

Friends of Tecolote Canyon



Photo by Mark Hannibal

Sundays in the Garden

The native plant nursery at Tecolote Nature Center is now fully set up with an automated mist and drip system, making it possible for the nursery to begin propagating native plants from locally collected seed stock.

Sunday in the Garden volunteer, Justin Daniel, recently designed and installed the upgrade. Ranger Steve Smith, who initiated and oversees the nursery, and Mat Wilson, who is in charge of ground maintenance for the recreation center, assisted the construction.

The system, with 10–11 misters at multiple stations, can expand up to 350 misters. This is important because having the ability to water hundreds of seedlings and young plants will help us be able to revegetate more acreage in the Canyon at much lower costs.

Seedlings need consistent watering, especially through our hot summers. Small seedlings can die easily when even one day of watering is missed, while other plants only need watering once per week. Perennials, which

make up the majority of the canyons fauna, can take up to a year before they are ready to be planted. The plant pallet at the nursery is based on biologists assessment of and recommendation for the Tecolote/Mission Bay watershed.

As invasive plants are removed they will be replaced with native plants helping us maintain the natural diversity of the chaparral and sage scrub habitats. This in turn will increase the diversity and health of wildlife, as well.

During April and May, Tecolote's ESCAPE program partnered with students from

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Justin Daniel with Ranger



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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.

Family Day ~ A Free Event ~ is Saturday, June 3rd!

See inside for the schedule and silent auction information!

Holmes Elementary and Bay Park Elementary. Using plants from the nursery, they completed revegetation projects at the Mt Brundage trail head and at the nature center. We are looking forward to many years of partnerships, propagating, and planting ahead!

If you are interested in learning about cultivating and growing our native plants or becoming part our team of volunteers that are helping our nursery grow and thrive, visit us, the third Sunday of every month, at 9:00am for "Sunday in the Garden." Or contact Ranger Steve at the nature center, if you have any questions.

Revegetation project completed and maintained by the Weed Warriors, led by Ranger Janice.



Meet Your TCCAC *By Niki Ahrens*

Since 1978, a committee of 13 volunteers, has been meeting bi-monthly to discuss ways to help preserve, protect, and enhance our beloved canyon in the heart of San Diego. This group, the Tecolote Canyon Citizens Advisory Committee, or TCCAC, swore in its first members on April 1, 1978, and is celebrating its 39th anniversary this spring.

This committee has been recognized by the City Council as the planning committee for Tecolote Canyon Natural Park. TCCAC's master plan recommends minimal development to preserve the natural character, habitat, flora and fauna, and overall environmental integrity of this park.

Some of the original founding members remain a vital presence in TCCAC today. Eloise Battle's name may be familiar to you, especially if you've visited the Battle Trail or the classroom with her namesake at TNC. Eloise was a primary grassroots organizer responsible for saving Tecolote Canyon Natural Park from becoming a landfill or development. She continues to serve as the committee's original Mayoral Representative. Darrel Madison has served as Chairperson since May of 2013.

These days the committee is focusing on the passage of the Master Plan Update. TCCAC is also involved in pertinent city projects to ensure that activity doesn't unnecessarily disrupt the continuity of the park environment. The committee is currently keeping an eye on the eight inch sewer main replacement project. As for what's coming soon, committee members are looking forward to future trail improvement projects as well as learning who our new Senior Park Ranger will be and working with that individual. And before we know it, we will be planning ways to celebrate the 40th anniversary of TCCAC!

Tecolote Canyon Citizens Advisory Committee

Back row, left to right: Niki Ahrens, Anitra Kaye, Susan Mourian, Jim Roberts, Chair Darrel Madison, Ranger Steve Smith, David Harpster.

In front: M. Eloise Battle and Don Steele

Not present: Suzy Logan, Rick Bussell and Ingrid Lewin.





FREE EVENT

TECOLOTE FAMILY DAY

Family Friendly Nature Fun for all ages!

Tecolote Nature Center (858-581-9954)

5180 Tecolote Rd., San Diego

June 3, 10-2:00

***Our Earth Rocks! *Face Painting (10:30-12:30)*
Create with clay!* Tecolote Snake Encounter* Nature Crafts*
* Owl Pellets* Animal Skulls & Tracks* Insect Investigations*
Zovargo* Climate Kids* Dept of Fish & Wildlife***

SPECIAL EVENTS

10:30- Ms. Smarty Plants: Be an Earth Hero!

11:15- Biomimicry: Engaging music for all ages!

We are proud to announce our 2nd Annual Silent Auction to raise funds for Friends of Tecolote Canyon. Please stop by our tables so you can bid on such great items as:

***Disneyland park hopper passes (4) *Hilton Hotel Overnight Package**

***Tickets to The Natural History Museum (4) *Whale Watching (4),**

***The USS Midway Museum (6) *Restaurants, and much more!**

See a more complete list on page 8 of this newsletter

100% of the funds raised during our auction will expand our naturalist-led education programs, including our environmental and Kumeyaay cultural education field trips to Tecolote Nature Center!

