

Hello Nature Friends!

What a joy to see all the activities and excitement at Placerita, after three long years of Covid restrictions.

We just finished the docent training, and we had a fantastic class of 22 new docents. They are all very enthusiastic, full of new ideas for projects and ready to work. The Open House preparations are going very well, meetings are progressing along, and all the docents are learning about their assignments. May 13 is Open House (see flyer). Come and visit, it will be such a fun and wonderful day with many activities for free.

There is water in the stream...maybe a little bit too much water for a safe crossing in some parts, but it is so beautiful and the visitors, big and small, have been enjoying playing in the water. The animal show is back, we have bird and flower walks, family hikes, and Nature Education programs (check the programs section). There is a new beehive on display and toad eggs in the pond! Placerita is at its very best right now, come out and hit the trails!



Poppies Can Tell the Weather

The flowers of the poppy can be a weather indicator. How does that work? The blossoms are responsive to sunlight, and they will open wide only on bright, sunny days. They remain closed on cloudy days and start closing at sunset, even on sunny days. They are always closed during the night.

The California poppy was selected as the state flower in 1890. The two other flowers considered were the Mariposa lily and the Matilija poppy, but the California poppy was selected by a wide margin.

It seems we have Sarah Plummer Lemmon to thank for that. She mounted a great campaign to have the California poppy accepted. However, the selection didn't become official until 1903. The golden bloom is seen on freeway signs entering California as a welcome sign, and along the roads on our "scenic route" signs.



The Rattler

Sponsored by the Placerita Canyon Nature Center Associates
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Placerita Canyon Nature Center
Over 50 Years of Nature Education

May-June 2023

Editor: Evelyn Vandersande Publisher: Heidi Webber



Graduation for the Class of 2023

After a very long hiatus because of Covid restrictions, we were overjoyed to be able to conduct docent training at Placerita. We have 22 new docents who showed up for each class with great enthusiasm for learning. They attended classes with rigor, and established friendships with each other right away. It was fantastic to witness such a wonderful development. Ron Kraus was celebrating 19 years of docent training, so he obviously knows how to handle this training, but even Ron was touched by this very special class and their passion.

The graduation celebration was really a wonderful evening. We had 65 guests and they all had a chair...not always easy to make that happen. Linette and Rick Brammer, Mara Cohen, Linda Jensen, Frank Hoffman and Herb Broutt spent most of the day cleaning up the kitchen, docent room and classroom, decorating and setting up, organizing the supplies for the event and making everything look beautiful.

Every guest was very generous in sharing dishes for the potluck, and it was delicious. Thank you to all the cooks.

Jack Levenberg brought some very good wines from his own production (we had a special permit and a guard for the evening as required). Ron Kraus had one of his favorite movies, the *Hard Hombre*, playing on the screen during dinner. Most of the movie was filmed in Placerita, and the Walker cabin is seen in a few scenes.

After dessert, Ron started the ceremony with a new twist, a congratulation speech created the same day by AI (artificial intelligence). It was incredibly accurate, well written and we were all amazed and touched. The new docents received their certificates along with their new name tags.

Nine docents received a green cap for perfect attendance, it is a high number compared with previous years. It shows again the rare dedication from the class of 2023. Glenda Perl fought supply chain problems to get those caps, and they arrived just in time that very afternoon.

It was not easy to fit 22 new docents in one photo, but a good effort was made.

Congratulations to the class of 2023, and may you enjoy your happy time with the Placerita family. We welcome you with open arms!

**Our Placerita Canyon Nature Center Associates (PCNCA)
Board of Directors Voting Season is Upon Us!**

By Jim Crowley

PCNCA will conduct the Board of Directors election in the first week of June.

It is time for the people interested in running for the Board to seriously consider it. The board of directors is always wanting new people and new ideas. You have a chance to express your thoughts on how we can improve the park and our programs. New Docents from the Class of 2023 are encouraged to consider running for a directorship.

