

Marsh Mailing

Madrona Marsh Preserve and Nature Center

Chocolates...and Children

—Chris Noddings

To borrow a well-known phrase, working at the Madrona Marsh Preserve on any given day is like the proverbial box of chocolates—you never know what you're gonna get. Anyone who has ever worked with small children can also relate to this sentiment. Combining the two, by taking small school children on tours of the Preserve, can result in some of the most wondrous moments I've experienced. They have a knack to not only notice everything out there but also to unashamedly ask what it is. If only we could all be so inquisitive!



from a fairly large hole in a tree. This event launched a two-week-long investigation into the mysterious creature that created the husk (a clear-wing moth that looks uncannily like a giant hornet) which was promptly followed by a massive (and successful) effort to prevent the moth from decimating our Arroyo Willow trees.

In a similar story, several months ago, another student on a tour found a previously unseen fly larva; investigating this larva resulted in the discovery of three new species never before recorded on the Preserve. More recently, another child found several pupae growing

Three years ago, shortly after I first started working at the Preserve, a student in our Summertime Junior Naturalist class noticed an insect husk protruding

on various green leaves that I could not identify. I later learned that they were the pupae of a Ladybug (which is technically a beetle) something I had never

“Chocolates” Continues on page 11.

A Perfect Storm

—Tracy Drake, *Naturalist/Manager*

Maybe you have been out on the Preserve over the past month; maybe you have greatly enjoyed the wetlands so full of water. You would certainly have noticed the beautiful ducks on the water and, as the water retreated some towards the end of the month, you observed up to nine Snowy Egrets feasting on the animals in the water. This Spring has been very beautiful.



But this Spring has been

not very cold—just a little bit warm—the perfect opportunity for the plants to grow and thrive. Unfortunately we cannot always control what does grow and what does not. And unfortunately the tules grew a lot this Spring. This would not have been an issue if we had removed a lot more in the dry season—but we did not. Now, in order to keep our visitors safe, and remove the potential for increased mosquito habitat, we

“Storm” Continues on page 5.

from the president

What's Happening on the Marsh-And Why?

—Bill Arrowsmith

Even a casual observer couldn't help but notice some unusual occurrences recently at Madrona Marsh: For over a week in mid-March men waded in water up to their waists, slashing tules with sharp knives and later those tules were stacked on the shore of the Marsh. Then, the second week of April, the water level dropped sharply in southern portions of the Marsh, leaving many areas nearly dry; and again men waded into the water to remove tules. What in the world is happening?

And why?

To answer these questions, we must first examine our Preserve's two most unusual features. Then I will introduce you to one of our most important, but least known, County agencies—the one without which we could not continue to enjoy our precious urban wetland.

Madrona Marsh's most unusual feature is its annual appearance (and disappearance) act. As most of you know, our Marsh is seasonal, drying up completely by late summer, then reappearing almost magically the following winter. Winter rain from over 200 acres settles into the lowest point, our Preserve, producing a Marsh pool over four feet deep at its deepest point. This water percolates slowly past clay lenses in our soil and also evaporates, so that the water level drops by nearly two inches a week until the Marsh finally dries up completely by late summer. The plants (and animals) we have in the Marsh area are those that have developed ways of adapting to this annual total inundation followed by complete drought.

"Cool. But what's that got to do with....?" I'm coming to that. The Black Willows can do neat things like grow new roots above the water line when submerged for long periods, in order to get more oxygen to the growing plant. But most plants, like the tules, just rely on living out a complete life cycle while the water is present. Tules can grow from seed to a spear over 12 feet tall in a single season, holding their seeds at the very top to let wind disperse them for next Spring's repeat performance. When the water disappears in

late summer, these tules die and the next spring young tules grow right up through their remains. The cycle repeats. This is great for the tules, but problematic for us, because it often results in a thick thatch at the base of the tules.



Tules are stacked along Madrona Avenue.

