

Marsh Mailing

Madrona Marsh Preserve and Nature Center

When Did Fall Migration Begin . . . ?

—Tracy Drake, *Naturalist/Manager*

. . . We were astonished to see, in the middle of July, a few bird species that normally show up at the Preserve around the middle of September! Why? Our staff kept asking ourselves this question. But, the truth is, we simply do not know. Possible explanations include a large number of failed nesters are already moving toward their wintering grounds. Their failure could be due to a lack of food resources so potential parents did not reproduce. Maybe there has been enough climate change to alter the birds breeding and migration habits. Maybe there is just more food in our area so the birds are stopping by early. Again, we really do not know why. Nonetheless, it has been wonderful to see so many beautiful and unusually early birds this summer.



Indigo Bunting

The most interesting has been the Indigo Bunting. (pictured to the left.) One lone male showed up on July 31. He sang nearly all day for at least a week—his hormones making him sing and search for a mate even though it was past breeding

season. Finally, a female appeared! We were amazed! In the past eight years, we have only seen three Indigo Buntings. One male last fall, for one day, another male this spring for two days, and suddenly we had two! If that were not enough, another male showed up on August 12! This was a very rare combination of events. Now there are three!

Indigo Buntings are commonly found east of the Mississippi and on into lower Colorado, parts of New Mexico and Arizona. They are rarely recorded in Southern California.

Many people from all over Southern California, even into Colorado have come to see these birds.

The buntings were not the only stunning birds on the Preserve this summer. In late July, a Summer Tanager and a Black-and-White Warbler arrived. Both can still be observed most days of the week. Late in August, two Yellow Warblers arrived and, occasionally for the past month, Black-headed Grosbeaks, (like the one pictured to the right), could be spotted. Some



Black-headed Grosbeak

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350: What's It All About?

—Bill Arrowsmith

As October 24th, 2009, approaches you're likely to see and hear the number "350" more frequently. It's all part of a worldwide environmental 'conspiracy' to make us both curious and concerned—curious enough to seek answers about climate change and global warming, and perhaps sufficiently concerned to find actions we can take—individually and as a nation—to curb our present contribution to global warming.

Evidence of global warming is widespread, from the melting of glaciers, arctic ice and Alaskan permafrost to extreme drought in Australia. Scientists at the 2007 Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) told us that global temperatures rose 1.3 °F

during the last century, and that most of the temperature increase since 1950 was due to human activity, such as burning fossil fuels and deforestation. The 2007 IPCC also reported sea levels have risen 70 percent faster in the last ten years (3.1 mm/yr) than in the previous century (1.8 mm/yr). Here in southern California we experienced the driest year on record (2006-07) within two years of the second wettest (2004-05)—very possibly our connection to global warming. But what can we do about global warming? First, let's examine its probable causes.

Scientists tell us that global warming is due in large part to an acceleration of the "greenhouse effect." That

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“Migration” continues...

people wonder why we pay so much attention to the birds like we do to the butterflies and dragonflies. The answer is simple. They are indicators of habitat health.

We make changes on the Preserve daily; we trim trees, clear weeds and plant natives. All of these changes have an effect on the habitats of the Preserve. We monitor our work very closely so that the Preserve increases its habitat value. Consequently, birds such as the above-mentioned find enough food,



Yellow Warbler

water and shelter to visit a while! One thing we have noticed though, is the truth about two common sayings; “If you build it, they will come,” and “Diversity creates a healthy habitat.” We continue, week by week, to restore the vernal pools, the uplands, and the wetland habitats. Over the past eight years we have observed some interesting trends. Animals once thought to have become absent from the South Bay forever have returned or increased their numbers. Examples of this include the Say’s Phoebe, several species of butterflies, and many species of insects. It is the restoration volunteers, led by Ron Melin and Daniel Marion, who have made the biggest difference so far this year. To them and to the Staff who work so hard to maintain the areas restored by volunteers — thank you so much!!!

–T.D.

“350” continues...

occurs when gases such as water vapor, carbon dioxide (CO₂) and methane in the upper atmosphere allow sunlight to reach the Earth but trap heat emitted from the Earth. That captured heat is recycled in our atmosphere, warming it up, and that’s a good thing – up to a point. The greenhouse effect is what keeps our average Earth temperature at about 57°F; without it Earth would be an uninhabitable 0°F or below. Brrrr!

But how much is too much? There are three numbers which will help us understand the CO₂ contribution to global warming: 275, 390, and 350. For all of human history until about 200 years ago, our atmosphere contained 275 parts per million of carbon dioxide. Parts per million (ppm) is just a way of measuring the concentration of a gas; it’s the ratio of the number of gas molecules per million other molecules in the air. 275 ppm of CO₂ was a nice safe level, warm enough for humans but not so hot it melted glaciers. Then, starting in the 18th century, humans began to burn coal, gas and oil to produce energy and goods, and the amount of CO₂ in the atmosphere began to rise. Recently the rise in CO₂ concentration has skyrocketed—to the second number: 390 ppm—and is rising about 2 ppm per year. What level can the world tolerate?

