

Summer 2007-In Review

Marsh Mailing

Madrona Marsh Preserve and Nature Center

An Abundance of Kingbirds

From the parking lot, while glancing along the blue-green horizon of the Preserve, I could see the unmistak-



able flight of kingbirds. I stopped to watch their light grayish underwings move in steady beats as they returned over and over to the same perch. Even from a distance, this behavior let me know they were flycatchers and experts at their craft. Anticipation of “kingbird season” has become a tradition for me – they are the first spring migrants I identified on my own without the aid of binoculars. I really enjoy watching them.

What makes these birds so likeable to me is their habit of returning to the same perch after chasing a flying insect. Their predictability offers any observer an opportunity to study their striking field marks – gray head and back, dark wings and tail, and lemon yellow breast. Besides their predictability and beauty making them easy to like, they are so voicy that they are easy to spot by following their calls. I find them quite simply regal.

Usually we are lucky to see seven to nine kingbirds on any given day from March to the middle of May. But on that early May day there were more than twenty of these aerial acrobats weaving looping patterns in the sky – so, I grabbed my binoculars. What else could I do? I had to go see them.

For several days there were so many kingbirds on the Preserve that many visitors came just to see them. By the end of May, all the Western Kingbirds had moved to points north and east — to their breeding grounds from

the Central Valley to the Mississippi River, and from Canada to northern Mexico. I’m already looking forward to their return trip through this area in September.

The First Annual Friends Garden Party and Tea

May 19th was a busy day at the Nature Center. After much discussion over the past year, the Friends of Madrona Marsh held their first “garden tea and plant sale.” The program included samples of many teas made from plants grown in our native plant gardens, tours of both gardens, and a sale of plants, most of which were grown by Connie Vadheim’s students at California State University, Dominguez Hills. Much to our delight, more than 75 people attended the event! In the past, when we held programs on the same day as the Armed Forces Day parade, few people visited the Preserve. Visitors were quite enthusiastic about this event and requested we hold a similar one in the fall.

Sharefest 2007

It happens every year but every year I am amazed by it: Sharefest. With sincere devotion to our community, Chad Meyer of the Kings Harbor Church, organizes hundreds of volunteers and dozens of projects, each aimed at making a lasting, positive change for each worksite.

This year, we needed to build six new plant tables for our nursery. Our operation has expanded so much

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continued from page 1.

that many of our growing plants had to be moved to a tarp on the ground before they could be planted out on the Preserve. We discovered that on the ground, our potted plants risk being invaded by weeds or ants. Caring for them has become generally more difficult.

So, to address this issue, we requested that the Sharefest volunteers build the tables for us. Not only did they build the tables, but they also raised the money for the lumber! In all, they donated almost six hundred dollars and more than 100 hours. To all the volunteers who worked that day – thank you so much! We are very grateful for your hard work and dedication to the Preserve.

The Babes of May

Because of our busy schedules, David Moody and I had never taken the time to sit at the water's edge at the bottom of the sump in search of migrants, but early one Sunday morning we did just that. Along our way, about halfway down the road, we saw a Yellow-rumped Warbler, a bird commonly seen in April but rarely in May. From there we just kept heading downhill. Soon a proud mama Mallard swam right up to us as if to show off her seven babies. They appeared to be about three days old. Not many ducks have been born at the Preserve this year, so it was a real treat to see these darlings close up. Doesn't she look as if she is smiling?

On her third try, our Say's Phoebe successfully hatched babies. She had a difficult time because the ants kept attacking her nest.

Also, the Raven pair fledged three; more than ten hummingbirds, twenty Bushtits, and six California Towhees were born; many goldfinch pairs were successful; and the Red-tailed Hawk fledged one. All things considered, it was a very good breeding season!



—Tracy Drake
Manager/Naturalist

The Madrona Marsh Foundation Update

—Jack Ludwick
President

I am sure that many of you read Bill Arrowsmith's President's Report in the last (Spring 2007) issue of the *Marsh Mailing* concerning the formation of the Madrona Marsh Foundation. As Bill pointed out, the Foundation is a non-profit organization that has been formed to raise monies for the continued successful support of the Marsh and all of its programs. This will be accomplished by distributing the funds to the Friends of Madrona Marsh working in concert with the City of Torrance to sustain and improve this unique ecosystem.

We have had several productive meetings since the formation of the Foundation. We are very fortunate to have the help of my very good friend, Mike Lacey, the owner of the Comedy and Magic Club in Hermosa Beach. He has had extensive experience holding fundraisers for various charities at his club.

Lucia Johnson, our Executive Director, is working with Mike to identify and contact a number of corporate sponsors that will help us with our mission. In addition, Mike has such a big and generous heart that he is willing to host a fundraiser at his club with the

proceeds going to the Foundation. More on this will be forthcoming.

