

Friends of Tecolote Canyon

June/July 2023

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Summer Safety Edition

This summer we hope you consider visiting the six-plus miles of trails that make up Tecolote Canyon. Thanks to the abundant rain we received this year the plants and animals are flourishing and are well worth taking the time to enjoy. However, to make every hike a safe hike it is important to be well-equipped and informed. So, in addition to reminding everyone to stay on the trails, bring plenty of water, and wear sunscreen, we are using this issue to address three of the greater concerns we are asked about when hiking in Tecolote Canyon. For an up-to-date trail map visit: <https://www.sandiego.gov/sites/default/files/legacy/park-and-recreation/pdf/tecolotetrailmap.pdf>

Thank You San Diego Mountain Biking Association!

The SDMBA staff and volunteers work every day to improve trail access for mountain biking in San Diego County. Short term projects can include trimming/brushing, tread work projects to control erosion, and even bridge replacement. The association recently replaced wooden plank with a permanent bridge across Tecolote Creek at the bottom of the Balboa Ave. trailhead. The trail entrance is located just east of the Starbucks on the corner of Balboa Ave and Clairemont Dr. and can also be accessed on Mt Acadia across from the golf course entrance.



If you are interested in responsible mountain biking and would like to know more about the SDMBA, visit their page at:

<https://www.sdmdba.com/>

Rattlesnake Safety



Red Diamond Rattlesnake

Generally not aggressive, rattlesnakes strike when threatened or deliberately provoked, and given room they will retreat. Most snake bites occur when a rattlesnake is handled or accidentally touched by someone walking or climbing. A bite can cause serious injury to humans and, on rare occasions, even death. Some tips for avoiding bites are:

- Wear closed-toed shoes, hiking boots are best.
- Stay on paths. Avoid tall grass and heavy underbrush where snakes hide.
- Look for concealed snakes before picking up rocks, sticks or firewood.
- Check carefully around stumps or logs before sitting.
- When climbing, always look before putting your hands in a new location.
- Never hike alone



Southern Pacific Rattle snake

In Case of a Bite

- Try to calm the victim
- Call 911
- Gently wash the area with soap and water
- Apply a cold, wet cloth over the bite
- Keep the bitten area still and lower than the heart
- Remove all rings, watches, and constrictive clothing, in case of swelling.

Do Not Make the Situation Worse!

- DO NOT apply a tourniquet
- DO NOT pack the bite area in ice
- DO NOT cut the wound with a knife or razor
- DO NOT use your mouth to suck out the venom or use a snake bite kit.
- DO NOT let the victim drink alcohol
- DO NOT apply electric shock



Many a non-threatening snake has suffered a quick death from a frantic human who has mistakenly identified a gopher snake, racer or other as a rattlesnake. This usually happens when a snake assumes an instinctual defensive position used to bluff adversaries. A gopher snake has the added unfortunate trait of imitating a rattlesnake by flattening its head and body, vibrating its tail, hissing and actually striking if approached too closely.

It is important to remember, snakes, even rattlesnakes, provide humans with a tremendous service they eat rodents, other reptiles, and insects, and are in turn eaten by other predators.

Poison Oak Identification

Toxicodendron diversilobum

- In Spring, new growth leaves are red turning light, bright green with whitish flowers clustered on the stems.



Summer brings yellow-green, pink, or reddish colors with small white or tan berries.

The leaves, stems, and roots of the plant carry an oil called urushiol, a severe, itch-provoking skin irritant to most people.

Oils penetrate and become absorbed into the skin within 10 minutes of exposure.

Wipe exposed skin with rubbing alcohol as soon after touching as possible

Do not immediately use soap. Soap gathers and spreads oils to other parts of the skin. Shower first with cold water to reduce skin absorption, and then use soap.

Don't forget that the oils may remain on clothing or shoes until they're washed.

