



Friends of



Tecolote Canyon

Volume 3, Issue 5

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Photo credit: iNaturalist.org

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DONATIONS

Your donations are always appreciated and make our programs possible.

You can donate to Friends of Tecolote Canyon at Tecolote Nature Center, or at our website:

www.friendsoftecolotecanyon.org/donate

CONTACT INFORMATION

Tecolote Nature Center
5180 Tecolote Road
San Diego, CA 92110

Open Tues-Sat 9:00-4:00
Sundays 9:00-2:00

Main Phone: 858-581-9944
Rangers Office: 858-581-9961

VISIT OUR WEBSITE

www.friendsoftecolotecanyon.org

Unless someone like you cares a whole awful lot, nothing is going to get better. It's not. -The Lorax, Dr. Seuss

Weed Warriors



Senior Park Ranger Steven welcomes the 44 Weed Warriors who came to water, weed and mulch new native plants in the canyon during Earth Day weekend in April.

Thank You

Thanks to Nicole from Hands On San Diego for continuing to lead volunteers on the third Saturday of every month.

Many thanks to Ranger Janice (retired) for volunteering with Weed Warriors while we transition to new ranger staff.

For more Weed Warrior information, see event information on page 5.

About FOTC

501(c)(3) Non-profit

Friends of Tecolote Canyon is a non-profit community organization committed to sponsoring nature education and restoration activities in Tecolote Canyon Natural Park. Our education program, supported by SDGE's "Environmental Champions Initiative", is dedicated to bringing children into Tecolote Canyon and fostering connection through enjoyable, memorable, and meaningful experiences in our unique and precious local habitat.



Tarantula Hawk in East Tecolote Canyon
Photo credit: Cindy Hazuka, California Native Plant Society
Continued on p. 3

Watch Your Sssstep

Do you sss-see it?
Right there, under the Toyon...



This Southern Pacific Rattlesnake was coiled right outside of the Nature Center entrance recently.
Photos credit: Marla Gilmore

Help for a Hawk

See photo (right)

On the morning of Friday, June 8th, Grounds Maintenance Worker Matt Wilson came to the Tecolote Nature Center to inform Director Marla about an injured hawk on the baseball field at the Tecolote Recreation Center. The hawk was unable to fly, in obvious distress and was being harassed by other birds. Matt was concerned for the hawk, especially because it was a mow and aeration day on the field.

Together he and Marla were able to safely capture the injured Cooper's Hawk, and Marla then transported it to the care center at Project Wildlife where it was expected to make a full recovery. Matt is always very helpful, works well with the nature center staff, and the care that he and Marla gave the hawk is greatly appreciated.

The bird was thin and covered in mites, but after some medication and plenty of food, Project Wildlife was successful with his rehabilitation. The Cooper's Hawk was released back home into Tecolote Canyon on June 23rd. Good news and great teamwork!



Matt Wilson with injured Cooper's Hawk

Mud Play

Friends of Tecolote Canyon volunteers Joan Brosnan and Yaz Battle, along with Tecolote Nature Center Director Marla Gilmore participated in International Mud and Nature Play Day at Golden Hill Recreation Center on Saturday, June 23. Thanks to Kathy Castello from the Park and Recreation Department for inviting us to participate! The Tecolote Canyon participants thought it was an outstanding event! Next year's event is being planned!



Pictured above: International Mud and Nature Play Day activities

Photos at right: (Top & bottom) Ms. Joan is teaching families about owl pellets at our "Regurgitation Station"; (middle) Tecolote Nature



It is a happy talent to know how to play
~Ralph Waldo Emerson



Play is really the work of childhood.
~Mr. Fred Rogers

The butterfly counts not months but moments, and has time enough. —Rabindranath Tagore



Volunteer Opportunities

Jr Volunteers (community service)

Native Plant Garden

Tecolote Canyon Citizens Advisory Committee

Weed Warriors

Environmental Stewards Canyon Program (ESCAPE)

Nature Center Docents

Interpretive Guides

Art & Crafts



Park Patrol

If you are interested in volunteering, we welcome you to come in and speak with any staff member. **We'd love to have you!**



Photos and Stories

Have you taken a Tecolote Canyon photo that you'd like to share? Would you like to share a trail tale? We'd like to include your Tecolote observations in an upcoming newsletter. Please send to friendsoftecolotecanyon@gmail.com



Thanks to Bob and Jan for snapping this rattler photo during one of their regular walks through Tecolote Canyon in June.



Nano Nature

by Joan Brosnan

How can I fit nature into my busy life? Never enough time? One of my desires is to reconnect with nature some time each day. I feel better spending time outdoors but really, can I handle one more item on my daily to do list?

Maybe. Begin. Think small. Think nano. Intentional awareness of the nature already around you.

I was sitting in my car at a stop light, a very long, stop light. Disgruntled. Impatient. Ready to get on with my to do list but halted by a red light and heavy traffic. Until. Looking out the window, I noticed a Cloudless Sulphur butterfly fluttering above the cars. I felt pity and thought, "That creature should not be surrounded by cars and asphalt." Revelation. I was the one trapped in the car while it was outside in the sunshine, air and flying free. Nano nature. I thought of metamorphosis. A caterpillar whose life once consisted of eating, pooping and sleeping now flies. Hmmm. Breathe. Take a nanosecond and fly free with the butterfly. Awesome.

