

Marsh Mailing

Madrona Marsh Preserve and Nature Center

The Value of Believing

—Tracy Drake, *Naturalist/Manager*

Think for a minute. Think of something you really believe in or have believed in. Just curious—what was it? Maybe it was your family, your kids, your spouse; maybe a project you have been a part of for a long time because you believe in it? Whatever it was, chances are that the relationship you have with that thing or person you believe in is pretty good and that somehow your life and the lives of the receiver were greatly enriched.

Belief is one of those things that is vitally important to our lives that we all have excellent experiences about but seldom talk about. But, when and if we take the time to reflect, take an honest and serious look at how we live this precious life, it becomes clear—what we believe in matters—matters to its success, matters to its depth of success and matters to whether or not potential is, at least in part, realized.

You are probably wondering by now, what this topic has to do with the Preserve and with nature. Well, on April 21—just a few weeks from now, we'll quietly



In just a few weeks from now, we will be quietly celebrating the 10th anniversary of the opening of the Nature Center

celebrate the tenth anniversary of the opening of the Nature Center. Milestones as you know, tend to make one a little reflective and maybe a bit sentimental. And so, in the quiet hours of the past few weeks, I have thought about the Center, how we are doing and how to best continue to move towards our potential. Admittedly, I am biased, so I will



"...to the tykes who beam with delight when a ladybug lands on their arm or they plant their first seeds."

defer to you and to our visitors; to the kids we mentor and to the tykes who beam with delight when a lady-

bug lands on their arm or they plant their first seeds. I will defer to the critters, plants, water and land to whom we owe a debt of gratitude. Because of that land and its uniqueness, we are all here. Lastly I will defer to the thousands of volunteers and City of Torrance Staff, many of whom are Friends of the Madrona Marsh, who have dedicated much more than time to the programs of the Nature Center and Preserve. They have dedicated part of their lives.

When looking back over the past ten years, it is obvious to me that our road to success was paved, not just in the last ten years but by many people I never knew who set the bar for the Preserve; in order to attract dedicated, intelligent, passionate believers in the Marsh. In my estimation, we have not failed to honor those who came before, nor will we fail those yet to come.

Sure, there is much work to do and plenty of room for improvement, but I am confident we will meet the challenges of the future with the same tenacity and grace that we have met them with in the past.

From your vantage place though, you cannot see what I see on a day-to-day basis at the Nature Center and Preserve. And so to help you judge how we are doing, what follows are a few stories about some of the happenings at the Nature Center and Preserve lately.

About three years ago, I got a phone message from a mom inquiring if her son could complete his community service requirements at the Preserve. As usual, I informed her that we hold community service on Saturday mornings only. The students work on and learn about restoration of the Preserve. She, like so many other moms, pushed hard to let him do anything else. As respectfully as I could, I explained working on restoration was his only option. She would not budge. "He is a writer" she explained, "maybe he could write something for you."

"Believing" continues on page 2.

On the afternoon he walked into the Nature Center to show me a sample of his work, I knew this kid was different. There was something solid—completely unflappable about him. And his mom was right, his writing was art. So, he began interviewing some of our longest-standing volunteers—putting together an anecdotal history of the Preserve from the volunteers' perspectives. David is 17 now, college is in his future. I simply have to share an essay he wrote about the Preserve. So with his permission...

“Madrona Marsh--On a December morning, when I was seven, my mother took me to the Madrona Marsh. We set out after breakfast, walking past suburban houses and apartments in the eight o'clock silence of a Saturday. I wore old shoes in anticipation for dusty trails.

Then we turned a street, and I stared ahead, amazed by the sudden expanse of wilderness. Twelve foot high Marsh reeds surrounded a pond. Willow trees shaded a dirt path. As we walked, I saw a hawk circling in the sky above. My mother and I went on a tour through



“Kids could gaze into telescopes on astronomy nights, or watch swimming bugs under a microscope.” -D. Wong

the Marsh, and I can still remember seeing mallard ducks paddle in the water. I remember the contrast between suburban Torrance and the wild Marsh. I thought the Marsh didn't fit in with the world of buildings and concrete, a world filled with right angles instead of wild lines.

But as I grew up, I started to realize that I was similar to the Marsh. I didn't fit in with my surroundings either. My father wanted me to be a doctor; I wanted to read. Medical school was too distant to comprehend. Reading took me on adventures. I traveled with hobbits across the Misty Mountains, attended Hogwarts, and lived with expatriates in Paris.

The Marsh also offered adventures. Kids could gaze into telescopes on astronomy nights, or watch swimming bugs under a microscope. Peregrine falcons soared over the grassy meadow. These wonders fascinated me, leading to late nights spent reading or watching the night sky. I dreamed of becoming an author, researcher, or astronomer. I didn't want to be a doctor. As I grew up, I became increasingly drawn toward stories. During sophomore year, I started writing for the Marsh. I mostly wrote interviews, but in my free time, I took walks across the dirt trail. The wilderness was a muse, often inspiring stories.

