

Rare Wildlife and Plant Species Found on New Preserve

Recent plant and wildlife surveys in the Portuguese Bend Nature Preserve have revealed some surprising and very positive results. Baseline data compiled by the Land Conservancy have confirmed populations of two rare species, one plant and one butterfly, that were previously not known to exist on the Peninsula. The surveys focused on species now protected under the Natural Communities Conservation Plan for the Preserve and include the California gnatcatcher and coastal cactus wren, the Palos Verdes blue butterfly and El Segundo blue butterfly, and five rare plant species.

The bird surveys provided good news with respect to the gnatcatcher and cactus wren. The monitors found that the Preserve is home to 79 adult pairs and nearly 100 juvenile gnatcatchers from this nesting season. Seventy-five adult cactus wrens were also observed in the Preserve. The surveys entailed walking all of the Preserve lands with suitable habitat three times during the nesting season. Tapes of gnatcatcher calls were played to elicit responses from the birds.

Female El Segundo blue butterfly



Since only biologists with permits from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service are permitted to count these birds, Land Conservancy staff apprenticed with permitted biologists from a consulting firm. In future years, Land Conservancy staff will have the necessary permits to be able to take the lead on this exciting survey work.



RARE PLANT DISCOVERED IN ABALONE COVE

The Conservancy is required to monitor a number of rare and special plant species within the new Preserve including aphanisma, south coast saltbush, bright green liveforever, Santa Catalina Island desert thorn, and Catalina crabapple.

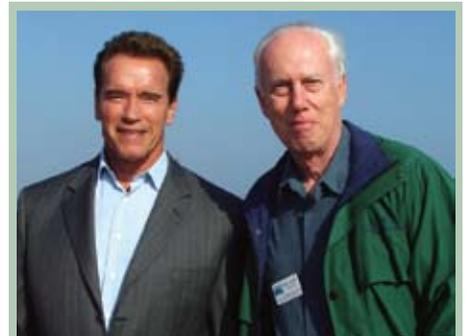
However, this year's survey brought a surprise, a rare plant that had not been seen in Los Angeles County since 1979. Tucked away on the bluffs of the Abalone Cove Ecological Reserve, a stand of sea dahlia (*coreopsis maritima*) was discovered this June. Andy Thompson, a biologist with the firm doing the plant and wildlife surveys for the new Preserve, discovered

Biologist Andy Thompson discovers sea dahlia in Altamira Canyon.



the perennial sunflower on the steep slopes of lower Altamira Canyon. The plant's bright yellow flowers and fleshy green leaves are normally seen from March to May. The sea dahlia has been included in the California Native Plant Society's (CNPS) Inventory of Rare

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LAND CONSERVANCY JOINS GOVERNOR TO SUPPORT PROP 84

PVPLC President Henry Jurgens showed his support for Prop 84 by joining Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger when he visited San Pedro prior to the November elections.

The PVPLC was an early and strong proponent of Prop 84, which provided funds for clean water and land conservation. We feel that the passage of this measure will be of significant benefit to the community. It will provide new sources of funding for restoration and trail maintenance projects on the Preserve. In addition, Prop 84 will be a source of funding for the acquisition of additional open space on the Peninsula as those opportunities arise, perhaps as early as next year.

We're pleased to announce that Prop 84 passed in the recent election by over 500,000 votes.

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OPEN SPACES

A newsletter published by the
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A MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR OF DEVELOPMENT

NEW PRESERVE – NEW RESPONSIBILITIES



*Staffmembers survey vegetation
in Portuguese Bend Preserve.*

There is a growing sense of excitement in the Land Conservancy. Last year, our major acquisition and the formation of the Portuguese Bend Nature Preserve tripled the size of the acreage under our stewardship. This means more things to do and more resources needed to get things done. The challenge is on the staff and the adrenalin is flowing.

Many of you are familiar with the extraordinary amount of work done by the Conservancy staff, but let's take a peek into the Land Conservancy's office on a typical day to get a feel for the range of their activities.

Mike Yadrick, Director of Restoration Programs has just returned from a day in the Portuguese Bend preserve supervising a weed clearing operation. Still sweaty, he hunches over his computer completing the annual report for the Chandler Preserve. He will compile reports on all our properties, and you will be able to review them on our website before the end of the year.

