

**Winter 2016**

# Marsh Mailing

Madrona Marsh Preserve and Nature Center

Marsh Mailing is also available in full color at [www.friendsofmadronamarsh.com](http://www.friendsofmadronamarsh.com)

## Friday Mornings, You Just Never Know . . .

*Suzan Hubert, President*

It's the beginning of 2016 and I was thinking back on the past years trying to choose what to write about. I couldn't decide so I figured, why choose? Why not just write about everything and anything I experienced volunteering at the Marsh!

It all started for me in 2007 when Linda Brown asked if I would help out in the gift shop for a few hours one Sunday a month. I'm still there, the third Sunday of the month. I'm learning how to use the new chip reader for credit sales and I'm invited to join Bobbie Snyder, the shop manager and FOMM Vice President, at the January LA Gift Show where we choose new merchandise. Bobbie and I are in a world unto ourselves at the Convention Center where the Gift Show is held; it's enormous! We arrive about 9 a.m., find a parking space by the front door (Bobbie has parking karma), then spend all day being only slightly distracted by "OOOH shiny!" things, only to walk outside and wonder how it could be dark.

A few years back, I started volunteering at the front desk Friday mornings. Whenever I walk into the Nature Center on Friday I am always astonished by all the unusual opportunities I have; some good, others not so much, but there's always something to make my sun shine. One Friday Tracy asked me if I would do data entry into eBird.org. This is an important

record kept by Cornell University and monitored by Kimball Garret, of LA Museum of Natural History; we provide reports of birds seen in the Preserve. I figured I could do that so I said yes. It went very well until one very busy, noisy Friday when I made so many mistakes that the Museum people called Tracy to query, "Did we really see Flamingos?" Okay, it wasn't THAT bad, but Tracy found someone else to handle data entry for eBird. I figured data entry is just not high on my skill set.

Several years ago Bobbie Snyder, Mary Garrity and I discovered we are pretty good at putting the **fun** in fundraising. This year (Mary moved away), Bobbie and I, along with local telescope manufacturer Celestron and the FOMM Board, hosted a September Total Lunar Eclipse Fundraising Party. Bobbie and I usually go to the city council to promote our fundraisers; for this one we learned to Moon Walk. We were pretty good...well we weren't awful anyway. In keeping with our tradition, there was a lot of howling at the moon during that eclipse!

Another adventure is leading the Docent Tours for students during the school year. This was something I really wanted to do despite having a lot of reservations. I had toured the Preserve with Bob Shanman, Bill Arrowsmith and Tracy...can't touch that!! I took the Docent

*"Friday ..." continued on page 2*



*Torrance Elementary School fourth graders are the first to cross the newly constructed observation bridge on the southwest corner of the Preserve. The bridge was built by staff member David Jamieson.*

**Annual Meeting  
Friends of Madrona Marsh**

**Sunday, January 31, 3 p.m.**

**See page 5 for Agenda**

"Friday..." continued from page 1.

Classes, teamed up with other Docents who were just as leery as I, and we all shared our experiences. I always feel so totally great when leading a student tour. I am no Bob, Bill or Tracy, yet I always play to my audience and the children usually catch my enthusiasm. We talk about and explore what they are interested in; sometimes I add to their knowledge and sometimes we wonder together. I believe wonder is an important part of learning.

Sometimes Cindy Reid asks me to take her Friday Fun class of three-to-four year olds on their walk. Recently we were searching for the particular leaves they had studied in class. We found all but one of the leaves, then we found huge piles of old crunchy leaves which we gleefully threw all over each other and got wonderfully filthy. When I said, "We will have to tell Ms. Cindy we couldn't find oval leaves," the children responded, "We don't have to tell her that; we just have to keep looking." What a concept; never give up! Ms. Cindy, along with her assistants Stacy and Lore are doing some wonderful things with the Friday Fun classes.

On another Friday Tracy asked me if I would organize about a hundred volunteers to paint the Preserve fence along Plaza Del Amo the following Sunday. Wow! Not something I do every day but I cheerfully agreed since Dinuk Magamma would be working with me and I had faith we'd figure it out.

That was one of my best Sundays ever; quite a Tom Sawyer moment. Dinuk and I greeted our hundred volunteers, explained our purpose and identified the project goals: Scrape, sand, primer and paint the fence. We asked for and got four outstanding gentlemen from our crew who had painting experience to be our Quality Control Officers and we were off.

Gosh, it was just excellent! Some groups were even singing while they worked. Dinuk and I passed out supplies, cookies and heaps of gratitude. When we were done, everyone was high fiving and we all felt so good about what we had accomplished. Now

*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, [FrاندBill@att.net](mailto:FrاندBill@att.net) or Editor, Diane Gonsalves at [gonwild2@yahoo.com](mailto:gonwild2@yahoo.com) or may be dropped off or mailed to the Nature Center, P.O. Box 5078, Torrance, CA 90510.

you go walk along the Plaza Del Amo fence; looks pretty good, right? Apparently, team building is in my skill set.

A few weeks ago I walked into the Nature Center and asked, "What's next?" Tracy said, "Morning Suzan, do you think you could organize the construction of habitats for Burrowing Owls?"