These walks through the Marsh also brought memories. I was seventeen now, a long way from ten

years ago when I had first seen the Madrona Marsh. The streets around the Marsh had changed. A row of houses now stood to the east, and there were new shops in the plaza. But the Marsh was the same, with its green reeds, willow trees, and hawks.

This difference struck me. I had once thought the Marsh out of place, a wilderness surrounded by suburban sprawl. But the wilderness had endured, while the buildings had changed. Walking across the dirt trail one day, I felt a sudden happiness.

I had also endured. My father had wanted me to be a doctor; I had pursued writing. He had started to appreciate my passion later on. I'm lucky to have great parents who now support me. But the pressure was never easy, and people still tell me stories about starving writers. However, I know the other side: to be like the streets around the Marsh, changing at a developer's whim. I'm determined to be green reeds, willow trees, and hawks.

I write and research for the Marsh now. Stories, astronomy nights, and microscopes are etched into my mind. But the best memory I have is the undiluted image of wilderness.” -David Wong

On the last day of March, I also received a text from **Austin Seol**. **Bob Carr**, our resident “Einstein” and I have been mentoring him (a seventh grader) on a research project relating to the habitat recovery after cutting tule patches to the ground as part of our mosquito abatement program. His text read, “...because of you and Bob, I got accepted into the California Academy of Math and Science!” We are so proud of him—we helped guide him but he did the work necessary to get into this prestigious school!

Like last year, the Say's Phoebe's are nesting on the Preserve again. This is their 6th successive year after not breeding in the South Bay since 1906! Restoration, planting native plants which attract native insects, allows them to find food and raise young. And lastly, all five students we mentored this year won awards at this year's Palos Verdes Science Fair!

So, how are we doing? Please let us know by e-mailing tdrake@torranceca.gov or by calling the Nature Center at (310) 782-3989.

Thank you to all of you who made the last ten years successful and for believing in the Marsh. To you in closing, we too, like David, strive to be green reeds, willow trees and hawks—not so much for ourselves, but for those who are yet to come . . . -T.D.

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.

from the president

—Bill Arrowsmith

Ten Terrific Years

It's hard to believe that our Nature Center is ten years old. . . no, wait a minute, that's what everybody says, but actually it's hard to believe that it's *only* ten years old, when you think of all that has taken place in this marvelous building and on the Preserve itself since April 2001.

Before we review those events, let's take a moment to remember the people who helped make our interpretive center a reality. We've recounted many times the early members of the Friends and their allies in various community groups and on the City Council – those people whose foresight and effort saved the Preserve from development in the early 1980s. Dream Number One: Complete. And from the moment the dedication was final in 1984 (okay, legally acceptable in 1986) the Friends began planning and dreaming Dream Number Two: A building to house classrooms and laboratories, and exhibits to help visitors understand and appreciate the ecology and history of the newest addition to the Torrance Park System.

For years Dream Number Two was confined to a 20-foot trailer, parked roughly where the Nature Center now stands, and filled with nests, rocks, stuffed birds, plants, pictures and books and anything we could find to help us tell the story of the Marsh. We were led on tours and guided by naturalists **Pete White** and later by **Walt Wright**, who shared his incredible depth of knowledge with anyone who'd listen.

And still the Friends, led by Presidents **Dan Portway**, **Bart Tendick** and finally by **Venora Lee** pursued a better solution. That's where you came in: You voted for the Safe Neighborhood Parks Acts of 1992 and 1996 and then the City of Torrance (**Dee Hardison** had taken over as mayor from **Katie Geissert**) successfully applied for nearly two million dollars of the so-called Prop A funds those acts made available. The Friends and the City and many other interested parties from local colleges and schools began planning in earnest for a new Natural History Center, later shortened to Nature Center. Some Friends had more grandiose plans for size, but ultimately "agreed" to the present 8,000 square-foot building with capacity for expansion.

The building was designed by architectural firm

"President's Report" continues on page 8.

We would like to express our sincere gratitude to the following corporations that sponsored our 2010 Moonlight Magic Fund Raiser at the \$2500 Red-Tailed Hawk level:



ExxonMobil

Toyota

Your support allowed us to assemble and execute the most successful fund-raising event in the 39-year history of the Friends of Madrona Marsh.

The Plight of Lacking Flight

—Emile Fiesler

During our work on the biodiversity assessment of the Madrona Marsh Preserve, we came across a number of flightless species. It makes one think how far their history goes back, and how they survived what all happened to their habitat, especially before it became a Preserve. Those species that have been here longer than we humans seem to deserve some kind of special respect.

