

**Fall 2007**

# Marsh Mailing

**Madrona Marsh Preserve and Nature Center**

## Stress Effects on Our Arroyo Willows

From a distance and even up close, the Arroyo willows appeared as they would in the middle of November. Most of their leaves had already shed, some of the branches had dropped off, and the leaf litter under the trees was thick.



*Clear-wing moth recently emerged from its casing*

Originally, I thought the stress of drought had caused them to defoliate. But, in July, we all learned what was actually causing the trees to shed their leaves so early. During the second session of our Junior Naturalist program, a student asked Dawn Hendricks what a red insect casing sticking out of the tree branch was since she had never seen it before. Dawn did not know, nor did I, but after some lengthy investigative work we had our answers. What we discovered was not “good news.” We found out that it was a clear-wing moth, which is a type of hornet mimic, and was attacking our Arroyo willows.

These clear-wing moths are interesting. They live in the soil around the base of the trees for a time as larvae, then move into and live off the growing parts of the tree— just beneath the bark. They feed for about two years, then emerge as adults, by chewing their way through the

bark, leaving their casing attached a noticeable hole. Less than two weeks later, they mate and start their two-year cycle over again. They can, if in numbers, kill the trees.

There are more than a hundred Arroyo willows on the Preserve; all were noted to have clear-wing moth casings on them. After a lot of research and hard work, we decided to treat the affected trees with beneficial nematodes—a specific species of worm that preys on the larvae of the moth. To ensure that the nematodes would survive, we had to irrigate the areas around the willows and wait for the results. Now, three months later, nearly all the affected willows look great. We lost some—10 or so— but saved the majority. This is a sad loss, but we are grateful to the student who noticed the problem.



*New growth appears on Arroyo willows*

This rescue effort, which was spread across nearly two acres of the Preserve, succeeded because of the hard work and dedication of our staff and volunteers.

**–Tracy Drake**  
Manager/Naturalist

## In Response:

# Why We Are Not Currently Using Recycled Water to Supplement Our Wetlands

There are many people who have come to the Preserve and inquired about why we do not use recycled water to supplement our wetlands. In order to determine if its use would be beneficial to the Marsh, a technical paper was written and then published in May 2005 by two environmental assessment agencies, Gannett Fleming and Telluris, Inc. The authors of the paper concluded that at least three different water filtration systems would be required for its use at Madrona Marsh.

The authors suggested using the three types of filtration, to effectively mitigate 11 of the 13 potentially adverse recycled water substances (parameters). The three systems are the following: 1.) Reverse osmosis (RO) filtration, 2.) Activated carbon filtration and 3.) Passive wetlands treatment. The filters are suggested because using the water without treatment would have two adverse consequences. First, due to its high ammonia and chlorine content, it would kill most if not all of the micro and macro invertebrates it contacted in the existing Marsh water. This would make the water undesirable to the migrant birds that visit the Preserve – many would stop coming here as a result. Second, recycled water is so rich in nutrients that it would cause the existing plants to grow and reproduce so excessively that they would close all the open water zones of the wetlands. There would be water present in the wet season but it would not be of any habitat value. Very little could live or forage in so dense a growth. Most animals and birds live and forage on what naturalists call the habitat “edges.” Animals need a clear view of their surroundings, and to be able to escape into a nearby bit of brush if a predator comes near.

The installation and use of these three filters/treatment types would improve recycled water quality significantly, but not completely. Not addressed, in the Technical Paper but required, would be a pretreatment system to reduce suspended solids in the recycled water to prevent clogging of the filters in the RO process. The cost of such a system needs to be determined.

According to internet sources, the cost of using a reverse osmosis system is \$10-15 per day. The conservative cost estimate of a reverse osmosis filter and its installation would be in excess of \$200,000.

The activated carbon filter would need to be a separate filter, in line with the RO filter. This filter would have the ability to address adverse substances not removed

through RO. While the cost of such a filter ranges in the thousands of dollars, (far cheaper than RO filters) according to internet sources it would be a bit more expensive to maintain due to the cost of replacement parts.