Nano nature begins when you notice.

My husband does nano nature in the early am by noticing the position of the rising sun in the sky. I notice the shape of the moon each day. Horns to the east, soon to be increased. Horns to the west soon to rest. Waxing. Waning. Take a nanosecond and pause, look up. Look around. Look down. Look for your next Nano Nature.



Cloudless Sulphur
Photo credit: iNaturalist.org

The beauty of the natural world lies in the details.
—Natalie Angier



Tarantula Hawk photo credit: iNaturalist.org

Tarantula Hawk



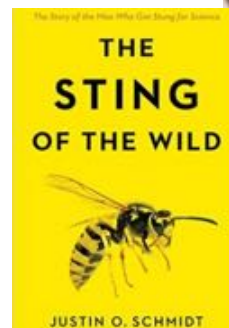
Photo credit: iNaturalist.org

Why is this wasp named Tarantula Hawk?

This spider wasp hunts tarantulas by paralyzing its prey with its sting. Once the female Tarantula Hawk stings a tarantula, she drags the paralyzed prey into her nest. She then lays a single egg on the tarantula's abdomen for her wasp larva to feed on.

While the female Tarantula Hawk is not known to be aggressive, her sting has been ranked second most painful in the world on the Schmidt sting pain index. This was confirmed by Biologist and author Justin O. Schmidt, who advises us to "just lie down and scream" if stung by a Tarantula Hawk. Fortunately, the sting is not dangerous, with exception to potential allergic reactions, and does not require medical help.

A Greater Roadrunner is one of only a few animals that can eat a Tarantula Hawk due to its large stinger size.



Tarantula Hawk with dark (melanistic) wings found near Tecolote Nature Center
ID credit: Jerry "the Bug Guy" Jacobs
Photo credit: Snr Ranger Steve Smith



Book Review

Kids Corner

Watch for the smallest moments with nature each day: Nano Nature. You could keep a journal of these moments.

Did you notice a shiny rock on your way into a store?

Was something fluttering by your window,?

What did a bird perched on a building sound like?

Did you see a plant growing out of a sidewalk space?

Have you smelled the flowers outside of the DMV?

Where was the most unexpected nato nature?

See p. 3 for more details



Wesley the Owl: The Remarkable Love Story of an Owl and His Girl

by Stacey O'Brien
(229 pages) Free Press, New York, 2008

Book Review by Joan Brosnan

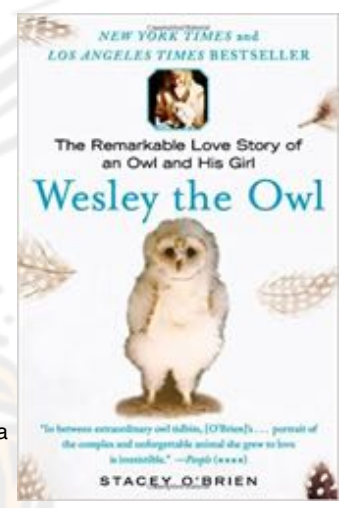
At Tecolote Canyon we know a quite a few facts about barn owls but this book opened my heart and mind to new level of appreciation for these incredible raptors.

In 1985, Stacey O'Brien, a biologist working at Caltech, received a rare opportunity to raise an injured owlet. Stacey was originally thrilled and terrified by the enormous responsibility that she would assume by raising a barn owl. She already had a kindhearted nature and desire to experience animals and learn from them directly. Even though it meant a 15 year commitment she viewed this as an opportunity of a lifetime.

Throughout her book, Stacey shares interesting owl facts. You might not know that barn owls use many vocalizations to communicate with their mate or keeper, from screams and hisses, to snores, chirps, rapid staccato calls and parrot like squawks. Unlike song birds, barn owls change their vocalizations according to the experience they're having at the time. What made this book so enjoyable to me was Stacey's great sense of humor, her personal experiences, and her drive to nurture Wesley. Satisfying Wesley's appetite for 2 mice per day, allowing Wesley to consider her as his personal tree, rearranging her personal life to ensure his security and wellbeing is the story of her devotion and perseverance as a biologist and animal lover.

Stacey writes, "Wesley taught me the *Way of the Owl*. In the human world, your value as a person is often linked to your wealth or most recent accomplishments. Wesley made me realize that if all I had to give was love, that was enough. I didn't need money, status, accomplishment, glamour or many of the empty things we so value."

Friends of Tecolote Canyon, if you need an awesome, educational and thought provoking book, I recommend Wesley the Owl by Stacey O'Brien.