That brings us to the last, and most important number. In the winter of 2008, the world’s leading climate scientists met and determined that the highest safe level of CO₂ is 350 ppm. James Hansen, head of NASA’s Goddard Space Flight Center, agrees that if we are to save our planet from the effects of climate change, “carbon dioxide must be reduced from its current 387 ppm to, at most, 350 ppm.” But if we’re already over the limit, what are we to do?

A Technical Action Plan:

There are many actions which we as individuals can take to reduce the amount of additional CO₂ we put into the air, such as: using photovoltaic cells, wind

turbines or geothermal to generate electricity; using hybrid or electric vehicles; or using solar or geothermal heating.

And there are some exciting new ideas for capturing excess CO₂ from the atmosphere and storing it in geologic formations such as basalt or sequestering it in the ocean. We can urge our government to support these efforts.

A Political Action Plan

But the technical actions described above must be done on a WORLDWIDE BASIS to be effective. We must have multinational agreement to set a goal of 350 ppm of CO₂ in the atmosphere as a safe upper limit if we are to avoid a climate “tipping point.”

In December 2009 the United Nations will host a two-week conference for world leaders in Copenhagen, Denmark to forge a new climate change agreement to replace the Kyoto Protocol. It is imperative that conference attendees are aware of worldwide support for reducing CO₂ concentration to the safe level of 350 parts per million.

A worldwide alliance of concerned environmentalists just like you will attempt to do just that in October. **Saturday, October 24th** was chosen as **International Climate Action Day** to allow time to get the message to delegates before the climate change conference. Here in the South Bay, 22 groups have joined in

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Marsh Mailing 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 gonwild2@yahoo.com or Bill Arrowsmith, TheArrowsmiths@sbcglobal.net, or dropped off or mailed to the Nature Center.

Drilling for Oil on the Marsh?

—Tracy Drake

Most everyone who came to the Nature Center in the last month was curious about the drilling in the parking lot. Some even thought we were drilling for oil to fund the Marsh!!! But, once we shared the facts, most monitored the project at least weekly. One lady, who lives in the condos on Monterey Street, visited the drill sight every night!

For us, the process was very interesting. The well was dug as part of the Water Replenishment District's regional groundwater Monitoring Program, and this well will become one of 50 wells of the same nature dug in the WRD's service area. We knew that the primary goal of these wells is to provide data on the saltwater intrusion that has been found in some of the potable aquifers in the Torrance area. But what really roused our curiosity was the soil sampling.

Early in the project I spoke with the Project Manager, Rhet, and later to another manager, Joe. Both gentlemen were very accommodating and would even

stop drilling to answer questions and explain the process. Realizing that we are an educational facility, they donated six tackle boxes, each with its small compartments filled with soil specimens taken at 10-foot intervals—all the way down to 1290 feet!

Looking at those samples was amazing. We were literally looking back in time—maybe back about 10,000 years. And while the official document is not out yet, it is clear by looking at the soil that the land at the Preserve has indeed had a complex history. The deepest one third of the samples are similar in their texture and color, hinting that for several thousands of years the land was covered by ponded water, likely fresh water.

Have you ever seen that fine dark silt at the bottom of old ponds? That is what this soil looks like. Above that, in about the middle one third of the samples, the textures and sizes of the soil particles vary from fine to rather coarse. Fine texture suggests ponding or wind-blown clay; coarse texture suggests that rivers once flowed through the area. But, the color is still that gray color of decomposing organic matter, possibly including fragmented seashells! The presence of shells is possible evidence of the early development of the ancient El Segundo Dune system, which once spanned from about LAX (to the north) to just past the Preserve (to the south and east).

The top third of the samples is not the same as the rest in color, particle size or texture. The soil appears fresh! The samples suggest that the top third of the soil was comprised of back dune coarse sand and very fine, slow-moving river sediment. The entire sample set shows that the history of the land under the surface of the Preserve is complicated. It also indicates that ocean, wind, shoreline and river forces all merged to become the Madrona Marsh Preserve where such history can still be seen by curious onlookers. The soil samples and complete USGS report will soon be on display at the Nature Center.

SAVE THE DATE

On November 14, 2009 the Friends of Madrona Marsh will host an Artist Reception and Art Auction from 1-5 pm at the Torrance Marriott Hotel

Featuring Artwork by Stephen West, Ron Libbrecht, and Doug Stenhouse and Photography by Jack Ludwick, Bert Weatherilt and

Mark Comon.

