

Friends of Tecolote Canyon



August 2019
Volume 4, Issue 4

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Oh Where Oh Where Could Maggie Be?

MISSING DOG "MAGGIE"



LOST OUR DOG MAGGIE. SHE WAS MISSING ON SACTO ROAD NEAR 47. PLEASE HELP TO FIND HER. SHE IS A 4 LB BARKER UNDER THE MOON. BLACK WITH WHITE ON HER NECK AND CHEST. WE LIVE IN OVERLOOK HEIGHTS ABOVE THE TECOLOTE CANYON.

We've all seen a lost dog or cat sign on a telephone poll in our neighborhood. It's always sad to know that someone's family pet is out there on its own, but especially sad when the signs are posted along canyon rims or open space areas where domestic animals may become prey to coyote, run into a rattlesnake, trapes though poison oak or cactus, and deal with the elements such as extreme heat or rain, not to mention the lack of good food and fresh water. The odds are not good for animals lost in the canyon, but the odds were in Maggie's favor this spring thanks to her encounter with Senior Park Ranger Steven Smith.

Late on a Wednesday afternoon Ranger Smith decided to take a walk into the canyon to pull weeds. He heard a dog bark and looked up on the hillside where a small dog appeared to be stuck. Ranger Steven got closer and told the dog to come. The dog listened to Steven and jumped into his arms. Ranger Steven thought he recognized the dog from a flyer that was posted at the nature center. He checked the tag and sure enough, it said "Maggie", just like the dog on the flyer. Maggie was exhausted, and had dirty, matted fur. Steven carried Maggie to the nature center and gave her some dog treats and fresh water, lots and lots of fresh water! The owner broke down and could barely speak when she found out that her precious Maggie, who had been lost for 11 days, was safe and sound just a few minutes away from their home. Maggie was reunited with her family and they all lived happily ever after.

Family Day 2019

By Joan Brosnan



On June 1, Friends of Tecolote Canyon welcomed over 600 adults and children to Tecolote Nature Center for the annual Tecolote Family Day community event. "Nurture Nature" included presentations from Project Wildlife, Critter Encounters, Luiseno Storyteller Cathleen C. Wallace and special music from the County Rangers Biomimicry Band.



Special thanks to District 2 Council Member Jen Campbell and Community Projects Programs and Services for funding this event that featured an Insect Zoo, Owl Pellet station, live snakes, crafts and many other awesome nature experiences for all ages.



As the Family Day coordinator, I wish to acknowledge and thank the Tri Canyon Rangers, our enthusiastic naturalists and volunteers who gave many hours to set up and staff this event.



I sincerely appreciate the notes, feedback and support that was received from the happy families who attended. If anyone would like to volunteer in planning Tecolote Family Day 2020, please contact friendsoftecolotecanyon@gmail.com.



Camera Trap Findings



A Collaboration with University of San Diego

By Alexa Sabate & Madeleine Braun

We are students from Dr. Nicole Danos's Vertebrate Natural History class at the University of San Diego. For a class project, we've chosen to research and review the camera traps placed in various locations along Tecolote Canyon to see what animals were present during the season because the canyon is known to be flourishing with different forms of life! Camera traps are motion-sensitive cameras that snap a picture whenever movement is detected, which is hopefully movement by animals! These traps were placed by Dr. Andrew Nosal as a part of his Animal Behavioral Ecology class in order to conduct research on local species.

We are excited to share some of our findings!

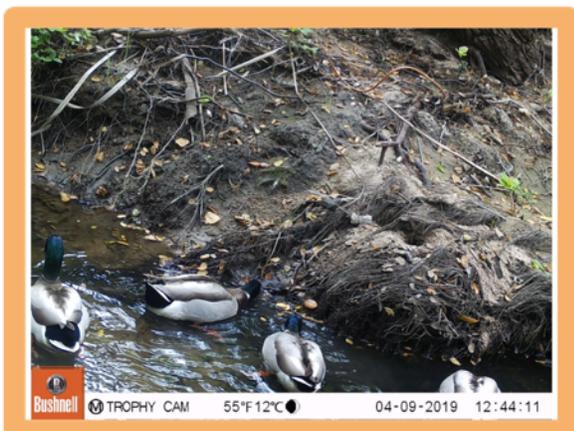


Raccoon (*Procyon lotor*)

A raccoon was spotted during the nighttime scavenging for food, which it may find by preying on aquatic species. Common identifiers for raccoons are their dark-colored hair around their eyes and their fluffy, black-ringed tails. Raccoons are nocturnal animals, so chances they'd be spotted during the day are slim. Raccoons are slightly larger than house cats, and emit many vocalizations, including purring, growling, and chittering.