Before our precious Preserve became a preserve, and for some time during the period it already was a preserve, it was used for oil exploitation, with all its impacts on the land. Further back in history, we learn about cattle ranching and other farming activities. When we add the occasional joy riding and continuing pet, and other non-native animal—cat, bullfrog, crayfish, alligator, etc.—releases, it makes one wonder how animals persist to exist; especially those that can't fly away.

Flight is an amazing evolutionary development, which only few animals are blessed with, like bats, birds, and insects. Flight is surely a key factor for the amazing success of insects, as well as birds. There are many animals, however, that are unable to take to the skies, like most mammals, reptiles, amphibians, fishes, and all invertebrates with the exception of most insects.

A number of mammals are relatively big and able to cover distances. They also tend to have larger brains, which might help them cross streets without getting hurt. The rest of the flightless species seem, in a way, to be closely tied to the Preserve. Take our emblem species, the Tree Frog. These small—in size, but not voice and charisma—creatures have survived history and are still with us to deliver their chorus. Much larger, and hence perhaps even more amazing long-time survivors, are our dear non-venomous snakes: the Gopher Snake and the King Snake. They have somehow been able to continue eking out a living on our 44 acre Preserve.

On the smaller side, we discovered flightless species not yet recorded from the Preserve, like a Camel Cricket (see figure 1) and a large Solifugid, during our bio-inventory. Camel crickets are predominantly nocturnal, and possess no musical nor flight instrumentation, which might explain why they have not been ob-



Figure 1-Camel Cricket

served until now. Solifugids are also mainly nocturnal and have eight legs and two long palpi that are used for aiding feeding and other tasks. They are fast hunters that do not harm people unless harassed. They are also known as Sunspiders and Windscorpions, although they are not spiders nor scorpions, but distant arachnid relatives of them.

Note that most spiders have a dispersal trick up one of their eight sleeves: they can actually take flight! They do this when they are still very young, very innocent, and very light. They wait for the right wind conditions, climb up to a higher location, spin a thread, and when the thread is caught by the wind and long enough to support their weight, they let go and take off into the aerial dimension.



Figure 2-Large Darkling Beetle



Figure 3-Woolly Darkling Beetle

Besides our new discoveries, we have other flightless species on the Preserve, like our terrestrial Darkling Beetles (see figures 2 and 3), Velvet Ants (which are wasps whose females are flightless; see figure 4), and our flagship invertebrates, the fairy shrimps. Even though we know little to nothing about their local history, it seems plausible that most of these native species, especially the terrestrial ones, have persisted and existed all along, to enrich our experience of the Preserve.



Figure 4-Velvet Ant

Shirley's Turn

—Shirley Turner

You might be interested in this new book on trees, **Sibley's Common Trees of Western North America** by David Allen Sibley from Amazon.com. The release date is April 4 and the price is \$19.77.

In the March 18 *New Horizons Weekly Newsletter*, Marilyn Rockwell, Grounds Maintenance Secretary, writes, "The Bee Buckets Are Back." (Try saying this one several times backwards.) New Horizons is the 600 unit senior condo complex just south of the Preserve.

Seriously, they really are back. If you noticed some dark brown cardboard-looking buckets hanging from some of our trees, those are bee buckets. The buckets are traps for bees looking to start new living quarters for the year.

Last year we located a local beekeeper (he lives near us). He checks the traps periodically, and when he has a hive started, removes them to his own hives. We are assured the bees are not getting destroyed. He does this for free. Bees high up in trees are removed by a traditional removal service.

More information on bees was given to me by Jean Steenson whose girlhood Cleveland friend forwards to her local news articles. A newspaper clipping dated 12/4/2010 tells the story of bees dyed red after dipping into maraschino cherries juice. An illicit diet of junk food had turned a hive of New York City bees a garish red, exasperating their beekeeper and vexing those who work at a nearby plant that uses red dye No. 40 in its products.

Beekeeper Cerise Mayo of Brooklyn was stumped when her bees came home with an unnatural blush. They started producing scarlet tinted honey. A friend suggested that the bees were skipping local pollen sources for the more stimulating sweets of red dye No. 40. An investigation revealed the source of the avian pubescence to be the artificial coloring of the nearby Dell's Maraschino Cherries Company. Workers found the bees a nuisance and made plans for a large screen to keep the sugar raiders out.

Scientists say that every 4th bite of food a person takes owes something to honeybee pollination. Michael Sangiacomo wrote this article in June 2010 for the **Cleveland Plain Dealer**:

"Ohio lost 70 percent of its honeybee population in 2007 from the mysterious colony collapse disorder, but it is doing better now. Jim Tew of Ohio State Uni-

versity, Wooster, honeybee laboratory said that 30 percent died over the winter—worse than previous years, when only 7 percent died. He thought the bees were not as tough as they used to be. Bees seem lethargic. Queens were living only one year instead of five years. He thinks there is no single cause of colony collapse. Feral honeybees are all but extinct. Diseases, mites and other factors combine to eliminate the wild population, beginning in the early 1900s. Scientists estimate only 10 percent of the nation's wild honeybees survive."