Honestly, I didn't have a clue what that would entail. I figured there must be an instruction manual somewhere, so I said, "sure." I'm working with grounds manager Ed Vandever on this project, which is good because power tools are involved and me with a power tool is not a good idea. I have or had the toes to prove that. Thus far we have scoped out locations, settled on an approved design, secured the barrels for nesting chambers and ordered materials for tunnels.

Thank you Stacy Herman for finding a source for donated materials. More to be revealed on this project! We will be ready for the owls when they migrate through next year.

The past few Fridays I've met some nice students from LA Southwest College doing research for a geography paper. Apparently, they have an instructor who suggested the Marsh as a source of information. I have learned to recognize these students when they walk in the door: Bewildered looks, hesitant steps, glazed eyes. I take them through the Exhibit Hall and start them 60 million years ago when this land was sea floor. The wall murals explain the movement of the earth plates forming the land. I walk them through the land uses—hunting, gathering, farming; the Tongva people, the Spanish, the European settlers, all the way to oil and condos. It's wondrous to watch them leave with plans for a well-researched paper and big smiles.

And that's just a few of the adventures, the rewards and just plain fun of volunteering at this extraordinary place. Am I volunteering? Am I working? Or am I just having a wonderful time? That's something I don't have to figure out. I just show up and later walk away with a really big smile. What can 2016 bring? I will just stay open, walk in every Friday and let excitement find me. I am so grateful I wandered into this amazing adventure.

I most sincerely hope the New Year finds you all with many opportunities, and if you're feeling pulled toward adventure... I'll see you at the Marsh!-



# The Mourning Cloak

by Vincent Lloyd

For some, it's the first few flowers of the new year; for others, the clack of baseball bats; but for me the first sign of spring is the appearance of the Mourning Cloak, fluttering about while other butterflies are still home in bed. It looks unlike any other butterfly as well: Chocolate brown, edged in yellow with a row of blue spots inside the margin. It's found all over North America, from the Arctic to northern Mexico. Here in Southern California we are near the southern limit of its range. It also occurs in temperate Eurasia—breeding across most of Europe but not, oddly, in Britain where it's considered something of a rarity.

The British have a special name for it: Camberwell Beauty; so-called because it was first noticed in England in Camberwell in south London in the summer of 1748. Otherwise, in the Germanic-speaking world, it is known by a term that evokes a garment worn at funerals: Trauermantel in Germany, Sorgmantel in Sweden, and Mourning Cloak in North America. Perhaps the name was brought to America by German or Scandinavian immigrants.

The Mourning Cloak (*Nymphalis antiopa*) belongs to the Nymphalidae, the family of brush-footed butterflies. They get their name because their two front legs, covered with brush-like hairs, are much reduced and held close to the body; consequently they stand on just four legs instead of six like most insects. The genus *Nymphalis* also includes the tortoiseshells such as the California Tortoiseshell. Closely related is the genus *Vanessa*, which includes the Red Admiral. The specific name *antiopa* is a name from Greek mythology; it possibly refers to the nymph Antiopa, the mother of the Pierides—nine maidens who challenged the Muses and, after being defeated, were turned into magpies.

The Mourning Cloak has an interesting life cycle. Unlike butterflies such as the Monarch, which migrate south in the winter, the Mourning Cloak hibernates during the winter. It will snuggle down inside some bark where the coloration of its underside makes it nearly invisible. The reason it's one of the first butterflies seen in the spring is because it doesn't have to travel—it's already here! Mating occurs in the spring.

The female deposits a bunch of eggs which are wrapped around the twig of a tree. Their favorite trees are willows, although they like cottonwood and elm trees as well—even aspen in the mountains. The larvae stay together after hatching and munch on the leaves as a group. After going through five molts, the mature caterpillar is black with red spots and is covered with black spines. Don't touch it. It's said that the spines can irritate the skin.

The pupa looks rather like a dead leaf. The adult emerges in May or June (later in the East). It feeds mainly on tree sap; oak trees are its favorite.



Photo by Richard Seaman ([www.richard-seaman.com](http://www.richard-seaman.com))

During the heat of the summer, the adult goes dormant, and then reawakens in the fall; this is why the Mourning Cloak is seen most often in the spring and fall. When winter sets in, the adult goes into hibernation, so the butterflies that emerge in the spring actually hatched the year before. Sadly, after mating, they soon die. But their adult lifetime of ten to twelve months makes the Mourning Cloak a Methuselah among butterflies!

Correction: A previous story stated that the Nymphalidae include the swallowtail butterflies. One of our readers, a Miss Annie S. Wallhotel, of No. 3 Black Willow, lower Madrona Marsh, writes, "I beg your pardon; I walk on six legs like any respectable butterfly, and wouldn't ever be seen with those crippled brush-foots!" We stand corrected; the swallowtails belong to the family Papilionidae.

## Thank You

## Lunar Eclipse Fundraiser

We would like to send our sincere thank you to all those who contributed to the success of our September Total Lunar Eclipse Fundraiser. THANK YOU to our sponsor Celestron, our outstanding helpers during the event, the presenters, those who attended, those who howled at the moon with us and... all those wonderful folks who stayed and helped clean up.