A passive wetland is actually a “natural” approach to filtration in which a biological pool or pond-like system is “engineered” so that plants remove several adverse substances (i.e. some metals and some nutrients) from the recycled water. There are a number of demonstration systems of this type operating successfully in the U.S. It requires substantial acreage for this treatment process to be useful. According to the original Santa Monica Bay Restoration Project Grant Proposal, the estimated amount of recycled water to be received by the Marsh would be 20 acre feet in the winter months. Twenty acre feet is the equivalent of 20 acres of water one foot deep. At maximum capacity, the Marsh can hold 60 acre feet of water. So, this kind of treatment system would require considerable space (acreage), and to prevent contamination of resident water, be kept isolated from the wetlands proper. If built, it would need to be situated in the upland area of the Preserve. This, of course, would significantly reduce available open upland habitat of the Preserve. Currently, the upland area is about 25 acres, thus, putting in a 20-acre barriered passive wetlands would effectively eliminate this natural habitat.

The one substance in recycled water which has the potential to cause the most long-term negative effects to the wetlands is dissolved ortho-phosphate. It is a substance which, if present in abundance, as it is in recycled water, would cause excessive bacterial and algal blooms (i.e. “eutrophication” or over nutrification of water) and fertilize the plants within and surrounding the wetlands to the point that they would over-populate and stress the ecosystem. Passive wetland treatment can, in part, reduce the amount of ortho-phosphate but, not to the extent of preventing completely a condition of nu-

*Continued*

*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](mailto:gonwild@ca.rr.com) or Bill Arrowsmith, [TheArrowsmiths@sbcglobal.net](mailto:TheArrowsmiths@sbcglobal.net) or dropped off or mailed to the Nature Center.

trient overload and its consequences. Currently, cost-efficient technology does not exist to efficiently and adequately remove phosphates (and nitrates) from fresh-water systems. This eutrophication problem is world-wide, which is to say that nearly every fresh water system on earth is affected to some degree by it. So far, no one has developed a practical solution to this problem.

Even with the previously-stated considerations, a few questions still remain about the use of recycled water: Is installing these three filtration systems to make recycled water available to the wetland habitat – all things considered – an overall benefit to the Preserve? And, is putting more water in the wetlands necessary for the health of the habitat? The answer to both these questions is “maybe.” Certainly it would take a lot more research and some advances in technology in order for recycled water to be of assured value to the wetland habitat. Also, it would take applied research to determine if more water in the Marsh would actually be beneficial.

Returning to the Technical Paper mentioned above, three potential sources of water were tested and assessed as to their possible benefit to the wetlands. These sources included our current water source, the rain water/urban runoff collected in the Sump; potable water; and recycled water. Forty-six water quality substances were tested on all three sources. The substances to be tested were chosen from West Basin’s recycled water quality reports of levels of certain substances present in their recycled water. Certainly, there are many other substances in the water not tested and not known as to their beneficial or harmful potential for the wetlands. For example, certain medicines that pass through our bodies are present in recycled water and not removed in any present-day filtration process. Their effects on aquatic fresh-water environments are unknown.

During the testing period, of the 46 parameters assessed in the Sump water, only one parameter was found that could potentially cause adverse effects to the wetlands –nitrates. It was unusual that ortho-phosphates were not found to be high during the testing period of our Sump water, because several years of our testing for this substance in our incoming street run-off water has shown it to be present in abnormally high amounts. Through experience, we know the Madrona Marsh wetlands system is very dynamic biologically and chemically. The water can change significantly day-to-day, and non-beneficial substances can appear in it at any time. But, for the most part, only under very rare circumstances would it be necessary to filter our incoming water to the extent that recycled water would require.

The current system of seasonal filling of the wetlands with rain and urban runoff water is working rea-

sonably well. Overall, the habitat is reasonably healthy, considering we are managing an urban facility in a densely populated area. This is evident by the diversity of plant and animal life present. People not familiar with seasonal wetland ecosystems become concerned when wetlands dry up for extended periods. What they don’t realize is that the system is adapted to this wet-dry alternation—sometimes dry for years – without the catastrophic elimination of its microbial and macro invertebrate-life. Consequently, it may be that no additional water is actually necessary. The water currently received in the course of the wet season undergoes a passive treatment in the Sump. The resident vegetation is adequate to remove impurities that could cause noticeable harm to aquatic macro and micro invertebrates that inhabit the water. These animals are extremely necessary in the maintenance of a healthy wetlands ecosystem. This system, works so well here that scientists and students from many surrounding universities come to the Marsh to study the small life forms living in the water. Essentially, filtering recycled water would provide more water, but, in a system that is already working reasonably well – would more water, with different characteristics, really be a benefit?