Across from him, Becky Harper, Outreach Director is on the phone working with an Eagle Scout to rebuild a trail. Earlier she had returned from an employee volunteer day with the Xerox Corporation where 20 employees planted native shrubs on the Preserve. They join more than 200 employees from Alcoa and Honda in our new corporate outreach program and hundreds of community volunteers who have helped out at our regular Saturday Volunteer Days.

Andrea Vona has just returned from the White Point Preserve, where she is working with the City of Los Angeles to put in a parking area and add a Nature Center. Andrea is also responsible for monitoring the Portuguese Bend Nature Preserve (see cover story) and is writing the restoration plan for the new Preserve.

Ann Dalkey, our new Science Director, spent part of her day visiting California State University at Long Beach where she met with the Biology Department. The professors there are excited about developing a strong partnership with the Conservancy for conducting research and classroom based long-term studies on the preserves. Now she is meeting with one of her 12 high school research students - his project is to research the presence of coyotes on the preserves.

In the adjacent rooms, following a series of community events (see page 7), Mary Ellen Richardson is working on the year-end mailing campaign. Mary Lopes is assembling a team of volunteers to help out with the year-end activity. Barbara Dye, in addition to running the organization, working with the City Councils and numerous government organizations, is compiling a trail guide of the best family hikes on the Peninsula.

If it sounds hectic, it is. As a tenant in our building, a retired CEO, commented the other day "You guys have the hardest working staff I've ever seen." The hours may be long, but with a great group of people dedicated to the Conservancy's mission, it hardly feels like work.

So here we are at year-end thankful for your support, yet needing a final push to help us meet our obligations for the year. Please consider helping with a year-end gift. We're also delighted that Michael and Virginia Cicoria have provided a matching grant to DOUBLE THE VALUE your contribution of \$1,000 or more received by December 31, 2006.

Robert Ford
Director of Development

RESEARCH TAKES OFF AT THE CONSERVANCY

Our new science program, known as RECIPE for Research, Education, and Community Involvement Program for the Environment, has started with a bang. From the program's inception through the summer months, many milestones were accomplished to set the course for exciting and valuable science research for the Conservancy.

Three exceptional interns worked at the Conservancy during the summer. Coming from varied backgrounds and career goals, Amanda Peterson (Skidmore College), Eric Yukai Hong (USC), and Lisa Eckert (Cal Poly SLO) teamed with Conservancy staff to help with office and field work as well as to produce their own scientific studies.

Amanda and Eric updated the Tree Survey for the White Point Nature Preserve. They measured every tree and established GPS readings for each, so that their locations can be mapped more precisely. The report showed steady growth for the trees that have been added to the site.

Lisa compared the soil characteristics of the area that was burned during the June 2005 wildfire to similar areas that were not burned. Her study found that there were detectable differences between the burned and unburned areas, but the impacts were primarily limited to the top 1-2 inches. Not only will Lisa obtain school credit for her work, but she will present her study next May at the Southern California

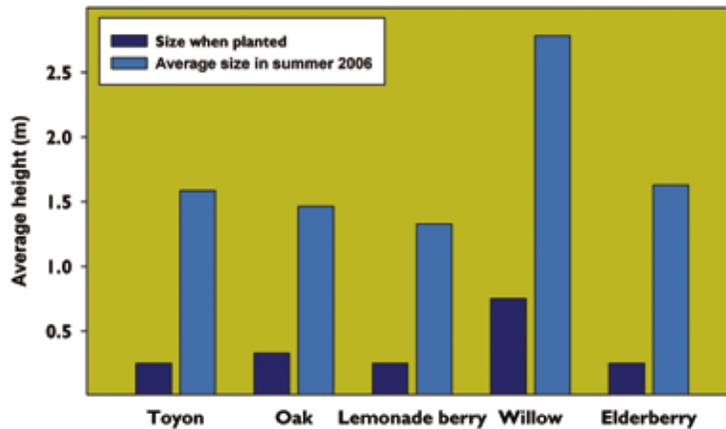
Academy of Sciences' annual conference.

The Conservancy has now established collaborative projects with area universities and scientists that will benefit high school, undergraduate, and graduate students. Ann Dalkey, Science Director, has met with teachers from Peninsula, Palos Verdes, and Chadwick High Schools and professors from CSULB, CSUDH, and LMU to explore ideas for

a RECIPE partnership, and she will be looking for additional opportunities as the program continues. Many students need volunteer hours and/or research projects to graduate; this program will start them on a successful research path.