This is a fundraiser to support the Madrona Marsh maintenance, restoration and education programs

The FOMM Board of Directors

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Fire on the Marsh

—Bill Arrowsmith

A brush fire flared up Sunday afternoon, June 28th at the southwest edge of the Madrona Marsh Preserve, but was quickly extinguished by the Torrance Fire Department. A passerby reported seeing smoke and flames about 2:30 p.m. and four engines were dispatched to the Marsh, as well as several police units to block northbound traffic on Madrona Avenue.



Torrance Fire Department responds to a report of brush fire on the Preserve in June.

Firefighters had to remove (temporarily) two ten-foot sections of the steel fence that surround the Preserve to gain access to the fire, which was inside the fence along Madrona about fifty yards north of the Sepulveda corner. A strong southerly breeze pushed the fire steadily northward, and observers estimated the fire at that point was eighty feet long (south to north) and ten to fifteen feet wide.



Fire Captain and Fire Marshall (arson investigator) walk away from point where fire started, at base of utility pole. Charred arroyo willows can be seen in background.

The fire crew went to work quickly, and within fifteen minutes had the fire completely contained. By then the burn area was 120 feet long and had widened to 25 feet at the northern end. The firefighters constructed a fire break of two feet of clean soil completely around the burned area, which they said is standard procedure for all wild land fires.

Two arroyo willows were badly charred, but no other trees were impacted. Fire Captain Miller gave Marsh personnel a detailed account of the department's action; they are trained to take special care to minimize damage to fragile ecosystems like Madrona Marsh.



Fire Captain and Fire Marshall (arson investigator) walk past burned area of Preserve.

Assistant Fire Marshall Bob Gebel conducted an arson investigation and determined the cause of the fire was a cluster of helium-filled Mylar balloons which made contact with overhead high power lines. These balloons, which are made of a conductive but flammable material with metallic threads, ignited and fell to the dry grass below, starting the blaze. Remnants of the balloons were found at the base of a badly charred utility pole.

We are extremely lucky that an alert passerby reported this fire so quickly and that we have such well-trained and fast responding firefighters! Thank you all for saving our Preserve!

Note: There is a 1990 California law which requires sellers of helium-filled metallic balloons to attach warning labels and weights sufficient to keep a released balloon grounded. But every year power companies report hundreds of outages caused by these balloons. Until their sale is banned completely, let's urge our friends to celebrate with NON-metallic balloons.



Junior Naturalists Take Creative Approach to Environment

—Dawn Hendricks

This year our Junior Naturalist program, which is held on six consecutive Wednesdays during summer from 10 a.m. to 12 noon, educated local and visiting youths about our environment. We examined plants and animals, as well as how to look at nature in a new way—discovering the importance of our own homes and gardens, as well as neighboring parks and nearby communities as important habitats for life.

We focused our learning on habitats, plant and animal life, explored the Madrona Marsh Preserve and then asked the students to apply what they learned in their own habitat—their home.

If they could not find a type of plant or animal where they reside, we encouraged them to go to the nearest park and investigate. The idea was for them to continue observing nature from a central location, their home, and move outwards in concentric circles, learning about the beauty of their surroundings, if only they take the time to look.

Our last class brought all of the things they learned together as we asked the older participants and some of the enthusiastic youngsters to really stop, look and listen, ask questions and develop new thoughts and understandings about their surroundings.

Different Approach

This year was different from past years in several ways. We took a different approach and divided our participants into two groups: ages 8 to 11 and 12 to 15, approximately. The older students, led by Dawn Hendricks, Bruce Brown and Tracy Drake, journaled as they created Junior Naturalist Photo Albums progressively throughout the summer, taking pictures each week of their “nature” friends.

We spent the last class finalizing their work into personalized photo albums and viewing nature on a more personal note by giving them time in the Preserve to formulate their own questions and ideas based on several questions posed by their leaders.

Younger students were given the same opportunity, but also had the flexibility to explore nature in a more introductory fashion with Bob Carr and Mark Christiansen as their leaders.

Our enthusiastic youngsters received a compilation of their journals at the end of the last class. For their last class they enjoyed the discoveries that only a microscopic view of the world can give. Viewing life and other “common” objects in a microscope opened up the doors for many new questions, which is exactly what we wanted.

In each class, participants observed and recorded the weather for that day. After that, some time was spent in the classroom teaching students about the day’s focus, such as habitats and ecosystems, plants, insects, amphibians, reptiles and mammals and birds. Then we walked to the Preserve to look for—maybe even catch—and examine our focus topic. At the end of each class, we asked students to go home and explore their own home habitat/ecosystem, just like we had during our class at the Preserve. They were to search for plants and animals and then document their findings by taking pictures and writing a description of the picture including the location of the picture, what it is they discovered and their thoughts/feelings about it.

