

Fall 2008

Marsh Mailing

Madrona Marsh Preserve and Nature Center

A New Buzz In Our Insect Collection

—Jeanne Bellimin

In the late 1970s when the Nature Center was merely a trailer run by Walt Wright, Norm Hogg and I donated a drawer of insects from our collection to be on display and to be carried to events. Now, after 30 years those insects were rather dusty, rumpled and broken. In 1997 a wonderful wet collection (i.e., stored in alcohol) of aquatic life, including many insects and other invertebrates found in the Marsh, was completed by Mark Angelos and stored in the Curation Lab.

In the Fall of 2004 a former Entomology student of mine, Duminda Wijayarathna, created a very attractive new two-drawer collection as part of an Environmental Restoration Class project.

Last December the Friends of Madrona Marsh received a generous \$1000 donation from the Medina Trust, in the name of Howard Medina, to refurbish the insect collections at the Nature Center. Howard was an avid insect collector in the South Bay and at Madrona in the 1970's before any restoration had occurred, and he had donated a pre-restoration collection to the Center. He went on to become a high school biology



Hide Kato, who spent more than 110 hours this past summer helping to organize and refurbish the Preserve's insect collection, seeks new specimens for the collection.

teacher in Santa Ana, and is currently serving as a Captain in the National Guard.

This year I had a very interesting and energetic group in my Field Entomology class, two of whom want to go on in the field of entomology. I thought it would be good experience for Hide Kato and Sanson Lin to combine the old collections at the Nature Center and build a new collection by adding specimens from the El Camino College students and newly collected specimens from the Madrona Marsh.

Hide Kato has spent more than 110 hours this past summer organizing and building the collection. Sanson Lin has helped with nearly 20 hours of work keying and collecting insects. Perhaps you have seen them working on the collec-

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Continued from page 1.

tion on visits to the Marsh this summer, or if you walked by the Curation Lab in the Nature Center.

We started back in June taking several boxes of insects from the student collection at El Camino College. Hide and Sanson then incorporated all the separate old collections of pinned insects and combined them into one 6-drawer collection organized by Order. Hide and Sanson have also gone out collecting and blacklighting (using a light source at night) to get additional new specimens.

They are now working on keying all specimens to the level of Family. In some cases they will be able to get even the full scientific names for



David Faulkner, former Entomology Collection Manager of the San Diego Natural History Museum, left, examines the insect collection with student Hide Kato.

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.



Hide Kato, left, and Sanson Lin, who plan to pursue careers in Entomology, display some of the insect collections they have helped to organize and preserve at the Nature Center this past summer.

many common insects with the help of local experts.

Former Entomology collection manager David Faulkner, of the San Diego Natural History Museum, was on hand September 7th to check their work on the Diptera Order (true flies and mosquitoes) and Hymenoptera Order (ants, bees, wasps, sawflies). It is still a work in progress but the insect collection at the Madrona Marsh Nature Center is growing. Many thanks to Hide and Sanson!!!

Jeanne Bellemin is a FOMM Board Member and Professor of Zoology at El Camino College

Donations--\$100 or More

The Friends of Madrona Marsh would like to say Thank you to the donors below, all of whom gave us \$100 or more.

June 29	Evelyn Wisneski	\$100.00
July 1	Karen Schaffer	\$100.00
August 6	Bobbie Snyder	\$300.00
August 16	Iris McKinley	\$100.00
September 12	BP Matching Funds for K. Schaffer	\$100.00

—Ellen Peterson, Treasurer

from the president

—Bill Arrowsmith

In the Beginning . . .

Thanks to the happy accident of very productive oil wells being located on the property we call Madrona Marsh, we were ultimately able to save the land as a nature preserve.

That was because, by the time the oil finally began to play out and the owners made plans for a very dense development in the early 1980's, local environmentalists (joining others across the country) had become aware of how valuable and important wetlands are, and how many had been lost—forever—to development.

And so, with great effort and support from many wonderful citizens, homeowners' groups and civic organizations, we were able to save it. That's the story in a very small nutshell, and most of you are familiar with it; many were part of it.

Many were upset with the amount of damage inflicted on the Marsh land, which was used for oil recovery for about 80 years, until the last wells were capped in the spring of 2003. To be sure, great amounts of iron pipe and other equipment had to be removed, and some occasionally still show up when a new area is prepared for restoration.

A Step Back in Time

One has only to look at the 'discovery table' next to our classroom at the Nature Center to see such remnants. There, next to hummingbird nests and fossils, sit some old, rusty wrenches and sections of pipe, ugly and incongruent in this collection of natural items.

