

Spring 2007

Marsh Mailing

In Review

Madrona Marsh Preserve and Nature Center

The clouds hung upside-down in the late afternoon sky. This uncommon weather phenomenon has always been a source of awe to me. The wind, coming from the west, slowly pushed the clouds closer to the Preserve. It would be a beautiful sunset.

After final meetings of the day in the Nature Center were finished, with little light left in the cool evening sky, I ran out the back door with my camera in hand—hoping to capture a bit of the remaining sunset. Once on the Preserve, I moved silently and stealthily from one vantage point on to another—the shutter clicking much more quietly than the melodious sounds of the evening chorus of blackbirds, finches, sparrows and warblers. The birds' songs were so numerous; I wondered if they were inspired by the sunset too.

I saw her from a distance, wiser than I, or perhaps just more prepared, she had on a silky—gray jacket and bright blue gloves. Silently, we crossed paths, each of us searching for that one last bit of beauty to photograph. Minutes later, we met up again and shared, in hushed tones, our amazement of this day's sunset. I had never known Connie Vadheim to be unable to fully express herself, but she was on this night. She again became silent as she watched the blanket of darkness that was swiftly covering the Preserve. I knew as I was observing her, that I was watching an artist at work. I



realized this because there seemed to be such a contrast in our points of view. While I looked skyward, I felt as if I were the entire Preserve, fully sensing the damp evening air, the coming night and settling of birds. But she saw things differently. Her eyes were still searching for one more shot—the fiery reflection on the water, the last bit of light striking the trees, and the clouds in the eastern sky still lighted from the sun. It was a surreal moment.

Both of us, deeply affected by our experiences, barely spoke as we made our way long the path and out the front gate. It had been an amazing evening— one too beautiful for words.

Within days of that February 27th sunset, all of us realized there was no rain forecast; the rainy season had passed without filling our wetlands. Admittedly, compared to the evening of that beautiful sunset, I found it difficult to be out on the Preserve. We, Staff and Volunteers, spend the entire year preparing for the coming rainfall, so shortly after that notable sunset, when the rain didn't come; it was very disappointing to all of us.

I wandered the Preserve daily—worrying about the general health of the Preserve, as I saw obvious signs of stress on both the plants and the animals. In many places, the Preserve had become so dry that even when we attempted to water, the soil would no longer accept the water, it simply ran off. In our wetlands the tules and cattails had all turned brown, appearing as if they were dead. Plants that normally appeared in July and August were appearing out of season. Absent were all the normally present waterfowl, and many other migratory birds. Even the chorus of treefrogs was missing, in fact few frogs could be found. The Preserve looked and felt barren.

Weeks later, while talking to Connie Vadheim about her Second Sunday class, "Wildflowers," she talked about how she and the class went to the Preserve to search for signs of spring. She described in

detail the many observations the class had made. At that moment, my entire point of view regarding the Preserve changed; I too, would search for signs of spring. Early the next morning I did just that. With this new viewpoint, I went out to the Preserve, and much to my surprise, I found many signs! The willows and a few wildflowers were blooming, bees were working hard to gather pollen, and numerous plants were emerging in the shaded areas near the wetlands. Butterflies, wasps and other insects were becoming abundant, and while I was walking I counted 45 different bird species! I began to realize that the plants and animals would persevere under what I perceived as exceptionally harsh, dry conditions. The ecosystem was clearly well-adapted to withstand periods of drought.

I more closely inspected the tules and cattails and discovered they were not dead as they seemed—they were dormant. Their energy storing tubers, which are part of their root system, were healthy. They would survive. Towards the end of my walk as I passed a small pool of water, I was pleasantly surprised to detect many treefrogs crossing my path, leaping through the green grasses that lined the edge wetlands.

Now I go to the Preserve with new respect for this complex Madrona Marsh ecosystem. It seems to have an astonishing resilience and quiescent beauty. Still though, I miss the abundant, lush green growth of spring and continue to hope for rain.

In the Nature Center, programs continued as usual; some of them were exceptional. In February, the guest speaker at the Audubon General Meeting was Carol “Kiwi” Donovan. Using slides she told of her incredible adventures while traveling the world, becoming the first woman to see, in their native habitat, at least one bird in every bird family. Watch for her talk as it will soon be featured on Torrance City Cable!

Kendrick Choi, pictured below, after working for several months, has completed building his bat houses.



Soon his houses will hang on the pump house located near the corner of Maple and Sepulveda Avenues. These houses are being installed because bats and their mosquito prey are active at night. If the bats eat mosquitoes locally, Los Angeles County Vector Control will not have to use as many chemicals in our wetlands.

Science Fair season is coming to an end. This year the students were exceptional in their ability and dedication to their projects. Already, one of our students, Megan Jones, has won first place in a science fair sponsored by her biology teacher. The students had some remarkable results. Several of our students will be participating in the Intel Science Fair on March 22. Look for the rest of the results in the next newsletter.