It was an amazing summer with this group and I do mean group—many participants returned every week and continued to ask questions while exploring the Preserve and their own natural surroundings.

Madrona Marsh was fortunate to have three local high school students assisting with the JN Program. Sara McBeth, a Green Team member, Loreal Salvado, with the Youth Leadership program (see page 10) and Dinuk Magamma, a budding young birder from North High School. They worked every week by helping participants check in, monitor and record weather for each class, capturing memories through photography and working with our participants as they themselves began a lifelong appreciation for our natural surroundings.

Expanding Influence

The effects of this program seem to expand well beyond the participants, but also to the youth that assisted us during the summer, the parents who stayed after programs—especially when we collected insects in one class, and to the leaders who are Madrona Marsh staff and volunteers, who constantly teach, but also learn from our participants.

(Please note that all insects were released unharmed back into their natural habitats after that class by our dedicated helpers who learned a lot about habitats and needs of animals.)

I am proud of our 2009 Junior Naturalists, our high school helpers, our leaders and that I have had another chance to share this time and learning experience with everyone involved. Looking forward, I envision the development and expansion of our “new” Junior Naturalist program, by including basic photography skills, personal explorations, observations, and writing about new discoveries and questions. Inspiring our youth now will certainly make a difference in our future.

Madrona Marsh Preserve and Nature Center

Schedule of Events*

October 2009-January 2010

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1	2	3 8:45 am-12 n-Habitat Restor. 8:45am-Student Serv.Learning No "Out of the Wilds" class 2-3 pm-Story Time for Kids
4 1-3 pm-Writing Wild Workshop (fee) with Beth Shibata	5 CLOSED	6 8:30 am-Tour de'Torrance 10 am-12 n-Weeders No "Out of the Wilds" class	7 10 am-12 n-Habitat-Weeders	8	9 Mark Comon Artist Reception 6:30-8:30 pm**	10 8:45 am-12 n-Habitat Restor. 8:45am-Student Serv. Learning 10 am-12 n-Bio-diesel Fuel
11 2 - 4 pm-Second Sunday Science-(fee) "A Closer Look at Raptors"	12 CLOSED	13 10 am-12 n-Weeders 9-11 am-Mornings on the Marsh	14 8 am- Bird Walk/ Bob Shanman 10-12 noon-Habitat Restoration-Weeders 7:15-9 pm-FOMM Board Meeting	15	16 6:30-8:30 pm-Telescope Workshop	17 8:45 am-12 n-Habitat Restor. 8:45am-Student Serv. Learning 12:30-1:15 pm-"Bugs, Birds & Animal Songs" (fee) 1:15-2 pm-FACE Painting booth- 2-4 pm-"A Closer Look at Planets" 6:30-8:30-Night Hike
18 7 am-12n-Fall Photo Day at the Marsh	19 CLOSED	20 8:30 am-Tour de'Torrance 10 am-12 n-Weeders 7 pm- Audubon Mtg.	21 10-12 n-Weeders 5:30-6:30 pm-MMF Meeting	22	23	24 8:45 am-12 n-Habitat Restor. 8:45am-Student Serv. Learning 10 am-12 n-Nature Walk 11 am-12:30 pm-Fall Festival of Crafts for Kids 7:30-9:30-pm-Star Party
25 10 am-Nature Walk	26 CLOSED	27 10 am-12 n-Weeders	28 10-12 n-Weeders	29	30	31 8:45 am-12 n-Habitat Restor. 8:45am-Student Serv. Learning

OCTOBER

**All activities and classes meet at the Madrona Marsh Nature Center, located at 3201 Plaza del Amo (between Maple and Madrona) on the north side of the street. For the very latest on events visit www.friendsofmadronamarsh.com. **See Artists Corner, page 8.*