I would like to introduce you to our current Foundation board members:

Jack Ludwick, President
Cliff Numark, Secretary
Jimmy Wakimoto, Treasurer
Stephanie Yee
Judy Emerson
Melissa Paltin
David Moody
Emile Fiesler
Jill Klausen
Lucia Galante Johnson, Executive Director

We would welcome anyone who would like to serve on the Foundation Board or who has money raising ideas/contacts. Please feel free to call Lucia at 310-316-9364.

The Marsh Mailer is a quarterly newsletter designed to provide information about activities and upcoming events at or relating to the Madrona Marsh Preserve. Contributions are welcome and may be e-mailed to Diane Gonsalves at gonwild@ca.rr.com or Bill Arrowsmith, TheArrowsmiths@sbcglobal.net or dropped off or mailed to the Nature Center.

President's Report

Friends, Foundation, and a Silent Benefactor

–Bill Arrowsmith

I reported for the first time in our spring newsletter the formation of the Madrona Marsh Foundation, and its President, Dr. Jack Ludwick, is a contributor to this issue. (See **MMF Update**, page 2.) The idea of having a Foundation in addition to The Friends of Madrona Marsh is a new concept and may be causing some confusion, so permit me to repeat the fundamental philosophy and current roles of FOMM, MMF, and the City of Torrance:

The Madrona Marsh Preserve and Nature Center are owned by the City of Torrance and operated as part of its Parks Department, with volunteer help and occasional advice from the FOMM. Tracy Drake is the Manager and Naturalist for the Preserve.

The Friends of Madrona Marsh help and advise the City with planning and execution of restoration projects and other programs, assist City staff in the Nature Center and conduct tours of the Marsh, and occasionally provide services or equipment which is beyond the scope of the current Parks budget, such as microscopes, garden maintenance, or new taxidermy.

The MMF will concentrate solely on raising funds and securing donations to allow the Marsh educational programs and restoration to continue, even after the current Proposition A funding, used to supplement Marsh programs and expenses, expires. The ultimate goal of the MMF is a self-sustaining endowment.

The plan is for MMF to raise money and make it available to the FOMM and for FOMM to direct use of these funds in concert with City Parks Personnel, unencumbered with the task of actually raising the money.

The Friends have been fairly successful raising and shepherding funds over their 35-year history, but we sense a potential tightening of City budgets in the next five or six years, with the expiration of county Prop A funding from 1972 and 1976. Nearly half of the FOMM budget will be used this year for a long-planned enhancement to the Exhibit Hall: taxidermy display cases. So the timing of a Foundation is fortuitous, and we look forward to working with them.

One reason we have been so successful raising money for the last several years, in addition to some thousand dollar corporate donations from Mobil and Dow Chemical, and the new DID program at Fremont Investment (see article below) is an increase in donations from our members, which our treasurer, Ellen Peterson, has been posting in the *Marsh Mailing*. Thank you all for your support!

But there is one very special donor whose name we have withheld from you up to this point, at her request. This year, as I wrote to thank her for her annual donation of \$15,000 I asked if she might consider letting us make her generosity public. She has been making donations of this size for years and I wanted all of you to know of our "secret angel".

Her donations allowed purchase of a \$10,000 digital microscope with TV viewing screen which has been fantastic for our laboratory classroom, and an emergency purchase of an \$18,000 drainage basin pump, to keep the vernal marsh wet, and more.

I wanted all of you future donors to the Madrona Marsh Foundation to see how important your donations are, and that we do value them and depend on them. So, on behalf of the Friends of Madrona Marsh, the Madrona Marsh Foundation, and the citizens of the South Bay, I extend a sincere and heartfelt thank you to Ms. Eloise C. Goodhew Barnett, for many years of generous donations.

Ms. Barnett lives in Rancho Palos Verdes, but her presence is felt in Madrona Marsh every day. Thank you!

Fremont Investment Offers Incentives for FOMM

FOMM is registered with Fremont Investments' Deposit Incentive Donation Program. Fremont donates to FOMM 0.1% of the annual average combined balances on deposits from our members of FOMM.

This year FOMM received \$930.00 from Fremont's Deposit Incentive Donation Program, and last year we received \$690 from the program.

Thanks to all of you who deposited money at Fremont Investment and Loan and mentioned FOMM, and thank you to Fremont for making this generous program available!

Fremont provides excellent service and rates. The Certificate Of Deposit for June 18th for 6 months is 5.15% APY for \$1,000-\$9,999.

Please continue to use Fremont and tell them you belong to FOMM. Let your friends and family know. The local branch is located at 3440 West Carson Street, Torrance, right next to Del Amo Fashion Center.

We appreciate your support.

–Ellen Peterson
Treasurer

Hope for the Future

— Bill Arrowsmith

We hear so many negative environmental reports, from global warming exacerbated by carbon dioxide (CO₂) emissions, to energy shortages and our growing dependence on foreign sources of oil, to our increasing problem just disposing of our own solid waste (trash). So it was nice to read recently of some exciting new ideas that show promise solving these problems.

The July, 2007 issue of *Popular Science* reports a new method of producing clean-burning biodiesel fuel—the alternative to petroleum-based fuels presented to us by Dr. Frank Navratil at our annual meeting in January. The new technique, which is currently being developed by several companies, converts oil from algae (yes, algae!) into biodiesel fuel. Gives a whole new meaning to *fuel cell*, doesn't it?