Bird walks, including the Tour de’ Torrance, a birding tour of the South Bay, continues to gain popularity. With this season’s unusual weather, migration is sure to bring a few surprises. Already there have been a Poorwill and Nutmeg Mannikins spotted on the Preserve.

In the past few months, several Eagle Scouts completed their projects. Brian Wang planted native plants on the Preserve. Michael Rolandelli, pictured at right, built bird-houses and installed both Bluebird and Swallow houses on the Preserve. Blake Harris painted 30 panels of our Preserve’s fence, and Iveh Soh installed native plants in an area on the north side of the Preserve. The Staff and Volunteers at Madrona thank all of these scouts and their troops for their dedication and hard work.



—Tracy Drake
Manager/Naturalist

The Marsh Mailer is a quarterly newsletter designed to provide information about activities and upcoming events at or relating to the Madrona Marsh Preserve. Contributions are welcome and may be e-mailed to Diane Gonsalves at gonwild@ca.rr.com or Bill Arrowsmith, TheArrowsmiths-sbcglobal.net or dropped off or mailed to the Nature Center.

President's Report

—Bill Arrowsmith

By any measure, Madrona Marsh Preserve and Nature Center is a huge success. Oh, we may have a dry year occasionally—and this year is a doozy! But the overall educational and recreational value of the preserve and associated programs is priceless. And that's just the value to humans, aside from butterflies, frogs, thousands of local and migrating birds, and millions more critters down to the microscopic level. FOMM will celebrate its 35th birthday this September, and we deserve a quick look back at our success.

We spent our first decade trying to convince everyone that this wetland was worth saving and helping the City obtain enough money (\$1.4 million) to be a credible force—but not enough to buy the marsh outright. Then when the owner decided to develop everything from Madrona Avenue to Crenshaw, leaving us only 15 acres for a 'duck pond,' we became a political force. Along with several homeowner associations, the League of Women Voters and others, we gathered, in 2-1/2 weeks, more than twice the number of signatures needed for a referendum on the marsh. The City Council reversed itself and denied the project and we then entered into a period of negotiation with the developers. There were many compromises, but we emerged, ultimately, with 35 acres donated by the developer plus another 8-1/2 acres purchased by the City with the money that had been raised.

The last two decades we have turned our attention to restoration of the preserve. The City of Torrance built a beautiful Nature Center in 2001 with its share of two county bonds for neighborhood parks, so-called 'Prop A money. We are privileged to have an excellent Manager and Naturalist for the Preserve, Ms. Tracy Drake, who continues to amaze us with the quantity and quality of programs at the Preserve and Nature Center.

What is next?

While we would love to continue in our current mode of operation, there is some concern that we might not be able to do so. In addition to more than \$1 million which was used to build the Nature Center, a like amount of Prop A funding was set aside to supplement future program and staff needs. The City pays the salary of the Manager/Naturalist and a full-time groundskeeper. But our current range of programs and activities requires several additional staff members. Although FOMM fills many positions with volunteers, such as our docents and the fine staff which runs the front desk, there are several more full or part-time positions which are being paid for by the remaining Prop A money. And there may be only 6 or 7 years' worth left.

So last fall a group of concerned people decided that what we need is another organization, outside the Friends of Madrona Marsh, whose sole purpose would be to pursue grants and donations for the Madrona Marsh Preserve and Nature Center. These funds would be used to support staff and implement programs and projects as specified in the Madrona Marsh Preserve and Nature Center Management Plan. They formed a new non-profit, public-benefit corporation, called Madrona Marsh Foundation (MMF).

The MMF has the full support of the FOMM Board of Directors, and we are helping them get started. The plan is that they will devote all their energies into establishing funding sources sufficient to supplement the ongoing activities of the Preserve and Nature Center, and make those moneys available to be used as directed by the FOMM and the City of Torrance. Note that this will allow the FOMM to continue its current focus, unencumbered by money-raising concerns.

The new MMF Board of Directors, who serve without compensation, is comprised of: Dr. Jack Ludwick, President; Emile Fiesler; David Moody; and Christopher Noddings.

In addition, Lucia Johnson, who served as incorporator and worked to secure the Articles of Incorporation, Corporate By-laws, and Taxpayer ID Number is acting as Executive Director, and is currently being paid by the FOMM. Once the Foundation becomes established, any such salaries will be paid by the Foundation.

If you are interested in learning more about the Foundation, or would like to become involved, please contact Lucia at 310-316-9364.

And speaking of money, I'd like to give a special note of thanks to CBS Studios who recently donated \$1500 to FOMM! This was above and beyond any fees they paid to the City of Torrance for use of the marsh for filming an episode of the TV series, "The Medium." You've made a fan of me!

