



Notes from meeting with and about Naturalist Guides

Wednesday, October 26, 2011, 2:00-3:45 pm at Girl Scouts of San Diego Council

Coordinated by San Diego Children and Nature Collaborative

What do we envision for the next five years?

- A. Coordinated training programs, county-wide
 - 1. Some common-broad understanding of all habitats
 - 2. Site-specific training (i.e. tidepools, estuaries, forest, desert)
- B. Shifts in approach
 - 1. Naturalists can lead in all places (not just where they were trained)
 - 2. Learn how to learn more (don't have to know everything)
 - 3. Reassure teachers and parents that exploration is effective learning approach
 - 4. Teach interpretive skills (more exploration, less "telling")
 - 5. Some people interested in learning and teaching nature, but don't want to lead walks
- C. Protocols for site assessments (including access, methods used by Walk San Diego)
- D. Link to agro-ecology, forest-gardening, urban forestry, conservation professionals
- E. Expand roles for naturalists
 - 1. Conservation issues, ways to take action
 - 2. Citizen science programs
 - 3. Education associated with restoration projects
 - 4. Focus on leading families, including grandparents

What are our opportunities and strengths?

- A. Well-developed training programs offered by several organizations
 - 1. Students in new class for Canyoneers are mostly under 30 years of age
 - 2. Trained naturalists are serving both as volunteers and as paid naturalist guides
- B. Nature places
 - 1. Micro-geography of San Diego, nature is urban, nearby residential areas, and in diverse habitats throughout county
 - 2. Many camps, parks, and public land areas in the county
 - 3. Visitor centers that attract the public
 - 4. Nature spaces in the built environment
- C. Resources
 - 1. Wealth in SD County to support nature education and experiences
 - 2. Many university and research centers, with scientists that have local nature expertise

3. US-Mexico Border has great ecological and cultural resources
 4. Parents can transport children in car pools (not all neighborhoods)
 5. Research documenting benefits of nature for humans (physical, health, emotional)
 6. Advantages of nature in this economy, that it is accessible and affordable potential of a *Naturalist Guide Fund* to support “nearby nature” field trips for classrooms and youth programs
- D. Program opportunities
1. Technology-facilitated learning
 2. Science/nature learning can be a spatial continuum, from classroom to schoolyard to nearby nature to field trip
 3. Citizen science programs operating locally (Plant Atlas, Christmas bird count, BioBlitz, hawk watch, and others)
 4. Youth clearly are interested in nature, can identify what they like to do and want to learn
 5. Nature lessons designed for children and families
 6. Children who are home-schooled, and children with special needs
 7. Wildlife center outreach programs, focus on human-nature interactions

What are our limitations and weaknesses?

- A. Access
1. Average schools are doing few nature field trips (“squeezed”), as “better” schools have funding and fill programs, and grant funds are focused on Title 1 schools
 2. Border US-Mexico complicates funding, travel, maps
 3. Access to parks and nature limited in some neighborhoods (People for Parks report)
 4. Rules against outdoor play activities, i.e. climbing trees
 5. Housing areas often don’t include play spaces and gardens
 6. Too much non-native vegetation in some places
- B. Resources
1. Difficult to get local scientists involved
 2. Budget cuts in schools, public agencies, non-profit organizations
 3. Loss of Palomar Outdoor School for SD Unified students (cut in 2011)
 4. Liability of naturalists in the field
 5. Certification required by different jurisdictions (no standards, no cross-acceptance)
 6. No collective measurement or tracking of nature-based learning (what, where, who)
 7. No directory or inventory of naturalists, each organization keeps list of active naturalists
 8. Sometimes difficult to get enough naturalists to staff nature walks and school programs
- C. Attitudes
1. Fears of nature, dirt, safety, danger
 2. Perceived difficulty of organizing nature walks and field trips
 3. Teachers’ fear of taking time for science, emphasis on test scores
 4. Lack passionate nature person in each school
 5. Limited public awareness of nature
 6. “Not invented here” attitudes within organizations
 7. Virtual nature-outdoor experiences more common
 8. “Corporate nature” focuses on exotic, entertaining and infrequent contacts with nature (SeaWorld, Zoo)

What actions can we take in next 6-12 months?