In the April/May 2023 time frame, all members will receive voting instructions. If you are at all interested, let one of the board members know you are interested in being added to the ballot. You can also contact one of the election committee members: Jim Crowley, Mara Cohen, or Jackie Thomason. They can answer questions about the responsibilities involved.

Here are some Board of Director (BoD) basics: Elected board members serve a two-year term, with half the BoD up for re-election each year (six positions this year). Additionally, two alternate directors are elected to a one-year term. Consider running for a board position to help make decisions and plans for our Docent organization. Eligibility requirements are easy...be a member in good standing (paid dues) and willing to attend a monthly board meeting.

The board of directors up for re-election in June are as follows: Joan Fincutter, Cindy Gold, Linda Jensen, Sue Sutton, Denny Truger, and Ken Yasukawa.

The voting process.... You will receive detailed voting information, including a ballot, in the April/May period.

Lastly, all members, especially the Class of 2023, have an ongoing open invitation to attend any or all Board of Directors' meetings on the first Tuesday of the month, at 1:00 pm so you can participate, watch, and see how it all works. We highly encourage this. The next board meeting will be on May 2. Mark your calendar.

Thank You,

THE VOTING RESULT WILL BE ANNOUNCED AT THE "WELCOME SUMMER" DINNER ON SATURDAY, JUNE 3 AT 6.00PM



Mimulus aurantiacus or Diplocos loniflorus

Trail Treasures

By RuthAnne Murthy

Sticky Monkey Flower or
Bush Monkey Flower

Oh, those crazy botanists! They can't decide what to call this plant, I just call it gorgeous! Yes, controversy abounds even in the plant world! Sticky Monkey Flowers are a native, perennial with woody stems. They have a large range from S.W. Oregon to the Baja Peninsula in Mexico. It can grow up to 6 feet tall, but is most often 2-4 feet tall. It is an evergreen plant, but it is known to lose its leaves during drought or extreme heat. It is found in the coastal sage scrub, chaparral and the oak woodland. It prefers rocky slopes, grasslands and disturbed areas.

It tolerates both full sun and part shade.

The leaves of the plant are lanceolate, long and narrow. They are 2-3 inches long and are a bright green. The leaves are opposite. The leaves exude a sticky resin. The margins are finely toothed.

The flowers range from a pale yellow, bright yellow, and salmon. It blooms from March to July. Some say the flowers look like grinning monkey faces. The flowers grow from 1-2 inches across. The flowers close upon touch or after pollination. The flowers attract butterflies, especially the variable checkerspot. The bees and hummingbirds are also attracted to the blooms.

The leaves were used by the native Californians as a salt substitute. They also used a tea of the leaves for treating diarrhea and indigestion.

Sticky Monkey Flowers are a flamboyant bloom that demands hikers' attention. Because of its large, colorful flowers, it is a true trail treasure.



Facelift Time for the Kiosks

We have a few kiosks in the park. Their purpose is to provide information and education to our visitors when they stop along the trail. One kiosk is located next to the bridge, and has a wonderful poster of mammal footprints. It is a perfect spot to study those footprints, since it's near the muddy banks of the stream. It is often used for educational purposes during docent training. The clouds poster is also a source of dreamy contemplation. As Californians, we do not know our clouds very well!

The other kiosk that has been renovated is next to the Butterfly Garden, close to the pond. This display shows not only beautiful butterfly photos, but tries to better engage the public's attention.

Who is in charge of those interesting changes? Henry Cuaz started this project, and was soon joined in his efforts by Linda Jensen and Debbie Meade (class of 2023).

Those kiosks are in full sun and demand ongoing attention. The photos fade fast, and the visitors like to have displays with variety and creativity.

We are delighted to have a team in charge of these informative, seasonally themed and interactive displays.



Jim and Diane Southwell

Jim Southwell was President of PCN-CA for 15 years and when he started, there were only 15 docents.