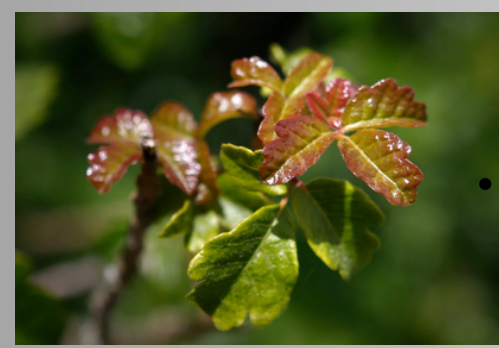
Fun Facts

Deer graze in poison oak thicket; wood rats eat the leaves

Many birds feast on the berries, including the California Towhee which builds its nest among the poison oak.

Poison oak can grow as a single stem, a six foot bush and even climb up to 40 feet into the treetops of the live oaks and sycamores

Poison oak is what is known as a pioneer plant. After a large disturbance like a fire, for example, poison oak is often the first to pioneer the landscape and stabilize the soil



Fall turns berries darker, dried, and wrinkled, and the leaves turn a brilliant scarlet or russet brown before falling to the ground.



Winter makes all of the leaves drop, leaving only bare sticks, whip-like stems, or climbing vines remaining. Scratch the common myth – you can in fact get poison oak in the winter, as the plant oil is present in the stems and is potent all year round!

Safety Tips for Hiking with your Dog

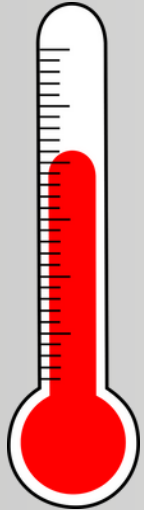
1. Never take your dog hiking when temperatures could exceed 70 degrees. Only walk dogs in the morning or evening on hot days and bring plenty of water for you and your pup!

2. Always bring plenty of cold, fresh water for your dog and let them hydrate often. The amount of water depends on the size of your dog and the length of your hike. Generally, dogs can drink up to 1.5 oz of water per pound per day. Dogs who are active and/or in a hot environment may need to drink more.

3. If your dog is slowing down or panting excessively, it's time to give them a break — and then turn around to head back home. Do not encourage a dog showing signs of heat exhaustion to continue hiking.

4. Always keep your pet on a leash while hiking. It is the law, but it also prevents them from running away and getting lost or hurt if they see something in nature, like another animal.

5. Remember your dog's paws are sensitive. Test the temperature of the ground by touching it with the back of your hand for seven seconds. If it is too hot for your hand, or for your bare feet, it is too hot for your pet's paws. Additionally, a rugged trail can hurt your dog's paws. You can purchase booties to protect them — but give Fido ample time to get used to them as most dogs don't really like them at first!



love 'em &
leash 'em!

As a good neighbor, you can:

- ▶ Keep dogs safe and parks clean.
- ▶ Prevent bites and fights.
- ▶ Reduce stress for everyone.

It's the leash you can do.
And it's the law too.

Report off-leash dogs by calling
619-299-7012, press 1. Violators may be cited!

For a list of leash-free locations, please visit
sandiego.gov/leashfree.

The City of **SAN DIEGO**

Scan for off-leash dog parks



San Diego **Humane**

Dogs and Poison Oak



Dogs rarely get poison oak because their fur protects them. The oil from the poison oak plant tends to stay on the surface and not penetrate through to the skin. However, there have been cases where dogs have contracted poison oak in the less furry areas, like their stomach and muzzle. If your dog does get exposed to poison oak, the oil from the plant will rub off on humans and cause a reaction so take steps to protect yourself. Bathe your dog as soon as possible and wear rubber gloves.

Canyon Connections

Connect with Tecolote Canyon
Discover nature. It's right in your backyard!

Free Community Event
Saturday, June 3rd 2023
10:00 am -2:00 pm



Come explore Tecolote Canyon and Tecolote Nature Center. Meet live birds of prey, reptiles and amphibians, and other interesting critters. Learn about native plants, Monarch butterflies, Kumeyaay culture, take a nature walk, dissect owl pellets, get crafty and more!

Brought to you by the City of San Diego, Council District 2, Friends of Tecolote Canyon, and SDGE

Pack a picnic and enjoy the day! Parking is limited...biking, walking, or drop off recommended.