It has been demonstrated that fats from algae can be made into biodegradable, non-toxic biodiesel fuel, and that algae can produce up to 30 times more fuel than crops such as corn or canola that are currently being used. Even land not suitable for farming can be used to grow algae, and it is estimated that enough algae to power the entire U.S. could be grown in any barren area slightly larger than the state of New Mexico.

Here's a nice 'extra:' algae farms set up next to power plants or industries could absorb carbon dioxide and convert it to oxygen. A company called GreenFuel, which originated at MIT, recently demonstrated this at a power plant in Arizona. Another company called Solix, with roots at Colorado State University, is setting up an algae farm next to a brewery in Fort Collins, Colorado. And earlier this year a New Zealand company was the first to mine biodiesel from the algae found in sewage.

If the price of oil stays high, these new methods of biodiesel production should prove economically feasible as well as environmentally superior.

The March issue of *Popular Science* tells the story of inventor Joseph Longo who addressed the following problem: America generates 245 million tons of municipal solid waste every year—twice as much as 35 years ago. Longo has invented a machine called a Plasma Converter which creates a field of extremely intense energy very much like lightning. The radiant energy of this plasma arc is so powerful that it reduces trash into its constituent elements by tearing apart molecular bonds. It is capable of disintegrating almost anything but nuclear waste, and the only by-products are an obsidian-like glass which may be used as raw material for tile or asphalt, and a synthetic gas which can be converted into marketable fuels, including ethanol, natural gas, and hydrogen.

Even more amazing, the process creates more electricity than it consumes, allowing customers using his Startech converters to profit from selling the excess power. Startech is currently working with Panama to set up 10 plasma converter systems there.

We have some very promising items to report at Madrona Marsh as well. Although we finished the July 2006–June 2007 rain year at a meager 20% of the normal 13 inches, our Native Plant Garden and Water-wise Garden continue to demonstrate the beauty and function of drought-tolerant plants.

The May 19th Garden Party and Native Tea was a great success and a fun day, and we sold over \$400 worth of native plants. Thanks to Connie Vadheim for setting it up and providing one of her students from CSUDH as well as many plants to supplement our nursery plants. But the most important thing that Connie has provided is the tremendous interest sparked by her first Saturday Native Plant classes. If you haven't attended one yet, you're missing the best!

Welcome to Our New Sister Organization in Gardena!

The Friends of Gardena Willows Wetland Preserve, Inc. is now an official California Tax Exempt Non-profit Corporation. Although the Willows Wetland is still not open to the public on a daily basis, a Restoration Work Day is held on the third Saturday of the month, from 7 to 10 a.m. through September, and from 8 to 11 a.m. through next May.

For more information and more events, see their new website at: gardenawillows.org. They are making great progress in restoration of their beautiful 13-acre wetland near the corner of Vermont Avenue and Artesia Boulevard.

The FOMM Board of Directors

- Bill Arrowsmith, President
 - Connie Vadheim, Vice President
 - Ellen Peterson, Treasurer
 - Carol Roelen, Recording Secretary
 - Venora Lee, Corresponding Secretary
 - Jeanne Bellemin
 - Bill Forrest
 - Maxine Trevethen
 - Sarah Noddings
 - Eric Carson
 - Archie Phillips
 - Mary Garrity
- ex-officio:**
- Shirley Turner
 - Jack Knapp

Shirley's Turn

—Shirley Turner

It is said that watching Turtles' and Tortoises' slow and sure movement can calm you.

Information on the California Turtle and Tortoise Society presentation of Dr. Peter C. H. Pritchard came after our last newsletter went to press. I hope you saw publicity regarding this event. We are very pleased to have such a world-famous scientist speak at our Nature Center.

Michael Bargeron, President of the Society, made the arrangements for 75 guests at the catered dinner in our Meeting Hall before the program, and brought some of Dr. Pritchard's books for sale. The speaker also brought books and graciously autographed them before and after the program.

His recent books are *Tales From The Thebaide*, *Reflections of a Turtleman* and *The Alligator Snapping Turtle: Biology and Conservation*. This is a reprint of the very valuable 1989 edition with supplemental material added after the original intact 106 pages. Since 1998 he has been director of the Chelonian Research Institute in Oviedo, Florida, which he founded—his own personal Thebadide. It is the world's third largest turtle museum.

The program included a professional, well-rounded video of the Galapagos Islands, including Dr. Pritchard's films made in the 70's and more recently. It was amazing to see "Lonesome George" the oldest living dinosaur turtle that now resides in the Park. His neck is very long so he can breathe when floating with the current from a south island to a north island 150 miles away. Then Dr. Pritchard showed turtle slides, many that he took, and was generous with his time in answering questions.

The California Society trip this year will be to Costa Rica. At his suggestion, next year they plan to go to an island off Madagascar.