**Bobbie Snyder and Suzan Hubert**

# Beginner Birding K-101

by Stacy Herman

A grin of gleaming white teeth greeted me as I pulled into the Madrona Marsh Nature Center parking lot. Hopping up and down, five-year-old Addy grabbed her beginner birder's book, stood still for the few seconds it took to drape a pair of binoculars around her neck, and raced for the traffic light so she could push the button.

As soon as we crossed the street, Addy stopped, distracted by the bird calls overhead. She plopped herself down on the sidewalk, tilted her head to determine which way the sound was coming from, pointed to a tree alongside the Marsh gates, and pulled out her book with pen poised to record her sighting. A crow... check.

Calling hungrily from a tree further on in the Marsh, we spotted a Red-tailed Hawk... check. A Red-winged Blackbird sounded in the tules and flew out unexpectedly, flashing red... check. A Yellow Warbler sang, attracting Addy's attention, gliding in and out of branches, looking like a "yellow highlighter"... check. A melodious, brilliantly-red House Finch sang from a treetop... check. As each bird was spotted, Addy sat down to "write" her sightings, looking for the photo in her guidebook and meticulously checking it off, then writing the month in bold capital letters. She was excited to find all of these birds in her book—within the first five minutes of our walk—and her excitement was infectious.

Using binoculars—and having to stand still to spot and focus—quickly lost its initial appeal. Addy informed us she could, of course, see the birds without binoculars. Given that the Marsh is a perfect place to bird without binoculars, we thought it more important to keep her interested than to insist she try to use them. We discovered that our usual method of signaling the location of a bird using an imaginary clock-face was lost on a digital-age five-year-old, as was "left" and "right." Standing behind her and pointing along her line of sight worked best.

We came upon Mallards with their ducklings "all in a row," paddling quickly away after Addy "quacked" at them... check (the check was delayed a bit by our explanation that quacking would frighten the ducks). Addy contented herself by waddling down the path.

While we were gazing across the grassland, a head popped up and then another. Canada Geese... check. We quietly walked closer and were rewarded with the sight of two pairs of Canada Geese and their goslings eating seeds a few steps from the path. Addy wanted to know how to tell a Mommy goose from a Daddy goose. Good question. She stumped us. Further research indicates the difference lies in the shape of their tails, and the sound of their honks. Fortunately, no honking was involved; the "quack" explanation had been effective.

Addy's sharp eyes noticed everything. Not only birds, but flowers, lizards and insects of all kinds. She tip-toed around the Harvester Ant nests and side-stepped beetles crossing the path. Harlequin Bugs fascinated her and she circled the Bladderpod finding bugs in different life stages from "tiny cute" to "huge." She again asked how to tell a Mommy from a Daddy (Harlequin), and again, I had to admit I didn't know.

Snowy Egrets gracefully landed in the water... check. Addy wanted to know why the feathers were sticking out from their heads—bad hair day? California Towhees hopped around below the bushes... check. Why were they on the ground and not in a tree?

Given the attention span of a five-year-old, I figured Addy would last, if we were lucky, about an hour before she was tired, hungry, hot, bored, cranky. To our surprise, we stayed out on the Marsh much longer and kept her engaged by pointing out the different ways birds were behaving, how and why the male and female birds looked different (with the exception of the Canada Geese), guiding her through a sunflower tunnel, and examining the bugs, plants and flowers.

Describing a Matilija Poppy as looking like a fried egg reminded her lunch-time was approaching, but we distracted her by coaxing our normally stoic, long-legged leader (obviously not me), into skipping with her down the path.

Still smiling, and reinforced by the promise of lunch, Addy led us back to the parking lot. Climbing into her car seat, she insisted on rolling down the window to say her good-byes, and asked, "When are we going again?"

It was refreshing to explore the Marsh at Addy's eye level and gratifying to help make her first birding experience positive and fun... check.

## What's New at FOMM Nature Center Gift Shop?

We now have a nice assortment of Celestron star, moon and planet viewing gear.

Have you got a copy our "Common Birds of the Madrona Marsh Preserve" yet? It was produced by our own birders and docents and Preserve Manager Tracy Drake. We proudly carry it, and other local authors' and artists' works as well.

We have lots of neat stuff. Come on in and browse.

**Bobbie Snyder**  
FOMM Gift Shop Manager

# Annual Meeting Friends of Madrona Marsh

*Sunday, January 31, 3 p.m.  
Madrona Marsh Nature Center*

- *Welcome and Introductions – President Suzan Hubert*
- *Election of Four Board Members*

*Candidates:*

- *Bobbie Snyder*
- *Carol Roelen*
- *Jeanne Bellemin*
- *Steve Giffin*

*The Board also has one open position. Please contact a Board member if you are interested in serving on the Board*

- *Annual Report from Preserve Manager and Naturalist – Tracy Drake*
- *2015 FOMM Annual Report – President Hubert*
- *PROGRAM: Climate Change and Its Effect on Local Preserves and Gardens – Dr. Connie Vadheim*
- *Plans for 2016 and Closing Remarks – President Hubert*

