

Marsh Mailing

Madrona Marsh Preserve and Nature Center

Marsh Mailing is also available in full color at www.friendsofmadronamarsh.com*

Notable Moments of the Season

Tracy Drake, Park Services Manager

For some who visit the Preserve, it is more than just a nice place to walk or a place that is good for our local environment. It is a living laboratory of life—where some have developed deep bonds with special moments in nature or with some of the plants or animals there. This article chronicles hours and hours of observations made by a few individuals and shared with many others, including our docents, and which have thus enriched the experience of the several thousand visitors who learned about the Preserve from one of us. Contributors include Jun Saito, Mark Rubke, and Jackie Fellague.



If you've lately walked the middle road of the Preserve near the west part of the wetlands, you may have seen a Mourning Cloak Butterfly (shown here) flying around and perching in the

willow trees near the entrance the map is called "The Meadow." Its wings are a dark brown-black, lined near the edges with iridescent blue spots, and fringed with a bright, creamy yellow. If you stop awhile, you may get a glimpse into the personality of this fierce defender of territory and the fearlessness it has towards people. More than one employee or volunteer has had one of these butterflies land on them while in the meadow. In a single day I have seen it chase even hummingbirds out of the area and sit on the cap of an employee for minutes at a time. These are long-lived butterflies, they can live up to

ten months, and often overwinter as adults in their favorite trees—poplars and willows.

Song Sparrow (shown here). The name says it all. And it is their melodic and chattering song that let me know they had bred again on the Preserve this year—the second year in a row. They tend to stay



in the denser regions of the Preserve and the Sump, and a lucky observer will see a bulky sparrow with a red crown and slate grey head. Most have a prevalent dark spot in the middle of their light, streaked chest. Interestingly, they feed on insects in the spring and summer but on seed in the autumn and winter. They forage on the ground. Soon they will migrate from Madrona and join flocks of sparrows looking for local wintering grounds or those flying farther south, but at this time of year, they are solitary and love to sing. As of mid June, they could still be heard singing from their perches on the Preserve.

Pints With a Purpose

Bill Arrowsmith, Past President

Many of you know of Yvon Chouinard, the legendary environmentalist who started the Patagonia Company, producer of outdoor clothing and equipment. In 1972, he realized the importance of making his climbing equipment more environmentally sensitive and later extended that philosophy to all his products. Since 1985, Patagonia has also pledged 1 percent of its total sales to the preservation and restoration of the natural environment. In 2002 Chouinard and Craig Mathews founded an organization called "1% for

"Pints" continued on page 5

Jun Saito continues a fifth year of the Mallard Project—a study of all the mallards born on the Preserve from discovery day (when they are first seen off-nest) to flight day. This year there have been 27 families with 108 babies born. As of June 22, 2018, ten families remain and 38 ducklings so far have survived. For those following Jun's "family D"—named for "Dorothy," a previously banded mallard born

"Moments" continued on page 2

at Madrona in 2013 and who has bred every year since: She had eight young this year and two remain. If you see her, though, you may notice she has five babies still with her. Why? She adopted three kids from family F, whose matriarch "Fanny" eloped and left her young behind! Also, the goose B family—"Bonnie and Benny," were successful again this year. Their four young goslings are practicing flight and will soon leave the Preserve. Family C, "Carl and Connie," lost one of their babies—the first gosling ever to be lost at Madrona. We suspect a raccoon got the young one. Jun is also tracking the Killdeer and the Pied-billed Grebes. If you see him on the Preserve, ask him to share his stories. He has seen much that most will never see!

Jackie Fellague continues her research on the Harvester Ants on the Preserve. To date there are 31 active nests, with 8 new ones started in 2018 so far. Thirteen of these nests were active in 2016 and 2017, as well. Ten of the nests that were active in 2016 were flooded and lost in 2017 but reopened in 2018. Makes us wonder, did it take them that long to dig out from their homes' getting covered by flooded soil? When walking the Preserve be careful not to step on these reddish-brown hard workers whose homes are often right on or very close to trails. Harvester Ants are a very important part of the system at Madrona. They aerate the soil, plant seeds, and are a food source for flickers!