Among Dr. Pritchard's writings is a book for children called *Cleopatra the Turtles Girl Travels and Adventures with Turtles in Guyana*. The adventure story of an eight-year old girl with few economic advantages demonstrates "it is who you are and what you do" and not what you have that counts.

In her village there is a small zoo where she spends her free time watching the turtles. Her rich gold miner uncle, also interested in turtles, takes her to see 10 different species in different habitats. They see the world's largest leatherback sea turtle lay its 80 to 150 eggs. These turtles feed on jellyfish and migrate from the cold waters of Scandinavia to the sandy beaches of Guyana in South America.

When they return from these extensive trips looking for the turtles of Guyana, they have absorbed a remarkable amount of accurate and fascinating information.

She gets to bring a mata-mata turtle home and sets up a viewing of her feeding fish to her turtle for which the fee is \$20. A Guyana dollar is worth about half an American cent.

The people and places in the travels for turtles are real. The rich uncle is really the author and Cleopatra was a young friend. Illustrations are charming of Cleopatra and accurate of the fauna. It is published by The Guyana Book Foundation, 56 New Garden & Anirav Streets, Queenstown, Georgetown, Guyana, South America with support from the Canadian Organization for Development through Education and the Canadian International Development Agency.

Dr. Pritchard has established a permanent field station for turtle conservation in Northwestern Guyana. He has been recognized as a "Champion of the Wild" by the Discovery television channel, and a "Hero of the Planet" by Time Magazine.

Poems & Story Telling

Beth Shibata's Story Telling Class is November 10. Will she tell stories in poetry form?

These poems are from the Arrow Book of Poetry selected by Ann McGovern published by Scholastic Book Services in 1965.

Where Is a Poem?

Where is a poem?

As far away

As a rainbow span,

Ancient Cathay,

Or Afghanistan:

Or it can be near

As where you stand

This very day

On Main Street here

With poem

In your hand.

—Eve Merriam

(In the Spring of 1982 a double rainbow appeared over oil wells and City Hall. It was photographed by Shirley and was interpreted by her as a promise that the Marsh would be preserved.)

The Caterpillar

Brown and furry

Caterpillar in a hurry:

Take your walk

To the shade of leaf or stalk.

May no toad spy you,

May the little birds pass you by

Spin and die

To live again a butterfly.

—Christina Georgina Rosseti, a very important Victorian poetess published in many collections. It was

Continued on Page 8.

Madrona Marsh Preserve Nature Center

Schedule of Events

July-October 2007

(For the very latest on events visit: www.friendsofmadronamarsh.com)

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<u>1</u>	<u>2</u> CLOSED	8:30 -Tour de' <u>3</u> Torrance-Bird Walk 10 a.m. - 12 p.m. Habitat Restoration	<u>4</u> HOLIDAY	10 a.m. <u>5</u> Tyke Hike	<u>6</u>	8:45 a.m. - 12 p.m. <u>7</u> Habitat Restoration 10 a.m. - 12 noon - Butterfly Count Class 10 a.m.-12 p.m. More... Butterflies
2 p.m. - 4 p.m. <u>8</u> Second Sunday Animal Prints in the Sand	<u>9</u> CLOSED	9-11 a.m.- <u>10</u> Mornings on the Marsh 10 a.m.-12 p.m. Habitat Restoration	8 a.m. Bird Walk <u>11</u> /Bob Shanman 10 a.m. - 12 p.m. Habitat Restoration 7:15-9 p.m.-FOMM Board Meeting	<u>12</u>	<u>13</u>	8:45 a.m. - 12 p.m. <u>14</u> Habitat Restoration 10 a.m.-12 noon Annual Butterfly Count
<u>15</u>	<u>16</u> CLOSED	<u>17</u> 10 a.m. - 12 p.m. Habitat Restoration	<u>18</u> 10 a.m. - 12 p.m. Habitat Restoration	<u>19</u>	<u>20</u>	8:45 a.m. - 12 p.m. <u>21</u> Habitat Restoration 7:30-9:30 p.m. Star Party
<u>22</u>	<u>23</u> CLOSED	<u>24</u> 10 a.m. - 12 p.m. Habitat Restoration 7 p.m. Audubon Get-together	<u>25</u> 10 a.m. - 12 p.m. Habitat Restoration	<u>26</u>	<u>27</u>	8:45 a.m. - 12 p.m. <u>28</u> Habitat Restoration 10 a.m. Nature Walk
10 a.m. <u>29</u> Nature Walk	<u>30</u> CLOSED	<u>31</u> 10 a.m. - 12 p.m. Habitat Restoration				