They are there to remind us of the history of the land. And although portions of the Preserve were severely damaged by heavy equipment or deposit of waste oil, the area as a whole is still very little changed from its condition 100 years ago, one of very few such places in the South Bay. As our restoration continues, and beautiful native plants once more adorn the ground, a visit to the Marsh is increasingly like traveling backward in time a century or more.

If that whets your appetite for historical time

travel, you might be interested in a coastal vernal wetland very much like Madrona Marsh, but which has not yet been exposed to man's destructive hand. There, native plant species far in excess of those we have on our Marsh flourish, challenged only by the change of seasons and the vagaries of weather patterns.

Last week I was among a few dozen people fascinated by Jess and Donna Morton's descriptions of Mesa Colonet, Mexico. As Donna and Jess ably demonstrated, habitats like those at Madrona and Mesa Colonet exist without regard to man-made borders. The vernal pools and marshes of Mesa Colonet, about 100 miles south of the US/Mexico border, are among the finest examples of that habitat on the west coast of North America. There is still time for you to travel there and see them. And there is still time to save them.

Another Chance to Protect and Preserve

Yes, save them; for these wetlands may soon face the scourge of outrageous development, very much like that which occurred here in the Los Angeles basin years ago. Mesa Colonet overlooks the possible future port of Punta Colonet, which Mexico is proposing as an alternative to the ports of Long Beach and Los Angeles, both of which are reaching capacity.

We were also privileged to hear a report from Alan Harper, an associate of the Mortons who has long championed preservation of the mesa. Jess and Donna are planning another discussion group. For more information email them at jmorton@igc.org. If you didn't have a chance to help in the fight for Madrona Marsh, this may be your opportunity to help save another wonderful wetland area.

The FOMM Board of Directors

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- Connie Vadheim, Vice President
- Ellen Peterson, Treasurer
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And Then There Was the 'Corner'

—Venora Lee

We can't say it grew like Topsy—the Madrona Marsh Preserve. But reaching the goal of a first class nature preserve has been like "...eating an elephant—one bite at time."

Clichés aside, there are those Friends of Madrona Marsh who have participated in a 35 year odyssey—an ever-changing, always fascinating trip through nature, finance, law, government, public works, team building, talent seeking ...on and on.

Along the way were the educators who brought their classes to the Marsh, first to peek through the broken and bent chain link fences, hovering over street runoff puddles to note the natural ecology of a local marsh.

The odyssey was joined by environmentalists of every cause for the protection of nature. They were joined by public officials from every form of jurisdiction, leaders from far and near, big and small, who saw the civic pride, aesthetic, recreational and educational value of the goal.

The public-at-large came to an insistent mind set of "let's do it."

So 35 years progressed inexorably, one event, one vote by government, one dollar from a multitude of sources (who can forget flipping hamburgers and hot

dogs?) and great personal financial gifts, to bonds and grants via government.

And participation by *people who cared*.

The dedication of the "Chevron Corner" was a milestone, and we thank everyone who made it possible. It is one of many milestones through the years, including the initial securing of the land, building the Nature Center, formation of a foundation and maintaining viable, vital and visible Friends of Madrona Marsh.

Need we note, too, a versatile FOMM. There are experts and loving laymen engaged in everything from art to zoology at the Marsh. Yet experience tells us that there is another issue to be dealt with, another challenge before us.

That is a **shortage of docents**, those who lead others on tours through the habitat and share their knowledge and enthusiasm with the public. One can hope that inspiration for doing this task can come from efforts of those who love the Marsh. Share your love.

After 35 years of patience and perseverance, trying and prevailing, seeking and succeeding, there is still a task facing us. The ranks of Marsh docents are thinning. **The next dedication that must take place is the dedication of self to others by becoming a docent, so that people in the next 35 years can enjoy and learn, as well.**

Venora Lee is a past president of FOMM.

Madrona Marsh Foundation Report

—Jack Ludwick, President

First, I would like to thank several individuals for their recent gifts to the Foundation: Elaine Endres-\$475, which was also matched by the Bank of America, Carol Selvey-\$100, and smaller gifts from Adeleh Esfandiari and the Southbay Women's Magazine. Thank you one and all! It is like the Red Cross, every drop of blood counts and we are likewise grateful for every penny we receive for the Marsh.