Our Preserve's second unusual feature is its urban location, right in the middle of Torrance. Urban wilderness is unusual enough, but urban wetlands are rare and urban *seasonal* wetlands are rarer still. Madrona Marsh is the only one we know of in Los Angeles County—certainly the only one easily accessible to the public. The Preserve's easy access for thousands of students and researchers, from kindergarten to graduate school, is perhaps its greatest human asset. But this sword has two edges.

Not only are all the natural wonders of the Marsh easily accessible to hundreds of thousands of Angelenos, so too are any dangers it might harbor. Although Madrona Marsh has no poisonous plants or animals (except for an occasional black widow spider) it does have the potential to create one little creature which can do us harm. Once the rain stops, the Preserve's water is quite still and it can become a breeding area for mosquitoes. Mosquitoes are not only irritating with their bites, they can also sometimes be carriers of dangerous diseases, such as encephalitis and West Nile Virus. Therefore we cannot allow the Marsh to become an uncontrolled mosquito breeding area.

So how do we control mosquito populations on the Preserve? We do so with the assistance of an agency called the Los Angeles County West Vector Control District. "Vector" refers to any animal capable

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.

of transmitting disease, including mosquitoes, flies and other insects, and even rats. We are very fortunate to have a well-staffed and extremely knowledgeable organization like L.A. County Vector Control (visit their website at <http://www.lawestvector.org/>). They not only help us control the mosquitoes on the Marsh, but are available to all of us as individual homeowners as well, to deal with anything from bees to rats to, well, mosquitoes. Vector Control has many methods at its disposal, including careful application of poison insecticide sprays or pellets.

Of course, at the Preserve we want to avoid spraying poisons, which often have a far greater negative effect on the environment than anticipated. So, we use one of L.A. West Vector Control's more environmentally friendly methods to control our mosquitoes: Once there is enough water in the Marsh to support them, Vector Control stocks our deep ponds with tiny fish: *Gambusia affinis*, or mosquitofish.



The tiny mosquitofish is an effective helper in controlling mosquitoes.

These fish do not eat mosquitoes, at least not adult mosquitoes. They are much more efficient. Mosquitoes go through four growing cycles: egg, larva, pupa and adult, and both the larval and pupal stages live in the water. Our mosquitofish love to devour them in the larval stage; one *Gambusia* can eat 50-100 larvae in a single day!

But the mosquitofish has to be able to reach the pool where the larvae are growing, and heavy thatch at the base of the tule can prevent that from happening. That's why we do so much tule clearing on the Preserve. At Preserve Manager Tracy Drake's direction, wide swaths are cut through the tules, not only for duck navigation, but also to let the mosquitofish reach their

prey. Also, at Vector Control's direction, we try to keep each stand of tules relatively small.



Sandbags are placed to hold water in northwest Marsh.

That's the plan, and it usually works quite well. Most of our tule clearing is usually performed in the summer, when there's no water, no mosquitoes, and the tules are easy to reach. There are also no breeding birds in late summer. But, as Tracy mentions in her concurrent article beginning on page 1, this past summer our usual clearing team was not available, and we are now paying the price.



Tules can be seen piled in front of southwest Marsh pool.

As new tules grow up through the old, Vector Control has advised us that in some areas the situation is unacceptable. Hence, we performed the initial tule clearing in March, and thought we were okay. But Vector Control advised us to do additional tule clearing, and as we prepared for that, Tracy noticed that tule growth even in our 'clear channels' was too dense. In order to properly address this issue, it was necessary to lower the water level of the Marsh by a foot or two. We did this by allowing water to drain into the sump at the southeast corner of the Preserve.

"What's Happening. . ." Continues on Page 9.

Invisible Friends

—Emile Fiesler

Gardeners encounter numerous, mostly small, animals that enjoy munching on the plants in their gardens. These animals are typically labeled 'pests.' There are other animals that prey on these pests, and these are typically labeled 'beneficial.' A number of beneficial insects are used as so-called *biological control agents*, as opposed to *chemical control agents*, which are often toxic to a broad range of organisms, including us humans ourselves.