Another aspect of the RECIPE program is to contribute to scientific workshops and conferences to share the Conservancy's experiences with respect to habitat restoration and preserve management. Staff and students presented at the Society for Ecological Restoration Conference in Santa Barbara in October.

Change in tree height since planting at the White Point Nature Preserve



Far left: Intern Lisa Eckert and Director of Restoration Programs Mike Yadrick conducting vegetation assessment survey at the Portuguese Bend Preserve.

Near left: UCLA graduate student Travis Brooks conducts research on grassland restoration.

The RECIPE Program is funded by Alcoa Corporation. We greatly appreciate their ongoing support. However, it is ongoing donations from our members that make it possible for us to manage a program like this. We leverage your donations to provide these benefits for our community. Thank you!

WHITE POINT NATURE PRESERVE UPDATES

NEW HABITAT TAKING HOLD AT WHITE POINT

In January 2003, the Land Conservancy began planting native shrubs throughout White Point Nature Preserve. This has been a collaborative effort between Land Conservancy staff and community volunteers, who have donated over 8,000 hours to the project. More than 90,000 plants have been installed to date and more than 10,000 shrubs, trees, and grasses will be planted this winter.

The results of the large-scale habitat restoration efforts are visually apparent and have been confirmed by three years of scientific monitoring. The site has transformed from less than 1% native plant cover to over 70 acres of coastal sage scrub, woodland, and native grasslands. All plant communities have increased in cover, with the purple sage scrub and wildflower grassland communities approaching seventy percent coverage (Figure 1). As additional plants are added, weeds continue to be removed. As more seedlings emerge after the winter rains, we look forward to a consistent climb in native plant coverage over the next several years.

Birds at White Point Preserve Oct. 2005 - Sept. 2006

Volunteer David Moody, has conducted regular surveys for birds, butterflies and insects at White Point Nature Preserve over the past year. During that time, he observed 115 different species of birds.

Some species are present year-round and others are seasonal. Seasonal birds can be winter visitors, summer visitors, or present in the spring and fall during their migration, as shown in the graphic. There is a sharp decrease in numbers of birds observed in June and July, since it is peak breeding time for the birds and they disperse to other locations to raise their offspring.

The return of a flourishing bird community to White Point is a tribute to the success of the restoration efforts. The most exciting recent discovery was the spotting of a burrowing owl in the Preserve.



Burrowing owl photo by Don Baccus

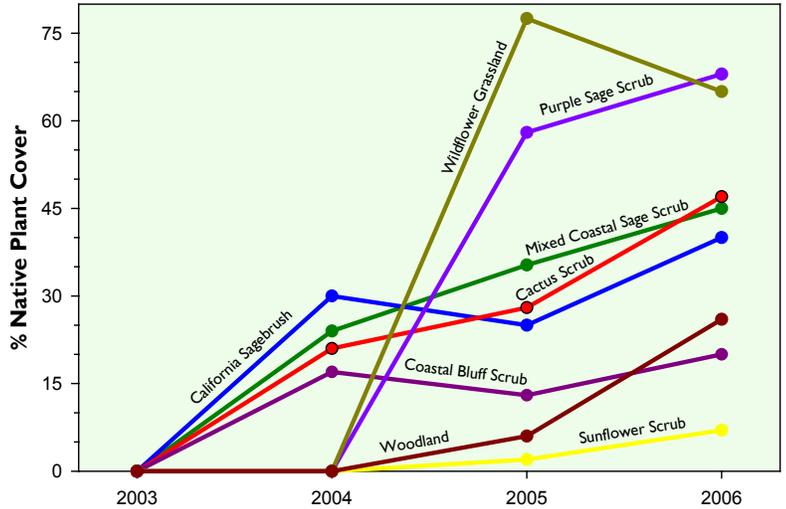
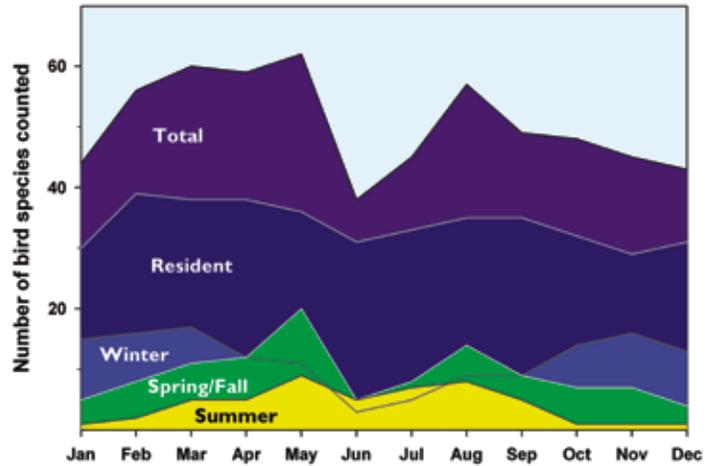


Figure 1. Percentage of native plant cover calculated over the past three years during transect surveys at White Point Nature Preserve.



