

Tortoise Tracks

Newsletter

Please Join us for our Annual Meeting and Luncheon

Saturday March 28, 2020

Knights of Columbus in Lancaster, CA



& 45th Anniversary Celebration

Sunday March 29, 2020

Desert Tortoise Research Natural Area

California City, CA

Festivities include a welcome from our President, unveiling of our new kiosk panels, guided nature walks, and more!

Registration form enclosed.

The Desert Tortoise Preserve Committee Invites you to our

45th Annual General Meeting*

*(*and a wonderful lunch buffet)*

Saturday, March 28, 2020

The DTTPC’s Annual Meeting and Luncheon will be held Saturday, March 28th, 2020 at **The Knights of Columbus, 719 West Avenue M, Lancaster, CA**. The afternoon Annual Meeting will feature a review of the Committee’s ongoing programs, activities and plans for 2020. Speakers from the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) will provide updates on important activities throughout southern California. The luncheon speaker will be very special!

PROGRAM

Doors Open	11:00am
Buffet Luncheon	11:45am
Annual Meeting	12:30pm to 2:45pm

To RSVP or For Additional Information Contact:

Dr. Brittany Slabach at (951) 683-3872 or Email: dtpc@tortoise-tracks.org

\$ _____ **Luncheon Reservation (\$45.00 per person)**

\$ _____ **Optional tax-deductible donation**

\$ _____ **Total of my enclosed check**

Name(s): _____ **Phone Number:** _____

Address: _____ **E-Mail:** _____

City: _____ **State:** _____ **Zip:** _____

Organizational Affiliation (if any): _____

Will you also be attending the festivities on Sunday, March 29th at the DTRNA? ___ Yes ___ No

If yes, are any children in your party? ___ Yes ___ No

Please make checks payable to: DTTPC, 4067 Mission Inn Avenue, Riverside, CA 92501



Dedicated to the recovery and conservation of the Desert Tortoise (*Gopherus agassizii*) and other rare and endangered species inhabiting the Mojave and western Sonoran deserts.

**The
Desert Tortoise
Preserve Committee, Inc.**

Founded 1974

Board of Directors

President	Ron Berger
Vice President	Bob Wood
Treasurer	Laura Stockton
Recording Secretary	Rachel Woodard
Board Member	Kristin Berry, Ph.D.
Board Member	Greg Lathrop
Board Member	Larry Nelson
Board Member	Dave Zantiny

**Preserve Manager &
Conservation Coordinator**

Brittany Slabach, Ph.D.

Director of Land Acquisition

Jun Lee

Telephone: (951) 683-3872

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www.tortoise-tracks.org



Tortoise Tracks is published
four times a year.

Employment Opportunities

Naturalist for the 2020 Season!

Are you passionate about science education and enjoy our desert habitats? Join us as a Naturalist at the Desert Tortoise Research Natural Area! The Desert Tortoise Preserve Committee, Inc. is seeking a seasonal Naturalist for the DTRNA from mid-March until early June 2020. The Naturalist is expected to be on site Tuesday through Saturday during operating hours (8 am to 5 pm) during the 2020 season. The Naturalist will be responsible for interpretative services, data collection and reporting, assistance with activities and programs, and site maintenance among other things. Applicants should have strong interpersonal and communication skills, demonstrated professionalism, knowledge of desert ecology or willingness to learn! To see the full posting and requirements for applying please visit the employment opportunities page on our website.

Volunteer Opportunities

Social Media and Website Assistance

Do you enjoy creating content for websites or social media outlets? Do you value tortoises and conserving them? We'd love to have you! We are currently looking for volunteers to assist in website maintenance and curation of social media posts. Volunteers would be responsible for creating blog and social media posts for our website and facebook pages. Specific topics and content to be included will be provided by our Preserve Manager. You will also be encouraged to come up with your own topics that relate to the organization, tortoise and desert conservation. This opportunity does not require travel to our office or any prior experience with website design.

Outreach Assistance

We are in the process of updating our outreach materials and are looking for additional volunteer assistance. Materials include but are not limited to, educational handouts, activities (classroom or other), and programs. We are also looking for volunteers who would be available to assist with live programs during the 2020 year. If you have suggestions of additional materials or would like to assist, please join us!

Land Monitors Needed - Help Us Manage Our Lands!

We are still seeking land monitors for our 2020 season to assist with our annual monitoring efforts. Monitoring will occur primarily during cooler months (January – April; October – Dec.) and can occur during weekdays or weekends. We will provide all training necessary.

If you are interested in any of the above opportunities please contact our Preserve Manager, Dr. Slabach at bslabach@tortoise-tracks.org.

National Public Lands Day and Fall Work Party Success!

On October 19, 30 volunteers joined us for our National Public Lands Day with the Bureau of Land Management! This fall we focused our efforts on a parcel just north of the DTRNA. We have worked the past several years to restore this area, once used for agriculture. In that time, we've removed invasive Sahara Mustard and Russian Thistle and cleared the area of trash. This year we continued restoration efforts by installing vertical mulch and broadcast seeding the area with native seeds.