Thanks, also, to County Supervisor Don Knabe for making a \$100 grant available to us. We may use that as 'seed' money for our upcoming Earth Day plantings!

The FOMM Board of Directors

⟨**Bill Arrowsmith, President**

⟨**Connie Vadheim, Vice President**

⟨**Ellen Peterson, Treasurer**

⟨**Carol Roelen, Recording Secretary**

⟨**Venora Lee, Corresponding Secretary**

⟨**Jeanne Bellemin**

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⟨**Archie Phillips**

⟨**Mary Garrity**

ex-officio:

⟨**Shirley Turner**

⟨**Jack Knapp**

Shirley's Turn

—Shirley Turner

Eagle Scout Candidates' Service Projects

On January 13 Brian Wang with his Troop #242 (Scoutmaster Scott Elledge) cleared the area of European weeds and set out 50 coastal native plants, using several species, in the Northeast corner of the Preserve along Plaza Del Amo, to restore the area as it was before Europeans came.

January 27, Michael Rolandelli (see page 2) with his Troop #849 (Scoutmaster Dave Rolandelli) cut and assembled 30 bird houses suitable for small birds such as the Western Bluebird. Seven of these houses have been placed on the Preserve; one is near the shed and one in the willows. If you have open space in your yard and few problems like a cat, call Michael, 310- 375-8807, to have a house installed. He lives in Manhattan Beach.

Blake Harris with his Troop #880 (Scoutmaster Johnny Potasi) painted 30 panels of the steel fence around the Preserve on February 17.

On March 10 Iveh Soh with his Troop #242 (Scoutmaster Scott Elledge) cleared two plots along Plaza Del Amo and planted native species. He continues to water. We are truly grateful to these people who contribute so much to society.

Thank you also to all the outside growers who bring in plants for restoration. Many come from Connie Vadheim's Class at Cal. State, Dominguez Hills. It was a sad experience to visit the nursery after the frost.

Ron Melin, retired history teacher, and part-time staff at the Center guides this work. He is now teaching some Merit Badge classes

Restoration Reports

Ron Melin is pleased to say that on March 17, assisted by 23 San Pedro and West High School students, 180 native needle grass plants were set in the ground on the Northwest corner of the Preserve. Needle Grass is Dan Portway's project. Mature two-year old needle grass can be seen waving in the breeze from Sepulveda between the sidewalk and the western end of sump fence.

Many more are ready for Earth Day April 21, when ten grape vines, three cottonwoods and one red willow will be planted. It's great the nursery has been stocked with plants grown elsewhere. We are especially grateful for the generosity of people who provided them. Linda's seedlings just coming up were wiped out by the freeze. The established native

perennials on the Preserve show good signs of recovery. Water is the name of the game. An ExxonMobil employee volunteers regularly to do this. Thanks. Due to lack of staff Tuesday and Wednesday restoration starts at 10 am.

In Memoriam

—Jay Apsel who passed petitions, came to and danced at our events.

—Bob Raps, Scoutmaster, whose many scouts did Eagle Service Projects on the Preserve over many years.

Joanie Spring's Photographs and Poetry (310) 834-5942

It was a delight to meet Joanie Spring at her recent Artist's Reception. She shared this year's January photos of Alaska, equally as wonderful as those hanging on our walls, with poetry for each scene. I was pleased to find cards of some of them in the Gift Shop. The following poem is one I chose to enclose in a card to my granddaughter who is in the first grade.

Joanie will retire this spring from teaching English as a Second Language in Wilmington and plans to travel all over America pursuing this new career. Good Luck Joanie.

Tracy found Joanie through Bob Shanman who displayed a special photo of hers in his store, Wild Birds Unlimited on Crenshaw near Pacific Coast Highway.

The card I chose was of dew drops on a spider's web. Joanie came to the Preserve during the dry fall period to produce the exhibit. Her eyes captured the beauty of the Preserve this year even though others are depressed to see the desperate conditions caused by the drought:

Gentle morning soft in the mist
Gentle droplets cling to the night
Waiting for the sun

Gentle Morning waiting for the sun
Gentle morning waiting for the dawn
Listen to the mist
Listen to the dawn

Step confidently into the morning
Step confidently into the day

And when the day comes
Listen to the sun
Listen to the moon
Feel the wonder of love
Of Mother Nature

Continued . . .

Step joyfully into your life
Step confidently into your future
Feel the wonder of living

Another purchase I made at the Gift Shop was a blue spider design pillow that is a pleasant new addition to the sofa. The creator has made place mats, pillows and quilts in nature fabrics. There may be something that will take your eye. Staff can assist in sales if a volunteer is not available. Linda Brown has done a magnificent job managing the Gift Shop. She needs volunteers, 310-320-8255.

Good Books

"The Last Child in the Woods: Saving Our Children from Nature-Deficit Disorder" by Richard Louv, published in 2005, has been highly recommended.