The Madrona Marsh Foundation recently (August 11) had a nice writeup by Nick Green in the **Daily Breeze**. Mr. Green's article "*Madrona Seeks Solid Foundation*" gave us some nice advertising. Also, we will be hosting a booth at the Torrance Chamber of Commerce Business Expo 2008 on October 30 from 4-7 p.m. at the Torrance Marriott, which will give us addi-

tional exposure. We will have a chance to distribute our brochures and other information about the Marsh in addition to providing some prizes and surprises. Drop by and say hello.

The Foundation continues to work toward a sustainable fund-raising program for the Marsh. In that light, we are currently having a series of our meetings dedicated to the development of a long-range Strategic Plan. With this plan we hope to ultimately raise amounts of money that will provide an endowment to sustain all of the features and programs at the Madrona Marsh. We know that this will not "happen in a minute" and will take a lot of hard work. We need the help of all of you to introduce our Foundation to your friends so that we can expand our mission and expand the composition of our Foundation Board. Thank you for continuing to love the Marsh.

New Use for the Chevron Corner

Background: As we reported in the Summer 2008 *Marsh Mailing*, the Chevron Oil Company has very generously donated the final piece of land for the Madrona Marsh Preserve, a half-acre at the corner of Sepulveda Boulevard and Madrona Avenue, bringing our total size to 45 acres. What are the plans for this property, known by Marshans as the 'Chevron Corner'? To answer that question, *Marsh Mailing* (MM) had this interview with Tracy Drake (TD), Manager and Naturalist for Madrona Marsh.

MM: What plans does the City have for the Chevron Corner?

TD: The most important and exciting use of the corner will be for a new water treatment system for storm runoff that enters the Marsh from the surrounding streets. This system is being proposed on the Chevron Property so as to not take away land from the Preserve for water treatment.

MM: What is happening with that runoff water now?

TD: Most of the urban runoff is channeled to the Stormwater Detention Basin (sump) at the southeast corner of the Preserve. Currently, water levels are seasonally maintained in Madrona Marsh by pumping that runoff water from the sump through underground pipes to the deep part of the Marsh, near the southwest corner. This water often shows the effects of eutrophication, which is when the water becomes too rich in nutrients (such as phosphates and nitrates) then experiences deficiency in oxygen as a result.

This water is detrimental to the Preserve and to its visitors. On the Preserve it causes overgrowth—it's like putting the plants on steroids! It weakens the trees and pollutes the water. And because our Preserve receives about 20,000 visitors a year, it must be managed to State guidelines of Rec 1 and Rec 2 standards. To meet these standards we implemented a water quality monitoring program.

Several years ago the Preserve received polluted water from the drain near Sepulveda/Madrona. Through our monitoring system we immediately noticed the problem but were powerless to prevent it from contaminating 20 acres of water. Portions of the Preserve were closed for months until the problem was resolved by the Marsh's own restorative powers.

MM: Why is this new system being proposed?

TD: The City conducted a study of alternative water supplies (potable water, recycled water and urban run off) to determine which of these supplemental supplies would be best for stopping eutrophication. It was determined that treating urban runoff water using passive wetlands treatment was the most economical alternative.

MM: Explain what this system will do.

TD: The system will reduce nutrients and raise oxygen levels. This system will take water runoff from Madrona and Sepulveda and water from the sump and send it through an "engineered wetlands" treatment system installed in the Chevron Corner property. Stagnation will be prevented by circulating the water from the sump to the system, where the water will flow across "wetland cells."

These wetland cells are designed for shallow surface flow to maintain aerobic conditions, with 3 to 6 inch water depth. The wetland cells are kept level to assure flow spreading and are planted with native grass-like plants that take up the nutrients. Oxygen levels will be kept up by circulating the water and by installation of a small waterfall where the water returns into the sump.

MM: How deep are these treatment areas?

TD: The wetlands treatment system will be at the same depth as the Preserve's wetlands, 2 to 3 feet below street level.

MM: Why is this important for the Marsh?

TD: Eutrophication is the biggest problem facing the health of the Marsh. Nutrient buildup in the Marsh could eventually require dredging of the Marsh to remove nutrients, which would have a detrimental effect to many of the species that live in the Marsh bottom.

MM: You're pretty excited about this, aren't you?

TD: We, the City Staff and the Friends of Madrona Marsh are very excited about this potential opportunity to finally improve the water quality of the Preserve. This project is in alignment with already forward-thinking projects such as the Storm Water Basin Enhancement Program which has been started in west Torrance.