Number of bird species observed each month compared to the subsets of resident birds, winter and summer visitors, and spring/fall migrants.

Birds that are commonly and rarely observed at the White Point Nature Preserve.

COMMON

- Western gull
- European starling
- House finch
- American crow
- House sparrow
- Brandt's cormorant
- Bushtit
- Brown pelican
- California towhee
- Common yellowthroat

RARE

- American oystercatcher
- Brant
- Brewer's sparrow
- Osprey
- Peregrine falcon
- Pigeon guillemot
- Pink-footed shearwater
- Sage thrasher
- White-winged dove
- White-throated sparrow

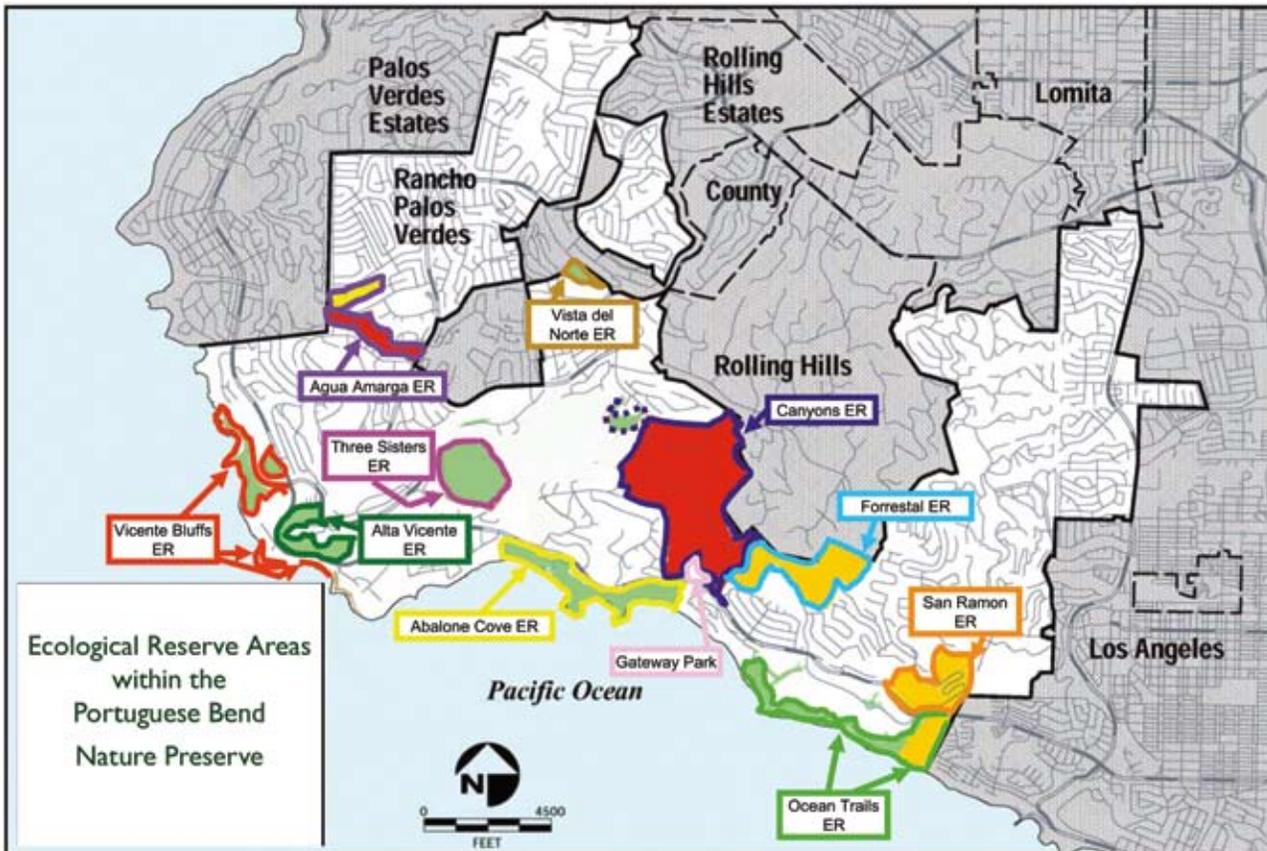
PORTUGUESE BEND NATURE PRESERVE UPDATES

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDS ECOLOGICAL RESERVE NAMES

The new 1200-acre Portuguese Bend Nature Preserve contains a number of different parcels within Rancho Palos Verdes. Many of them have been called by different names through the years. The City and the Land Conservancy have established a community committee to make recommendations for the trail system and its uses within the Preserve. This group of 14 residents from different backgrounds will also look at trailhead locations, overlooks, and signage for the Preserve.

In order to standardize the language for the new Preserve, the committee was asked to recommend names for smaller areas, which they called Ecological Reserves, within the larger Preserve. The committee recommended historic names whenever possible, but invented new names based on historic usage for several of the areas. Their recommendations must be approved by the City Council, but are being used until that vote can take place. The suggested names are:

- Vista del Norte ER: the slope above Indian Peak Road, with magnificent views to the north
- Agua Amarga ER: the two canyons, Agua Amarga (across from Ralph's Market) and Lunada Canyon (which belongs to the Land Conservancy)
- Vicente Bluffs ER: The habitat and bluff areas of the Oceanfront Estates tract (except for one section), the bluffs of Lower Point Vicente, and the Fishing Access;
- Alta Vicente ER: The slopes surrounding Rancho Palos Verdes City Hall;
- Three Sisters ER: The area dominated by three ridges above Barkentine Road;
- Abalone Cove ER: The undeveloped area south of PV Drive South, except for a 5-acre part of the park;
- Canyons ER: The recently acquired parcel in Portuguese Bend, characterized by numerous parallel canyons extending through it from Palos Verdes Drive South up to Del Cerro Park;