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1	2 CLOSED	3 8:30 am-Tour de'Torrance 10 am-12 n-Weeders	4 10 am-12 n-Weeders	5 10 am-Tyke Hike	6 Mark Comon Exhibit ends**	7 8:45 am-12 n-Habitat Restor. 8:45am-Student Serv.Learning 10 am-12 n-"Seeds for the Birds"/ Dr.Vadheim 1-3 pm-Microscope Exploration
8 2-4 pm-Second Sunday Science (fee) -"Discovering Tongva"	9 CLOSED	10 9 am-Mornings on the Marsh 10 am-12 n-Weeders 6:30-8:30 pm-"Seeds for the Birds"/ Dr.Vadheim Holly Gray Exhibit Begins**	11 8 am-Bird Walk/Bob Shanman 10 am-12 n-Weeders 7:15-9 pm-FOMM Board Meeting	12 10:30 am-12:30 pm-Propagation Society	13	14 8:45 am-12 n-Habitat Restor. 8:45am-Student Serv.Learning 10 am-12 n-"Reptiles & Bugs" 10 am-12 no-Turtle Day 10 am-1 pm-"Mystery of Mushrooms"
15	16 CLOSED	17 8:30 am-Tour de'Torrance 10 am-12 n-Weeders 7 pm-Audubon meets	18 10 am-12 n-Habitat Restoration-Weeders 5:30-6:30 pm-MMF Board Meeting	19	20 Doug Stenhouse Exhibit Ends	21 8:45 am-12 n-Habitat Restor. 8:45am-Student Serv.Learning 7-9- pm-Star Party
22	23 CLOSED	24 10 am-12 n- Weeders	25 10 am-12 n-Habitat Restoration-Weeders	26 10:30 am-12:30 pm-Propagation Society	27	28 8:45 am-12 n-Habitat Restor. 8:45am-Student Serv. Learning 10 am-12 n-Nature Walk
29 10 a.m-Nature Walk	30 CLOSED	31 8:30 am-Tour de'Torrance 10 am-12 n-Weeders	1 10 am-12 n-Habitat Restoration-Weeders			

NOVEMBER

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	CLOSED	1 8:30 am- Tour de' Torrance 10 am-12 n-Weeders	2 10 am-12 n-Habitat Restoration-Weeders 10 am-12 n-Jr. Naturalist	3 10 am- Tyke Hike	4 6:30-8:30 pm Holly Gray Artists Reception**	5 8:30 am-12 n-Arbor Day II 8:45 am-12 n-Habitat Restor. 8:45 am-Student Serv.Learning 10 am-12 n-"Sunshine & Sunflowers"/ Vadheim
6	CLOSED	7 9 am-Mornings on the Marsh 6:30-8:30 pm- "Sunshine & Sunflowers"/ Dr. Vadheim 10 am-12 n-Weeders	8 8 am- Bird Walk/Bob Shanman 10 am-12 n-Weeders 10 am-12 n-Junior Naturalist 7:15-9 pm- FOMM Board Meeting	9	10 10:30 am-12:30 pm-Propagation Society	11 6:30-8:30 pm- Telescope Workshop
2-4 pm- Second Sunday Science- "Spiders of the South Bay"	13 CLOSED	14 8:30 am- Tour de' Torrance 10 am-12 n-Weeders 7 pm-Audubon meets	15 10 am-12 n-Weeders 10 am-12 n-Junior Naturalist 5:30-6:30 pm- MMF Board Meeting	16	17	18 6:30-8:30 pm- Telescope Workshop
19	20 CLOSED	21 10 am-12 n-Habitat Restoration-Weeders	22 10 am-12 n-Weeders 10 am-12 n-Junior Naturalist	23	24 10:30 am- 12:30 pm- Propagation Society	25 CLOSED FOR CHRISTMAS
8-11 am-Workshop for Annual Christmas Bird Count 8:45 am-12 n-Habitat Restor. 8:45-Student Serv. Learning	26	27 8:45 am-12 n-Habitat Restor. 8:45-Student Serv. Learning 10 am- Nature Walk 2-4 pm- "Are We Alone?"	28	29	30	31
10 a.m- Nature Walk	31 CLOSED	1 8:30 am- Tour de' Torrance 10 am-12 n-Weeders Ron Libbrecht Exhibit Begins**	2 10 am-12 n-Habitat Restoration-Weeders	3		

DECEMBER

*All activities and classes meet at the Madrona Marsh Nature Center, located at 3201 Plaza del Amo (between Maple and Madrona) on the north side of the street. For the very latest on events visit www.friendsofmadronamarsh.com. **See Artists Corner, page 8.

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1	2 8:45 am-12 n-Hab.Restor. 8:45-Student Serv.Learning 10 am-12n-"Beyond the Lawn Parking Strip"/Dr. Vadheim-
3 Holly Gray Exhibit Ends**	4 CLOSED	5 8:30 am- Tour de' Torrance 10 am-12 n-Weeders 6:30-8:30 pm- "Beyond the Lawn Parking Strip"/ Dr. Vadheim-	6 10 am-12 n-Habitat Restoration-Weeders	7 10 am- Tyke Hike	8	9 8:45 am-12 n-Habitat Restor. 8:45am-Student Serv.Learning
2-4 pm- Second Sunday Science- (fee) "Understanding Earthquakes"	10 CLOSED	11 9 am-Mornings on the Marsh 10 am-12 n-Habitat Restoration-Weeders 4-6 pm-Environ- mental Interpretation.	12 8 am-Bird Walk /Bob Shanman 10 am-12 n-Habitat Restoration-Weeders 7:15-9 pm- FOMM Board Meeting	13	14 10:30 am- 12:30 pm- Propagation Society	15 6:30-8:30 pm- Ron Libbrecht Artists Reception**
16	17 CLOSED	18 8:30 am- Tour de' Torrance 10 am-12 n-Weeders 7 p.m.-Audubon Mtg.	19 10 am-12 n-Habitat Restoration-Weeders 5:30-6:30 p.m.- MMF Board Meeting	20	21	22 8:45 am-12 n-Hab.Restor. 8:45am-Student Serv.Learning 10 am-Nature Walk 11 am-1 pm-Kids" (3-6) Art Workshop (fee) 7-9 pm-Star Party
10 am- Nature Walk	23 CLOSED	24 10 am-12 n-Weeders	25 10 am-12 n-Weeders	26 10:30 am-12:30 pm- Propagation Society	27	28 8:45 am-12 n-Hab. Restor. 8:45 am-Student Serv.Learning 8:30-11:30-am-Kids (8-12) Birding Workshop (fee) -2-4 pm-Cosmic Collison (fee)
29 CLOSED	30					

