

Garden Clippings

Orange County Independent Master Gardeners' Newsletter

Volume 19 Number 9

October 2013

October Meeting

Saturday, October 5, 2013

Field Trip to

Newport Back Bay

If you want to carpool, meet at the NOCCCD Office where we normally have our meetings by 9:30 a.m. We will meet at the parking lot of the **Peter and Mary Muth Interpretive Center at 10:00 a.m.** It is located at **2301 University Drive, Newport Beach, CA 92660**, on the corner of **University and Irvine Avenue**. The Center is currently open to the public from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Tuesday through Sunday. Call (949) 923-2290 for information. Please note that the building is not visible from the street.



We'll meet in the parking lot and walk down through the Butterfly Habitat to the Center.

Upper Newport Bay is the largest of the remaining natural estuaries in Southern California. An estuary is a coastal wetland where salt water from the ocean mixes with nutrient-rich fresh water from inland sources, to provide a fertile feeding area for birds, fish and other animals.

**Reminder! Dues are due!
This is your last newsletter!**

Please pay \$20 at the October meeting or mail to:
Nancy Shaw
9701 Holder St
Cypress 90630

Gardening Events

L.A. County Arboretum 301 North Baldwin Ave., Arcadia, CA 91007 tel. 626.447.8751

Sat. & Sun. Oct. 26 & 27: "Fall Plant Sale and Harvest Fair". \$9 admission. 9am – 4pm.

Native plants, vegetables and used books for sale! Get there early as parking is at a premium.

OC California Native Plant Society Saddleback College, 28000 Marguerite Pkwy, Mission Viejo

Sat. Oct. 19: "At Home with Natives 2013: Sustaining California with Native Gardens" 8:00am – 4:30pm. \$55 includes gourmet lunch. More information and online registration at: <http://www.ocnps.org/#basic-information>.

Fullerton College Horticulture Dept., 321 E. Chapman, Fullerton 92832, 714-992-7135

Sat. & Sun. Oct. 5 – 6: "Fall Plant Sale" Sat. 9am-4pm. /Sun. 10am – 3pm.

Natives and Drought Tolerant Plants, Succulents, Herbaceous Perennials, Flowering Shrubs, Shade Plants, House Plants, Vines & Winter Vegetables.

Fullerton Arboretum. Pre-register for all classes by calling 657/278-3407.

Sat. Oct 12: "Composting 1" 10 – 11:30am. Bleachers. \$7

Learn the basics of home composting and receive a free booklet to guide you.

Sat. Oct 19: "Composting 2" 10 – 11:30am. Bleachers. \$7

Advanced techniques in composting.

Upcoming Saturday, Nov. 2: Rancho Santa Ana Botanical Gardens annual native plant sale

Leaves from the President



Upper Newport Bay Conservancy

Upper Newport Bay is an important rest stop and/or winter home for birds migrating from Canada and Alaska. Nesting birds include the endangered light-footed clapper rail and California least tern. The Bay is also a spawning ground and nursery for many commercial and sports fish, including halibut and bass.

Peter & Mary Muth Interpretive Center

This 10,000 square foot educational facility was built into the side of one of the bluffs on the north side of the Bay. It offers panoramic views of the Bay yet is nestled so unobtrusively that many local residents are still unaware that the Interpretive Center is there.

The center, which opened in October 2000, provides a focal point for the public's enjoyment of the Bay. Here you can visit a series of exhibits and interactive displays.

Watch the award-winning "Saltmarsh Seasons" in the Ray and Elsa Watson Theater. This innovative short film has different wildlife scenes shown simultaneously on five separate screens. Or check out the live reptile and amphibian displays in the classrooms.

Habitats

Coastal salt marsh vegetation has been found to be up to twice as productive as corn, three times as productive as wheat and twenty times as productive as ocean vegetation. Throughout the USA, it is estimated that one third of all threatened and endangered species are found in wetlands.

Upper Newport Bay is a particular type of wetland called an estuary – a place where seawater and freshwater mix. Estuaries are typically found at the mouths of rivers and streams. Some of the most fertile areas of the

world, such as the Nile delta, are the flood plains and estuaries of the great rivers. The following characteristics make estuaries like Upper Newport Bay particularly fertile:

- The freshwater sources that feed the estuary bring nutrient-rich sediments that accumulate in the estuary instead of being washed out to sea.
- The ebb and flow of the tide causes a continual mixing of the water that distributes food and nutrients throughout the Bay and maintains a high level of oxygen in the water to support demands.
- The duration and intensity of sunlight in areas like southern California coupled with the shallow water in the estuary provide ideal conditions for photosynthesis by the microscopic plankton in the water that form the start a complex and highly-productive food web.

As stated above, in an estuary the water level rises and falls with the tide. As the tide falls, shorebirds are able to feed on the worms and shellfish living in the mud that is no longer covered by water. The tides are caused mainly by the gravitational pull of the moon as it passes overhead. When the moon is new (on the same side of the earth as the sun) or full (on the opposite side to the sun) the pull of the sun reinforces that of the moon and larger tides called spring tides occur. At Upper Newport Bay there are two high tides and two low tides roughly every day. When there is a spring tide there is about 8 ft. difference between high and low water level.

Plants

Upper Newport Bay is blessed with a wide variety of plant species, each adapted to the particular habitat in which it grows.