- Ocean Trails ER: The habitat areas restored by the former Ocean Trails project (now Trump National) which will be part of the Preserve in the future;
- San Ramon ER: The parcel that encompasses the switchbacks section around Palos Verdes Drive East.



PORTUGUESE BEND NATURE PRESERVE UPDATES

New Wildlife and Plant Discoveries

and Endangered Plants List 2, meaning that the plant is rare, threatened or endangered in California.

New Population of Endangered Butterfly Discovered

Butterfly surveys also resulted in exciting and unexpected news. Because the only known population of Palos Verdes blue butterfly is at the Fuel Depot in San Pedro, the surveys this year focused on looking for the El Segundo blue.

This rare blue butterfly is specifically adapted to the dune buckwheat *Eriogonum parvifolium*, and emerges in summer when the buckwheat's flowers open. The adult life of these butterflies is fairly short, only a few days, during which they mate and lay eggs.

When the Land Conservancy's botanical consultants confirmed suitable populations of dune buckwheat, the Conservancy requested surveys by Dr. Gordon Pratt, an expert in this rare butterfly. His surveys revealed that our coastline indeed supports populations of this very uncommon butterfly both immediately north of Point Vicente and at the Fishing Access. The habitat north of Point Vicente supports at least 36 of these butterflies, while the habitat southeast of Point Vicente supports at least 12 butterflies.

Before this discovery, the butterfly was previously only known to persist on three fragments of habitat: the dunes of LAX, Chevron's El Segundo refinery property, and the bluffs of Malaga Cove. Dr. Pratt confirmed that the Preserve does contain a pair of El Segundo blues.

The Land Conservancy will incorporate the new knowl-

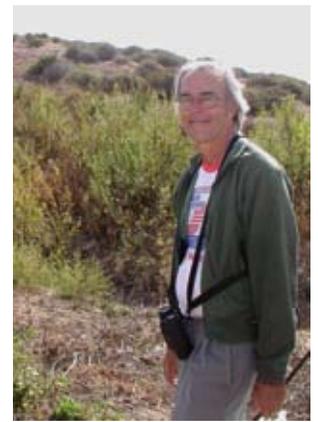


According to Dr. Travis Longcore, Science Director of The Urban Wildlands Group (UWG), it was a good year for the Palos Verdes blue butterfly. He reported that a variety of new techniques implemented by Jana Johnson of UWG

tripled the output of the captive rearing program and now 525 pupae are ready for the next season. With continued success next year, an ample captive stock will be available for reintroduction to parts of the species' range where it has been eliminated. UWG's adult surveys at DFSP showed a population of a size similar to last year, around 200–250 butterflies by their best estimates.

