



Friends of Tecolote Canyon

May 2020
Volume 5, Issue 3

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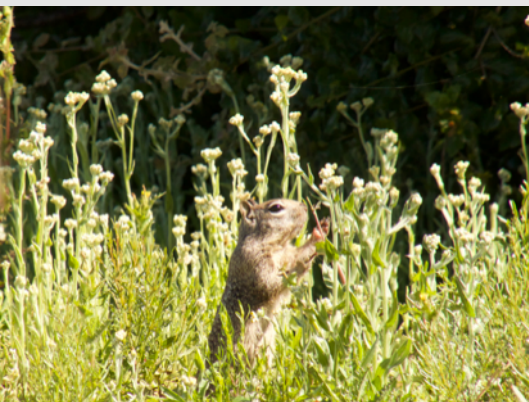
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Neighborhood Nature



April 18, 2020 Through the Window:
Orange Crowned Warbler photograph
by Rich and Susan Breisch



California Ground Squirrel:
Backyard photo by Niki Ahrens

The 10-Minute Challenge by Ranger Steven Smith

As a Park Ranger I often get asked, “What animals are in the park?” The answer is there are quite a lot of mammals, birds, reptiles, insects and plant life that exists in the Open Space Parks of San Diego. More than I can tell you in a brief reply to the question. I could write out a very long list of all the species that exist here and you might read it, remember one or two you really want to see, forget the rest and then get disappointed that you don’t see the critter of your desire the next time you are in the park. I know this to be true because after working here almost 6 years I have really wanted to see a Bobcat, yet still have not despite the numerous hours I spend in the canyons. To be amazed by all the life in the parks I really don’t need to see one spectacular creature to make me happy that there is so much life in the parks. Usually all it takes is to sit still and be quite for a short amount of time and let all the critters forget that I am there so that they can get on with living their life in the small wild spaces of urban San Diego.

So, I have started my own personal challenge I would like to share with you in order to see, hear and appreciate more of the San Diego’s Open Space. In particular, the Tri Canyon Parks of Tecolote, Marian Bear and Rose Canyon as these are the parks closest to you. I call it, The 10-Minute Challenge. All you will need is a trip to a park, a stop watch or phone with timer and the ability to sit



still for 10 minutes and do absolutely nothing. That last part is the hardest part of the whole challenge, but it’s worth it.

To do this, I recommend you hike a short distance into a park, preferably as far from a road as you can as you will soon hear the absolute deafening noise of cars and construction encroaching on your experience. Find any spot you like to have a seat, whether it’s a bench, against a tree, by a stream, in the shade or exposed to the sun, just somewhere you want to spend 10 minutes. Get comfortable and set your timer for 10 minutes. Start the timer and then close your eyes and just start listening. At first you might not notice much and random thoughts will be distracting your challenge, but as each minute passes you will notice the noises of all the life around you start to get louder and creep in closer as they forget you as a large mammal has just crossed into their realm. *(continued on p. 3)*

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Clairemont Times



City of San Diego

Many generous neighbor
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A Tell Tale Trail



*Could a bobcat have left these tracks?
Photo shared by Marla Gilmore*

About Friends of Tecolote Canyon



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.

Like us on Facebook/Friends of Tecolote Canyon
www.friendsoftecolotecanyon.org

*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

The 10-Minute Challenge (continued from p. 1)

by Ranger Steven Smith



At first you might not notice much and random thoughts will be distracting your challenge, but as each minute passes you will notice the noises of all the life around you start to get louder and creep in closer as they forget you as a large mammal has just crossed into their realm. You will definitely hear a plethora of birds and their many different songs, the lizards as they scuttle over dry leaves and twigs, bugs flying all about, hummingbirds zipping and diving through the air, a rabbit hopping around looking for food, the breeze being broken by the branches and leaves of the plants around you, maybe water babbling over rocks and whatever else passes into the space of your audible range. You might even start to smell the different aromas of the canyon, especially if you happen by an area populated by the local sages.