- A. Meet again in early December, suggest Wed. Dec. 7, 2:00 to 4:00 at Girl Scouts-Cabin 3
- B. Learn more about California Master Naturalist efforts (<http://ucanr.org/sites/UCCNP/>), including state-wide curriculum
- C. Gather information about current programs
 1. Copies of naturalist training syllabus/outline from each organization
 2. Outlines for naturalist guides-led walks and activities
 3. Handouts to teachers (before, during, after field trips)
 4. Schedule for naturalist programs, could be report from last year or schedule for this year
 5. [initially post these on Wiki or Google page, then migrate to webpage for naturalists]
- D. Explore additional roles for naturalists
 1. Conservation
 2. Citizen science
 3. Restoration
- E. Connect naturalists
 1. Distribute attendee list from this meeting (done!)
 2. Designate a webpage with posted information about naturalist trainings, programs, and materials (SD Children and Nature Collaborative, or someone else volunteer to host this?!)
 3. Set up a Facebook group for SD Naturalists and/or a blog
 4. Nature “mixers” at different places, for time together as colleagues and friends
 5. Consider a directory of active naturalists
 6. Add marine- and water-focused naturalists
 7. Connect to Master Gardeners and other para-professional and docent programs
- F. Outline opportunities for more coordination
 1. Standard elements and specialized elements
 2. Interpretive skills, including those for leading children and families
 3. Continuing education for current naturalists
 4. Accreditation (formal) and/or certification (i.e. school district requirements)
 5. Experts serving as trainers and others that could be trainers
 6. Areas of county not served geographically or demographically
 7. Accessibility for those with limited time or transportation (time of day, expectations for future service)
 8. Ways to recruit, retain, and schedule naturalists
 9. Estimated demand for naturalists, including turnover, expanded roles, outreach to schools, family-centered programs

Notes taken by Anne Fege, Chair, San Diego Children and Nature Collaborative. Send corrections to Anne at fege@sandiegoaudubon.org , 858-472-1293



Notes from meeting with Naturalist Guides

Wednesday, December 7, 2011, 2:00-3:30 pm at Girl Scouts of San Diego Council, Cabin 3
Coordinated by San Diego Children and Nature Collaborative

Attendees: Arne Johansen, Brian Moehl, Diane Greening, Fred Kramer, Heidi Gutknecht, Joni Gabriel, Laura Lowenstein, Renee Owens, and Anne Fege

There is interest in organizing two efforts-initiatives in 2012, a 40-hour training for the California Naturalist program, and two courses for interpretive skills. The next meeting of the naturalist guides group will be in January.

California Master Naturalist program. The California Master Naturalist program interests many local naturalists and organizations. Joni attended an organizing meeting this fall and has continued contact with the UC-Extension Service staff. Since they offered to travel to San Diego for an informational and/or organizing meeting, Joni will invite them to meet with us in mid- to late January.

There are nine units, including southern California, and a “sponsor” identifies local instructors to teach the 40-hour training. From webpage, <http://ucanr.org/sites/UCCNP/>. “California Naturalist is a new program developed by the University of California Cooperative Extension to foster a committed corps of volunteer naturalists and citizen scientists trained and ready to take an active role in natural resource conservation, education, and restoration. This program provides training, in collaboration with local sponsoring institutions, for adult environmental stewards through an adaptable outdoor and in class curriculum that can be as easily applied in a variety of settings. The program utilizes a science curriculum, hands-on learning, communication training, and community service to engage adults in interactive learning and provides them with scientific literacy and critical thinking skills.”