A common method for restoring denuded desert habitats is the installation of vertical mulch using dead creosote branches. After collecting dead creosote, branches are gathered into a bunch and buried in the ground to resemble a live creosote. Vertical mulch will act to catch wind dispersing seeds and as a haven for birds and rodents. In this way, it mimics the functionality of live creosote and assists in the natural restoration of areas. Volunteers installed over 20 additional vertical mulch sites and reseeded these areas with native seeds provided by the BLM. In addition to installing vertical mulch and reseeded, volunteers removed over 300 invasive Russian Thistle plants (filling 29 garbage bags!), fixed fences, inventoried various portions of the DTRNA and other properties, and conducted trail maintenance at the kiosk area. Volunteers were also citizen scientists assisting with data collection on the parcel. Understanding how the landscape is changing through vegetative distribution and plant and animal species presence, is an important component to restoration efforts. This year, we tasked volunteers to collect data on all rodent burrows found and the distribution of invasive species. Our citizen scientists went the extra mile! Volunteers identified and mapped over 250 rodent burrows! Their efforts to mark and remove Russian thistle provided us with an updated distribution of invasive species that we can compare to previous years.





Volunteers after a long day of work. Not all attendees are pictured.

Our volunteers drove a collective 5149 miles to assist in our efforts and worked tirelessly all day. The BLM provided a delicious lunch bbq and lots of laughs were had. Thank you everyone for making this such a great event! We would especially like to thank Michael Thamann, Dan Stenger, Craig Bansmer, Bonny Ahern, and Steve Ishii for assisting with logistics leading up to and the day of. We couldn't do what we do without the support of our awesome volunteers and members, and our wonderful partnership with the BLM. Hope to see everyone on March 14 for the

spring work party! We will be conducting trail maintenance and clean up near the kiosk area, continuing to inventory signs, and continue removal of invasive species if necessary.

Other News

New DTPC Email and Website Updates

In response to the email compromise that occurred in July, we have decided to update our email address to a more secure platform. Our new email combines old with new to reflect our website! Our email contact is now dtpc@tortoise-tracks.org This platform also provides additional email capabilities allowing for email addresses tailored to specific people and/or activities, providing additional tools as we continue to grow as an organization. We are also taking this opportunity to update our website! We have been working diligently to unveil the changes by the new year, so stay tuned.

New Symbolic Adoption Kits & Eddie the Tortoise Merchandise

We have updated our symbolic adoption kits to reflect different levels of giving. All of our symbolic adoption kits include an annual subscription to our newsletter *Tortoise Tracks*, a 5 x7 photograph, personalized certificate, and informational materials. Depending on the level of giving you choose you will also receive a plush tortoise, t-shirt, or both! We have also included a family option for those who may have more than one person they would like to include in their symbolic adoption. These kits are currently available in our shop on our website at www.tortoise-tracks.org



Pictured above is an example of our Gold level adoption kit.

Eddie, a rescue pet tortoise, became an overnight sensation after making his way into owner Tom Astle's home. Tom, a writer and photographer, used Eddie's fame to educate his social media followers



on the desert tortoise, their ecology, nutrition. Eddie soon won over more hearts (and followers!) and Tom created amazing Eddie merchandise to sell to benefit the desert tortoise including the DTPC! 100% of the proceeds from the sale of the merchandise will benefit tortoise conservation. To purchase Eddie wares visit our DTPC shop on our website and click the Eddie the Tortoise link to be redirected. To read more about Eddie's story visit: <https://twitter.com/tjalamont/status/1185240300400197632> or to follow along on Twitter follow the #Eddiethetortoise tag. Thank you Tom for educating others and for all of your support!

A Fairy Tale by Our President, Ron Berger

Once upon a time (1994), a man named Jeff was driving up to Seattle with his girlfriend. On the drive, he/they invented a tiny little business they audaciously named after the world’s largest river, because, well, you can send anything down the Amazon. In time, Jeff’s little business grew, and today, his Amazon.com is one of the planet’s most successful businesses. This has made Jeff one of, if not the, world’s wealthiest person, with an estimated net worth today of around \$150 billion.

While Jeff was growing his Amazon business, Jeff’s Seattle friends, Bill and Melissa Gates, announced that they would contribute virtually 100% of their multi-billion dollar fortune to addressing some of the world’s biggest problems. Jeff, being no dummy, and wanting to find a way to be as generous as Bill and Melinda, came up with another brilliant idea, allowing Amazon customers to shop while donating to charity. Customers of Amazon, can key in **www.smile.amazon.com** instead of amazon.com. On their first visit, they select from any of more than one million charities. Once you do, Jeff/Amazon donates a few cents of every dollar (0.5% of your purchase) you spend to the charity you designated.