JULY

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			10 a.m.-12 p.m. <u>1</u> Habitat Restoration 10 a.m.-12 p.m. Junior Naturalist	10 a.m. <u>2</u> Tyke Hike	<u>3</u>	8:45 a.m. - 12 p.m. <u>4</u> Habitat Restoration 10 a.m. - 12 noon- Water Zone Gardening Drake/Vadheim
<u>5</u>	<u>6</u> CLOSED	<u>7</u> 8:30 a.m.- Tour de- Torrance-Bird Walk 10 a.m.-12 p.m. Habitat Restoration	8 a.m.- Bird Walk <u>8</u> 10 a.m.-12 p.m.- Habitat Restoration 10 a.m.-12 p.m.-Jr. Naturalist 7:15-FOMM Board Meeting	<u>9</u>	<u>10</u>	8:45 a.m. - 12 p.m. <u>11</u> Habitat Restoration 10 a.m. - 12 noon Turtles & Tortoises 10 a.m.-12 p.m.-Watercolor for Children
2 -4 p.m. <u>12</u> Second Sunday Science- Mysterious Life of Bees	<u>13</u> CLOSED	9-10 a.m.- Morn- <u>14</u> ings on the Marsh 10 a.m.-12 p.m. Habitat Restoration	10 a.m.-12 p.m. <u>15</u> Habitat Restoration	<u>16</u>	6:30-8:30 p.m.- <u>17</u> Artists' Reception for Dr. Connie Vadheim & Beth Shibata	8:45 a.m. - 12 p.m. <u>18</u> Habitat Restoration 7:30-9 p.m. Night Hike
<u>19</u>	<u>20</u> CLOSED	10 a.m.-12 p.m. <u>21</u> Habitat Restoration 2-4 p.m. Einstein for Kids 7 p.m. Audubon Get-together	10 a.m -12 p.m. <u>22</u> Habitat Restoration 2-4 p.m.- Einstein for Kids	2-4 p.m.-Einstein <u>23</u> for Kids	<u>24</u>	8:45 a.m. - 12 p.m. <u>25</u> Habitat Restoration 10 a.m Nature Walk
10 a.m. <u>26</u> Nature Walk	<u>27</u> CLOSED	10 a.m.-12 p.m. <u>28</u> Habitat Restoration	10 a.m.-12 p.m. <u>29</u> Habitat Restoration	<u>30</u>	<u>31</u>	

AUGUST

Brought to you by
Friends of Madrona Marsh

Nature Center (310) 782-3989
Gift Shop (310) 320-8255

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						8:45 a.m. - 12 p.m. <u>1</u> Habitat Restoration 8:45 a.m. - 12 p.m. The Flowers of Fall (Drake/Vadheim)
<u>2</u>	<u>3</u> CLOSED	8:30 a.m.-Tour de' <u>4</u> Torrance-Bird Walk 10 a.m.-12 p.m. Habitat Restoration	10 a.m.-12 p.m. <u>5</u> Habitat Restoration	10 a.m. <u>6</u> Tyke Hike	<u>7</u>	Habitat Restoration <u>8</u> 8:45 a.m.-12 p.m.
2 -4 p.m. <u>9</u> Second Sunday Science-Reptiles & Amphibians	<u>10</u> CLOSED	9-11 a.m.- Mornings <u>11</u> on the Marsh 10 a.m. - 12 p.m. Habitat Restoration	8 a.m. <u>12</u> Bird Walk/Bob Shanman 10 a.m. - 12 p.m. Habitat Restoration 7:15 - 9 p.m. FOMM Board Meeting	<u>13</u>	<u>14</u>	8-45 a.m.-12 p.m. <u>15</u> Habitat Restoration 10 a.m.-12 p.m. Watercolors for Children 7-9:30 p.m. - Star Party
<u>16</u>	<u>17</u> CLOSED	10 a.m. - 12 p.m. <u>18</u> Habitat Restoration 7 p.m.- Audubon Get-together	10 a.m. - 12 p.m. <u>19</u> Habitat Restoration	<u>20</u>	<u>21</u>	8-45 a.m.- 12 p.m.- <u>22</u> Habitat Restoration 10 a.m.- 1 p.m. Bio-Diesel Fuel 10 a.m -1 p.m.-Turtles. . . 10 a.m.-2 p.m.- Painting Outdoors 10 a.m.-Nature Bird Walk
10 a.m. - Bird Walk <u>23</u>	<u>24</u> CLOSED	10 a.m.-12 p.m. <u>25</u> Habitat Restoration	10 a.m. - 12 p.m. <u>26</u> Habitat Restoration	<u>27</u>	<u>28</u>	8:45 a.m.-12 p.m. <u>29</u> Habitat Restoration 10 a.m. - Nature Walk
10 a.m. <u>30</u> Nature Walk						