Interpretive skills training. Interpretive training for naturalists is currently limited, and could be offered as part of the initial training and/or as professional development/continuing education. The National Association for Interpretation (www.interpnet.com) has curriculum for a 32-hour training for interpretive naturalists, and this would serve as professional development for naturalists, park rangers, and educators. There is a fee of about \$350 for the course. Crystal De Soto, Sarah Zakaria, and perhaps others are certified to be instructors for this training.

In addition, there is a need for teaching basic interpretive skills to current naturalists, naturalist training classes, park rangers, and nature educators. Parents and grandparents may take such a class, to increase their skills/confidence in taking children to natural areas. A four-hour class could focus on ways to engage children to engage with nature and exploratory activities for the target age ranges (pre-school, early elementary, pre-teen, youth).

We agreed to set a teleconference call meeting to get started on the interpretive naturalists (32 hour) and interpretive skills (2 to 4 hour) training, now scheduled for Monday, December 19 at 1:00 pm.

Discussion:

- There is interest in discussing approaches to retaining trained naturalists, and use of mentors to train new naturalists.
- Evaluations are informal at most organizations; Torrey Pine invites the team of seven naturalists to share “what worked, what didn’t work” after each session with classes.
- Several years ago, public lectures on local natural history were offered in the evenings at the SD Natural History Museum (repeat from lectures in docent training sessions).
- There are many perspectives on whether to charge a fee and how much to charge, for naturalist training.

Information shared:

- Renee will lead the Wildlife Conservationist training again in fall, 2012 for the SD Audubon Society. There will be a \$80 fee, which is refunded if naturalists complete their volunteer commitment.
- Brian has recruited and arranged for seven naturalists to lead nature walks/activities at Silverwood Sanctuary, about 350 students funded by the first grant, and another 150 students with another grant.
- Laura outlined the docent-led programs at Torrey Pines State Reserve; there are also self-guided tours that teachers can lead (will be posted on Wiki page)
- Fred and Heidi reported that the 10-week training at Mission Trails Regional Park will begin in January, with maximum of 40 students including some park rangers and interpreters from other parks.
- One organization (unnamed) has a naturalist trainee that has a disability that may limit her/his service, and is considering how to handle this.
- Arne is contacting schools to offer in-school programs, and is leading several restoration efforts.
- Arne described the format for California Native Plant Society public walks, with two botanists selecting, learning about, and providing information on 20 native plants during each walk. There is no formal training for native plant walk leaders.
- Joni is helping to identify funding opportunities for the California Naturalist Guide program, with Adina Merelender at UC-Extension Service.

New email addresses: dgreening@parks.ca.gov, and childrensprogram@torreypine.org for Laura.

Notes taken by Anne Fege, Chair, San Diego Children and Nature Collaborative. Send corrections to Anne at fege@sandiegoaudubon.org, 858-472-1293



Notes from meeting with Naturalist Guides

Thursday, March 15, 2:00-3:30 pm at Girl Scouts of San Diego Council, Burnham Hall
Coordinated by the San Diego Children and Nature Collaborative

Attendees: Anne Marie Tipton-Calif. State Parks, Brian Moehl-SD Audubon, Dierdre Ballou-SD Zoo, Fred Kramer-Mission Trails, Judie Lincer-SDNH Museum, Laura Lowenstein-Torrey Pines, Sheri Sherman-SD Zoo, and Anne Fege-SD Children and Nature Collaborative.

California Master Naturalist program. The California Master Naturalist workshop was held on February 16 from 10:00 to 3:00, at the San Diego Botanic Garden (great setting!). Thanks to Joni Gabriel for arranging for the workshop to be held in San Diego, and to Adina Merenlender, Tom Scott, and others that were instructors. About 20 of the 30 attendees were from San Diego, with most organizations represented that train or use naturalists locally. The workshop was discussed at this meeting, notably that the presentations were thorough and described the program aspects well. The California program has state-wide content and relies on local instructors, presentations, and materials to be developed. More information is at <http://ucanr.org/sites/UCCNP/>.