A large group of these gardeners' friends are tiny parasitoid wasps. Note that *parasites* do not intend to cause lethal damage to their host, whereas *parasitoids* do not intend to spare the life of their host.

These parasitoid wasps are often so tiny—many are between 0.2 mm (0.01") and 3 mm (0.1")—that they are virtually invisible, as they are rarely noticed, let alone recognized. A Fairy Fly Wasp (family: Mymaridae), at 0.21 mm, is the current record holder as the world's smallest insect.

There are many different kinds of parasitoid wasps in the world; estimated at hundreds of thousands of species. Virtually all of these parasitoid wasps are host-specific; meaning that a given parasitoid wasp species only targets one specific host species. Given this amazing diversity and specificity, there are parasitoid wasps targeting almost any host. Scientists often travel to the area where a given pest species is native to find a local parasitoid wasp that



Figure 1—Eulophid Wasp (*Eulophidae*) which measures about 2.5 millimeter (0.1 inch) in length, on California Bush Sunflower (*Encelia californica*).

preys on it.

As part of the biological inventory project at Madrona Marsh Preserve, a number of these beneficial parasitoid wasp families have been identified, including: Eulophid Wasps (*Eulophidae*), see Figure 1, and Diapriinid Wasps (*Diapriinidae*), see Figure 2.

Having such para-



Figure 2—Female Diapriinid Wasp (*Diapriinidae*), with fringed wing edges, which has a mature length of about 1 millimeter (0.04 inch).

Shirley's Turn

—Shirley Turner

My favorite magazine that I keep renewing is *Birder's World*. It was suggested to me by Martin Byhower. I look at the pictures, turn the pages, read, and it is like a bird walk. Eldon Greij is a founding editor. In the April 2010 issue he writes about "Biological Clocks: How ingenious internal clocks help birds anticipate critical life events." Birds have accurate calendars, an excellent environmental cue they can use to check off the hours of night and day. The length of light and dark photoperiods has been simulated with ink over the bird's forehead for one test of the clock.

I'll copy the article and leave at the Nature Center for you to read and learn more about this very technical subject when you visit the Marsh.

The spring activities of birds in response to the clock are most visible just as trees are sending out new leaves. This leads me back to the December 2009 issue's Bookshelf interview of David Allen Sibley, "Identifying trees from a distance." You can read the entire transcript of interview by Editor Chuck Hagner on blog *Birder's World Field of View* (www.BirdersWorld.com). The 464-page book, *The Sibley Guide to Trees* is \$39.95. It took seven years to produce the book. Most of that time was spent on the 4,000 paintings of 668 commonly planted trees found in the temperate zone north of Mexico. The paintings reveal what to look for in identifying trees from a distance, as all of his bird books do for identifying birds.

Many trees are shown bare as they would be in winter, while other pages show close-ups of leaves etc. He also shows how the families of trees are similar. To save time he took a great many photographs and uses these for reference. He did travel to the west coast and south but he studied a lot around Boston. Some of these locations I have observed as well. He hopes people will get a sturdy backpack and carry both guides.

Did you participate in Backyard Bird Count? John Small called to ask if I had and how many did I see? He saw 38 species. I hear several species and wish I had studied the songs and calls better. I would love to take Ron and Tracy's special class on the subject.

Enjoy the street pull-off on Madrona Avenue even for a short time, either alone or with kids or grandkids. It's yours to take care of and find hope for the world.

Friends...

sitoids around is an indication of the health of the ecosystem, as they help keep the system in balance. In other words, a large biodiversity, including parasitoids, minimizes the chance of a potential pest species going out of control.

Feathered Friends Flock to E-Fair (along with hundreds of humans)

—Tracy Drake

I stood at the top of the front stairs leading into the Nature Center and slowly surveyed the parking lot. It was crowded. No wonder; the Second Annual Torrance Environmental Fair was in full-swing. Hundreds of people came to look at the information booths and ask about the latest happenings in the “Greening” Southern California. How encouraging it was to see so much interest in solar panels, recycling, composting, using recycled products, carbon neutral transportation, and conserving our precious natural resources.