JANUARY

Dow Chemical Donates Surf Gate Drain Protector

Dow Chemical Corporation has donated \$1000 for installation of a Surf Gate protective shield at Catch Basin #1 at the southwest corner of the Preserve. As reported in the Spring newsletter, illegal dumping of hazardous waste at this drain and one across the street resulted in a two-week Marsh closure and an expensive clean-up. American Storm Water, makers of the Surf Gate, donated another shield for the basin at the carwash. A giant THANK YOU to both these companies for providing critical protection for our pristine and precious wetland!

We also take this opportunity to thank Dow Chemical for its many years of support and partnership with the Friends of Madrona Marsh. Mr. Lindley Ruddick of Dow has helped us successfully apply for many grants, such as the one above. Dow is reducing its footprint in Torrance and must at least temporarily suspend its Marsh support, but we hope for a resumption of our partnership in the future.

Tour de Torrance Spawns Many Rewards

One of the premier birding experiences in the South Bay is the "Tour de Torrance," led by David Moody and Ron Melin—sometimes joined by Tracy Drake. They go out on the first and third Tuesdays, joined by a loyal and increasing following, and explore the best birding areas in the South Bay, including Madrona Marsh. If you have a chance to join them, take it!

Nancy Pasquali is a Tour regular, and showed her appreciation to Dave, Ron and Tracy by making a donation of \$1000 to the Friends last month.

Thank you, Nancy and husband, Larry, and thanks to Dave, Ron and Tracy for sharing your love of birding and expertise with us mortals!

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an alliance called the South Bay 350 Climate Action Group to support this day of action. The Board of Directors for FOMM voted unanimously to endorse SB350CAG at their September meeting.

What YOU can do:

Write, email or call: Senator Dianne Feinstein, senator@feinstein.senate.gov, and Senator Barbara Boxer, senator@boxer.senate.com, and urge them to request our delegates to the Copenhagen UN conference to support a target of 350 ppm as a safe level of carbon dioxide if we are to mitigate global warming.

Join with the South Bay 350 Climate Action Group on Saturday, October 24 at 3 p.m. at the Manhattan Beach Pier as they mark where the high tide line will be if we don't STOP GLOBAL WARMING. Even better, bring a friend and carry a card with "350" on it, or wear a T-shirt with "350" written on it. You will be part of an International Day of Climate Action.

More details at: <http://sb350.pbworks.com/> or www.350.org.

—B.A.

Artists' 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.

September 22-November 6 - Mark Comon, "The Magnificent Marsh," a Photography Exhibit. Artist's Reception - Friday, October 9, 6:30-8:30 p.m.

November 10-January 3 - Holly Gray, "Paintings on the Marsh." Artist's Reception Friday, December 4, 6:30-8:30 p.m.

December 29-February 12 - Ron Libbrecht, "Outdoor Paintings." Artist's Reception Friday, January 15, 6:30-8:30 p.m.

Donations-\$100 or More

—Ellen Peterson, *Treasurer*

DATE	WHO	DONATION	INFORMATION
8-1-09	Barbara Burgett and her team volunteered 143 hours. Their employer, ExxonMobil matched the hours with a donation.	\$3,000.00	This is the third year that Barbara and E/M team raised matching funds!
8-3-09	Mrs. Eloise C. Barnett	\$10,000.00	
8-10-09	Charlene Wright	\$100.00	In honor of Shirley Turner
8-31-09	Mr. & Mrs. Pasquali	\$1,000.00	