Over the past few months we have completed several tree surveys looking for--and hoping not to find--Polyphagous Shot Hole Borers. In many local cities and even in Torrance, many trees have been lost to this highly invasive species which actually does not harm the trees directly. But they bring with them into the tree a fungus that quickly overtakes the transportation systems of the tree, and the tree dies. So far there are more than 200 known host trees and shrubs for this borer. And luckily, so far, no colonies have been seen on the Preserve. We--Bob, Melissa, Tracy and the City Arborist, Rande Jacobs--keep careful watch on our trees, though, because conservative estimates indicate that California could lose up to 38 percent of its trees in the coming years if a solution to this tiny (0.1") pest is not discovered soon.

In the coming months, as the water completely dries up, look for incredible pollinators including beautiful (non-harmful) flies, dragonflies and butterflies. While Mark Rubke is our most consistent volunteer doing bird surveys, he reports that the most common butterfly on the Preserve right now is the Gray Hairstreak. You can easily

The Preserve--More Than A Place on a Map

Suzan Hubert, President

The Preserve is quite a bit more than just a place because of our support. I had an article prepared for this newsletter but it became insignificant when I received the following email from Tom Reeves. I share this with you because I want us all to know that we make a difference in peoples' lives

Received June 7, 2018

"My oldest brother was a resident at a hospice house located on El Dorado Street. I discovered your wonderful preserve while taking a decompression walk; such a beautiful place for nature and people to thrive. Sadly, my brother died yesterday. Your preserve was a sanctuary for us to retreat to yesterday as well as the days preceding his passing.

I serve on the Big Sur Land Trust board of directors and we are in the process of deciding the best uses for and ways to develop a 73 acre parcel that we purchased in the city of Salinas known as Carr Lake. As the name implies, it has historically been an ephemeral lake located at the confluence of three creeks. Walking through your preserve gave me great inspiration as to what our Carr Lake could become.

Thank you for your efforts!

Tom Reeves"
Reprinted with permission



I thanked Tom for sharing this as it brought tears and made my heart smile. It was a tragic thing to lose his brother. I am so glad the Preserve was there for him and absorbed some of his sadness.



identify these speedy fliers when they perch. If you move slowly and look at their closed wings, you will see mostly silver wings with an orange spot at the bottom of the hind wing, and coming out of that spot you will see a tiny black hair.

If you have an interesting story of something you saw on the Preserve, please let us know. And when you walk the trails, try doing what we do: watch with a sense of wonder and curiosity. You will certainly see something very interesting. **-T.D.**

Talkin' Tanagers

by Vincent Lloyd

We love our resident birds: finches and goldfinches, mockingbirds and jays—they are with us all year round; their songs and calls are a constant reminder that nature is all around us; they're our friends and neighbors. Yet whose heart does not beat a little faster at the sight of a colorful oriole or tanager, birds that seem to have teleported from the tropics!

Two good examples are the Hooded and Bullock's Orioles, whose story Bob Shanman told in the Summer 2014 issue of *Marsh Mailing* (as I was writing this story late in June I heard a Bullock's Oriole chattering outside my window).



Another good example is the male Western Tanager, (shown above) with its yellow body, red head, and black wings—a most gaudy fellow (no doubt why he is the symbol of the L.A. Audubon Society!). He's about the size of a White-crowned Sparrow. The female is more modestly cloaked in green, its back greyish and wings dark, the better to blend into foliage. The female tanager can be confused with a female oriole, but notice the bill: The oriole has a long pointed bill, while the tanager's bill is stubby. The tanager's bill is interesting. it's midway between the long, pointed bill of an oriole (designed for snatching insects) and the thick conical bill of seed-eating sparrows and finches.

Based on the bill shape, can you guess what tanagers eat? Yes, they are generalists, feeding mainly on insects (particularly bees and wasps) but balancing that protein with plenty of fruit—not such a bad idea. You usually see them looking for insects among the leaves high up in

trees (“gleaning”) but if they see a wasp fly by they will fly up to catch it (“hawking”).

Because they tend to forage high up in the trees, they are more often heard than seen. The song of the male is somewhat reminiscent of a robin, but is a bit monotonous; I often confuse it with the Black-headed Grosbeak, whose song is more melodious.

