

The South Swell

Doheny State Beach Interpretive Association
Summer Newsletter 2011

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Stingray!

By Supervising Ranger Jim Serpa

With summer coming and hopefully the warm water associated with it, in will come the misunderstood stingray. Females move into shallow water to mate around June.

Stingrays belong to the same group of fish that the sharks belong to, the elasmobranchs. Probably the biggest claim to fame the elasmobranchs have is the fact that they lack any true bones.

Instead of bone they use cartilage as a skeleton. This makes them more buoyant and flexible

Stingrays get a bad rap because of the fact they can and do inflict a very painful sting if stepped on. They prefer to live over sand-bottomed environments, so we don't see them nearly as much as at Huntington and San Onofre beaches. That is not to say we never get people stung here at Doho, just less often.

The most common ray in our area is the Round Stingray, which only gets to the size of a dinner plate, on average. There

are species of rays in the area like the Bat Ray that can obtain a "wingspan" of six feet, and others that can actually deliver a nasty shock. Rays prefer to prey on bottom-dwelling animals like crabs, worms, shellfish and shrimp.

The best way to avoid the sting is to shuffle your feet as you enter the water. The worst thing you can do is to run into the water like a crazy man on fire. You are



just asking for trouble. If stung, remember the poor little fella was just trying to tell you to get off his spine

as he flipped up his barbed stinger into your ankle or foot. The sting can be excruciating.

I have seen big linebacker-sized men crumble into a pile of goo after getting stung - receiving the large dose of the toxin associated with the sting starting to taking effect. The best course of action is to place the injured foot into water as hot as the victim can

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President's Message

by Bill Brooks

I had the recent opportunity to attend the CALPA (California League of Park Associations) Conference in Mendocino, California, as both president and a representative of our association. I came away learning a lot along with plenty of new ideas that I learned from the other associations in attendance. During the second day of the conference, Ruth Coleman, Director of California State Parks, was called back to Sacramento. On Saturday, she brought the sobering news of seventy state parks that will close in July of 2012 due to California's on-going budget crisis. Many of the parks announced as closing had association representatives in attendance at this conference. Her message during that Saturday morning breakfast meeting was one of thinking outside the box. She said that CALPA associations and Department of Parks and Recreation personnel need to explore creative ways to keep the parks open, and operational, and to think of ways to operate closed parks.

With over two million annual visitors a year, Doheny State Beach is not on the closure list, but that doesn't mean our park won't be impacted. At this juncture, construction on the aquarium grotto and tide pool is about to begin, and Bob Scholfield, along with his staff, is making progress in our visitors center. There is the possibility that it could open before 2011 ends. Thinking about Ruth Coleman's message, we may need to be prepared to fund and complete the final touches on the visitors center building. During the conference, I learned that volunteers can be

involved in a more hands-on role in the completion of the building.

I also learned that membership is the key to a successful association, and I would greatly appreciate if all current members could bring one new member into the Doheny State Beach Interpre-



Bill working hard at the California Wine Festival

tive Association this year. Increasing membership is one of our goals for 2011. Many hands make light work and will be needed to keep Doheny the wonderful park that it is during the times of decreasing state funding. We will have a second annual membership dinner and wildlife cruise in September this year, so please plan on joining us.

Our summer season featured our sponsorship of the Monarch Beach Sunrise Rotary's Lobster Feast in June, at Doheny. The Monarch Beach Rotary generously provided our association with a donation (along with the other charities they support). The big event of the summer was our own Surf-A-Rama on Saturday, July 23. Blue-tarp surfing, surf authors, entertainment, vendors, and even Dutch oven cooking demonstrating surfari cooking techniques highlighted this year's Surf-A-Rama. I'm looking for "out of the box" ideas to help our organization in its continued support of Doheny, so please email me at wbrooks@iustd.org or see me at one of the summer's events with your ideas.



Stingray! cont.

By Supervising Ranger Jim Serpa

stand - without scalding him, of course. This heat counteracts the toxin and can really relieve the pain of the wound. The cut or puncture should be cleaned thoroughly and, if deep enough, should be looked at by a doctor.

Every summer I take a trip down to La Jolla to swim with the leopard sharks. In that same water, hundreds of round stingrays can be seen, often a little too close for comfort as you swim in toward shore. I glide in as shallow as I can, watching the bottom closely for any hidden rays in the sand. More than once I have seen people walking in get slammed by these pesky critters, no matter how inadvertent the ray that caused this was.