Birds, Butterflies and Dragonflies of the Preserve

Summer 2009

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



Birds

Mallard	<i>Chimney Swift</i>	Barn Swallow	<i>In flight</i>
Double-crested Cormorant	White-throated Swift	Bushtit	<i>Loggerhead Shrike</i>
Great Egret	<i>Black-chinned Hummingbird</i>	House Wren	<i>Lanius ludovicianus</i>
Great Blue Heron	Anna's Hummingbird	Blue-gray Gnatcatcher	Black-headed Grosbeak
Snowy Egret	Allen's Hummingbird	Northern Mockingbird	Lazuli Bunting
Black-crowned Night-Heron	Downy Woodpecker	European Starling	<i>Indigo Bunting</i>
Turkey Vulture	Western Wood-Pee-wee	Orange-crowned Warbler	Red-winged Blackbird
Cooper's Hawk	<i>Willow Flycatcher</i>	Nashville Warbler	<i>Yellow-headed Blackbird</i>
Red-shouldered Hawk	Pacific-slope Flycatcher	Yellow Warbler	Brown-headed Cowbird
Red-tailed Hawk	Black Phoebe	Black-throated Gray Warbler	Hooded Oriole
American Kestrel	Say's Phoebe	<i>Black-and-White Warbler</i>	Bullock's Oriole
Killdeer	Ash-throated Flycatcher	Common Yellowthroat	House Finch
<i>Willet</i>	Cassin's Kingbird	Wilson's Warbler	<i>Lawrence's Goldfinch</i>
<i>Long-billed Curlew</i>	Western Kingbird	Western Tanager	Lesser Goldfinch
California Gull	<i>Loggerhead Shrike</i>	<i>Summer Tanager</i>	American Goldfinch
Western Gull	Warbling Vireo	California Towhee	House Sparrow
<i>Caspian Tern</i>	Western Scrub-Jay	Lark Sparrow	Orange Bishop
Rock Pigeon	American Crow	Savannah Sparrow	<i>Nutmeg Mannikin</i>
White-winged Dove	Common Raven	Lincoln's Sparrow	<i>Italics=rare/unusual on the Preserve</i>
Mourning Dove	No. Rough-winged Swallow	Song Sparrow	
Common Poorwill	Cliff Swallow	<i>Rose-breasted Grosbeak</i>	



American Lady
Vanessa virginiensis

Butterflies

Monarch	West Coast Lady	Cloudless Sulphur	Umber Skipper
Queen	Western Swallowtail	Gray Hairstreak	Eufala Skipper
Gulf Fritillary	Dainty Sulphur	Western Pygmy-Blue	Fiery Skipper
Red Admiral	Cabbage White	Marine Blue	Sandhill Skipper
Painted Lady	Orange Sulphur	Acmon Blue	Funereal Duskywing



Flame Skimmer
Libellula saturata

Dragonflies

Common Green Darner	Flame Skimmer	Black Saddlebags
Blue-eyed Darner	Wandering Glider	Red Saddlebags
Variegated Meadowhawk	Spot-winged Glider	Pacific Forktail

Green Team Memories

—Tracy Drake

Every year at the Nature Center we are fortunate to have one student from the ExxonMobil Green Team and one student from the Torrance Youth Leadership Program. This year, these excellent young adults took their assignments seriously. The following is an excerpt from a summary they wrote about their experiences this summer.

"Hello! Our names are Loreal Salvado and Sarah McBeth. We started working at the Marsh at the beginning of July, and have loved every minute of it: from emptying out and cleaning buckets of Marsh water, to feeding a blind Western Toad. Tracy and the rest of the staff have been inspirational leaders and great advisors. We have learned a lot from our experiences at the Marsh. One lesson is that it is very important to preserve our native California plants and animals. In order to do that, we would have to start with preserving their natural habitat: the Marsh. We are doing our part by picking up all the trash inside and outside the Preserve.



*Loreal, Dawn,
Sarah and the
Gopher Snake*

"There were many firsts for both of us during our time at the Marsh. One of them was to hold the gopher snake, which we now know is NOT poisonous. We also led our first tour of the Preserve. We were surprised at how much we had learned and could remember about the Preserve's plant and animal life!

"This has been the experience of a lifetime, and we will never forget our summer at the Madrona Marsh. If you have the time, stop by the Nature Center. You will never be able to look at your backyard the same way."

As the end of summer arrives, I realize that I will greatly miss Sarah and Loreal as well as Bruce Brown and Dawn Hendricks, who also work summers-only — all four of them worked this year on our Junior Naturalist (see page 5.) and Einstein for Kids Programs. Dawn rewrote and implemented the Junior Naturalist program, and Bruce worked with Bob and Mark on the Einstein programs. He also worked with Sarah and Beth on a reading/reflection project.

Together they studied the book, *The Go-giver* by Bob Burg and John David Mann. Sarah and Loreal met

Shirley's Turn

—Shirley Turner

Ruth McConnell has been praising the beauty of the northwest corner of the Preserve all summer and more. Dan Portway and friends are responsible for much of this work. Ibeth and German Morales had brought their children to volunteer and they have stayed on for some time. These are people who really love the touch of soil and seeing plants grow and they pass on the good feeling of accomplishment. We thank the whole family. Dan was awarded a Certificate of Appreciation recognizing him during Volunteer Week.