Jim saved the Nature Center twice during those turbulent years. In February 2004, the Nature Center was to be closed. It was a difficult fiscal year, and the county could not afford to keep Placerita open.

Jim Southwell took the matter in hand, going to visit Supervisor Michael D. Antonovich to see if a reprieve from closure was possible. During the talk, it was decided that the supervisor's office would pay for overhead and maintenance costs, if PCNCA would pay the salary of the

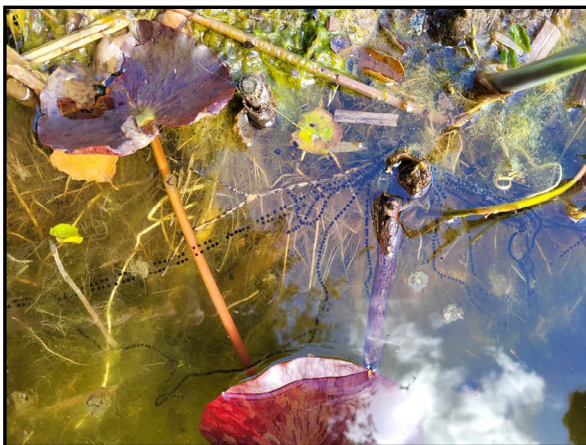
park supervisor, Ian Swift. As a volunteer organization, it was a major step for the docents to take. But we were delighted that Placerita Nature Center could remain open and that a solution, even temporary, was found. It was a close call!

In 1999, a Golden Valley developer was planning to build 866 homes and a 90-acre commercial center across from the Nature Center. The project included a 4-lane road, an elementary school and a sewage pumping station across from the Walker Ranch entrance. Jim fought tooth and nail against this project. In May 2007, the City of Santa Clarita and the developer agreed to place a conservation easement on the open space, requiring the land to remain in its natural state in perpetuity. This property is now part of the Golden Valley Open Space. He made sure the old Museum got replaced by the new Interpretive Center and insisted we use the new term each time! (old habits are hard to die)

Jim was a strong leader who gave the docents terrific support. And not just support, but great fun with fantastic trips, ideas for new programs and a deep connection to Placerita.

Diane Southwell and several other women (including Shirley Moreno) had been coming to Placerita long before the Nature Center existed. They essentially established the first steady volunteer contingent in the Natural Areas way back in the 1970s. Diane was part of every event at Placerita, and we all enjoyed her gentle sense of humor and her friendly demeanor through her many years at Placerita.

Jim and Diane are moving to Florida to live closer to their son Gary, and we wish them the very best. There is a little pinch in our heart to let them go!



Toad Eggs

Pat Coskran was the first docent to spot the toad eggs in the pond during the last week of March. It is interesting to keep those records to check the timing differences from year to year.

They look like a string of very small black pearls, so head over to Placerita, check the pond, and see if you can find them. Frog mating season is in mid-April and it is impossible to miss as the many insistent frog calls get very loud!

Right now, tadpoles can be found in large puddles on the trails. You won't find them yet in the stream. They need quiet and warm pockets of water. There is too much water, and the stream is running full force right now.... but it will come!

Barb Heinzl Class of 2023



Nature has been a part of my life for as long as I can remember. Growing up, many of our family vacations were spent camping in the Sierras, the coastal Santa Cruz Mountains and the Sacramento Delta. Some of my fondest memories were of my Mom being the tour guide to our many relatives and friends visiting us from the East Coast. It seemed like every summer she and I were taking our visitors on day trips to northern California's many natural wonders, such as Yosemite, Big Sur, Monterey Bay, Carmel by the Sea, Half Moon Bay, San Francisco, Napa and Sonoma. During our travels, I enjoyed watching the changes of the landscape as we drove from the San Joaquin Valley through the golden foothills, past the Southern San Francisco Bay, into the curvy forest roads of the Santa Cruz Mountains to the coast of the Monterey Bay. I feel each region of California has unique beauty that I have learned to love.

