

Friends of Tecolote Canyon

November 2021

Volume 7, Issue 1

Header photo: Tecolote Canyon Toyon [*Heteromeles arbutifolia*] in November

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Ballpark Hermit

by Anitra Kaye

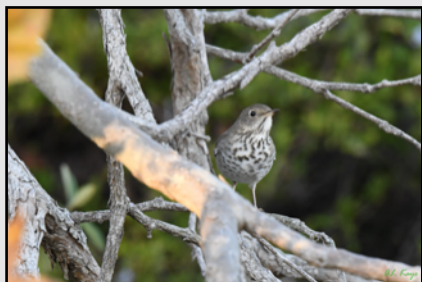
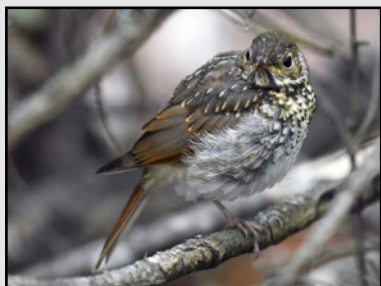


Photo and observation by Anitra Kaye, Audubon Volunteer & Tecolote Canyon Citizens Advisory Committee Member

This Hermit Thrush has been observed —by myself and others—hanging out in the parking lot vegetation near the Tecolote ball field. Observers including myself have consistently found it in the early morning in the past few weeks.

Hermit Thrush [*Catharus guttatus*] tend to forage on the ground and near berry-bearing plants during the winter. Learn more about this meek bird and hear its charming and humble song at [AllAboutBirds.org](https://www.allaboutbirds.org).



Juvenile Hermit Thrush has spotting on its back and wings, image courtesy of [Macaualay Library](https://www.macaualaylibrary.com)

Recognition

by Marla Gilmore, Center Director



photo: Ranger Erika giving a talk about restoration to the San Diego Canyonlands crew in Rose Canyon

Congratulations to Park Ranger Erika

Weikel on being awarded the Open Space Division's Employee of the Quarter!

Ranger Erika was recognized for the ways she responded to a patron in a medical emergency and successfully aided with the recovery of the patron. Erika was also rewarded for her work with those experiencing homelessness in our communities. In addition to these extraordinary achievements, Ranger Erika can be found in the canyons teaching folks about nature, nurturing milkweed in the restoration areas in order to boost the monarch habitat, assisting at special events and pop up nature tables, creating interpretive signage, and helping out wherever she can.

Well done, Ranger Erika!



photo: Ranger Erika (right) helping Ranger Mika at Otay Valley Regional Park's Día de los Muertos event

Upcoming November Walks

Self-Guided Walk Green Friday, November 26

Skip the mall and the shopping chaos on Black Friday and come on over to the nature center and canyon on Green Friday, November 26. Check out our restoration areas and take a self-guided interpretive walk on the trail. The Tecolote Nature Center will be open 9:00-3:00 on November 26, and the trail is always open.