Why does this matter? Well, as of today, those ‘few cents’ that Jeff has contributed have already added up to \$134,890,393.33! That’s a whole lot of charity! So, here’s my self-serving addition. Since you are already a member of our non-profit organization and if you remember to visit **www.smile.amazon.com**, instead of going to amazon.com, and you designate the Desert Tortoise Preserve Committee as your charity, that will be wonderful for our little friends, the highly threatened desert tortoises. But hey, you can designate any charity you like, and can change the charity you select every time you shop. So, there you have it – a fairy tale or several which have already come true, and a way you can join in the fun, in a positive, rewarding way. If you’re going to shop at Amazon anyway, you might as well help Jeff spend some of his billions in a way that supports your favorite cause and actually does some good. I certainly do. Thanks!

Kids’ Corner!

Picture Jumble



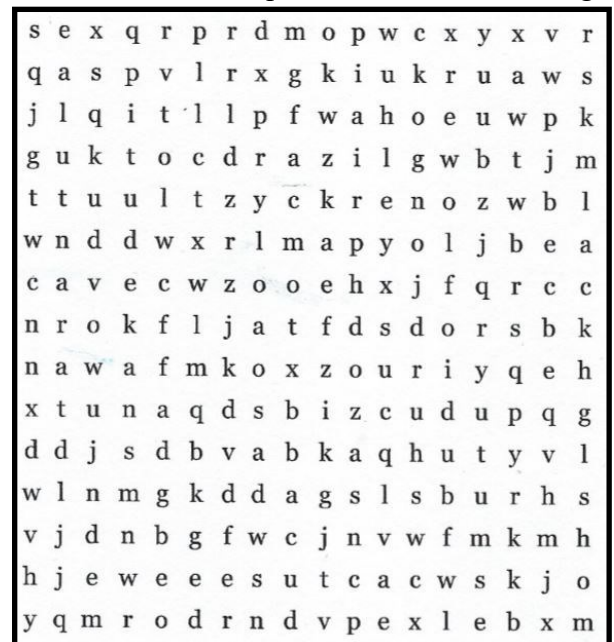
Can you identify the desert animal in the jumbled picture?*

Hint: It’s a reptile and a welcome sight!

Word Search

Can you find the following words in the word search?

- Snake
- Tortoise
- Tarantula
- Cactus
- Lizard
- Flower
- Squirrel
- Shrub
- Badger



DTPC MEMBERSHIP/CONTRIBUTION FORM

1. YES, I want to help save the threatened desert tortoise and its habitat! Here is my tax-deductible membership contribution of:

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$25 Individual | <input type="checkbox"/> \$100 Benefactor |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$40 Family | <input type="checkbox"/> \$200 Patron/Corporate |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$75 Sponsor | <input type="checkbox"/> \$1000 Life Membership |

2. My membership is current but here is an additional donation of \$_____.
Please use it for:

- | | | |
|---------------------------------------|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Fencing | <input type="checkbox"/> Land Acquisition | <input type="checkbox"/> Where Most Needed |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ | | |

3. I'd like to help you grow the DTPC endowment. Please accept an additional donation of:

- | | |
|----------------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$250 | <input type="checkbox"/> \$2,500 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$500 | <input type="checkbox"/> \$5,000 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$1,000 | <input type="checkbox"/> Other \$_____ |

- Marketable Securities (Stock): Contact DTPC Finance Committee Chairperson, Greg Lathrop at 2redgrey@gmail.com or (415) 637-7187 for assistance

Let's grow the endowment!

- I would like my contribution to remain anonymous
 I would like to receive Tortoise Tracks electronically (please provide email address)

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Email Address: _____

Please make your check payable to DTPC and mail to:

Desert Tortoise Preserve Committee
4067 Mission Inn Ave.
Riverside, CA 92501.

Thank you.

*All contributors receive the Tortoise Tracks newsletter. The Desert Tortoise Preserve Committee is an IRS recognized tax-exempt 501(c)(3) nonprofit corporation. All contributions and/or annual membership dues are fully tax-deductible. Contributor information is kept confidential and is not disclosed to third parties.

If you would like to renew your membership or donate online, please visit * www.tortoise-tracks.org *



Tortoise Tracks

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Thank you for being a member

Membership expiration date:



When you shop [@AmazonSmile](#),
Amazon will make a donation to
Desert Tortoise Preserve Committee Inc.



www.Facebook.com/DTPC.inc



Electronic copies of *Tortoise Tracks* are in **COLOR!**
If you would prefer to receive an electronic copy, notify us
by email at dtpc@pacbell.net

Calendar of Events

- January 25, 2020 – DTPC Board Meeting
- February 20 - 23, Desert Tortoise Council Symposium Las Vegas, NV
Early registration closes January 21, 2020
- Week of March 10 - Start of our 2020 Naturalist Season
- March 14 - Annual Spring Work Party
- March 28, 2020 – Luncheon for Members, DTPC Board and Annual Meeting in Lancaster
- **March 29, 2020 – DTPC 45th Anniversary Celebration at the DTRNA!**

Celebrate 45 years of tortoise conservation and stewardship with us at the DTRNA in California City!



Receive our newsletter electronically! Electronic newsletters are received in color and sooner than those that are mailed. If you would like to be added to our e-newsletter list, please email us at dtpc@pacbell.net.