As I stood there, the gentle sounds of Jon Sherman’s flute playing wafted towards me—sounding like Carlos Nakai’s native flute music mixed with natural bird sounds one can frequently hear in our local wetlands, including this one. From his solar acoustic amplifier came the sounds of a Kestrel calling, then another Kestrel call. But I immediately noticed the sounds came from two different contrasting directions! Curious, I followed the sounds which led me to Ann Lynch’s South Bay Wildlife Rehab booth where three species of owls and a Peregrine Falcon were silently perched. Then, I noticed perched in the far left side of the booth, a live Kestrel. I watched as it raptly responded to Jon’s music —calling back to an unseen companion. He (it was a beautiful male) appeared curious and content to interact with another apparently live Kestrel.

As the day waned, and the end of the Fair grew closer, a stunning bright-yellow male Lesser Goldfinch zoomed a few feet overhead, above several of the booths, then perched and started singing in the Cape Myrtle tree between the Living Christmas Tree booth and the Nature Center. I listened to his mournful-sounding song and wondered if anyone else saw or heard him.

The bright yellow of this bird matched the bright yellow shirts of the Leo Club Volunteers. Seventy members of this junior Lions Club, comprised mostly of high school and middle school students, helped set up tables and chairs, assist in booths and take down the tables and chairs for the entire Environmental Fair. This sounds like a fairly easy task, but it wasn’t. They moved over one hundred heavy display tables and two hundred chairs from inside the Nature Center to our parking lot and back again. During the Fair, the Leo group assisted the vendors on an as-needed basis! Their youthful energy and exuberance helped to make the Fair very special. We thank them for their continued dedication and support, not only to our Preserve but also to the community.



Leo Club Volunteers bring energy (and muscle) to assist at the Environmental Fair.



“Storm” Continued from page 1.

will need to remove some of the tules in the wet season—and that is now.

So, maybe you have already noticed we had to drain the southernmost part of the wetlands back into the sump. For the next few weeks we will be carefully removing excess tules. Once this is done, we will pump the water back up to the Preserve. And, if the temperature holds steady through the next few months, we will continue to have water in the wetlands through at least the middle of July. (See Bill Arrowsmith’s related article on page 2.)

If you have any questions about this process, please call Tracy, Manager/Naturalist (310) 782-3989.—T.D.

Madrona Marsh Preserve and Nature Center

Schedule of Events*

April-July 2010

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1 10 am- Tyke Hike	2	3 8:45 am-12 n-Habitat Restor. 8:45am-Student Serv.Learning 10 am-12 n- "Fragrant Flowers"/ Dr.Vadheim 12 n-3 pm-Garden Tea Party & Native Plant Sale
4	CLOSED 5 Connie Vadheim Art Exhibit Begins	6 8:30 am-Tour d' Torrance 10 am-12 n-Weeders 10 am-12 n- "Fragrant Flowers"/Dr.Vadheim	7 10 am-12 n-Habitat-Weeders	8 10:30 am-12:30 pm-Propagation Society	9	10 8:45 am-12 n-Habitat Restor. 8:45am-Student Serv. Learning
11 2 - 4 pm-Second Sunday Science- "Spring Migration"	12 CLOSED	13 10 am-12 n-Weeders 9-11 am-Mornings on the Marsh	14 8 am- Bird Walk/ Bob Shanman 10-12 noon-Habitat Restoration-Weeders 7:15-9 pm-FOMM Board Meeting	15	16	17 8:45 am-12 n-Habitat Restor. 8:45am-Student Serv. Learning 7:30-9:30-pm-Star Party
18	19 CLOSED	20 8:30 am-Tour d' Torrance 10 am-12 n-Weeders 7 pm- Audubon Mtg.	21 10-12 n-Weeders 5:30-6:30 pm- MMF Meeting	22 10:30 am-12:30 pm-Propagation Society	23 6:30-8:30 pm- Dr. Connie Vadheim Artist Reception**	24 8:45 am-12 n-Habitat Restor. 8:45am-Student Serv. Learning 10 am-12 n-Nature Walk 8:30 am-12 n-Earth Day
25 10 am-Nature Walk	26 CLOSED	27 10 am-12 n-Weeders	28 10-12 n-Weeders	29	30	