Madrona Marsh Preserve and Nature Center

Schedule of Events*

October 2008-January 2009

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1 10 am-12 n-Habitat Restoration-Weeders	2 10 am- Tyke Hike	3	4 8:45 am-12 n-High School Service Learning 8:45 am- 12 n-Habitat Restoration 6:30-8:30 pm-Night Hike
5	6 CLOSED	7 8:30 am- Tour de' Torrance 10 am-12 n-Habitat Restoration-Weeders	8 8 am- Bird Walk/Bob Shanman 10 am-12 n-Habitat Restoration-Weeders 7:15-9 pm- FOMM Board Meeting	9	10	11 8:45 am-12 noon- Habitat Restoration 8:45 am-12 n-High School Service Learning 2-4 pm-Exploring Universe/ Bob Carr 2-2:45 pm-Children's Stories
12 2-4 pm- Second Sunday Science- Fall Migra- tion/Ron Melin	13 CLOSED	14 9 am-Mornings on the Marsh 10 am-12 n-Habitat Restoration-Weeders	15 10 am-12 n-Habitat Restoration-Weeders 5:30-6:30 p.m.- MMF Board Meeting	16	17	18 8:45 am-12 noon- Habitat Restoration 1-3 pm- "Kill Your Lawn"
19 12 n-3 pm-Writing Workshop/Beth Shibata	20 CLOSED	21 8:30 am- Tour de' Torrance 10 am-12 n-Habitat Restoration-Weeders 7 p.m.-Audubon Get-together	22 10 am-12 n-Habitat Restoration-Weeders	23	24 6:30-8:30 pm- Reception- Joannie Spring, Photography	25 8:45 am- 12 noon- Habitat Restoration 9 am-12 n-Make a Difference Day 10 am- Nature Walk 11-11:55 am-Halloween Music at the Marsh
26 10 a.m- Nature Walk	27 CLOSED	28 10 am-12 n-Habitat Restoration-Weeders	29 10 am-12 n-Habitat Restoration-Weeders	30	31	

OCTOBER

*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. (For the very latest on events visit www.friendsofmadronamarsh.com. Also, see **Artists' Corner**, page 9)

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						1 8:45am-12n-Student Service 8:45 am-12n-Hab. Restor. 10 am-12 n- "Plant, Shape, Shear, Enjoy"-Dr. Vadheim
2	3 CLOSED	4 8:30 am- Tour de' Torrance 10 am-12 n-Habitat Restoration-Weeders 6:30-8:30 pm- "Plant, Shape..."-Vadheim	5 10 am-12 n-Habitat Restoration-Weeders	6 10 am-Tyke Hike	7	8 8:45 am-12 n-Students Service 8:45 am-12 n-Habitat Restor. 10 am-12n-Bio-diesel Fuel 2-4 pm-Garden Planning... 8-10 pm-Star Party
9 10-am-3 pm-Plein Air Workshop 2-4 pm-Second Sunday Science- Insects of Fall	10 CLOSED	11 9-11am-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	14	15 8:45 am-12 n-Student Service 8:45 am-12 n-Habitat Restor. 11 am-1 pm-Solar program 11-11:55 am- "Bugs, Birds..." Songs
16	17 CLOSED	18 8:30 a.m.- Tour de'Torrance 10 am-12 n-Habitat Restoration-Weeders 7 pm- Audubon Mtg.	19 10 am-12 n-Habitat Restoration-Weeders 5:30-6:30 p.m.- MMF Board Meeting	20	21	22 8:45 am-12 n-Students Serv. 8:45 am- 12 noon- Habitat Restoration 9 am-12 n-Nature Walk 1-3 pm-Native Plant Sale 2-4 pm-Garden Planning.
23 10 am-12 n- Nature Walk	24 CLOSED	25 10 am-12 n-Habitat Restoration-Weeders	26 10 am-12 n-Habitat Restoration-Weeders	27	28	29 8:45 am-12 n-Students Ser 8:45 am-12 noon- Habitat Restoration
30						