So, what is the status of pollinators in California? Jeanne Bellemin, El Camino College professor, sent me the March 2011 **National Geographic** article, "Gold Dusters" (page 114) by Jennifer S. Holland. Bees come in more than 200,000 shapes and sizes. Without pollinators our lives would be dictated by the wind.

There are 240,000 flowering plant species. Most require a third party to transfer pollen between the male and female parts. The tomato flower requires a violent shake up to 30 times the force of the Earth's gravity. A fighter pilot blacks out with at 4 to 6 g's. The most prolific pollinators are the 20,000 distinct bee species. The European honeybee was imported 400 years ago. A hive may have 30,000 bees. The wonderful photographs are by Mark W. Moffett.



European Honey Bee. Photo courtesy of Emile Fiesler

Emile Fiesler, who studies and photographs insects on the Marsh, tells about a hive in the southeast corner of the fenced off sump maintained by **LeRoy Jackson**, our City Manager. **Tracy Drake**, Marsh Manager, is pleased to have this hive here, since she has observed an increase in the number of bees, both in the Marsh and the native gardens. The sunflowers have increased in number and quality of seed.

Jack Knapp has a native garden front yard. He walks around the block and observes bees lying on their backs dead. Tracy thought these may be just waiting to warm up but Jack says no. The Madrona Marsh Preserve and Nature Center employees, volunteers and friends are doing their best to alleviate colony collapse.



Madrona Marsh Preserve and Nature Center

Schedule of Events*

April-July 2011

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1 10-11:30-am-Friday Fun***	2 8:45 am-12 n-Hab.Restor. 8:45am-Student Serv.Learning 10 am-12 n- "The Cutting Garden"/ Dr.Vadheim
3	4 CLOSED	5 8:30 am-Tour d' Torrance 10 am-12 n-Weeders 6:30 pm-"The Cutting Garden"/ Dr.Vadheim	6 10 am-12 n-Habitat Restoration-Weeders	7 10 am-Tyke Hike (fee)	8 10-11:30-am-Friday Fun***	9 8:45 am-12 n-Habitat Restor.& Student Serv.Learning 1-3 pm-Tea & Garden Party-(donations) 8-10 pm-Star Party
10 2-4 pm- 2nd Sunday Science-"Rediscovering Rapid Reptiles," Tommie (fee)	11 CLOSED	12 9 am-Mornings on the Marsh 10 am-12 n-Habitat Restoration-Weeders	13 8 am-Bird Walk /Bob Shanman 10 am-12 n-Habitat Restoration-Weeders 6:30-8:30 pm-FOMM Board Meeting	14 10:30 am-12:30 pm-Propagation Society	15 10-11:30-am-Friday Fun***	16 8:45am-12 n-Habitat Restor.& Student Serv.Learning 9 am-12 n-Earth Day 1-1:30 pm-Storytime for Kids 8-10 pm-Star Party
17	18 CLOSED	19 8:30 am-Tour d' Torrance 10 am-12 n-Habitat Restoration-Weeders 7 pm- Audubon Mtg	20 10 am-12 n-Habitat Restoration-Weeders	21	22 10-11:30-am-Friday Fun*** Emile Fiesler Exhibit Ends	23 8:45 am-12 n-Hab.Restor.& Student Serv.Learning 10 am-1 pm-Turtle & Tortoise Day 10 am-Nature Walk
24 10 am- Nature Walk	25 CLOSED	26 10 am-12 n-Weeders Ivett Garay's Exhibit Begins**	27 10 am-12 n-Weeders	28 10:30 am-12:30 pm-Propagation Society	29 10-11:30-am-Friday Fun***	30 8-11 am- Binocular Seminar 8:45 am-12 n-Hab. Restor.& Student Serv.Learning 10 am-Watercolor for Kids (fee)

APRIL

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. **See Artists Corner, page 11. * No fee charged for Friday Fun , but reservations are required. For the latest event information, consult website, www.friendsofmadronamarsh.com.*