As most naturalist training in San Diego is focused on docents and interpretation, there is benefit to expanding the roles of naturalists to stewardship, restoration, citizen science and greater knowledge of local natural history. The “certification” aspect is motivating to some naturalists; valued by some individuals and organizations; and would have greater value if there were a competency test. A “market analysis” would be helpful to assess the interests of individuals and organizations (both state-wide and locally), and how to structure and finance the program to meet those needs. The meeting attendees expressed limited interest in collectively sponsoring the California Master Naturalist training in San Diego, and acknowledged that there may be sufficient capacity and demand for one local organization to offer the training.

Coordinated local naturalist training. Meeting attendees discussed how to improve training program coordination and standardization; usefulness of a needs assessment; and some “next steps” to share and strengthen key modules. The meeting ended with the reflection that the workshop “made us think we’re ready to do a local cooperative training program.”

There is value in offering naturalist training that is more standardized in presentations and materials; ensures that local naturalists have competencies in core subjects; adds topics that currently are only taught by a few organizations; and allows for more instructors to teach each topic. Most organizations that train naturalists have developed “modules” on various habitats, physical processes (San Diego’s geology, soils, climate), interpretive skills, and other natural history elements. These modules could be strengthened by coordinating among organizations and instructors (i.e. for geology), or offering them to naturalist trainees if the host organization doesn’t currently teach those topics.

There is interest in training naturalists for restoration and other conservation work (not just interpretive roles). Naturalist courses could be offered for a fee, to individuals interested in local natural history but not in becoming naturalist volunteers, perhaps with college credit. They could be extensions of local naturalist-led offerings such as bird classes by SD Audubon Society (free), plant walks with California Native Plant Society (free), eight walks with San Dieguito River Park (\$250), and Canyoneers' walks (free).

A needs assessment would advance the recruitment, training, retention, needs for, and utilization of naturalists in San Diego. The objectives, audience, and costs were discussed, and the next step is to draw from other needs assessments (from Anne Marie and others), develop an outline, and seek funding for this in the future.

Meeting on April 25. The next meeting will focus on coordinated training modules and will be held on Wednesday, April 25 from 2:00 to 4:00 pm at the Girl Scout office, 1231 Upas Street. Anne Marie will draft a "compelling" invitation and e-mail subject line! She is also willing to review current materials in advance, identify common elements and gaps, and recommend the first module(s) to work on together. Participants will be asked to mail electronic copies of current training materials to Anne Marie amtipton@parks.ca.gov by Wednesday, April 18 and also bring 2 paper copies of each to the April 25 meeting. They will not be distributed further or posted without permission, but could ultimately become an online "library." The following materials are requested; the first two will form the basis of training module discussions on April 25, and the last four (identified at the 10/27/11 meeting) will be used to discuss cooperation on interpretive guide training.

1. Naturalist training syllabus/outline
2. Presentations and handouts for each training module
3. Outlines for naturalist guides-led walks and activities
4. Handouts to teachers (before, during, after field trips)
5. Schedule for naturalist programs, could be 2011 report or 2012 schedule
6. Evaluation forms used in training sessions, naturalist/docents, and interpretive programs

Interpretive skills training. Anne Marie confirmed that the 32-hour certified interpretive guide training from the National Association for Interpretation (www.interpnet.com) will be offered August 6-10 (four of those five days) at the San Diego Coast State Park District office in Old Town. Laura handed out the survey of the interests of current naturalists in gaining interpretive skills, age groups they serve, and other information about naturalist training (thanks, Diane and Laura!). This will be used to develop a series of 2- to 4-hour courses focused on engaging children of various ages (pre-school, elementary age, middle school, and high school) and adults with nature-based exploratory activities for the target age ranges.