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.*

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						1 8:45 am-12 n-Hab.Restor. 8:45-Student Serv.Learning 10 am-12n- "Year-Round Color"/Dr. Vadheim-
2 1-4 pm-Kill Your Lawn	3 CLOSED	4 8:30 am- Tour d' Torrance 10 am-12 n-Weeders 6:30-8:30- "Year Round Color"/Dr. Connie Vadheim	5 10 am-12 n-Habitat Restoration-Weeders	6 10 am- Tyke Hike	7 10-11:30-am- Friday Fun	8 8:45 am-12 n-Habitat Restor. 8:45am-Student Serv.Learning 1-1:30 pm- Story-time for Kids
9 2-4 pm- 2nd Sunday Science- (fee) "Where Did Dinosaurs Come From?"	10 CLOSED	11 9 am-Mornings on the Marsh 10 am-12 n-Habitat Restoration-Weeders	12 8 am-Bird Walk /Bob Shanman 10 am-12 n-Habitat Restoration-Weeders 7:15-9 pm- FOMM Board Meeting	13 10:30 am-12:30 pm-Propagation Society	14 10-11:30-am- Friday Fun	15 8:45am-12 n-Habitat Restor. 8:45am-Student Serv.Learning 1-4 pm-Introduction to Astronomy
16 10 am- Nature Walk	17 CLOSED	18 8:30 am- Tour d' Torrance 10 am-12 n-Weeders 7 p.m.-Audubon Mtg.	19 10 am-12 n-Habitat Restoration-Weeders 5:30-6:30 p.m.- MMF Board Meeting	20	21 10-11:30-am- Friday Fun	22 8:45 am-12 n-Hab.Restor. 8:45am-Student Serv.Learning 10 am-Nature Walk 7:30-9:30 pm-Night Hike
23 10 am- Nature Walk	24 CLOSED	25 10 am-12 n-Weeders Bill Wassenberg Exhibit Begins**	26 10 am-12 n-Weeders	27 10:30 am-12:30 pm-Propagation Society	28 10-11:30-am- Friday Fun	29 8:45 am-12 n-Hab. Restor. 8:45 am-Student Serv.Learning
30	31 CLOSED					

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
	CLOSED	1 8:30 am- Tour d' Torrance 10 am-12 n-Weeders	2 10 am-12 n-Habitat Restoration-Weeders	3 10 am- Tyke Hike	4 10-11:30-am- Friday Fun	5 8:45 am-12 n-Habitat Restor. 8:45 am-Student Serv.Learning 10 am-12 n- "Ponds & Pools"/ Dr.Vadheim
6	CLOSED	7 9 am-Mornings on the Marsh 6:30-8:30 pm- "Ponds & Pools"/ Dr. Vadheim 10 am-12 n-Weeders	8 8 am- Bird Walk/Bob Shanman 10 am-12 n-Weeders 7:15-9 pm- FOMM Board Meeting	9	10 10:30 am- 12:30 pm- Propagation Society	11 10-11:30-am- Friday Fun 6:30-8:30 pm- Bill Wassenberg Artist Reception**
2-4 pm- 2nd SundayScience- "Featuring Frogs"	CLOSED	13 8:30 am- Tour d' Torrance 10 am-12 n-Weeders 7 pm-Audubon meets	14 10 am-12 n-Weeders 5:30-6:30 pm- MMF Board Meeting	15	16 10:30 am- 12:30 pm- Propagation Society	17 10-11:30-am- Friday Fun
18	CLOSED	19 10 am-12 n-Habitat Restoration-Weeders	20 10 am-12 n-Weeders	21	22 10-11:30-am- Friday Fun	23 8:45 am-12 n-Habitat Restor. 8:45-Student Serv. Learning 8-10 pm-Star Party
24	CLOSED	25 10 am-12 n-Habitat Restoration-Weeders	26 10 am-12 n-Weeders	27	28 10-11:30-am- Friday Fun	29 8:45 am-12 n-Habitat Restor. 8:45-Student Serv. Learning 10 am- Nature Walk 8-9:30 pm- "Bugs of the Night"
10 a.m- Nature Walk	CLOSED	30 8:30 am- Tour d' Torrance	31 10 am-12 n-Junior Naturalist class 10 am-12 n-Weeders			