Morning Bird Walk Saturday, November 13 8:00-10:00 AM

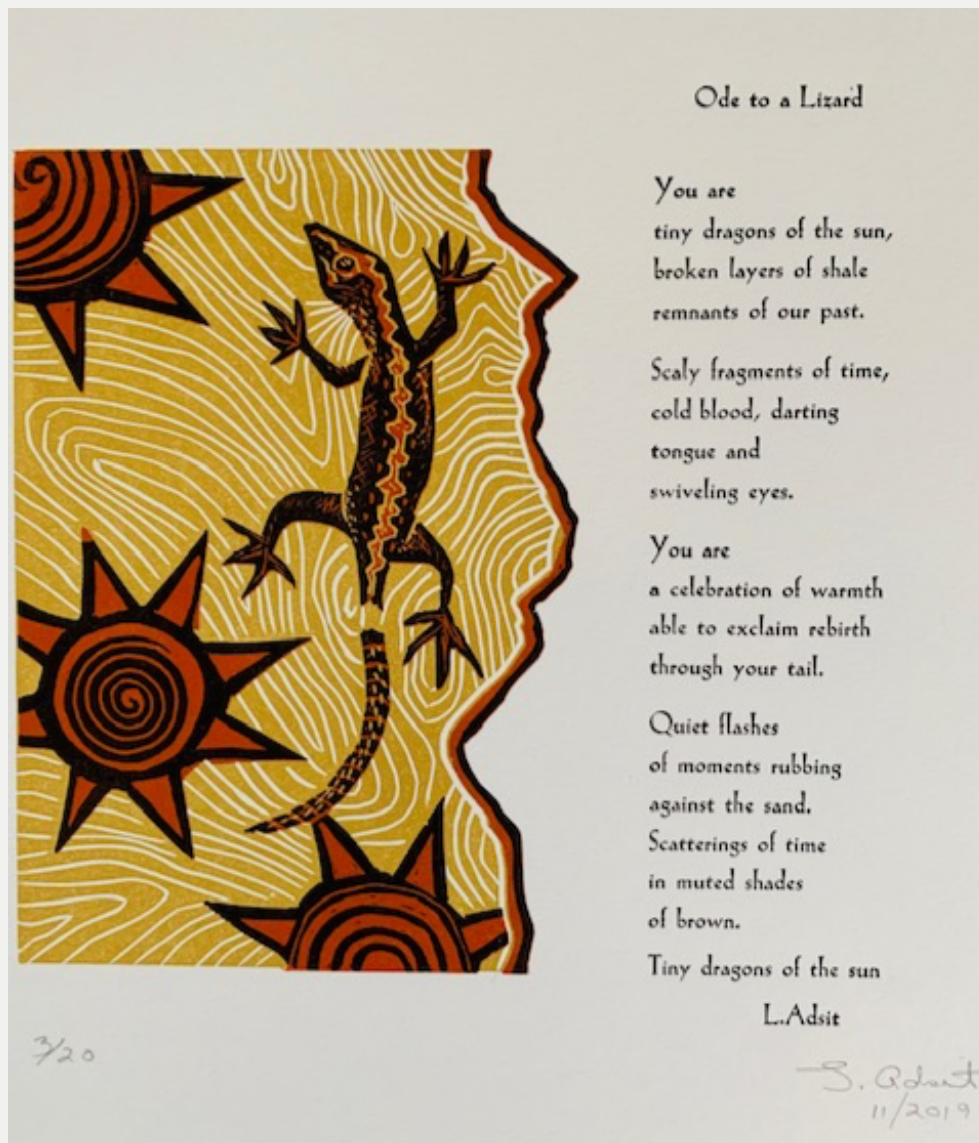
Start your weekend off right with a morning bird walk in Tecolote Canyon! More than 150 species of birds have been recorded in the canyon, which provides excellent habitat for local riparian, grassland, and forest birds. Fall migration will be in full swing, so who knows what might pop up!

We'll meet at the Nature Center at 8am and meander up the canyon before turning around and heading back. The path is flat, well-groomed gravel - comfortable walking shoes are all that's needed. Binoculars encouraged, but not necessary - this event is open to birders of all levels.

TECOLOTE NATURE CENTER,
Tecolote Nature Center
5180 Tecolote Road · San Diego, CA
[MeetUp Link](#)

Both November walks meet at Tecolote Nature Center, 5180 Tecolote Road, San Diego

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(above) art and poetry by Lauriel Adsit, Environmental Artist
and Tecolote Canyon Interpretive Volunteer

Tecolote Nature Center is Open

TECOLOTE NATURE CENTER
5180 Tecolote Road
San Diego, CA 92110

HOURS OF OPERATION*

Sunday - CLOSED
Monday - CLOSED
Tuesday - CLOSED
Wednesday - 11:00 AM - 3:00 PM
Thursday - CLOSED
Friday - 11:00 AM - 3:00 PM
Saturday - 11:00 AM - 3:00 PM

The garden, patio, and outdoor
restrooms are open every day.