The Western Tanager breeds in coniferous forests throughout the West from about the Mexican border as far north as the Yukon. (Locally, it breeds in the San Gabriel Mountains.) Its range extends eastward as far as the Great Plains, and it winters from Mexico to Costa Rica. At least that is what the field guides say. So it was a bit of a surprise to me when a female Western Tanager spent last winter in my yard. I would often hear its call, a soft stutter Sibley renders as “prididit”; occasionally I would see it gleaning bugs from our ficus tree. Evidently she hadn't read Sibley's guide, which shows them spending the winter no closer than the Pacific coast of Mexico, a thousand miles away. I thought maybe she was a senior citizen tanager who had gotten tired of traveling. But it turns out that every winter quite a few tanagers find that the abundance of tropical trees in the L.A. area makes it a nice spot for wintering.

Three other tanagers breed in the U.S. The eastern counterpart of the Western Tanager is the Scarlet Tanager of the northeast U.S. Its deep red color accented with black wings make it one of the most striking birds in North America. The other two are the Hepatic Tanager of the Southwest and the Summer Tanager, found from the Southwest to the Southeast.

The Summer Tanager reaches the western extreme of its range in southern California. Although it has been known to breed in Los Angeles County, the nearest place where Summer Tanagers regularly breed is Big Morongo Canyon in San Bernardino County. Not surprisingly, Summer Tanagers often wander to the L.A. basin and are seen every year. They are found occasionally at the Marsh.

Melissa spotted a female Summer Tanager here this past June. Compared with the Western Tanager, the male Summer Tanager shown here

“tanagers” continued on page 4



is all red. Its song is sweeter than that of the Western. The female Summer Tanager and the female Western Tanager are quite similar (as are the female Hepatic and Scarlet Tanagers). One thing to check is the wing: the female Western Tanager has two indistinct wing bars that are traces of the bold wing bars of the male. The other female tanagers lack wing bars.

The North American tanagers, along with five tropical species, make up the genus *Piranga*. “Piranga” is a word of Tupi origin, a native language of Brazil. It is said to refer to a kind of bird (duh!) (“Tanager” also comes from a Tupi word for some unspecified small bird.)

The Summer Tanager is *P. rubra*, where “rubra,” appropriately, is Latin for “red.” The Western Tanager is *P. ludoviciana*, that is to say, the Louisiana tanager, despite their not being found anywhere near Louisiana. Not only that, it was discovered recently that the *Piranga* tanagers aren’t tanagers at all! For decades they were grouped with the “true” tanagers of the large family Thraupidae of tropical America, such as the widespread Blue-grey Tanager.

(Probably the most famous members of the Thraupidae, however, are the Darwin “finches” of the Galapagos.) But DNA studies have shown that the *Pirangas* are more closely related to the cardinal family, the Cardinalidae, which comprise the North American buntings and grosbeaks, such as the Black-headed Grosbeak, as well as the Northern Cardinal. The bright red and yellow colors of the *Piranga* species link them with the brightly-colored cardinals and grosbeaks.

The Western and Summer Tanagers are stunning examples of the wonder of bird migration. Most of their near relatives spend their entire lives in the tropics. A good example is the lovely Rose-throated Tanager, which is found only on the Yucatan Peninsula. It is happy to spend its whole life in the area where it was hatched. How its close relatives decided to go to the trouble and danger of flying thousands of miles north and south every year is one of the mysteries of nature.

Western Tanagers are regular visitors to the Marsh during spring and fall migration. A glimpse of a male Western Tanager is a sure sign that migration is under way! —V.L.

Donations of \$100 or more Spring 2018

Date	Donor	Donation	Information
April	Vincent Lloyd	\$100	
April	Ruth Vogel	\$150	
April	9Round Kickboxing	\$200	
April	Ellen & Chris Veline	\$1,000	
April	Elsie Inase	\$100	
May	Charles Lafferty	\$200	
May	James & Yoko Justiss	\$500	
June	Maxine Trevethen	\$500	
June	Melodies James Family Trust	\$100	In memory of James Robert Divers

The Nature Center and Preserve are open Tuesday through Sunday from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Call 310-782-3989 for more information. or consult the website: www.friendsofmadronamarsh.com.

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the Planet,” an alliance of businesses that share his passion for protecting the natural environment. Each member business pledges to contribute at least 1 % of its total annual sales to grassroots environmental organizations, like FOMM, making each group one of its non-profit partners.