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1	2 CLOSED	3 8:30 am-Tour d' Torrance 10 am-12 n-Weeders	4 10 am-12 n-Habitat Restoration Weeders	5 10 am-Tyke Hike (fee)	6 10-11:30-am-Friday Fun***	7 8:45 am-12 n-Habitat Restor.& Student Serv.Learning 10 am-12n-Water Colors for Kids (8+) (fee) 10 am-12 n- "Radiant Reds..." / Dr.Vadheim
8	9 CLOSED	10 9 am-Mornings on the Marsh 10 am-12 n-Weeders 6:30-8:30 pm-"Radiant Reds" /Dr. Vadheim	11 8 am-Bird Walk/Bob Shanman 10 am-12 n-Weeders 6:30-8:30 pm-FOMM Board Meeting	12 10:30 am-12:30 pm-Propagation Society	13 10-11:30-am-Friday Fun***	14 8:45 am-12 n-Habitat Restor.& Student Serv.Learning 10-11:30 am-Plant Communication/Dr.Vadheim
15 2-4 pm- 2nd Sunday Science-" Rock, Mineral or Fossil?" (third Sunday)	16 CLOSED	17 8:30 am-Tour d' Torrance 10 am-12 n-Weeders 7 pm-Audubon meets	18 10 am-12 n-Habitat Restoration Weeders	19	20 10-11:30-am-Friday Fun***	21 8:45 am-12 n-Habitat Restor.& Student Serv.Learning 8 pm-Night Hike
22	23 CLOSED	24 10 am-12 n-Habitat Restoration-Weeders	25 10 am-12 n-Habitat Restoration Weeders	26 10:30 am-12:30 pm-Propagation Society	27 10-11:30-am-Friday Fun***	28 8:45 am-12 n-Habitat Restor.& Student Serv. Learning 10 am- Nature Walk
29 10 a.m- Nature Walk	30 CLOSED	31 8:30 am-Tour d' Torrance				

MAY

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
			1	2 10 am-Tyke Hike (fee)	3 Ivett Garay Exhibit Ends**	4 8:45 am-12 n-Habitat Restor. & Student Serv. Learning 10 am-12 n- "Tracy's Insect Garden"/ Dr.Vadheim 8:30-10:30pm-Star Party
5	6 CLOSED	7 8:30 am-Tour d'Torrance 10 am-12 n-Weeders 6:30-8:30-pm- "Tracy's Insects"/Dr. Vadheim Dustin Tygret Exhibit Begins**	8 8 am- Bird Walk/ Bob Shanman 10 am-12 n-Habitat-Weeders 6:30-8:30 pm-FOMM Board Meeting	9 10:30 am-12:30 pm-Propagation Society	10 10-11:30-am-Friday Fun***	11 8:45 am-12 n-Habitat Restor. & Student Serv. Learning 10am-12n-Kids-Water Colors+ fee 10am-12n-"Bugs,Bugs,Bugs," with Brent the Bug Guy Karner
12 2 - 4 pm-Second Sunday Science-"Whales that we Love"/John Nieto	13 CLOSED	14 10 am-12 n-Weeders 9-11 am-Mornings on the Marsh	15 10-12 n-HabitatWeeders	16	17 10-11:30-am-Friday Fun***	18 8:45 am-12 n-Habitat Restor. & Student Serv. Learning 10am-12n- "History of Earth"
19	20 CLOSED	21 8:30 am-Tour d'Torrance 10 am-12 n-Weeders 8-11am-K-12-Nature Drawing Workshop (fee) 7 pm- Audubon Mtg.	22 8-11am-K-12-Nature Drawing Workshop (fee) 10-12 n-HabitatWeeders	23 8-11am-K-12-Nature Drawing Workshop (fee) 10am-12n-Jr. Naturalist(8-13yrs)fee 10:30 am-12:30 pm-Propagation Society	24 10-11:30-am-Friday Fun*** 8-11am-K-12-Nature Drawing Workshop (fee) 8:30 pm-Dustin Tygret Reception**	25 8:45 am-12 n-Habitat Restor. & Student Serv. Learning 10 am-Nature Walk 8-11am-K-12-Nature Drawing Workshop (fee)
26 10 am-Nature Walk	27 CLOSED	28 10 am-12 n-Weeders	29 10-12 n-Weeders	30 10am-12n-Jr. Naturalist (8-13yrs)fee		

JUNE

*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. **See Artists Corner, page 11. *** No fee charged for Friday Fun, but reservations are required. For the latest event information, consult website, www.friendsofmadronamarsh.com.

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1 10-11:30-am-Friday Fun***	2 8:45 am-12 n-Habitat Restor. & Student Serv. Learning 10 am-12 n- "Buzzing of Bees"/ Dr.Vadheim
3	4 CLOSED	5 8:30 am-Tour d' Torrance 10 am-12 n-Weeders 6:30-8:30 pm- "Buzzing of Bees"/Dr. Vadheim	6 10 am-12 n-Habitat-Weeders	7 10 am-Tyke Hike (fee) 10am-12n-Jr. Naturalist(8-13yrs)fee	8 10-11:30-am-Friday Fun***	9 8:45 am-12 n-Habitat Restor. & Student Serv. Learning 10am-12n-Audubon Annual Butterfly Class
10 2-4 pm-Second Sunday Science-"Microscope Fun" with Bob Carr	11 CLOSED	12 9-11 am-Mornings on the Marsh 10 am-12 n-Weeders	13 8 am- Bird Walk/ Bob Shanman 10-12 noon-Habitat Restoration-Weeders 6:30-8:30 pm-FOMM Board Meeting	14 10am-12n-Jr. Naturalist(8-13yrs)fee 10:30 am-12:30 pm-Propagation Society	15 10-11:30-am-Friday Fun***	16 8:45 am-12 n-Habitat Restor. & Student Serv. Learning 10:30am-12n-Audubon Annual Butterfly Count
17	18 CLOSED	19 8:30 am-Tour d' Torrance 10 am-12 n-Weeders 7 pm- Audubon Mtg.	20 10-12 n-Habitat Restoration Weeders	21 10am-12n-Jr. Naturalist(8-13yrs)fee	22 10-11:30-am-Friday Fun***	23 8:45 am-12 n-Habitat Restor. & Student Serv. Learning 10 am-Nature Walk
24 10 am-Nature Walk	25 CLOSED	26 10 am-12 n-Weeders	27 10-12 n-Habitat Restoration Weeders	28 10:30 am-12:30 pm-Propagation Society 10am-12n-Jr.Naturalist(8-13yrs)fee	29 10-11:30-am-Friday Fun*** Dustin Tygret Exhibit Ends**	30