It's really quite amazing to hear the life go on around you as if you weren't even there.

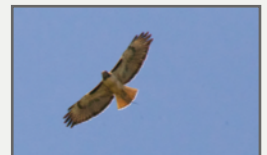
After the timer goes off 10 minutes later, which may feel like it took an hour to get through, open your eyes, but don't move.

Take another couple of minutes to let the color and shapes of everything around you flood in and put shape to everything you just heard. There is so much life there that stopped noticing you while you noticed it.

This challenge may sound quite easy, but I assure you it will be harder to get through 10 minutes of eyes closed silence than you might think.

That said, it is highly worth it and at bare minimum a new way to appreciate the amazing diversity of nature in your neighborhood.

So get out there and challenge yourself to notice what is in the park.



February Bird Day at Kids Art and Activities



COVID-19 Update for Tecolote Canyon



Per the San Diego County public health order in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, this park is open for passive use only. Please follow the temporary protocols below for enjoying our parks and trails.



Passive use only, such as walking, jogging, or hiking.



No congregating or participating in sports activities.



Do not shake hands or engage in any unnecessary physical contact.



Maintain social distancing of a minimum of 6-feet (1.8 meters) at all times.



Wear recommended face covering when in the parks and on the trails.



Do not enter the parks or trails if You have a cough or fever.



Please check www.sandiego.gov/status for updates regarding closures and restrictions. If you see something that needs attention, please submit to AskParks or the Get It Done app.



Following health and safety guidelines: wearing masks while biking the trails of Rose Canyon



Western Tussock Moth found by Joan Brosnan's grandson in Escondido. The caterpillar eats willow and oak leaves and could be found in Tecolote Canyon.

The moth is about 1" and light brown in color. "Nature is everywhere; we just have to be looking for it." —Joan Brosnan



pictured above: Puzzle that Senior Ranger Steven and his fiancé Laurel completed recently



Did you do a little jig during the Coronavirus Pandemic...a jigsaw puzzle that is.

During the Stay at Home order many of us have been doing jigsaw puzzles. According to Wikipedia, the first jigsaw puzzle is believed to have been created around 1760. Jigsaw puzzle popularity soared during the Great Depression and now, during the Coronavirus pandemic the demand for jigsaw puzzles has seen an increase similar to that of the Great Depression. Originally, puzzles were created by painting a picture on a piece of wood and cutting it into bits. Some early puzzles were made by mounting maps on wood and cutting around national boundaries. Today, puzzles are mostly made of cardboard and come in variety of themes including landscapes, nature, animals, and just anything you can think of.

Puzzles are inexpensive, recyclable, fun for all ages and a great way to keep your brain active. Since most brick and mortar stores aren't available during this time you may be able to find puzzles in one of the free little library boxes in your neighborhood. Some neighborhood residents have been putting puzzles on the curb in front of their homes to share with the community. One Tecolote Canyon patron and graduate of the University of San Diego recently opened Perch Birding Gifts and Supplies, an online store with birding and other nature related items including puzzles! Visit their website www.perchbirding.com Use code TECOLOTE and Perch Birding will donate 10% of sales to the Friends of Tecolote Canyon. Find some fun gifts and nature related items without leaving your home, support a local small business and support the Friends of Tecolote Canyon.! Happy Puzzling!

Webs & Weeds Never End



Neighborhood Nature photograph by Joan Brosnan



Kids Corner

Nature Bingo

While you're outside or looking out your window, try to get a Nature Bingo!

Fill in the empty spaces with things you see or hope to find.

Cool Rock	Flying insect	Bird sound	Something round	
	An animal track	Flower	Plant with an aroma	Leaf on the ground
Crawling Insect	Something with blue on it		Spider web	Something Fuzzy
Neat stick	A bird	Something green	A breeze	
Ant trail	Seed or berry	water	Something smooth	Something with a tail