We are very fortunate to have one such environmentally sensitive company right here in Torrance. It’s called Smog City Brewing Company and its owners, Laurie and Jonathan Porter, share Chouinard’s passion for running an environmentally sensitive business. They are also members of “1% for the Planet”, with many local non-profit partners... the newest of which is Friends of Madrona Marsh!

Their method of sharing revenue is called “Pints with a Purpose,” in which they allow a non-profit partner to have a percentage of total sales, every Thursday, for an entire month.

The icing on this cake is that Smog City’s hand-crafted beers, all brewed on site, are very tasty and quite numerous. And they even offer flights of 5 different beers, in smaller glasses.

But don’t take my word for it, PLEASE. Stop in and check out Smog City yourself – THIS MONTH! Friends of Madrona Marsh is the “Pints with a Purpose” partner for EACH THURSDAY OF JULY, 2018.

So please invite your friends to join you for a cool brew or two at Smog City this month, and support the Friends with every quaff. “Pints with a Purpose” gives the phrase “DRINK RESPONSIBLY” a whole new level of meaning. (see bulletin on Page 10).

Bill Arrowsmith, Brewery Liaison

Where’s the Friends’ Calendar?

If you’ve tried to access the Friends’ calendar via the VIEW CALENDAR button on the home page in the last few months, all you got was a DATABASE CONNECTION ERROR diagnostic. We used a calendar host who provided the service free to local non-profits, but that host mysteriously disappeared. Together, Manager Melissa Loebel and her staff are in the process of evaluating and selecting a new calendar host, and ask for your patience. As usual, we are publishing a four-month calendar in this newsletter, and we hope to have the dynamically updated web calendar up again soon. -**Bill Arrowsmith**

You’ve Got Options

Suzan Hubert, President

We all like choices and we are offering members of The Friends a choice for how you would like to receive your *Marsh Mailing*. For many years we have sent each member a black and white paper copy through the U.S. mail. Now we are offering you a choice: you can either continue to receive a paper newsletter in the mailbox or you can notify us that you would prefer to read the full color edition accessible online at our website, friendsofmadronamarsh.com.

Reading the newsletter online saves printing costs and postage and means more of your annual membership fee can be used to support our educational and restoration programs.

Please let us know which option you prefer when you renew your membership or when you join our organization. We have changed our membership form (see page 12) to reflect this choice. For current members, if you wish to continue receiving your newsletter by U.S. mail, you need do nothing. But if you would prefer to view your newsletter online, just send an email with SUBJECT = ONLINE TO frandbill@att.net; in the body supply your NAME and PHONE No. and we will stop mailing you a paper copy of the newsletter. If you’d like to be notified via email when a new color issue is available for viewing online, please enter the word, NOTIFY.

The Marsh Mailing is a terrific way to keep up with what’s happening on and around the Preserve and Nature Center. We are most grateful to our editor Bill Arrowsmith, his co-editor and publisher, Diane Gonsalves, Elaine Endres and her faithful crew of folders, tabbers and labelers of the paper copies and to all our contributors for the excellent reporting they do every quarter.

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 Editorial Advisor, Bill Arrowsmith, frandbill@att.net or Editor, Diane Gonsalves at gonwild2@yahoo.com or may be dropped off or mailed to the Nature Center, P.O. Box 5078, Torrance, CA 90510.