Great Blue Heron (*Ardea herodias*)

One great blue heron was spotted alone wading through the shallow water. Common identifiers for these birds are: long legs, greyish-blue feathers with a long orangish-yellow beak, and a black crown with head plumes. Great blue herons are known to wade slowly and stand like a statue when stalking fish or other prey in shallow water, so it is possible that we are seeing part of this action here!



Mallard Ducks (*Anas platyrhynchos*)

Four mallard ducks were found swimming in the water, and appear to be feeding on either aquatic invertebrates or underwater plants. Common identifiers for mallards are: A dark, iridescent green head (found in males), a bright yellow beak, and a grey body in between a grey chest and a black rear. Female and juvenile mallards, although not pictured, are mottled-brown with orange-brown bills. Both sexes have a white-bordered, blue "speculum" patch on their wings.

August Events

Tecolote Nature Center

5180 Tecolote Road San Diego, CA 92110
858-581-9944
Park Ranger Office 858-581-9961
Monday – Closed,
Tuesday – Saturday 9:00-4:00,
Sunday 9:00-2:00

Saturday, August 3

9:00 a.m. Outdoor Beautification Volunteer opportunity

Location TBD. Email Park Ranger Erika for details
eweikel@sandiego.gov

Saturday, August 17

9:00-11:00 Weed Warriors

Volunteer with the Park Rangers to make your canyon awesome! Help is needed in the restoration and revegetation areas. Gloves and tools provided. Wear long pants and sturdy shoes. No flip flops please. Bring sun protection and a refillable water bottle. * Arrive early to get a good parking spot.

Wednesday, August 21

1:30-3:00 Art & Activities for Kids- Free!

Get crafty and have fun! Ocean themed nature crafts and activities.

Program is free! Donations to the Friends of Tecolote Canyon are always appreciated.

Many volunteer opportunities available!

Sign up at www.sandiego.gov/volunteer-program

Activities are posted 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

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.

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

Children in Nature

Our ESCAPe

Our education program, the Environmental Stewards Canyon Program [ESCAPe] provided outdoor, nature-based field trips in Tecolote Canyon to 764 local elementary students during the 2018-2019 school year.

Our team of naturalists introduced native plants and live animals, participated in canyon restoration projects, made upcycled art, and played carbon cycle games with students from seven local public schools.



We want to thank

our many generous neighborhood donors for funding our program supporting future generations of environmental stewards. The ESCAPe program is grateful and honored to receive an Environmental Champions grant from SDG&E to help support our educational programming for local elementary students in Tecolote Canyon. Together, we make a difference!



Friends of Tecolote Canyon members were presented with Environmental Champions grant from SDG&E (pictured L to R: Niki Ahrens, Eloise Battle, Erika Weikel, Sherlie Miller, Joan Brosnan, Morgan Justice-Black)

Art & Activities

156 participants attended June's Art and Activities at Tecolote Nature Center!



learning



arts and crafts



and so much



fun

Water Buffalo Has Arrived

By Steven Smith, Senior Ranger

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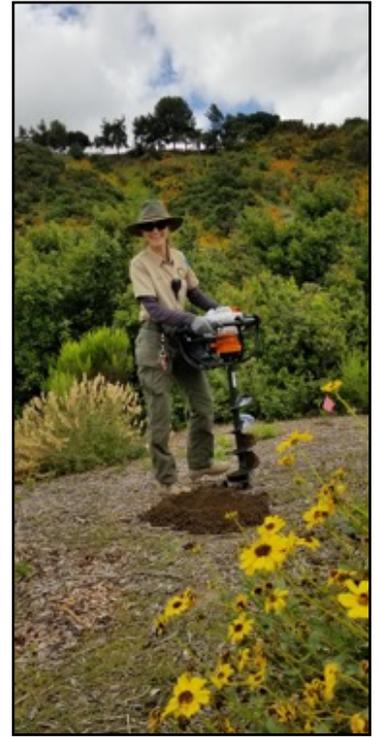


Tri-Canyon staff has been upping their restoration efforts in Tecolote Canyon. What started out as removing a small amount of non-native plants and planting a handful of native plants near the beginning of the Battle trail has grown into an expanding effort of clearing larger swaths of non-natives and planting larger amounts of natives. It is a task that requires effort throughout the entire year. Staff and a growing number of volunteers must work to plant and weed with the appropriate season. Ideally planting starts in the fall just before the rains come in order to allow for new plants to get as much rain as possible during the winter months. Then when spring comes and the seed stock of decades of non-natives freshly rained on feel the longer days and warmer temps they all begin to grow. This is the time staff and volunteers need to put in the effort to remove all the non-native growth before they flower, go to seed and deposit another years' worth of non-native seed bank into the soil. Finally, as summer arrives, the rains have all ended, and the ground becomes a hard pack of dirt, staff and volunteers then need to give water to the natives they planted in the fall about once a month in order to keep them alive their first year as they don't have a lot of the water preserving shaded ground cover that a fully functioning habitat provides.