In conclusion, while the use of recycled water does not currently make coherent biologic, ecologic and economic sense, we (our Staff), will continue to monitor the practicality of technological advances made in the various types of filtration discussed. There may come a time when it can be used, without reservations, to supplement our wetlands.

—Tracy Drake  
Manager/Naturalist

## Recent Donations

New Horizon Conservation Club donated \$100 in July to the Friends of Madrona Marsh. In September, Ralphs Grocery at Del Amo donated \$2,500 on the occasion of their grand opening of the Torrance store. (See accompanying picture and story on page 5.)

—Ellen Peterson  
Treasurer

## Share Your Talents-

Join us for a six-month Celebration of the Trees to honor a chosen tree on the Preserve, beginning in December and running through May 1. Enter your framed photography by May 1, 2008. Winners’ entries will become part of an exhibit running from May 19 to June 6. Come in or call Tracy Drake at the Nature Center for more details, 310-782-8255. Only 20 entries will be chosen by our judges. Start taking pictures now.

# President's Report

I had a nice call from Maxine Trevethen this week. Maxine has had to give up her position on the Board of Directors for a bit while she attempts a difficult recovery from shoulder surgery, but we have been very fortunate to have Bobbie Snyder step up and take her place. Maxine was calling to congratulate us for the wonderful donation we received from Ralphs at Del Amo as part of their grand remodel celebration (see accompanying story). She was also happy to tell me that she was going to be able to make an extra donation herself this year and take advantage of the special legislation allowing direct transfer of IRA funds without tax consequences that we reported in the Spring newsletter.

In case you missed it, I'll repeat it below. Maxine wants to remind everyone that this opportunity will expire at the end of the year—f you're going to do it, do it now!

## Direct Gifts of IRA Dollars:

If you are age 70-1/2 or older, you may benefit from recent legislation, and help Madrona Marsh at the same time! Under the Pension Protection Act of 2006, you can make a gift to the Madrona Marsh Foundation using funds transferred directly from your individual retirement account (IRA) without paying any tax on your distribution. The charitable distribution counts toward minimum required distributions. The transfer generates neither taxable income nor a tax deduction, so even if you don't itemize you'll still receive the benefit. You may transfer up to \$100,000 directly from your IRA until December, 2007. Contact Lucia Johnson for details at 310-316-9364.

## The Marsh Will Survive- But Will It Thrive?

This September marked the 35th Anniversary of the founding of the Friends of Madrona Marsh, and the Marsh has been protected as a preserve owned by the City of Torrance since 1986 – twenty-one years. Visitors often express their appreciation for the battle waged by early Friends and their allies in homeowner associations and the League of Women Voters, and that is appropriate. Without their effort, the Marsh would have become another drop in the ocean of development that even then was washing over Torrance. "We're so glad you saved this wonderful wetland!" I agree.

But the preservation of Madrona Marsh as an educational and recreational resource is an ongoing adventure, one with many facets and one which is not yet over. The legal struggle for ownership is successfully concluded, but there are many less visible but vitally important efforts ongoing and still ahead. The past year of drought has presented new biological challenges, as

chronicled by Preserve Manager Tracy Drake in this issue. And there is concern that current city funding sources for much of our programming and staff will disappear in a few years. These are the challenges of maintaining the Marsh we have worked so hard to save, and we will meet them as we have the challenges of the past: With your help.

Our financial future is being addressed by an enthusiastic and energetic new group which has incorporated as the Madrona Marsh Foundation. Although we get occasional large donations like the recent \$2500 from Ralphs, we need to secure our future with a solid endowment program—perhaps one which includes many donations like Maxine Trevethen's. And yours.

—Bill Arrowsmith

### 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
- Bobbie Snyder
- Sarah Noddings
- Eric Carson
- Archie Phillips
- Mary Garrity

### Ex-officio:

- Jack Knapp
- Maxine Trevethen
- Shirley Turner

## Volunteer Opportunities

Do you have secretarial or clerical experience? Would you like to assist Madrona Marsh staff? You may be just the volunteer we're looking for. Volunteer Clerical Assistants are needed to help with clerical tasks including typing, data entry, preparing monthly calendars, duplicating, etc. under the direction of Nature Center staff. Depending on level of experience, Volunteers may also help to design flyers and other design work, set up Excel files, answer telephones and other tasks.