Bring your kids, your family, your friends and neighbors. We look forward to seeing you all on June 3rd from 10:00-2:00.

In preparation for the Silent Auction, please note that items must be paid for with cash or credit card on Saturday, June 3 at the event. Only adults may place bids, and signing the bid sheet is a commitment for the final bidder to purchase the item.

Pink Umbrella Honey *By Niki Ahrens*

One of our slope stabilizing native plants is an early summer standout. *Eriogonum fasciculatum*, more commonly known as California buckwheat, can be easy to miss during most seasons until late spring into summer. It looks similar to other “short shoot” plants like chamise, sagebrush, or narrowleaf bedstraw, but it has some unique traits to distinguish it. Pink umbrella honey.

While most flowers have yellow pollen, California buckwheat flowers have pink pollen. New budding flowers are pink, then appear white and fuzzy once mature. By fall, California buckwheat flowers dry to a beautiful rust color and remain throughout the season. Right now you can find its flowers at each stage in the canyon. The flowers are a favorite nectar spot for some of our smaller, somewhat unnoticed butterflies like the Behr’s metalmark. This brown, speckled butterfly lays its eggs on California buckwheat, then the caterpillar will feast on the narrow, bundled leaves. Another frequent flyer on this plant is the nut-brown hair-streak butterfly.

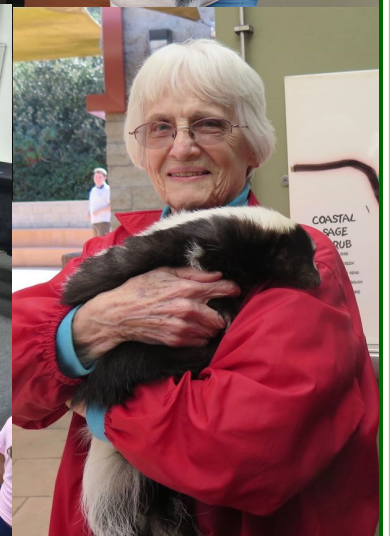


The flowers are also well-loved by bees, making this our most important native source of honey in California. In the canyon, you can find California buckwheat visited by birds like finches and California towhees who find these tiny seeds delicious. The flowers grow on umbels which resemble umbrella spokes. This shape helps to identify it among look-alikes. The umbrella-like shape of the short 2-3 foot tall shrub provides cover for rodents underneath, too. This plant’s deep taproot stabilizes the slopes of our coastal sage scrub and chaparral, making it both a lovely and important sight to see.



ESCAPE educator and TNC volunteer, Andrea Burgan brought her rescued pet skunk to Art and Activities in February. The grownups enjoyed meeting Zola, named after Gorgonzola (the stinky cheese) as much as the children!

Did you know skunks can eat wasps, bees, and rattlesnakes? They are immune to venom!



*A KING's lunch: about 45 minutes from start to finish.
Incredible photos contributed by Russell Burnette, many thanks!*

