

Special Interests

Water Lab

A one to two hour water lab is available by reservation for up to 20 third grade and older students. Students use stereoscopes and compound light microscopes to observe small and microscopic aquatic animals living in our Preserve water.

Modular Wetlands System

The Preserve has a bio-filtration system which cleans street runoff entering the City Sump. An age appropriate explanation of this system may be offered during tours.

Migratory and Resident Birds

The Preserve is situated on the Pacific Flyway which is the main pathway for western migratory birds throughout the year. Approximately 50 species of birds are residents of the Preserve.

Restoration

Every Saturday throughout the year high school students help restore native plants and remove non-native species in the Preserve. This helps the students fulfill their community service requirements. Applications are available in the Nature Center.



Become a Docent

Would you enjoy becoming a volunteer docent and leading school tours? Docents must be 21 years of age or older and pass a background check.

We offer a series of docent training workshops during the summer and fall; we provide lots of support and encouragement all year long.

There are usually 5 training workshops, each are approximately 2 hours long. The workshops cover various topics including: How to Lead a Tour, History of the Preserve, a survey of plants, insects, birds, and mammals and History of the Tongva people. There will be an opportunity to tour with an experienced docent.

Necessary preparation: complete all workshops, take several tours with experienced docents, develop the confidence and ability to supervise a group of students and have the knowledge to talk about the Preserve, Nature Center and Native Garden.

Commitment: available to conduct two to six tours a month from January – May, our busiest time.

**Contact the Nature Center
if you are interested:
310-782-3989**

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MADRONA MARSH

Nature Center and Preserve
3201 Plaza Del Amo, Torrance, CA

DOCENT TOURS

For Preschool - High School students



The Madrona Marsh is one of the last known vernal marshes in Los Angeles County. A docent led tour provides the opportunity to step back in time when the entire area between Wilmington and Marina del Rey made up an extensive wetland system. Presently the Marsh covers approximately 45 acres of natural habitat for a variety of animals. Being a vernal (spring) marsh it depends on winter and spring rain and street run off for water. The Nature Center includes an Exhibit Hall where visitors learn about the history and ecology of the area and view taxidermy of resident animals. Outside, one can stroll through the Native Garden with its many examples of plants from the Preserve and other areas.



Trained docents lead 2 hour tours for preschool through high school students from September through May.

Tours include guided visits to the Exhibit Hall, Native Garden and the Preserve. Also see the special interest section in this brochure.

On site facilities include restrooms in the Nature Center, drinking fountains, a Gift Shop and a small picnic area.

The Madrona Marsh is within walking distance of Wilson Park and the Del Amo Mall.

Tours are available by reservation, and are conducted Tuesday-Thursday from 10-12 noon.

Maximum tour size is 60 students plus chaperones, the number of adults required being appropriate to the students' ages or grade level.

How to Schedule a Tour and What to Expect

Call the Nature Center at

310-782-3989

A receptionist will take your information and forward it to our Docent Tour Coordinator.

You will receive a call from the Coordinator confirming the details of your tour.

When you arrive, your docents will greet you and ask that you break into small groups of 10-20.

During the tour, students will visit the Native Garden, the Exhibit Hall and the Preserve. Each group begins in a different location but each group covers all three areas.

Tours take a minimum of 2 hours.

Tours are dependent upon availability of docents. This is not ordinarily a concern



How to Prepare for a Tour

Docents conduct tours that cover general information; however, they can include specifics tailored to an area of study and age group if this is requested in advance.

Docents do not have scripted tours; they have a conversation with their group based on what the students observe, the students' ages and their interest levels.

The Preserve is a natural habitat, home to many species. All visitors are expected to understand that they are in an area where all life is respected.

The animals a visitor may encounter include birds, insects, amphibians (frogs) and reptiles (lizards and snakes).

Our mammals are primarily nocturnal and are best observed through taxidermy and study skins in the Exhibit Hall.

In the Native Garden and throughout the Preserve visitors will see native plants which have adapted to live in the Southern California climate.

In the Preserve students will gain insight as to how this area looked hundreds of years ago.

What to wear: closed toe walking shoes, a hat with a brim, sunscreen and long pants.

The charge for tours is 50 cents per student. There is no charge for TUSD schools.