Prior clerical or data entry experience is helpful, but not necessary. The volunteer should be careful and accurate in completing tasks and should enjoy learning new things. Training includes a 2-hour general orientation to the Preserve and Nature Center and on-the job training on specific projects by Center staff. Typical time commitment for this position is one half-day per week (4 hours). Within limits you can set your own schedule.

This position allows you to use your skills in a setting that benefits the community. You will also learn more about nature in the South Bay and may have an opportunity to use your creativity (for example in designing flyers). Information about this and other volunteer opportunities is available at the Madrona Nature Center.



*Ralphs Del Amo Store Director, Joe Valencia (left, holding check) and assistant Christina Ferrelli (far right) present generous donation to FOMM to celebrate the grand opening of the newly-remodeled store.*

## Ralphs Donates \$2500 to Friends of Marsh

The Ralphs supermarket at Del Amo Shopping Center (just west of the Marsh) has been a good neighbor for years – they erected a block wall years ago to keep mall trash from blowing onto the marsh, and they support the California beverage container recycling program with a center in their parking lot.

The Del Amo store has just completed a major remodel and as part of its grand re-opening celebration, Joe Valencia, the Store Director, presented the Friends of Madrona Marsh with a check for \$2500! That takes

“good neighbor” to a whole new level!

Thank you, Ralphs! Your generous donation will help insure the success of Marsh programs for restoration and education, and our members will certainly want to visit your beautiful new store and guarantee its success as well.

–Bill Arrowsmith

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## 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.

Display of the paintings of **Doug Stenhouse** runs through Nov. 3. Free.

Photography of the Madrona Marsh Preserve by **Bert Wetherilt**, Nov. 5 - Dec. 22. Artist's reception is Friday, Nov. 23, 6:30-8:30 p.m. Free.

Photography of the Madrona Marsh Preserve by **Jess Morton**, Dec. 24 - Feb. 9. Artist's Reception is Jan. 11, 6:30-8:30 p.m. Free.

Display your art at Madrona Marsh. Share your artistic talent by showing your Madrona Marsh art at the Center. Amateurs welcome. Submit your portfolio at the Nature Center at 3201 Plaza del Amo. For more information, call 310-782-3989.

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## El Dorado Nature Center Hosts Native Plant Fundraiser

El Dorado Nature Center will be hosting its annual California Native Plant Sale on Saturday, October 27 from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. Most of the plants available are well suited to Southern California's dry climate and require minimal watering once established. Many have fragrant foliage and bear brightly colored flowers that are attractive to butterflies and birds. All proceeds go to support habitat restoration at the Nature Center. Be sure and come early for best selection. Members of Friends of El Dorado Nature may make pre-sale purchases beginning at 8:30 am. Your \$6 vehicle entry fee will be credited toward all purchases of \$75 or more. For further information, please call 562-570-1745. Memberships to the Friends of El Dorado Nature may be purchased at the event.

The El Dorado Nature Center is located at 7550 East Spring Street, in Long Beach.

# Madrona Marsh Preserve Nature Center

## Schedule of Events

October 2007-January 2008

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

**OCTOBER**

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				<b>1</b> 10 a.m. Tyke Hike	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b> 9 a.m. - 12 noon. Habitat Restoration 10 a.m. - 12 noon- "Snip, Shear & Pinch" /Dr. Connie Vadheim 12 noon-2 p.m.-Native Plant Sale
<b>4</b>	<b>5</b> CLOSED	<b>6</b> 8:30 a.m.- Tour De' Torrance-Bird Walk 10 a.m.-12 noon Habitat Restoration Bert Wetherilt Exhibit begins	<b>7</b> 10 a.m.-12 p.m. Habitat Restoration	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b> 9 a.m. - 12 noon Habitat Restoration 10 a.m. - 12 noon 2-4 p.m.- Story Telling 6:30-8:30 p.m.-Night Hike
2-4 p.m. <b>11</b> Second Sunday Science- "Discovering Tongva Culture"	<b>12</b> CLOSED	<b>13</b> 9-10 a.m.- Morn- ings on the Marsh 10 a.m.-12 noon. Habitat Restoration	<b>14</b> 8 a.m. - Bird Walk 10 a.m.-12 noon- Habitat Restoration 7:15-FOMM Board Meeting	<b>15</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>17</b> 9 a.m. - 12 noon Habitat Restoration 10 a.m. - 12 noon - Watercolor for Kids 7:30-9 p.m.Night Hike
<b>18</b>	<b>19</b> CLOSED	<b>20</b> 8:30 a.m.- Tour de'Torrance-Bird Walk 10 a.m.-12 noon. Habitat Restoration 7 p.m. Audubon Get-together	<b>21</b> 10 a.m -12 noon. Habitat Restoration	<b>22</b>	<b>23</b> 6:30-8:30 p.m. - Bert Wetherilt Artist's Reception	<b>24</b> 9 a.m. - 12 noon Habitat Restoration 10 a.m Nature Walk
10 a.m. <b>25</b> Nature Walk	<b>26</b> CLOSED	<b>27</b> 10 a.m.-12 noon Habitat Restoration	<b>28</b> 10 a.m.-12 noon Habitat Restoration	<b>29</b>	<b>30</b>	