The worst thing is that there is a similar looking animal called the skate that lives in the same general areas as rays. Skates get

blamed for attacks (and I use that term loosely) even though they have no stinger and couldn't hurt you if they wanted to. It's really sad to see someone catch one, freak out and harm the fish thinking they are going to get stung. That's where we come in though. We can march right down there and explain just what it really is that they have caught. Of course, that also presents a great

opportunity for us to check the rest of their catch and get a look at their fishing licenses.

Keep an eye out this summer for these fish. You sure don't want to meet the wrong end of the stinger and end up at the lifeguard tower with your foot in a bucket of hot water. Rays are just in the shallows chillin' like we all do at Doheny in the summertime.



An adult stingray

Halfway Into 2011

By Doheny Interpreter Vicki Wiker

You've all heard of a Lone Ranger; however, have you ever considered there may also be a Lone Interpreter? Due to ongoing budgetary constraints and low staffing I have come to realize that I, Vicki Lynn, am Doheny's Lone Interpreter. Have no fear, my readers, for this is not a sob story, but more like an inspirational message about how forging multi-faced partnerships can help to get the job done!

Whale of a Tale

My interpretive year kicks off with the City of Dana Point's Annual Festival of Whales parade. Everyone around the maintenance

yard can sense my panic of how I, one person, will completely decorate a truck into a thematic "Magical Migration" float. Perhaps a mermaid's wand flickered my way as magically, helpers appeared for everything from set-up to marching to even breakdown. Veteran float decorator Jennifer James who transferred to SCSB as an upgraded Worker I grabbed PMA Marcus and headed to Doho (thanks Greg Kania) while Doheny's finest Tower 12 volunteer Ronnie Johnston gave most of his day to help "Miss Vicki," as well. I am happy to say that truck was morphed in record time. And now the marchers:

Some of my Junior Ranger groupies expressed interest in marching this year, so about three families proudly walked beside Doheny's float while blowing bubbles, not balloons, into the crowds who lined the Dana Point parade route. Now that we decorated and marched, let's get on with the breakdown. Doheny's maintenance staff offered help through the court-worker program. If you're keeping track of this tale can you see how partnering with everything from fellow staff to volunteers to even families with children allowed Doheny to

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Halfway Into 2011 cont. By Doheny Interpreter Vicki Wiker

participate in the parade.

Earth Day...close to 300 volunteers to plant close to 300 plants

Home Depot, through the California State Parks Foundation, graced Doheny with a generous Earth Day grant to green and clean Doho. We focused on the 6 planter islands and 1 planter mound in the southern section of the north day-use parking lot. Team Starbucks, longest term participant, offered everything from iced coffee and tea to just over 100

volunteers who planted at least 100 plants alone! Also, St. Regis Hotel, Helping Honda, students, and families volunteered their morning by beautifying those islands under the blazing springtime sun. You're probably wondering with that large of a turnout how could lone interpreter Vicki

get the job done? Yes, you guessed it, partners! My longtime dedicated waiver queens, Eugenia and Jeanette Shue, worked diligently by directing volunteers while new camp host Pam Busta and Junior Ranger volunteer Lynee Miller oversaw planting crews so I wouldn't gator around like a headless chicken! Are you seeing a trend here readers, establishing a variance of partnering bonds helped to successfully complete an Earth Day project!

We marched and we planted, now where's the money?

The California State Parks is gearing up for slash-and-burn with the turn of the new fiscal year. Everyone is preparing to weather the clearing by storing up their rations. Doheny's established interpretive program, with ongoing support from DSBIA, is putting those irons in the fire as well.

Earlier in the year, South Orange County Wastewater Authority blessed Doheny's water quality educational efforts with a generous

the Starbucks-Make Your Mark program sites around Doheny's grounds have been restored to vibrant and healthy landscape. The latest effort was made through Starbucks' donation money and the Eagle Scout program. Boy Scout Jesse Cerami developed a planter island adjacent to the campfire center with a Hawaiian décor of bamboo fencing and fauna (thank you Starbucks and Scout Jesse!). Talk about partners building upon other partners!