June 15th, 2019 was our first chance to put the Water Buffalo to work during our monthly Weed Warriors event. Previously we used a gravity fed water buffalo that held 100 gallons. It took us the entire 2 hours to empty the old tank and was very inefficient. Today we emptied 200 gallons in 1.5 hours getting water to almost all the plants we planted last fall and winter. Everything worked out great and we look forward to expanding our ecosystem rehabilitation efforts in Tecolote and the Tri-Canyon Parks.



As you can see this is a lot of work. A lot of work that has grown in size and effort each year. So new tools were needed in order to keep up with the work load and expansion rates. Fortunately for staff and volunteers, when former Council Member Lori Zapf left office she donated enough funds for the Tri-Canyon Parks staff to purchase a Water Buffalo that is street legal, has a gas-powered pump and holds 535 gallons of water. We also purchased a single person Earth Auger with a bit that easily and quickly drills 1-gallon sized plant holes for us to plant more plants faster and with less effort. Our hope is to pre-drill holes and have volunteers plant more plants giving them a stronger connection to the canyon and their efforts throughout the years. (cont. on page 5.)



Mt. Etna Walk By Joan Brosnan



"To walk is to set the mind jogging"- Kenneth Grahame



Exploring Tecolote Canyon: Trail entrance from Mt. Etna is located within Mt Etna Neighborhood Park at 4741 Mt Etna Drive. Park in the lot below the street level, walk past the restrooms and the fenced ball fields until you see the trail head sign.

This is an easy, accessible trail and great for families with small children. **It is approximately 1/2 mile one way trip from the entrance at Mt Etna park to Balboa Avenue.**

This trail is mostly shaded by Coast Live Oaks with three bridge crossings. Bear to the right where the trail forks to end at Balboa Avenue then return the way you came. We heard various birds, startled two rabbits, noticed some possible animal dens and enjoyed the aromas of coastal native plants. Stay safe and stay on the trail! Be aware of the hedges of poison oak, carry water and wear closed toed shoes.

FYI for longer walk: Families with older children could cross the small bridge at Balboa and follow the **steep, narrow** upward trail which plateaus and runs alongside and above Balboa. This trail descends **steeply** into another Tecolote finger canyon which runs parallel to the trail from Mt. Etna. This trail ends at Genesee Avenue and Chateau Drive. With this addition, the total round trip back to Mt Etna Park would be approximately 4 miles.

Thank You to Our Sponsors

SDG&E: A Sempra Energy Utility

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Hilton San Diego Resort & Spa

Clairemont Town Council

Clairemont Times



City of San Diego

Many generous neighbor
volunteers & donors

2,535 Volunteer Hours

In fiscal year 2019 (July 1st 2018-June 30, 2019) our awesome volunteers put in 2,535 hours of hard work to beautify our parks, teach kids about nature, assist with special events, welcome visitors to the nature center, patrol the trails, remove invasives, plant and water natives, lead walks, plan and implement arts and crafts programs, attend meetings, manage the newsletter, Meet Up and Facebook, and more.

Many volunteer opportunities are available with the City of San Diego and Friends of Tecolote Canyon.

Sign up at www.sandiego.gov/volunteer-program
or email the Friends of Tecolote Canyon at
www.friendsoftecolotecanyon@gmail.com.

Thanks to Dax's Grandma for
the donation of new animals to
our children's library!



Camp Tales at Tecolote Nature Center

by Marla Gilmore, Tecolote Nature Center Director

This Summer, Cabrillo Recreation Center's day camp kids came for a visit. The group was all boys of all abilities. Our activity was drawing pictures and telling stories about the drawings. The boys were so creative with their artwork and storytelling! We learned about a banana snake that peeled its skin instead of shedding it, a dragon horse with angelic wings that learned to survive on its own in the wild, a big-eyed bird with crazy big hair and more. The boys got a real treat when out of the blue, Running Grunion, a Native American storyteller happened to come in. Running Grunion also created a drawing (of a grunion of course) and told a story about his drawing. Thank you Running Grunion, also known as Abel Silvas, for spontaneously sharing your story and your talents with the group! The boys also witnessed our Rosy Boa eat a delicious meal. It was a fun day for everyone!



Water Buffalo Has Arrived (pt. 2)

Continued from p. 4

We would like to thank all those that have contributed and helped in this effort. The places we have restored were once a monoculture of annual non-natives that then became a near dead space during the hot dry summer months in Tecolote Canyon. Now you can go to these same places and see native plants blooming at all different times of the year providing food, shelter and habitat for a growing number of native animals and insects. Where there was once minimal noise of life to be heard you can now hear bird songs and brush scratching, see insects pollinating flowers, watch lizards scurrying about and see evidence of mammals eating and utilizing space again. It is a long-term effort, but we feel more ambitious than ever with our new tools to aid our big dreams of restoring Tecolote's native habitat.