**NOVEMBER**

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

Brought to you by  
 Friends of Madrona Marsh

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						9 a.m. - 12 noon. <b>1</b> Habitat Restoration 10 a.m.-12 noon-"In the Shade of the Old Oak Tree" /Dr. Connie Vadheim
<b>2</b>	<b>3</b> CLOSED	8:30 a.m.-Tour de' <b>4</b> Torrance-Bird Walk 10 a.m.-12 noon. Habitat Restoration	10 a.m.-12 noon <b>5</b> Habitat Restoration	10 a.m. <b>6</b> Tyke Hike	<b>7</b>	9 a.m.-12 noon <b>8</b> Habitat Restoration 9 a.m.-12 noon - Arbor Day Tree planting. . .
2 -4 p.m. <b>9</b> Second Sunday Science- "The Amazing World of Ducks"/Ron Melin	<b>10</b> CLOSED	<b>11</b> 9 a.m.- Mornings on the Marsh 10 a.m. - 12 noon Habitat Restoration	8 a.m. <b>12</b> Bird Walk/Bob Shanman 10 a.m. - 12 noon Habitat Restoration 7:15 - 9 p.m. FOMM Board Meeting	<b>13</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>15</b> 9 a.m.-12 noon Habitat Restoration 9 a.m.-12 noon - 42nd Annual Christmas Bird Count Class/Bob Shanman
<b>16</b>	<b>17</b> CLOSED	8:30 a.m.- Tour <b>18</b> de'Torrance-Bird Walk 10 a.m. - 12 noon Habitat Restoration 7 p.m.- Audubon Get-together	<b>19</b> 10 a.m. - 12 noon Habitat Restoration	<b>20</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>22</b> 9 a.m.- 12 noon- Habitat Restoration 10 a.m.- Nature Walk
<b>23</b> All day-42nd Annual Christmas Bird Count 10 a.m- Nature Walk	<b>24</b> CLOSED	<b>25</b> Christmas	<b>26</b> 10 a.m. - 12 noon. Habitat Restoration	<b>27</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>29</b> 9 a.m.-12 noon Habitat Restoration
<b>30</b>	<b>31</b> CLOSED					

**DECEMBER**

(For the very latest on events visit [www.friendsofmadronamarsh.com](http://www.friendsofmadronamarsh.com))

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		<b>1</b> New Years Day	<b>2</b> 10 a.m. - 12 noon. Habitat Restoration	<b>3</b> 10 a.m.- Tyke Hike	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b> 9 a.m. - 12 noon Habitat Restoration 10 a.m. - 12 noon.- "Beyond the Lawn,"(native lawn substitutes) Dr. Connie Vadheim
<b>6</b>	<b>7</b> CLOSED	<b>8</b> 9-11 a.m.- Mornings on the Marsh 10 a.m.-12 noon Habitat Restoration	<b>9</b> 8 a.m. Bird Walk /Bob Shanman 10 a.m. - 12 noon. Habitat Restoration 7:15-9 p.m.-FOMM Board Meeting	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b> 6:30-8:30 p.m. - Jess Morton Artist's Reception	<b>12</b> 9 a.m. - 12 noon Habitat Restoration 6-8 p.m. - Star Party
10 a.m.-3 p.m.- <b>13</b> Painting Outdoors/ Ron Libbrecht 2 - 4 p.m. Second Sunday Science- "Sharks"	<b>14</b> CLOSED	<b>15</b> 8:30 a.m.- Tour de'Torrance-Bird Walk 10 a.m. - 12 noon. Habitat Restoration	<b>16</b> 10 a.m. - 12 noon Habitat Restoration	<b>17</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>19</b> 9 a.m. - 12 noon Habitat Restoration 10 a.m.-12 noon - A Brief Summary of Our Solar System
<b>20</b>	<b>21</b> CLOSED	<b>22</b> 10 a.m. - 12 noon Habitat Restoration 7 p.m. Audubon Get-together	<b>23</b> 10 a.m. - 12 noon Habitat Restoration	<b>24</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>26</b> 9 a.m. - 12 noon Habitat Restoration 10 a.m. Nature Walk 6:30-8:30 p.m.-Night Hike
10 a.m. <b>27</b> Nature Walk	<b>28</b> CLOSED	<b>29</b> 8:30 a.m.- Tour de'Torrance-Bird Walk 10 a.m. - 12 noon Habitat Restoration	<b>30</b>	<b>31</b>		