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.

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1 10 am- Tyke Hike	2 10-11:30-am- Friday Fun	3 8:45 am-12 n-Habitat Restor. 8:45am-Student Serv.Learning 10 am-12 n- "Promoting Pollinators"/Dr.Vadheim
4	CLOSED	5 8:30 am-Tour d'Torrance 10 am-12 n-Weeders 10 am-12 n-"Promoting Pollinators"/Dr.Vadheim	6 10 am-12 n-Habitat-Weeders 10 am-12 n-Junior Naturalist class	7 10:30 am- 12:30 pm- Propagation Society	8	9 10-11:30-am- Friday Fun
2 - 4 pm-Second Sunday Science- "Butterflies of Madrone"/Ron Melin	CLOSED	10 10 am-12 n-Weeders 9-11 am-Mornings on the Marsh Christiansen/Drake Exhibit begins	11 8 am- Bird Walk/ Bob Shanman 10-12 n-HabitatWeeders 10 am-12 n-Junior Naturalist class 7:15-9 pm-FOMM Board Meeting	12	13 10-11:30-am- Friday Fun	14 8:45 am-12 n-Habitat Restor. 8:45am-Student Serv. Learning 10 am-12 n-Annual Butterfly Count Class
15	CLOSED	16 8:30 am- Tour d'Torrance 10 am-12 n-Weeders 7 pm- Audubon Mtg.	17 10 am-12 n-Junior Naturalist class 10-12 n-Weeders 5:30-6:30 pm- MMF Meeting	18 10:30 am-12:30 pm-Propagation Society	19 10-11:30-am- Friday Fun	20 8:45 am-12 n-Habitat Restor. 8:45am-Student Serv. Learning 10 am-12 n-Nature Walk
21	CLOSED	22 10 am-12 n-Weeders	23 10 am-12 n-Junior Naturalist class 10-12 n-Weeders	24	25 6:30-8:30- Christiansen/ Drake Artist Reception**	26 8:45 am-12 n-Habitat Restor. 8:45am-Student Serv. Learning 10 am-12 n-Nature Walk
10 am-Nature Walk	CLOSED	27 10 am-12 n-Weeders	28 10 am-12 n-Junior Naturalist class 10-12 n-Weeders	29	30	31

JULY

Guaranteeing Our Future

—Bill Arrowsmith

Gee, that's a strange title. We know there are no true guarantees in life, other than the old standbys, Death and Taxes. But we also know that there are steps we can take to make our life more secure.

And the same is true for our organization, and the fine set of education and restoration programs for the Preserve that we have helped Manager Tracy Drake develop. Through the joint support of the Friends and the City of Torrance these programs are thriving. But we have only to look at the recent economic downturn to realize how quickly things can change. This can be especially true for our city governments, as the State continues its struggles.

Realizing this, FOMM has begun its own efforts to create an endowment. We are trying to set aside enough money that the interest or investment returns would support future programs on the Preserve, even if the City occasionally runs short. It's a nice dream, but a huge effort for 'us common folk' who don't know too many billionaires.

