
- Royal Tern 1

Pigeons & Doves
- Rock Pigeon 8
- Mourning Dove 20

Hummingbirds
- Anna's Hummingbird 23

Kingfishers
- Belted Kingfisher 2

Woodpeckers
- Nuttall's Woodpecker 2
- Northern Flicker 4

Tyrant Flycatchers
- Black Phoebe 12
- Say's Phoebe 7
- Cassin's Kingbird 11

Jays and Crows
- Western Scrub-Jay 11
- American Crow 30
- Common Raven 21

Swallows
- Tree Swallow 2
- Cliff Swallow 3

Bush tits
- Bushtit 47

Wrens
- House Wren 3
- Marsh Wren 2

Gnatcatchers
- Blue-gray Gnatcatcher 1
- California Gnatcatcher 3

Thrushes
- Hermit Thrush 1

Wrentits
- Wrentit 28

Mockingbirds & Thrashers
- Northern Mockingbird 3
- California Thrasher 1

Starlings
- European Starling 18

Pipits
- American Pipit 1

Wood-Warblers
- Orange-crowned Warbler 1

Yellow-rumped Warbler 52

Common Yellowthroat 9

Towhees & Sparrows
- Spotted Towhee 3
- California Towhee 28
- Rufous-crowned Sparrow 1
- Savannah Sparrow 4
- Song Sparrow 9
- Lincoln's Sparrow* 3

White-crowned Sparrow 36

Blackbirds
- Red-winged Blackbird 17
- Western Meadowlark 2
- Brewer's Blackbird 25

Finches
- House Finch 70
- Lesser Goldfinch 4

Old World Sparrows
- House Sparrow 1

Observers: Blair Francis, David Blue, Gary Grantham, Hank & Jane Baele, Herb Knufken, Jack Friery, Kathy Estey, Will Cox
The Pinecone, a calendar of events, notes from business meetings, and other items of specific interest to the docent membership, is published bi-monthly (even months). Please submit items by the 20th of the month to Editor Sharon Clay Rose at clayrose@roadrunner.com. For odd months submit to Roger Isaacson at risaacson@ucsd.edu. Items for publication may also be left in the Torreyana mailbox in the Visitor Center. Roger Isaacson, Director of Communications

### December 2007 TPDS Visitor Center Duty Calendar- Updated 11/26/07

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To sign up for an opening, call docent on duty (858 755-2063) to confirm the time and write your name in the Calendar Logbook. If you cannot do your duty, please try to find your own substitute by switching with another docent or using the short-notice list. Then call the docent on duty to make the change in the Logbook.

**Duty Coordinators:** Irene Larrimore (858 509-9604) & Lillian Lachicotte (858 481-6237)