July

Bryant Palmer Soto, with plenty of input from the Friends and City on what was wanted. The Friends played a key role in providing input and suggestions to the northwest firm of PPI, who designed and built our Exhibit Hall—for attractive displays explaining the geology, flora and fauna, and history of our Preserve. As the building neared completion (but still lacked heaters) local artist **Ron Libbrecht** and two associates painted the gorgeous—and instructive—mural that adorns the Hall's west wall, and amazingly depicts the annual cycle of the Marsh in vivid color.

About this time, Board Member **Carol Roelen** brought an interesting suggestion to the FOMM Board of Directors, one that would provide "icing on the cake" to the Center's opening—and would ultimately change many of our lives: "How about a Native Plant Garden outside the new Nature Center?" Hmm. We didn't know. Might be a lot of work, and what if it ended up looking, well . . . dull, dry and deserty? But she introduced us to natural landscape expert **Tony Baker** who presented his plan and convinced us it would work, and, as they say, the rest is history. His beautiful plants still adorn the Center property today, and, complemented by the newer "Water-wise Garden," provide a living laboratory for **Dr. Connie Vadheim's** monthly classes on Native Plants and excellent examples of the type of plants we should all incorporate into our yards.

But that wasn't the Friends' only input to the new Center; we also offered to operate a Gift Shop, with all the profit being invested in programs and educational material for the Preserve. This was a huge undertaking for the Friends, but it was masterfully executed by

"President's Report" continues on page 11.



We would like to express our sincere gratitude to

Little Company of Mary Hospital

for its sponsorship of our 2010 Moonlight Magic Fund Raiser at the

\$500 Say's Phoebe level.

Your support allowed us to assemble and execute the most successful fund-raising event in the 39-year history of the Friends of Madrona Marsh.

Secrets . . .

—Bill Arrowsmith

There are few things more pleasing than observing a person doing something that she or he really enjoys. When that person is also an expert, the enjoyment mounts; and if the person has a very pleasant voice and great personality . . . well, you've struck it rich.

A room full of 'prospectors' hit such a mother lode on Friday, March 18, when they attended the Artist's Reception for **Emile Fiesler**, our current exhibitor in the Artists' Corner gallery of the Nature Center. "Secrets of the Madrona Marsh Preserve," which adorns the walls through April 22, allows us all to see some of the Preserve's tiniest creatures (and hence, best-kept secrets) through Emile's trained eye. And the photographs are in gorgeous color—who knew windscorpions and velvet ants could look so beautiful?

But the 'treasure' of the evening was Emile's narration of a video with many additional 'secret creatures,' as well as many more 'secrets' from our tour guide about the fauna and flora and geology of the region in which we live. If you missed it, I am truly sorry, for I cannot do justice to his presentation here; but we will try to arrange a repeat performance, perhaps at next year's annual meeting. In the meantime you can get a small taste of what we experienced by visiting the gallery and by reading Emile's article in this newsletter (page 4).

Lesson learned: Mark the Artist Receptions on your calendar (see page 11). Friday evening events can be easily overlooked. But we are truly fortunate to have skilled and expert and interesting artists, like Emile, and **Jack Ludwick** and **Connie Vadheim** and **Beth Shibata** and **Tracy Drake** and **Mark Christiansen** who can turn your Friday evening into a very memorable occasion. Common theme: They all love what they're doing—and it shows.

October 1, 2011

Enjoy a barbecue dinner, wine, entertainment, gift baskets, live and silent auctions on the Marsh and under the stars

for your enjoyment and the benefit of the Marsh Preserve and Nature Center.

Watch for more information and...