*\*\*\* Light refreshments will be served \*\*\**

## Astonishing Early Christmas Present

A few weeks before Christmas, the most wonderful thing occurred: a Long Beach couple, very familiar to the Friends, stepped up to donate a new utility vehicle for the Preserve, plus a two-year service contract; a gift worth over \$9000. Here is the Thank-you message from Friends President Suzan Hubert:

To Joannie Spring and Karyn Holderbaum-Spring:  
*On behalf of the Friends of Madrona Marsh (FOMM), we thank you for your astonishing gift of a new electric cart! I believe I can speak for the Board and staff in saying we were all stunned by your generosity. As you probably know, the Nature Center and Preserve were in dire need of a new cart as the old one was on its last legs. The added donation of two years of service for this grand new vehicle was the icing on the cake. All donations to FOMM are used for the restoration, preservation and education programs of the Madrona Marsh. This donation will vastly improve staff ability to carry out restoration and preservation.*

*Thank you for supporting FOMM as together we continue to preserve this last 45 acres of wildland for future generations.*

*I offer a heartfelt "thank you" for your support and encouragement.*

## Donations of \$100 or More Fall 2015

Date	Donor	Donation	Comment
Sept.	The Horne's	\$100	
Sept.	Bobbie and Larry Snyder	\$685	
Oct.	Nancy and Frank Langdon	\$100	In memory of Jane Ellinwood
Nov.	Karen Peters	\$500	
Nov.	Clark Mitchell	\$308	Raytheon Employee Matching Program
Nov.	Richard E Kuhns	\$100	
Dec.	Stettenheim Foundation	\$500	Donation suggested by Wendy Jones, Board member of Stettenheim Foundation
Dec.	ExxonMobil Corporation	\$1,000	Match for hours of Volunteer Service by FOMM Board member Steve Giffin

## Madrona Marsh Preserve and Nature Center\*

### Schedule of Events for January through April 2016

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					<b>CLOSED FOR HOLIDAY</b> <sup>1</sup>	8:45 am-12 n-Hab.Restor. & Student.Service 10am-TBA-Dr. Vadheim <sup>2</sup>
<sup>3</sup>	<b>CLOSED</b> <sup>4</sup>	8:30 am-Tour d'Torrance 10 am-Adult Weeders <sup>5</sup>	10 am-Adult Weeders <sup>6</sup>	10 am-Tyke Hike -donation 10:30 Prop.Soc. 6:30-"TBA-Dr.Vadheim" <sup>7</sup>	10 am--12 n-Friday Fun-donation** 6:30-Recept.-Mark/Dinuk <sup>8</sup>	8:45 am-12 n-Hab.Restor. & Student.Service 6:30pm-Night Hike-fee <sup>9</sup>
<sup>10</sup>	<b>CLOSED</b> <sup>11</sup>	10 am-Adult Weeders <sup>12</sup>	8 am-Bird Walk/ Bob Shanman 10 am-Adult Weeders 6:30-8:30 pm-FOMM Board Meeting <sup>13</sup>	1pm-Sr. Naturalists 35+ 10:30-12:30-Prop. Society <sup>14</sup>	10 am--12n-Friday Fun-donation** <sup>15</sup>	8:45 am-12 n-Hab.Restor. & Student.Service 1:30 pm-Nature Origami 2 pm-Native Bees-fee <sup>16</sup>
<sup>17</sup>	<b>CLOSED</b> <sup>18</sup>	8:30 am-Tour d' Torrance 10 am-Adult Weeders 7 pm-Audubon Mtg. <sup>19</sup>	10 am-Adult Weeders <sup>20</sup>	10:30-12:30-Propagation Society <sup>21</sup>	10 am-Friday Fun-donation** Mark/Dinuk Exhibit Ends*** <sup>22</sup>	8:30 am-Bird Walk 8:45 am-12 n-Hab.Restor. 9 am-Nature's Watercolors 10 am - Nature Walk <sup>23</sup>
10 am. <sup>24</sup> Nature Walk	<b>CLOSED</b> <sup>25</sup>	10am-Home School Nature Class/Reid 10 am-Adult Weeders Libbrecht/Hurst Exhibit Begins*** <sup>26</sup>	10am-Home School Nature Class/Reid 10 am-Adult Weeders <sup>27</sup>	10:30-12:30-Propagation Society <sup>28</sup>	10 am--12 n-Friday Fun-donation** <sup>29</sup>	8:45 am-12 n-Hab. Restor. & Student Service <sup>30</sup>
3-pm-FOMM Annual Mtg. <sup>31</sup>						

## JANUARY

*\*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 11. For latest event information, see our newly upgraded website, [www.friendsofmadronamarsh.com](http://www.friendsofmadronamarsh.com).*

