

GO OUTSIDE AND PLAY

When the editors of the Oxford Junior Dictionary purposely omitted certain “nature” words from the latest edition (e.g., acorn, buttercup, heather, willow) in favor of tech terms like blog, voice-mail, and attachment, British author Robert Macfarlane took notice. He was moved to write *Landmarks*, a book about the words we use to describe our natural world, and how our vocabulary is shrinking along with our participation in the natural world, and thus our love of and concern for nature. Macfarlane cites a study showing that British children’s “roaming radius” has shrunk 90 percent as their outdoor play areas and consciousness of nature have been reduced to mostly indoor activities like playing videogames. Instead of practicing their birdcalls, they are tweeting and texting on mobile devices. This is a sad state of affairs, but Macfarlane says we should all learn to reawaken our five senses to experience the outdoors, and that these forgotten sensory inputs will enliven our minds. Another way to think of this is simply to be in the here and now. Be aware of every sight, sound, smell, touch, and taste. Here on the Coastside, that is not so hard to do. You just go outside and wander and wonder. We are so lucky to live in the midst of open space: beaches, trails, parks, and green hillsides. Admission free and open to the public.

WINE SECRETS

Vinous.com founder Antonio Galloni has spent the past two years mapping all the wineries in Napa Valley, including the very private ones. His wine guides will be available on the Vinous website and app. (Wall Street Journal Magazine,

August 13)

WHALE TALES

Scott McKellar confirms my recent item about whalewatching being good for business in Pacifica. While dining with wife Patty at Nick's seafood restaurant in Rockaway Beach, Scott asked their waiter about all the whales spotted cavorting right offshore. The waiter said the whale shows have really filled seats at Nick's. Speaking of endangered species, Scott is abandoning old technology like his cable TV and landline. He notes that the Internet is awash in lists of things that may disappear in our lifetime. I hope that whales and Nick's are not on any of those lists.

BEST BITES

Having a strong bite is a marker for longevity in men, according to a study published in the Journal of Oral Rehabilitation. Researchers in Japan studied 559 people age 70 and determined that the men with weaker jaws were at an 84 percent higher risk of dying before their mid-80s. (Apparently, there was no such correlation/benefit for the women in the study group.) Now aren't you glad your parents told you to chew your food 100 times!

SITSEER

Fancy a \$6,250 sterling silver teapot by British designer John Pawson? See this and other baubles at whenobjectswork.com.

SWAMI SEZ

“If a man says something in the woods and there are no women there, is he still wrong?” (Steven Wright)

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