

## **NATURE BOY**

This week we focus on Coastside critter crises caused by the four-year drought, and some creative solutions suggested by locals. Thank goodness we soon hope to get relief, as the weatherman is predicting a 95 percent chance of a big, strong El Nino bringing badly needed rain to California.

## **GOPHINATOR GETS GOPHERS**

Thanks to Pacifica Tribune reader Stephen Ludwig for contributing these suggestions in response to my recent item on gophers: "I bought two pairs (both sizes) of Gophinators in 2009. The device basically chokes them (most, sometimes only a leg gets caught and you have to knock them dead). The only downside is that you have to learn how to set the trap, which requires hand strength to set the spring action. I've never hurt myself or other animals; you have to set it into the earth and I put a metal stake in front of any semi-open hole. Sometimes the cats will beat me to the trap and haul it all away (somewhere else I can recover it) so they can eat in peace. The cats have also helped me pinpoint activity. It may seem cruel, but so are poisons. I live at the edge of a large hillside, so the supply of gophers seemed endless at first. As soon as I got rid of one, another would inherit the tunnels. If they escape the trap, they learn and become harder to catch (sometimes up to 10 trials). My first two years I lost count after killing 50 (a year)

and now it's only less than 10 a year. I don't kill the moles. I never wanted to get into this but I had to do something. Watch and learn on YouTube; search for Stephen Albano. His website and store: [traplineproducts.com](http://traplineproducts.com).

## **DROUGHT: COYOTES HUNT CATS**

Valerie Frizzell from Vallemar posted on NextDoor neighborhood forum: "I just want to make sure that everyone understands that there is a link between the coyote sightings and missing cats. Not all cats stay gone; we have noticed some are making it back home, so there is hope. It is possible that the cats that make it home were chased by the coyotes, managed to escape them and eventually found their way back home. Due to drought, coyotes are hunting cats more now than ever, nightly in all neighborhoods. I am advising that everyone either keep cats in or allow them out only between 10 a.m. or later and dusk if they are able to run fast, hide, or fend off coyotes. This is to alert anyone who has not heard about what is happening with the coyotes or seen them in their neighborhood yet. We want to save as many cats as possible during this drought. I know many people are still unaware that Pacifica and many other areas are not safe for cats outdoors as it used to be; please let everyone know ASAP. Thank you!"

## **MAYBURRITOVILLE**

Blog: [PacificaRiptide.com](http://PacificaRiptide.com)

Word Whacker: [Goofbuster.com](http://Goofbuster.com)

Email: [Mayburrito@Goofbuster.com](mailto:Mayburrito@Goofbuster.com)