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	<b>CLOSED</b> <sup>1</sup>	8:30 am-Tour d'Torrance 10 am-Adult Weeders <sup>2</sup>	10 am-Adult Weeders <sup>3</sup>	10 am-Tyke Hike-donation 10:30-Prop. Society. <sup>4</sup>	10 am--12 n-Friday Fun-donation** <sup>5</sup>	8:45 am-12 n-Hab.Restor. & Student.Service 10am-"Trees, Shrubs..."-Dr.Vadheim <sup>6</sup>
<sup>7</sup>	<b>CLOSED</b> <sup>8</sup>	10 am-Adult Weeders <sup>9</sup>	8 am-Bird Walk/ Bob Shanman 10 am-Adult Weeders 6:30-8:30 pm-FOMM Board Meeting <sup>10</sup>	10:30 a.m.- Prop.Society 1pm-Sr.Naturalists- 35+ 6:30pm-"Trees"-Dr.Vadheim <sup>11</sup>	10 am--12 n-Friday Fun-donation** <sup>12</sup>	8:45am-12 n-Hab.Restor. & Student.Service 2-4pm-Valentine Potpourri 7-9pm-Star Party 9pm-12-Illum.Nature-fee <sup>13</sup>
<sup>14</sup>	<b>CLOSED</b> <sup>15</sup>	8:30 am-Tour d'Torrance 10 am-Adult Weeders 7 pm-Audubon Mtg. <sup>16</sup>	10 am-Adult Weeders <sup>17</sup>	10:30-12:30-Propagation Society <sup>18</sup>	10 am--12n-Friday Fun-donation** <sup>19</sup>	8:45 am-12 n-Hab.Restor. & Student.Service <sup>20</sup>
1-4-Libbrecht/HurstRecept.*** <sup>21</sup>	<b>CLOSED</b> <sup>22</sup>	10 am-Adult Weeders 10 am-Home School Nature Class/Reid <sup>23</sup>	10 am-Adult Weeders 10 am-Home School Nature Class/Reid <sup>24</sup>	10:30-12:30-Propagation Society <sup>25</sup>	10 am--12 n-Friday Fun-donation** <sup>26</sup>	8:30 am-Bird Walk 8:45 am-Hab.Restor. & Student.Service 10 am-Nature Walk 1pm-Tongva Toys <sup>27</sup>
10 am-Nature Walk <sup>28</sup>	<b>CLOSED</b> <sup>29</sup>					

## FEBRUARY

**Nature Center & Gift Shop**

**(310) 782-3989**

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		<u>1</u>	<u>2</u> 10 am-Adult Weeders	<u>3</u> 10 am-Tyke Hike -donation 10:30Prop.Soc.	10 am--12 n- <u>4</u> Friday Fun- donation** Libbrecht/Hurst Exhib.Ends.***	<u>5</u> 8:45 am-12 n- Hab.Restor.&StudentServ. 10am-"Native Foods..." -Dr. Vadheim
<u>6</u>	<u>7</u> <b>CLOSED</b>	<u>8</u> 8:30 am-Tour d'Torrance 10 am-Adult Weeders Hines Exhibit Begins***	<u>9</u> 8 am-Bird Walk/ Bob Shanman 10 am-Adult Weeders 6:30pm-FOMM Mtg	10:30-12:30- <u>10</u> Prop. Society 1pm-Sr. Natur- alists 35+ 6:30- Dr. Vadheim	10 am--12 n- <u>11</u> Friday Fun- donation**	<u>12</u> 8:45 am-12 n-Hab.Restor. & Student.Service 9pm-12-Illuminating Nature Through Art-fee
<u>13</u>	<u>14</u> <b>CLOSED</b>	<u>15</u> 10 am-Adult Weeders 7 pm-Audubon Mtg.	<u>16</u> 10 am-Adult Weeders	<u>17</u> 10:30-12:30- Propagation Society	10 am--12n- <u>18</u> Friday Fun- donation**	<u>19</u> 8:45 am-12 n-Hab.Restor. & Student.Service 1:30-Nature's Origami
<u>20</u>	<u>21</u> <b>CLOSED</b>	<u>22</u> 8:30 am-Tour d'Torrance 10 am-Adult Weeders 10 am-Home School Nature Class/Reid	<u>23</u> 10 am-Adult Weeders 10 am-Home School Nature Class/Reid	<u>24</u> 10:30-12:30- Propagation Society	10 am--12 n- <u>25</u> Friday Fun- donation** 6:30-Hines Reception***	<u>26</u> 8:30 am-Bird Walk 8:45 am-12 n-Hab.Restor. & Student.Service 10 am-Nature Walk
10 am. <u>27</u> Nature Walk	<u>28</u> <b>CLOSED</b>	<u>29</u> 10 am-Adult Weeders	<u>30</u> 10 am-Adult Weeders	<u>31</u> 10:30-12:30- Propagation Society		