**** Save the Date ****

Birds, Butterflies and Dragonflies of the Preserve January-March 2011



These lists were compiled by Tracy Drake, Ron Melin, David Moody and Dan Cooper

Green-winged Teal

Birds

American Wigeon	<i>Wilson's Snipe</i>	Cedar Waxwing
Gadwall	Ring-billed Gull	Orange-crowned Warbler
Mallard	California Gull	Yellow-rumped Warbler
Blue-winged Teal	Glaucous-winged Gull	Black-throated Gray Warbler
Green-winged Teal	Western Gull	Townsend's Warbler
Cinnamon Teal	Rock Pigeon	Common Yellowthroat
Northern Shoveler	Mourning Dove	<i>Wilson's Warbler</i>
Ring-necked Duck	Anna's Hummingbird	California Towhee
<i>Bufflehead</i>	Allen's Hummingbird	Chipping Sparrow
Ruddy Duck	Downy Woodpecker	Lark Sparrow
Pied-billed Grebe	Northern Flicker (red-shafted)	Savannah Sparrow
Snowy Egret	Black Phoebe	Lincoln's Sparrow
Black-crowned Night-Heron	Say's Phoebe	Song Sparrow
Sharp-shinned Hawk	Cassin's Kingbird	White-crowned Sparrow
Cooper's Hawk	<i>Warbling Vireo</i>	Red-winged Blackbird
Red-shouldered Hawk	Western Scrub-Jay	Brewer's Blackbird
Red-tailed Hawk	American Crow	Great-tailed Grackle
American Kestrel	Common Raven	Brown-headed Cowbird
<i>Merlin</i>	Tree Swallow	Western Meadowlark
Peregrine Falcon	Northern Rough-winged Swallow	Lesser Goldfinch
Sora	<i>Bank Swallow</i>	American Goldfinch
<i>Common Moorhen</i>	Cliff Swallow	House Sparrow
American Coot	Bushtit	Orange Bishop
Killdeer	House Wren	BOLD = rare on Preserve for the Season
<i>Black-necked Stilt</i>	Ruby-crowned Kinglet	
<i>Greater Yellowlegs</i>	Northern Mockingbird	
<i>Long-billed Curlew</i>	European Starling	

Butterflies

Monarch	Cabbage White	Cloudless Sulphur
Orange Sulphur	Sandhill Skipper	Fiery Skipper
Pgymy Blue	Acmon Blue	Red Admiral



*Orange Sulphur
Colias eurtheme*

Dragonflies

Common Green Darner	Variiegated Meadowhawk	Blue-eyed Darner
	Pacific Forktail	

We would like to express our sincere gratitude to

Wells Fargo

*for its sponsorship of our
2010 Moonlight Magic Fund Raiser at the
\$1500 Western Meadowlark level.*

*Your support allowed us to assemble and execute
the most successful fund-raising event in the
39-year history of the Friends of Madrona Marsh.*



South Bay Native Plant Corner

—Dr. Connie Vadheim, CSU Dominguez Hills



Globe Gilia
Gilia capitata

Annual wildflowers were an essential component of South Bay native plant communities. Early travelers wrote of the incredible spring wildflower displays seen in Hermosa Beach, Torrance and Gardena. With good winter rains, the Coastal Prairie and Coastal Shrubland communities came alive with the colors and fragrances of annual wildflowers—truly a sight to experience! Many of our California wildflowers were exported to gardens throughout the world in the 1800's.

In addition to their beauty, annual wildflowers were an important food source for many local species. The flowers were visited by a wide array of native bees, butterflies and other insect pollinators. Some native annuals even provided nectar for hummingbirds. After flowering, the annuals provided food for seed-eating birds ranging from finches and songbirds to doves, sparrows and other ground-feeding birds. Many of the seeds were also eaten or used as seasonings by Native Californians. So, the annual wildflowers were a vital part of the local South Bay ecosystems.

Many annual wildflowers are fairly easy to grow once you understand their needs. Most should be planted with the fall/winter rains for best results. So now is a good time to start planning for next spring's garden. And you could even plant some Globe Gilia for late spring/summer color this year. Globe Gilia can be seeded every two weeks until early May to provide a long period of bloom. As long as you provide adequate water for seed germination and growth, you will be rewarded with blooms well into the summer months.

Native annual wildflowers grow best with a 1/2 to 1 inch layer of gravel or crushed rock mulch. A thin inorganic mulch provides several benefits to annual wildflowers: 1) it warms the seeds and soil; 2) it retains the soil water; 3) it hides the seeds from hungry birds.

So consider using an inorganic mulch in areas where you want to grow native wildflowers.

Native wildflower seeds need light to germinate, so just barely rake them in. If you plant Globe Gilia now you'll need to water the seedlings regularly to provide adequate moisture. Once the plants flower you need to decrease water—down to no water at all once flowering ceases. This will ensure a good crop of seeds for next year.



Globe Gilia grows one to three feet tall and has lacy, fern-like leaves. It does well in full sun to part-shade and will grow in any local soil. The tiny flowers are clustered at the tips of the stems (see photos). The purple-blue of the flowers contrasts nicely with California Poppies.