SEPTEMBER

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	<u>1</u> CLOSED	8:30 a.m.-Tour de' <u>2</u> Torrance-Bird Walk 10 a.m. - 12 p.m. Habitat Restoration	10 a.m. - 12 p.m. <u>3</u> Habitat Restoration	10 a.m. <u>4</u> Tyke Hike	6:30 p.m. <u>5</u> Artists Reception Doug Stenhouse	8-45 a.m. - 12 p.m. <u>6</u> Habitat Restoration 10 a.m.-12 p.m.-Planets in the Milky Way
<u>7</u>	<u>8</u> CLOSED	9-11 a.m. - <u>9</u> Mornings on the Marsh 10 a.m.-12 p.m. Habitat Restoration	8 a.m. <u>10</u> Bird Walk/Bob Shanman 10 a.m.-12 p.m. Habitat Restoration 7:15 p.m.-9 p.m. FOMM Board Meeting	<u>11</u>	<u>12</u>	8:45 a.m. - 12 p.m. <u>13</u> Habitat Restoration 6:30-8:30 - Night Hike
<u>14</u> 2-4 p.m. Second Sunday- Fall Migration	<u>15</u> CLOSED	10 a.m. - 12 p.m. <u>16</u> Habitat Restoration 7 p.m. Audubon Get-together	10 a.m. - 12 p.m. <u>17</u> Habitat Restoration 6:30-8:30 p.m. Telescope Clinic	<u>18</u>	<u>19</u>	8:45 a.m. - 12 p.m. <u>20</u> Habitat Restoration 8:45 a.m.-12 noon Exploring Nature Through Pictures and Poetry 10 a.m.-2 p.m. - Painting Outdoors
<u>21</u>	<u>22</u> CLOSED	10 a.m. - 12 p.m. <u>23</u> Habitat Restoration	10 a.m. - 12 p.m. <u>24</u> Habitat Restoration	<u>25</u>	<u>26</u>	8:45 a.m. - 12 p.m. <u>27</u> Habitat Restoration 10 a.m. Nature Walk
10 a.m.- <u>28</u> Nature Walk	<u>29</u> CLOSED	10 a.m. - 12 p.m. <u>30</u> Habitat Restoration	10 a.m. - 12 p.m. <u>31</u> Habitat Restoration			

OCTOBER

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her poem that inspired Dr. Pritchard's comment on "who you are and what you do counts, not what you have."

I Like It When It Is Mizzly

I like it when it is mizzly
And just a little drizzly
So everything looks far away
And make-believe and frizzly.
I like it when it is foggy
And sounding very froggy.
I like it even when it rains
On streets and weepy windowpanes
And catkins in the polar tree
And me.

—Aileen Fisher, *FOMM*;
(*I wish it would rain on us.*)

And So It Did Rain on Us

Jeff Taylor, of the Torrance Airport Operations, reports that on April 20 there was 0.40 inches of rainfall and on March 20, 0.01 inches. For the year the total is 3.03 inches, the lowest ever recorded. On telling Jeff my reason for the request he volunteered he had seen a Kite at the airport several months before it was sighted at the Marsh on June 2 on the return walk from the sump during the "Beautiful Buckwheats" class taught that day by Tracy Drake. The western side of the airport has a stream of water off the Hill where ducks congregate and many Barn Swallows are seen.

Tyke Hikes Meets First Thursdays

Two Cinnamon Teal and a Snowy Egret were seen on the June Tyke Hikers trek. The sump pump had operated at least three hours after the April storm. Beth Scott, Mary Garrity and I led the 19 people—young and old, with 10 strollers—who came in 12 cars through the 18-inch high barnyard grass past the opening to the pond where the waterfowl was sighted.

It was snowing among the willows because the catkins had popped open. Western Tiger Swallowtail Butterflies swooped over our heads. Tiny, not more than little finger nail size, Pacific Tree frogs were abundant to catch and feel. Then we arrived at the dry sun scorched grasses at the sheds for the walk back past North of Kelt planting. The ruts were fairly smoothed out and easier to push strollers over. Three Red-tailed Hawks circled overhead for a long time. Pam, a perspective docent, took notes along the way as she completed her assignment of going on two tours before leading a walk.

In May there were 49 preschoolers and 10 teachers with Ruth McConnell and Beth Shibata escorting them. Jack Knapp took some of them. Another elementary school came, which Bill Arrowsmith led in three consecutive tours. That day 100 people appreciated the saving of the Preserve, promised by the double rainbow in 1982.

On the April Tyke Hike Bill Arrowsmith helped lead the boys, always screeching for wild fauna up ahead. A cricket and caterpillar had to do until we were joined by late comers who had found a Great Egret in a remnant of water. They guided us to the place and the bird was still there fishing for breakfast.

We all would be pleased to have more of you people to try out this rewarding experience and become a docent. Lucia Johnson, Executive Director of the new Madrona Marsh Foundation, and her sons Adam and Noah will assist on the July Tyke Hike. Join us and meet Lucia.

Eagle Scout Projects

Six Eagle Scout Service Projects were completed in the last quarter, for which we are very grateful—all assisted by the Ron Melin's excellent guidance.

Jonathan Wang with Troop 242 wire-brushed, primed, and painted 30 panels of fence on April 7. On April 28 Trenton Rearick with his Troop 210 constructed two arbors and two tables used for propagation in the nursery. Steven Jackson with his Troop 386 cleared an area 15' X 60' of non-natives and planted foothill needle grass on May 12.