I also applaud Boston Globe: "Every parent and teacher should read." Audubon adds, "city councils." At a National Environmentalist Meeting attended by my daughter, Teresa, the book was the subject of discussion, so she sent the book to me and her sister, who has the child who received the poem. Hopefully our City library will have this book soon for you to read. You will remember where and how you connected with nature and how helpful it has been over your life time.

The author tells stories of the hundreds of children across the country he has interviewed. He fears for children wired to TV and the internet.

Two earlier books by Louv at the library are "Childhood's Future," 1990, and "101 Things You Can Do For Our Children's Future," 1994. Louv is an award-winning columnist, distinguished journalist, and social commentator who lives in San Diego with his wife and two boys.

Did you have a tree house to climb, or fields to explore growing up? Torrance has done well to provide the Preserve and Nature Center for the 10 million people surrounding it. But it can do more and should. A foundation is in the works. Lucia Johnson needs your advice and help in the project, 310-316-9364, e-mail LGJmadronamarshfoundation@msn.com.

Student Observations

At the Second Sunday Science in February Bob Shanman, of Wild Birds Unlimited, was the teacher dealing with Spring Migration. He was impressed with the answers students came up with concerning why birds moved for food, breeding, and habitat. But the basic triggering factor was the sun, I learned, length of daylight and location in the sky.

People choose to live in dense population clusters where the climate effects of the sun are most rewarding. How long will this continue to be until they move back into the interior parts of the continent Rich Louv asks in his book.

March Tyke Hike

March Tyke Hike was most unusual, with only 2.18 inches of rainfall. Dry, grassy vegetation was in shades of brown to tan tules and gray stubble after mowing. Gopher mounds were flattened, bare sandy circles dotting the otherwise grayness of somewhat pulverized vegetation. Pushing of strollers was easier since the gopher holes were filled in.

The walkers traveled the southwest quadrant of the wetlands but where did we find water? Only in the lowest small pond, the last to dry in August, and patches along the channel from first culvert on the Middle Road south under thick tree overstory. A wider pathway had been cleared here which was wet in February but not now. One family caught up to us on the Chevron Corner walking straight to us from the Center picking their way through some muddy spots.

(Two weeks later on the March Second Sunday Science, the Spring Flower class was led to this water which was all but gone. They watched a hummingbird on and off the nest in Arroyo Willows North of the Middle Road as they looked at spent flowers before new leaves sprouted on trees.)

On the Tyke Hike the very tall Red Willow had older leaves of green with blue gray underside dropping down, and new buds, flowers, seeds and leaves—a very mixed-up tree. Remember, there had been a hot spell to contend with. This tree is on the east side of the Chevron Corner next to Sepulveda, one of the first original plantings by developers. All other Red Willows are cuttings from it and do well semi-near water, whereas the Black Willow can grow in several feet of water. Its adventitious roots are visible in the dry season and now show the depth of missing water.

Ruth McConnell, Mary Garrity, and I found these seven families who joined us, 18 people in all, delightful. The mothers and grandmothers each reinforced to their children that which was pointed out to them. We appreciated the great interest shown and questions asked. One child, Maddy, was outstanding. She shared her interest in cattail fluff with other children. She also was the one to search around the tule patch, find and catch a Pacific Tree Frog so that everyone could hold it and pass it from hand to hand. Her Mother said they had hummingbird feeders in their Harbor City yard. Three hawks circled over the Kelt hills and vales as we walked back to the dry Middle Road and back to the Madrona gate.

Kathy Benz in February caught up to Ruth and me on the Madrona trail. She spotted a gopher that was still in good condition (now in the freezer). Turning it over the huge curved teeth, claws, and under parts were carefully contemplated, the big find of the day. There had been three hours of pumping so the East Creek had water and was crossed over before the Duck Island to the sheds. Some had turned back but

Continued on page 11.