NOVEMBER

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
	1 CLOSED	2 8:30 am-Tour de'Torrance 10 am-12 n-Weeders	3 10am-12 n-Habitat Restoration-Weeders	4 10 a.m.-Tyke Hike	5	6 8:45 am- 12 n- Hab. Restor. 8:45 am-12 n-Student Service 9 am-12 n- Arbor Day 10 am-12 n- "Shimmer of Silver" /Dr. Connie Vadheim 6:30-8:30 pm-Night Hike
7	8 CLOSED	9 9-11 am-Mornings on the Marsh 10 am-12 n.-Weeders 6:30-8:30 pm"Shimmer of Silver" Dr. Vadheim	10 8 a.m. Bird Walk/ /Bob Shanman 10 am-12 n-Habitat-Weeders 7:15-9 pm-FOMM Board Meeting	11	12 6:30-8:30 pm-Artists Reception/Ron Libbrecht	13 8:45 am-12 n- Habitat Restor. 8:45am-12n-Student Service 2-4 pm-Garden Planning Wkshp. 11 am-12:30 pm- Christmas Crafts for Tykes
14 2 - 4 pm-Second Sunday Science- "Test Your Water"	15 CLOSED	16 8:30 am-Tour de'Torrance 10 am-12 n-Habitat Restoration-Weeders 7 pm- Audubon Mtg.	17 10-12 noon-Habitat Restoration-Weeders 5:30-6:30 pm- MMF Meeting	18	19	20 8-11 am-Citizen Scientist- All day-Bird Count Workshop 8:45 am - 12 noon- Habitat Restoration 8:45 am-12 n-Student Service
21	22 CLOSED	23 10 am-12 n-Habitat Restoration-Weeders	24 10-12 n.-Habitat Restoration-Weeders	25 CHRISTMAS DAY	26	27 8:45 am-12 n -Hab.Restor. 8:45am-12 n-Student Service 10 am-12 n- Nature Walk
28 All day-29th Annual Christmas Bird Count 10 am-12 n- Nature Walk	29 CLOSED	30 8:30 am- Tour de'Torrance 10 am-12 n.-Habitat Restoration-Weeders	31 10-12 n-Habitat Restoration-Weeders			

DECEMBER

**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. (For the very latest on events visit www.friendsofmadronamarsh.com. Also, see Artists' Corner, page 9)*

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1 NEW YEARS DAY	2	3 8:45 am-12 n-Student Serv. 8:45 am- 12 n-Habitat Restor. 10 am-12 n-"Beyond the Lawn..."-Dr. Connie Vadheim
4	5 CLOSED	6 8:30 am-Tour de' Torrance 10 am-12 n-Habitat Restoration-Weeders 6:30-8:30 pm-"Beyond the Lawn..." /Dr. Connie Vadheim	7 10 am-12 n-Habitat Restoration-Weeders 7:15-9 pm-FOMM Board Meeting	8 10 am-Tyke Hike	9	10 8-10 am-"Birding by Ear" 8:45 am-12 noon-Habitat Restoration 8:45 am-12 n-Student Service 2-2:45 pm-Children-Nature Stories Around the World
11 2-4 pm-Second Sunday Science- Sharks	12 CLOSED	13 9 am-Mornings on the Marsh 10 am-12 n-Habitat Restoration-Weeders	14 8 am-Bird Walk/Bob Shanman 10 am-12 n-Habitat Restoration-Weeders 7:15-9 pm-FOMM Board Meeting	15	16	17 8:45 am-12 noon-Habitat Restoration 8:45 am-12 n-Student Service
18	19 CLOSED	20 8:30 am-Tour de' Torrance 10 am-12 n-Habitat Restoration-Weeders 7 p.m.-Audubon Mtg.	21 10 am-12 n-Habitat Restoration-Weeders 5:30-6:30 p.m.- MMF Board Meeting	22	23 6:30-8:30 pm-Reception-Joannie Spring, Photography	24 8:45 am- 12 noon-Habitat Restoration 8:45 am-12 n-Student Service 10 am- Nature Walk
25 10 a.m-Nature Walk	26 CLOSED	27 10 am-12 n-Habitat Restoration-Weeders	28 10 am-12 n-Habitat Restoration-Weeders	29	30	31 8:45 am-12 n-Student Service 2-4 pm-Early Life of Dinosaurs (Ages-9+)

JANUARY

Shirley's Turn

—Shirley Turner

My daughter's new gift book for me was **Return to Warden's Grove Science: Desire, and the Lives of Sparrows**, published in 2007. It has given me much pleasure, enjoying and learning more about birds—particularly Harris Sparrows. They have been observed at the Marsh, according to David Moody, having been blown over the mountains during migration.

"They nest in Canada." So author Christopher Norment recounts in his extensive detailed research. He banded, weighed, measured length and wing span, sexed, hunted for nests (very difficult building nests) and collected data on the success of nestlings. I relived holding a mist-netted bird in my hand, finding nests as a child, and an abandoned Red-winged Blackbird nest at the Marsh.

As a 15 year old boy he hiked the mountains with a friend which began his long standing love of the natural world.