With all these good thoughts in mind, I wish to bid all of you farewell until the end of the year. Off I go to finish up doing school programs in the park and prepare for another busy summer at Doheny-land. I would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge my supervisor, Ranger James Serpa, for allowing me so many varied opportunities as an interpreter here

at Doheny. Every day is a learning experience and for that I am truly grateful. May all of us learn the importance of taking a chance by asking for help, perhaps building those partnering bridges, as we enter uncertain vistas on the horizon. After all, sometimes we could not reach the other side of that peak without that bridge. Peace and happiness to all of you!



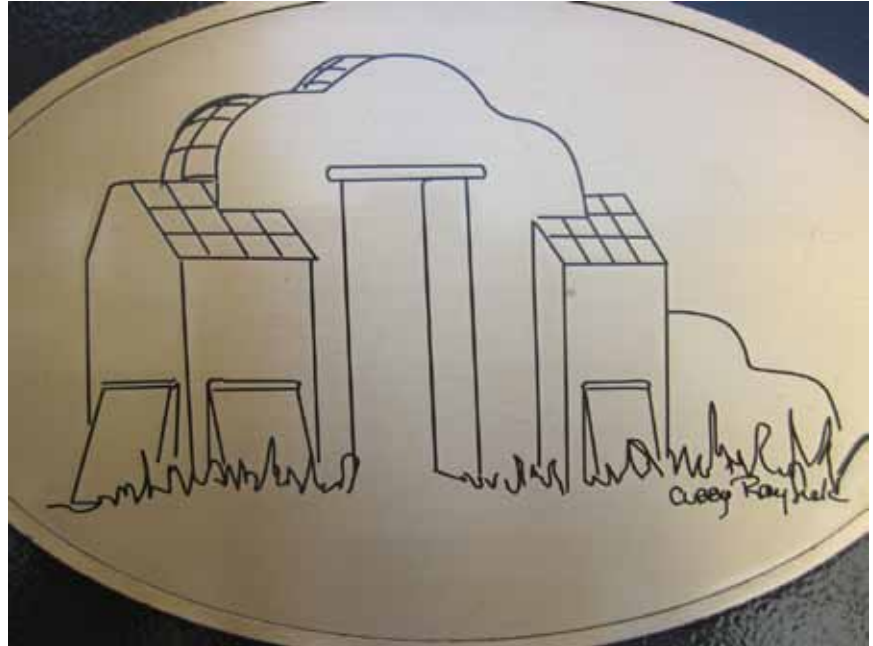
annual donation (thank you, Paul!). Second, through the City of Dana Point's Charitable Grant program, DSBIA was awarded grant-funding to help host the summertime Junior Rangers program. Those Junior Rangers from the community will be thrilled with another year (thank you City of Dana Point!). Third, Doheny Longboard Surfing Association recently made a donation toward the interpretive program. It is surely an appreciated partnership as we both strive to play and clean in the ocean that we enjoy together (thank you DLSA club!). Next,

Where's Jimbo?

by Supervising Ranger Jim Serpa

After 21 years here, I thought I had seen every inch of this park, but just the other day I walked by something I had never noticed (or, at my age just forgot about). I got to thinking how many undiscovered sights there are in the park. So in that vein, I give you.... the digital scavenger hunt, "Wheres Jimbo?" I won't give any hints, other than they they are all somewhere inside of our favorite park. See how many you can find at Doheny.

See the answers on page 10.



BIKE HIKES FROM DOHENY

By Ed Neely

BIKE HIKES FROM DOHENY Ed Neely

There are cyclists, young and old, cruising through Doheny all the time. You'll find riders from the South Day-Use area to the Visitor Center; from the butterfly garden to the campground. Doho guests can rent two and three-wheel cruisers, and "surrey with the fringe on the top" four wheelers at the main beach snack stand, but many visitors prefer more extensive hikes on their own bikes with more distance and destinations outside the park. Here are three bike hikes for those who like riding for pleasure, but are definitely not marathoners. Best of all, for the most part, they're flatland trips. Each trip starts in front of the snack stand at main beach. Recommended supplies include water, sunscreen, bike lock, perhaps a camera, and of course, a helmet. (I'm a survivor.)

AROUND THE HARBOR AND THE HEADLANDS

Approx. 7 miles / Add 2 miles and some hill climbing if taking the extended bike hike.

Dana Point Harbor nestles in what was once known as Stillwater Cove, and before that, Capistrano Bay. It is now home to a variety of great views, ocean sports, restaurants and merchants.