**JANUARY**

# Shirley's Turn

—Shirley Turner

## Surprise Story Time

A surprise story time was presented at the Second Sunday September program. Christine Gunderson, a Senior Girl Scout, also a senior student at Torrance High School this fall, read the 27-page book, just published, to the children circled at her feet. She wrote the story "The Bugs Can Read" for the book. She illustrated it with her Preserve photographs, which she imprinted with animal illustrations drawn by her mother, who also colored the pictures for each page of the story.

The children sat quietly, enthralled with the Blue Jay baby just fledging first the time away from the tree where she was born. She was lost and several animals talked to her but it was the bees who formed words she couldn't read and they helped her find her tree and then the nest in lower branches.

The parents were attentive when Christine's voice was dramatic as she read her copyrighted work. This is the second book she has worked on for the Nature Center. She will go far. I hope the Torrance City Council will recognize this scout's Gold Award achievement.

I remained at the Center while staff member, Ron Melin, showed off the Preserve insects. This is the third program one family has attended this year.

## Scouts Report

Boy Scout/Eagle Scout Service Projects from June 23 through Sept. 27 include:

Jason Chen, with his Troop 242, prepared and painted 10 panels of steel fence on June 23. They also removed marathon grass from the front of the Center. Then they planted native Kerick' Panss meadow sedge.

On August 8 Jake Harris and his Troop 880 prepared for and painted 30 panels of Preserve perimeter fence.

Monday, August 27 Sam Levinbook and his Troop 55 cleared a 12 foot by 60 foot area along Sepulveda of non-native grass and weeds and then planted 100 foothill needlegrass plugs.

The parents, friends, and troop sponsors are to be commended for their help and support in these accomplishments. We love you!!!!

THANK YOU! THANK YOU! THANKYOU

For a Boy Scout Merit Badge, Citizenship In The Community, Kelly Lessler brought her boys, Thomas, Joseph, and Daniel, to work when I happened to be there. It was fun to guide them to good plants to weed around, have them experience various tools, and push the garden carts full of their work to the dumpster. We appreciate the many hands that make work interesting and lighten the job, singing and cracking jokes. Thomas is a member of Troop 595.

## A Program Not to Miss

November 11 Second Sunday Science program will feature Craig Torres, "Discovering Tongva Culture." He returns after some years. He will tell stories, teach songs and dances. Crafts may include soapstone carving, work with shells and making rope.

Craig Torres is a descendant of the Yaavitam (Yaanga/Los Angeles) and the Komiikravitam (Komiikrangna/Santa Monica Canyon) ancestral communities of the Tongva in the Los Angeles Basin. He has spent much of his adult life free-lancing as a cultural educator in Arts & Education presenting to schools, cultural centers and docent training at museums. He has an intensive knowledge and experience in the traditional tribal mediums of shell and soapstone. Recently, he has been exploring the world of digital media arts and computer graphic design. Much of what is expressed in his artwork is his cultural background and life experiences as an indigenous person.



A quote from his e-mail:

*In tribute to: Our Mothers, Our Foremothers, Our Mother Land, Our Mother Earth "Everything is born of woman. All life comes into being through the feminine aspect, and therefore women should be honored and respected. The Earth is our Mother."*

## Around the Marsh

Ruth McConnell has been sorely missed this summer when she spent time in Wisconsin (which also has had drought conditions). She chose to weed in a green patch east of the big dry vernal pool north of the sump. There were so many gopher holes that walking was difficult. My small wheeled sport walker needed to be lifted over each hole. Radish and mustard was already removed but there still was rye grass and three kinds of filaree among other stuff and some sunflowers. It is hoped gophers will stay in the wet, non-planted areas, and not chew on newly-planted roots. Other changes have been made to improve efficient use of labor and water such as a map and landscape features to locate a specific area to water and record frequency of application. David, who waters trees frequently, came by with a new sprinkler gun he had bought.