I moved to Southern California to attend UCLA where I earned my Master's in Public Health. I worked for over 30 years as a Certified Health Education Specialist developing and implementing health and wellness programs for various organizations in the Los Angeles area. A few years after my husband and I were married we moved to Santa Clarita where we raised our two daughters.

I didn't spend much time at Placerita Canyon Nature Center until recently. A number of years ago a good friend of mine completed the Docent Training. She needed to practice leading hikes so I agreed to help her out. She guided me through most of the trails pointing out plants, and talking about the history of the park. As I became more familiar with the park, I began bringing my family to hike the Canyon and Waterfall Trails. Aside from passing on her love of Placerita Canyon Nature Center, my friend also introduced me to some of the docents who are wonderful people!

As a result of COVID, my two part-time jobs were shut down and for the first time as an adult I was officially a homemaker. With COVID becoming endemic, I began searching for a volunteer opportunity. I wanted to find a place where I could be active, interact with good people, and be surrounded by nature. I heard the Docent Training was returning this year, so I signed up. I have learned so much from the training and I have met some amazing people. I can't wait to start my adventure as an official Docent/Naturalist at Placerita Canyon Nature Center!

Ellen Coleman Class of 2023

I worked in state service for 25 years, before finally retiring in 2020, at age 50. I didn't know what I wanted to do with Part II of my life. I'm a single mother, but a recent 'empty nester' and for the past 20 years, I worked a full-time job; another part-time job; and multiple side hustles. I was too busy working and raising a child to develop any meaningful hobbies. Other than occasional summer vacations spent traveling with my immediate family, there wasn't much time for anything else.

Two years prior, I started laying the groundwork for the next phase of my life. I read some self-help books and memoirs by authors over 50+ to see what their retirement looked like. After a couple years of introspection, I tried a few things, narrowed my definition of a "meaningful" life, and made a list of my values. I won't bore you with the list, but one thing I discovered was that I like being in nature.

Shortly after retiring, I joined a Santa Clarita hiking group. One of the women in the group mentioned that she liked hiking at Placerita Canyon. "Where's that?" I asked. I can't believe I didn't know about PCNC! As soon as I got home, I checked the PCNC website and pulled up the Events Calendar, where something called Bird Walk was scheduled. I had no idea what that was but went anyway.

My first Bird Walk was led by Rosemarie and her husband, Don (docents) and I really enjoyed it. PCNC is so beautiful and walking through the canyon, looking at birds, was both peaceful and fun. Until Bird Walk, I hadn't realized that I love birds, so I kept going. Every time Rosemarie led Bird Walk, she talked how being a Docent Naturalist had enriched her life. She was very passionate about it and encouraged me to apply. In January 2022, I arrived for the first day of docent training, only to be told that it was canceled due to Covid. I was very disappointed.

In January 2023, however, docent training was back on track, so I showed up for the first day and kept going. It's been a great experience and I've learned a ton of interesting information. At the time of this writing (March), I'm scheduled to graduate next week, and I can't wait to be a Docent Naturalist for PCNCA.





Beehive Installation

On March 2nd, during Docent training, we had the wonderful privilege to witness the transport and installation of the new beehive in the classroom at Placerita. We are extremely lucky to have the help and expertise of Chip Vannoy, a top-notch beekeeper and the owner of Bennett's Honey Farm. (location: 3176 Honey Lane in Fillmore - coming from Santa Clarita, it is on your right on 126, before the town of Fillmore)

It is a wonderful place to visit, taste many different honey flavors and get a bee education first-hand.

How were we able to get a beehive? After some time, a beehive gets crowded, and some of the bees need to swarm to find a new location. A trap door is put at the entrance of the hive so the larger queen cannot escape, and the bees are collected to start a new hive.

In the past, we ordered a new queen from Hawaii. She would have a color dot on her body, a different color for each year which make it easier to track how old she was.