From the snack stand, peddle west along the Whale Walk to the park entrance on Dana Point Harbor Drive (DPHD) (0.15 mi.), cross the street and head left in the bike lane. The road ends (1.2

miles) at the entrance of the Ocean Institute (O.I.); open to the public on weekends. Continue through the parking lot, along the dirt road on the side of the O.I. to the base of the breakwater. This is a great spot for a scenic stop; perhaps lock your bike and head down to the tide pools if the tide is low, or out to the "pirates' cave" on the headlands (less than a 3/4 mile hike, no flip flops). Back on the bike and



head back along DPHD to Island Way (0.7 mi.), a right turn takes you across a bridge to the island. Make a right or left and cruise both sides of Dana Drive (approx. 1.5 mi round trip), then back across the bridge and head towards the park. Right turn onto Golden Lantern (.2 mi) and you'll be headed into an area of good restaurants, varied and interesting shops and Dana Wharf Sports Fishing. Back on the bike, back to DPHD and back to the park (.4 mi.).

EXTEND THE HIKE: At Golden Lantern, cross DPHD to the shopping center; turn left and at the west end of the parking lot (by stairs) is a switch back trail up

through levels of Heritage Park (0.5 mi.) and into the lovely old neighborhoods of Dana Point. You start on Old Golden Lantern, but make a quick left onto Camino Capistrano, which dead ends into Violet Lantern (right turn), then another quick left onto Santa Clara. You'll pass by numerous outlooks onto the harbor (all worth a view, especially at the end of Violet Lantern) while keeping the harbor

to your left and skirting the bluffs; pass the gazebo overlook, pass Cannons Restaurant, to a dead end into Street of the Green Lantern, turn left and follow it to the end at the Nature Interpretive Center (another great, short walking hike along the top of the headlands). Back on your bike and down Street of the Green Lantern to Cove Rd., right turn and downhill to DPHD. Left turn and head back to Doheny.

SAN JUAN CAPISTRANO
Approx. 7.2 miles round trip, not including any scenic side trips through old San Juan.

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BIKE HIKES FROM DOHENY cont.

By Ed Neely

The recorded history of San Juan Capistrano is rich, extending back hundreds of years. This bike hike takes you through the oldest continuously occupied neighborhood in California, near the mission and passed interesting and unique shops.

From main beach snack stand, ride passed the lifeguard tower to the entrance of San Juan Creek Bike Trail and head inland (north). At the confluence of San Juan Creek and Trabuco Creek (2.5 miles), you'll find a walking bridge you will cross, turn left along the creek and continue on the trail crossing under the Del Obispo Rd. Bridge (0.5 mi.). When you reach the other side of the bridge, make a quick U-turn leaving the trail onto Del Obispo Rd. heading towards town, then a quick left onto Paseo Adelanto, ride to its dead end and turn right onto Ramos Street. You are now in the Los Rios District, the oldest continuously occupied neighborhood in California. Its pastoral homes, unique restaurants and eclectic shops will take you back to earlier days of Old San Juan. Ramos St. dead ends into Los Rios, turn right, then just as you pass the Hummingbird House Café, turn left and you're at the old San Juan Train Depot. Cross the tracks and continue up passed the theater to Camino Capistrano. This is the heart of San Juan Capistrano; the mission is on your left and interesting shops and restaurants surround you. Take time to check out the Old Antique Barn across the street. To return to Doheny, go back across the train tracks and

turn left following Los Rios to Del Obispo Rd. Turn right and the entrance to the bike trail is a short distance in front of you. Peddle towards the ocean, back to Doho!

SAN CLEMENTE PIER AND STATE BEACH
Approx. 13 miles round trip / Add 1.2 miles if taking the return route through San Clemente.

Our third and longest bike hike goes along Pacific Coast Highway into San Clemente, once home to the Nixon Western White House. The beaches of San Clemente are some of the most popular in the area and the beach trail is a lovely ride/walk.