## Tyke Hike Happenings

Mary Garrity and Beth Scott lead the Tyke Hikes. In August we observed the fall conditions of tree, early dropping of leaves. Then in September we saw young green

*Continued on Page 11.*



# Birds, Butterflies and Dragonflies of the Preserve

## Summer 2007

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

### Birds

Mallard	White-throated Swift	Common Raven	Savannah Sparrow
Double-crested Cormorant	Black-chinned Hummingbird	Northern Rough-winged Swallow	Lark Sparrow
Great Egret	<b>Anna's Hummingbird</b>	Cliff Swallow	<i>Black-headed grosbeak</i>
Great Blue Heron	<b>Allen's Hummingbird</b>	Barn Swallow	<i>Blue Grosbeak</i>
Snowy Egret	Belted Kingfisher	<b>Bushtit</b>	Lazuli Bunting
Black-crowned Night-Heron	Downy Woodpecker	House Wren	<b>Red-winged Blackbird</b>
<i>White-tailed Kite</i>	Western Wood-Pee-wee	Blue-gray Gnatcatcher	Hooded Oriole
Cooper's Hawk	Willow Flycatcher	<b>Northern Mockingbird</b>	Bullock's Oriole
Red-shouldered Hawk	Pacific-slope flycatcher	European Starling	<b>House Finch</b>
Red-tailed Hawk	<b>Black Phoebe</b>	<i>Phainopepla</i>	Lesser Goldfinch
American Kestrel	<b>Say's Phoebe</b>	Orange-crowned Warbler	<b>American Goldfinch</b>
American Coot	Ash-throated Flycatcher	<i>Chestnut-sided Warbler</i>	House Sparrow
Killdeer	Western Kingbird	Yellow Warbler	Nutmeg Manikin
Western Gull	Cassin's Kingbird	Black-throated Gray Warbler	<i>Pin-tailed Whydoh</i>
<i>Caspian Tern</i>	<i>Bell's Vireo</i>	Common Yellowthroat	<i>Orange Bishop</i>
Rock Pigeon	Warbling Vireo	Wilson's Warbler	<i>Italics = rare species to</i>
<i>Eurasian-collared Dove</i>	Western Scrub-Jay	Western Tanager	<i>Madrona</i>
Mourning Dove	American Crow	<b>California Towhee</b>	<b>BOLD = Breeding</b>

### Butterflies

Monarch	Sandhill Skipper	Painted Lady
Western Tiger Swallowtail	Umber Skipper	Buckeye
Cabbage White	Eufala Skipper	Funereal Duskywing
Orange Sulphur	Gulf Fritillary	Western Pygmy Blue
Gray Hairstreak	Mourning Cloak	Marine Blue
<i>Fiery Skipper</i>		

### Dragonflies

Common Green Darner	Wandering Glider
<i>Giant Darner</i>	Black Saddlebags
Blue-eyed Darner	Red Saddlebags
Flame Skimmer	Blue Dasher
<i>Cardinal Meadowhawk</i>	<i>Mexican Amberwing</i>
Variegated Meadowhawk	

# South Bay Native Plant Corner

—Dr. Connie Vadheim, CSUDH



## Coast Goldenbush-

*Isocoma menziesii*

Fall would be dull indeed if not for our native fall-blooming sunflowers. Their golden flowers gladden the heart, while their nectar and leaves provide food for insects. Later, their seeds provide a feast for seed-eating birds like finches. Our local Coast Goldenbush (*Isocoma menziesii*) is a great example fall-blooming plants from the Sunflower family (*Asteraceae*).

The local variety of Coast Goldenbush (var. *vernonioides*; formerly *Haplopappus venetus* spp. *vernonoides*) is found growing in sandy soils from central California to Baja. Along the coast it is a common plant of dunes, marshes, bluffs and scrub lands. The name *menziesii* honors Archibald Menzies (1754-1842), a Scottish botanist and surgeon who traveled the Pacific Northwest with Captain George Vancouver collecting and describing native plants.