This year, the queen was already acclimated in the hive, so they all came together. They were carefully transported to our display. After checking the bee behavior, Chip noticed the queen was missing – where on earth was she? She was not in the hive, but hiding in the white transport box! She was added without problem, the bees were not agitated and easy to handle.

It was a cold day, and moving to a new home is never easy. Could they find food right away?

Jack Levenberg, who had been the initiator of this project, wanted to make sure they had an

easy and fast way to find food. So a Mason jar with honey and water was positioned on top of the hive. The bees started working right away at making honeycombs and going in and out of the hive from the back entrance.

A family with young children walked inside the room and Jack put the short step ladder in front of the beehive so they could see all the action up close. It is always exciting to see the reaction and the interest from children and adults! There are not many places where you can see so many bees close up and learn about what they are doing!

We were delighted to see Nate Gold filming the transfer of bees. Nate Gold is a critically acclaimed director of photography and producer. We are extremely grateful that he offers his talent to the Nature Center. The future video is in the planning phase, and it will be about bees and pollination, a fantastic topic for Placerita.

A very exciting day and a new way for our visitors to learn about bees and their lives.



At the Library by Glenda Perl

Thank you, Joanne Darcy Library, for the opportunity to share Nature with the public!

Sandra Weatherby Balaram and I gave a presentation to a room full of infants, toddlers, and their parents. Sandra shared her extensive spider/tarantula knowledge, and King Tut, the California king snake, charmed everyone with his flicking tongue and basic awesomeness!

There were questions from the crowd (kids and adults), and everyone was enthralled with petting the animal pelts.

A great time was had by all!



Helen Sweany and the Yucca Rope

Helen is the Ethnobotany teacher for Docent training, and her class is very informative. Each year, she teaches us one survival skill that is always a big hit! How to make a rope!

Yucca fibers braided as rope are very strong, and are used in many parts of the world to construct suspended bridges that are extremely resilient. In Spain, they are part of the luxury market to make long-lasting and very exclusive sandals.

To enable this year's skills demonstration, Denny Truger brought yucca leaves from his property because no plants can be harvested from a natural area like Placerita. Thank you, Denny! To get to the fibers, the fleshy part of the leaf must be scraped off, the long fibers can then be separated and carefully and tightly braided. The docents helped

each other and applied themselves (with lots of laughter), until all had a finished product. The guys were especially proud of their results. Many admitted never having done any craft project since 1st grade, so it was quite an achievement. Thank you, Helen, we will never look at a yucca quite the same way!



Some Unsung Heros

by Monica Chocooj,

Recreation Service Leader

Many people come to PCNC for certain events, or programs. Some do odds and ends to prepare for those programs and events. Some people take charge of things when no one else will. Some repair something that only a person with their expertise can. All these people are appreciated much more than they know.

The two people I want to acknowledge at this moment are here on the days when none of those things are going on. They come in weekly to water, repair things, and help wherever needed.

These two individuals never hesitate to jump in to lend a hand, or even help with a very large deposit of mud in the driveway after one of our many recent storms.

The two people I am speaking of are Pat and Sean Coskran. I have never seen Pat when he isn't smiling or laughing. Sean is a very observant man and is an incredibly hard worker. Sean has some great stories to share. Ask him about his job with the Carousel Ranch.

Pat also started a hiking group for challenged individuals. He has taught them so much about nature and hiking and they love coming out on Saturdays to find out what Mr. C will teach them next.



Bird Display Renovations

by Ken Yasukawa

At the request of the Board of Directors, I will be renovating two outside displays that provide information about birds to PCNC visitors. Here is a brief description of what is to come.