Notes taken by Anne Fege, Chair, San Diego Children and Nature Collaborative. Send corrections to Anne at fege@sandiegoaudubon.org, 858-472-1293



Notes from meeting with Naturalist Guides

Wednesday, April 25, 2:00-4:00 pm at Girl Scouts of San Diego Council, Training Center
Coordinated by the San Diego Children and Nature Collaborative

Attendees: Anne Marie Tipton-Calif. State Parks, Brian Moehl-SD Audubon, Carol Wilson and Judie Lincer-SDNH Museum, Laura Lowenstein-Torrey Pines, Fred Kramer-Mission Trails Regional Park, Crystal De Soto-Local Point of View Tours, and Anne Fege-SD Children and Nature Collaborative.

Naturalist Training Outlines. Anne Marie received copies of training outlines from only three organizations, and more personal requests may need to be made. (Email messages were sent requesting local organizations share their outlines, presentations and handouts for each training modules and local walks, handouts to teachers, and schedule of public programs.)

Coordinated local naturalist training. The March 15 meeting was discussed, including the limited direct benefits of the California Master Naturalist program to meet local interests and needs, the reliance on fees and the focus on citizen science and other functions of naturalists. At that meeting, ways were identified to improve training program coordination and standardization; usefulness of a needs assessment; and some “next steps” to share and strengthen key modules.

There is value in offering naturalist training that is more standardized in presentations and materials; ensures that local naturalists have competencies in core subjects; adds topics that currently are only taught by a few organizations; and allows for more instructors to teach each topic. Most organizations that train naturalists have “Modules” on various habitats, physical processes (San Diego’s geology, soils, climate), and other natural history elements (archaeology, birds, mammals) were discussed. These modules could be strengthened by coordinating among organizations and instructors, or offering them to naturalist trainees if the host organization doesn’t currently teach those topics. They can also be offered as professional development for naturalists. Two modules were identified to develop cooperatively: interpretive skills and birding.

Core Birding Principles Module. Brian volunteered the San Diego Audubon Society (SDAS) and Phil Pryde to draft the birding module, and the planning meeting will be held on May 16, 12:00 at the SDAS office. He wrote the following in an email message to set up the meeting: “A naturalist training program such as this would help ensure that local naturalists have competencies in core subjects as well as disseminate topics that currently are only taught by a few organizations. Core Birding Principles could be a good addition to our list of classes and become a vehicle for SDAS building membership. The [San Diego Naturalists group] would like a 3-hour classroom presentation that would cover the basics of birding and ornithology (including basic biology, behavior, migration, design for flying, and calls/songs). It might also be desirable to

include interesting anecdotes that a naturalist/docent could share while on the trail. This classroom lesson would be followed by a session in the field. The field session would be location specific (given at MTRP or Torrey Pines for example) and it would not be necessary for SDAS to deliver the field session; however, the committee has requested a topic outline for it.”

Interpretive Skills Module. Considerable resources can be pulled together for coordinated training on interpretive skills, and these training materials and a cadre of trainers will build capacity and quality of naturalists locally. Likely two interpretive modules would be developed, one for public programs (interpretive) and one for curriculum-based school programs (environmental education). Anne Marie, Crystal, Judie and Tara (needs to be invited) will meet to outline the modules, and the first meeting date was set.

Anne Marie reminded us that there are dozens of resources and tools posted at http://parks.ca.gov/?page_id=21700. One handbook provides measures and measurement tools for assessing the quality of educational and interpretive services: *Aiming for Excellence: An Evaluation Handbook for Interpretive Services in California State Parks* (2000, rev. 2009), posted at <http://www.parks.ca.gov/pages/735/files/aiming%20for%20excellence.pdf>

Next Steps for the Modules. The next three actions for the modules are to:

- Develop the modules for interpretive skills and core birding principles, about 3 hours each
- Teach them as pilot lessons with other naturalists and SDCaN members, perhaps on Thursday, June 28, 1:00 to 4:00 as the bi-monthly meeting
- Then schedule in naturalist training classes and as professional development classes

Docent League of San Diego. Carol suggested that participation in the Docent League might interest organizations who train or use naturalists, and she provided the following information (after the meeting): The Docent League was started in 1981 by Nana Hughs of the SD Natural History Museum by bringing together docents from around 12 museums. Today the League has about thirty members. The purpose of the League is “to form a network through which docents, interpretive volunteers and administrators from Regular Member organizations share information and ideas, and work toward mutual goals and gather socially.”