**MARCH**

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Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					<u>1</u> 10 am--12n- Friday Fun- donation**	<u>2</u> 8:45 am-12 n-Hab.Restor. & Student.Service 10am--"Shrubs..." Dr. Vadheim
<u>3</u>	<u>4</u> <b>CLOSED</b>	<u>5</u> 8:30 am-Tour d'Torrance 10 am-Adult Weeders	<u>6</u> 10 am-Adult Weeders	<u>7</u> 10 am-Tyke Hike -donation 10:30 Prop.Soc. 6:30-"Shrubs"- Dr.Vadheim	10 am--12 n- <u>8</u> Friday Fun- donation**	<u>9</u> 8:45 am-12 n-Hab.Restor. & Student.Service 9pm-12-Illum.Nature-fee
<u>10</u>	<u>11</u> <b>CLOSED</b>	<u>12</u> 10 am-Adult Weeders	8 am-Bird Walk/ Bob Shanman 10 am-Adult Weeders 6:30-8:30 pm-FOMM Board Meeting	<u>13</u> 1pm-Sr. Naturalists 35+ 10:30-12:30- Prop. Society	10 am--12n- <u>14</u> Friday Fun- donation**	<u>15</u> 8:45 am-12 n-Hab.Restor. & Student.Service 8-10 pm-Star Party
<u>17</u>	<u>18</u> <b>CLOSED</b>	<u>19</u> 8:30 am-Tour d' Torrance 10 am-Adult Weeders 7 pm-Audubon Mtg.	<u>20</u> 10 am-Adult Weeders	<u>21</u> 10:30-12:30- Propagation Society	10 am--12 n- <u>22</u> Friday Fun- donation** Hines Exhibit Ends***	<u>23</u> 8:30 am-Bird Walk 8:45 am-12 n-Hab.Restor. 10 am - Nature Walk 6:30 pm-Night Hike
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**APRIL**

# New Insect Display for Madrona Marsh Nature Center

*By Jeanne Bellemin*

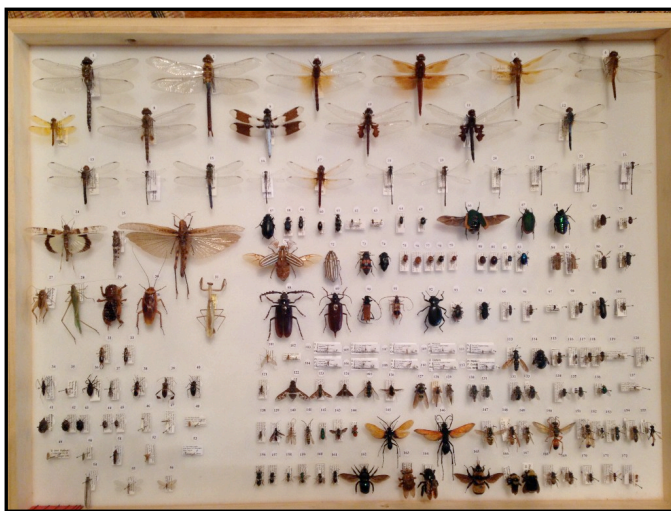
The new Insect Display has now been installed in the Exhibit Hall of the Nature Center. The story of its creation goes back to 2007 when the Medina Family Trust donated a sum of \$1,000 to honor Howard Medina, who had donated his insect collection to the Marsh in the 1970s.

Mrs. Lois Medina, who administered the Trust, wanted to support and encourage the study of insects at Madrona because her son Howard had so much enjoyed the insects here.



*David Faulkner with displays*

In spring of 2008 some of the money was used to purchase insect collecting and preserving equipment and drawers to enhance and expand the insect collection. Several of my El Camino College



*Insect Display*

Entomology students worked on the collection and it grew into several drawers stored in the Curation Lab. The board decided in spring 2014 that the rest of the donation money should be spent to



*Lepidoptera Display*

create a more public display of the Marsh insects. The board commissioned a two-case display for the Exhibit Hall, to be curated by David Faulkner, resident Entomologist at BioQuip. David was highly qualified for this task because he curated the insect collection of the San Diego Natural History Museum for 25 years.

Insects that occur at the Marsh are displayed in two wall-mounted display cases in the Exhibit Hall entrance area. One case contains the orders Odonata, Dermaptera, Orthoptera, Neuropter, Coleoptera, Diptera and Hymenoptera. The other case contains only Lepidoptera—the butterflies and moths—because they are so large when displayed with the wings spread.

Each insect in the display is numbered, and a key next to the display allows visitors to match the number to the insect's common name.

Many thanks to the Medina Family Trust for their generosity and to David Faulkner for his patient and skilled work. Please come see our new display so you may appreciate the insect diversity on the Marsh!



# Madrona Marsh Preserve Species List

One hundred seventy seven species of birds were spotted on the Preserve in 2015. This is the largest number of species seen in the past 15 years. There are tremendous birders who have contributed to this data. In total, this group birded the Preserve 261 days this year! The core surveyers are: Tracy Drake, Mark Rubke, David Moody, Ron Melin, Manuel and Alejandra Duran, Tony Strangarity, Dick McGreevy, Tommye Hite, Jeanne Bellemin, Eric Hansen and Dinuk Magamma.