If you visit the Hummingbird Garden just behind the Nature Center, you'll see a display panel next to the bench. It was funded and installed in 2004 by Ron Krauss to honor his brother-in-law, Bill Goddard. It has photos of and information about hummingbirds that can be seen in Placerita Canyon. At nearly 20 years old, however, this display is showing its age, so Jim Crowley and I will make some improvements, including weatherproofing the box and replacing the cork backing with a steel panel. We can then use magnets to post new information along with Gary Park's beautiful photos (garyparktookthese.com) of Anna's, Allen's, Costa's Black-chinned, and Rufous Hummingbirds.

The three-sided display just outside the entrance to the Nature Center includes pictures of the kinds of Rescued Birds that visitors can see at PCNC. Three of the birds are in cages in the courtyard (Turkey Vulture, Long-eared Owl, and Red-tailed Hawk) and others (Great-horned Owl, Western Screech-Owl, Barn Owl, American Crow, Harris Hawk, and another Red-tailed Hawk) that PCNC Staff and Docents bring out to show to the public. The new display will add information about these birds and direct visitors to the Interpretive Center and Frank Hovore Classroom, where they can see mounts, models, and paintings of the common birds of Placerita Canyon, as well as the Know Your Nature Center with its photographs, display of nests, and birdwatching (birding) video.





Allan Wallander- RIP Allan.

I am so very sad to bring you this news.

Allan Joseph Wallander, age 84, entered eternal rest on February 2, 2023, surrounded by his family.

We have many wonderful memories of Allan. At our Open House cutting the logs, cooking barbecue on the patio, and making huge trays of food for every occasion. He was always ready to help, with a big smile.

Sue is from the class of 2004 and Allan was right there with her, from the start, sharing his love for Placerita.



The Canyon Trail is Closed.

Since March 8, the Canyon Trail has been closed because of storm damage. The closure is for an indefinite period. The water flow in the stream is quite high, and the trail has been damaged in some areas by water runoff. This has created mud slides and large crevasses.

This trail is often used by families with young children, and we do not want to put anybody in harm's way. The stream crosses the trail in a few places, making the trail impassable at present.

We are all very well aware that this trail is loved by the whole community, and we are sorry for the inconvenience. We all know that summer is coming soon and the creek will dry up before we know it. All the other trails are open.



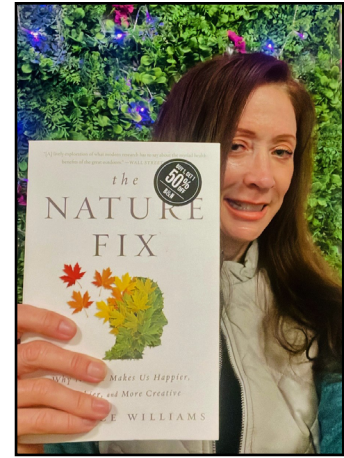
Fingerprinting

by Sarah Brewer,
Regional Park Superintendent
Vasquez Rocks

When you work for an organization dealing with children, you need to be fingerprinted to make sure that the children will be safe in your company. This rule could not be observed during the Covid restrictions. However, neither could we have docent training, so no new members were added to our roles. This year, we have been very happy to have docent training (finally!) and we are going to welcome 20 new docents.

Being fingerprinted is not an easy process: the special machine needs to be brought to the Center, somebody needs to be in charge to supervise and know how to do it properly, then all the paperwork has to be filled out.

Sarah Brewer, Regional Park Superintendent at Vasquez Rocks, Russ Kimura, Regional Park Superintendent and Frank Hoffman, Recreation Services Supervisor joined forces to make sure all the new docents at Placerita were fingerprinted, an important step at the Nature Center.



A Book Club with a Twist

by Ellen Coleman – Class of 2023

Do you want to learn more about the environment? Are you interested in a “Hands-On Book Club”? An interactive experience with books AND nature? Would you like to spend more time outdoors, but cannot seem to fit it into your busy schedule? Then the Placerita Canyon Book Club is for you!

The public is invited to join the docents, they will read books about nature, the environment, sustainability, and wildlife then take a guided hike on one of the beautiful trails of Placerita Canyon. Join us for a two-hour experience, every month. It will take place in the docents' room at Placerita, time and date to be determined.