Madrona Marsh Preserve and Nature Center*

Schedule of Events for July through October 2018

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<u>1</u>	<u>2</u> CLOSED	<u>3</u> 8:30 am-Tour d'Torrance	<u>4</u>	<u>5</u> 10 am-Tyke Hike -donation 10:30 Prop.Soc.	<u>6</u> 10 am--12 n-Friday Fun-donation**	<u>7</u> 8:45 am-12 n-Hab.Restor.& Student.Service 10 am-Dr. Vadheim-
<u>8</u>	<u>9</u> CLOSED	<u>10</u> 9 am-ArtistAdventures\$	<u>11</u> 8 am-Bird Walk/ Bob Shanman 9am ArtistAdventure\$ 6:30-8:30 pm-FOMM Board Meeting	<u>12</u> 10:30 Prop.Soc. 9am-ArtistAdventures\$ 1pm- Naturalist 6:30Dr.Vadheim-	<u>13</u> 9am-ArtistAdvent.\$ 10 am--12 n-Friday Fun-donation** Niles Exhibit Ends	<u>14</u> 8:45 am-12 n-Hab.Restor.& Student.Service
<u>15</u>	<u>16</u> CLOSED	<u>17</u> 8:30am-Tour d'Torrance 10am-Jr.Naturalist.\$ 7 pm-Audubon Mtg.	<u>18</u> 10am-Jr.Naturalist.\$	<u>19</u> 10:30-12:30-Prop. Society 10am-Jr.Naturalist.\$	<u>20</u> 10 am--12n-Friday Fun-donation** 10am-Jr.Naturalist.\$	<u>21</u> 8:45 am-12 n-Hab.Restor 9am-H.B.Nature Walk
<u>22</u>	<u>23</u> CLOSED	<u>24</u> 9am-Art in Nature\$	<u>25</u> 9 am-Art in Nature\$	<u>26</u> 9 am-Art in Nature\$ 10:30-12:30-Prop. Society	<u>27</u> 9 am-Art in Nature\$ 10 am-Friday Fun-donation**	<u>28</u> 8:30 am-Bird Walk 8:45 am-12 n-Hab.Restor. 10 am - Nature Walk 7-9 pm--Night Hike
<u>29</u> 10-NatureWalk	<u>30</u> CLOSED	<u>31</u> 8:30 am-Tour d'Torrance				

JULY

*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. **Reservations are required for Friday Fun. ***See Artists Corner, page 9. For latest event information, see our website, www.friendsofmadronamarsh.com.

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			<u>1</u>	<u>2</u> 10 am-Tyke Hike -donation 10:30 Prop.Soc.	<u>3</u> 10 am--12 n-Friday Fun-donation**	<u>4</u> 8:45 am-12 n-Hab.Restor.& Student.Service 10 am-Dr. Vadheim-
<u>5</u>	<u>6</u> CLOSED	<u>7</u> 8:30 am-Tour d'Torrance	<u>8</u> 8 am-Bird Walk/ Bob Shanman 6:30-8:30 pm-FOMM Board Meeting	<u>9</u> 10:30 Prop.Soc. 1pm-Naturalist 6:30Dr.Vadheim-	<u>10</u> 10 am--12 n-Friday Fun-donation**	<u>11</u> 8:45 am-12 n-Hab.Restor.& Student.Service
<u>12</u>	<u>13</u> CLOSED	<u>14</u>	<u>15</u>	<u>16</u> 10:30-12:30-Prop. Society	<u>17</u> 10 am--12n-Friday Fun-donation**	<u>18</u> 8:45 am-12 n-Hab. 9am-H.B.Nature Walk 8:30pm-Star Party
<u>19</u>	<u>20</u> CLOSED	<u>21</u> 8:30am-Tour d'Torrance 7 pm-Audubon Mtg.	<u>22</u>	<u>23</u> 10:30-12:30-Prop. Society	<u>24</u> 10 am--12 n-Friday Fun-donation**	<u>25</u> 8:30 am-Bird Walk 8:45 am-12 n-Hab.Restor. 10 am - Nature Walk
10-am <u>26</u> NatureWalk	<u>27</u> CLOSED	<u>28</u>	<u>29</u>	<u>30</u> 10:30-12:30-Prop. Society	<u>31</u> 10 am--12 n-Friday Fun-donation**	

AUGUST

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						8:45 am-12 –Hab.Restor. ¹ 10am-Dr.Vadheim-
²	³ CLOSED	8:30 am-Tour ⁴ d'Torrance	⁵	10 TykeHike ⁶ 10:30 Prop.Society 6:30pm-Dr. Vadheim	10 am--12 n- ⁷ Friday Fun- donation**	⁸ 8:45am-12-Hab.Restor. Student.Service
⁹	¹⁰ CLOSED	¹¹	8 am-Bird Walk/ Bob Shanman ¹² 11am-Senior Stroll 6:30--FOMM Meet	10:30-12:30- ¹³ Propagation Society 1pm Naturalist	10 am--12n- ¹⁴ Friday Fun- donation**	8:45 am-12 - Hab.Res.. ¹⁵ 9 am-H.B.Nature Walk
¹⁶	¹⁷ CLOSED	8:30 am-Tour ¹⁸ d'Torrance 7 pm-Audubon Mtg.	¹⁹	10:30-12:30- ²⁰ Prop. Society	10 am--12 n- ²¹ Friday Fun- donation**	²² 8:30 am-Bird Walk 8:45 am-Hab.Restor. Student.Service 10 am-Nature Walk
10 am- ²³ Nature Walk	²⁴ CLOSED	²⁵	²⁶	²⁷ 10:30-12:30- Prop. Society	10 am--12 ²⁸ Friday Fun- donation**	²⁹ 8:45 am-Hab.Restor. Student.Service
³⁰						