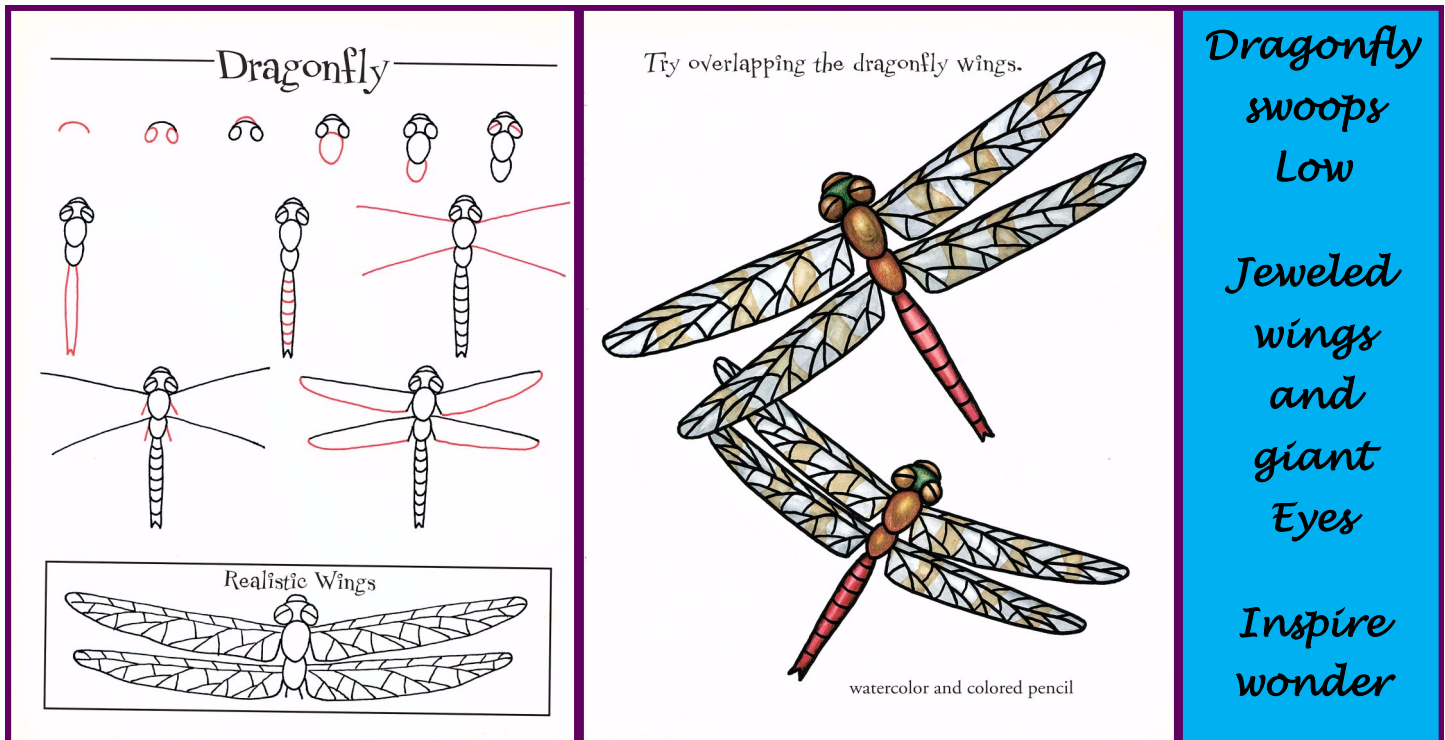


Kingsnakes constrict their prey and swallowing it whole. The constricting cuts off blood supply to major organs and the prey can lose consciousness in seconds, with death following soon after. Kingsnakes eat rats, birds, and lizards, but are most famous for eating other snakes, especially rattlesnakes.

~ <http://news.nationalgeographic.com>

Nature Journal Art ~ How to draw a Dragonfly

From Ralph Masiello's Bug Drawing Book



Why do Dragonflies Have Big Eyes?

Excerpt from How do Ants Know when you're having a picnic? By Joan Settle and Nancy Baggett

A dragonfly uses over 56,000 tiny eyes to get a sharp view of it's fast-moving insect prey. The tiny eyes, called facets, are bound together in bundles of 28,000 to form it's two giant compound eyes. While the function of a compound eye is not completely understood, it is known that these specially designed light detectors are exceptionally good at seeing moving objects. For the dragonfly, which captures other insects in midair, the ability to notice movement is especially important.





EVENTS IN THE PARK

Tecolote Nature Center
5180 Tecolote Road San Diego, CA 92110
858-581-9959

Monday – Closed, Tuesday –Saturday 9:00-4:00, Sunday 9:00-2:00

Saturday, June 3rd

Family Day 10:00am—2:00pm

Saturday, June 17th & July 15th

9:00-11:00 AM – Weed Warriors
Canyon clean up with Ranger Janice

Sunday, June 18th & July 16th

9:00 AM Sunday in the Garden
Volunteer with Park Ranger Steven
Get dirty, have fun, help out your community

Wednesday, June 21st & July 19th

1:30 – 3:00 PM Art & Activities for Kids
Free crafts, nature stories, and activities!

Saturday, June 24th & July 22nd

8:00 AM Audubon Society Bird Walk
All skill levels welcome

Updated activities are posted at:

<http://www.meetup.com/Friends-of-Tecolote-Canyon-Natural-Park-and-Nature-Center/>

Like us on
www.facebook.com/friendsoftecolotecanyon



Tecolote Nature Center ~ 5180 Tecolote Road San Diego, CA 92110

Hours of operation: Tues.-Saturday; 9-4:00, Sunday: 9-2:00, Closed Monday

For information call 858-581-9959



Like us on Facebook – Friends of Tecolote Canyon

Activities are free of charge.

**Donations to the “Friends of Tecolote Canyon
are always appreciated!”**



*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 Chambers and Filmetrics** for
their donation, providing 5 years of wifi to the nature center*

**We want to express our gratitude to all the donors who have
generously made Family Day 2017 a success!**

Disney Parks * San Diego Junior Theater * Hilton Hotel (Mission Bay) * Padres
Chili's Restaurant (Clairemont) * Dream Dinner * Café Gratitude * Starbucks
Jimbo's Natural Foods * Acorn Naturalist * Richard Louv (Author) * Skate World
U.S.S Midway * SD Natural History Museum* Japanese Friendship Gardens
Tecolote Golf Course * Hornblower Tours* Cami Abel (Artist) * Eloise Battle
Westroot Tavern * The Dana on Mission Bay * San Diego Paintball
Joan Brosnan and Marla Gilmore

SD City Council Community Project and Services