The first book will be *The Nature Fix* by Florence Williams.

Welcome to Summer Dinner!

For the more “seasoned” docents, in the past this big day was called “End-of-the-School-Year Dinner.” Because of the paperwork situation with the schools, we did not have school groups coming to Placerita, so we needed a new name for this event. Fred Seeley came up with this great suggestion “Welcome-to-Summer Dinner.”

It is always held the first Saturday of June, otherwise too many docents disappear on vacations. This year it will be on Saturday June 3rd, at 6:00pm, a great way to celebrate together after the Open House.

Please remember to vote for your board member, the results of the vote will be given on this date. This is also the traditional time when certain docents will receive recognition for a special effort or project. They will enjoy your support.

It is a potluck dinner, so we know the food will be delicious, and it is always great being together. Mark your calendar for June 3rd at 6:00pm!



Outreach in Valencia Library

by Henry Cuaz

In March, Bill Webber and Rick Brammer found themselves overwhelmed by the wonderment of forty school-aged children at the Valencia Library. Both children and parents were excited, although one of them warned Bill, "I don't do snakes and I don't want to touch their skins!"

Fortified by their innate wonder, EVERY child experienced the smooth, lacy texture of the snakeskin. "It won't hurt, Dad, it's awesome," didn't persuade one parent, but brought Rick a smile. These outreach presentations are important efforts to promote the Nature Center.

Thank you, Bill Webber and Rick Brammer. When the team members were asked how many years they have they been presenting these animals, Bill playfully mused, "We started sometime last century." Hearing this, Rick, librarians, and attendees smiled. Little did they know that Bill started in 1996!

Want to experience the enchantment? Contact Heidi Webber who is in charge of our outreach events.



GOPHERS IN PCNC CLASSROOM!

Nature Tots

by Linda Jensen

Children crawling through tunnels then pretending to dig into the ground like gophers. A conversation with puppet Gary the Gopher. Movement exercises that gets everyone behaving like gophers. Story time. Center activities such as display of local plants that gophers eat (as well as plants that repel gophers). An interactive craft where a gopher pops up from underground, games, seeing a model of what a gopher home looks like under the ground. Nature hike.

Since 2018 this docent lead program for 3-6-year-old future naturalists has fostered interest and appreciation for the world of nature. With team planning, educational topics, and creativity the Nature Tots Program is a hit every second Saturday of the month. Every month the program is unique to the topic.

There are numerous docents involved in this program and the roster ebbs and flows. We welcome everyone to participate when they can and we thank you for doing so. The movers and shakers of the 2022/2023 Nature Tots Program are Sylvia Altamirano, Maria Elena Christensen, Andrea Donner, Richard Donner, Melanie Golder, Irene Heerlein, Sandy Holloway, Linda Jensen, Judy McClure, Carol Mercado, Melissa Rocha, Dave Taylor, John Whitaker



The ADA Walkway is Finished

The construction of the ADA restroom went very fast. The construction of the ADA walkway leading to the restroom proved to be a little bit more difficult, because the rainy season hit us with a vengeance this year.

After the proper grading was completed, a heavy 2-day rain storm went through, and thick layers of mud had to be removed from the driveway for the second time. The concrete was poured and cured just in time before another long rain storm came along.

The parking lot will be smoothed out in that area, so it won't be a problem for cars driving over the driveway. One step at a time!

It seems that this project is close to completion, and we will be glad to be able to use this restroom very soon.





Placerita's Gift Shop

By Teresa Jacobs

As many of you know, the Gift Shop has gone through many renovations in the last few months—if you have not done so, please check it out.

There are many new products. The finger and hand puppets are so popular with the public they sell out as soon as they come in. Selections of books highlighting local areas are great sellers, and young people really enjoy the nature journals.