On June 9, Kenneth Wu with his Troop 242, prepared a large area along the path to the sheds, planted 300 buckwheat, rattle pod, deer vetch, and bush lupine. They also planted 1344 seeds of lupine, poppy, wall flower and crocin. On June 23 Jason Chen, with his Troop 242, removed non-native grasses in front of the Nature Center and planted sedges in their place. They also wire-brushed, primed, and painted 30 panels of the fence.

Wow!!! That is a lot of man-hours. You are all to be congratulated.

Etcetera . . .

A visit to the nursery is a must. There are so many new tables, over head shades: Sharefest-THANK YOU! There are plants left over from the very successful Garden Party to tempt you Check out Audubon's web site for their programs at the Nature Center on the third Tuesday of the month, 7 p.m. . . . A group of owls is called a parliament, gleaned from an owl book recently purchased at Hickory School Spring-Fling. . . . Scholastic is still providing books for schools. . . .

-S.T.

A Special Thanks to All Wood Company

Friends of Madrona Marsh would like to extend a special "thank you" to Jim Davidson, owner of **All Wood**, a wood working business in Harbor City.

All Wood has not only donated supplies on several occasions for the tyke craft program but also has given time and made machinery available used for building the bat houses.

The shop is located at 1215 West 254th St.; and the phone number is 310-534-2679.

Birds, Butterflies and Dragonflies of the Preserve

May 2007

This list was compiled by David Moody, Tracy Drake, and Ron Melin

Birds

Mallard	Anna's Hummingbird	Barn Swallow	<i>Brewer's Sparrow</i>
Double-crested Cormorant	Allen's Hummingbird	Bushtit	Lark Sparrow
Great Egret	Downy Woodpecker	Blue-gray Gnatcatcher	Black-headed Grosbeak
Great Blue Heron	Western Wood-Pewee	Swainson's Thrush	<i>Blue Grosbeak</i>
Snowy Egret	<i>Hammond's Flycatcher</i>	Northern Mockingbird	Lazuli Bunting
Black-crowned Night-Heron	Gray Flycatcher	European Starling	Red-winged Blackbird
Cooper's Hawk	Pacific-slope Flycatcher	Cedar Waxwing	Brewer's Blackbird
Red-shouldered Hawk	Black Phoebe	Orange-crowned Warbler	Great-tailed Grackle
Red-tailed Hawk	Say's Phoebe	Nashville Warbler	Brown-headed Cowbird
American Kestrel	Ash-throated Flycatcher	Yellow Warbler	Hooded Oriole
American Coot	Cassin's Kingbird	Yellow-rumped Warbler	Bullock's Oriole
Killdeer	Western Kingbird	Black-throated Gray Warbler	House Finch
<i>Spotted Sandpiper</i>	<i>Cassin's Vireo</i>	Townsend's Warbler	Lesser Goldfinch
California Gull	Warbling Vireo	Common Yellowthroat	American Goldfinch
Western Gull	Western Scrub-Jay	Wilson's Warbler	House Sparrow
Rock Dove	American Crow	<i>Yellow-breasted Chat</i>	Pin-tailed Whydah
Mourning Dove	Common Raven	Western Tanager	Orange Bishop
White-throated Swift	Northern Rough-winged Swallow	California Towhee	
<i>Black-chinned Hummingbird</i>	Cliff Swallow	Chipping Sparrow	

Italics = rare species to Madrona
BOLD = Breeding

Butterflies

Mourning Cloak	Western Tiger Swallowtail	Fiery Skipper
Gulf Fritillary	Cabbage White	

Dragonflies

Common Green Darner
Blue-eyed Darner
Wandering Glider
Variegated Meadowhawk

Recent Donations

The following donations in the amount of \$100 or more have been received from the following contributors during the last three months:

March	Irma A Ruiz	\$200	April	In memory of Hester Billings	\$100
March	Paul's Photo Inc	\$100	May	Evelyn Wisneski	\$100
April	Mr. & Mrs. Vinter	\$100	June	4 th Graders – Hickory School	\$107
April	Michele and David Wilson	\$100	June	Betty Jo & Abe Ravitz	\$100
April	Kathleen Lahey	\$135	June	Michael Weber	\$100
April	Jim and Jo Standifer	\$100			
April	Otto Cache	\$100			

–Ellen Peterson
Treasurer

South Bay Native Plant Corner—

—Dr. Connie Vadheim, CSUDH



Coastal (Dune) Buckwheat

Eriogonum parvifolium

Nothing signals summer better than our local native buckwheats. With their abundant blooms and long flowering times, native buckwheats bring a range of colors to the landscape. You can enjoy native buckwheats on the Preserve and in the Native Plant Gardens throughout the summer. And home gardeners should consider including a buckwheat or two in their garden. The coastal native, Dune Buckwheat (*Eriogonum parvifolium*), is a great choice for our area.

Native buckwheats provide key habitat, attracting a range of interesting butterflies and insect pollinators with their nectar and pollen. Buckwheat foliage provides additional insect food. For example, Dune Buckwheat provides caterpillar food required by the endangered El Segundo Blue butterfly. Birds eat the seed in fall and use buckwheat plants for cover. In fact, native buckwheats are among the most important native habitat plants in Southern California.