Madrona Marsh Preserve Nature Center

Schedule of Events

April-July 2007

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<u>1</u>	<u>2</u> CLOSED	<u>3</u> 10 a.m.-12 noon. Habitat Restoration	<u>4</u> 10 a.m.-12 noon Habitat Restoration	<u>5</u> 10 a.m. Tyke Hike	<u>6</u>	<u>7</u> 9 a.m.-12 noon Habitat Restoration 10 a.m.-12 noon. Pots, Pails & Planters... (Drake/Vadheim) 10 a.m.-12 noon Whales & Sea Birds
<u>8</u> EASTER-CLOSED	<u>9</u> CLOSED	<u>10</u> 8:30 - 9:30 a.m. Senior Stroll with Bart Tendick 10 a.m.-12 noon Habitat Restoration	<u>11</u> 8 a.m. Bird Walk/Bob Shanman 10 a.m.-12 noon. Habitat Restoration 7:15 - 9 p.m. FOMM Board Meeting	<u>12</u>	<u>13</u>	<u>14</u> 9 a.m.-12 noon. Habitat Restoration 1-3 p.m. Global Warming Class
2-4 p.m. Second Sunday Science- Butterflies <u>15</u>	<u>16</u> CLOSED	<u>17</u> 10 a.m.-12 noon. Habitat Restoration 7 p.m. Audubon Get-together	<u>18</u> 10 a.m.-12 noon. Habitat Restoration	<u>19</u>	<u>20</u>	<u>21</u> 9 a.m.-12 noon. Earth Day Planting & Habitat Restoration 1-3 p.m. Global Warming Class
<u>22</u>	<u>23</u> CLOSED	<u>24</u> 10 a.m.-12 noon Habitat Restoration	<u>25</u> 10 a.m.-12 p.m. Habitat Restoration	<u>26</u>	<u>27</u>	<u>28</u> 9 a.m.-12 noon. Habitat Restoration 10 a.m. Nature Walk 1-3 p.m. Global Warming Class
10 a.m. <u>29</u> Nature Walk	<u>30</u> CLOSED					

APRIL

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		<u>1</u> 8:30 a.m. Tour de'Torrance- Bird Walk 10 a.m.-12 noon Habitat Restoration	<u>2</u> 10 a.m.- 12 noon. Habitat Restoration	<u>3</u> 10 a.m. Tyke Hike	<u>4</u>	<u>5</u> 9 a.m.-12 noon- Arbor Day 9 a.m.-12 noon Habitat Restoration 10 a.m. - 12 noon. "Sweet Scent of Summer"
<u>6</u>	<u>7</u> CLOSED	<u>8</u> 9 a.m.-Mornings on the Marsh 10 a.m.-12 noon Habitat Restoration	<u>9</u> 8 a.m. Bird Walk/Bob Shanman 10 a.m.-12 noon Habitat Restoration 7:15 p.m.-9 p.m. FOMM Board Meeting	<u>10</u>	<u>11</u> 6:30-8:30 p.m.- Artist's Reception for Dr. Jack Ludwick	<u>12</u> 9 a.m. - 12 noon Habitat Restoration 10 a.m.-12 noon Tree Frogs & Dragonflies Dr. Jack Ludwick 10 a.m.-12 noon Arts & Crafts for Tykes with Marsha Miller
2-4 p.m. Second Sunday "Spring Migration" Bob Shanman <u>13</u>	<u>14</u> CLOSED	<u>15</u> 10 a.m.-12 noon Habitat Restoration 7 p.m- Audubon Get-together	<u>16</u> 10 a.m.-12 noon Habitat Restoration	<u>17</u>	<u>18</u>	<u>19</u> 9 a.m. - 12 noon Habitat Restoration 10 a.m.-12 noon Garden Party and Open House
<u>20</u>	<u>21</u> CLOSED	<u>22</u> 10 a.m -12 noon Habitat Restoration	<u>23</u> 10 a.m.-12 noon Habitat Restoration	<u>24</u>	<u>25</u>	<u>26</u> 9 a.m. - 12 noon Habitat Restoration 10 a.m.- 12 noon Nature Walk
10 a.m. <u>27</u> Nature Walk	<u>28</u> CLOSED	<u>29</u> 10 a.m.-12 noon Habitat Restoration	<u>30</u> 10 a.m.-12 noon Habitat Restoration	<u>31</u>		

MAY

**Brought to you by
Friends of Madrona Marsh**

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

(For the very latest on events visit:
www.friendsofmadronamarsh.com)

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					<u>1</u>	9 a.m.-12 noon. <u>2</u> Habitat Restoration 10 a.m.-12 noon "Buckwheats" Drake/Vadheim
<u>3</u>	<u>4</u> CLOSED	8:30 a.m.-Tour de' <u>5</u> Torrance-Bird Walk 10 a.m.-12 noon Habitat Restoration	<u>6</u> 10 a.m.-12 noon. Habitat Restoration	<u>7</u> 10 a.m. Tyke Hike	<u>8</u>	9 a.m.-12 noon. <u>9</u> Habitat Restoration 6:30-10 p.m.- "An Evening of Tortoises and Turtles"
8 a.m-12 noon <u>10</u> Photo Day & Contest/Mark Comon 2-4 p.m. Second Sunday Science-"Bats"	<u>11</u> CLOSED	9 a.m.- Mornings <u>12</u> at the Marsh 10 a.m.-12 noon Habitat Restoration Redondo Beach Art Group Exhibit Begins	8 a.m. Bird Walk <u>13</u> /Bob Shanman 10 a.m.-12 noon Habitat Restoration 7:15 - 9 p.m. FOMM Board Meeting	<u>14</u>	<u>15</u>	9 a.m.-12 noon. <u>16</u> Habitat Restoration 10 a.m-4 p.m.-"Painting Outdoors . . ." 2-4 p.m.- "The New Planets-A Closer Look."
<u>17</u>	<u>18</u> CLOSED	10 a.m.-12 noon. <u>19</u> Habitat Restoration 7 p.m. Audubon Get-together	10 a.m.-12 noon <u>20</u> Habitat Restoration	<u>21</u>	<u>22</u>	9 a.m.-12 noon <u>23</u> Habitat Restoration 10 am.-Nature Walk
10 a.m-12 noon <u>24</u> Nature Walk	<u>25</u> CLOSED	10 a.m.-12 noon. <u>26</u> Habitat Restoration	10 a.m-12 noon. <u>27</u> Habitat Restoration	<u>28</u>	6:30-8:30 p.m. <u>29</u> Artist's Reception Redondon Beach Art Group	9 a.m.-12 noon <u>30</u> Habitat Restoration 7:30-9:30 p.m.- Night Hike