We are gearing up for Open House, ordering products and nosh. Judy McClure has made a great contribution with the natural seed packets with instructions for planting, and the same plants already growing in pots, which are a great seller.

Other Gift Shop news: Sue and Glenda were honored at the Volunteer

Appreciation Banquet, Liz took a trip to Patagonia and Judy and I held down the fort.

When the school tours begin again, training will take place for anyone interested in working in the Gift Shop. The current Gift Shop team is Teresa, Glenda, Sue, Liz and Judy. We all work hard to make sure this is a part of Placerita everyone can be proud of.

The biggest news is that there is now a Gift Shop sign on the same post as the amphitheater sign across from Walker Cabin. Since then, many hikers have visited the gift shop and commented that they didn't know there was a gift shop or museum in the park as they normally get out of their cars, hike and leave. The sign has already made a big improvement, especially to visitors not familiar with the Nature Center.



The Animal Presentation is Back!

The bird flu was the reason we could not show the birds to the public for many months. We needed to protect our precious birds from being contaminated by any contact with wild birds. However, the number of cases is decreasing, and we have received notice that the birds can be shown to the public once again.

Therefore, we will resume our Animal Presentations starting April 1st at 10am. The presentation will continue on the first and third Saturday of each month. This presentation is free to the public, and lasts about one hour. Bring your children, if you can. It is a presentation that is a true joy for any age!

SPRING PROGRAMS

Animal Presentation: 1st and 3rd Saturday of each month, 10AM. On the patio.

Bird Walks: First Saturday of every month with Rosemarie Regis. Second Saturday of every month with Ken Yasukawa. From 8AM to 10AM. For all levels of birders. Bring binoculars, water, and a field guide.

Blooms of the Season: Learn about native plants with RuthAnne Murthy. 4th Saturday of every month, meet on the patio at 9:30AM for a one-hour stroll. Bring your camera and questions.

Family Nature Walk: Every Saturday from 11AM to noon with Judy McClure. An easy 1-hour walk exploring the natural and cultural history of the area.

Hike with the Downhill Sliders: The third Wednesday of the month at 10AM. Hike going downhill on the Canyon trail. Meet at the Nature Center, then we will drive to the Walker Ranch parking lot. Program for docents and friends. Please bring water and poles. If we cannot cross the stream safely, another option will be proposed. Check with RuthAnne Murthy.

Placerita Nature Tots: Second Saturday of the month at 9:30AM. For 3-to-6-year-olds. Program lasts 45 minutes to one hour, and will involve learning about the environment. No program in May because of Open House. June topic will be frogs. To register: Nature_tots@placerita.org

Nature Education: Every 3rd Sunday of the month at 2PM, PCNCA provides a free educational program open to the public.

OPEN HOUSE: Saturday, May 13 at Placerita Canyon Nature Center from 10AM to 2PM.

"WELCOME TO SUMMER" dinner: Saturday, June 3rd at 6PM. For docents and their family, there will be a potluck dinner and result of the vote for the board of directors.

Placerita Canyon Nature Center

Open House

May 13, 2023

10AM to 2PM

- Free Admission & Parking
- Family Hikes
- Crafts & Games
- Panning for "Fools" Gold
- Animal Presentations
- Caricatures by Jill
- Displays by Local Nature Clubs & Organizations
- Gift Shop
- Fender Guitar Raffle

Many more fun activities for the whole family! Bring a lunch & enjoy our picnic grounds. Activities & displays are subject to change at any time.

19152 Placerita Canyon Road
(661) 259-7721
www.placerita.org

Sponsored by
Placerita
Canyon
Nature Center
Associates



The Placerita Canyon Nature Center and Natural Area are located within the unincorporated area of Los Angeles County in the Supervisorial District of Kathryn Barger. The Natural Area and Nature Center are operated by the County of Los Angeles, Department of Parks and Recreation, in partnership with the Placerita Canyon Nature Center Associates.