SEPTEMBER

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. **Reservations are required for Friday Fun. *See Artists Corner, page 9. For latest event information, see our website, www.friendsofmadronamarsh.com.*

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
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²⁸ 10-NatureWalk	²⁹ CLOSED	8:30 am-Tour ³⁰ d'Torrance	³¹			

OCTOBER

Madrona Marsh Species List

June 2018

Birds	This list, representing the sightings of June 2018, was compiled through the generous support of Mark Rubke, David Moody, Tracy Drake, Melissa Loebel, Jonathan Nakai, Dinuk Magamma, Tony Strangarity, the Tour de Torrance group, Jun Saito, David Kozlovsky, Mike Coulson, Brooke Keeney, Kim More, Christine Jacobs, Manuel Duran and various visitors who love to bird the Preserve.		
Canada Goose	Killdeer	Warbling Vireo	Wilson's Warbler
Gadwall	Western Gull	American Crow	Song Sparrow
Blue-winged Teal	Rock Pigeon	Common Raven	California Towhee
Mallard	Eurasian Collared-Dove	N. Rough-winged Swallow	Spotted Towhee
Pied-billed Grebe	Mourning Dove	Tree Swallow	Summer Tanager
Great Blue Heron	White-throated Swift	Cliff Swallow	Lazuli Bunting
Great Egret	Anna's Hummingbird	Barn Swallow	Red-winged Blackbird
Snowy Egret	Allen's Hummingbird	Northern Mockingbird	House Finch
Green Heron	Nuttall's Woodpecker	Hooded Oriole	Lesser Goldfinch
Cattle Egret	Downy Woodpecker	Bushtit	American Goldfinch
Black-crowned Night-Heron	Western Wood-Pewee	House Wren	House Sparrow
Cooper's Hawk	Pacific-slope Flycatcher	Western Bluebird	Scaly-breasted Munia
Red-shouldered Hawk	Black Phoebe	European Starling	Pin-tailed Whydah
Red-tailed Hawk	Ash-throated Flycatcher	Orange-crowned Warbler	
American Coot	Cassin's Kingbird	Common Yellowthroat	Uncommon sighting
Black-necked Stilt	Western Kingbird	Yellow Warbler	Bred at Madrona

It is interesting to note that typically, because migration is over, the wetlands is drying and some breeding birds have gone on to other places, June is typically a slow month for us. We usually do not see too many different bird species. But this year June has been busy and we saw a lot of birds. Maybe it is because there was so little rain and therefore so little viable habitat locally, but for whatever the reasons are, we had a good month. And July looks promising too. Come visit, and if you do keep an accurate list, please post it to ebird. That way we can track the birds and provide you with accurate accounting.

Butterflies			
Mourning Cloak	Marine Blue	Fiery Skipper	Cloudless Sulphur
Western Tiger Swallowtail	Acmon Blue	Umber Skipper	Monarch
Western Pygmy Blue	Gray Hairstreak	Cabbage White	
Dragonflies			
Common Green Darner	Blue-eyed Darner	Variagated Meadowhawk	Flame Skimmer

Our (Turf) Tiger is Dead!

Our zero radius mower came to an unhappy ending this spring, as reported in the Spring 2018 Marsh Mailing. Luckily no-one was hurt! Without a mower like this we cannot mow on the Preserve, cannot keep the weeds down and cannot prepare the wetlands area for the coming rains. Do you have one you would like to donate? If so, please give us a call at the Nature Center at (310) 782-3989. --Tracy Drake, Park Services Manager



Snapshots Around the Marsh



Friday Fun - Cindy Reid shows toddlers asphaltum



Dorothy Austin, Karen Peters, Lore Schmidgall and Vincent Lloyd at "Whale of a Day"



Earth Day - Dorothy Austin, Sarah Noddings, Ellen Peterson and Lore Schmidgall at Torrance Environmental Fair.