Canada Goose	Wilson's Snipe	Loggerhead Shrike	Grasshopper Sparrow
Wood Duck	Red-necked Phalarope	Plumbeous Vireo	Chipping Sparrow
Gadwall	Bonaparte's Gull	Cassin's Vireo	Clay-colored Sparrow
American Wigeon	Ring-billed Gull	Hutton's Vireo	Brewer's Sparrow
<b>Mallard</b>	Western Gull	Warbling Vireo	Lark Sparrow
Blue-winged Teal	California Gull	Western Scrub-Jay	Fox Sparrow
Cinnamon Teal	Herring Gull	American Crow	Dark-eyed Junco
Northern Shoveler	Glaucous-winged Gull	Common Raven	White-crowned Sparrow
Northern Pintail	Caspian Tern	Northern Rough-winged Swallow	Golden-crowned Sparrow
Green-winged Teal	Rock Pigeon	Tree Swallow	White-throated Sparrow
Canvasback	Eurasian Collared-Dove	Violet-green Swallow	Vesper Sparrow
<i>Redhead</i>	<b>Mourning Dove</b>	Barn Swallow	Savannah Sparrow
Ring-necked Duck	Great Horned Owl	Cliff Swallow	<b>Song Sparrow</b>
Lesser Scaup	Lesser Nighthawk	<b>Bushtit</b>	Lincoln's Sparrow
<i>Bufflehead</i>	<i>Common Poorwill</i>	<b>House Wren</b>	<i>Swamp Sparrow</i>
<i>Hooded Merganser</i>	Vaux's Swift	Marsh Wren	<b>California Towhee</b>
Ruddy Duck	White-throated Swift	Bewick's Wren	<i>Spotted Towhee</i>
<b>Pied-billed Grebe</b>	Black-chinned Hummingbird	Blue-gray Gnatcatcher	Western Tanager
Double-crested Cormorant	<b>Anna's Hummingbird</b>	California Gnatcatcher	Black-headed Grosbeak
Great Blue Heron	<b>Allen's Hummingbird</b>	Ruby-crowned Kinglet	<b>Blue Grosbeak (first breeding)</b>
Great Egret	Belted Kingfisher	<b>Western Bluebird</b>	Lazuli Bunting
Snowy Egret	Acorn Woodpecker	Swainson's Thrush	<i>Indigo Bunting</i>
Green Heron	<i>Nuttall's Woodpecker</i>	Hermit Thrush	<b>Red-winged Blackbird</b>
Black-crowned Night-Heron	<b>Downy Woodpecker</b>	American Robin	<i>Tricolored Blackbird</i>
White-faced Ibis	Northern Flicker	<i>Varied Thrush</i>	Western Meadowlark
Turkey Vulture	American Kestrel	Sage Thrasher	Yellow-headed Blackbird
Osprey	Merlin	Northern Mockingbird	Brewer's Blackbird
White-tailed Kite	Peregrine Falcon	<b>European Starling</b>	Great-tailed Grackle
Sharp-shinned Hawk	Yellow-chevrons Parakeet	American Pipit	<b>Brown-headed Cowbird</b>
Cooper's Hawk	Mitred Parakeet	Cedar Waxwing	Hooded Oriole
Red-shouldered Hawk	<i>Red-masked Parakeet</i>	Phainopepla	Bullock's Oriole
<i>Swainson's Hawk (new MMP recrd)</i>	Olive-sided Flycatcher	Black-and-white Warbler	<b>House Finch</b>
Red-tailed Hawk	Western Wood-Pewee	Tennessee Warbler	<i>Purple Finch</i>
Sora	Willow Flycatcher	Orange-crowned Warbler	<i>Pine Siskin</i>
Common Gallinule	Hammond's Flycatcher	Nashville Warbler	<b>Lesser Goldfinch</b>
American Coot	Gray Flycatcher	<i>MacGillivray's Warbler</i>	<i>Lawrence's Goldfinch</i>
Black-necked Stilt	Dusky Flycatcher	<b>Common Yellowthroat</b>	<b>American Goldfinch</b>
Killdeer	Pacific-slope Flycatcher	<b>Yellow Warbler</b>	<i>European Goldfinch</i>
Spotted Sandpiper	<b>Black Phoebe</b>	<i>Palm Warbler</i>	<b>House Sparrow</b>
<i>Solitary Sandpiper</i>	<i>Eastern Phoebe</i>	Yellow-rumped Warbler	<b>Northern Red Bishop</b>
Greater Yellowlegs	Say's Phoebe	Black-throated Gray Warbler	<i>Diamond Firetail (new MMP recrd)</i>
<i>Willet</i>	Ash-throated Flycatcher	Townsend's Warbler	<b>Scaly-breasted Munia</b>
<i>Whimbrel</i>	Tropical Kingbird	Hermit Warbler	
Least Sandpiper	Cassin's Kingbird	Wilson's Warbler	<b>BOLD = confirmed breeder MMP</b>
Long-billed Dowitcher	Western Kingbird	<i>Yellow-breasted Chat</i>	<i>ITALICS = uncommon visitor</i>

# South Bay Native Plant Corner

Dr. Connie Vadheim, CSU, Dominguez Hills



## Big Gum Plant

*Grindelia camporum*

Native sunflowers brighten the garden and provide habitat for native pollinators and seed eating birds.

Big Gum Plant grows along roadsides, on stream banks, in dry washes and on grassy plains from the central California coast to Baja California. An herbaceous perennial, it has several to many erect branching stems. The leaves, which are yellow-green, coarsely toothed and stiff, clasp the stem. The stem is sticky-resinous, as are the young flower heads. In fact, Native Californians used the gummy resin as a type of chewing gum! The plant grows to three to four feet high and wide and has a unique, balsamic scent.

Gum Plant blooms from March to September with flowers typical of the Sunflower family. The flower heads, which are one to two inches in diameter, have bright yellow ray flowers surrounding yellow disk flowers. The flowering heads are held above the foliage, making this a real “standout” in the garden.