Amazon.com gives the book 5 stars. Lynn Harnett, a book reviewer, makes these notes on the book:

"In 1988, at age 37, with an 18-month-old daughter and a precarious financial outlook, biologist Norment decides to chuck his steady, if unsatisfying teaching job, and pursue his doctorate. He chooses to study Harris's Sparrows, for two good reasons. For one, they breed in a beautiful, isolated patch of the Canadian arctic that Norment remembers with longing from a youthful 3-year stint there. And the second good reason is that because the place is so remote, very little is known about them.

"His book describes the three summers that he spent in Warden's Grove - from the initial uncertainties, failures and fears of failure to his increasing confidence in himself and affection for his subject. The structure of his book echoes this path, moving from the general and objective to the specific and subjective.

"The beginning is concerned with setting up the project—repairing the bear-trashed cabin, finding the sparrow's nests, trapping and banding birds, recording the data. Not until the end of the book do we learn of the nightmares he had about horrible accidents befalling his tiny daughter, or how deeply aware he was of the effect his youthful experiences in Warden's Grove had had on his psyche, as if coming back could make him young and carefree again.

"As he settles more comfortably into the project, he describes the satisfaction he gets from the work, his pleasure in maps and the beauty of scientific names, the hours of watching undone by the superior patience and attention of a small bird, the plagues of mosquitoes and black flies and the differing personalities of the clouds of delicate, crafty mosquitoes and the hordes of frenzied, voracious black flies.

"This is a book for anyone interested in the natural world and especially in one man's journey as he gropes his way through life with determination, doubt and eloquent reflection . . ."

I totally agree with William Fox, author of **Terra Antarctica: Looking into the Emptiest Continent**, who states that Norment's book is an exquisitely crafted meditation on science, nature, wildness, civilization, and is marked by bottomless prose, reflection on timeless questions, and keen observations of our world and our place in it.

Christopher Norment is a professor of environmental science and biology at Sunny College at Brockport, part of the State University of New York where he joyfully still looks for nesting sparrows with his graduate students in grasslands. Brockport is on the shore of Lake Ontario near Rochester, NY.

September Tyke Hike

Mary Garrity reports that the September 4 Tyke Hike (these hikes are offered on the first Thursday of the month) was very well attended. Mary has agreed to take Shirley Turner's position as organizer and manager of these important hikes, sponsored by the Friends. Shirley, along with Ruth McConnell, has been leading the Tyke Hikes for many, many years, and they have built it into one of the Marsh's premier attractions.

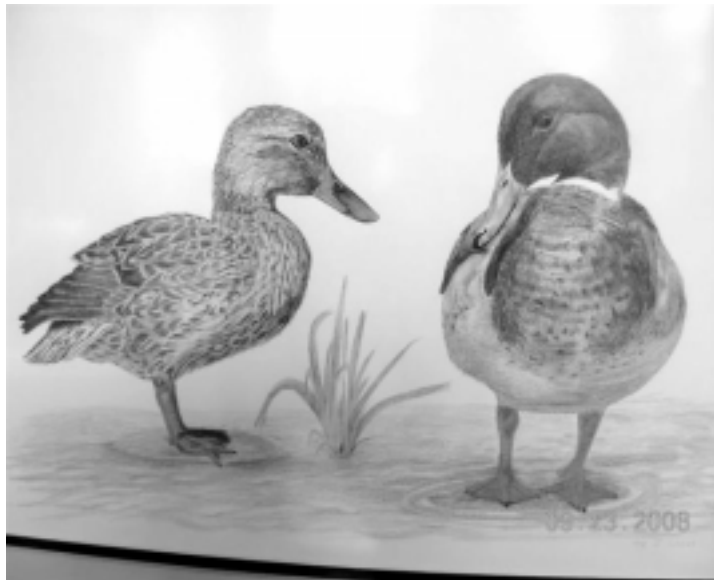
Mary started the September hike at the Nature Center parking lot, where Ruth registered all the participants. Beth Scott, one of Tracy's assistants, joined the group as a co-leader as they crossed the street to discover what surprises the Marsh had in store for them on a beautiful late summer morning.

Mary and new board member Suzan Hubert are excited about developing a new curriculum of learning experiences for our tiny monthly visitors, and of possibly enhancing their visit by providing small pictures of what they can expect to find on their nature walk at Madrona Marsh. If you are interested in joining Mary and Suzan in this fun activity, please call the Nature Center at 310-782-3989.

Inspiration

—Bill Arrowsmith

Last week I attended the Artist's Reception for Ivett Garray, whose beautiful colored pencil drawings of birds currently light up the walls of the Artist Corner in the



Artist Ivett Garray's rendering of Mallards . . .