Leaving again from in front of the snack stand, head towards the lifeguard headquarters tower, but before getting on the San Juan Creek bike path, turn north (inland) along the edge of the grass (restroom on your left) and passed the parking lot to the park's main road. Turn right, cross the creek bridge, pass the entrance to the campground and head to the end of the South Day-Use Area (1.2 mi.). Here is a short paved path that takes you out of the park, passed volleyball courts and into Capistrano Beach Park. As you enter the park (watch for traffic!) turn left, cross the train tracks, right turn and enter the Pacific Coast Hwy. bike lane towards



San Clemente. This portion of the bike trail is separated from cars by K-rail walls until you reach the lighted intersection at Camino Capistrano (1.6 mi.). Continue in the PCH bike lane (sans K-rail wall) until PCH turns inland into San Clemente (.9 mi). You veer right into the entrance of the Amtrak station / North Beach parking lot (Kaylani Coffee Company on your left as you enter the parking lot). At the far end of the lot is the entrance to the beach trail. The first portion of the trail extends 1.1 miles to the pier and pier bowl area. Along the way, there is a long pedestrian bridge where you must walk your bike (sometimes patrolled and tickets are given to bike riders), but the view from the bridge is worth the walk. The pier itself makes a great destination with its snack stand, restaurant and bar at the entrance and funky snack stand, gift shop and checkers game tables out by the end, as well as the spectacular view of the coastline from Dana Point to San Mateo (Cotton's) Point. From the pier, the bike trail continues southwest for another 1.26 miles (In the summer months,

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BIKE HIKES FROM DOHENY cont.

By Ed Neely

you must walk your bike from the pier to a bit passed the overpass at T Street, about 1/2 mile or so.), some of it along the beach, some of it on the inland side of the train tracks, to Calafia Beach and the north end of San Clemente State Park. There's a snack stand there, open in the summer (good burgers and root beer floats).

Heading home, there are two routes (well, really more); back

along the beach trail or up through neighborhoods of old San Clemente. For the second route, ride up Califia to Ola Vista (0.4 mi., all uphill), left turn. Follow Ola Vista, a winding street through old neighborhoods to Ave. Santa Barbara (1.4 mi.). At this T intersection, the green bike route signs clearly indicate a left turn that you should make. Continue on Santa Barbara to Ave. Del Mar (0.1 mi), turn left (downhill) and

ride to the pier (0.3 mi.). Rejoin the beach trail heading towards Doho. At the Amtrak parking lot where it meets PCH, cross PCH to the bike lane that is protected by K-rail walls heading west to Camino Capistrano. Cross PCH at Camino Cap. to enter the bike trail protected by K-rail walls, back to Capistrano Beach Park and into the entrance to Doheny South Day-Use area.

Photo Highlights



DSBIA gift shop coordinators at the Blues Festival



Aquarium meeting with Manwarren representatives



Bill, Brian, Director Ruth Coleman and Jim at the CALPA conference



2011 Doheny Blues Festival



2011 Doheny Woody show



Camphost potluck

Doheny Latest

Meet our new Fish Girl!

We would like to welcome Ashley Nelson to the park. Ashley started in our park as a volunteer two years ago maintaining the fish we still had. At Saddleback College, she studied in a specialized program for Aquariums and Aquaculture. She completed a Marine Biology course traveling around the coast of Northern Australia. Currently, she spends time at Aquarium of the Pacific as a husbandry volunteer. She says "I love taking care of the fish they have there. My favorite part is scuba diving in the exhibits."



*Farewell Ranger Kummer
By Supervising Ranger Jim Serpa*

April 31st marked the end of a great career of longtime ranger Brian Kummer. We will miss him, especially me, as he was my long-time dive buddy on the State Park Dive team. Although Brian didn't try to impress people with

*Left to Right: Brian Kummer, Bill Brooks,
and Jim Serpa*

his knowledge of the sea you could really tell how much he did know if you ever attended one of his campfire programs. Brian and his wife, former Doheny Ranger Jody Kummer, will now both be able to enjoy their time off together exploring this incredible world we live in. Good luck, Brian.

2011 Earth Day at Bolsa Chica Wetlands

Doheny was represented at this year's Bolsa Chica Wetlands Earth Day Event by Ranger Jim Serpa, and Sr. Park Aides Rachel Hammer and Ashley Nelson. This event encourages the public to learn something new at the fun educational booths. Doheny's booth this year was about educating people about sharks. This year, Doheny's shark booth had a special exhibit about the reality of shark finning. Everyone that stopped by the Doheny shark booth left with a better understanding of one of the most feared animals with which we share the ocean.



Rachel Hammer and Ashley Nelson educating the community about sharks

WHERE'S JIMBO ANSWERS