JUNE

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<u>1</u>	<u>2</u> CLOSED	8:30 a.m.-Tour de' <u>3</u> Torrance-Bird Walk 10 a.m.-12 noon Habitat Restoration	<u>4</u> 10 a.m.-12 noon. Habitat Restoration	<u>5</u> 10 a.m. Tyke Hike	<u>6</u>	9 a.m.-12 noon <u>7</u> Habitat Restoration 10 a.m.-12 noon "More Flights of Butterflies"
2 p.m. - 4 p.m. <u>8</u> Second Sunday Science-"Animal Prints in the Sand," Ron Melin	<u>9</u> CLOSED	9 a.m.-Mornings <u>10</u> on the Marsh 10 a.m.-12 noon Habitat Restoration	8 a.m. Bird Walk <u>11</u> /Bob Shanman 10 a.m.-12 noon. Habitat Restoration 10 a.m.-Junior Naturalist 7:15 p.m.-FOMM Mtg.	<u>12</u>	<u>13</u>	9 a.m.-12 noon <u>14</u> Habitat Restoration 10 a.m.-12 noon Annual Butterfly Count
<u>15</u>	<u>16</u> CLOSED	10 a.m.-12 noon. <u>17</u> Habitat Restoration 7 p.m. Audubon Get-together	10 a.m. - 12 noon. <u>18</u> Habitat Restoration 10 a.m.-12 noon- Junior Naturalist	<u>19</u>	<u>20</u>	9 a.m.-12 noon <u>21</u> Habitat Restoration 7:30-9:30 p.m.-Star Party
<u>22</u>	<u>23</u> CLOSED	10.a.m.-12 noon. <u>24</u> Habitat Restoration	10 a.m. - 12 noon <u>25</u> Habitat Restoration 10 a.m.-12 noon- Junior Naturalist	<u>26</u>	<u>27</u>	9 a.m.-12 noon <u>28</u> Habitat Restoration 10 a.m.-12 noon- Nature Walk
10 a.m.- <u>29</u> Nature Walk	<u>30</u> CLOSED	10 a.m.-noon. <u>31</u> Habitat Restoration Vadheim/ Shibata- "...Two Views of Madrone..." photo exhibit begins				

JULY

In Sincere Appreciation!

— Bill Arrowsmith

It has taken many dedicated Friends and many years to bring our Preserve, Nature Center, and programs to their current state of success. Today I would like to share the names of three people who have been working behind the scenes to contribute to that success:

Gary Kuwahara runs a Certified Public Accountant firm in Torrance. Gary's firm, and most recently his associate, **Sue Nagy**, have prepared income tax returns, *pro bono*, for the FOMM for as long as anyone can remember, and the last six years they have also prepared the returns for our Gift Shop. Thank you, Gary, for your generous and continuing support!

Linda Brown served on the Board of Directors of the Friends for many years, but when the Nature Center opened in 2001, she took her support to an entirely new level. Linda agreed to "help" run the FOMM Gift Shop, which is our only permanent presence in the Nature Center. She was soon running the shop entirely by herself, planning and purchasing what was needed, from cash register to display case to merchandise, and she took on a tremendous challenge. She has done a fabulous job, as you know if you've visited the shop. Did I mention that she has also maintained a position of leadership in the League of Women Voters during this entire period?

We are sincerely appreciative, Linda, for all that you do—from selecting merchandise to making sure the shop is properly staffed to (ugh!) even doing that annual inventory. I know, though, that you currently have some openings and could use a little additional help. Hopefully someone who reads this will offer to assist you for a few hours each month. It seems only fair, after all the hours you have given us. Thank you!

Bill Forrest, as you may know, serves on the Board of Directors and also is personally responsible for scheduling docent-led tours for the dozens of schools that visit our Preserve and Nature Center and microscope laboratory each year. He has done a remarkably good job of this and is a requested favorite by many teachers and all the children.