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.



We would like to express our sincere gratitude to

**Supervisor
Don Knabe**

*for his sponsorship of our
2010 Moonlight Magic Fund Raiser at
the
\$500 Say's Phoebe level.*

Your support allowed us to assemble and execute the most successful fund-raising event in the 39-year history of the Friends of Madrona Marsh.

Board Member **Linda Brown**, who served as the Gift Shop Manager for over nine years, buying and displaying Marsh-themed products as well as recruiting and supervising a great team of volunteers to help run the shop. Thank you, Linda! And thanks also to our new Gift Shop Manager, **Bobbie Snyder**, who stepped in in fine fashion and has added exciting new inventory.

We are certainly grateful also to then Parks and Recreation Supervisor **Gene Barnett** and his deputy, John Jones, who, with Friends President **Venora Lee’s** help, coordinated a massive number of ‘first-time’ decisions, all leading up to a wonderful “Grand Opening” on April 21, 2001. The first Manager of the Preserve and Nature Center was **Joann Webb**, who helped with many of the planning and purchasing decisions for the

Center, but seemed to lack enthusiasm for the Preserve itself. She was replaced a year or two later by current Manager and Naturalist **Tracy Drake**, under whose leadership both the Center and the Preserve have thrived.

The Nature Center has held up quite well for ten years, with only an occasional leak, and continues to serve as the hub of Preserve activity, and also as a meeting spot for several community organizations. The Exhibit Hall received a significant improvement in 2007 when the Friends contracted with Split Rock Studios of Minnesota to build five diorama-style display cases, to showcase our superb collection of taxidermy. Thanks go to artist **Carlyn Iverson** of Split Rock who did the interiors of the cases, to **Igor Caragodin**, who did all the taxidermy, and to **Fran Arrowsmith**, who coordinated the installation for the Friends.

Stay tuned, for Tracy and the Friends have many more enhancements planned for the Nature Center. But whether improved or as is, the Madrona Marsh Nature Center will continue to play a major role in the Preserve experience. We may even have a little ten-year celebration this summer. Watch the website for details.

—B.A/

Donations of \$100 or More		
DATE	WHO	DONATION
12-29-10	James & Yoko Justiss	\$400
12-30-10	Frank & Marilyn Miles	\$200
1-3-11	Joanie Springer	\$250
	From Calendar Sales	
1-11	Norman & Suzanne George	\$150
1-25-11	Mr. & Mrs. Roderick Macdonell, Jr.	\$100
2-15-11	Mr. & Mrs. Anthony Vinter	\$100
2-14-11	Irma Ruiz	\$250
3-5-11	New Horizons Conservation Club	\$100
3-8-11	Sharon Angelos	\$200

—Ellen Petersen, Treasurer

Visit Friends of Madrona Marsh Gift Shop

We’re happy to welcome our four new volunteer clerks. This is good news. It means the gift shop can remain open on more days and for longer hours.

Here are our current gift shop hours:

Mondays and Tuesdays **Closed**

Wednesdays **Noon – 4 pm**

Thursdays **10 a.m.- 2 pm**

Fridays **11 a.m.- 1 pm**

Saturdays **10 a.m.- 4:30 pm**

Sundays **10 a.m. - 4:30 pm**

Please come on in and say hello to any of our friendly Friends of Madrona Marsh volunteer shop clerks. While you’re there to thank our volunteers for giving their time, you might want to have a look around the shop. We have lots of fun new items in stock.

We have science, nature and craft kits. There are new books, art supplies and lovely nature themed jewelry. There are always lots of fun trinkets for the youngsters.

Think of us when you’re looking for a gift or perhaps want to give yourself a treat. The real treat is in knowing that shop profits go to the Friends of Madrona Marsh to support our continuing programs to restore and sustain the Madrona Marsh Preserve.

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 served.

If you would like to display your art at the Nature Center, please call for more information: 310-782-3989.

Through April 22 - Emile Fiesler, “Secrets of the Madrona Marsh Preserve,” A Photography Exhibit.

April 26 - June 3 - Ivett Garay, “Literary Marsh: Illustrations of Birds that Inspired Poems and Prose,” an exhibit of oil paintings.

June 7- July 29- Dustin Tygret, “A Year’s Study: Four Seasons at the Marsh,” a Photography Exhibit. Artist Reception, Friday, June 24, 6:30-8:30 p.m.

Friends of Madrona Marsh

a non-profit organization est. 1972

NON-PROFIT ORG.
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
PERMIT NO.214
Torrance, California

P. O. Box 5078
Torrance, CA 90510

(310) 32MARSH

Return Service Requested



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.

Name _____ Phone _____

Address _____

E:Mail _____

I will volunteer for: (Gift Shop, Reception Desk, other) _____