The League sponsors two general meetings at member institutions each year and holds planning meetings with representatives of each museum. The dues are \$10.00 for the institution, there are no individual dues. Tours of museums are free at the twice yearly meetings, with optional lunches. Many institutions offer free admission to members wearing a Docent badge. More information from Bob Allan, docent at the Maritime Museum of San Diego, 858-278-6542.

Needs Assessment. A needs assessment would advance the recruitment, training, retention, needs for, and utilization of naturalists in San Diego. Anne Marie is getting information from other needs assessments and developing an outline, then funds needs to be sought.

Next Meeting. The next meeting of the San Diego Naturalists will be on Wednesday, May 30, 2:00-3:30 pm by teleconference, call (605) 475-4875, Code 434627#.

Notes taken by Anne Fege, Chair, San Diego Children and Nature Collaborative. Send corrections to Anne at fege@sandiegoaudubon.org, 858-472-1293



Notes from meeting with Naturalist Guides

Wednesday, May 16, 12:00 to 2:00 pm at San Diego Audubon Society office
Coordinated by the San Diego Children and Nature Collaborative

Attendees: Attending were Phil Pryde, Bob Breisch, Chris Redfern, and Brian Moehl, San Diego Audubon Society (SDAS); Shelley Glenn, UCSD ScienceBridge program; Meredith Vaughn, SDSU Science Education program; and Anne Fege-SD Children and Nature Collaborative.

This meeting was organized to begin developing a birding module, for naturalist training programs in San Diego to increase competencies in core subjects as well as offer topics that currently are only taught by a few organizations. Core Birding Principles was identified as the first content module to develop, as a 3-hour classroom presentation to would cover the basics of birding and ornithology (including basic biology, behavior, migration, design for flying, and calls/songs) and a follow-on field session that is location specific (given at MTRP or Torrey Pines for example) and taught by experts at each site.

Audience.

- Class for adults, naturalists-docents and naturalist trainees, teachers, and potential SD Audubon Society members
- Designed to provide basic knowledge to lead adults and/or children in field setting
- Inspire naturalists to continue learning and to inspire others
- Follow-on longer classes are offered by SDSA for those who want to learn more (advanced birding class taught by Phil every other year)
- This would be a way to introduce people to birds, attract SDSA members

Content. Phil outlined his proposal, and the following comments were noted:

- What is being interpreted in birding? Bird habits are fascinating (feeding, territories, communication, etc.)
- Important elements are thinking like a bird, understanding habits, experiencing some principles in class (i.e. wings-flying-air physics)
- For migration, use Geography of Bird Migration (Pryde 2002) as resource, correct some misinformation about flyways, possibly borrow from Mike Matherly's presentation on bird migration
- Add survival-cover-temperature, feeding-water, and reproduction, relate to habitats and seasons
- Add using field guides and mobile applications, start with families
- About mobile apps: in field setting, first turn it off; identifying by plumage is mostly ineffective, need to have field guide with level of detail; most common vocalizations are not in the apps, there are regional variations in bird sounds

- Patterns, field trip w/ Ken Kaufman in Mexico, flock of birds overhead identified by pattern
- Sounds, signal calls w/ scrub jays, alarm calls

Interpretive/educational approach.