What you may not know is that Bill also has a keen eye for what is **missing** at the preserve. And he's just the man with the fortitude and persistence to see that nothing stays missing too long.

For instance, the City took possession of Madrona Marsh in 1986 and made it officially part of its park system. But they never quite got around to putting up signage telling people what it was. That bothered Bill from the moment he joined the board, and he would always find a way to mention it to Tracy

and her boss, John Jones, in any meetings we had. It wasn't immediate, but after a couple years of 'reminders', the City came through with its long-promised signs.



And a year ago, after the death of one of our best and most popular docents, Bob Ingraham, Bill wondered why we didn't have a suitable way to memorialize not only Bob, but all the Friends who have made significant contributions over the last forty years but are no longer with us. So Bill spearheaded an effort to properly recognize those people and the result is a "Path of Remembrance".

This path, which starts in the beautiful Water-wise Garden just north of the Nature Center, is denoted by a handsome bronze plaque mounted on a sturdy gray stone. We invite you to visit this path often and let the plaque remind you to think of those whose efforts have made this wonderful preserve possible, and those who have made it better.

Mary Garry and Gail Cole are helping Bill put together a book of remembrance, listing all the people being honored. The book will be kept in the Nature Center, and we welcome your help in remembering Friends of the past.



If you would like to help with this project or have a suggestion for the book, please call the Nature Center at 310-782-3989.

South Bay Native Plant Corner

—Dr. Connie Vadheim, CSUDH

Miniature (Bi-color) Lupine

Lupinus bicolor



Need something to spice up your spring garden? How about a nice plant for containers or planters? One of our delightful native annual wildflowers might be just the ticket! We are fortunate to have a number of native annuals to choose from—and Miniature Lupine is guaranteed to brighten the garden and gladden the heart. You still have time to plant this spring—but don't wait too long.

South Bay annual wildflowers complete their entire life cycle in the period between the fall/winter rains and the summer drought. They tend to germinate quickly after the winter rains begin (one to three weeks is common), and grow rapidly in spring. The shorter species (one to two feet) generally bloom in early to mid-spring, while many of the taller-growing species (two to four feet) bloom in late spring to summer. All species develop seeds soon after blooming to insure the next generation.

Miniature Lupine is typical of our earlier-blooming wildflowers. Growing less than two feet tall (often much shorter) and one to two feet wide, this species

has many characteristics typical of lupine species. It has grey-green leaves with the leaves that look like an out-stretched hand. It blooms March through May in the South Bay, with showy small pea-like flowers in groups of four to five, on stalks above the leaves. The flower's 'banner' is white with purple spots, and the 'wings' are purple. In nature—and in your yard—this species is attractive massed. Like all plants in the Pea family, lupines improve soils by increasing available nitrogen.

One benefit of annual wildflowers is their versatility. You can grow them in wildflower 'prairies' with other local wildflowers and grasses, tuck them in around shrubs and even grow them in large pots (at least 12 inches deep) on a patio. As long as you have a little patch with sun/bright shade for four to six hours per day you should definitely try some annual wildflowers.



Most native wildflowers reseed themselves on bare ground, making native annuals a good investment. Withhold water after flowering to insure a good seed crop. Then let the plants reseed naturally or collect the seeds and store them in a cool, dry place. You'll have plenty of seed for next year! You can try soaking Lupine seeds in water overnight before you plant them to improve germination.

Caution: Lupine seeds are toxic if eaten!



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.

South Bay Energy Fair to Focus on Global Warming

The Environmental Priorities Network will hold its second annual Energy Fair on May 5 to promote public awareness about the causes and impacts of climate change, and to inform South Bay residents how to use less gasoline and electricity, even while saving money and gaining convenience. The fair will be at the Pacific Unitarian Church, 5621 Montemalaga Drive, Rancho Palos Verdes.

The scientific community has concluded that reducing energy use is the fastest and most cost-effective way to control global warming pollution. Burning fossil fuels—oil, coal, and natural gas—to power our cars, homes, and electrical generating plants is causing an exorable rise in the world's temperature. This warming of the planet by heat-trapping emissions poses a serious threat to our health, safety and environment.

Following 8:30 a.m. registration, Jan Kidwell will speak about why saving energy must be every consumer's highest priority, if we are to protect our

world from the dire effects of greenhouse gas pollution. The panel discussion to follow will feature three speakers: Brad Bartz, who will discuss solar panel installations and the good rebates, tax write-offs, and discounts that are now available; Marilyn Lion, the director of the South Bay Energy Savings Center, who will cover many quick and easy ways of saving energy, ranging from appliances to lightbulbs; and Dency Nelson, whose ecological home was a highlight of last year's Solar Homes Tour, who will discuss hybrid and electric vehicles, as well as energy saving alternative fuels. For more information contact Lilian Light at 310-545-1384.

