



The First Nature Memory

You have first nature memories, maybe many, your first experiences with nature. Do you remember your first impressions, where you were, who you were with? My firsts are walks with my dad around our home by the Saugus Ponds in Massachusetts, along the shore in Cape Cod, in the deserts of the southwest, the Baja coast, and the National Parks of California. Walking, talking, and watching all sorts of plants and creatures. It was always an adventure with Dad. My actual first nature memory was the maggot moment. I was about four years old. In Saugus, garbage had its own small knee-high metal container. Today it would be the compost bin.

On one of our walks Dad and I hunkered next to this bin to watch maggots dropping from the edge into the waiting jaws of ant teams. Gross you may think, my mom certainly did. As we watched, my dad explained that flies laid eggs in the garbage. The eggs hatched into larvae/maggots, which ate the garbage. When they grew big enough, they pupated, like a cocoon, from which they would emerge as full-grown flies. The ants, much smaller than a maggot, were in organized teams to kill and haul the maggot away for food. These maggots would never become flies. That became a big discussion. No one likes flies but the ants were killing the babies; they would never pupate and live a fly life. The concept that some small irritating insect was denied the opportunity of a full life seemed so unfair, yet ... a fly? Who cares?

NOVEMBER EVENTS

Every Friday

Friday Fun*

10:00 am - Noon

Every Saturday

Guided Nature Walk

10:00 am-Noon

Thursday, November 7th

Tyke Hike

10:00 am - Noon

Saturday, November 9th

Night Hike*

6:30 - 8:30 pm

Star Party

6:30 - 9:00 pm

Thursday, November 14th

Nature Storytime & Crafts

10:30 am - Noon

Saturday, November 23

Bird Walk

PV/SB Audubon Society

9:00 - 11:00 am

The ants cared because fat maggots would feed their entire nest. The ground beetles, bats, birds, wasps, spiders, and frogs all cared because they eat flies. The death of a fly matters. The life of all living things matters because we are all linked and intertwined together by nature. It doesn't matter where you start or what you start with; we all end up in the same place.

I grew up, went to college, majored in art, minored in biological science, became a teacher, grant writer, and administrator. Now, I'm a docent for the Madrona Marsh, where I lead study tours for students. I share my fascination with the natural wild world hoping to inspire a new generation and I still hear my dad's voice.

There is enormous wonder in nature. Take every opportunity to learn more about what's going on in the wilds and your, mine, and our place within it ...then dance with the joy of it all.

See you on the Preserve.



*by Suzan Hubert,
California Naturalist
President of Friends of Madrona Marsh*

From the Manager

October began with the Madrona Marsh hosting the annual plant sale for the South Coast chapter of the California Native Plant Society on October 5. Hundreds of people came through the Nature Center to purchase locally grown native plants. On October 12, in conjunction with the Water Replenishment District and COT Public Works, the Marsh offered a Waterwise Gardening Workshop on rainwater capture to almost 50 participants. The Marsh's gardens and the Preserve were featured on this year's South Bay Waterwise Garden Tour. The Palos Verdes/South Bay chapter of the Audubon held their monthly bird walk and their monthly chapter meeting at the Marsh. On October 26, the Marsh held its annual Turtle and Tortoise Day in partnership with the California Turtle and Tortoise Society. Several different species of turtles and tortoises were on display and over 250 community members of all ages

Saturday, November 30th

Holiday Photos with Ollie

11:00 am - 2:00 pm

November 28-29th

Closed for Thanksgiving

* Registration required

Featured Sighting



Although a rare visitor, recently there have been sightings of a black and white warbler. Look for it near the south pond foraging for hidden insects in the bark of trees by creeping up, down, and around branches.

(Photo: Alix d'Entrmont / Macaulay Library)

came through to see and learn about these adorable creatures. Staff at Madrona Marsh are mentoring five high school students working on science projects. One student goes to Torrance High, three students go to PV High, and one student attends the California Academy of Math and Science in Carson, CA.

Fall work is in full swing in the Preserve. Broken willow branches are being cleared by staff and volunteers. Fallen logs and downed wood are being gathered and chipped in advance of the winter rains. The prairies are being mowed. The “parklet” at 236th and Arlington has been replanted with California native plants, many of which were grown at the Preserve.



*by Liz Evans
Madrone Marsh Preserve Manager*

[Learn More About Volunteering at Madrona Marsh](#)

Making a Difference

This summer, Madrona Marsh participated in the City of Torrance’s Summer Internship program with Kaylin Lee, a rising senior at UC Berkeley studying Economics and Conservation Resource Management. Over nearly three months, she measured the health and water quality of five stormwater basins, including Madrona’s Maple sump, under the mentorship of Sciences Coordinator Miriam Taeubel.

Kaylin and Miriam spent 20 hours each week collecting water samples from basins, navigating through muddy waters and thick vegetation. They analyzed the samples for temperature, pH, oxygen levels, and more, while also collecting macroinvertebrates. Kaylin embraced the challenges and learned to process samples using new equipment donated by the Friends of Madrona Marsh. She later presented her findings to other interns, mentors, and Torrance Mayor George Chen, expressing gratitude for her experience and Miriam’s mentorship.

We are thankful for Kaylin’s contributions to our understanding of the City’s stormwater retention basins and look forward to seeing her again in the future!



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