Learning Center (Classroom) and
Library temporarily closed

*Occasionally, when understaffed,
the center may close on short notice.

*The land is the real teacher.
All we need as students is
mindfulness.*

— Robin Wall Kimmerer,
*Braiding Sweetgrass: Indigenous
Wisdom, Scientific Knowledge
and the Teachings of Plants*

A New Footbridge in Marian Bear article by Ranger Steve Smith

It wasn't part of the federal infrastructure package list of bridges to be updated, but it was updated nonetheless due to years of use and storm damage. The small footbridge located at Marian Bear Park near the Regents East comfort station leading north across the creek was redesigned by Ranger Cameron Engelhart. The former footbridge had seen one too many high flow events that damaged and mangled it against roots and rocks.

So, Cameron redesigned a new 20-feet long by two-feet wide foot bridge to aide people crossing the creek when the water is flowing, but not "really flowing." When the water is "really flowing," the bridge is attached to a cable so it can move, but not wash down the creek and become irretrievable. Once the water retreats, the bridge can be replaced in its crossing position. The bridge has a simple bowed design that Ranger Cameron and Ranger Steve were able to construct in only a couple of hours. The bow in the bridge allows for the bridge to be flipped every so often for equal flex and wear, thus allowing for the bridge to hopefully double its lifespan.

Stop by Marian Bear, go for a hike, and check out the new foot bridge.

Ranger staff hopes to replace a few other lost and decaying foot bridges around the Tri-Canyons in the near future as well. So be on the lookout for those as you enjoy a local hike.



photo: Ranger Cameron crossing the new foot bridge

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Clairemont Town Council

Clairemont Times

City of San Diego

Many generous neighbor
volunteers & donors



A Call for Haikus

How might you describe Tecolote Canyon in
three lines?

A haiku is a Japanese form of poetry that follows
a three line structure:

The first line is 5 syllables

The second line is 7 syllables

The third line is 5 syllables

for example:

woodrats and birds nest

buckwheat and pollinators

buzz, Tecolote

Send your Tecolote Canyon haiku to

TecoloteFriendsOf@gmail.com

and we'll publish it in the February newsletter
issue. We look forward to your submissions!

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

San Diego Bird Festival

Mark Your Calendar!



The 2022 Bird Festival Agenda includes
Tecolote Canyon bird walks. Check out the
[website](#) for information and an agenda. Mark
your calendars for February 16-20, 2022.

Tecolote Canyon Walk Detail:

Tecolote Canyon is a well-known birding gem
of San Diego, it is one of the largest
continuous canyons in the urban heart of San
Diego, located near Old Town and it's name
"tecolote" means little owl in the indigenous
local language. Tecolote Canyon is home to
many coastal chapparel specialist species as

well as many other local birds, expect to see California thrasher, Spotted and
California towhees, wrenit, Nuttall's woodpecker and red-shouldered hawks.
May be difficult for people with access challenges.

Praying Mantis Questions and Answers

by Marla Gilmore, Center Director
with help from Jerry "bug guy" Jacobs

During the last week of October, visitor Will asked questions about a praying
mantis he found in his neighborhood. A few minutes after Will left, someone else
came into the nature center to tell me about a praying mantis on the nature
center's patio. Since I am not an expert in the subject, I reached out to our "bug
guy" Volunteer, Jerry.

Will, thanks for the questions. Jerry,
thanks for the answers!



It's hard to tell from the pictures, but the
more brown one is probably one of the
native *Stagmomantis* species (possibly
Stagmomantis californica which has the
same banded raptorial legs [first pair of
legs]), and likely a female (since the
back of the abdomen protrudes beyond
the wings in females).

The more green one with the pinkish
prothorax (segment in front of wings) is
more than likely a non-native species,
possibly grown from an ootheca (literally
egg-case in Greek), possibly the
Mediterranean Mantis *Iris oratoria* (the
scientific name makes it sound like a flower
that lectures you). The color is generally
quite variable in praying mantises, so
usually not good indicator of the species.