The plants found in the saltmarsh are called halophytes – from the Greek words for salt (halo) and lover (phyte). In the lower tidal areas cordgrass predominates. This plant is adapted to grow submerged in saltwater for much of the time. On higher ground that is covered by water only occasionally, pickleweed is most abundant. Other halophytes found at or above the high tide

mark and adjacent roadside/barren areas are the saltmarsh bird's beak, fleshy jaumea, sea lavender, brewer's saltbush, sea blite, and alkali heath.

Saltmarsh bird's beak (*Cordylanthus maritimus*) is a federal and state endangered species of plant. This annual herb is so named because its flower is like a bird's beak pointed towards the sky. At the Bay, it is found mostly in dredge spoil disposal areas. Growth seems to occur in the vicinity of freshwater sources which appear to be necessary for germination.

In the freshwater marsh cattail, bulrush (tule) and sedge are found. These non-halophytes are adapted to live in standing freshwater. The marsh and pond areas are fed by streams and seeps. Trees and bushes that like the moist soil conditions found on and near stream banks include the native willow, cottonwood, sycamore and mulefat, and the invasive, non-native Brazilian pepper. The term riparian is used to describe steam-side habitat.

Two main plant communities are found in the uplands surrounding the Bay. They are grassland and coastal sage scrub. The characteristic native coastal sage scrub plants include California sagebrush and buckwheat. Non-native plants include wild mustards and pampas grass.

Retrieved from <http://newportbay.org/> September 26, 2013

Opportunities with Back to Natives

Volunteer in their Native Plant Nursery at Santiago Park Nature Reserve on **Tuesdays, 9am – 12pm**. Help propagate, water, weed and transplant native plants for use in habitat restoration and to raise funds for environmental education. RSVP via volunteer@backtonatives.org.

Learn how to propagate Native Plants at their Nursery on **Thursdays or Saturdays, Oct. 3 - Nov. 23**. Thursday, meet 9:30am – noon; Saturday, meet 10am – 12:30 pm. In this hands-on class, you will learn which native plants propagate best by seed, cuttings, layering, and division. **RSVP online at <http://www.backtonatives.org/events.shtml>**.

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Teraganix and EM1

Don Martin

Some time ago, I ordered a magazine called *Grower Talks* and in it I found a company called Teraganix. They sell a product named EM1. I called them and requested more information on EM1. As it turns out, EM1 is a whole host of things aimed at gardens, agriculture, livestock and pollution.

For gardens, it provides a broad spectrum of beneficial microorganisms, enzymes, trace minerals, vitamins, and organic acids. All this is to support healthy soil and plants, microbes, worms and insects already in the soil. I ordered some and will let you know what I think of it. For more information, the website is www.teraganix.com. The first sentence on the website states: "Teraganix specializes in products that help to restore the natural balance of nature—soil, water, air, and people—using only natural ingredients and soil organisms."

Fall Story Time at Fullerton Arboretum's Children's Garden

By Linda Pope



Fullerton Arboretum kicked off a new program in September entitled "Children's Garden Story Time". Designed for children between the ages of 4-7, it encompasses a garden related story or two plus a tour of the Children's Garden and one or two garden related crafts.

The program was designed by recent OCIMG graduates Linda Pope and Cerise Outhier. After Harriet Bouldin, who is in charge of volunteers at the Arboretum, spoke at one of our monthly meetings, Linda contacted her and signed on as a volunteer with the idea of completing the 50 volunteer hours. She asked Cerise to get on board and with the guidance of Harriet and Evelyn Brown, education manager, the program was launched. Cerise's expertise as a retired school librarian was a fabulous asset in choosing the stories to be read.

September 14th was "Pizza, Pizza, Pizza Garden". *Little Red Hen (Makes a Pizza)* and *Pete's a Pizza* were the two stories read by Jan Gross, a retired school teacher. Next was a tour of the Children's Garden, including the Gourd Tunnel, Scent Garden (the kids loved smelling the lavender, rosemary, tansy and lemon balm) and Earthbag House. They identified vegetables and herbs in the raised bed Pizza Garden (one of three raised beds) and then made a garden marker of paper pizza toppings to leave in the Pizza Garden and painted a garden sign to take home. They ended

the session by potting an herb for their own garden.

Other classes include "Butterflies" (sure to be a hit as Cerise is a lover and expert on butterflies), "Sunflowers for Everyone" (including an art lesson on Van Gogh's *The Sunflowers*), "Weird and Wonderful Pumpkins and Gourds" (we'll make a gourd birdhouse), "Autumn Leaves", "What are Biomes?" and "Gifts of Nature" (we'll make a gift for the wildlife in the children's backyard and make a gift for their own home with repurposed containers).

The final story will be *The Gardener* by Sarah Stewart which you can't help but love if you're a gardener!!

The goal of the program is to inspire kids to connect with the Arboretum and to get out in nature and enjoy its rewards. The program started with just Linda and Cerise choosing the stories, programs and crafts but several other volunteers have now joined the Children's Garden team. Teachers and librarians were chosen as readers. Judging by the enthusiasm of both children and parents, the Pizza, Pizza, Pizza Garden class was a huge success and a great beginning for the series.

More information can be found on the Arboretum's website at FullertonArboretum.org.

Seed Savers at Yorba Linda Library

Linda Pope learned at her Del Norte garden club meeting that Yorba Linda Library has started a "seed savers program". The program is for heirloom variety vegetable and herb seeds only, with the hope of adding flower seeds at a later date. You register with the library and you can take out two of their seed packets per month free of charge. They do not have to be paid back. You can also donate seeds, if they are heirloom.

The people to contact are Julie Zeoli, librarian or Julie Horn at 714-777-2873 Ext. 6. Sounds like a pretty neat concept!