- Teach the class in a way that the participants would model how participants would teach a shorter class in the future
- Teach interpretation w/ content, teach content w/ interpretive skills
- Include tactile, feathers, photos, sounds, different learning styles
- Caution about preparing and using powerpoint effectively, including using .ppt to pace and direct the learning, not just words or words
- Visual aspects: Phil still uses slides (not .ppt), w/ laser pointer, could some of his slides be scanned?
- Include “know your audience”
- Create the module in a way that others can teach this
- Needs to allow effective teachers to use tools they prefer (i.e. .ppt, slides, physical features), use ways to engage audience

Resources.

- Add vocabulary list (Phil has this)
- Add local resources, including SDNHMuseum website and “Museum loan” program, classroom visits by Project Wildlife
- Internet resources, including SDAS, SD Natural History Museum, Nature Bytes short videos of birds at www.naturebytesvideo.com, Cornell University at www.ebird.org
- Need to prepare and use handouts, some can be reproduced by teachers
- content seems complete and appropriate; questions about how to deliver the content to engage and retain audience

Next Steps for the Birding Module. The next actions are to:

- Confirm the learning objectives and key content
- Start with sample lesson plan and learning objectives (Meredith), knowledge-skills-inspiration, including inspiration to use birds in docent or teaching activities
- How do we make this all more fun, telling stories, feathers, recordings, etc. (quality interpretive practices)?
- Need evaluation plan (from learning objectives)
- Anne-check on accuracy of scanner
- Next meeting: bring draft learning objectives, teach one of the content areas, bring handouts that can be used in class (Phil), bring evaluation sheet, local and national resources (Phil-bibliography, Meredith-Shelley online), put links on SDAS website

Other information. Bob Breisch related that Susan Breisch attended a meeting at Tecolote Nature Center about developing an interpretive program and training. [Anne called Marla Gilmore on May 17 and sent notes from the four meetings of San Diego naturalists, regarding opportunities to work together on training programs.]

Next Meeting. The next meeting will be on Monday, June 11, 12:00 - 2:00pm in the San Diego Audubon Society conference room. Phil Pryde will have a draft of the course objectives and will present a sample section of the class.

Notes taken by Anne Fege, Chair, San Diego Children and Nature Collaborative. Send corrections to Anne at fege@sandiegoaudubon.org, 858-472-1293



Notes from Meeting of San Diego Naturalists

Thursday, November 8, 1:00 to 3:00 pm at Girl Scouts of San Diego Council, Training Center
Coordinated by the San Diego Children and Nature Collaborative

Attendees: Brian Moehl and Phil Pryde-SD Audubon; Judie Lincer and John Hopper-SDNH Museum; Laura Lowenstein-Torrey Pines; Heidi Gutknecht-Mission Trails Regional Park; Lorena Warner-Lara, Danielle Litke, and Winand Hess-Tijuana River National Estuarine Research Reserve; Eloise Battle and Sherlie Miller-Friends of Tecolote Canyon; and Anne Fege-SD Children and Nature Collaborative.

Naturalist training schedules. Schedules are being collected for local naturalist training offered in 2012-2013. John Hopper reported that Canyoners (SD Natural History Museum) just completed their training. The Museum invites naturalists to attend the fall 2013 training (without committing to being an active Canyoners nature field trip leader) both those affiliated with other nature experience providers or unaffiliated. Mission Trails will offer their naturalist training this spring.

Birding for Naturalists Module. This module has been developed by about ten birders, educators, and others who have met monthly since May. Two segments were previewed at the meeting: Judie Lincer presented II. How to Think like a Bird, and Phil Pryde presented III. Bird Basics. There were lots of compliments on the module, and several want to use it in early 2013! One interpretive specialist reminded us that this approach features critical observation and critical thinking skills! Some of the activities suitable for nature walks and some slides will be changed, based on this feedback. The other three segments will be previewed at the December 4 meeting: I. Importance of Birds, IV. The Tools of Birding, and V. Bird Identification.