Nature Center. I had already looked at her works hanging in the Corner—amazingly detailed drawings of a bold scrub jay, a ferocious young Cooper's hawk, an excited pair of cardinals—and I knew I was about to meet a very talented artist as well as a sharp-eyed birder. I figured she'd been an artist all her life, and was looking forward to finding out when and how she started birding. Was I in for a surprise.

Ivett Garray is a delightful young woman, and looks very much like you'd expect an artist to look. But probably not a cop. On her "day job" she is just that: an officer with L.A.P.D. and, strangely enough, that's how she became interested in art. While assigned to the Art Theft detail she not only assisted in the recovery of some major paintings, but she realized that art held a special fascination for her.

Determined to learn more about it, she signed up for some art appreciation courses at El Camino College. In one of these classes, she was required to produce some artwork herself. But she had never done anything like that before, so another chapter opened for her. Soon she was learning how to draw, also, and found she had a talent for it.

If her work on the police force inspired her to pursue art, what was the impetus for her interest in birds?

That came from a movie she watched about five years ago called "Winged Migration." If you've seen the movie you'll understand. In this magnificent film (in which there is no dialogue) cameras follow birds to all corners of the world. Most of the shots are incredible bird's eye views—taken within the flocks themselves. I know it mesmerizes my grandchildren as well as their Grandma and Grandpa each time we watch it.

I'm sure "Winged Migration" has inspired many to take up birding, but Ivett has taken her birding to a new level by photographing the birds, then drawing



. . . Ring Billed Gull

them in exquisite detail, as you'll see at the Nature Center. It seems that each time this lady is inspired, she ends up being even more inspirational herself.

Artist 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.

Running through October 11 - **Ivett Garray**, An Exhibit of Drawings: *Winged Whimsey: Avian Visitors of Madrona Marsh*.

October 14-November 29 - **Joannie Spring**, A Photography Exhibit: *Reflections*. Artist's Reception: October 24, 6:30-8:30 p.m.

December 2-January 16 - **Ron Libbrecht**, *Painting Moments at the Marsh*, a Photography Exhibit. Artist's Reception: Friday, December 12, 6:30-8:30 p.m.

January 20-March 6, 2009 - **Paul Blieden** - "*Birds of Madrona Marsh*," A Photography Exhibit- Artist's Reception - Friday, February 6, 6:30-8:30 pm.

South Bay Native Plant Corner

—Dr. Connie Vadheim, CSUDH



California Wild Rose – *Rosa californica*

In many ways, the Southern California fall season is a time of waiting. Many native plants are dormant, awaiting the winter rains. But some native species—including those that bloom and set fruit in summer—are quite active during this period. Several native fruits only ripen with the cooler weather. These fruits provide important food for fruit-eating birds such as migrant Cedar Waxwings and Grosbeaks and resident Mockingbirds. One important native fruit-bearing shrub is the California Wild Rose (*Rosa californica*). The sweet fruits—the ‘rose hips’—provide a tasty treat for birds, mammals and even humans.

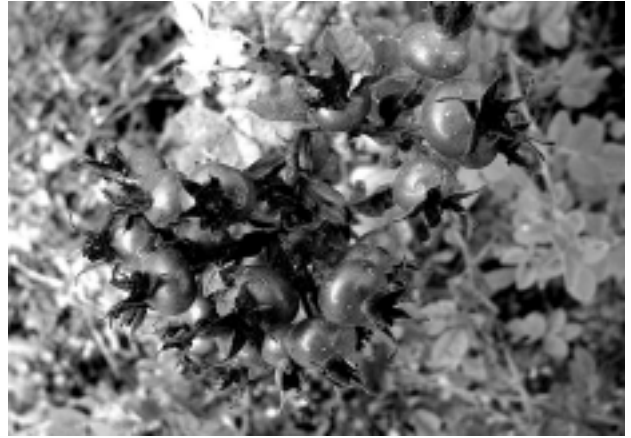
Species of wild rose occur throughout the world, where they are prized for their showy, sweet-scented flowers and their fruits. *Rosa californica* grows throughout lower elevations in California, Oregon and Baja California. It can be found in moist places such as along stream banks and in shaded woods and canyons. In favorable settings it forms dense thickets. In nature, wild roses provide important cover and nesting sites for birds and small animals in addition to food.

California Wild Rose is typical of wild roses in terms of its characteristics. It is a woody shrub with upright branches to 5-6 feet tall. Like all roses, the branches have prickles. In our own wild rose, the prickles are stout and relatively less dense than in some wild rose species. The branches arise from suckering roots—a characteristic typical of the genus *Rosa*. The leaves, which look like those of garden roses, are winter-deciduous for a short time in our mild coastal climate.