Most people are on the world, not in it.
~John Muir

The Uncommon Core: Help Create a Force for Balance Excerpt from Vitamin N by Richard Louv

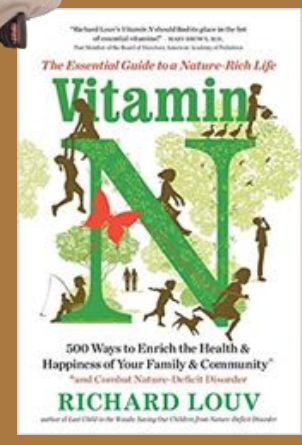
Shared by Joan Brosnan



"Today, children and adults who work and learn in dominating digital environment expend enormous energy *blocking out* any of the human senses---including ones we don't even know we have---in order to focus narrowly on the screen in front of the eyes. That's the very definition of being less alive. What parent wants his or her child to be less alive? Who among us wants to be less alive?"

The point here is not to be against technology, but to find balance. When it comes to shaping the future of our schools, there is no economic force as powerful as the technology industries--- with the possible exception of the health industry. Therefore, the only force strong enough to effectively stand up for balance in education and at home will be a social force: parents, teachers, pediatricians, psychologists and other caring adults who are building a new nature movement.

At home, at school, and even at work, think of experience as a budgeting issue---of time and money. For every dollar invested in the virtual invest at least another dollar in the natural," (Louv, 2016).



Please consider making a donation to Friends of Tecolote Canyon to support the 2019 Environmental Stewards Canyon Program. Your donation of \$100 will provide bus transportation to Tecolote Canyon Natural Park for 2 classes (50 students). Electronic donations may be made on our Facebook page (link on page 1).

Free Events in August

Saturday, August 4

8:00 Birding by Ear

Join the Tecolote Canyon Interpretive Group for a fun walk to look and listen for birds. Binoculars are recommended.



Photo credit: iNaturalist.org

Sunday, August 5

9:00-11:00 Sunday in the Garden & Seed Sorting Work Party

Join Ranger Erika for a fun day on Sunday! We'll be sorting and packaging native seeds with the California Native Plant Society and working in the garden if time permits.

Sunday, August 12

9:00-10:30 "Be in Wonder and AWE-gust"

Family Nature Walk in Tecolote Canyon

Mt. Etna Park, 4741 Mt. Etna Drive, San Diego 92117

Join naturalists on a free, guided family-friendly walk through Tecolote Canyon at the Mount Etna Park entrance. Explore this part of Tecolote Canyon by crossing bridges together and finding plant and animal AWE all around us.

Trail is mainly flat with a gentle slope at the beginning and end. Public restrooms are located in Mount Etna Park. Please wear closed-toe shoes, sunscreen, and a sun hat, and bring water.

Carriers are recommended for little ones. Picnic tables and playground located at Mount Etna Park before/after walk. We look

forward to being in wonder and awe with you!

Meet in the lower parking lot near the public restrooms facility at 9:00AM. We'll walk together to the trailhead behind the ball fields.



Photo credit: iNaturalist.org

Saturday, August 18

9:00-11:00 Weed Warriors

Volunteer with the Park Rangers to clean up your canyon. Gloves and tools provided. Wear long pants and sturdy shoes. No flip flops please. Bring water.



Events can be found at <https://www.meetup.com/Friends-of-Tecolote-Canyon-Natural-Park-and-Nature-Center/>
Like us on Facebook/Friends of Tecolote Canyon
www.friendsoftecolotecanyon.org

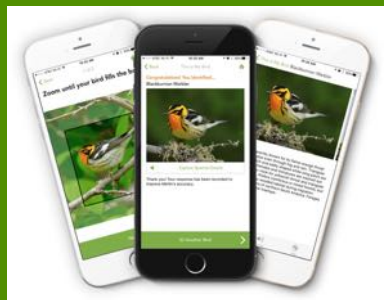
What's App-ening



Merlin Bird ID, The Cornell Lab

A quick and free App for bird identification is the Merlin App by The Cornell Lab. Next time you want to identify a mystery bird, this may be helpful to you. Simply input your location, date of observation, select the general size and colors of the bird, and where the bird was seen, and the Merlin Bird ID will generate a list of options for you to select from to potentially identify your sighting.

Happy birding!



Thank you to folks in Tecolote Canyon for stopping into the Nature Center to report seeing a girl experiencing distress on the trail, while with her mother. The family was not in need of an ambulance, rather support to their own vehicle. Thank you to Ranger Cameron Engelhart for meeting the family on the trail, then helping the mother and daughter out of the canyon and to their vehicle.

Special Thanks



Friends of Tecolote Canyon and the ESCAPE team gratefully acknowledge a generous grant from SDGE supporting another year of our ESCAPE program.



We want to thank **Scott Chalmers** and **Filmetrics** for their donation, providing 5 years of Wi-Fi to the Nature Center.



Thank you to Cole's Fine Flooring for a donation of carpet squares for children's education programs at our Nature Center.



Our thanks to the Clairemont Town Council for their \$250 donation to support TC Habitat Restoration. FOTC will purchase native plants, gloves, and hand tools for children to use in our ESCAPE education program.



Our terrific team of Rangers: Steven, Cameron, and Erika, have been very busy caring for Tecolote Canyon and the trails that allow us to enjoy this urban treasure. Paths are being cleared, signs are being updated and added, native plants are being restored, among many more improvements. We thank you, Ranger Erika, Ranger Cameron, and Senior Ranger Steven!