

# Our Dictionary Hill

DHOSA

Dictionary Hill Open Space Advocates



Winter 2020—21

[www.dictionaryhill.info](http://www.dictionaryhill.info)

## Know Your Dictionary Hill Lizards

For much of the country lizards are strictly summer time creatures. Down here on the Mexican border we can expect to spot a lizard any day of the year when the sun is shining. A walk on Dictionary Hill gives an excellent chance to find lizards and start to identify them.



### Western Fence Lizard

What to look for: 8" including tail. Characteristic blue underside, otherwise brown to black with stripes across the back  
Behavior: As the name implies, it likes to sit in prominent places in its search for insect prey. This makes it vulnerable to hawk predation.



### Side Blotched Lizard

What to look for: Small lizard 4" including tail. Overall color is brown, gray, yellowish, or black, with dark blotches, spots, and sometimes stripes. The males can vary in color according to their mating strategies. Behavior: Bobs like push ups. Breeds abundantly

to replace high predation rate from hawks and mammals.



### San Diego Horned Lizard

What to look for: These highly endangered lizards are very distinctive with the unmistakable horns behind its head and spikes down its body and tail. They are secretive and well camouflaged. You might spot one

near an ant nest. Think of them small enough to fit in the palm of your hand.

## Governor Newsom Moves to Protect our Wildlife

Amidst climate change fueled wildfires, heat and smog in October our Governor Newsom signed an executive order calling for 30% of California's land area and near shore marine habitat to be protected in the name of conservation by 2030.

This is a hopeful first step. Although not immediately protecting any land or coastal water, it directs creation of a California Biodiversity Collaborative.

This is an important recognition of widespread biodiversity loss spurred by human development both by reducing habitats and causing a rapidly warming climate. Planet Earth is teetering on the edge of a catastrophic loss of wildlife. If we don't act our children in the next generation will only ever see butterflies or snakes or hummingbirds in picture books.

Impetus for this order grew from the "30 by 30" movement that is asking all nations around the globe to set aside essentially a third of their land and water in the next decade. California has more species of plants and animals than in any other state -accounting for roughly a third of all species found in the US. **Pat Bryan**



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## A Message from DHOSA president Chris Heiserman

Dictionary Hill Open Space Preserve was a wonderful refuge for families, dog walkers, hikers, joggers and cyclists this year during the tragic national Covid-19 crisis. As illness and loss of life hammered our health care systems and



Americans were encouraged to stay safely at home, many of our neighbors here in Spring Valley discovered a great way to get some fresh air and exercise in the county's newest open space park.

At Supervisor Dianne Jacob's final quarterly virtual Spring Valley Revitalization Meeting (she is leaving the Board of Supervisors after 28 years as our East County representative) on December 16<sup>th</sup>, I was honored to thank her for both her lengthy service to our community and especially her key support for creation of the Dictionary Hill Open Space Preserve in 2017. The



county is still preparing a master resource plan for the preserve and DHOSA will soon be providing input and recommendations on official trail alignments and future improvements for this environmental

gem in the heart of Spring Valley. Stay tuned.

A fact to surprise you: San Diego County has more species of wild birds than any other county in the whole of the USA.

## We Want Your Dictionary Hill Photos



If you take any photos of the hill you're especially pleased with just send them along to us. We can include them here in the news letter or in a public exhibition later in 2021.

Views, birds, wildflowers, lizards, family walks—whatever subject you think shows an aspect of our hill.

Send them to Ken Barratt at -

***kenbarratt47@outlook.com***

We will of course give you full recognition.

This could be the start of your new career in creative photography.

## Open Space Preserve Update

Three years back the county designated Dictionary Hill as an Open Space Preserve. It is now completely safe from any developers who have designs on building on our hill.

The county is now working on a masterplan which will designate trail routes and information signs showing the wildlife on the hill. Watch out for community meetings where you can input your visions and suggestions for the masterplan.

## Facebook Live Broadcast

We are currently organizing a live broadcast January 27<sup>th</sup> at 6:30 pm on the incredible geology of Dictionary Hill. This will feature local geologist Jen Morton who will give a basic description of the formation of the hill and answer your questions live. Find us on Dictionary Hill Open Space Advocates Facebook page and on YouTube.

## DHOSA Zoom Meetings

Until we get the covid19 all clear we meet on line 9:30 am on the third Saturday of each month.

If you want to be included email Chris Heiserman at ***chaise9400@aol.com***