Bob Carr reported that he had spent the afternoon looking at bird books that might be donated to the Marsh. He was pleased to discover and bring home 35 books covering as many places around the world. This collection was accumulated by William Rapp, a resident of San Pedro who died at the age of 89 this year. Jess Morton said that he was a member of Audubon and may at one time have been a board member of the local Audubon Society. You may have been on one of the many walks he led for them. If you are traveling come and look for a bird book of the country you are visiting. Some may show hot spots. The Friends are very thankful for this donation from his family.

With grandchildren visiting, I was very grateful to Dinuk Magamma who volunteered to make Second Sunday Science flyers in my stead. This talented artist is very skilled on the computer. I was surprised to learn that he is a senior at North High School and had only come to this country last year from Sri Lanka. He is in Facebook where you can see his school, countryside and art work. Ask to be friends with him. He speaks English well.

While Beth was telling me this, she was holding a bunny for vacationing owners. She said that three bunnies have been left on the Preserve this year and homes had been found for them. Thank you Beth for this special attention you give to animals.

daily with Bruce to discuss chapters they read and lessons learned. The final part of the project was a telephone interview with one of the authors, Bob Burg. I moderated the interview, and based on the questions Sarah and Loreal asked and the discussion that followed, I was deeply impressed by the level of understanding they had about the idea and value of being a go-giver, rather than a go-getter or go-taker.

In the book, the authors discuss five laws of stratospheric success in business. The first law is the one both of our students seemed to connect with the most. It is The Law of Value, which states, *"Your true worth is determined by how much more you give in value than you take in payment."*

For us, Sarah, Loreal, Dawn and Bruce all have tremendous value.

South Bay Native Plant Corner

—Dr. Connie Vadheim, CSU Dominguez Hills



Broad-leaf Cattail—*Typha latifolia*

This column usually focuses on local native plants suitable for the home garden. Occasionally, however, it features plants that are key to the Preserve habitats. While not appropriate for many home gardens, our local native cattails, the *Typha* species, are interesting wetland plants that play a vital role in local wetlands. You may even find a place for them in your garden!

Two Cattail species are native to local wetlands. The Broad-Leaved (Common) Cattail (*Typha latifolia*), found throughout the Northern hemisphere, is widely distributed in California. The Southern (Narrow-leaf) Cattail (*Typha domingensis*), which grows in southern United States, South America and Europe, tends to grow at lower CA elevations (< 3000 feet). Both cattails grow in year-round streams, and the edges of ponds, lakes and freshwater marshes. They often occur with Tules, Bulrushes and other common wetland plants.

Cattails play several important roles in local wetlands. First, they provide food, shelter and nesting places for wildlife such as Redwing Blackbirds, ducks, geese and other wetland species. A second benefit is that their stout roots bind the soil, preventing erosion. This is important for streamside habitats. Finally, Cattails, Tules and Bulrushes all play an important role in cleansing water of toxins. These plants take up and transpire (release into the air) large amounts of water. In doing this they filter out excess nutrients and toxic chemicals. For this reason they are often used in remediation wetlands.

Cattails grow as tall as 8-10 feet, but often are in the 4-6 foot range. Their leaves are stout and strap-

like—rather like a very large grass. Cattails flower in late spring or summer. Both the male and the female flowers are small, and located on flowering stalks above the leaves. One way to tell our local Cattails apart is the gap between the male (top) and female flowers on the stem in the Southern Cattail (see photo below). The seeds are small, with a fluffy tail. They spread both by wind and water. You may see the seeds escaping this time of year. Young ‘tails’ can be cooked and eaten like corncocks. The roots are also nutritious and can be eaten raw or cooked as a vegetable.



Southern Cattail—*Typha domingensis*

Cattails need lots of sun and water to grow. In nature, they grow in shallow water (less than about 2 1/2 ft) and the soil may become dry by summer’s end (as in the Preserve). They grow in just about any type of local soil, including clays. Cattails grow very rapidly, spreading by stout runners (rhizomes).

If you want to grow Cattails at home, you might consider growing them in a large container (as a bog or wetland garden). If you want to grow cattails in/around a pond, you can grow them in large pots set within the pond, as long as they have about 6 inches of water to cover them. Plants are easy to start from root divisions. Cut back leaves to near the ground in fall/winter. Be sure to wear gloves—leaf edges are sharp.

Volunteer Opportunities

Are you looking for an interesting volunteer opportunity? The Madrona Marsh Preserve and Nature Center is seeking volunteers for a variety of positions. Please call the Nature Center for further information and to request a volunteer application (310)782-3989.

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