It was the reason for the creation, three years ago, of the Madrona Marsh Foundation. The idea was that the Foundation could focus on creating an endowment, leaving the Friends to focus on restoration and educational programs. But the Foundation has found this a difficult task, also, and has decided to take a hiatus and re-evaluate their approach. For the immediate future, fund-raising operations will be handled by the Friends' new Fund Raising Committee, chaired by Suzan Hubert. Their next big event will be the "Moonlight Magic on the Marsh" dinner on October 23, 2010 (see accompanying notice), and Foundation members have been invited to participate.

It's not an easy task to raise large sums of money, but the enthusiasm and perseverance of Suzan's committee, including Bobbie Snyder, Mary Garrity, and Sarah Noddings gives us all confidence that it can be done; but maybe not as quickly as some had hoped.

I thought of this last week when our treasurer, Ellen Peterson, told me that the Friends of Madrona Marsh had been named as a beneficiary of the Samuel and Adelaide Rockwood Living Trust in the amount of \$5000. I don't know the Rockwoods, but Madrona Marsh will certainly benefit from their generosity. In fact, if all the current membership of the Friends remembered us in their wills, Living Trusts and Charitable Remainder

Trusts, even for an average of \$3000, we would have the money we need to fund a permanent endowment. The strength of our organization has always come from our individual members. "The Rockwoods did it, and the Marsh will benefit. Have you made the Friends of Madrona Marsh a beneficiary yet?"



➤-save the date-◀

"Moonlight Magic on Madrona Marsh"

October 23, 2010

6:00 pm

Festivities include food, music, entertainment and dancing. Opportunity drawings for gift baskets, live and silent auctions of unusual items.



Photo by Mark Comon



A Poem to the Reader

—Beth Shibata

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[Last November I read this poem and, like a really good book or movie, it sort of haunts me. I watch hundreds of people visit the Preserve each month and I wonder what they see. Do they see the Preserve the way I do? How is the Preserve enjoyed by our visitors? I really do not know, but what I do know is it is enjoyed. Please read this poem, let it rest and then read it again later. What does it say to you? —Tracy]

You may have come here to discover
Nature raw and unprocessed.
You believe Nature lives here
in this spot, hidden in these open acres
set aside to turn back the clock
and bury generations of changes
in soft sandy soil.
You would be right and wrong.

Nature is here trying to recall
how it used to be before
civilizations transformed the landscape.
And still it remains a sacred haven
for surviving wildlife and weary
winged travelers on ancient migrations,
a place where the old ways echo
through the swaying tule.

And as important as this parcel
of Nature is as a haven for so many souls—

“What’s Happening. . .” *Continued from page 3.*

It has been sad, watching our lovely, still very full Marsh lose so much of its water. But the good news is that, once the tules have been properly thinned, we can pump most of that water back onto the Marsh. Tracy and Chris Noddings did a great job of placing sandbags along the center road, keeping much of the northern water pools intact. The Friends were pleased to be able to pay for the initial tule clearing, which had to be done more quickly than the wheels of city government allowed. And we are very pleased to know that Los Angeles West Vector Control and our Preserve Manager are working together to assure our Preserve is a safe and healthy environment for us and our children and grandchildren.

(As a postscript: In over 35 years of walking the Preserve, working restoration projects and leading tours and even night hikes, I have never seen a mosquito; nor have I ever been bitten while on the Preserve, and I’m usually a mosquito magnet. That doesn’t mean

or perhaps because of it—
you may overlook the Nature in the ficus
standing beside you, in the crabgrass
flourishing in the crack in the sidewalk
at your feet, in a crow’s rough laughter,
and where it resides within you.

But for now, immerse yourself in this Nature—
the kind your ancient memory knows.

From Sankaku, Shikaku, Maru —An Interpretation of the Madrona Marsh Preserve.

Copies of Beth’s poems can be purchased at the Nature Center gift shop for \$10 each with partial proceeds going to the Friends.