Cont'd. from Page 1

edge of these butterfly populations into their restoration plan as well as management activities to eventually expand the habitat and encourage an increase in numbers of butterflies.



Volunteer David Moody conducting bird surveys at the White Point Nature Preserve.

In Celebration!

Remember family and friends with your gift to the Land Conservancy.

Graduations Weddings Birthdays Anniversaries

Recipients and donors will be specially recognized in upcoming issues of *Open Spaces*. Please contact Bob Ford at (310) 541-7613, ext. 202 or rford@pvplc.org

Gifts in Celebration

The Autry Event at Abalone Cove given by Stephan and Wendi Olshan

CORBA Palos Verdes given by George Hicks

Happy Birthday to Craig Lardiere given by his mom

Gifts in Memory

Eric Allen given by Cynthia Allen

Herb Asmussen given by Bruce and Shirley Edson

Mildred Birnbarm given by Milton Birnbaum

Ken and Juanita Crane given by Pamela J. Crane

Nelle Curtis given by Georg and Mary Ellen Babbe, Constance Davenport, Dorian Dunlavey, KFX Inc., Carolyn Kratzet and Trudi Park

Frank Garcia given by Susannah Garcia

Mrs. Pupta Gupta given by Ashok Gupta

Lowell Haueter given by Frank and Joy Gonzales and Marty and Dave Leveille

Homer given by Bridget and Michael Stamos

Janet Landon given by Bob and Romona Allison, Paul and Jane Arnold, Margee and Joe Hoffman, Robert Landon, Sheila Philip, Roger and Beverly Richesson, Charles Weathers, Dale and Joanne Wendel, Karl Newacheck and the firm of Kelley, Drye & Warren LLP

Angus Nuttman given by Brian More

Martin Reiter given by an anonymous donor

Grace and Dick Taube given by Betty Strauss

Bill Tierney given by John and Ann Chaffey

Duncan P. Walker given by Margaret Walker

MEMBERSHIP NEWS AND SPECIAL EVENTS

FUN FOR ALL IN THE FALL



Young picnicker with "Miss Penny" a California king snake.



Picnickers competed for prizes in the Table Decorating Contest.



Super Woman Pam Hatch and her Super Dog Rio



"Surging Wave and Catalina" by John Harbison took the Grand Prize in the 2006 Photo Contest.



Fall is a great time to enjoy our local preserves. In addition to monthly nature walks, the Land Conservancy offers a variety of events and special activities designed to bring new members and old to the preserves.

Mile Long Picnic

On October 22, the Mile Long Picnic was held at Upper Point Vicente Park where the Innisfree Irish Band and Master Magician Jeff Parmer entertained over 200 picnickers. While adults enjoyed tastes of handcrafted ales and lagers from The San Pedro Brewing Company, kids got to handle and learn about local snakes from teenage herpetologist Bryce Trevett.

In a special ceremony, PVPLC President Henry Jurgens announced the Land Conservancy's Conservation Partner awards recognizing those who have contributed significantly to the organization's conservation goals. This year, awards were given to Richard and Melanie Lundquist who played a leadership role in fundraising efforts and to the National Charity League, Palos Verdes Chapter for their ongoing volunteer support.

White Point Preserve Hosts First Annual "Bark & Boo" Halloween Party

On October 29, our first annual "Bark & Boo" Halloween Party was held at the White Point Nature Preserve. More than 30 dogs and their owners competed for prizes in the Bark & Boo Canine Costume Contest before hitting the trails for a parade around the Preserve. Both young and old enjoyed the experience of this spook-tacular event with free refreshments and treats for all!

Picture Palos Verdes 2006 Photo Contest

For photography enthusiasts, the Picture Palos Verdes Photo Contest entries were on full display at the Mile Long Picnic. This year's Grand Prize went to John Harbison for his entry "Surging Wave and Catalina". Additional winners in the Natural Landscapes, Wildlife, Plants & Flowers and Student categories included Jerry Kotler, Steven Thompson, Jared Dastrup, Robert Day, Gerald Felando, Doug Mew, Howard Russell, Bryant DeRoy, Hannah Levenson and Jarrett Rouse. To see all the winning photos, visit the PVPLC website at www.pvplc.org/photocontest.