Gifts of IRA Dollars

NOTE: If you are age 70—or older, you may benefit from recent legislation, and help Madrona Marsh at the same time! Under the Pension Protection Act of 2006, you can make a gift to the Madrona Marsh Foundation using funds transferred directly from your individual retirement account (IRA) without paying any tax on your distribution.

The charitable distribution counts toward minimum required distributions. The transfer generates neither taxable income nor a tax deduction, so even if you don't itemize you'll still receive the benefit.

You may transfer up to \$100,000 per year directly from your IRA. Contact Lucia Johnson for details at 310-316-9364.

A Special Thanks . . .

We would like to thank the following donors who contributed \$100 or more in January and February:

In January **Maxine Trevethen** contributed \$100.

In February **Marie Roser, Lois Duncan** and the **San Pedro Garden Club** each contributed \$100. **Cheryl Martin** contributed \$110, **Norman and Suzanne George** contributed \$150 and **David Moody** and **Rebecca Moore** contributed \$200 each.

—Ellen Peterson

Artist's Corner

Works of local artists and photographers inspired by the beauty of the Madrona Marsh are regularly on display at the Nature Center. Upcoming exhibits:

Enjoying the Beauties of the Madrona Marsh Preserve Through Painting and Photography - Steven West, Artist and Photographer - Runs through April 21. —Free.

Madrona Marsh: A Place of Wonder and Beauty, Dr. Jack Ludwick, Photographer - April 23 - June 9. Artist's Reception: Friday, May 11, 6:30-8:30 p.m. —Free.



Note: Jack will also give a presentation on **Tree Frogs & Dragonflies** on Saturday, May 12, from 10 a.m. to 12 noon. Don't miss it! — Free

Redondo Beach Art Group, Nina Laden and Various Artists - June 11 - July 28. Artists' Reception: Friday, June 29, 6:30-8:30 p.m. — Free.

Point/Counter Point: Two views of the Madrona Marsh Preserve, Connie Vadheim/Beth Shibata photo exhibit begins July 30.

Great Nature/Biology Classes

At the Madrona Marsh Preserve/ Nature Center



Introduction to Nature Interpretation

The Madrona Marsh Preserve and Nature Center, in collaboration with El Camino College and CSUDH, offers a college level course on nature interpretation. Classes meet Tuesdays from 4-6 p.m., through May 8 and may be audited for free.

Open to everyone interested in South Bay natural history—recommended for prospective docents at Madrona and other local preserves, teachers, college students interested in careers in natural history/ecology teaching.

Shirley's Turn

Continued from page 5.

others continued on. One pair had come from Lakewood for the tour. Kathy enjoyed walking in areas where she had only paddled a canoe, and learned about winter plants and trees.

Mark your calendar for these events:

Check the Global Warming Class the last three Saturdays of April, 1 to 3 p.m. \$25 for all three.

An Evening of Tortoises and Turtles with expert, Dr. Peter C.H. Pritchard, 6:30 to 10 p.m. Saturday, June 9. Dr. Peter Pritchard, Oxford scholar, conservationist, world traveler and multifaceted expert on turtles and tortoises shares his incredible stories. He has been to every corner of the world to study these animals. A catered dinner is served 7 to 8 p.m. Make \$35 checks payable to the California Tortoise and Turtle Society. The show only and book signing is \$20. For questions and required reservations, RSVP to

- 4/10 Nature Interpretation: Child-focused
- 4/17 Nature Interpretation: Adult-focused
- 4/24 Interpretation (at Ballona Wetlands)
- 5/1 Student presentations
- 5/8 Nature Activities (at El Dorado Nature Center)



"Out of the Wilds & Into Your Garden"

The only native plant gardening class focused on the South Bay—and it's free. All sessions are the first Saturdays, 10 a.m.-noon and repeat the following Wednesday, 6-7:30 p.m.

- 4/7/07 **Pot, Pails & Planters** (*container gardening*)
- 5/5/07 **Sweet Scent of Summer** (*fragrant plants*)
- 6/2/07 **Beautiful Buckwheats**

Interested in learning more about these and other classes? Information is available at the Madrona Marsh Nature Center.

310-782-3989

Second Sunday Science topic June 10 will be Bats with Dianne Simons.

June 10, 8 a.m.-12 noon - Annual Madrona Marsh Photo Day and Photo Contest presented by Mark Comon of Paul's Photo; An expedition to explore and capture the Preserve through lecture, field work, and wildlife pictures. Reservations required: 310-782-3989. \$60 per person.

Precipitation:

Month to Date	0.00"
Normal Month to Date	1.38"
Season to Date	2.18"
Normal Season to Date	11.19" as of
March 18, 2007	

—S.T.

Friends of Madrona Marsh

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Patron _____ \$35 Club/Organization _____ \$50 Business/Industry _____ \$100

Amount Enclosed _____

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