Heavy duty “housekeeping” on the Marsh

mosquitoes are not present on the Marsh, but it does support the notion that we, with L.A. County West Vector Control’s direction, have done a fairly good job of keeping them under control.)-B.A.

elelele

Mosquito Trivia

These Q/A’s were taken from the website of the L.A. County West Vector Control District (www.lawestvector.org):

1. How long does it take for a mosquito larva to turn into an adult mosquito when it is warm outside?
 - a few hours
 - a few days
 - a few months
2. Mosquitoes lay eggs in water that:
 - is chlorinated and filtered, like a swimming pool
 - is moving quickly, like a river
 - is standing still

[Answers: 1. a few days; 2. is standing still]

“Chocolates” Continued from page 1

seen before. I’ve also been told that the larvae look completely different, too. I am still hoping that another school child will find one of these for me!

Children not only find the smallest creatures but also create the most magical moments. I was recently giving a tour to a group that was excited (and talkative) as our tours usually are. This was one of the first tours that was able to make use of the recently dried road that leads from the sheds to the sump. I had been watching a pair of mallards here for the past two months and usually they scuttled away as soon as I approached, especially when I approached with a large group.

This morning, to my surprise, they did not leave when we moved near. Instead, as we came around the corner, I held up my hand and all the children became quiet. We stood there for several minutes in silence as we watched the mallards feed, preen, and quietly talk, chirp, and quack to each other. I had never before been this close to this pair, especially with a group, and I still cherish and celebrate that moment we all shared together.

We Put the FUN in Fundraising!

The 2010 Moonlight Magic Fund Raising Committee; Bobbie, Bob, Mary and Suzan invite you to join the party. We need help with invitations, publications, decorations, thank you letters, advertising, electrical hook-ups, layout, liaison with caterers and other fun stuff.

Please call Suzan and join the party 310-329-0073 or suzanhubert@sbcglobal.net

If you enjoy the Marsh or children, I urge you to consider volunteering as a docent. I am hard-pressed to think of a better way to spend a morning. After all, it was a school tour of the Preserve when I was a child that first opened my eyes to the greater environment and made me interested in working to protect and preserve it.

With hundreds of school tours given to thousands of school children every year, I would like to believe that I am now one of many helping to educate the next generation about the value of our wild places. Will you join me? —**C.N.**

Ed. Note: Chris Noddings has been on staff as a Senior Recreation Leader since May of 2007. Chris earned his BA with honors from UC San Diego in Environmental Systems: Public Policy, in 2004; he earned his Masters in 2009 from the Bren School of Environmental Science and Management.

Artists' Corner

Works of local artists and photographers inspired by the beauty of the Madrona Marsh are regularly on display at the Nature Center. Everyone is invited to attend each artist's reception where the artist talks about his/her work or gives a demonstration. Snacks and beverages are included.

Through May 21 - **Dr. Connie Vadheim**, “A Photography Exhibit.” Artist Reception-Friday April 23, 6:30-8:30 p.m.

May 25-July 9 - **Bill Wassenberg**, “Watercolor of the Marsh,” An Exhibit of Paintings. Artist Reception -Friday, June 11, 6:30-8:30 p.m.

July 13-August 27 - **Mark Christiansen and Tracy Drake**, “A Study of Spring,” An Exhibit of Paintings and Photography. Artist Reception-Friday, July 30, 6:30-8:30 p.m.

Donations-\$100 or More First Quarter 2010

<u>Date</u>	<u>Who</u>	<u>Donation</u>	<u>Comments</u>
Jan. 2	James Justiss	\$400	Applied for matching gift funds from Boeing
Jan. 3	Sharon Angelos/ITG	\$120	Applied for Matching Funds program at her company, ITG
Jan. 22	Joannie Spring	\$200	Sales of Joannie Spring's Marsh Calendar
Jan. 22	Norman and Suzanne George	\$200	
Jan. 23	Mrs. Crystal MacDonell	\$100	
Feb.1	Irma Ruiz	\$200	
Feb.1	New Horizon Conservation Club	\$100	
Feb. 24	Kathleen & Edward Lahey	\$150	
Mar. 10	Georgian Griswold	\$110	

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