The flowers attract a parade of interesting insects including native bees, bee-flies, butterflies, beetles and more. Later, the seed-eating birds can be seen, gobbling down the tiny seeds.

Gum plant thrives on poor sandy or clay soils, and even tolerates salty/alkali soils. It needs full sun. While very drought tolerant (although losing its leaves) it can take some summer water. It looks great with drought-tolerant natives such as bunch grasses (Stipas/Nassellas), Showy Penstemon and other purple flowers.

Find the right spot in the garden and Gum Plant is easy to grow. Just cut it back after flowering in the fall to keep it manageable. Remember that it is big!

Gum plant has a long history of medicinal use, particularly for respiratory conditions. The flowers can be used for vegetable dyes. The plant's sticky resin is being tested as a substitute for wood rosin in many industrial applications.

For more on this interesting plant see: <http://mother-natures-backyard.blogspot.com/2015/11/plant-of-month-november-big-bracted.html>

**Learn more about local native plants at our “Out of the Wilds and into Your Garden” series on the second Saturday of each month. Plant Information Sheets for South Bay native plants are also available at the Nature Center.**

## Tyke Hike

If you have the company of a fairly new person, and want to introduce them to the wonders of nature, our Tyke Hikes are a wonderful beginning.

There's always life to discover in the Madrona Marsh Preserve. Our hike is an unhurried stroll through the Preserve, while developing an understanding and respect for the plants and animals that are here. We walk, rain or shine, so dress accordingly, and wear sensible shoes.

You're welcome to join us, every month, on the first Thursday morning at 10 a.m.. We meet at the bench in front of the Nature Center.

Hope to see you there next month!

**Bobbie Snyder**, Tyke Hike Docent

# Ode to Chocolate

by Tracy Drake

Preserve Manager/Naturalist

Those who know me well know I do not much like chocolate. I prefer fruit. So, it was a surprise to me that I caught myself reading the following ode on the back of a Chipotle cup while on a break. The ode struck me hard and tears filled my eyes. When I'm on the Preserve at the end of a long day—feeling the coming night fall upon the land, I feel these feelings—think these thoughts. To all of you whose lives and spirit have made Madrona into the incredible place it is—I am grateful. I am grateful. I am grateful.

## Two-Minute Ode to Chocolate

by Laura Hillenbrand

It is the simplest ritual of my noondays: A square of chocolate, little larger than a postage stamp. For its minuteness, I savor it all the more, closing my eyes as it melts gently, generously, in my mouth as softly exquisite as a kiss.

Always, I think, I am grateful. In my mind, I follow my chocolate to its beginnings. I see a drop of rain touching red soil, and beneath, a seed waking. Leaves reaching for sifted sunlight. Careful, sure hands unclasping fruit from limbs. A kind donkey pulling a laden wagon. Wise faces bent over an ocean of seeds, summoning sweet from bitter. Roads and rivers and cunning machines that bear the chocolate to me.

Someone built that wagon; someone cut that road; someone labored under a beaded brow; someone heeded an inspiration; someone offered love. How wondrous is a world that brings such gifts.

In my little ritual I am connected to that sunshine, those hands, that river, the beautiful alchemy that

unites so much in a square of chocolate. A drop of rain that falls on the other side of the world, in a place whose language I may never hear, becomes sweetness on my tongue, thankfulness in my heart, words spilling from my pen, and perhaps a thought, however fleeting, in the mind of whoever reads them.

We are none of us, bereft, ever. We slumber in seas of gifts. To wake up to them, to follow their tributaries, is to traverse in every direction, yet always arrive at the same place: Gratitude. Awakening from my chocolate, I look about and wonder: Whose hands made this? To whom do I owe thanks for the song of a wren or the warmth of a sweater, cool grass under bare feet, the joy of dogs playing, laughter, and a whispered I love you, the scent of bread?

I am grateful. I am grateful. I am grateful.

## Artists Corner

Through January 22 - An Exhibit of Paintings and Photographs by **Mark Christansen** and **Dinuk Magamma**. Artist Reception Friday, January 8, 6:30-8:30 p.m.


January 26 through March 4 - "**Ron Squared at the Marsh**," an Exhibit of Paintings by **Ron Libbrecht** and **Ron Hurst**. Artist Reception, Sunday, February 21, 1-4 p.m.

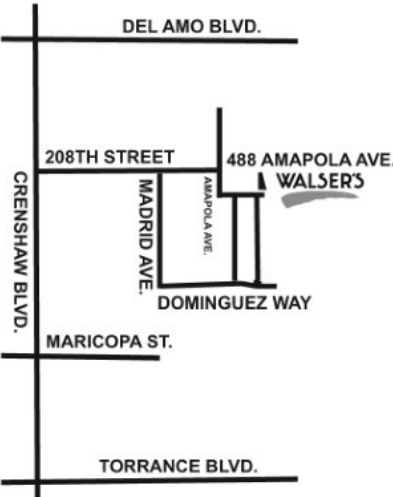
March 8 through April 22 - Photography Exhibit by **Altha Hines**. Artist Reception Friday, March 25 from 6:30-8:30 p.m.

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