Schedule of Events

10:00 Event begins!

10:30-11:30 Critter Encounters-Live animal education and presentation

All Day 10:00-2:00

Southwestern Field Herping Association-Live reptiles and amphibians

Sky Hunters Raptor Education – Live birds of prey

San Diego Tracking Team -Wildlife tracking information

Nature Walks with **ESCaPe!** -Sign up at the event

Ranger Erika's monarch and milkweed station

California Native Plant Society San Diego Chapter

Kumeyaay information and activity table

Regurgitation Station -Owl pellet dissection

Nature Crafts and Nature Play

**TECOLOTE NATURE
CENTER**

**5180 Tecolote Road
San Diego, CA
92110**

858-581-9944

ESCaPe! is the Environmental Stewards Canyon Program.

Trained naturalists provide nature walks and field trips for local school groups.

Supported by the Friends of Tecolote Canyon, a 501c3 nonprofit group, and SDGE

www.friendsoftecolotecanyon.org

Volunteer Opportunities ~ Something for Everyone!

Jr Volunteers (community service)~ Native Plant Garden ~Tecolote Canyon Advisory Committee ~Weed Warriors
Environmental Stewards Canyon Program (ESCAPE)Docents ~ Interpretive Guides ~ Art & Crafts
Nature Center Hosts ~ Park Patrol

If you are interested in volunteering, we welcome you to come in and speak with any staff member.

Thank you to our sponsors

SDGE: A Sempra Energy
Utility

Scott Chalmers

Clairemont Town Council

City of San Diego

Many generous
neighbor volunteers and
donors



Please consider joining our Meetup.com group Friends of Tecolote Canyon and Nature Center as another way to stay connected with our events and the events of our nature loving partners. TCCAC meets at 6:30pm on the 3rd Wednesday of every month at the Nature Center. For more information about TCCAC you may contact Darrel Madison at at darrel.madison@outlook.com

Tecolote Nature Center

5180 Tecolote Road
San Diego, CA 92110

Hours of Operation*
Wednesday–Saturday
10:00am–4:00pm
Closed Sunday–Tuesday
Occasionally when
understaffed the
center may close on short
notice
The garden, patio, and
outdoor
restrooms are open
everyday.

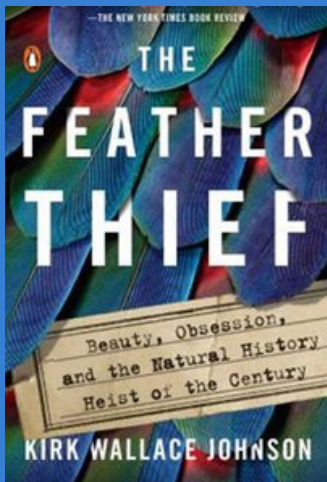
Bird Walks At Tecolote

SAT, JUN 3 · 8:00 AM

Birding Tecolote Canyon from Gardena Ave & Cross St. This walk is planned as part of the Tecolote Nature Center's Family Day Event. We will be hiking east from the Gardena Ave. and Cross St. entrance and doubling back on the Battle Trail. Please bring binoculars and good walking shoes.
<https://www.meetup.com/the-san-diego-beginning-birders/>

SAT, JUN 24 8:00 AM

San Diego Audubon Bird Walk at the Tecolote Nature Center ~ <https://www.sandiegoaudubon.org/>



Book Review ~ The Feather Thief

Beauty, Obsession, and the Natural History Heist of the Century

This book does an amazing job of "seamlessly weaving" together the study of Natural History with the worlds of flyfishing, women's fashions, endangered birds, and the obsession of an unlikely thief. From the cover: "It is a rollicking true crime adventure and a thought provoking exploration of the human drive to possess natural beauty" It is fascinating and thoroughly engaging from the first page. I have recommended this book to friends and family, who enjoy reading a spectrum of literature and each of them have raved about the book. It is a book I will keep on my shelf and I highly recommend adding it to your summer reading list. ~ Linda Stafford