Coastal Buckwheat is found along the California coast from Monterey to San Diego. It's typically found on dunes and bluffs near the beach in the coastal strand and coastal sage scrub communities. Dune Buckwheat is adapted to harsh coastal conditions, including shifting sands, drought and salty ocean spray. It is right at home in the water-wise home garden, even in our sandy coastal soils.

Dune Buckwheat is a small, spreading shrub with many branches, growing 2-3 feet tall with a spread of 2-4 feet. It has many small rounded leaves that are green on top and wooly-white below. In the dry sum-

mer months the leaves roll up, allowing the plant to conserve water. It can even shed its leaves, growing new ones after the Fall rains.

Dune Buckwheat produces an abundance of tiny, pink-white flowers clustered in balls at the ends of flowering stems. While the primary bloom time is summer, Dune Buckwheat may flower at any time. The flowers and seed heads float like a pastel cloud above the green foliage.



Dune Buckwheat does best in well-drained sandy soils, but can even be grown in clay soils with judicious (limited) watering. It tolerates full sun to nearly full shade. Once established, it is incredibly drought tolerant. While it can survive without any summer water, infrequent summer watering keeps it looking better. Dune Buckwheat requires little care – prune it back every couple of years to keep it looking neat. And enjoy!

Learn more about local native plants at our “Out of the Wilds and into Your Garden” series on the first Saturday of each month. Plant Information Sheets and Plant Lists are also available at the Nature Center.

Volunteer Opportunities — Story-tellers

Do you love telling stories or reading stories aloud? Would you like to share nature stories with visitors to the Nature Center? We are planning a new program which will feature nature stories from different cultures throughout the world. The stories will be interesting and thought-provoking for children and adults.

Contact the nature center if you can suggest appropriate nature stories, or if you would like to volunteer as a story-teller. We will provide a short training session for volunteers participating in this program.

Great Nature/ Biology Classes

At Madrona Marsh Preserve/
Nature Center-



Introduction to Environmental Restoration

The Madrona Marsh Preserve and Nature Center, in collaboration with El Camino College and CSU Dominguez Hills, offers a college level course on environmental restoration. Classes meet Tues. from 4-6 p.m., beginning Sept. 4th. The class may be audited for free or taken for college credit.

Lectures and labs introduce the student to various aspects of environmental restoration including finding historical records, site assessment, planning insect & bird habitat, plant propagation and project monitoring. Students learn about the native plants, birds & insects of the South Bay, as well as tips for long term management of restoration projects. Students participate in the planning and executing a restoration project on the preserve, and will also get first-hand experience in plant propagation and other practical skills.

Open to everyone interested in native plants and environmental restoration—recommended for restoration volunteers at Madrona and other local preserves, gardeners, college students interested in careers in restoration or natural areas management. Call the Nature Center for more information.

Out of the Wilds & Into Your Garden"

The only native plant gardening class focused on coastal Southern California – and it's free. All sessions are held on first Saturdays, 10 a.m.-noon (repeats the following Tuesday, 6-8 p.m.)



- 8/4/07 **Planning with a Wild Heart** (Water zone gardening – featuring ground covers)
- 9/1/07 **The Flowers of Fall**
- Oct. **No Class**
- 11/3/07 **Snip, Shear & Pinch** (Pruning/maintaining your native plants)

The Mysterious Life of Bees	8/12	2 - 4 p.m.
Einstein for Kids	8/21	2 - 4 p.m.

At El Camino College (Fall)

Marine Biology – TTh 7:45-9:15; 9:30-10:55 a.m.
Biology of Plants – TTH 11:30-1:00
Astronomy (Solar System) – Distance Ed.

At LA Harbor College (Fall)

The Human Environment: Physical Processes
The Human Environment: Biological Processes
Physical Geography

At CSU Dominguez Hills (Fall)

Marine Biology – Distance Learning

Interested in learning more about these and other classes? Information is available at the Madrona Marsh Nature Center or on the FOMM Website: <http://www.friendsofmadronamarsh.com/>.

Artist's Corner

Works of local artists and photographers inspired by the beauty of the Madrona Marsh are regularly on display at the Nature Center. Everyone is invited to attend each artist's reception where the artist talks about his/her work or gives a demonstration. Snacks and beverages are included.

Point/Counter Point: Two Views of the Madrona Marsh Preserve, **Connie Vadheim/Beth Shibata. Exhibit begins July 31**, Artists' Reception is August 17, 6:30-8:30 p.m.

Paintings of **Doug Stenhouse, Sept. 17-Nov. 3**, Artist's Reception Oct. 5, 6:0-8:30 p.m.

Friends of Madrona Marsh

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Patron _____ \$35 Club/Organization _____ \$50 Business/Industry _____ \$100

Amount Enclosed _____

Please send your donation or offer of services to:

Friends of Madrona Marsh, P.O. Box 5078, Torrance, CA 90510

FOMM is a 501(c)(3) non-profit corporation. Your donations are tax free within the law.

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