Coast Goldenbush is an upright to sprawling subshrub, one to three feet tall and two to five feet wide. The branches grow from a woody stem and die back nearly to the ground each year (may need to be cut back in the garden). The gray-green oval leaves, with toothed edges, are densely clustered around the stems. The foliage is not as prickly as its more holly-like cousin, Sawtooth Goldenbush (*Hazardia squarrosa*).

Coast Goldenbush is quite easy to grow in the garden. It likes full sun, but tolerates a little shade. It does well in sandy to clay soils and even thrives on the immediate coast – a boon to seaside gardeners. While quite drought tolerant, Goldenbush looks best with occasional summer water—otherwise it loses its leaves in summer drought. It needs no fertilizer.

Coast Goldenbush can flower any time from April to December, but usually blooms from August to October in the South Bay. Clusters of small, golden-yellow flowers sparkle above the foliage, making quite a show! A number of insect species, including bees, butterflies and others, utilize the nectar and foliage. The seeds are light, wind-borne, with fluffy hairs.



Coast Goldenbush is great on slopes, where it is important for erosion control. Goldenbush is a must for coastal habitat gardens, and also looks good in informal water-wise mixed beds. It requires little maintenance, other than cutting it back to about six to ten inches in winter. Plants will spread via seed (on bare ground) and will naturally increase in size with age.

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

# Great Nature/ Biology Classes In and Around South Bay

## At the 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 Tuesday from 4 to 6 p.m., beginning Sept. 4<sup>th</sup>. The class may be audited for free. You may attend individual classes even though the class has begun. Get a schedule at the Nature Center.

Lectures and labs will introduce the student to various aspects of environmental restoration and management including finding historical records, site assessment, planning insect and bird habitats, plant propagation and project monitoring. Students will learn about native plants, birds and insects of the South Bay, as well as tips for long-term management of restoration projects. Students will participate in 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.*

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## Shirley's Turn

*continued from page 8.*

grasses under the dying trees and new buds, leaves, and flowers sprouting on the trees, an unusual sight for this time of year. There was a Great Egret feeding on frogs in dense tules. There were no ducks to be seen in the sump when Beth opened the gate, so they could look over the edge. Actually one boy really led us down the path until Beth found a trail through dense growth where a dog hangs out. It had eluded those trying to catch it for some time. One grandpa pushed his grandson in a sports stroller, the kind with big wheels. That looked great for me to try. Does anyone have one for sale? The seat could hold a weed container.

## Other News

At the September Board meeting Mary showed her progress in decisions regarding the Book of Remem-



### "Out of the Wilds and Into Your Garden"

The only native plant gardening class focused on the South Bay—and it's free. All sessions are held on the first Saturdays, 10 a.m.-noon (repeated the following Tuesdays, 6:30-8 p.m.) We include a walk in the gardens where you can see the plants.

- 11/3/07 - *Snip, Shear, Pinch (Pruning native plants)*
- 12/1/07 - *Under Oaks (Native plants for dry shade)*
- 1/5/08 - *Beyond the Lawn (Native lawn substitutes)*
- 2/2/08 - *Blue & Purple (Wildflowers)*

October 14 -	2-4 p.m. -	Fall Migration
November 3 -	1-3 p.m. -	Native Plant Sale and tours of the Nature Center gardens.
November 11 -	2-4 p.m. -	Discovering Tongva Culture

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

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brance. Tracy distributed three CD's to each of us that Connie and she made, pictures of all the 272 plants growing on the Preserve, and native plants in various stages of development that will be helpful to volunteers. Thank you Connie and Tracy.

The Second Sunday Science program offered January 13 from 2 to 4 p.m. will be "Sharks," presented by Rachel from the Redondo Beach SEA Lab, who is a shark expert. She will take you on a voyage under the sea to study the magnificent life of sharks. This is a hands on event with live sharks. WOW! Check out the SEA Lab website: [www.lacorps.org](http://www.lacorps.org). This is a great place to visit with your children or even by yourself. They raise native plants for restoring coastal bluffs at Torrance Beach and Redondo Beach in their "Beach Bluff Restoration Project." The fee for this class is \$5 per person or \$10 per family. For more information please call the Nature Center at 310-782-3989.

# Friends of Madrona Marsh

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## Membership Application

We appreciate your support. Thank you!

Annual Membership: \_\_\_\_\_ New \_\_\_\_\_ Renewal

Individual \_\_\_\_\_ \$10    Family \_\_\_\_\_ \$20    Youth (under 18)/Senior (over 65) \_\_\_\_\_ \$5

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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