Sunset Photo Workshop

Photo buffs had an opportunity to improve their skills on sunset shots at a special outdoor workshop on November 4 led by Mark Comon of Paul's Photo in Torrance and Land Conservancy Education Director John Nieto. The group enjoyed perfect weather and took some gorgeous sunset photos. For those who missed this workshop, check the Land Conservancy calendar at www.pvplc.org for our next workshop in the spring.

Local Businesses Pitch In

Special thanks go out to these local businesses who donated to our events both financially and with in kind services. We appreciate their generous support and we encourage our members to thank them as well.

Mile Long Picnic

Bay Cities National Bank, Raju and Philo Chhabria of Shorewood Realtors, Attorney Michael A. Barth, Medawar's Jewelers, Dr. Cassie Jones of Point Vicente Animal Hospital, and Linda Elliott of Smith Barney

The Bark & Boo Halloween Party

Aussie Pet Mobile, Bark Busters Home Dog Training, Centinela Feed & Pet Supplies, Creative Pet Supply, Francine Dominique, Kritter Korral Pet Shop, South Shores Pet Clinic, Albertsons, Ralph's, Trader Joe's, Vons and The Corner Store.

Photo Contest and Workshop

Mark Comon of Paul's Photo, Frank Brown and Tom Underhill of the PV News, Ted Vegvari of PV on the Net.



NOV. 30 & DEC. 28

Bird Walks
George F Canyon
4pm - 5pm

Watch birds come in to roost for the evening. Meet naturalist Loretta Rose at the Nature Center sign. Bring your own binoculars.

DEC. 2

Family Fun Day
George F Canyon
Nature Center
2pm - 4pm

Make holiday ornaments, join a scavenger hunt and view exhibits and live animals at the Center. Free hot cider and goodies for all plus plenty of nature themed gifts for your holiday shopping. For more information, call the Center at 310-547-0862 or Becky Harper at 310-541-7613 ext. 207.

DEC. 2 & JAN. 6

Nature Walk
George F Canyon
9am & 1pm

See the canyon and learn fascinating facts about local plant and animal communities. \$3 per person donation suggested.

DEC. 3 & JAN. 5

Night Hike
George F Canyon
7pm - 8pm

Walk to the top of the canyon for a fantastic city lights view. Bring your flashlight. \$5 per person donation suggested. Reservations required, call 547-0862.

FALL CALENDAR

Join us for these exciting events and volunteer opportunities! For information about Volunteer Workdays, call Outreach Director Becky Harper at 310/541-7613 ext. 207. For information on other volunteer opportunities, call Volunteer Coordinator Mary Lopes at 310/541-7613, ext. 206, or send an e-mail to mlopes@pvplc.org.

DEC. 2

Volunteer Workday
DFSP 9am - Noon

Help us with plant propagation in our nursery on Gaffey St. in San Pedro. Due to security concerns, your contact information is required before entering the base. Call Becky at 541-7613 X207.

DEC. 9

Nature Walk
Ocean Front Estates
Bluff Trail
9am - 10:30am

Stroll along bluff edge trails with incomparable ocean views and admire newly-restored habitat areas. Easy.

DEC. 9

Volunteer Workday
Chandler Preserve
9am - Noon

Help us restore habitat for the Palos Verdes blue butterfly. Call Becky at 541-7613 X207.

JAN. 13, 2007

Nature Walk
George F Canyon
9am - 10:00am

See rare Catalina schist rock and wonderful coastal sage scrub habitat in one of the nicest canyons on the Peninsula. Easy to Moderate.



EXCLUSIVE OFFER FOR PVPLC MEMBERS

Be among the first to get the new Land Conservancy Trail Guide! For a donation of \$100 or more by December 31, we'll send you a free guide to the best hikes on the Peninsula (available in early 2007).



Missed a Nature Walk? Land Conservancy Nature Walks are broadcast on local RPVTV Channel 35 Friday evenings at 6pm.

New Outdoor Volunteer Opportunities

Would you like to help lead activities on volunteer days? Become a volunteer Team Leader. Join us for Team Leader training in February and March.

Is there an area on one of the Preserves that you hike frequently? Join our Volunteer Stewards Monitoring Program. It's a healthy, enjoyable way to contribute to the successful management of these preserves. Call Becky at 310-541-7613 x 207 for details.



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