



Wandering & Wondering

John Maybury

Tunnel Time!

Mitch Reid has heard that the Devil's Slide Tunnels might open as early as August 2012. Bully, you say! I am ready to celebrate, and I propose a pedestrian walk-through of the tunnels before they open to vehicular traffic. What say you, Caltrans? Do we have to beg, "Mother, may I?" See you at the grand opening. Wear your walking shoes.

CCC'S Peter Douglas, R.I.P.

"Peter M. Douglas, the controversial and resilient executive director of the California Coastal Commission, who for more than 25 years fought to preserve the natural beauty of the state's shoreline and the independence of the influential regulatory agency he helped create, has died. He was 69." (Elaine Woo, Los Angeles Times, April 3, full article at latimes.com)

Good Horsekeeping

Jane Myers, an internationally recognized expert on environmentally sustainable practices for horse farms, presents a visual, entertaining, and informative program on horse grazing behavior, horse and pasture management, water and vegetation management, chore efficiency, and effective property planning. Jane has been in the horse industry in Australia and the U.K. for more than 35 years. She is a principal with Equiculture (equiculture.com.au), author of "Managing Horses on Small Properties, Horse Safe: A Complete Guide to Equine Safety" and co-author of the "Sustainable Horsekeeping" series. Jane is travelling in the U.S. on a Winston Churchill Fellowship grant to learn best practices and has generously offered to share her knowledge and experience in this one-time-only workshop, Saturday, April 14, from 9 a.m. to 1:30 p.m., Old Train Depot, 110 Higgins Canyon Road (just below Johnston House off Highway 1 at Higgins Purisima Road turnoff), Half Moon Bay. Snacks provided. Feel free to bring lunch.

Return of the Checkerspot

Scientists, rangers, and park supporters have taken another step to return Bay checkerspot butterflies to their historic home at Edgewood County Park and Natural Preserve in Redwood City. The butterflies suffered local extinction in 2002 due to a decrease in the number of their host plant: dwarf plantain. Ecologist Dr. Stuart B. Weiss

called it "drive-by extinction" when his research showed how exhaust fumes (nitrous oxides and ammonia) from cars driving on nearby Interstate 280 fertilize nonnative grasses, allowing them to drive out native wildflowers that support the butterflies. Edgewood now is being restored by rotational mowing, and checkerspot host plant and nectar sources are abundant in the area once again. U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service granted a permit to transfer butterflies, in both caterpillar and adult form, from a healthy population at Coyote Ridge to 15 acres of prime habitat at Edgewood. In February 2011, more than 4,000 caterpillars were introduced. Volunteer monitors counted about 130 adults during the flight season (March and April 2011), also noting about 2,000 caterpillars (offspring of those butterflies) this winter. To further the odds of firmly reestablishing this species, another 4,852 caterpillars were introduced in February 2012. More than 100 butterflies have been spotted already this year, a strong indicator of success. To further increase the likelihood of success, additional adults were introduced on April 3, 2012. The larvae were reintroduced into their historic home, in the serpentine grassland between the serpentine loop and the clarkia trails. The site can be observed from the serpentine loop, facing the freeway, and looking across the swale and upslope. The site is protected and not crossed by public trails. Ranger John Trewin says, "We ask people to stay on trails to protect the sensitive habitat, but the views from those trails are spectacular."

Titanic Supplies

James Cameron's TV special about the sinking of the Titanic recently aired on the National Geographic Channel. Here is what went down with the ship: 1,750 quarts of ice cream; 16,000 lemons; 7,000 heads of lettuce; 3,500 pounds of onions; 36,000 oranges; 40 tons of potatoes; 25,000 pounds of poultry and game; 10,000 pounds of rice; 4,000 pounds of salt and dried fish; 2,500 pounds of sausages; 10,000 pounds of sugar; 800 pounds of tea; 1,000 pounds of sweetbreads; 8,000 cigars; 57,000 items of crockery; 44,000 pieces of cutlery; 29,000 pieces of glassware; 20,000 bottles of beer and stout; 15,000 bottles of mineral waters; 850 bottles of spirits.

(Source: Ben Schott, miscellanies.info)

Wise Health Consumer

As the U.S. Supreme Court debates the health care law, all of us need to take an active role in protecting our own health. In dealing with health care providers (doctors, nurses, therapists, dentists, et al), it is important to be specific and well organized. Prepare for office visits by writing everything down, doing your online research, and keeping a list of questions to ask. Document all of your prescription drugs. Understand how your health insurance plan works.

Use self-care when you can. Not all conditions or illnesses require the attention of a medical professional, but certainly ask for their advice as to which over-the-counter and generic medications are safe and recommended for you. Do not self-medicate without your health care provider's approval.

Super Markets

Locally owned and operated Oceana grocery store at Eureka Square has a lot of things going for it. Whenever I shop there, I usually run into someone I know. Besides all the unique food items and special-order requests, Oceana has a health food store, coffee shop, deli with an adventurous international menu, organic produce, DVD kiosk, Wells Fargo ATM, senior discounts and extensive wine, beer and spirits selections. Although Oceana is my go-to grocery store, I also like the locally owned and operated Sun Valley markets (three locations) and Pacifica Farmer's Market. Just to be clear: I have nothing against Safeway or Fresh & Easy. The people who work there are very nice and helpful, but those stores are owned by giant corporations, and I would rather do business with small, independent markets with local roots.

PB2

The latest issue of Nutrition Action endorses reduced-fat PB2 (bellplantation.com), and I can second that. I ordered some from Amazon and it is delicious. What is it exactly? Powdered peanut butter with 85 percent of the fat removed. Just add a little water and whip up fast and easy peanut butter that tastes good and is good for you. PB2 also makes a version with chocolate powder added. Gotta try that next. Check it out.

Sierra to the Sea

It's time again for Paddle to the Sea, the Tuolumne River Trust (TRT) epic water journey from the Sierra to the sea. Help TRT bring back the salmon, improve water quality, and enhance recreational opportunities along the river: Tuolumne.org.

Sightseer

- Envirospeak: alpinegreensolutions.com/glossary.php
- Spring hikes on San Bruno Mountain: mountainwatch.org

Swami Sez

"Three out of two people have trouble with fractions."

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