Friday Fun - Mr. Crow and his young friends in classroom

Proposition 84 Improvements Outlined

Tracy Drake,

Torrance Park Services Manager

We were all very excited to get the new exhibits installed in the Nature Center by the end of June, but we had an unexpected delay. Unfortunately, our new solar panels failed, and as a result need to be replaced. They failed because of a faulty connection between the inverter and panels.

It is expected that the new ones, manufactured in Italy, will come in and be installed sometime this summer. This will cause us to delay installing the five exhibits planned to be in the Atrium, below the solar panels. However, the rest of the exhibits—Symphony of (Madrona's) Nature Sounds in the Exhibit Hall, the five panels of the history mural with accompanying explanatory reader rails along the north and east interior walls around the atrium, and the three interpretive panels for the sump are ready to go! We will start by bringing in the sump

exhibits in the middle of June, and the rest will be installed by the end of July.

Stay tuned! When all of the exhibits have been installed, we will host an open house and have a special event, "Walkin' through Time" during which you will have a chance to take a special tour and learn about the behind-the-scenes historical research that we conducted to assure that the murals would be as accurate as possible.

Artist's Corner

Through Friday, July 13 - An Exhibit of Acrylics by Clara Niles.

View the works of local artists portraying the beauty of the Madrona Marsh. Exhibits are on display daily in the Nature Center. To display your art at Madrona Marsh, call 310-782-3989.

Enjoy a Mug of Beer
Help the Madrona Marsh

The Smog City Brewing Co. will
donate a percentage of the night's sales to
the Friends of Madrona Marsh

when: every Thurs. in July
3:00-10:00 p.m.



Smog City Brewing Co.

1901 Del Amo Blvd
Torrance, CA 90501
(310) 320 - 7664



<https://www.smogcitybrewing.com/home>

Beer + Madrona Marsh = Pints with a Purpose!

South Bay Native Plant Corner

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Photos by Dr. Vadheim



Evergreen cherry/Islay
Prunus ilicifolia

Native trees and large shrubs make good sense. They provide shade and privacy and can serve as habitat anchors for an entire garden. A nice example—the native Evergreen cherry—can be seen in the Madrona Native Plant Gardens.

Prunus ilicifolia is the only cherry native to the west coast of S. California. There are two subspecies: the Hollyleaf cherry (ssp. *ilicifolia*), native to the mainland; and the Catalina Island cherry (ssp. *lyonii*), native to the Channel Islands. Both can be grown successfully in local gardens. Of the two, the Catalina cherry is the larger, growing to a mature height and breadth of 20-40 feet. This subspecies makes a nice shade tree when pruned up.

The Hollyleaf cherry is slower growing and is more of a large shrub (usually 10-15 feet tall and wide at maturity). This subspecies also has attractive, holly-like leaves. Both subspecies are evergreen, making them useful as year-round shade trees, tall hedges and screens.

Evergreen cherries bloom in spring—often in May and June but sometimes as early as March. The flowers are small, cream-colored and clustered along drooping flower stalks (see photo). In a good year, plants are literally covered with blossoms. The sweet-scented

flowers attract a wide range of pollinators from native bees and Honey bees to butterflies.

The evergreen cherry is a true cherry, producing dark-red cherries in summer. The fruits are loved by fruit-eating birds, and can also be used to make jelly or syrup. Like all cherries, **the large 'pits' (seeds) are toxic and should never be eaten.** Note: these seeds, properly prepared, once formed an important source of food for Native Californians.



Evergreen cherries are widely planted in Southern California gardens. They can succeed in full sun or part shade. They grow well in just about any local soil. And while quite drought tolerant once established, they benefit from monthly deep waterings in the dry season.

Prunus ilicifolia is an easy-care plant. It's fairly pest-free, drought tolerant and needs little maintenance. It can be pruned up as a tree or hedge-pruned if desired. It's no wonder that this species has been a staple of local gardeners for over 100 years.

For more on this plant see: <http://mother-natures-backyard.blogspot.com/2018/06/plant-of-month-june-evergreen-cherry.html>

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.

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