Rosa californica blooms off and on during the

warm months, often from spring through late summer. The flowers are typical ‘old fashioned’ single roses, with five pink petals. The flowers are 1 inches across and occur in clusters. A wild rose in full bloom is a lovely sight to behold and of courses the scent of roses is heavenly.

Wild roses are quite adaptable to the home landscape. They grow in any well-drained soil including most clays and tolerate full sun to part-shade. They are fairly drought tolerant in shady conditions, but look best in full sun with occasional summer water – Zone 2 (water deeply when soils are dry) to Zone 2-3 (water weekly). Use an organic mulch – such as bark or wood chips – to conserve moisture.



California Wild Rose has been grown in gardens since the Mission Period (the Padres called it the ‘Rose of Castile’). Use the wild rose any place where you might use a non-native shrub-type rose. It makes a nice hedge or screen. You can even grow *Rosa californica* in a large container. Prune back in winter to manage – much as you would any garden rose. The rose hips make a delicious and unique jelly, syrup, tea and fruit leather.

Planning Your New Drought-tolerant Garden: A Guided Workshop

Are you stumped as to how to redesign your garden so it is more drought-tolerant? Do you want to learn about where and how to plant Southern California Native plants? This three-class series offers step-by-step personalized assistance in all aspects of creating a new water-wise garden. For more information, call 310-782-3989. Classes will meet at Madrona Marsh Nature Center-Saturdays, November 8, 22 and December 13, from 2 – 4 p.m.; fee: \$60 per person, \$75 per couple.

Birds, Butterflies and Dragonflies of the Preserve

July-September 2008

This list was compiled by David Moody, Tracy Drake, and Fran Arrowsmith.

Birds

Mallard	White-throated Swift	Cliff Swallow	Chipping Sparrow
Double-crested Cormorant	Black-chinned Hummingbird	Barn Swallow	Lark Sparrow
Great Egret	Anna's Hummingbird	Bushtit	<i>Black-throated Sparrow</i>
Great Blue Heron	Allen's Hummingbird	Bewick's Wren	Savannah Sparrow
Green Heron	Olive-sided Flycatcher	House Wren	Lincoln's Sparrow
Black-crowned Night-Heron	Western Wood-Pewee	Marsh Wren	White-crowned Sparrow
Sharp-shinned Hawk	<i>Willow Flycatcher</i>	Blue-gray Gnatcatcher	Black-headed Grosbeak
Cooper's Hawk	Pacific-slope Flycatcher	Northern Mockingbird	Blue Grosbeak
Red-shouldered Hawk	Black Phoebe	European Starling	Lazuli Bunting
Red-tailed Hawk	Say's Phoebe	Cedar Waxwing	Red-winged Blackbird
American Kestrel	<i>Vermilion Flycatcher</i>	Phainopepla	Brown-headed Cowbird
Peregrine Falcon	Ash-throated Flycatcher	Orange-crowned Warbler	Hooded Oriole
Sora	Cassin's Kingbird	Nashville Warbler	House Finch
American Coot	Western Kingbird	Yellow Warbler	Lesser Goldfinch
Western Gull	Warbling Vireo	Black-throated Gray Warbler	American Goldfinch
Rock Pigeon	Western Scrub-Jay	Common Yellowthroat	House Sparrow
<i>Eurasian Collared-Dove</i>	American Crow	Wilson's Warbler	Orange Bishop
Mourning Dove	Common Raven	Western Tanager	Nutmeg Mannikin
Mitred Parakeet	No. Rough-winged Swallow	California Towhee	

Bold = Breeds at Preserve

Italics = Rare/unusual species at Madrona

Madrona Marsh's ace bird chronicler, David Moody, reports that, when Ron Melin spotted Black-throated Sparrow on September 11, the total number of bird species seen on the Preserve has now reached 250!

Butterflies

Monarch	Painted Lady	Gray Hairstreak	Umber Skipper
Queen	Western Tiger Swallowtail	Western Pygmy-Blue	Eufala Skipper
Gulf Fritillary	Giant Swallowtail	Marine Blue	Fiery Skipper
Mourning Cloak	Cabbage White	Acmon Blue	Sandhill Skipper
			Funereal Duskywing

Dragonflies

Common Green Darner	Variegated Meadowhawk	Wandering Glider	Black Saddlebags
Blue-eyed Darner	Flame Skimmer	Spot-winged Glider	

Friends of Madrona Marsh

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