Interpretive Skills Module. An interpretive module for naturalists was developed and presented on July 11, focused on leading interpretive walks and thematic interpretation. Feedback on the module was mixed, perhaps because the needs of local naturalists and their organizations had not been clearly articulated before the course objectives and lessons were assembled. The December 4 meeting will include a discussion of current interpretive skill needs, then several interpretive specialists will work together in early 2013 to develop this module (much as a group/committee worked on the Birding for Naturalists module). The Certified Guide Training was completed by 15 naturalists from August 6-9, instructed by Crystal De Soto.

News Items.

- Friends of Tecolote Canyon seek more volunteers to lead nature walks and assist with annual Mesa College Classroom Event this spring. They received a \$2,500 grant from SD Gas & Electric for their programs, and recently held a cultural event with Jane Dumas and others.
- The California Naturalist program is developing in several locales, but not locally.

Next Meeting. The next meeting of the San Diego Naturalists will be on Tuesday, December 4, 1:00 to 3:00 pm at the Girl Scout Center [Notes taken by Anne Fege fege@sandiegoaudubon.org]



Notes from Meeting of San Diego Naturalists

Monday, December 4, 1:00 to 3:00 pm at Girl Scouts of San Diego Council, Training Center
Coordinated by the San Diego Children and Nature Collaborative

Attendees (17): Brian Moehl and Phil Pryde-SD Audubon; Carol Wilson, Judie Lincer, and Debbie Bushong-SDNH Museum; Laura Lowenstein and Louis Sands-Torrey Pines; Fred Kramer-Mission Trails Regional Park; Anne Marie Tipton, Danielle Litke, and Winand Hess-Tijuana River National Estuarine Research Reserve; Tara Fuad-San Elijo Lagoon Conservancy; Shelley Glenn-UCSD ScienceBridge Program; Tina Rysedorph-Tecolote Nature Center; Jeanne Waterford-Children's Garden Program, Dan McKirnan-public health; and Anne Fege-SD Children and Nature Collaborative.

Birding for Naturalists Module. This module has been developed by about ten birders, educators, and others who have met monthly since May. Four of the six segments were previewed at the meeting: Judie Lincer presented I. Importance of birds; Phil Pryde presented IV. The tools of birding and V. Bird identification; and Brian Moehl presented VI. Birding as part of nature walks. Suggestions were made for a few changes on the slides, and for incorporating more practice and role-playing in the workshop. Judie, Shelley, Anne Marie, Tara and Deborah will review/revise the activities (within the ppt and classroom-based training) to feature field activities that naturalists can use on a nature walk ("imagine you're now in the field," displays/tools (sketches of beaks, outline of wing/airfoil), and "key concepts" sheet that is small enough for naturalist to refer to (in the field).

Naturalist Training Classes. The group agreed to work together to schedule, market, offer, and evaluate three workshops/trainings for Birding for Naturalists and three for interpretive tour skills in spring 2013. They will be offered at three different locations (could be Tijuana River National Estuarine Research Reserve, SD Botanic Garden, Mission Trails Regional Park), and Anne will contact them to schedule both workshops this spring at different times (Saturday and weekday mornings). The module could be a 3-hour classroom-based workshop for naturalists and 1-hour nature walk. Or the trainings could be scheduled as a 3-hour workshop one week, followed by 3-hour field class a week or month later, with each preparing a short lesson to teach at second class.

A "train the trainer" workshop will be scheduled in early January for naturalists, bird walk leaders and others who are interested in being the instructors for the Birding for Naturalists module, then individuals or teams will instruct the three workshops. The Interpretive Tour/Walk Skills for Naturalists Module will be offered by Anne Marie Tipton, California Parks and Recreation.

Next Meeting. The next meeting of the San Diego Naturalists was not set. All are encouraged to attend the Birding and Interpretive workshops, and participate in their evaluation and adaptation.

[Notes taken by Anne Fege fege@sandiegoaudubon.org]